
Education Scrutiny Committee

27 May 2008

Scoping Report For Part B of the School Governors Review

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of re-presenting this scoping report to Members is to allow them to reconsider the information previously provided on 26 February 2008 in order that they may agree a way forward for this review.

Background

2. This Committee originally considered a feasibility report on the role of School Governors in October 2006, but at that time a review was not progressed. In September 2007, this Committee reconsidered the topic and recognised that a review would fit with the following eligibility criteria:
 - i. Public Interest (i.e. in terms of proposals being both in the public interest and resident perceptions)
 - ii. Service Efficiency
3. Following a presentation by the Governor Support & Development Service, the Committee agreed to undertake the review with the following remit:
4. In regard to Governing Bodies, to encourage an improved level of community involvement and maximise their diversity and skills

Part A - Key Objectives

- i. Investigate the current composition of governing bodies with an effort to find ways of improving the diversity of governing bodies to better reflect the community
- ii. Identify ways of increasing the number of community Governors
- iii. Identify ways of increasing community involvement with Governing Bodies
 - iv. Investigate ways of maximizing the skills that individual members of governing bodies bring to their role

Part B – Key Objective

- v. Investigate the role of Governors and current clerking arrangements in extended schools
5. Work on Part A of the review has been progressed and at a meeting on 26 February 2008 the Committee received this scoping report for Part B. At that time, Members heard from the Head of Early Years & Extended Schools about the provision of extended schools services in York schools, but were unable to consider the recommendations within the report due to the limited time available for the meeting (as it was being followed by a consultation session for Governors). The minutes of the meeting on 26 February 2008 are attached at Annex A

Consultation

6. The information provided within this scoping report has been provided by the Head of Early Years & Extended Schools Advisor.

Extended School Provision

7. The Government's 'Extended Services in Schools' agenda will ensure that every school in the country will provide a range of services and activities outside the normal school hours and across the whole year for families, children and the wider community. All schools will be expected to deliver the following core offer by 2010:
 - High quality 8am –6pm childcare provided on the school site or through other local providers for 52 weeks of the year alongside a varied menu of activities, including study support – such as homework clubs, sports, music, art and play activities
 - Parenting support – including information and family learning
 - Swift and easy access to a wide range of specialist support services
 - Wider community access to school facilities – including ICT, sports and arts facilities and adult learning opportunities.

The role of the Governing Body

8. The introduction of Extended Schools has huge implications for the strategic leadership of schools. Governors have a critical role in developing this work, and ensuring that parents, children, young people and the wider community are consulted about the kind of activities they would like to see developed within their local communities.
9. Section 27 of the Education Act 2002 gives governing bodies of all maintained schools the power to provide, signpost families to existing provision, or enter into contract or arrangements to provide facilities and services that "further any charitable purpose for the benefits of pupils at the school, their families or people who live and work in the locality in which the school is situated"

10. It is important that school governors ensure that they:
- work in partnership with the local authority and other organisations when planning new activities in order that existing facilities are not compromised
 - consult with families and the wider community
 - make sure that all activities are inclusive and open to all
 - make sure that all activities are self financing as school funding may not be used for extended schools activities
 - make sure that legislation is followed
 - have a clear strategic oversight of the activities and how these relate to teaching and learning
 - complete an action plan with their Shared Foundation Partnership in order to receive additional funding to support the work.
 - Include these action plans in the School Development Plan as evidence of partnership working and the development of the Extended Schools Agenda

Extended School Provision In York

8. City of York have already been shown to be the 4th highest performing authority in the region regarding this agenda. This was largely due to York's Shared Foundation Partnership policy. Originally set up to ensure that every primary school developed formal partnerships with pre-school play groups, childminders, private day nurseries and others to ensure that the government's new Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum was delivered in a co-ordinated manner, the Shared Foundation Partnerships have been an ideal vehicle for meeting the Extended Schools agenda. Secondary and special schools have joined them, along with colleagues from other agencies such as health and crime prevention. Together the Shared Foundation Partnerships audit local need and work together to meet the Extended Schools agenda. Each partnership meets once per term and is supported by Early Years and Extended Schools Service staff. Shared Foundation Partnership plans are submitted to the department every year, to allow monies to be devolved to support their delivery. Typically the smallest school in the authority has received £12k over 3 years with a further 2 years funding expected from government. Larger schools have received more as headteachers and governors were consulted about the fairest way of sharing Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) money and elected to have a system based on the number of pupils in the school. All government monies have been devolved to schools rather than being held centrally. The Early Years Service was restructured into the Early Years and Extended Schools Service in order to support this work and the Head of Service is the lead officer.
9. Every school in the city has met DCSF targets in terms of meeting the core offer. The Early Years and Extended Schools Service conducted a face to face audit based on a DCSF questionnaire. The audit conducted with every school in York, gave an opportunity to discuss:
- What they are already providing

- How they wish to develop further
- What support they require from the Early Years and Extended schools service

Support & Training For Governors

10. DCSF, local authority training days and briefing sessions were made available for governors, local authority staff, and members of partner organisations. A DVD and Information Pack was also made available to every school and this and further guidance is now on the Yor-Ok web site. An Early Years and Extended Schools Partnership Board has been set up to further develop this work in the city.
11. Each school has a named development worker from the Early Years and Extended Schools Service who can help schools and Shared Foundation Partnerships to develop services. A head teacher will be joining the Early Years and Extended Schools Service on a part time basis in order to further develop this work. The Early Years and Extended Schools Partnership (a multi-agency forum), is the consultative body for this work.
12. A part time post has also been created within the Finance Team to help schools with finance, governance and human resource implications.

Ofsted report on Extended Schools

13. A recent Ofsted report found that:
 - Parents were very enthusiastic about the benefits of extended schools and the provision has been transformational for some
 - Services work well together to support children when they collaborate on agreed protocols for working practices
 - Extended schools can enable multi-agency teams to deliver services directly from the school and this improves access for children, families and the community.

Possible Future Developments

14. Although DCSF targets have been met, the following 2 years will see this agenda developing to ensure that play, care and educational opportunities are easily accessible to all children and young people and that schools are working in close partnerships to allow a sharing of buildings and resources with the wider community. It is important that activities are fully inclusive and of the highest quality and that they are flexible to allow all families to make choices about the services they wish to take up. Sustainable and well marketed services are critical. Many Shared Foundation Partnerships and schools are clustering together within localities in order to develop this work together and ensure that activities are not duplicated.

Timetable For Review

15. When the remit for this review was set, the Committee only agreed a timeframe for Part A of the review. Therefore, having regard to the agreed objective for Part B, Members need to identify how they wish to proceed with this part of the review and consider how much time they wish to allocate to completing it.

Options

16. In order to identify how to proceed, Members make choose to take advantage of the open session following this meeting to gain the views of the attending Governors about their additional work and responsibilities as a result of the introduction of Extended School Provision.

Implications

17. There are no known Legal, Financial, HR, Equalities or other implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

Corporate Priorities

18. Although the remit for this review does not fit directly with any of the Corporate Priorities, it could indirectly have a positive effect in relation to Corporate Priority No.7 – 'improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city'.

Risk Management

19. Without the thorough engagement of current governors the findings from this review could be limited which in turn, could have a negative effect on the number of new applicants.

Recommendations

20. Members are asked to consider and agree a timetable and methods for progressing Part B of this review.

Reason: To ensure compliance with scrutiny procedures, protocols and workplans.

Contact Details

Author:

Melanie Carr
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Services
Tel No. 01904 552063

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Colin Langley
Acting Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services

**Scoping Report
Approved**



Date 8 February 2008

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: N/A

Annex A - Minutes of Meeting held on 26 February 2008