

<b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE</b> <b>Overview and Scrutiny (Children's Services and Safeguarding)</b> <b>15<sup>th</sup> March 2022</b>		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Period of Report</b>
Diane Roscoe	Education	February 2022

## **Education Excellence**

Recruitment to vacant posts within Education Excellence continues.

### **Schools**

This half term we have had the final reports for two academies. Maghull High was rated good overall an improvement from the last inspection when they were requires improvement. Litherland High remains requires improvement although behaviour and attitudes and personal development were rated good. The school improvement team continue to support, challenge and broker additional support for schools.

The DfE piece of work focusing on attendance and speech, language and communication and the secondary focus on literacy linked to the Narrowing the Gap programme have both commenced. Anecdotally all schools are finding the programmes supportive and helpful.

All schools rated good or outstanding due for an inspection have been offered health checks in a range of areas including early years; school improvement and curriculum; SEND and leadership and management. Schools have found this beneficial and enabled them to target areas for development.

### **St Teresa's**

The report to Cabinet in February was accepted and the notice of closure has been published. This will return to cabinet in May for final sign off. Two children remained on roll, however neither have attended school since before Christmas. Parents are not accepting the places on offer due to their needs. The SEND team is working with the school and the parents to support the children and identify the solution.

### **Sacred Heart**

The school will move to the St Francis Academy Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

### **Holy Spirit**

The school will move to the St Joseph Academy Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

### **Savio**

We still do not know what is happening with Savio. The buildings are still causing an issue and we are still awaiting further information from the DfE with regards the next steps. We continue to support and challenge the school through the Secondary programme and the DfE piece of work. The school engages well with both programmes.

## **Exams and Tests**

On February 7, exam boards published information for schools detailing which topics will appear on exam papers to help students focus their revision. A-level and GCSE students will be given

more "generous" grades this summer, the exam watchdog has said, as it confirmed that students will be given a "safety net" to make up for the disruption they have faced.

However there does not appear to be any consideration given to the testing in primary schools. The testing of year 1 phonics; year 4 multiplication check and year 6 SATs will go ahead as normal.

The early years foundation stage profile will also go ahead as usual as will the year 2 assessments. Year 2 children were tested on phonics at the end of last term.

### **Covid**

Covid continues to impact on schools as staff and pupils test positive. One school had an Ofsted inspection deferment due to the number of teachers absent, not all through covid and last week was inspected. Schools are no longer required to follow any of the covid restrictions and some are expressing concern about ongoing impact.

### **Attendance**

Attendance continues to be incredibly challenging for all school leaders who have been dealing on a regular basis with positive cases of COVID 19. There is still some parental anxiety about sending children to school due to Covid-19 especially since the relaxation of all legal requirements.

The levels of persistent absence have increased across all schools but have stabilised.

Schools continue to report that one of the most significant challenges they face is supporting young people with mental health difficulties to engage in the full education offer. Local Authority Officers continue to support schools and families

The attendance team has continued to provide additional support for children who have a social worker by continuing with the first day response scheme. Early help workers across the three locality Family Wellbeing Centres are continuing to work closely with Education Excellence colleagues to support children back to school.

### **ILACs**

The inspection focused on the Virtual School; safeguarding; elective home educated; children missing education and alternative provision were the key foci for Education excellence teams. Officers were interviewed; random cases were considered; schools contacted and documentation examined.

### **SEND**

The revised action plan and scorecard are being developed in conjunction with key stakeholders. There will be a greater emphasis on what is happening in schools for pupils identified as SEND. It will be signed off and monitored by the SEND Continuous Improvement Board.

We continue to work with special schools, resource bases and mainstream schools to right size budgets and develop the new banding systems.