

Putting the Learner First

Northumberland schools
reorganisation newsletter.

No 2. July 2005

Progress with school discussions

Blyth, Cramlington, Seaton Valley

In the first PLF Re-organisation Newsletter last May, I informed you that you would be kept up to date with progress on the discussions on school re-organisation within the first six school partnerships in the process.

The first step in the discussions has now been completed in the Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley Partnerships. Over the past two months, the PLF team at County Hall have been meeting with Head Teachers, Chairs of Governors, Learning and Skills Council Representatives, local County Council members and representatives from the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses. The purpose of these meetings was to begin to share information and identify issues using the proposed models for school organisation published in the 'Strategic Plan for Provision of Education in Northumberland', published in November 2004. Alternative models within the two-tier framework were explored as well as other issues such as size of schools and catchment areas. As a result of these discussions, draft models have been developed for school organisation in the Blyth, Cramlington and Seaton Valley partnerships to be taken forward to the second round of discussions. There is no absolute consensus in any Partnership but the Models have taken account of issues raised with the PLF team and are the current "best match" to aspirations.

I have prepared a report for the Council Executive detailing the outcomes of this initial phase of discussions, with a request that we proceed to the next round of discussions. You can read my full report and see the draft models proposed by the Cramlington, Blyth and Seaton Valley Partnerships on the Putting the Learner First website at [HYPERLINK http://northumberland/learning/documents.asp](http://northumberland/learning/documents.asp) or at your local library. The Council Executive will decide whether or not to give permission to move to the next round of discussions, and the outcome of the meeting on 25th July 2005 will be reported in a newsletter in the Autumn Term.

Ashington, Hirst, Alnwick

The first round of discussions has taken place in the Ashington, Hirst and Alnwick partnerships and was completed on 11th July 2005. I will be reporting on the findings of these discussions to the Council Executive in the Autumn Term 2005, asking for permission to proceed to the second round of discussions in Ashington, Hirst and Alnwick partnerships on the basis of the draft models that will emerge.

The Roman Catholic Partnership will undertake its own county-wide re-organisation but this will be in partnership with the County Council. The recently appointed Director of Education for the RC Diocese will take up post in September.

Forthcoming Discussions

The second round of discussions in all six partnerships will widen to involve parents of children in the relevant school partnerships, governors, staff and early years representatives as well as those involved in the first round mentioned above. These groups will have the opportunity to review the draft model relating to their partnership and to influence the final model. However, parents and staff will have different perspectives about the re-organisation to a two-tier system of education and in order to ensure that enough time is allowed to discuss all viewpoints, staff working in the relevant partnerships will be consulted separately.

After the second round of discussions have taken place in your school partnership, a second report will be prepared for the Council Executive. This report will firm-up the proposed model for re-organisation within the partnership, taking into account the views and suggestions of parents, staff, governors and early years representatives and will request permission to proceed to the third and final step in the discussions, which is the formal consultation.

Revised Timetable

In my last newsletter, I set out an indicative timetable for discussions on re-organisation in the first six partnerships. A number of issues have become apparent during the first round of discussions in the first three partnerships and as a result I have proposed changes to the timetable in my report to the Council Executive of July 25th 2005. If approved, the changes to the timings of the second and third rounds of discussions in certain partnerships will be as given in the timetable below. The revisions to the timetable for Stage 2 Discussions will not affect the implementation dates of the change to a two-tier structure for any of the partnerships involved.

You will receive an invitation to take part in the second round of discussions in your partnership closer to the time they are due to take place. In the case of parents whose children attend a school within the Cramlington partnership, or if you are a member of staff at one of the schools there, you will receive an invitation to the second round of discussions before the end of the summer term.

Jackie Strong
Programme Director
Putting the Learner First
Northumberland County Council

Stage 2 - Discussion on school models Revised Timetable

Partnership	First Round	Second Round	Third Round	Implementation
Cramlington	May/Jun 2005	September 2005	Nov/Dec 2005	2007
Blyth	May/Jun 2005	Mar/Apr 2006	Sept/Oct 2006	2008
Hirst	Jun/Jul 2005	Mar/Apr 2006	Sept/Oct 2006	2009
Ashington	Jun/Jul 2005	Mar/Apr 2006	Sept/Oct 2006	2009
Seaton Valley	May/Jun 2005	Nov/Dec 2006	April/May 2007	2009
Alnwick	Jun/Jul 2005	Nov/Dec 2006	April/May 2007	2009

Further information

If you require more information on any of the points raised within this newsletter, you can contact the PLF team at [HYPERLINK
mailto:learnerfirst@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:learnerfirst@northumberland.gov.uk)
learnerfirst@northumberland.gov.uk or visit our website at [HYPERLINK
http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/learning](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/learning)
www.northumberland.gov.uk/learning.

Alternatively, you can write to:
Putting the Learner First Team,
Children's Services Directorate,
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