
Waltham Forest Town Hall, Fellowship Square, Forest Road, London E17 4JF

Date: 18th April 2023

Dear colleagues,

Re: Start of new term

Welcome back. I hope you had a restful and enjoyable break. We are looking forward to a busy term ahead, so I thought it may be helpful to set out some of our main priorities:

SEND

Thank you for your positive response to a number of the initiatives we are currently undertaking. Our SEND Strategic Board terms of reference has been reviewed and we are reinvigorating its membership, which we hope to include Headteachers from Primary, Secondary and Special Schools. The Board is our local partnership board that has strategic oversight of how well the local system is supporting all children and young people with SEND.

Our SEND Strategy Task and Finish Group is reviewing and refreshing our SEND Strategy, with a goal to have a draft by May ready for ratification when the last Strategy finishes in September. This will link to our local self-evaluation and will inform our action plan.

We have been delighted at the interest and support for the EHCP multi-agency audits and the co-production of Waltham Forest's ordinarily available provision, which is intended to promote consistency of our offer to children and young people with SEND, including those at SEND Support.

School place planning

Following the SEN2 statutory return, we are also undertaking a review of the primary needs of our children and young people, and this will inform our emerging SEND place commissioning plan, which will dovetail with existing AP and mainstream commissioning plans.

School Improvement

The School Improvement Steering Group supports the identification of local improvement priorities and we are rolling out our school improvement visits for LA maintained schools with our School Improvement Partners. I am pleased to advise that Gerry is joined by Emma Leaver, who will be working with him to develop this important strand of our work. Gerry and Emma will be taking forward two strands of work, as we discussed at the Education Conference: boys achievement (community in practice approach) and recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.

The Learning Partnership

Further to the conference, we are now seeking to recruit representatives for the Learning Partnership Steering Group. This will be a small group of leaders, from schools and academies as well as the Local Authority, who will help shape the future of our educational landscape here in Waltham Forest. The first task will be to advise me on what leaders would like to see in my first annual report on education in Waltham Forest, which will be shared after the external examination analysis in October 2023.

I appreciate that there is an awful lot going on this term in schools and we will be working closely with you around business as usual work, such as moderation of SATs, as well as some fantastic events taking place, such as celebrations of 75th Anniversary of Windrush's arrival.

Wishing you a great term,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren M. Ovenden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'O'.

Lauren Ovenden
Corporate Director of Education