

Inclusion in Education Scrutiny Review Action Plan

Recommendation		Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive?	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update
R1	(a) Blackpool's In-Year Admissions process should be reviewed by the School Admissions team as a matter of urgency.	Agreed	Yes	Jan 2021	Paul Turner	This has been reviewed and it meets the nationally agreed requirements of the school admissions code.
	(b) Academies should maintain clear and positive lines of communication with parents and make efforts to discourage requests for in-year transfers wherever possible. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion should closely monitor all in-year transfers and report any concerns to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.	Agreed	Yes	Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	This has been actively happening since September. The numbers of in-year moves have reduced significantly, although this may be because of Covid as well as action on behalf of the Council and partners.

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	(c) Appropriate training and guidance should be provided to all Academy staff who receive enquiries about admissions to ensure correct and appropriate advice is offered to parents. Academies should maintain records of all training undertaken, with the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion undertaking annual checks of training records.	Partly agreed – the Council has no legal jurisdiction over the Academies but will work closely with them to clarify admissions guidance and to act in an advisory role.	Yes	Update Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	This has not yet been offered due to the Covid crisis and demands upon people's time.

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	(d) Admission meetings with parents and start dates for new pupils should be provided by Academies within timeframes agreed with the Council to avoid lengthy delays and prolonged gaps in a pupil's education provision. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion should closely monitor admission meeting timeframes and pupil start dates and report any concerns to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.	Agreed, however national consultation on proposed changes to the School Admissions Code is currently ongoing and anticipated to be completed by January 2021. These changes will impact implementation of the recommendation but can be incorporated into guidance provided to Academies.	Yes	Update Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing. Timeliness of admissions is very good in Blackpool, currently.
	(e) More prescriptive admissions procedures should be reintroduced by the Council's Admissions Team, with a unified procedure agreed with the Academies and introduced across the trusts. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion should lead on the coordination and implementation of the admission procedures.	Partly agreed – whilst supportive of this recommendation, the Council lacks legal jurisdiction but will seek to standardise admissions procedures across the Academies as far as possible within its advisory role.	Yes	Update Jan 2021	Paul Turner	Outside of our scope as we are not the admissions authority for the Academy Trusts operating in Blackpool.

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R2	Wider communication and publication of the continued pursuit of court proceedings should be implemented by Academies to discourage Elective Home Education applications in cases where non-attendance sanctions are being pursued. Academy Principals and Headteachers should report their implemented measures to the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion.	Partly agreed – the Council would advise discouragement of EHE only in cases where provision has been identified as being unsatisfactory and can act in its advisory role to Academies to suggest a tightening up of their procedures.	Yes	Update Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing. Families that have opted for Elective Home Education due to the Covid-19 pandemic are being encouraged to return to school.
R3	The appeals process should be clearly explained to parents via the provision of a simple information leaflet clearly explaining the process, to be produced by the Council's Admissions Team and issued by Academies.	Agreed	Yes	Nov 2020	Paul Turner	Appeals information is now clearly outlined and accessible to parents via the Council's website and as such is now easier for parents to access and navigate.

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R4	The Council should ensure that Fair Access Process meetings should return to their previous format whereby Headteachers were present and involved in the process. Commitment to attend from Academies would be required in order to allow fair and transparent administration of the allocation of places. The Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion to report back to the Committee on the implementation of the recommendation within twelve months.	Partly agreed – Academies have ultimate control over their own processes but the Council is supportive in putting the recommendation to the Academy Chief Executives and Headteachers for implementation.	Yes	Update April 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing. Representatives have again stated that they wish for the In Year Process to remain as it is, currently.
R5	(a) To address the issue of each Academy operating its own appeals process, the whole system should be reviewed and brought into alignment across the Academies. This would be coordinated by the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion in conjunction with the trusts.	Not accepted. The appeals process is managed individually by each Academy and as such the Council is unable to enforce alignment across the Academies as a whole.	No		Paul Turner	Outside of our control.
	(b) Appeal letters to parents should be more user-friendly and all Academies should use the same format. This would be coordinated and approved by the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion.	Partly agreed – the Council is supportive of the recommendation and will work with Academy Trusts to advise on the format of appeal letters.	Yes	Update Jan 2021	Paul Turner	Ongoing.

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Recommendation		Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive?	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update
R6	That the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion work with all academies to identify the support required within each school for pupils in need of mental health provision, for example in the form of counselling sessions from appropriately trained specialists. Once the support required had been identified, to work with the academies to put that provision in place and report back to the Committee on progress in approximately twelve months.	Agreed		Nov 2020	Paul Turner	A full time equivalent counsellor, based at Educational Diversity is now available to provide Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to all schools. The service includes a free four week placement on referral through the Athena panel. Mr Turner agreed to report back to the Committee on the impact of the counselling service in twelve months' time.
R7	To request that Academies consider the reintroduction of Council representation on their Local Governing Bodies in order to allow valuable input from elected Councillors and an additional link with the Local Authority.	Agreed – the Council will issue the request to Academies.	Yes	Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing.

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Recommendation		Cabinet Member's Comments	Rec Accepted by Executive?	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	Committee Update
R8	A Blackpool Schools' Pledge should be created by the Council's Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion, in conjunction with Academy Principals and Headteachers, with the joint aim of providing timely and appropriate school places for all Blackpool secondary pupils. All Academy Headteachers should be encouraged to sign up to and adhere to the Pledge. The Pledge should be reviewed annually with the Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion reporting any compliance issues to the Committee.	Agreed – this can be incorporated into the launch of the 'Ten Year Education Strategy.'	Yes	Jan 2021	Paul Turner Academy Heads	Ongoing.