

CABINET MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILLOR	COMMITTEE	DATE
Peter Dowd	Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families	15 April 2010

School Inspections

Our Lady of Walsingham - Good

St George of England

A report was recently submitted to me on the outcome of the consultation with St. George of England Stakeholders and a number of parents of students at the school attended the meeting to discuss their concerns about the proposed closure in 2013. Discussion took place concerning the points raised and the action to be taken to support the transition of students to Hillside School. After further consideration it was resolved that we move to the formal statutory process.

BSF

Following a recent recruitment and appointment process, Mike McSorley Head of Technical Services has been appointed as BSF Project Director and Mike Horne (usually with the Liverpool BSF team) will join the LA as BSF Project Manager in July. The Local Authority formally joined the BSF Programme at a Remit Meeting with Partnership for Schools (the National Agency responsible for BSF) on 23 March.

South Sefton Catholic Academy

The Strategic Director and the three Sponsors (the Archdiocese of Liverpool, the Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco and Liverpool Hope University) met with the Governors and Staff of St. Wilfrid's, followed by a similar meeting at Savio Salesian. Whilst there were understandable issues regarding the staffing of the new Academy, the general view was that they were successful meetings, and there was a developing strong commitment to the Academy approach. In addition, an Academy Reference Group has been established comprising of the three sponsors, the headteachers and chairs of governors of the two schools, the DCSF/office of the schools and is chaired by the Strategic Director – Children, Schools & Families. We await approval for the Academy Expression of Interest from the Secretary of State.

Relationship with Schools

The new Strategic Director has introduced a Termly Report for Headteachers and a Termly Report for Governors, as well as a suggested Local Authority Agenda. The first edition was in January (Spring Term). Meetings have taken place with these key stakeholders, and there has been strong support for the pro-active and formative approach from the Local Authority. The reports for the Summer Term are being prepared and meetings will take place again with headteachers and governors.

Sefton Governors Conference

There will be a newly established Annual Conference for Governors taking place on Saturday, 22 May from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Formby High School. There will be two national speakers contributing to the event as well as a variety of interesting workshops. The Conference is open to all Governors, and I hope that Elected Members who serve as School Governors will be able to attend.

Children's Trust

I chaired a recent Children's Trust Workshop, which is one of a number to be held to develop a clear vision and priorities for children, young people and families in Sefton with a view to compiling our next Children and Young People's Plan. All partner agencies felt very positive about the workshop and the next steps.

Inspection

Necessary preparations are being undertaken for the next major inspection of the Council's arrangements for safeguarding children and young people and its provision for LAC. We are working with our partners across the Borough to ensure that we have a joined up coherent story and most importantly provision. I recently attended Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee to inform them about preparations for the inspection.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

462 young people, together with proud parents and carers, attended a ceremony at Southport Floral Hall to receive their awards. The ceremony was attended by the Mayor and Mayoress together with the Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Merseyside as well as many elected members. Congratulations and well done to all the recipients.

LEISURE BRIEFING

Positive Futures

- Positive Futures have continued to offer children and young people with additional needs the option to participate in short breaks, most recently organising a successful weekend trip away to Bendrigg Lodge.

- The weekend long trip provided all young people with the opportunity to access new sport & leisure activities including climbing, abseiling, indoor

caving, archery, zip wiring, rope courses and a chance to relax in a specially adapted sensory room.

- The children and young people who attended the weekend had not previously stayed away from home before and by attending had benefited from increased confidence and independence with one young resident successfully climbing the wall thanks to staff in attendance.

Targeted Exclusion

- Despite the dark nights, young women in Sefton have shone a bright light on their futures by getting involved in a range of positive activities during the dark nights.
- Targeting young women at risk of exclusion, we have been running evening activities to deliver issue based sessions focusing on important life skills including awareness of the problems of smoking, drugs, alcohol, sex and relationships while also providing an opportunity to enjoy fun exercise and relaxation sessions with young women attending who have previously been excluded from mainstream activities.

Boxing Success

Continuing to inspire the next generation, Netherton Activity Centre's boxing club has once again sparked successful talent as one young girl has been hand selected to attend an Olympic camp in Sheffield to undertake assessments to see if she will progress to join the Great Britain squad.