



# Northumberland

## County Council

Families and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Date: 11th February 2019

### **Haydon Bridge High School - post OfSTED update**

Report of the Executive Director of Adult and Children's Services, Cath McEvoy-Carr  
Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Wayne Daley

#### **Purpose of report**

To update members on the progress being made at Haydon Bridge High School and the support being offered via the Local Authority and the Interim Executive Board (IEB).

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the priority "We want you to achieve and realise your potential", included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018/2021.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **It is recommended that:**

- 1) Members note the acknowledgment made by OfSTED of the input and support from the local authority
- 2) Members note the contents of the report and the fact that progress has been made although the school continues to need to make significant improvements.

##### **Key Issues:**

- The school was judged as "not taking effective action" by OfSTED in October 2018.
- Ofsted identified some key areas where progress was being seen. The IEB has recently changed to help make more rapid progress.
- Recruitment of new staff is a challenge, due to the location of the school and the current OfSTED grading.
- Middle leadership is improving slowly, but needs further development .

## **1. Background**

The history of Haydon Bridge High School has previously been discussed extensively. In brief, the school was judged inadequate by OfSTED in 2015. An academy order was served on the school and Bright Tribe was chosen as the preferred sponsor. Bright Tribe withdrew from sponsoring the school in November 2017. In March 2018, OfSTED judged the school to be inadequate again. The Local Authority (LA) began substantial improvement work with the school in April 2018. OfSTED undertook a monitoring visit in October 2018 and concluded that leaders at the school were not taking effective action to come out of special measures. They did, however, praise the input and support being provided from the Local Authority.

## **2. Actions taken by the Local Authority**

- Replacement of the Human Resources (HR) provider by the LA (April 2018)
- Confirmed the appointment of the headteacher (April 2018)
- Introduced a Maths/Leadership consultant to work with leaders across the school, and provide specific support to the Mathematics department. (April 2018)
- Introduced a pastoral consultant to lead the pastoral team in the absence of the substantive postholder. (April 2018)
- Introduced an Interim Executive Board (IEB) comprising of experienced educationalists, former headteachers, local councillors and solicitors (April 2018) Dr. Andy Johnson took over as Chair of the IEB in January 2019.
- The Commissioner for Secondary Education visits the school weekly to support and offers challenge to leaders. (April 2018)
- Restructuring of the leadership team to provide greater capacity and clearer lines of accountability. (May 2018)
- The Pupil Premium strategy reviewed and rewritten in conjunction with the LA Pupil Premium Consultant. (May 2018)
- A middle leadership training programme has been introduced, commissioned by an external training company. (May 2018)
- Improvements in the accuracy of data/standards through a programme of external moderation with a Gateshead Teaching School. (June 2018)
- New training for staff with specific focus areas of challenge, personalisation and marking and feedback. (July 2018)
- The appointment of an Assistant Head (pastoral and maths experience, from a Gateshead school). (January 2019)

- The introduction of a Rapid Improvement Group, made up of selected IEB members, who meet regularly with school leaders to assess the progress being made (January 2019)
- Middle leadership is being strengthened by the introduction of Faculty Heads, thus providing stronger leadership to small departments (February 2019)
- £4.5m will be invested by the LA in the rationalisation of buildings at Haydon Bridge High School which will assist the school in reducing its fixed costs and thereby its deficit budget. This work is due to begin in May 2019.

### **3. Impact:**

- 2018 Progress 8 was -0.09, in line with other Northumberland schools, and deemed “average” by the DfE. This was an improvement on 2016 and 2017.
- The Pastoral leader has updated behaviour systems across the school, leading to decrease in detentions by 42%
- The re-alignment of attendance officer work has decreased persistent absenteeism from 13% to 10.92%
- Predicted Progress 8 and Attainment 8 figures, including for Pupil Premium pupils and SEND, are expected to improve again in 2019

### **4. Selected outcomes from the OfSTED visit in October 2018:**

- “The local authority’s statement of action is fit for purpose”.
- “The local authority is providing different levels of leadership support.”
- “The newly formed IEB have worked swiftly to get to grips with the areas that need the most attention in the school. They are in a strong position to use their skills shrewdly to hold leaders, at all levels, to account and effect change.”

However, the inspector also noted that:

- “Since the previous inspection, the pace for addressing the areas for improvement has not gathered enough momentum, particularly improvements in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.”
- “Middle leadership is a concern. Despite the efforts of senior leaders and external support, some middle leaders remain unclear about how important their role is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas.”

- “The headteacher, the IEB and other senior leaders are under no illusion that there is a lot of work to do to secure better outcomes for pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, throughout the school.”

## 6. Changes in school structures:

In July 2018 the council approved the closure of Bellingham Middle School with effect from 31 August 2019 and the extension of the age ranges of the remaining first schools in the Haydon Bridge Partnership to primary schools with effect from 1 September 2019. In October 2018, following an appeal from the Governing Body of the Bellingham Federation of Schools, the Schools Adjudicator notified parents and relevant parties of his decision to reject the Council’s proposal to close the middle school and therefore it will remain open for the foreseeable future. However Haltwhistle Middle School (part of Wise Academies Trust) have consulted on closing the school with effect from 31 August 2019. The impact of both of these changes is not as yet known but will be closely monitored by the school organisation team.

## 7. Future inspection visits:

It is anticipated that the next OfSTED monitoring visit will occur around April 2019. We expect the inspection team will identify improvements in the quality of teaching, stronger middle leadership, better pupil behaviour and increasing rates of attendance. This should lead to the conclusion that *leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.*

## CONSULTATION

None required for this report

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Haydon Bridge High School - [OfSTED report March 2018](#)  
 Haydon Bridge High School - [OfSTED report October 2018](#)  
 Haltwhistle Middle School - [update for parents from Zoe Carr](#)

## IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

<b>Policy:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
<b>Finance and value for money:</b>	Investment of £4.5m
<b>Legal:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
<b>Procurement:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
<b>Human Resources:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.

<b>Property:</b>	Rationalisation of the school estate
<b>Equalities:</b> (Impact Assessment attached)  Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	There is a risk that the school will continue to be rated inadequate by OfSTED
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
<b>Customer Considerations:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
<b>Carbon Reduction:</b>	There are considered to be no implications arising from this report.
<b>Wards:</b>	Haydon and Hadrian

**Report sign off.**

Finance Officer	N/A
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Human Resources	N/A
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Executive Director of Children's Services	CMC
Portfolio Holder(s)	WD

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