

**Oxford Strategic Partnership
Education Summit
Tuesday 13th October 2020**

Draft meeting notes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Baroness Royall, Chair of the Oxford Strategic Partnership welcomed the participants. See attached participant list

2. Oxford City School readiness and support

Kevin Gordon, Corporate Director of Children's Services, Oxfordshire County Council, opened up the Supporting Schools in Oxford presentation (see presentation attached).

Hayley Good, Deputy Director Education talked about post-lockdown return to school progress.

- Daily attendance of 95.3% primary and 91.2% secondary above national average of 87.9%

Maria Godfrey, Head of Early Help highlighted the support for pupils through the Locality Community Support Service and the Oxford City Community Impact Zone.

- Impact on children of issues within some families (e.g. Substance abuse) exacerbated during lockdown
- Early Help Network established involving all agencies – 172 children helped so far

Kim James, Head of Learning & School Improvement, outlined the support the County Council is providing School Leaders.

- Staff training offered to all schools in the city and Head Teacher group set up, with focus on boosting attendance
- Targeted additional support for disadvantaged pupils

Dame Kate Dethridge, Regional Schools Commissioner, South Central England, set out her perspective on Oxford schools. Dame Kate spoke about the pre-COVID focus on failing schools in the city, helping successful Academy Trusts to grow and helping schools to set up Academy Trusts.

- Since COVID working more intensively with local authorities - initially with a focus on school closure, then on how vulnerable children were supported with home learning, and then working on the reopening of schools.
- Holding Academy Trusts to account has become more challenging without the usual set of attainment and progress pupil data. However, conscious of what Trust and school leaders have gone through and how to engage with them in a way that doesn't put them under more pressure.
- National and local increase in elective home education. This potentially impacts school budgets linked to the no. of children on the roll. This month's school census show the scale of financial impact.

Anne-Marie Canning, Chair of Bradford Education Opportunity Area, and CEO of The Brilliant Club, gave a presentation on place-based approaches to improve children's life chance and her role in Bradford to improve educational attainment there.

- UK Opportunity Areas were identified using the Social Mobility Index to help address the attainment gap between disadvantaged and other children. Bradford is behind the national average in nearly every single measurement. Over 20,000 children are in schools that require improvement (across 25 different schools).
- A city wide admissions study was commissioned which brought together health and education data which led to findings such as 300 children who couldn't read as they did not have the right/any glasses, which have now been provided. A Centre for Applied Data was also created.
- Money was not most important aspect of the programme, but partnership working for example with large corporate businesses. Through this they activated local residents and business and when COVID hit they responded strongly. This place-based approaches draws on the learning from Harlem Children's Zone, and we're now seeing them across the UK (Feltham, Child friendly Leeds, and being established in east Oxford with the Community Impact Zone).

Discussion

The following points were noted in the discussion that followed:

Professor Mary Wild, Head of School of Education, Oxford Brookes University:

The universities seem quite central to Opportunity Areas - we can and should work more closely together. Would support bidding to Government for opportunity area in Oxford.

Paul James, Chief Executive, River Learning Trust (MAT): Oxford can benefit from learning from other areas of the country that are doing better than us around the attainment gap and linking with the work that Anne-Marie does - would be very keen to get involved. However, we shouldn't let an application to Government for an Opportunity Area slow down short-term activity. We need to get ball rolling with good practice and place-based approaches sooner rather than later.

Adrian Sell, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Community Foundation: digital exclusion has come up as really big issue across Oxfordshire and OCF are in discussions with Nominet and others about bringing partnership together to create a refurbishment pipeline of computers. Will also be looking for data providers to put data in pot. Thinks it's a realistic ambition to get everyone online in next 5 years or so. Agree that Schools should be first priority area for support with equipment. Please contact me if you are interested - adrian@oxfordshire.org

Donations of IT equipment from colleges could be part of the refurbishment pipeline as well - a ten year old laptop refurbished to be a Chromebook is faster than most new Chromebooks so old kit can be hugely valuable.

Baroness Royall: yes, we can speak to all colleges as well as the wider university

Bernard Grenville-Jones, Executive Director, Activate Learning (Education Trust): Can the initiative to provide laptops and improve connectivity for school children also cover Further Education colleges. There is also potential for

colleges to do some of the refurbishment as part of developing skills for their students.

Hannah Rolley, Head of Access, Trinity College: We can link with the other colleges around the possibility of donating laptops to Oxford Community Foundation's programme.

Cllr Susan Brown, Leader of Oxford City Council: We should not just think about computers for disadvantaged children, but also access to broadband and to space in which to learn. For example disadvantaged students were, pre-Covid, able to use space and wifi at Oxford Brookes. That has stopped due to Covid which is a concern. Anne-Marie talked about the importance of schools' partnerships with local universities and I think we do need to pursue this more actively in Oxford. We need to map more effectively the help that is already available for schools and also deploy it more strategically. How can we co-ordinate this most effectively?

Dame Hilary Boulding, Principal Trinity College: Trinity is the Schools and Outreach Programme link college within Oxford University for Oxfordshire schools. The entire programme is now online, and reaching out to schools who have not engaged in the past – though recognise we could do more to connect. Head of Access is Hannah Rolley. We need to convene people across Oxford University to identify what is already being offered in support of Oxford schools and pupils and what additional could be done – starting with a mapping exercise.

Hannah Rolley, Head of Access, Trinity College: The offering begins at primary school level and extends to teacher training and working with the teachers as champions of raising expectations of children. Oxford University works with schools in the Opportunity Areas in the north of England. There are some emerging projects around teacher CPD that Trinity College are involved in. Collaboration is an important vehicle of knowledge and skills exchange. We are now offering our core teacher programme online and this has vastly increased engagement (work/life balance). Alongside our engagement & support programme for teachers, and our pupil programme we want to prioritise stronger partnerships with Oxford city schools. A map of provision across 'themes' (eg teacher cpd) would be helpful

Contact me at: hannah.rolley@trinity.ox.ac.uk

Sally Andreou, Skills Hub Manager, OxLEP: Would be good to speak regarding how you can engage 'career leaders' in schools.

Zoe Barnes, Senior Teacher, St Gregory the Great School: St Greg's would like to hear your ideas. Teaching and Learning Leader for CPD and staff training is: Kate McCabe k.mccabe@dbmac.org.uk

Paul James: River Learning Trust schools would be very keen to strengthen links email address is pjames@riverlearningtrust.org

Cllr Marie Tidball, Cabinet Member for Supporting Local Communities, Oxford City Council: We should push for an Opportunity Area for the city. We recognise there is no scheme to apply to right now, but we should start the lobby and look at the strands of work applied in Bradford to see if there are things that could be taken forwards in the meantime.

The countywide Health and Wellbeing Board has previously identified around 60 areas for action that impact on children's development. It is worth revisiting these with some of our health colleagues.

Kevin Gordon: The real value of these sessions it helps all connect dots between initiatives. However should guard against another set of governance. When we talk about tackling issues now it's about us being fleet of foot.

Sara Fernandez, CEO, Oxford Hub: We have in place the governance to direct place-based interventions within Oxford – initially through the established Community Impact Zone (CIZ). This operates under similar principles to the Harlem Children's Zone and that in West London, though currently at a much smaller scale due to resources. We would like to invite all partners to get involved – as more local resources are needed to help reach the scale of other initiatives.

Ian Brooke, Head of Community Services, Oxford City Council: The CIZ is a great example of whole system working, where the City Council, County Council, TVP and the Hub have worked collectively taking an insight led approach that looks at the whole child, families and the wider environment. It's been great how this "collective impact" approach has levered in funds and resources into the city, investing time into relationships and really understanding the local landscape has been key.

Nadeem Murtuja, Director of Communities and Customers, Oxford City Council: It is really important that disadvantaged children and families can share their lived experiences and insights from their perspective, with policy and decision makers. Particularly if we are to understand barriers better and to what it truly means to "belong".

Margaret Madden, Education Specialist, Oxford Civic Society: We need to recognise the specific nature of Oxford. There needs to be mapping of issues if those who are underperforming are to be genuinely helped and supported. For example support outside of education, such as sport or music. Partnering schools and the Universities and colleges would help raise the expectations of children. Before lockdown I met young people from Blackbird Leys at a debate and it was their first time in the city centre, and first time in a formal debate.

Paul James: The universities provide a lot of NQTs in Oxfordshire, and the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance focuses on developing leaders within the Oxfordshire schools system. It would be useful to coordinate some of the information about the challenges re attainment gap in Oxford schools into the training provided to trainees who end up in Oxfordshire schools. How could the universities do more to support the school based education system?

Professor Trevor Mutton, Director of Professional Programmes and Director of the Oxford Education Deanery, University of Oxford: We need to take a wider view of the teaching profession and equip teachers with skills to adapt to pupil learning needs. Often results comes down to quality of teaching which is "a hidden thing". Oxford University Education Department has previously been involved in leadership work in this area and has a large Excluded lives interdisciplinary research project as well as several reports about school exclusions and other wide ranging issues which could hopefully feed in.

Mary Wild: Mentoring of teaching staff is important. There is competition between the universities' education departments, and among schools for teachers – “the elephant in the room” – we should seek to collaborate around the training package we deliver based on a strategic look at training needs across the region.

Bernard Grenville-Jones, Executive Director, Activate Learning (Education Trust): Our organisation already puts a focus on BAME and those most disadvantaged - it is important to get a real perspective of work from these points of view. Could connect teachers, leaders, managers, with people in the community to gain this perspective?

It is often challenging for schools to release teachers for CPD. Can we put together a pot of money to meet the costs of backfilling teachers?

Zoe Barnes, Senior Teacher, St Gregory the Great School: The laptop scheme could make a big difference as St Greg's even some staff members are struggling with access to computers. The school *does* already have connections with the universities, however it would be good to strengthen these as this is essential in moving staff and students forward. We would also very much like to hear about opportunities for staff CPD opportunities and further outreach work.

Katherine Ryan, Chair of the Oxfordshire Strategic Schools Partnership and Head Teacher of Matthew Arnold School: There is a lot of work going on but not a clear picture of what's happening across the piece. The Oxfordshire Strategic Schools Partnership has been useful forum to share information, collaboration and following up on actions – but it doesn't the out of school elements.

Cllr Marie Tidball: Mapping what is done across the wider system for children is important – however the Children Trust and Health & Wellbeing Boards already have access to the key data. What to target our work on addressing the attainment gap in schools.

3. Skills and school leavers

The discussion on skills and school leavers was curtailed due to time pressures however the following discussion points were noted.

Sally Andreou, Skills Hub Manager, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP):

- There is a challenge around young people who are leaving school who don't know about jobs and soft skills. OxLEP is passionate about supporting young people as a high proportion of those under 25 had experienced being out of work. Likely to be exacerbated by the COVID pandemic situation.
- OxLEP is focusing on the Kickstart work placements scheme and wants to support young person to utilise skills they've learned over their 6 month placement. A challenge to maintain a young person's morale when they come off Kickstart onto Universal Credit at the end of 6 months. Mental health problems are also highest young adults. Is there more we can do locally in Oxford – signposting young people to organisations to help them?
- Careers advisors need to understand the oxford labour market and OxLEP have developed a new web tool to help that process. Also considering improving the way local parents are informed about jobs for their children. Employers also need guidance on navigating the Government-back employment schemes.

- OxLEP has been commissioned to write local skills report which will be submitted by end of the year. This report will be reviewed and updated every year alongside engagement with employers.

Bernard Grenville-Jones: There is an opportunity to use this gathering of senior people as a catalyst for change in the city. His headline message was the need to change thinking about the vocational pathway in relation to the academic pathway – to achieve ‘parity of esteem’. There needs to be recognition that a young person may excel in English and maths, and do T levels, and then want to university. But most Russell Group universities do not accept T-levels in the same way as A levels in their entrance criteria.

Sara Fernandez: We are in discussion with City Council about it taking the role as a Kickstarter intermediary, along with how we can work together to support young people to enter the charity sector in particular. This is a great opportunity to diversify the charity sector in Oxford as part of the Charity So White Movement, and a good alternative to year of service arrangements - however young people need to be really well supported to graduate from 6 months of kickstart into really good social impact careers.

Sally Andreou: Could we work with newly trained teachers on enabling them to understand the Oxford Labour Market and career progression after school?

4. Next steps

The following actions were suggested;

- Develop a lobby for an Education Opportunity Area in the city – suggest OSP takes this forward
- Look at learnings from Bradford and other Opportunity Areas to see if there are measures that could be run anyway (point made by Paul James)
- Computers for schools + wider community – Oxfordshire Community Foundation is offering to take a lead (Adrian Sell)
- Oxford University Access programme – wider promotion – linking through Trinity. Plus Somerville College/New College initiatives to link with schools and children in the city
- Skills and mentoring for teaching staff – suggestion to pool expertise – Brookes/Oxford/Oxfordshire Teaching Schools/County (suggested by Mary Wild and Paul James). With potential to create a bigger funding pot to help meet costs of backfill in schools etc (Suggested by Bernard Grenville-Jones)
- Invitation to wider involvement in Community Impact Zone in east of the city (call by Sara Fernandez – but also links with what Maria Godfrey of County Council was saying)
- Proposal from Jeremy Long: Set up a working group (comprising a manageable number, and of the most effective participants) to map more of what is going on, but then looking at how to better communicate this, and tackle whatever emerges as critical gaps?