

To: City Executive Board

Date: 12th. February 2014

Report of: The Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Educational Attainment Programme

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To report the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee on the progress report for the Educational Attainment Programme.

Key decision: No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Mills

Executive Lead Member: Councillor Kennedy

Policy Framework: Strong Active Communities

Recommendation(s): For the City Executive Board to say if it agrees or disagrees with the following recommendation.

To welcome the continued investment and work in this area and to see both the evaluation of the Leadership programme and the Key Stage results as soon as they are available.

Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Committee set a Panel to consider the outcomes from the City Council's investment in Primary Schools in the City. This work is on-going and being considered through a partnership with a City School which is taking part in the KRM programme. An update on this work will be provided to Scrutiny and the City Executive Board in April. In advance of this the Scrutiny Committee asked to pre-scrutinise the views of officers and the Board Member on progress during the second year of this investment.

2. The Panel was supported in their debate by Anna Wright and Councillor Kennedy; the Committee would like to thank them for their time and advice.

Conclusions and Recommendation

3. The Scrutiny Committee noted the difficulties of showing evidence of improvement against target within the KRM investment because of the delayed start of most of the schools in the programme. They did however join with the Board Member in being encouraged by some of the early signs of improvement.
4. The work of the Scrutiny Panel was discussed and in particular the evidence from the partner school that linking improvement in the school overall to KRM was difficult because of the many other changes within City Schools. This was accepted and overall it was agreed that the only evaluation method we have is Key Stage tests and so the target and evaluation remains around performance in these. The Scrutiny Committee look forward to the early results in July 2014 and hope to see participating schools improving at a rate that allows the gap between comparator schools to begin to close and good progress made towards the target.
5. The Scrutiny Committee heard worrying details of the high turnover of Head Teachers and teachers and discussed some of the reasons for this. Of particular interest was the offer of support with accommodation in an effort to make posts more attractive and sustainable. A Committee Member with experience of using this scheme for recruitment to a local school said that this had made little difference and councils and schools need to think more widely than this to attract good quality candidates.

Recommendation

To welcome the continued investment and work in this area and to see both the evaluation of the Leadership programme and the Key Stage results as soon as they are available.

Comments from the Board Member

No comments

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