

EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

Item under consideration: Education Performance (2011/12) Headline Report

Date Considered: 29 November 2012

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 29 November 2012, the Education Select Committee considered provisional results for early years, primary, secondary and special school phases for the academic year ending in the summer of 2012.
- 1.2 In addition to giving the Committee an opportunity to scrutinise the provisional data, the report allowed Members to identify specific areas of interest so that further analysis could be made available when the validated data was brought back to the Committee in 2013.

2.0 Areas of interest identified

- 2.1 The Committee noted that education performance seemed to worsen as students got older, with each subsequent key stage performing worse than the one before it. It was noted that whilst the County Council had historically sought to address this disparity through investment in secondary education, it was possible that there was a need to invest more heavily in the lowest performing primary schools to ensure that students were prepared for the next step in their education. It was agreed that officers would provide a more detailed analysis of performance results for individual phases in subsequent reports to Committee.
- 2.2 The Committee asked that further analysis be conducted to see whether there was a variance in performance between students that attended combined primary schools and those that were educated in separate infant and junior schools. An initial view of the situation was shared with members in June 2012 but did not find a conclusive outcome. However, it was requested that this analysis be extended with the 2012 results and brought back to the Committee.
- 2.3 Members raised concern that since the introduction of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework in January 2012, 17%¹ of schools inspected in the first six months of the new framework had been judged to be inadequate. Whilst it was accepted that the new framework was more challenging and that the schools inspected were not a representative sample of education provision in Surrey, it was felt that the data would still cause concern for parents. It was therefore requested that any information published on Ofsted inspection results note and explain the changes to the inspection framework.
- 2.4 When presenting Ofsted inspection data, the Committee felt it would be beneficial for subsequent reports to include more detailed information on the quality of teaching in schools - one of the four key judgements school inspectors reported on.

¹ The latest available data indicates that of the 98 schools inspected between 1st January 2012 and 15th November 2012, 12% were judged to be inadequate.

- 2.5 The Committee agreed that there was an urgent need to review the way in which Surrey sought to raise standards in schools, particularly in light of budget pressures and the new Ofsted inspection framework. Members expressed concern that Surrey had historically been too content with its school improvement performance and that Babcock 4S had not done enough to challenge this status quo. As such, the Committee welcomed Babcock 4S' commitment to review its School Improvement activities to ensure that in the future it provided both better value for money and a more robust service. However, the Committee also acknowledged the need to consider whether additional resources might be required in order to achieve this given the County Council's aim for all children to attend a 'Good' school by 2017.

3.0 Recommendations

The Education Select Committee:

- (a) Noted the provisional education results for 2012;
- (b) Requested that the final validated data presented to Committee include:
 - i. Detailed analysis of performance results for individual phases;
 - ii. Analysis of performance between students attending combined primary schools and those educated in separate infant and junior schools;
 - iii. Greater clarity concerning the changes to the Ofsted inspection framework.
- (c) Welcomed Babcock 4S' review of its school improvement activities.

Denise Turner-Stewart
Chairman of the Education Select Committee