

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

5th October 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

THE PUPIL ATTITUDE TO SCHOOL AND SELF TOOL FOR BIP SCHOOLS

Executive Summary

- 1.0 This report is a requirement of the Council's Constitution with regard to the contract procedure rules in respect of sole suppliers. It relates to the purchase, using DfES grant funding, of a commercial assessment tool and data evaluation contracts, called P.A.S.S, for a three year period, at the cost of £55,020.00. Cabinet is asked to note this transaction.
- 1.2 P.A.S.S is an electronic rating scale that provides a profile of children's perceived capabilities, motivation and general preparedness for learning.

Background

- 2.0 BIP schools identified that children's perceived capabilities, motivation and general preparedness for learning are useful predictors of their school success, attendance, behaviour and later life opportunities; no standardised tool is available locally to gauge these predictors. From a 'raising standards' perspective, HMI are now recognising the decisive role that such learner attitudes can have. The new Ofsted framework for school inspection emphasises the key role that student attitudes plays in school improvement. The DfES advises that pupil attitudes need to be taken into account in the schools Self Evaluation Framework and The National College for School Leadership emphasises learner self-esteem, self-knowledge and motivation as key pupil targets.
- 2.1 In order to measure these pupil attributes a number of commercial tools advised by the DfES were considered by a HeadTeacher working party. From this process two products were discussed at a BIP Management Board meeting, a subgroup of the Excellence in Cities Partnership and subsequently presented to the BIP Head Teacher Cluster Group. During this developmental process it became apparent that only one product was able to meet the requirements, the P.A.S.S system. DfES grant funding for the BIP initiative was therefore allocated to the purchase of the system for three years from 2005-2006 to 2007-2008. The three year period allows the schools to measure pupil progress and pupil development as they move through the school. There is also the potential for the system to be extended for use by other schools.

Key Functions of P.A.S.S

- 3.0 P.A.S.S is an electronic rating scale that provides a profile of student's self-regard, perceived capabilities, perseverance, motivation, general work ethic, attitudes to teachers, their school and attendance, preparedness for learning and response to the curriculum. Pupils complete a 50 question profile online from which each individual's pupils scores are compared against rigorous national benchmarks. Data is analysed and reported back to schools and the Local Authority in four categories; individual pupil assessment, classroom groups, learner climate and attitude change.

- 3.1 Assessment of individual pupil's attitudes helps provide a sound basis for baselining individual pupils, value added follow up evaluation, target setting and action planning. This level of data has shown to be invaluable for schools and Local Authorities where pupil mobility can be an ongoing problem.
- 3.2 Classroom group analysis provides a traffic light system to identify pupils 'at risk' in groups. Large pupil cohorts can be simultaneously viewed to identify individuals and classroom issues in terms of high risk, medium risk and low risk. Such data provides an additional layer of interpretation and is well suited to an evidence-based exploration of group issues, for example, classroom management, group dynamics and pastoral concerns.
- 3.3 Combining individual pupil profiles generates powerful measures of an overall organisations learner climate. Data can be broken down to investigate attitude differences in terms of gender, ethnicity and year group.
- 3.4 Whole school and learner climate measurements are useful for Self Evaluation submissions and school development planning.
- 3.5 Longitudinal data analysis is also possible for schools undertaking regular annual P.A.S.S audits. This can show percentage change in attitudes, by factor, in terms of whole organisation, gender, ethnicity and year group. This can be used as a powerful tool to support the identification of good practice in terms of primary-secondary transition, value added progress and re-integration.
- 3.6 The tool is standardised against a large pool of pupils, providing a powerful basis for benchmarking. Reliability of the test is high; internal and test-re-test reliability for P.A.S.S are 0.9 and 0.85 respectively. The tool is similarly deemed valid in explaining success at school, predicting actual attendance behaviour, identifying fragile learners and providing screening data at whole school level. P.A.S.S is endorsed by the Learning Skills Council, BIP good practice guidelines for evaluation, Ofsted, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Natwest Bank, DfES EiC Consultant and the Director of the DfES innovations Unit.

Financial and Staffing Implications

- 4.0 DfES grant funding ring fenced for BIP has been used to purchase a three year licence for the P.A.S.S programme, to be used in all twenty-six BIP schools. The cost of the three year package is £55,020.00 which includes Wirral based training, online support and data interpretation.
- 4.1 There are no staffing implications relating to this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications, Human Rights Implications, Community Safety Implications

- 5.0 The main aims of implementing this tool are to have a positive impact on the achievement of young people, to reduce the level of internal truancy in schools, reduce overall exclusions levels and raise overall attendance levels. This has proved to have positive impacts for the community, schools and pupils.
- 5.1 Pupil's attitudes are an important predictor of pupil attainment, pupil conduct and behaviour, school attendance and life opportunities. Through identifying a pupil's attitude to themselves, their learning and the learning climate it is possible to identify of 'fragile

learners'. The tool can be used as an early warning instrument for predictive early identification of pupils at risk and it can highlight pupil's needs and screen for social emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Planning Implications, Local Member Support Implications, Local Agenda 21 Implications

- 6.0 Through raising standards of achievement, levels of attendance and improved behaviour, the young people of Wirral will have a better quality of life.
- 6.1 BIP covers four secondary, eighteen primary and four special schools spanning the wards of Rock Ferry, Bebbington, Leasowe and Moreton East, Upton, Bidston and St.James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Brombrough, Claughton, Wallasey, Seacombe and New Brighton.

Background Papers

- 7.0 BIP Management Board minutes, BIP HeadTeacher Cluster Group minutes, order and contract documentation.

Recommendations

- 8.0 Cabinet are requested to note the purchase of the P.A.S.S system as part of the DfES grant funded BIP Programme.