

ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

17 October 2019

The Achieving for Children (AfC) Board of Directors met on 17 October 2019. The following substantive items were considered:

Managing Director's Report

The Board noted that the recruitment process is underway for a joint DCS for Richmond and Kingston. RBWM reported that Ofsted visited to undertake a re-inspection on 16 October and reported that 6 of the 8 actions were no longer areas for concern. A routine monitoring visit will take place in 6 months. In partnership with a local university and another London borough AfC have been awarded a grant which will enable the Virtual School to support a number of young people aged 11-14 across AfC's three boroughs by developing personalised support when entering care.

Independent Fostering Agency

It was reported to the Board that the Independent Fostering Agency was registered in August 2018. In its recent inspection in September 2019, the IFA received a Good rating by Ofsted and is the first local authority to convert to an IFA to receive a Good rating.

Both areas for improvement in the report were already known to the service and a consultant has been appointed to address these.

A separate application for Maidenhead has been made to be an arm of the IFA and, as such, will have a separate inspection.

Education Services Annual Report

Headline data from the report for Kingston and Richmond shows that KS4 progress 8 is still strong in Kingston with Richmond improved on last year. Richmond's primary achievement is very good. Work is taking place to continue to improve attainment for pupils with SEND and/or pupil premium.

The data in RBWM represents improvement across the borough in general but the middle school system makes data difficult to compare. Particular focus at the moment includes writing at primary level, the pupil premium gap and continuing to improve absence rates.

Annual Workforce Report

The Board noted that social work posts are continuing to prove difficult to recruit to and there are a number of vacancies. The application process has been changed in order to simplify things. Discussions and a number of activities are taking place to look at what can be done to improve retention of staff to reduce the number of agency staff and the associated costs. In Richmond and Kingston, the biggest drivers are in social care and SEN followed by Early Help. In RBWM the majority are in social care but most of these agency covered posts are now out to advert.