

Council: Monday, 4 April 2016

Administration Motion in the name of Cllr Reuben Thompstone

Ensuring Continued Educational Achievement

Council notes the Annual Statement of Educational Standards presented to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee and welcomes the very positive results it contains. The analysis demonstrates that Barnet's diverse family of schools together deliver some of the very best educational outcomes in the whole of the country.

Council notes that:

- As of February 2016, 91% of Barnet pupils in Primary and Secondary schools attended a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school;
- At Key Stage 1, Barnet's attainment was in the top 18 authorities nationwide for Reading, Writing and Maths;
- At Key Stage 2, progress for Reading and Maths was 3rd and 12th in the country respectively;
- At Key Stage 4, Barnet ranked 5th nationally for pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades including English and Maths and was ranked 1st for pupils attaining the English Baccalaureate;
- Secondary school progress in English and Maths was the 2nd and 3rd best in the country;
- At A-level, Barnet was 5th for pupils achieving AAB grades or better.

Council is proud that pupils and schools are achieving such strong results, but is particularly pleased that, within these overall outcomes, Barnet is performing well for those children with SEN (2nd nationally for SEN pupils without a statement at KS4), those who have English as an additional language, and those who come from less advantaged backgrounds (in the top 10%). Council notes that the attainment gap between pupils from disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged backgrounds is half that of the national average.

Council further welcomes the fact that Barnet ranks among the top 10 authorities nationally for social mobility. Council is committed to ensure the best outcomes possible for all children, irrespective of background or circumstances.

Council wishes to ensure that the progress and attainment detailed in the report continues. For example, Council notes the work being undertaken to tackle primary school attendance issues. Council will position itself to support schools in their transition to academy status and will work to ensure that this process protects and even furthers the choice available to parents. Council will further investigate with government how demand for places at faith schools and grammar schools can be met going forward.

Council notes the announcement by the Secretary of State of a new National Funding Formula for Schools, intended to ensure a funding arrangement fair to all

pupils and schools. Council notes the principles behind this policy – to ensure that funding is not determined by geographical luck and that it is properly linked to the needs of children.

However, Council calls on the Leader and Chairman of the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee to respond to the consultation, and make further representations to government, to communicate the importance of the formula reflecting the needs of Barnet's schools. Council believes that the formula must, therefore, account for the higher running and staffing costs of schools in London; give proper weight to the challenges of teaching pupils who have English as an additional language (now comprising 48% of primary pupils in the borough); and respect the current pattern of deprivation in London and not rely upon an outdated 'Inner vs Outer London' dichotomy.

Council also calls on them to monitor the details of planned changes to the role of local authorities, with regards to schools, as they emerge and make appropriate representations on the borough's behalf, with the aim of enabling the continuation of the successes noted above.