

Select Committee on Children's Services – 23 March 2011

Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services

Update Report on the Pensnett Education Campus

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Select Committee of the progress of the students at the Pensnett Campus.

Background

Teaching and Learning:

2. The teaching and learning continues to provide a sound basis for student improvement. Their work in the classrooms is well supported by student support staff and a range of Advanced Skills Teachers.
3. Performance Management continues to be carried out under the published systems and is being regularly monitored by the Local Authority consultant attached to the school. Two senior members of staff have recently been supported through their Threshold applications.
4. As members will be aware, all Staff at Pensnett Education Campus (PEC) are currently working under Local Authority 1 Year contracts. The work to begin the process of staffing reductions for next year (September 2011-August 2012) has already begun, alongside considerations for those staff who have applied for Voluntary Redundancy. This document is being supported by close consultation with the relevant teacher unions and a variety of meetings offered to staff to look at concerns. Although this set of arrangements is being handled with sensitivity, it will result in a number of staff not having their contracts renewed. There are further arrangements in place to ensure that those staff most affected will be guided through the redeployment process on an individual basis. Although there might be some turbulence following the appointments, this early move to complete appointments will be reassuring to parents and students alike.
5. The school continues to be well resourced. Plans are being put in place to reduce a number of costs for next academic year.

Student Behaviour:

6. The behaviour of students continues to be good.

Other Matters:

7. Meetings continue with staff from the Short Stay School Service. A meeting to draw together the two institutions is planned for March. Members of the Short Stay School Management Committee will visit Pensnett Education Campus to familiarise themselves with the site and buildings.
8. A meeting of the parent group took place on Wednesday 16 February. The following issues were discussed:
 - Continuing satisfaction with the current circumstances.
 - Parental support for the early staffing arrangements. With concern for teachers that will not have a post.
 - Acceptance that the site can have joint use. They were happy for Head of Campus to monitor this use to ensure no disruption to Pensnett students.
 - Pleased to hear that the Student Council have reported back that students feel safe and happy at Pensnett.
 - Some concern expressed regarding the viability of school meals next year.
 - Pleased to note that enrichment activities/opportunities have been maintained and in many cases extended.
9. The discussions to 'mothball' some of the classrooms and site continue.
10. At time of writing, the staff and students continue to make the most of what is on offer at Pensnett Education Campus.

Progress of former Pensnett pupils now attending other local school's

11. The following information relates to those students who left Pensnett in July 2010 and are now being educated in other Dudley schools.
12. 43 students are registered at three other Dudley Secondary Schools
 - The majority have attendances above the Government 92% floor target, those whose attendance falls below that figure are being challenged to improve.
 - The overwhelming majority have a range of positive scores for 'attitude to learning' and have made the most of the new opportunities available. Some students have represented their new schools and houses in external sporting competitions.
 - There is much evidence that the students are being well supported by their parents.
 - Although it is difficult to measure the achievement levels for these students currently; from data, it is clear that over 65% are currently working at or above

target levels for English Maths and Science. Many at level 6's and some at level 7.

Finance

13. Budget has been identified in 2010/11 financial year to fund the operational costs of running the Pensnett Campus from September 2010. Current projections indicate that the actual costs for 2010/11 will be within the budget available. This will continue to be monitored.
14. The operational funding for Pensnett Campus, together with all Dudley schools and other school services, is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Law

15. This report relates to Cabinet approval for the discontinuance of Pensnett High School from 31st August 2010 in accordance with Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of the Schools) (England) Regulations 2007.

Equality Impact

16. This report takes into account the Local Authority's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Recommendation

17. The Select Committee Members are asked to note the work undertaken at the Pensnett Education Campus.



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