

**Council, Tuesday 13 July 2010**

**Administration Policy Item: Councillor Andrew Harper**

**Academies and Free Schools**

The Government has announced that all schools are being invited to apply for Academy Status and that parents other interested groups will now be able to set up “Free Schools”.

Academies will be autonomous of the local Council and receive their funding direct from the DFE. They will be given greater freedom over their curriculum and financial affairs. LA Maintained Schools rated as Outstanding by OFSTED can apply to be fast-tracked, with a view to becoming an Academy by Autumn this year.

In addition, “Free Schools” which will also enjoy Academy status can be set up by parents groups, teachers, charities, trusts and voluntary groups. The planning framework is being liberalised in order to facilitate the location of schools within a variety of buildings.

Accordingly, Council:

- 1) Welcomes this innovative policy by the Conservative-led Government, which Council believes will further the Borough’s reputation of being the home of First Class Education.
- 2) Urges Cabinet to ensure Barnet is at the forefront of national education policy, works constructively to assist our schools in becoming Academies and engages with all its partners to guarantee that every school is a good school for every child.