

Select Committee on Children's Services – 26 January 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 timetable continues to provide secure learning opportunities for students. The work of the Advanced Skills Teachers, in a variety of subjects, continues to promote good standards of teaching and learning. Performance Management is being carried out under the published systems and is being regularly monitored by the local authority consultant attached to the school.
3. Staff are currently working under local authority 1 Year contracts. There has been limited turbulence caused by staff applying for posts outside the school, so far this term no staff have been successful in securing appointments.
4. The work to begin the process of staffing reductions for next year (September 2011-August 2012) has already begun. With the agreement of the staff body as a whole, a paper outlining the new staffing structure will be given to staff before Christmas and arrangements for interviews and eventual appointments will be completed during January. This will give some additional security to some staff and a more realistic timescale to others, and will also be comforting to parents and students.
5. The whole process will be done with the agreement of the various unions and professional associations.

Student Progress:

6. The first data review to establish the progress of students took place on 15 October. Details are as follows:
7. Year 11: students are progressing well with GCSE subjects. Currently 24 students are on track to achieve 5+A - C grades including Maths and English. This represents 30% of cohort. Additional students are being targeted for support. Success with these students could raise the cohort percentage to between 32% and 39%. No students are currently expected to achieve zero qualifications.
8. Year 10 students started their Option Subjects in September. An initial data review indicates the potential of 30% of students will achieve 5+A-C including Maths & English. Parents Evenings and reports maintain appropriate communications with parents and careers relating to student progress. However, in addition, staff are making contact with individual parents on a regular basis as the need demands. The next data review will take place on 7 January 2011.
9. Whilst this data does not currently guarantee an outcome above the government target of 30%, there are a variety of arrangements in place to target students to achieve their true potential, through set changes, and 1 to 1 tuition and specialist intervention groups, initially in Maths and English but also into other subjects.
10. It is very important to note that examination entries for all Pensnett Education Campus students will be conducted under the existing school arrangements leading to students sitting their final examinations on the Pensnett site as normal, and also having 'Pensnett Education Campus' on their certificates.

Student attendance figures for October are:

Year 11	91.3%
Year 10	94.6%

Student Behaviour:

11. The behaviour of students continues to be good. A significant reduction in the number of recorded incidents of poor behaviour has been noted and as a result there has been a dramatic reduction in fixed term exclusions. There have been no permanent exclusions to date.
12. The school continues to work hard with students to ensure they benefit from all that is there for their advancement. The student common room continues to be used sensibly.
13. Observations of student behaviour give a very positive picture of students who understand the circumstances in which they work. Information from the recent

meeting with parents was also positive about students wishing to be at school and making the most of their opportunities.

Other Matters:

- Meetings continue with staff from the Short Stay School Service to draw the two systems together. A document has been produced to describe the pathways of accountability. The Instruments of Governance are currently being amended.
- The discussions to 'mothball' some of the classrooms continue.
- The first meeting of the Parent Group took place just after half term. This group will be a very important yardstick about how the school is making progress.

Issues discussed included:

- *Year to date:* Parents were very positive and expressed their thanks for the many arrangements that had been put in place for teaching and subject support. Parental requests for some interventions to take place at different times and venues to protect subject specialist teaching have now been met.
- *Student Council matters:* Parents welcomed the opportunities that were on offer for students (Common Rooms, lunchtime clubs, breakfast clubs, after school clubs, Saturday schools, student council and various trips and visits.) Indeed parents said that these facilities should be communicated more widely so that parents could encourage greater participation.
- *Staffing for next year:* Parents were encouraged by the arrangements being put in place to organise staffing for next year; although they did express concern that inevitably some staff would find jobs elsewhere. They felt that the inevitable impact that this would have on teaching and learning would be detrimental. They have asked that the Local Authority do everything in its power to maintain the best possible teaching circumstances until the last of the students leave.
- *General issues:* Parents commented that students were happy with the current arrangements, that they were keen to come to school and had not expressed any concerns.
- It is pleasing to note that students collected £250 for their Children In Need Appeal, and that they sent 77 Christmas Shoe Boxes for Needy Children to the local church.

- At time of writing, the staff and students continue to make the most of the Pensnett Education Campus educational offer.

Finance

14. 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.
15. The operational funding for Pensnett Campus, together with all Dudley schools and other school services, is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and as yet, the DSG funding for 2011/12 has not been finalised.

Law


16. 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

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

Recommendation

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



.....
Jane Porter
Acting Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Dave Perrett
Telephone: 01384 814250
Dave.perrett@dudley.gov.uk

In consultation with: Paul Taylor - Head of Campus
Trevor Johnson - Education Consultant