Title: Promoting positive stories of success in the borough’s schools

Media monitoring report for the CSSC

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Background
On 10 August 2015 the Marketing and Communications Team was asked by the Children’s Services Select Committee to monitor the number of positive school stories it promoted, ensuring that at least one positive story was achieved monthly.

Summary
Since the date of this request to monitor the number of positive stories about the borough’s schools - we have extended six invites to local and national media, written 16 press releases, been responsible for 14 stories appearing in the media and posted over nine social media news items.

A monthly breakdown can be seen below.

Current situation
We have a good relationship with schools across the borough and promote good news stories as and when they happen, using:

- Media invites – before an event
- Press releases – after an event
- Phone calls to media contacts - to generate interest in good news stories
- Social media – posts on Facebook and twitter

We forward links or scans of these stories to headteachers, the Corporate Director of Children’s Services, the Divisional Director Education and lead members as they are published.

In the event that a school has a straightforward good news story or event, the team will either inform or invite the media about/to the event or provide contact details and advice to enable schools invite or inform the media directly.

Schools who have built up a good relationship with the local media and are comfortable liaising directly with the media will often do so themselves with good outcomes.*

Media coverage of good news stories can come from a variety of sources and keeps the steady stream of positive news a frequent mainstay in the local media. However, there is no way of guaranteeing positive stories will come through the team. You will note that although for most months there was one or more good news stories coming through the
team, there are none recorded in the month of September. This will be due to schools taking time to settle back into a new academic year following the long summer break.

This report will focus on the positive stories we have been directly involved in getting into the media, including social media posts from 10 August 2015 to 29 February 2016. It does not include positive and proactive articles generated around the wider youth agenda, such as volunteering, education and training opportunities, school attendance, admissions, school places, expansions and funding.

*Schools are advised to deal directly with the media for good news stories only. All sensitive or contentious press enquiries are fed through the press office to ensure schools receive appropriate support and media advice to protect and maintain the reputation of the local authority and the borough’s schools.

The monitoring report below records the team’s activity to promote stories centred around schools for each month since 10 August 2016.

August 2015

LBBD press releases:
1. Barking and Dagenham A Level results buck falling national trend – 14/8/15
   Barking and Dagenham schools have continued to see its A level results improve yet for another year with improvements against the national average for the ninth year in a row.
2. Pupils celebrate with news of GCSE results – 24/8/15
   Nearly 55 per cent of Barking and Dagenham pupils achieved 5+ A* - C GCSE grades in English and Maths.

Media articles:
1. Pos – The Post (online) - 13 August 2015
   Barking and Dagenham students celebrate their A-level results
   http://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/barking_and_dagenham_students_celebrate_their_a_level_results_1_4193517
   A long, anxious wait ended today as hundreds of sixth formers across the borough reaped the rewards of their hard work.
2. Pos – ELY Standard (online) - 13 August 2015
   Robert Clack pupil bags Princeton University place with top A-Level results
   http://www.elystandard.co.uk/news/robert_clack_pupil_bags_princeton_university_place_with_top_a_level_results_1_4192630
   Connor Bridges is somewhat of a pioneer in his family.
Pupil bags Princeton uni place
Robert Clack pupil, Connor Bridges secures full scholarship to Princeton University.

A-Level joy as clever students buck trend
Schools record some of their best ever results despite a drop in top grades across the country.

Social media:
1. A Level results
2. GCSE results

September 2015

October 2015

LBBD press releases:
1. **School meals are top of the class** – 16/10/15
   Barking and Dagenham Catering Services and Lisa Morris, Cook Supervisor at Manor Longbridge School, are crowned Primary School Caterer of the Year at the EDUcatering Excellence Awards.
2. **Headteacher wins Duathlon for GB** – 19/10/15
   Simon Abeledo, headteacher of Rush Green Primary School, wins gold for Great Britain in the 2015 Adelaide ITU Duathlon.

Media articles:
1. Pos – 4 Traders - 1 Oct 2015
   **Taylor Wimpey: Schoolchildren help unveil artwork at Academy Central**
   Creative children from Manor Longbridge School in the Borough of Barking and Dagenham were invited to help unveil public artwork incorporating their own designs at our nearby Academy Central development, located off Longbridge Road.

2. Pos – The Post (online) – 6 Oct 2015
   **Barking school picks up international award**
   http://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/barking_school_picks_up_international_award_1_4260983
   A primary school in Barking has been awarded a prestigious prize by the British Council, in recognition of its work to bring the world into the classroom.
Social media:

1. Cook Supervisor at Manor Longbridge School is crowned Primary School Caterer of the Year at the EDUcatering Excellence Awards

November 2015

LBBD Media invites:

1. **Healthy Schools London Celebration Event** – 02/11/15
   The media are invited to a photo opportunity to a healthy schools celebratory event to thank schools and others for their commitment to improving the health of young people in Barking and Dagenham.
2. **School wins Dragon and Chinese Cooking Day competition** – 02/11/15
   The media are invited to a photo opportunity at Thomas Arnold Primary School to see excited pupils meeting their very first animatronic dragon.
3. **Groundbreaking at Riverside kicks start 18 month building programme** – 19/11/15
   The media are invited to a photo opportunity at Riverside Campus for a groundbreaking event that will begin the process to provide much needed school places.
4. **£44m investment kick starts development of three-in-one school** – 23/11/15
   A £44 million building project has taken off which will see the construction of an innovative three school campus providing additional school places in one of London’s fastest growing boroughs.

LBBD press releases:

1. **School wins Dragon and Chinese Cooking Day competition** – 09/11/15
   A Barking and Dagenham school’s pupils meet a fire breathing dragon after winning a competition for primary schools to see who could encourage the highest uptake of school meals on Dragon and Chinese Cooking day.
2. **Schools committed to improving the health of young people** – 16/11/15
   More schools than ever in Barking and Dagenham signed up to the Healthy Schools London programme and committed to improving the health and wellbeing of their pupils are celebrated in a special event.

Media articles:

1. **Pos – The Yellow Advertiser**
   *Dagenham pupils enjoy day with robotic dragon after winning cooking contest*
   [http://www.dagenham-today.co.uk/article.cfm?id=107831](http://www.dagenham-today.co.uk/article.cfm?id=107831)
   PUPILS have enjoyed the day with a fire breathing dragon after winning a cooking contest.

2. **Pos – The Post – 13 November 2015**
   **Barking and Dagenham Seed to Plate programme is top of the crops**
   [http://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/barking_and_dagenham_seed_to_plate_programme_is_top_of_the_crops_1_4310180](http://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/barking_and_dagenham_seed_to_plate_programme_is_top_of_the_crops_1_4310180)
Primary pupils were not the only ones to reap what they sowed after a pioneering food education programme received recognition earlier this month.

**Social media:**
1. Healthy Schools in Barking and Dagenham
2. Thomas Arnold Primary School pupils meet their very first animatronic dragon
3. Riverside Campus groundbreaking will provide much needed school places

**December 2015**

**LBBD press releases:**
1. **Primary schools in Barking and Dagenham achieve 5 year high** – 03/12/15
   Primary schools in Barking and Dagenham have improved at a faster rate than other London boroughs with an increase of 8 percentage points over the last year.
2. **Local teacher wins prestigious national prize** – 04/12/15
   A Sydney Russell School teacher has been awarded the Pearson Prize for her relentless dedication to improving the life chances of pupils.
3. **North African inspiration gives school chef national award** – 08/12/15
   Barking and Dagenham Catering Services wins Highly Commended Dessert, for three years running!
   On 19 November, Lisa Morris, School Cook at Manor Longbridge, entered the Regional Finals of the School Chef of the Year competition, with two delicious North African inspired dishes.
4. **Eastbrook School hero receives award** – 15/12/15
   A Year 11 Eastbrook pupil who cycled to the rescue of a former council Leader’s pet greyhound following a car accident was today (15 December) presented with a special award.
5. **Local headteacher receives OBE at the palace** – 15/12/15
   Trinity School head is honoured at Buckingham Palace as he receives OBE for his services to special educational needs.
6. **Barking and Dagenham primary school in top 100 in the country** – 21/12/15
   The hard work and dedication of the headteacher, staff and pupils of Warren Junior School has been recognised by the Minister of State for Schools.
7. **Whopping numbers of festive school lunches served** – 22/12/15
   Barking and Dagenham schools served over 20,000 tasty festive Christmas dinners in primary and secondary schools in the run up to the holidays.

**Media articles:**
1. Pos – Yellow Advertiser

More than 20,000 Christmas lunches served at primary and secondary schools in Barking and Dagenham before holidays

Chefs at the borough’s schools dished up 25,000 turkey slices, 50,000 brussel sprouts, 75,000 sliced carrots and more than 100,000 roast potatoes.


**Chadwell Heath headteacher made OBE**

http://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/chadwell_heath_headteacher_made_obe_1_4363095

A headteacher who has taught in Barking and Dagenham for 36 years has been made an OBE.

**Social media:**
1. Year 11 Eastbrook hero presented with special award
2. Local headteacher receives OBE at the palace
3. Local primary school in top 100 in the country

January 2016

**LBBD media invites:**

1. **Eastbury Comprehensive presents a Diary of a Bad Man** – 18/01/15
   The media are invited to a great photo opportunity at an exciting anti-terrorism performance delivered by internet sensation Humza Arshad.

**LBBD press releases:**

1. **Online Youtube sensation fights radicalisation** – 25/01/15
   ‘Diary of a Bad Man’ – a performance aimed at preventing young people from being drawn into terrorism was performed at Eastbury School on the same day the government launched its ‘Educate against hate’ website.

**Media articles:**

1. Pos - The educator – 11 Jan 2016

**Schools getting fit for the New Year**

http://www.the-educator.org/schools-getting-fit-for-the-new-year/

Research carried out by the Get Britain Standing campaign has revealed that the average Brit spends a staggering 8.9 hours every day sitting down, be that at work, in a car or on the sofa in front of the TV.

Bucking this trend however, is All Saints Secondary School in Dagenham. Daisy Hamilton, head of PE at the school, says that last year, the school reported a significant increase in students’ uptake of physical activities, with 95 per cent of Key Stage 3 pupils attending at least one extracurricular club.


**Eastbury Community School in east London officially designated the kindest school in the UK**
Education Editor Richard Garner visits Eastbury Community School, Barking, where exclusions are down, and results are up.


YouTube star supports cause


Muslim comedian and YouTube sensation Humza Arshad gave a performance to pupils to help prevent them from being drawn into terrorism.

February 2016

LBBD media invites:
1. An Antarctic adventure day – 29/02/16
   The media are invited to an Antarctic adventure designed to make the school dining hall more exciting and vibrant for young children.

LBBD press releases:
1. The power of storytelling set to challenge stereotypes – 16/02/16
   Secondary schools across Barking and Dagenham are set to benefit from a series of workshops which are aimed at helping young people challenge discrimination.
2. Brand new secondary school opening this September – 22/02/15
   Greatfields School plans to open in the Gascoigne area in September 2016, helping to fulfil Barking and Dagenham Cabinet’s promise of a school place for every child.

Media articles:
1. Pos – Post – 23 Feb 2016

New secondary school planned for Barking

http://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/education/new_secondary_school_planned_for_barking_1_4429991

A new secondary school is expected to open in the Gascoigne area of Barking in September.