

## People Scrutiny Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015

### Public Questions

#### Question from Mr Webb to the Executive Councillor for Children & Learning

##### Question

“Chase High Academy G.C.S.E result of 5 or more students passing A – C grades (including Maths, English, Science) has dropped to 18% in 2014. This year (2015) the new head Andrew James has increased this up to 22%. This means 78% pupils not achieving basic A-C grades in English, Maths, Science. What strategies can Southend Council support the head teacher, staff, parents and pupils in raising these G.C.S.E and do you think this can be achieved in a short or long term period?”

##### Answer

Chase is an Academy and part of the Brentwood Academies Trust. This means that the school is not in the direct control of the local authority. The school is directly accountable to the Department for Education via the Regional Schools Commissioner for its performance. The Regional Schools Commissioner will be holding the school and the Academy sponsor (Brentwood Academies Trust) to account for progress and attainment.

The Head of Chase, Andrew James, has been made substantive. (Initially, he was in post on a temporary basis.) The implication of this is that the Head of the Brentwood Academies Trust has confidence in his leadership and his ability to rapidly improve results at the school. The local authority has raised concerns to the Regional Schools Commissioner about the pace of improvement in the school's provisional results for 2015.

In October, there was a Challenge meeting with the Director and Head of Learning and Andrew James, Head, to discuss the performance of Chase Academy and the contributory factors.

Discussion focused on some of the strategies in place to bring about culture change and improved outcomes for pupils. In particular, there was a focus on the actions the leadership team is taking to ensure that pupil progress tracking and predictions are accurate. At Chase, there is a lot of hard work and commitment being invested to bring about these changes and the positive impact of these strategies in classrooms and the wider school environment is already being seen. Chase is also working collaboratively with three other secondary schools in Essex who are providing strong support and challenge. Chase is confident that a higher proportion of pupils will achieve 5A\*-C grades next summer.