

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Early Years, Children & Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	25 March 2013
TITLE:	Update Briefing: Academies and Services to Schools
WARD:	ALL
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report: Attachment 1 – Draft Principles and Outcomes	

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 To provide a further update on the dialogue between the Department and local schools, regarding future collaborative arrangements and the delivery of services.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the report and receive a further update in due course.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Department has been continuing to work with schools and staff to consider our future roles, ways of working together and the potential impact on the delivery of services to schools arising from recent policy and legislative change, including the development of Academies and Teaching Schools and further delegation of funding to all schools.
- 3.2 The previous report in March 2012 described the dialogue with head teachers, governors and staff, leading to a commitment from the Authority to continue offering the broad range of current services for at least 2 years.
- 3.3 Subsequent to that the service produced a detailed brochure of services that schools could access – either funded by us as part of our statutory role or that they could choose to purchase. This was published in the autumn.
- 3.4 Schools responded positively to this with the majority of schools choosing to continue with most of the services they were previously accessing. These

commitments are now being secured through Service Level Agreements. It is clear however, that schools will increasingly wish to make independent choices about which services they continue to fund.

- 3.5 One service that schools have chosen not to continue to fund is the Learning Support Service. Staff consultation is underway on the proposal to discontinue this service in August 2013. Schools will retain the funding and responsibility for specialist teaching (eg for support with dyslexia).
- 3.6 Alongside the discussion about service delivery, we have also embarked on a further dialogue with schools about the Authority's strategic and leadership role in the local education system and the respective roles of Schools and Teaching Schools.
- 3.7 There has been considerable national debate on the evolving role of local authorities (for example see background paper referenced below) and some of this has informed the local discussions. In particular, we need to embrace the new landscape and build new relationships with schools, academies, academy sponsors and Teaching Schools if we are to create a broad collaboration for the benefit of children and young people across Bath and North East Somerset. The authority can play a key leadership role in bringing partners together, but cannot direct how it happens.
- 3.8 At the same time, we need to be clear about how schools and academies will be held to account by the local community and the authority's role as a champion of children and families, which may lead us to challenge schools who are not co-operating with Fair Access protocols or other local collaborative arrangements.
- 3.9 A series of draft principles and desired outcomes has been shared and tested with head teachers and chairs of governors and is attached for information (see attachment 1). We are continuing to develop these and to articulate 'how we will work' setting out what this might mean for each type of organisation.
- 3.10 This debate will continue both nationally and locally and a further update will be brought to PDS in due course.

Contact person	<i>Mike Bowden 01225 395610</i>
Background papers	http://www.virtualstaffcollege.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Think-Piece-By-Whose-Authority-1.4-1.pdf
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

ATTACHMENT 1 - DRAFT PRINCIPLES AND OUTCOMES

The Principles we will adopt:

- Every child is unique and has the right to grow and develop personally, emotionally and intellectually
- Safeguarding of children remains a paramount concern
- All organisations working with children have a shared moral purpose to work together to enable our children to enjoy the best possible outcomes, not least because we all have a duty to see public money spent well on educating children
- The LA will champion children and their families to ensure their needs are central
- The LA will work with and support schools to deliver the best outcomes for all, promoting participation and high standards of education for children with Special Educational Needs or who are in care or otherwise vulnerable
- The LA will work in partnership with Teaching Schools to ensure clarity of our respective roles and optimise wider benefits to the system
- Every school is unique and has good practice to share
- The accountability for school improvement rests with autonomous and self-improving schools
- Identified schools will be challenged and supported through access to best practice within and beyond the LA, this includes Teaching Schools, National, Local and Specialist leaders in Education, School to School Support as well as support from the School Improvement Inclusion Service and Dioceses
- Improvement is secured through high quality leadership and learning and teaching in schools. Additional equally important drivers for improvement are improving the conditions for learning and strengthening the school as a learning community
- Successful schools are inclusive schools which personalise learning experiences through enriched and engaging learning opportunities
- Improving outcomes for all children can best be achieved by schools working collaboratively and inclusively, in partnerships with a range of providers
- Schools will be encouraged to celebrate success and innovation which enables all children to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens
- All schools and Academies will be expected to comply with statutory obligations including participation in the local Fair Access Protocol, to ensure access to education for all children, including those most vulnerable, without delay
- The LA will work fairly and transparently in establishing and implementing policies relating to school funding, place planning and other relevant matters and will seek to engage with schools in the development and implementation of policy.
- The LA will work within the overarching framework of legislation, regulation and local policy, such as the policy statement on Academies and Free Schools (Sept 2011).

The Outcomes we want to achieve:

- Improved outcomes for all pupils including the most vulnerable
- All schools to be judged good or outstanding by Ofsted
- All schools to achieve above National Floor Standards
- Identified schools have clear action plans for improving performance
- Narrowing the attainment gap between vulnerable groups of children and the overall level achieved
- Effectively governed schools, with accommodation that is of sufficient capacity and fit for purpose, accessible to all
- Strong collaboration between schools and between schools and the Authority
- Minimising disruption to children's education by achieving the lowest possible level of school exclusions
- Schools making the most of opportunities to contribute to the wider health and wellbeing and strength of their local communities.

What we mean by an Integrated Approach is:

- Everyone who supports children and young people working together effectively to put children at the centre and not organisations
- All agencies work together openly, honestly, effectively, sharing information and providing the right help to children, young people and their families at the right times
- All providers of School Improvement Services (LA, Dioceses, Teaching Schools, other commissioned services) valuing the contributions all make in delivering the Children & Young People's Plan vision
- We all aim to prevent failure and promote success
- Using the integrated pathway to inform decision making
- Completing Common Assessments with vulnerable young people and where appropriate convening multi-agency meetings to agree plans to support them