

Spring Governors Briefing 2016 - Feedback Q&A - Question Wall

- **Categorisation – Primary – Red and Green does not talk about attainment and what about ‘coasting’?**
- **Categorisation - How old can the Ofsted judgement be?**

At the moment, whilst the primary criteria don't make many specific references to data, this will be a key source of information to inform the judgements made about the criteria. The self-categorisation and other information from the school will also be very important. We anticipate providing the locality steering group, who will complete the categorisation alongside representatives of Learn Sheffield, with analysis about which schools potentially meet the definitions for coasting and floor standards. In terms of OFSTED judgements, which can be several years old, the language makes reference to the 'likely' outcome, which makes the current view more important if it is different from an existing OFSTED judgement.

- **Locality Steering Groups – who, how and when will these be set up – will they be Governor driven?**

Most localities already have a steering group which is made up of (usually elected) Headteachers from the locality and some form of action plan. In terms of the development of those existing systems into the new school improvement strategy we will work with each locality Headteacher group to determine exactly how this will be developed in their locality. The peer to peer support and challenge which underpins this model is an important element of the strategy. We would like to see Governors more involved in the locality action plans, and next year would like to see the plans shared more widely.

- **How much does the support package cost?**
- **Does the annual LSIP visit cost? How much? Who pays? Is the cost based on the size of the school?**

All of the activities in the column that these questions refer to (the third one in the categorisation grid) would be paid for by Learn Sheffield. As a simple rule of thumb, if Learn Sheffield is asking for something to happen then we will pay for it. If a school chooses to ask for something from the school improvement services menu (website link below) then the school pays.

<http://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/ServicesToSchools/SchoolImprovementServices>

- **Who are the people providing them and what are their qualifications?**

This kind of school improvement activity will be quality assured by Learn Sheffield. The work will be done by our own core team of Learn Sheffield Improvement Partners (LSIPs), by Associate LSIPs (who are current Sheffield school leaders with proven track records in school improvement) and consultants (who are, for example, often OFSTED trained).

- **Half termly & termly LSIP visits. Have you the capacity for this?**

Capacity is a significant challenge for Learn Sheffield but we are confident that we can deliver the commitments in this strategy. We have used the time this year, whilst each sector has been working with us to develop the strategy, to model different ways to expand our capacity. There is also an element of investing to save in this model as the overall cost decreases as more schools move into the higher categories.

- **Will the School Profile include school context and additional information on schools with IR Units?**

The school profiles do include contextual information and are being designed with each sector. The issue of IR Units has not been discussed up to this point but there is no reason why this can't be included. I will take this question as raising this issue and feed it into the consultation process.

- **How will Learn Sheffield share best practice to the benefit of all schools in Sheffield? Beginning to feel like a poor relation as a maintained school.**
- **How will Learn Sheffield work with academies?**

Whilst Learn Sheffield recognises that maintained schools and academies have different regulations in relation to school improvement, we have the same expectations and aspirations for both. Everything that we do, offer and expect is the same for all Sheffield schools, especially in relation to sharing best practice. Academies have different regulations, which we understand, but the key driving force behind Learn Sheffield was that we wanted to continue to work together as a city. The priorities that are emerging, for example, apply to all types of institution and all schools will be motivated to help to overcome the challenges that we collectively face.

- **How will Learn Sheffield support schools as we move towards the national move towards academies?**

This is an issue that came up frequently in the priorities workshops that we held in December and January. Learn Sheffield has asked Marc Rowland from the National Education Trust, who is supporting the priorities work, to write a short paper about the national academisation agenda from his independent perspective. We will be sharing this with school leaders and Governors and then hosting a series of events where schools can come and find out more about the different opinions and options that exist. If the government are to pursue a more determined policy of wanting all schools to become academies, then there is a strong case for Sheffield schools being proactive and strategic in their approach.

- **Governors need a CPD review with 'teeth'. Performance managed Governors?**
- **Governor training needs strengthening. Governors must do induction in the 1st year and a minimum of 1 training session per year.**

As we discussed later in the briefing it is the intention for Learn Sheffield to take a lead on Governor training from the summer term onwards. We will, naturally, work within the regulations that exist (e.g. I don't think we can compel Governors to do training) but we would like to see structured induction programmes become more widely available and used. Part of the answer to this issue is developing a culture where this is expected but it will also be important to make the training more accessible. The recruitment, development and retention of Governors is one of the emerging priorities for the city.

- **How is / or will Learn Sheffield support the lack of Headteachers in the city and the quality of graduate teachers coming through?**

The recruitment, development and retention of both teachers and school leaders are also amongst the emerging priorities for the city, from the work we are doing with the National Education Trust. Learn Sheffield recognises that these are crucial to the future success of the city and there will be significant strategies put in place for both. I don't want to predict the details of these strategies at this stage, before the planning has happened, but the first information about this will be out around the start of March for consultation and comment.

- **Manchester funding, compared to Sheffield, is approx. £250/£300 per child per year more. How are negotiations on the shortfall progressing with the DfE?**
- **Standstill budgets – impact on forward budgeting for Governance. Any news / indication for 2016/17 – 2017/18 allocations?**

There is a funding formula working group looking at the future allocation model and this will report back to Schools Forum. A delegation from the Schools Forum are due to meet with ministers to discuss the issues for Sheffield in the national allocation and some suggested solutions that they wish to put forward. I would imagine that the outcomes of these issues will be part of future briefings.

- **Sports Premium – is it still 2020 that it is going to be withdrawn? (as advised at a prior Governor briefing). Rumour has it – it will be withdrawn in 2017.**

I am not aware if this has yet been decided. The latest allocations came out in the Autumn Term and only relate to this school year. The report into the impact was published towards the end of the autumn term if you want to have a (long) read!

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/489477/DFE-RR489_PE_and_sport_premium_an_investigation_in_primary_schools_-_final_report.pdf

- **Moving from Good to Outstanding. Is it true that if a school in every other aspect is judged Outstanding but is in financial deficit will not satisfy the Outstanding criteria?**

It is very unlikely that an outstanding school would not receive this grade because of a financial deficit and routine financial information is not generally an aspect of an Inspection. For a problem to arise the financial issues would need to be very significant and having an obvious impact on learning outcomes or the quality of leadership.

- **Can you email handouts to School Governing Bodies or provide link to Learn Sheffield website.**

This document, the feedback from the session and the presentation have been emailed out to all Heads and Chairs and put on the Learn Sheffield website. We are asking that they circulate more widely to Governors in their schools and encourage them to visit the website, follow us on twitter, etc.

Our contact details are below – including a new phone number ...

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