



Report to the Children's Select Committee

Title:	Side by Side Update
Committee date:	Wednesday 27 November 2019
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Cabinet Member sign-off:	Cllr Anta Cranmer

Purpose of Agenda Item

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Select Committee with an update on the Side by Side Project and our 2019 academic results.

Background

Side by Side is the Buckinghamshire model for a local school improvement system. The strategy builds on the established, strong relationships across Buckinghamshire and enables all schools across the county, regardless of type, size or status, to work collaboratively to support county wide school improvement. It recognises that it is this wider system that will deliver improvements and as such harnesses and utilises the experience, strengths and knowledge within our schools, with school leaders and practitioners. The Local Authority's role is one of a facilitator; identifying areas of strength and those which require development, building expertise capacity, empowering system leaders and enabling support. The key aspects of Side by Side include:

- Working with the Local Authority, schools are encouraged to identify areas of development that would support them on their continuing improvement journeys.
- Schools work collaboratively to share experience and learning, through both formalised and bespoke relationships.
- Where particular vulnerabilities exist, the local authority brokers support by deploying 'champions' from within the Buckinghamshire family of schools to deliver significant improvements.
- Learning is shared for the benefit of all schools and settings across the county.
- The Side by Side Partnership team quality assure the work delivered and identify areas for further improvement.

Currently, Side by Side has several different strands of work:

Direct support

Schools are prioritised for support according to need and classified as an Intervention, Prevention and Enhancement school:

- Intervention Schools - Support from a Side by Side Leadership Champion and Side by Side Pupil Champion for up to 18 funded days per year.
- Prevention Schools - Support from a Side by Side Leadership Champion or a Side by Side Pupil Champion depending on the evaluation of need for up to 6 funded days per year.
- Enhancement Schools - For schools with low vulnerabilities, non funded Side by Side Champion support can be brokered through the Side by Side Partnership Team.

Key Project Work

For those areas that have been identified as needing targeted improvement, a number of distinct projects have been set up in order to address the emerging concerns. Examples include:

- Support for mainstream schools to ensure pupils with SEND achieve and thrive. Projects have been commissioned by Stony Dean Special School, Furze Down Special School and Chiltern Wood Special School
- The Aspire secondary pupil referral unit (PRU) and Chiltern Hills Academy have been commissioned to develop a 'toolkit' to support secondary schools with high exclusion rates.
- Funding has been supplied to our 19 liaison groups across the county for the commissioning of 'Action Research' projects to address weaknesses in locality data.
- A programme focused on identification of vulnerable children and delivery of prevention activities in the early years.
- Support for school leaders through work with the Buckinghamshire Academy of School Leadership (BASL) to deliver a support programme for new head teachers. There is also collaboration work between BASL and Side by Side to deliver a leadership conference and three seminars open to all school leaders.

Development Work

In order to further support schools to achieve at the highest levels for their pupils, the Side by Side project continues to develop strategies for school improvement:

- Creating networks of specialist teachers across the county to support schools directly with information and training in relation to a range of areas including SEN and behaviour support.
- Developing a structure of school improvement conferences targeted at those schools in the prevention category; however, also open to all school leaders.
- Hosting briefings for outside providers of school improvement support who work with Buckinghamshire schools. These briefings will outline our key priorities for so that they can be reflected in the work that outside agencies offer to schools in the county.

- Strengthening relationships and support for governance and development of the relationship with teaching schools across the county.

Academic Results

Overall, our provisional results are very pleasing and we will strive to improve these further by supporting schools through other Side by Side initiatives. Full details of our results are shown below:

	Buckinghamshire		National	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
EYFSP - % of pupils achieving Good Level of Development	74%	74%	72%	72%
Year 1 Phonics - % of pupils achieving expected standard	84%	82%	82%	82%
Key Stage 1 Reading - % of pupils achieving expected standard	79%	78%	75%	75%
Key Stage 1 Writing - % of pupils achieving expected standard	72%	71%	70%	69%
Key Stage 1 Maths - % of pupils achieving expected standard	78%	76%	76%	76%
Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing & Maths - % of pupils achieving expected standard	66%	66%	64%	65%
Key Stage 4 - Attainment 8	55.0	55.0	46.6	46.7

Key metrics in attainment demonstrates that overall, the Local Authority continues to ensure that our pupils receive a good standard of education.

Next steps

The service is keen to ensure that the Side by Side project continues to develop and is responsive to the needs of all schools across Buckinghamshire. The impact and effectiveness of the project is reviewed annually when comparable results are published.