

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16 MAY 2018

STATEMENT OF EDUCATION & SKILLS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

School funding

From April 2018, we have moved towards the national funding formula which delivers approximately an additional £7m to schools in North Yorkshire. Although no school will lose out as a result of this, we recognise that schools in North Yorkshire continue to see budget pressures. We are anticipating

- an increase in the number of schools with decreasing balances;
- an increase in the number of schools submitting budget plans with in-year deficits for the financial year ahead, and;
- an increase in schools with accumulated deficit balances.

We continue to work with schools to mitigate the financial pressures and we continue efforts to lobby central government to ensure that schools in North Yorkshire receive a fair funding deal.

High needs funding continues to be under severe financial pressure with a £4m underlying projected overspend in 2018-19. Following consultation and agreement with school, we have transferred £1.6m from school budgets to alleviate some of the financial pressure but significant savings will be required as this is only a temporary measure. This gives rise to real concerns about our ability to provide financial support to both mainstream and special schools and will require a whole-systems review to carefully manage change. We will continue to lobby central government for a better deal for children with SEND in North Yorkshire.

School Ofsted inspections

Ofsted outcomes continue to be in line with national trends. North Yorkshire continues to perform above national for the number of schools judged good or outstanding at Secondary and slightly below for Primary. In 2016/2017 there was a change to the inspection framework and in that period of time the County was hit by a number of inspections that were demoting schools; however this was in line again with national trends whereby about 50% of schools inspected were judged requires improvement or inadequate. Recent inspection outcomes across 2017/2018 at 84% good or outstanding have recovered significantly from this position.

Ofsted continues to focus heavily on safeguarding and this is still causing some issues in a small number of schools. Another focus is the breadth of the curriculum as well as the continuing spotlight on provision for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and the use of pupil premium. This is an area which is a concern for us in North Yorkshire and something we are now highlighting with schools. The gap in achievement and progress in North Yorkshire schools is a major issue. Our 'Achievement Unlocked' project has been a significant response to this; highlighting nationally recognised provision and supporting schools in North Yorkshire to build on this evidential practice.

School Organisation

The statutory notice period for the proposed closure of Burnt Yates CE Primary School ended on 19 April 2018. There were no representations so the proposal will now be determined by the Executive Member for Schools on 22 May 2018. Oatlands Junior School, Harrogate are consulting on a proposal to become a Primary School. The School is an academy under Red Kite Learning Trust so in this matter the County Council is a consultee and the Regional Schools Commissioner is the decision maker.

SEND Strategic Plan for SEND Provision 0-25

We have continued to finalise proposals for the Strategic Plan for SEND Education provision. The plan will include proposals for the continuum of special educational provision in North Yorkshire, the development of locality based governance arrangements and locality based teams, and a review and reshaping of the High Needs Budget. Public consultation was approved by myself and Cllr Sanderson on 1 May and there will be engagement events across the County during the period up to 28 June.

North Yorkshire's plan for the use of Special Provision Capital Funding was published on 14th March 2018 and confirmation has been received from the Government that the Council will receive this funding. The planned work in four of our special schools will now be progressed. Proposals for years two and three of the funding will be developed and consulted on in due course.

School admissions

This year, nearly 95% of parents or carers of primary age children secured their first school preference in North Yorkshire and 98% of families secured one of their top three preferences. The figure remains consistently high in comparison with many other places in the country. At secondary level 90% of parents or carers secured their first preference and 98.6% secured one of their top three preferences.

North Yorkshire Coast Opportunities Area

The North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area Programme is focussed on improving social mobility in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey. The Programme's Partnership Board has allocated funding to project focusing on the creation of an innovative literacy hub in the area, improved speech, language and communication skills in primary schools and support for evidence-based social mobility initiatives in individual schools. Projects are being developed and launched through collaborative work with a range of partners, including schools, business, the voluntary and public sectors.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan
Executive Member for Education and Skills