

REPORT TO:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee 25 November 2014
AGENDA ITEM:	6
SUBJECT:	Croydon's Academies
LEAD OFFICER:	Paul Greenhalgh, Executive Director, CFL
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Alison Flemming Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Learning
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Paul Greenhalgh, Executive Director, CFL

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item is contained in the sub-committee's agreed work programme.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To examine the performance of academies in Croydon

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1:1 Members are invited to examine the performance of academies in the borough. This report provides an overview of the types of schools within the London Borough of Croydon and recent developments in academisation in the borough. Appendix 1 provides data on the results of Ofsted inspections in the borough's academies. Appendix 2 provides information kindly supplied by the following academy trusts:
- Oasis Community Learning
 - The Synaptic Trust
 - The STEP Academy Trust

2. DETAIL

Croydon has a wide and rich range of schools: LA maintained, converter Academies, sponsored academies, church schools, foundation schools and free schools.

- **A converter academy** is a school judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding that has chosen to become an academy.
- **A sponsored academy** is a school that has become an academy under the trusteeship of a converter academy which has, in addition, been given

permission by the Secretary of State to sponsor other schools. Schools may have become sponsored through a need or desire to add additional leadership capacity, to work together or may have been directed by the DfE to become sponsored following an inadequate Ofsted judgement.

- **Free Schools** were introduced through the Academies Act 2010. They were intended to widen the opportunity to provide a school that could be established by teachers, parents, universities and voluntary or community groups. They are independent state funded and all ability and once established are essentially no different to an Academy. A Free School, like an Academy, is accountable directly to the DfE rather than the local council.
- All **state funded schools** are subject to Ofsted inspections. Whilst Academies and Free Schools do not need to teach the National Curriculum, unlike maintained schools, they must provide a broad and balanced curriculum, with a focus on mathematics, English and science.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to monitor standards in all schools, regardless of their designation. To this end, all schools are allocated a Link Adviser by the Council, a service which will continue to be commissioned following the establishment of the Mutual Trading Company in April 2015. In addition to this, all academies in Croydon commission additional services from the Council's school improvement and other teams, including teaching and learning reviews, education welfare, subject consultancy, HR support, governor services and continuing professional development.

The Council also invites Academies to become involved in other ways in the wider educational landscape within the LA. For example, Academy head teachers are amongst the members of the Head Teacher Advisory Group who, amongst other things, work with LA officers to agree borough-wide priorities for improvement in order for all to work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for Croydon's children and young people. (The STEP Academy Trust and The Synaptic Trust are amongst these). Academy head teachers and governors are also represented on Schools Forum (the Chair of Schools Forum is an Academy head), the Education Committee of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board and the Shadow Board of the Mutual Trading Company. All head teachers are members of Croydon Head Teacher Association, including Academy head teachers. Primary head teachers attend regular Head Teacher Breakfast Briefings which are hosted at two of our Academies, Forest Academy (part of the Synaptic Trust) and Wolsey Junior Academy (part of the STEP Academy Trust).

The Local Authority has taken a proactive approach to working with academies to provide school to school support, using the capacity of the borough's good and outstanding schools to increase the pace of change in those schools that are more vulnerable. There is general agreement that all schools in Croydon, regardless of their designation, work together to ensure the best outcomes of Croydon's children. For example, REAch2 have, on two occasions, agreed to assume responsibility for a school prior to academy conversion. Currently the Synaptic Trust are currently providing consultant support for teaching and learning to Parish Church Junior School, Chipstead Valley Primary School and Fairchildes Primary School both agreed to convert to academy status, in part to be able to sponsor

more vulnerable schools. This is not an exhaustive list, but serves to demonstrate the kind of brokerage role played by the Local Authority and the positive response received from our academy schools. Other academies have worked with the Local Authority to provide additional capacity due to population increases. For example, Harris have opened two new schools this year, one primary and one secondary, to meet rising demand, Pegasus have opened a new Annexe, and Synaptic will open additional capacity in September next year, as will Oasis. Many other academies have accommodated bulge classes at the request of the Local Authority.

Where there are any concerns regarding the performance of an Academy it is the duty of the LA to alert the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Regional Schools Commissioner who has statutory powers of intervention for academies (see below). The Regional Schools Commissioner (a new role only in place since September 2014) will also monitor academies independently of the LA. This differs from LA powers in relation to maintained schools where the LA has statutory powers of intervention.

Regional schools commissioners (RSCs)

The Regional schools commissioner for Croydon is Dominic Herrington. He is responsible for making decisions about the academies and free schools in his area, which covers 22 Local Authorities, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education. Officers of the Local Authority have met with the RSC on two occasions since he took up post on 1 September.

The RSC's main responsibilities are to:

- monitor the performance of the academies in their area
- take action when an academy is underperforming
- decide on the creation of new academies
- make recommendations to ministers about free school applications
- encourage organisations to become academy sponsors
- approve changes to open academies, including:
 - changes to age ranges
 - mergers between academies
 - changes to multi-academy trust arrangements

RSCs get support from head teacher boards (HTBs). HTBs are made up of experienced academy head teachers who advise and challenge RSCs.

RSCs are accountable to the Schools Commissioner.

Overview of Schools in Croydon

Establishment Type	Primary	Secondary	All Phase	Total
Academy Converter	13	5		18
Academy Sponsored	8	7	1	16
Free School	2	1		3
Free School sponsor led		1		1
LA Community	42			42
Foundation	3	2		5
City Technology College		1		1
Voluntary Aided	13	6		19
Voluntary Controlled	3			3
LA Nurseries				6
Sub total	84	23	1	114
Virtual			1	1
Independent	10	6	7	23
Grand Total				138

Croydon Academies as at October 2014	Status
Primary	
Ark Oval Primary Academy (01/09/2011)	Sponsored
Atwood Primary Academy (01/01/14)	Converter
Aerodrome Academy (REACH2) (01/12/12)	Sponsored
Beulah Infant School (01/09/14) (Pegasus)	Sponsored
Broadmead Primary Academy (REACH2) (01/06/14)	Sponsored
Castle Hill Primary School (REACH2) (01/11/13)	Sponsored
Chipstead Valley Primary Academy (Converter) (01/04/14)	Converter
Fairchildes Primary Academy (Converter) (01/04/14)	Converter
Forest Academy (Synaptic Trust) (01/09/13)	Sponsored
Harris Primary Academy Benson (01/09/13)	Sponsored
Harris Primary Academy Kenley (01/09/13)	Sponsored
Harris Primary Academy Haling Park (01/09/14)	New school
New Valley Primary (Formerly Wattenden Primary) (01/09/14)	Sponsored

(Chipstead Valley)	
Oasis Byron Primary (01/09/2012)	Sponsored
Oasis Ryelands Primary (01/05/14)	Sponsored
Oasis Shirley Park Academy (01/09/2009)	Sponsored
Paxton Academy Free School (01/09/14)	New school
Pegasus Ecclesbourne Primary (01/04/2011)	Sponsored
Pegasus Whitehorse Manor Infant (01/04/2011)	Converter
Pegasus Whitehorse Manor Junior (01/04/2011)	Converter
Robert Fitzroy Academy (REACH2) (01/09/2012)	New school
Rowdown Primary Academy (Fairchildes) (01/06/14)	Sponsored
St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary (01/07/2012)	Converter
St James the Great RC Primary (01/04/2012)	Converter
St Mark's C of E Primary (01/09/14) (REACH2)	Sponsored
St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary (01/09/2012)	Converter
STEP Applegarth Academy (01/04/2013)	Sponsored
STEP David Livingstone Academy (01/08/2011)	Sponsored
STEP Gonville Academy (01/05/2011)	Converter
West Thornton Primary (Synaptic Trust) (01/06/2011)	Converter
Winterbourne Junior Boys' School (Platanos Academy Trust) (April 2014)	Sponsored
Wolsey Junior Academy (STEP) (01/11/13)	Sponsored

Secondary	
Addington High School (01/06/2013)	Sponsored
Harris Academy Purley (01/09/2009)	Sponsored
Harris Academy South Norwood (01/09/2007)	Sponsored
Harris Academy Upper Norwood (01/09/13)	Sponsored
Harris City Academy Crystal Palace (01/09/2007)	Converter
Harris Invictus Free School (01/09/14)	New school
Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College for Girls (01/01/2012)	Converter
Oasis Academy Coulsdon (01/09/2008)	Sponsored
Oasis Academy Shirley Park (1/9/2009)	Sponsored
Riddlesdown Collegiate (01/06/2012)	Converter

Shirley High Performing Arts College (01/01/2012)	Converter
St Joseph's College (01/06/2012)	Converter
The Archbishop Lanfranc (September 2014) (Coloma Trust)	Sponsored
The Quest Academy (01/09/2010) (Coloma Trust)	Sponsored
Woodcote High (01/06/2012)	Converter

Pending	
Chestnut Park GLF (September 2015)	New school
Oasis Arena (September 2015)	New school
Oasis Fairfield Primary (September 2015)	New school
Park Hill Infant School (TBA)	Converter
Heathfield Academy STEP (September 2015)	New school

CONTACT OFFICER: David Butler, Service Manager – Education Standards

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None.

ACADEMIES AND INSPECTION RESULTS

Academies which have not had an inspection since their creation are highlighted in grey.

Primary

SCHOOL NAME AND ACADEMISATION/OPENING DATE	OFSTED INSPECTION DATE AND RESULTS
Ark Oval Primary Academy (01/09/2011) Cherry Orchard, Road CR0 6BA	December 2012 Overall effectiveness: good
Atwood Primary Academy (01/01/14)	December 2008 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Aerodrome Academy (REACH2) (01/12/12)	July 2012 Overall effectiveness: good
Broadmead Primary School (REACH2)(01/05/14)	May 2012 Overall effectiveness: satisfactory
Castle Hill Primary School (REACH2) (01/11/13)	June 2011 Overall effectiveness: good
Chipstead Valley Primary Academy (01/04/14)	March 2013 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Fairchildes Primary Academy (01/04/14)	October 2012 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Forest Academy (Synaptic Trust) (01/09/13)	September 2011 (As Spring Park Primary School) Overall effectiveness: satisfactory
Harris Primary Academy Benson (01/09/13)	November 2012 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
Harris Primary Academy Haling Park (01/09/14)	New school – not yet inspected
Harris Primary Academy Kenley (01/09/13)	April 2013 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
New Valley Primary School (formerly Wattenden Primary School)(Chipstead Valley) (01/09/14)	May 2013 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
Oasis Byron Primary (01/09/2012)	June 2011 Overall effectiveness: good
Oasis Ryelands (01/04/14)	March 2014 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
Oasis Shirley Park Academy (01/09/2009)	November 2013 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Paxton Academy Free School (01/09/14)	New school – not yet inspected
Pegasus Ecclesbourne Primary (01/04/2011)	February 2014 Overall effectiveness: good
Pegasus Whitehorse Manor Infant (01/04/2011)	March 2007 Overall effectiveness: outstanding

Pegasus Whitehorse Manor Junior (01/04/2011)	July 2012 Overall effectiveness: good
Robert Fitzroy Academy (REACH2) (01/09/2012)	July 2014 Overall effectiveness: good
Rowdown Primary School (Fairchildes) (01/09/14)	July 2013 Overall effectiveness: satisfactory
St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary (01/07/2012)	September 2014 Overall effectiveness: good
St James the Great RC Primary (01/04/2012)	October 2012 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
St Mark's C of E Primary School (01/09/14) (REACH2)	March 2013 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary (01/09/2012)	September 2007 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
STEP Applegarth Academy (01/04/2013)	Insp. for Applegarth Nursery and Infants: Sept. 2009 Overall effectiveness: satisfactory Insp. For Applegarth Juniors: June 2012 Overall effectiveness: good
STEP David Livingstone Academy (01/08/2011)	April 2012 Overall effectiveness: good
STEP Gonville Academy (01/05/2011)	June 2012 Overall effectiveness: good
West Thornton Primary (Synaptic Trust) (01/06/2011)	September 2012 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Winterbourne Junior Boys' Academy (01/04/14) (Platanos Trust)	January 2014 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
Wolsey Junior Academy (STEP) (01/11/13)	January 2013 Overall effectiveness: inadequate

Secondary

SCHOOL NAME AND ACADEMISATION/OPENING DATE	OFSTED INSPECTION DATE AND RESULTS
Addington High School (01/06/2013)	June 2012 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
Harris Academy Purley (01/09/2009)	December 2011 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Harris Academy South Norwood (01/09/2007)	February 2011 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Harris Academy Upper Norwood (01/09/13) (Formerly Westwood High School)	As Westwood High School: November 2012 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
Harris City Academy Crystal Palace (01/09/2007)	October 2014 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Harris Invictus Free School (01/09/14)	New school – not yet inspected
Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College for Girls (01/01/2012)	June 2013 Overall effectiveness: good
Oasis Academy Coulsdon (01/09/2008)	March 2011 Overall effectiveness: good
Oasis Academy Shirley Park (1/9/2009)	November 2013 Overall effectiveness: outstanding
Riddlesdown Collegiate (01/06/2012)	October 2011 Overall effectiveness: good
Shirley High Performing Arts College (01/01/2012)	November 2013 Overall effectiveness: requires improvement
St Joseph's College (01/06/2012)	January 2014 Overall effectiveness: requires improvement
The Archbishop Lanfranc (01/09/14) (Coloma Trust)	September 2013 Overall effectiveness: inadequate
The Quest Academy (01/09/2010)	June 2013 Overall effectiveness: requires improvement
Woodcote High (01/06/2012)	January 2013 Overall effectiveness: requires improvement

London Borough of Croydon Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Tuesday 25th November 2014

Academies in Croydon

Response to key questions from Oasis Community Learning

Oasis Academies in Croydon

Academy	Date of joining Oasis	NoR	Ofsted judgment
OA Coulsdon	September 2008	700	Good (Mar 2011)
OA Shirley Park	September 2009	1600*	Outstanding (Nov 2013)
OA Byron	September 2012	200	Good (Jun 2011) **
OA Ryelands	May 2014	400	Special Measures (Feb 2014) **

* All-through ** Prior to conversion / sponsorship by Oasis

1. Standards: *What are your priorities in relation to further improving standards?*

Primary Academies

Raising Pupil Attainment & Achievement

1. Pupil progress meetings to identify areas of underperformance and bring them back in line to national expectations and close the achievement gap
2. To continue to look at attainment in all year groups and make sure that this is increasing so that more children are at National Expectation + in reading, writing and mathematics
3. To focus on phonics in Key Stage 1

Quality of Learning and Teaching

1. To improve the teaching of writing with a focus on basic skills
2. To improve the teaching of mathematics with a focus on basic skills
3. To ensure a greater number of Reception Year children are reaching a 'good level of development'

4. To continue to secure high quality learning & teaching across the curriculum

Curriculum Development

1. To continue to develop broad and balanced curriculum plans, promoting both excellence and enjoyment
2. To continue to review early years provision in light of changes to EYFS curriculum and assessment procedures
3. To provide rich learning experiences in keeping with the revised National curriculum
4. To continue to develop the 'all-throughness' of the curriculum at OASP, by looking at purposeful ways to maximize the potential of all facilities on all the Shirley Park sites
5. To embed the effective use of *Cornerstones* and *Success for All* at OA Ryelands, as well as improving the quality of PE and RE (both areas of particular weakness in the predecessor school)
6. A number of Academies, including OASP, intend to be assessed for the Arts Mark Award

Personal development, well-being, behaviour and safety

1. To promote responsibility and respect
2. To improve rates of attendance, especially in EYFS
3. To develop pupils' positive contribution through pupil leadership and pupil voice opportunities
4. To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through visiting speakers and off-site visits
6. To develop the use of recorded positive behaviour systems

Development of the Hub

1. OASP are developing links with CALAT to increase parents' skills levels and parental involvement in learning
2. To develop further the community use of facilities and extended services of school during the holidays

Leadership and Management

1. To implement the new SEND Code of Practice
2. To decide on the format for assessment going forward (to replace NC levels)
3. To continue to develop leaders at all levels with a focus on succession planning
4. To secure accurate self-evaluation based on rigorous monitoring of teaching and pupil outcomes in EYFS
5. To develop distributed leadership to ensure high expectations, high quality teaching and high standards
6. To sustain high levels of governance through the Academy Councils, to provide appropriate support and challenge as well as to further develop the distinctive Oasis ethos with the Academies and their communities

Secondary Academies

- Further increases in Key Stage 4 and 5 headline measures and adaptation to new government accountability measures
- Significant increases in students achieving in EBacc subjects at Key Stage 4 and facilitating subjects at Key Stage 5, to ensure students have access to the widest range of HE and career opportunities
- Continued delivery of an effective and inclusive school curriculum in the face of frequent external changes
- Closing the achievement gap between students eligible for the Pupil Premium and those not, where this exists (OAC, not OASP)
- Raising levels of literacy and numeracy across the ability range
- Ensuring all teaching over time is at least good
- Improving the quality of marking and assessment, including feedback dialogue between teachers and students

2. Curriculum:

a. *Breadth and balance: How do you ensure breadth and balance of the curriculum?*

Primary Academies

- Use of the National Curriculum (regardless of theoretical exemption as Academies)
- Implementation of the *International Primary Curriculum* (IPC) at OAB and the *Cornerstones* programme at OAR
- Increased use of visiting speakers and visits to support curriculum themes (including visits to galleries, museums and theatres)
- Opportunities to learn to play musical instruments
- MFL, including Spanish at OASP
- Swimming in Years 3,4 and 5 at OASP
- OASP links with Crystal Palace Football Club, who provide coaches for sport
- Chess lessons for Year 4 at OASP
- OAB chosen by HSBC as the Croydon primary school to benefit from their school bank initiative run by pupils (80 children from OAB now have HSBC accounts and all posts within the bank are filled by pupils who have applied and been interviewed for them by HSBC bank managers)

Secondary Academies

- Use of UK National Curriculum for guidance and good practice
- Development of international dimension through Oasis Global Partnerships
- Guided curriculum pathways at Key Stage 4 to ensure that breadth is retained for all students
- Greater focus on English and mathematics is in addition to, not instead of, a broad curriculum offer, including science, humanities, technology, the arts and sport
- Identification of high-quality vocational courses that are recognised by FE and HE providers
- Ongoing development of enrichment programmes and opportunities beyond the mainstream curriculum
- Sharing of best practice through Oasis conferences, Principals' meetings, Professional Learning Communities and CPD programme
- Annual Oasis Academy Reviews, including Ofsted-trained inspectors and Principals of other Oasis Academies

b. **Post-16 provision** (where appropriate): *How do you ensure the correct progression pathways are in place for pupils post-16?*

NB: OASP only

- Regular advice from Work Related Learning Coordinator (Level 4 trained) throughout Key Stage 4 to ensure that students have early advice on next steps
- Up-to-date information, advice and guidance from specialist post-16 staff
- Liaison with a range of universities and employers to ensure that pathways are clear and opportunities are open
- Regular curriculum updates attended by staff to keep abreast of curriculum changes

3. **Inclusion and entitlement:**

a. *How do you ensure inclusive provision for children with SEN and other vulnerable children?*

Primary Academies

- Well-informed, evidence-based use of Pupil Premium funding as appropriate, for example one-to-one teaching for vulnerable Year 6 pupils at OAB
- More strategic and carefully-monitored use of teaching / learning support assistants
- Data is carefully analysed to inform pupil progress meetings and action plans
- Pupils are closely monitored within class to make sure they are accessing the curriculum
- Targeted intervention to boost rates of progress
- External specialist agencies work with Academies to support individual children and work with staff, e.g. EP, SALT, OT, VI and Victoria House PRU
- Learning mentors help children overcome barriers to learning and support parents
- Counsellor and play therapists used on site to support children
- OAS have specialist EAL teacher who helps children and families to integrate into school and the classroom
- New SEN Code of Practice implemented in all Oasis Academies
- Regular CPD updates for staff
- Additional support provided for children who need help to access after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities

- OASP has a 12-place Enhanced Learning Provision for statemented children from across Croydon
- OASP provides three places in Year 6 for boys to be re-integrated from three local PRUs (Victoria House, Beckmead and New Woodlands)

Secondary Academies

- Oasis Academies are passionately inclusive schools and seek to include any pupil who applies with needs that they can meet. They have large teams of SEN staff including the SENCO, HLTAs and TAs as well as EAL specialists and professionals from other external agencies who can support students
- OASP have an on-site therapeutic service provided by Place2Be for students in need of additional emotional support
- OAC has an on-site ASD unit
- All Oasis Academies have skilled pastoral teams who work to build and maintain relationships with students and their families to ensure that a genuine partnership facilitates the best outcomes for all students
- A wide range of complementary strategies, including art therapy, drama therapy, reading recovery, mentoring and peer mentoring amongst others, provide additional support for students

b. *How do you ensure good attendance and minimise exclusions (including work with Croydon's Fair Access panel)?*

Primary Academies

- Permanent and fixed-term exclusion levels are extremely low in all Oasis Academies in Croydon
- Oasis Academies use the SOL diamond system that highlights individual pupils' attendance in each classroom
- Attendance data is added to the weekly Academy newsletters
- Provision of breakfast and after-school clubs
- First day calling and text messages used in all Academies
- Home visits are carried out if parents haven't called in by the second day of absence
- Letters are sent and meetings arranged with Principals and EWOs
- Attendance officers and learning mentors work closely with parents
- Counsellors, play therapists and art therapists play a valuable role in encouraging and improving attendance

- OASP are involved in a Croydon project to raise the standard of achievement for BAFR and BCRB children and families, to reduce exclusions and low academic achievement

Secondary Academies

- Permanent and fixed-term exclusion levels are extremely low, and have decreased year-on-year, in all Oasis Academies in Croydon. Oasis Academies seek to minimise exclusion wherever possible, as an intrinsic expression of their inclusive ethos.
- OASP took in the largest number of students from the Fair Access Panel of any Croydon school last year.
- OASP has two different provisions for alternative education (separate from internal or external exclusion) meaning that a wide range of student needs can be catered for without the need for exclusion
- Oasis Academies work closely with other schools to arrange and support 'managed moves' for students in need of a fresh start
- Excellent attendance levels are supported by the work of pastoral teams who conduct first-day calling and follow-up home visits whenever a student is absent
- An Academy-wide commitment to maximising student attendance is shared by all staff at all levels
- High expectations of staff attendance help to model expectations to students
- Use of SOL Attendance Tracker and attendance audits
- Student attendance data on display in tutor group bases
- Early intervention for students and families where attendance is below 95%
- A recognition that high standards of teaching and pastoral care lead to improved behaviour and attendance
- All Oasis Academies are actively engaged in their local authority's Fair Access Panels and often take more excluded students onto their roll than other local schools and more than they lose from their roll

4. Engagement with, and accountability to, parents and the community:

- a. *How do you engage with pupils, parents, the local community and other agencies, for example to reduce the incidence of bullying?*

Primary Academies

- High visibility of Principals and Leadership Team members at the Academy gates and in the playground at the beginning and end of the day, interacting with parents and carers and providing a rapid response to concerns and queries
- Bullying is addressed with pupils through assemblies, P4C and PSHE
- Making sure that pupils know that they can go to any adult in school for support/help and use the problem page service
- Pupil Leaders and School Councillors support anti-bullying initiatives
- Weekly Academy newsletters
- Academy websites
- Regular coffee mornings and informal drop-in sessions with Leadership Team members
- Adult education classes run at OASP in conjunction with CALAT
- Comments boxes
- Open door policies
- Academy staff attend and host meetings with outside agencies
- OAB were awarded the *Leading Parent Partnership Award* last academic year and work closely with *Parents in Partnership* and Croydon Council's Family Resilience Service

Secondary Academies

- Oasis Academies work very closely with parents, offering them same-day meetings should any issues arise. They actively seek parental feedback, which is often highly positive about the Academies and their work
- Academy staff are on duty in the local community before and after school to ensure that journeys to and from the Academy have minimal negative impact on the community
- One-to-one and family support provided by Oasis Chaplains, Family Support Workers and Well-being Co-ordinators
- A wide range of anti-bullying programmes
- The wider, intergated family and community support work of the Oasis Hubs
- Regular press releases about Academy events and achievements, and rapid improvements in standards and Academies' local reputations, have enabled increasingly positive relationships to be established with the local press

b. *What do you see as the opportunities and challenges of working in the community you serve?*

Primary Academies

Opportunities

- A wide range of opportunities are offered by Oasis Hubs, including community engagement and relationship-building events, community advice centres, youth work, debt counselling and family support
- Opportunities for parents and community members to develop skills and engage in lifelong learning
- Provision of employment opportunities
- A diverse range of cultures brought together in a harmonious environment with a shared sense of common, moral purpose

Challenges

- Low levels of prior attainment for pupils on entry, especially with regard to literacy and numeracy, which impacts access to other aspects of the curriculum
- Some parents are quick to complain but slow, or unable, to support the school or their child's learning. Some parents find it difficult to trust school staff or individuals that they see as in positions of authority
- Getting parents into school can be a challenge, necessitating higher than average levels of home visits
- At OASP, many children don't live in the local area and travel over two miles to the school
- High levels of pupil mobility. For example, at OASP (Primary), during 2013/14, 73 pupils arrived during the course of the year and 48 pupils left
- High numbers of EAL students with little or no English on arrival

Secondary Academies

- The increasing employment opportunities presented in Croydon are exciting for students' futures. Many are now considering university and professional careers or at least further education and training following their time at school, which was not the case for their parents' generation.
- There are many challenges associated with meeting the needs of a highly diverse community, including economic disadvantage (now 58% eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant at OASP). This requires engagement with many agencies and community groups.

- Changes in funding have added to these challenges, particularly in the areas of SEN and post-16. The relatively low level of per pupil funding in Croydon makes matching provision in other areas of London and attracting the best staff more challenging.
- Some parents and families still have very low expectations for their children that reflect their own educational experiences (sometimes at the predecessor schools).

5. **Collaboration with other schools and the local authority?**

a. *What are the strengths in your collaboration with other schools and the local authority?*

Primary Academies

- Early Years Teams are part of local Early Years Clusters
- SENCOs attend SEN Network meetings through which the local offer has been agreed and established
- OASP is part of the Woodside Cluster and OAB is part of the Coulsdon Cluster, one of the most proactive and productive inter-school collaborations in Croydon
- All Oasis Primary Academies seek out opportunities for moderation with other local schools
- Oasis Academy staff still attend and support local authority and local cluster CPD events and meetings
- Several Academy staff are accredited moderators in EYFS, KS1 and KS2

Secondary Academies

- Oasis Academies have both formal and informal collaborative partnerships in place with other schools both within and beyond Oasis and Croydon
- Oasis Academies are active members of the Fair Access Panel and also frequently involved in managed moves to support students in need
- OASP are keen members of the Teach First Hub and have hosted most of the ITT sessions so far this year. They have also hosted trainee teachers from Quest, Addington High and Trinity School very recently.
- Recent local curriculum collaboration for OASP has including swapping best practice with Edenham School in Geography and Mathematics.

b. *What suggestions for improvement do you have?*

- Both OASP and OAN have experienced major and ongoing frustrations with the Council's pupil admissions process, which has resulted in unfilled pupil places, despite both Academies' high standards

Andy Yarrow

Regional Academy Director (London and South East)

07.11 14

Scrutiny committee meeting: Academies in Croydon

Academy Trust name: Synaptic

Academy Trust company number: 07588104 (England and Wales)

The Trust's priority aim is to advance, for the public benefit, education, by maintaining, managing and developing academies offering a broad and balanced curriculum - "To Create Futures for All"

We are a learning community, which creates chances for dreamers, idea makers and innovators to connect, thrive and outperform. We empower our children to use their skills as divergent thinkers, responsible role models and leaders to carve out their own futures, and become extraordinary citizens.

We are passionate that all schools in our family are free to follow their own destinies based on the needs and aspirations of their investors. Our uniqueness and different strengths ensures that our communities grow and prosper and that we have opportunities to support and learn from each other as we create futures for all.

The Aims of the Trust are to:

- Create a welcoming and caring atmosphere, placing safeguarding at the forefront of all we do;
- Expect the very best from all through developing an enjoyment, and commitment to twenty-first century lifelong learning;
- Develop critical thinking and the ability to transfer skills (Building Learning Powers – BLP);
- Foster self-esteem, self-autonomy and self-discipline;
- Provide inspirational opportunities to acquire, develop, and apply a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Enable pupils to become creative, innovative and enterprising learners who welcome challenge;
- Develop a respect for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural values and views of others;
- Encourage and recognise the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle and developing wellbeing;
- Establish clear performance measures and accepted procedures for ensuring outstanding provision; and
- Promote a sense of community cohesion through developing partnerships with all stakeholders in our academy

1. **Standards:** What are your priorities in relation to further improving standards?

Improving Educational Results

Core Priorities

The Core Priorities of West Thornton Academy

Core Priority A:

- To review and update our whole school reading practices to ensure we continue to create active readers

Core Priority B:

- Develop emotional intelligence and well-being amongst staff, pupil and parents; through the use of Packtypes

Core Priority C:

- Continue to develop an integrated enquiry based curriculum concentrating on -
- Development of a Growth Mindset
- Independent/learner led learning
- Integrated use of ICT, including coding
- 'Flipped Learning'
- Blogging
- Making effective use of feedback and self evaluation
- Development of an effective whole school assessment system to suit our requirements after the removal of NC levels

Core Priority D:

- Continue to develop a culture of self-reflecting teaching and give teachers the opportunity to be action researchers, particularly making use of opportunities through the teaching school

Core Priority E:

- Work to establish the Teaching School as a place for good quality training and exemplary practice within Croydon and beyond

Core Priority F:

- Work in partnership with other stakeholders and the LA to develop the new Canterbury Road West Thornton annex

The Core Priorities of Forest Academy

Core Priority A:

- Continue to embed and develop outstanding teaching and learning practice across the school via on-going, regular and rigorous review and monitoring (already in place) by developing policies, systems, structures and well-targeted CPD across all phases
- Continue to develop and embed inclusive practice across the school in line with the new SEN Code of Practice to remove barriers to learning to ensure vulnerable groups prosper and thrive (particularly in spelling and reading)

Core Priority B:

- Develop and sustain outstanding achievement (progress and attainment) across all phases (particularly phonics & reading)

Core Priority C:

- Continue to improve safeguarding mechanisms and monitoring across the school through improved communication and teamwork
- Improve attendance rates to 97%

Core Priority D:

- Continue to develop a broad and balanced integrated 'enquiry based' curriculum that meets the needs of our pupils and promotes and sustains a thirst for knowledge with an emphasis on Outdoor Learning and the 'Basic Skills' (reading, spelling, use of spoken Standard English, writing and Maths).

Develop and embed a rigorous assessment system that will -

- Inform curriculum development, staff planning and give powerful information on pupil progress
- Regularly inform all staff on gaps in pupil achievement to address through well targeted planning & interventions to address gaps in pupils' attainment
- Provide robust information on the quality of teaching and learning in all phases
- Provide clear information for parents on what pupils can and cannot do

Core Priority E:

- Continue to improve the profile of the school in the community through building further links with the wider community to strengthen and develop parental involvement & engagement & improve teaching & learning

Core Priority F:

- Continue to strengthen the effectiveness of the Governing Body

The Synaptic Trust has ensured that resources are directed where they are most needed to meet educational requirements. We have in place strong systems for tracking pupil progress and achievement coupled with programmes of early and appropriate interventions. The Trust rigorously monitors the performance of all staff and ensures that appropriate actions are taken to address any weakness.

2. Curriculum:

Please visit:

<http://thesynaptictrust.org/our-schools/west-thornton-primary-academy/our-curriculum>

<http://thesynaptictrust.org/our-schools/forest-academy/our-curriculum>

3. Inclusion and entitlement:

Please see our external Inclusion Mark Reports

West Thornton Primary Academy: <http://thesynaptictrust.org/our-schools/west-thornton-primary-academy/about-us/quality-mark>

Forest Academy: <http://thesynaptictrust.org/news/forest-academy-awarded-the-inclusion-quality-mark>

West Thornton Attendance: 97.64%

Forest Academy Attendance: 97.1%

4. Engagement with, and accountability to, parents and the community

Across the Trust we have:

- Parent Councillors, Family Liaison Officers, A Children's Centre (with and support for housing, health, nutrition and safety ... etc.), Non LA EWOs, PALs

For engaging with parents we have:

- Home/School visits before pupils start the EYFS, Learning logs, Home School Agreements, Home School Communications books, In-school activities e.g. volunteering, helping in the classroom, parent's evenings, assemblies, plays etc., parent governors, PTA reps, Parent Questionnaires, FRONTER, Roots of Empathy Project, Parent Tutoring programmes

Support and training for parents/the community we have:

- Family learning workshops (especially in Literacy and Numeracy), parenting classes, classes aimed at specific groups e.g. Tamils, Outreach and signposting from our Inclusion Leaders

Also please see our external Inclusion Mark Reports

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West Thornton Primary Academy: <http://thesynaptictrust.org/our-schools/west-thornton-primary-academy/about-us/quality-mark>

Forest Academy: <http://thesynaptictrust.org/news/forest-academy-awarded-the-inclusion-quality-mark>

Rigorous monitoring of pupil's behaviour and a whole Trust focus on positive relationships, acceptance of diversity and pupil's rights and responsibilities results in instances of bullying, racism, homophobia, transphobia or other forms of inappropriate behaviour being rare:

- The understanding of diversity that we foster in pupils leads to outstanding racial harmony and excellent relationships that exist between pupils results in rare instances of bullying or racism;
- Pupils carry out responsibilities around the Trust with low level supervision effectively;
- Pupil's behaviour is welcoming and positive; visitors and parents/carers frequently comment on pupil's polite and friendly approach;
- Older pupils take care of younger ones. Pupils understand the Trust's Shared Rules and abide by them;
- Behaviour rewards and sanctions are consistently applied – our learning star of the week, Rights Respecting awards and good behaviour awards are valued by the pupils;
- Pastoral support plans are implemented for individuals who require clear boundaries; these are supported by parents/carers and teachers; and
- Pupil's receiving behaviour support and the impact that it has had, is analysed termly.

5. Collaboration with other schools and the local authority?

The Trust has engaged with different partners to share delivery and good practice. This has resulted in very positive outcomes, especially in helping to drive up standards. The cost to the Trust has been marginal.

West Thornton Primary Academy is a National Support School and a National Teaching School. As such we have supported schools in challenging circumstances and run many courses for schools in and around London.

The Executive Head worked as a lead facilitator at the IOE with NPQH, NPQSL and NPQML students.

One of our Deputy Headteachers works with the LA and helps them to moderate EYFS settings.

We are an accredited school and have run good to outstanding programmes for schools across London. Many teachers as a result have raised their game and have reported that they are now delivering outstanding lessons.

The Executive Headteacher has lectured at the IOE and for different educational companies on what outstanding practice looks like in action.

The Trust is a placement school for trainee Headteachers.

The Executive Head has coached three NPQH trainee Heads this year.

The Trust has supported placement teaching for students from Brunel, Goldsmiths, Roehampton, UEL and Kingston universities.

The Executive Headteacher worked for the LA as a Link Advisor supporting two schools.

FA worked with the Freedom project with members of the school community.

FA worked with SMART and helped to train future TAs.

The Trust has worked with the LA on developing new assessment arrangements.

FA hosted four LA headteacher conferences.

FA worked in partnership with Edenham High School on Sport's Development.

The Trust hosted visits from other schools to find out about our work in ICT and the curriculum and teachers from Germany as part of a British Council, Comenius Project.

Two senior leaders from WTA lectured at conferences in Manchester and London for the National Literacy Trust.

The Trust is working with Apple to develop digital learning and WTA hosted training for other schools.

Teachers across the Trust were trained as mentors to support Roehampton teacher training students.

WTA hosted a Maths cluster group with five local schools on how to develop problem solving in Numeracy lessons.

Scrutiny committee meeting: Academies in Croydon

1. **Standards:** What are your priorities in relation to further improving standards?

A key priority across The STEP Academy Trust is raising achievement in English and mathematics. Ensuring progress accelerates, particularly where underachievement has been identified, is a theme running through all STEP Academy improvement plans. Where there has been a legacy of poor teaching and, as a result, standards are below the national/borough average, for example Wolsey Junior Academy and Applegarth Academy, establishing consistent quality first teaching has been the immediate priority. However, alongside quality first teaching all STEP Academies have implemented a range of interventions targeted at individuals and groups. Eradicating the attainment gap between Pupil Premium (PP) and non-PP pupils remains a major focus across the Trust.

2. **Curriculum:**

a. **Breadth and balance:** How do you ensure breadth and balance of the curriculum?

All STEP Academies operated the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). As UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools, a non-negotiable of the Trust, our academies maintain a strong focus on children's rights and responsibilities as global citizens. Through the IPC, which has been personalised according to context, STEP Academies have developed an engaging curriculum which also meets the requirements of recent legislative changes. Our focus on pupils developing strong literacy and numeracy skills remains unrelenting and where necessary, a higher proportion of time is spent on these core subjects.

b. **Post-16 provision** (where appropriate): How do you ensure the correct progression pathways are in place for pupils post-16? N/A

3. **Inclusion and entitlement:**

a. How do you ensure inclusive provision for children with SEN and other vulnerable children?

Another non-negotiable of The STEP Academy Trust is a commitment to providing a fully inclusive learning environment. As such, all our academies have developed strong provision to support SEN and other vulnerable children. Specific roles have been created to support vulnerable pupils. For example, all STEP Academies have at least one Learning Mentor to work with identified pupils and their families. The

Headteacher of Applegarth Academy, which accommodates an Enhanced Learning Provision for pupils with speech and language needs, coordinates regular meetings for STEP Inclusion Managers facilitating the sharing of good practice and knowledge.

b. How do you ensure good attendance and minimise exclusions (including work with Croydon's Fair Access panel)?

We work with an external Educational Welfare Service and currently have consistently good/outstanding rates of attendance across the Trust. Pupils' behaviour is generally well managed and rates of exclusions are generally low, despite an increased number of pupils with challenging behavioural needs. STEP remains committed to working with Croydon's Fair Access panel; indeed, one of our Headteachers is a longstanding member and now chairs the panel.

4. **Engagement with, and accountability to, parents and the community:**

a. How do you engage with pupils, parents, the local community and other agencies, for example to reduce the incidence of bullying?

A strong ethos of partnership underpins STEP. The name, an acronym – Striving Together for Excellence in Partnership – underlines our commitment to work closely with all stakeholders including pupils, parents and the local community. As UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools, the rights of all are systematically taught through an understanding of the UNCRC Articles. Bullying, for example, is constantly addressed through this context. Trust policies are in place to ensure consistent robust systems are in place to tackle incidents as they occur.

b. What do you see as the opportunities and challenges of working in the community you serve?

Although challenging, the communities we serve are increasingly committed to the Trust's mission – to improve the life chances of all children by providing high quality teaching, learning and leadership. Being a "family of schools" has enabled STEP to share its moral purpose and, to some extent, embed this commitment amongst all stakeholders. As a result, our communities understand that STEP will continue to work with vulnerable partners because our moral purpose requires it.

5. **Collaboration with other schools and the local authority?**

a. What are the strengths in your collaboration with other schools and the local authority?

As stated above, STEP is committed to collaboration within and beyond the Trust. We have maintained an excellent relationship with the LA which has supported our work, particularly in the early days. The growing reputation of the Trust, based on its

strong track record, is enabling STEP to have a wider impact. Recently, The STEP Academy Trust has developed partnerships in Bromley and Southwark.

b. What suggestions for improvement do you have?

We passionately believe in the "Power of Partnership". It is becoming increasingly difficult for schools to operate independently, albeit under the umbrella of a local authority. Strong partnerships, based on common values and a shared vision, enable schools to insure themselves against the vulnerabilities they often face. Driving improvements through mutually supportive partnerships, as STEP is doing, is undoubtedly a proven approach to school improvement and one I would urge the LA to continue promoting.

Mark Ducker

Executive Principal

STEP Academy Trust

