



Northumberland

County Council

COMMITTEE: FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

DATE: 26TH MAY 2022

Education Strategy Board Annual Update

Report of: Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services

Cabinet Member: Cllr Guy Renner-Thompson, Lead Member Children's Services

Purpose of report

The Education Strategy Board Annual Update is provided to committee members to:

- Highlight the work and impact of the board in 21/22

Recommendations

Committee is recommended to:

- Review the performance of the board in its first year
- Comment on the boards ability to review, develop and drive the Education and Skills key priorities
- Give further direction to the board as it continues to develop

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- We want you to have access to the things you need; 'connecting'
- We want you to achieve and realise your potential; 'learning'
- We want you to attract more and better jobs; 'thriving'

Key issues

1. The need for an Education Strategy Board was highlighted just before the start of the pandemic. Although education outcomes in Northumberland were improving it was believed that to maximise further impact bringing together a sector led governance group would be most beneficial.
2. A report to FACS in December 2020 outlining the need for the board noted areas for improvement including:
 - Narrowing the disadvantage gap

- Improving secondary outcomes
- Reducing exclusions and improving the quality of Alternative Provision
- SEN provision and processes
- Post-16 Education

3. These areas for improvement were further specified in the development of 12 Education and Skills Priorities (see Appendix 1)

Background

- 1.1 The board was set up as a representative sector led group to provide governance around the Education and Skills key priorities.
- 1.2 The board was to review the current priorities, report on their effectiveness and help develop new priorities to direct the work of the whole sector including officers, services, schools and other educational settings
- 1.3 The initial meeting of the board was slightly delayed due to covid but the first one took place on 14.6.21
- 1.4 The Education Strategy Board Agenda, Meeting Plan and Working Groups for 21/22 are as follows:

Standing Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Consideration of any previous minutes and actions
3. Comments on papers from partner boards
4. Priority reports from key officers
5. Working group feedback
6. Business as directed by the chair
7. Actions arising
8. AOB
9. Confirm date of next meeting

The meeting invite will include any relevant minutes from other partner boards including SEND Strategy Board, Exclusion and Inclusion Board, FACS Committee, Safeguarding Board and others.

Meeting Plan

Date	Priority update reports from officers	Working Group Feedback
28.9.21 Autumn 1	Priority 10 – Neil Dorward Priority 4 – Sue Aviston Priority 5 (redraft) - Sam Barron	Consider and finalise groups
7.12.21 Autumn 2	Priority 8 – Dave Cookson Priority 6 – David Street	Group 1 & 2
10.3.22 Spring 1	Priority 3 – Nicola Taylor Priority 12 – Audrey Kingham	Group 3, 4 & 5
Spring 2	Priority 11 – Mick Burton Priority 9 – Sam Barron	Group 1 & 2
Summer 1	Priority 2 – David Street Priority 12 – Audrey Kingham	Group 3, 4 & 5
Summer 2	Priority 7 – David Street Priority 1 – Audrey Kingham	Review groups Education Strat Board impact Year 1 impact model

Working Groups

Working Group	Participants
1) School Improvement and Outcomes (Secondary)- A detailed exploration of priorities 2 and 8 supported by Dave Cookson and David Street.	Joanna Lamb James Wilson Andrew Thelwell Alan Hartwell
2) School Improvement and Outcomes (Primary)- A detailed exploration of priorities 2, 6 and 7 supported by David Street and Dave Cookson.	Ben Ryder Zoe Ryan Bethan Harding Glen Whitehead Debbie Wylie David Nesbitt
3) Inclusive practice and provision- A detailed exploration of priorities 3, 4, 5 and 9 supported by Sue Aviston, Nicola Taylor and Sam Baron.	Zoe Ryan Andrew Thelwell Gillian Linkleter Louise Doyle Janice Woods
4) Pathways and destination planning- A detailed exploration of priorities 10 and 11 supported by Neil Dorward and Mick Burton.	David Nesbit Nigel Harrat Andrew Thelwell Gillian Linkleter Louise Doyle
5) Collaborative North of Tyne development Priority 12 – A detailed planning group underpinning NOT Joint School Improvement Strategy, informing policy and direction supported by Audrey Kingham.	John Barnes Anne Marie Armstrong Bethan Harding Alan Hartwell Gillian Linkleter

Conclusion

In its first full year the Education Strategy Board has:

1. Given a new voice to all areas of the education sector
2. Identified areas of focus for working groups
3. Overseen progress in the key priorities and re written a priority that was achieved
4. Taken part in support in challenge and support to officers
5. Taken part in challenge and support to schools and settings
6. Highlighted areas of best practice
7. Highlighted specific areas for further work e.g., transition, secondary outcomes, relationships with Academies, data sharing expectations

Further areas for development of the board are to look at models for setting sector expectations, sharing best practice and their support and challenge role.

This work to date has cemented the role of the Board. The strategic participants are well positioned to be the voice of education in Northumberland and to be able to influence wider groups because of their strategic involvement and external engagement. In March 2022 the publication of the Education White Paper means this board should review their work and consider whether they would recommend any updates to the Education and Skills priorities for Northumberland.

Implications

Policy	The actions set out in this report support the vision and values of the Council's Corporate Plan. All DFE / ESFA policies and guidance are reviewed, interpreted and shared.
Finance and value for money	All budgets and decisions conform to expected DFE /ESFA funding requirements.
Legal	Northumberland County Council has statutory responsibilities with schools and academies as well as colleges and post 16 providers. The statutory responsibilities are clearly defined within policy and priorities for Education and Skills; within specific officer roles and also within the Board structures that engage with schools and academies and wider stakeholders to engage and to assure all that statutory duties are met. Formal reporting routines are embedded across the corporate calendar to ensure oversight and decision making is clear.
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) N/A X	
Risk Assessment	All schools and staff have individual risk assessments. All sites are risk assessed. All Schools and Skills sites are covid risk assessed. Skills sites undertake reviews every week as well as spot checks on premises to ensure routines and expectations are being followed
Crime & Disorder	The report has considered Section 1 (CDA) and the duty it imposes and there are no implications arising from it.
Customer Consideration	Service plans and systems are approached from the pupil/family/customer perspective. All learner facing approaches include the learner/ customer journey to improve satisfaction.
Carbon reduction	The increase in digital and remote learning as well as digital meeting spaces has significantly reduced the travel and carbon footprint in 2020/21.

Health and Wellbeing	Staff well-being is of high importance. Systems such as Kooth and Qwell are in place to support pupils and staff as well as bespoke arrangements to meet the needs of particular circumstances.
Wards	All aspects of the service support all wards in Northumberland, the digital reach has now expanded this opportunity.

Report sign off

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Lynsey Denyer
Service Director of Finance	Alison Elsdon
Relevant Executive Director	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Deputy Chief Executive	Cath McEvoy-Carr
Portfolio Holder(s)	Guy Renner-Thompson

Author and Contact Details

This report has been prepared on behalf of Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director, Children's Services by David Street, Deputy Director of Education and Skills, david.street@northumberland.gov.uk

Appendix 1- Education and Skills Key Priorities

- 1- We will take a key role in the strategic leadership of educational improvement in Education and Skills in Northumberland. Our vision will define the purpose and will ensure connectivity and inclusion to eradicate gaps. (Audrey Kingham)
- 2- We will know the strengths and weaknesses of our schools and other educational providers, challenge and support them to improve and report their performance to the Council and the community. (David Street)
- 3- We will lead the development of an overall strategy to ensure our residents and their families are able to access appropriate and inclusive provision in Northumberland that meets their needs as close to their homes as is possible. (Nicola Taylor)
- 4- We will develop an alternative education model which offers routes for children which support their future career choice; the model may also support keeping our children in education and provide a positive and financially viable contribution to our communities. (Sue Avison)
- 5- In partnership with all stakeholders, including education, health and social care, we will lead on the implementation of the Local Area 0-25 SEND Strategy to ensure learners with SEND achieve best outcomes. (Sam Baron)
- 6- We will work across the early years sector to ensure all children are school ready and that the schools are ready for every child. (David Street)
- 7- We will support all first and primary schools to ensure their pupils have all the skills and knowledge required to access the secondary curriculum. (David Street)
- 8- We will transform transition, progress and performance for our Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 and improve their access to their first choice University place, Further Education, Higher Apprenticeship and/or employment. (Dave Cookson)
- 9- We will work in partnership across services to ensure our children are supported through Social Care, Virtual school and Community Hub supporting their health and well-being (including mental health), feel safe, in touch, listened to and supported every week of the year and not just term time. (Sam Baron)
- 10- We will develop key relationships with education and industry to support careers ambition, curriculum development and routes into post 16 and Higher Education which support the economic priorities in Northumberland. (Neil Dorward)
- 11- We will develop a strategy and create an appropriate curriculum supporting the needs of all our young people and adults in Northumberland so that more can access suitable/appropriate/good fit apprenticeships, skills training and development to underpin careers, employment and in work progression. (Mick Burton)
- 12- We will work closely with Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council and North of Tyne Combined Authority to be innovative in our approaches and to be ground-breaking and leading the way in education for all our stakeholders. (Audrey Kingham)