



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Education, Skills and Children's Services Select Committee

Report to the Education, Skills and Children's Services Select Committee

Title:	Select Committee Inquiries – Evidence from Buckinghamshire Schools
Committee date:	19 th November 2014
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Cabinet Member sign-off:	N/A

Purpose of Agenda Item

The special meeting of the Select Committee 19th November 2014 has been convened to hear from a selection of Buckinghamshire schools on key inquiries currently being considered by the Select Committee. The main purpose is to receive evidence from schools to help inform those inquiries. The Select Committee inquiries to be considered are Children's Internet Safety, Improving Children's Social Care, From Good to Outstanding and the Secondary Transfer Test Results Analysis.

Children's Internet Safety Select Committee Inquiry

The Select Committee is currently holding an inquiry into children's internet safety. The main purpose of the inquiry is to consider how statutory partners in Buckinghamshire are dealing with issue to keep children safe online. The Select Committee would like to hear from schools on how they are approaching the issue, any concerns or challenges they have and suggestions on ways in which local partners may be able to work together.

Key questions to schools are:

1. How do schools inform their students about the risks when going online and how to keep themselves safe?
2. Do schools provide internet safety training themselves or do they work with external partner(s)? If so who?
3. How schools inform their staff and parents about how to support their children in keeping safe and what to do if they have an issue?



4. How do schools perceive the issues of internet safety and cyberbullying impacting on their school and the lives of their students?
5. Do schools have procedures about dealing with internet safety, cyberbullying and “sexting”? How often have they had to activate these?
6. Do schools have any suggestions on how local partners can work together better to keep children safe online?

Improving Children’s Social Care Select Committee Inquiry

The Select Committee has established an inquiry to oversee improvements to children’s social care following the recent Ofsted Inspection report. As part of this the Committee would like to hear from schools on identification of children at risk and on referral to other agencies, including children’s social care.

Key questions to schools are:

1. How do schools deal with safeguarding, in policy and in practice?
2. What is the procedure for identification of children at risk, in policy and in practice?
3. What is the procedure for referral to other agencies, including children’s social care, in policy and in practice?
4. Do schools have any concerns or identify any gaps in safeguarding partnerships and referral in practice at the moment?
5. Do schools have any suggestions on how local partners can work together better to keep children safe?

From Good to Outstanding

The Select Committee would like to hear from schools on how schools can improve, especially from “Good” to “Outstanding” Ofsted Inspection results and any ways in which the Council and the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust can improve school improvement or ways in which schools can learn from each other.

Key questions to schools are:

1. How are/have schools made progress from Good to Outstanding?
2. What key challenges are there for schools in making this improvement transition?
3. How might the Council and the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust improve school improvement and how might schools can learn from each other?
4. What other resources can schools draw upon?

Secondary Transfer Test Results Analysis

The Select Committee would like to hear from grammar schools on the new Secondary Transfer Test results. A new secondary transfer test was introduced and the Select Committee will consider the expectations of what the expected impact of the new test will be and if there are any early indicative signs which can be drawn from the results. The data for the Secondary Transfer Test results is owned by the schools and so the Select Committee has invited schools to present the data.

Key questions to schools are:

1. What were the expectations of the new secondary transfer test? To what extent was the new test expected to provide a more level playing field and pupils qualifying from a broader range of socio-economic backgrounds?
2. To what extent is the new test less “coachable”?
3. What do schools do to prepare primary school pupils for the exams? Is there a policy on this?
4. What more could we do to facilitate or encourage pupils from socially and economically deprived backgrounds to achieve in this test?
5. What can be drawn from the data at this stage and to what extent is it too early to draw definitive conclusion? When might we be able to draw more definitive conclusions?
6. Are there any indications from this data as to whether the new test favours pupils from within the County or drawn from outside of the county? Is there, in any case, anything the Local Authority and schools could do to influence this?

Next steps

Evidence provided by schools and other contributors will be noted and used as evidence for the Select Committee inquiries.