

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP

<b>TO:</b>	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
<b>DATE:</b>	4 JULY 2016	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	8
<b>TITLE:</b>	READING FIRST PARTNERSHIP		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	CLLR TONY JONES	<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	CHILDREN'S SERVICES
<b>SERVICE:</b>	CHILDREN'S SERVICES	<b>WARDS:</b>	BOROUGHWIDE
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Reading First Partnership (previously referred to as the Reading Education Excellence for All Partnership). Since the last report to ACE in November 2016 there have been a number of initiatives which have formulated a cleared strategy for the Reading First Partnership.
- 1.2 Headteachers and Governors from all Education Providers across all phases in Reading initiated a meeting of a Strategic Group, supported and driven by officers within Reading Borough Council. This has led to the formation of an Executive Board, with representatives from Reading Borough Council, Headteachers and Governors from Academies and Maintained Schools and Nurseries, as well as from the Institute of Education at Reading University.
- 1.3 The Inaugural Reading First Conference in February was well attended and included Baroness Morris of Yardley (better known as Estelle Morris) as the Keynote Speaker, along with conference speakers from other established partnerships
- 1.4 The Executive Board has formed three task groups with a primary focus over the next Academic Year to be on:
  - Recruitment and Retention
  - Leadership and Management
  - Vulnerable Groups (to be known as the Aspirational Task Group)

From September these groups will meet 3 times per year to set the agenda around school to school support

- 1.5 Schools have identified areas of good practice that they are willing to share across other schools and this is being incorporated into the Areas for development within schools through the School Monitoring Group
- 1.6 Educational settings across the Borough will receive an agreement letter before the end of this academic year outlining the benefits and costs of being a member of the Reading First Partnership and emphasise the ethos and aims set at the November ACE meeting. This letter outlines that the Reading First Partnership will ensure that:
- There is effective local support for local issues
  - All Reading Schools and settings to be good or outstanding by 2018
  - There are enhanced life chances for our families
  - There is an effective education service, which quickly identifies and provides support for our children
  - It will facilitate leadership solutions
  - A school and setting improvement service is actively developed locally

The letter also outlines examples of support, including innovative and unique opportunities that are not presently available to schools; an example of this is coaching for senior leaders through the services of an HMI. Other aspects include the facilitation of secondments to develop future leaders, brokering support for Key Issues identified by schools and supported by other educational providers.

- 1.7 In order to ensure the successful outcomes and achievement of the aims of the partnership, each school will be required to sign up and commit to the Reading First Partnership, through their Governing Bodies. This will involve a fee per pupil, initially set at £1 per pupil for the remaining part of this financial year (up to April 2017) and a commitment to £2.50 per pupil per annum for future years.
- 1.8 Mechanisms have been set up to ensure effective working relationships and these are outlined as below:
- Support an ethos of trust between members to ensure successful collaboration, engendered by professionalism, confidentiality and honesty
  - Support the formulation of clear action plans with achievable milestones
  - Working to identify best practice models and evaluating the success of their incorporation into other settings
  - Partner schools may undertake peer enquiry, lesson studies, audits and reviews of provision; by request from a school or setting

Reading First Partnership is driven by the principles of effective research practice and this will be supported by the Institute of Education at Reading University

## **2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1 For Reading Borough Council to continue in its full support of the Reading First Partnership and be an active member of the aforesaid partnership**
- 2.2 To hold to account the outcomes and effectiveness of actions within the Reading First Partnership and work collaboratively through its officers**

## **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The aims of Reading First Partnership are embedded within the aims and ambitions of Reading Borough Council in relation to ensuring that all schools and academies are good or better by 2018**
- 3.2 Reading Borough Council has identified that closing the gaps in achievement for our most vulnerable children and young people is a main focus and this is reflected within the aims of the Aspirational Task Group**

## **4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

Reading Priority: Narrowing the Gap

- 4.1 A local priority for Reading has been to narrow the outcome gap for three particular groups of pupils: those eligible for Free School Meals; those with Special Educational Needs; and those from ethnic groups that are doing less well than the average in Reading.**
- 4.2 Reading First Partnership will contribute to these aims through their work within the Aspiration Task Group**

## **5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Reading First Partnership will focus on key gaps within the results for those children in Reading to ensure that each group and setting is supported so that every child receives an appropriate education

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are financial implications for schools, academies and nurseries as outlined in 1.7; this will need to be agreed through the respective Governing Bodies
- 7.2 Reading Borough Council is supporting the development of Reading First Partnership initially through the School Improvement Budget and this has already been accounted for this financial year

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers for this report