
Meeting	Cabinet
Date	24 th June 2013
Subject	An Education Strategy for Barnet 2013/14 – 2015/16
Report of	Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families
Summary	The attached report (Appendix A) sets out an Education Strategy for Barnet which has been developed in partnership with schools, governors, elected members, Barnet and Southgate College and Middlesex University. The proposed strategy sets out the framework for the Local Authority's relationship with schools to deliver the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and to continue to promote educational excellence in Barnet.

Officer Contributors	Val White, Schools, Skills and Learning Lead Commissioner Heather Storey, Senior Strategy Officer
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards Affected	All
Key Decision	Yes
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	Not applicable
Function of	Executive
Enclosures	Appendix A – Education Strategy for Barnet 2013/14- 2015/16 Appendix B – Barnet Academy Accord.
Contact for Further Information:	Heather Storey, Senior Strategy Officer, 0208 359 3057

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet approve the partnership 'Education Strategy for Barnet 2013/14- 2015/16'.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet note that progress in delivering the strategy will be monitored by Barnet's Children's Trust Board through the delivery of the Barnet Children and Young People Plan.**
- 1.3 That Cabinet endorse the proposal to amend the local authority governor appointment process put forward by the Education Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Panel and refer it to the General Functions Committee for consideration and approval.**
- 1.4 That Cabinet approve the Barnet Academy Accord template which provides a framework to define the relationship between the Council and an Academy Trust.**
- 1.5 That Cabinet authorise the Director for People to negotiate variations to the Academy Accord template for each Academy Trust as necessary.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet approval of the Barnet Children and Young People Plan 18th April 2013.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Barnet's excellent education offer makes Barnet an attractive place to live, with the reputation and quality of Barnet's schools key to the satisfaction of many residents in the borough. The attainment and achievement of Barnet's children and young people is key to delivering the council's ambition for Barnet's future growth and prosperity, supporting business and enterprise through helping young people become job ready and skilled. Schools have a unique place in a community bringing children and families together in a shared common purpose and as such, are a driving force in Barnet's plans to regenerate parts of the borough.
- 3.2 The Education Strategy for Barnet, introduced through this report, sets out how the Barnet partnership of schools, settings and other education providers will together, support the delivery of the council's priority outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan 2013–16:
 - Support families and individuals that need it through promoting independence, learning and well-being: through high quality early years provision to give children the best start in life, ensuring support for children with additional needs and identifying and meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils.
 - Improve the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study: through ensuring

that Barnet's schools are high performing and that every child can access a school that good or outstanding.

- Create the right environment to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough: through ensuring that young people are equipped with the learning and skills to progress into adulthood and that schools work in partnership to identify and meet the needs of Barnet's current and future economy

- 3.3 It provides the policy framework to deliver collective education priorities and objectives set out in Barnet Children and Young People Plan (CYPP), a partnership plan for all organisations working with children and young people in Barnet for the next three years.
- 3.4 Within the partnership approach set out in the strategy, it articulates the council's role within the education landscape that is emerging nationally and how the council will fulfil both its role as a provider of education services and as a champion for children and young people. It provides a framework for the Barnet education partnership to respond to the national policy direction of an increasingly diverse field of education providers including Academies and Free schools.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 There is a risk that key deliverables within the plan will not be carried out, which could adversely impact on the council's reputation. In order to mitigate this risk, extensive consultation was carried out with partners in developing the policy framework and priorities for the Barnet Education Strategy. The resulting final draft has been agreed by all members of the Barnet Education Strategy Project Board which includes representation from Primary, Secondary and Special Schools, Barnet and Southgate College and Middlesex University.
- 4.2 The risk of schools, governors and other stakeholders not engaging has been addressed by appropriate consultation during the course of the development of the strategy, which included over 200 governors and school attendees at conferences, 60 attendees at multi agency workshops, 100 headteachers engaged through forums and meetings and consultation with Barnet Youth Board.
- 4.3 In a fast changing policy environment there is a risk that any strategy is rapidly overtaken by further changes. This three year strategy (2013/14-15/16) sets out broad principles that have been developed to stand the test of time. Detailed delivery planning is contained in supporting working documents that can be refreshed as appropriate.
- 4.4 The Barnet Academy Accord contains a commitment by the council to support an academy in the first aftermath of a catastrophe or major incident. This commitment ensures that Barnet children, irrespective of the type of school they attend, would have their education needs met in the event of a major incident or catastrophe (such as extreme damage to the school building or a death in the school) and the disruption to their education minimised. It contains a proposition for an academy to assist the council in the event of a

local emergency that requires the assistance of schools.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 Barnet has a wide range of schools catering for families of different faiths and within the commissioning of new places, the council will seek to meet, where practical, demand for different types of faith school that offer an ethos that promotes cohesion within the borough as a place to live and study.
- 5.2 The strategy sets out a policy framework to support and promote the progress of children and young people with additional needs or at risk of underachievement, for example, children with additional learning needs, young people with poor mental health or those at economic disadvantage. The strategy identifies the partnership's approach to reduce the impact of their vulnerability and to 'narrow the gap' between their progress and that of their peers. The pupil premium, bringing additional revenue funding into the partnership, offers a new opportunity to support groups of children whose socio-economic disadvantage puts them at risk of under achievement.
- 5.2 The strategy identifies a need within Barnet to widen opportunities for young people as they transition into adulthood and work. Groups of young people are at greater risk of not being engaged in education or employment and the strategy sets out the requirements for increasing opportunities within the partnership.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 6.1 Any financial implications for the council of the Education Strategy for Barnet will be contained within the Children's Service budget (including the Dedicated Schools Grant). In relation to capital funding, the council receives an annual allocation for the maintenance of maintained schools and for commissioning new provision. In commissioning new provision, the council has committed to funding an investment package within the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy funded through government grant, borrowing and contributions from development schemes. Free School proposers apply directly to the Department for Education for capital funding.
- 6.2 The council's Medium Term Financial Strategy requires a saving of £330k from education related budgets for 2014/15. The strategy identifies the roles and the responsibilities of the council enabling an assessment of how the council can most cost effectively deliver the responsibilities of the council.
- 6.3 In relation to the Barnet Academy Accord, this contains a commitment by the council to support an academy in the first aftermath of a catastrophe or major incident. This would involve emergency, unplanned expenditure and would be subject to the council's process for approving expenditure in exceptional circumstances. Where appropriate the council would seek to be reimbursed from the relevant parties once the emergency and urgent situation was addressed. For major catastrophe's and in very particular circumstances, the Government is prepared to make emergency financial assistance available to

local authorities (as defined in section 155(4) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) in England under the Bellwin Scheme.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 The council has a vast range of statutory functions in relation to education ranging from sufficiency of suitable school places in their area, school admissions and non-attendance at school, school exclusions, special educational needs identification, assessment and provision, school finance, school curriculum, school transport, free school meals and school governance.
- 7.2 The Department for Education has compiled a list of duties on its website (<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/strategy/a00198443/sta-tutory-duties-la>), however, this is not a legal document and should not replace legal advice with regard to discharge of the council's functions.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS (Relevant section from the Constitution, Key/Non-Key Decision)

- 8.1 Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Functions – Section 3, Responsibilities of the Executive.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 9.1 This report is seeking the approval of An Education Strategy for Barnet 2013/14 – 2015/16 which is a partnership document developed by education partners for the provision of education in the borough. The quality of education in Barnet, from early years through to secondary schooling and beyond plays a crucial part in making Barnet a popular and desirable place to live. Children's achievements at all key stages are among the best in the country and a high proportion of Barnet's young people progress on to high education. Maintaining and building on this success is critical to the council's ambitions for the future growth and prosperity of the borough.
- 9.2 The strategy has been developed at a time of significant change within the education sector. The national policy direction is leading to an increasingly diverse range of education providers and further autonomy for schools, provoking much debate about changes to roles and responsibilities within local education partnerships. The Council discerned a need across the education community in Barnet for greater clarity and certainty about the borough's education strategy, not least the role that was expected of the local authority, and this document is designed to address that need and ensure that we all remain focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people
- 9.3 Alongside this diversification of the market, additional responsibilities and duties are unfolding for Local Authorities, for example, the raising of the participation age requiring all young people to remain in education, employment and/or training for longer.

- 9.4 The Mayor of London has also recently published the outcome of his enquiry into education in the capital along with a list of recommendations and actions, including to strengthen and improve the quality of teaching and learning across the capital. This enquiry has informed the development of Barnet's strategy together with national research published by the Department for Education looking into the future role for local authorities in education. Ofsted is also proposing an inspection schedule for Local Authorities in those areas where there is insufficient good or outstanding provision for children and young people.
- 9.5 Developing this strategy has provided an opportunity to review and refresh our educational partnership in Barnet in the light of the national and regional developments. It provides a local policy framework for how partners will maintain and build on the success of Barnet's current educational offer and ensure that all of Barnet's children benefit in this new and emerging landscape. The partnership of the council, schools, Barnet and Southgate College and Middlesex University have developed this strategy through a process of consultation with a range of stakeholders including schools, governors, elected members and young people. Its development has been overseen by an Education Strategy Board with representatives from council services and partner organisations.
- 9.6 Through the consultation programme of workshops, conferences and individual interviews, the partnership has developed this framework to identify and clarify the roles and responsibilities across the partnership and where we need to strengthen our efforts to ensure the high quality offer is available to all Barnet's children and young people. It provides a firm foundation from which to respond together to the opportunities and challenges both nationally and locally.
- 9.7 A Member Task and Finish group also heard evidence from schools and governors to develop recommendations for how elected members can best play their part to champion the interests of residents. These recommendations have been taken forward in the strategy. The proposed approach to streamlining the nomination of Local Authority Governors is to be referred to the General Functions Committee for consideration and approval.
- 9.8 The Education Strategy sets out a range of overarching policies and principles for our partnership, articulating the way partners work together and it identifies a number of key 'deliverables' that will be put in place going forward. The document sets out how the Council will:
- Work in partnership as champions of children and young people
 - Strive for excellence and challenge under performance
 - Champion the attainment of vulnerable children and young people and those at risk of underachievement
 - Secure sufficient high quality local provision and widen opportunities
- 9.9 Having set out a framework within the strategy for working together in partnership, the way is paved for each partner organisation to move forward to deliver the shared ambition for children and young people. The council will be exploring opportunities to develop the most effective delivery models for the education functions that fall to the local authority and other services that are

provided to schools, settings and partners. In the first instance, the council is working with headteachers to develop an options appraisal to provide a long term sustainable future for the Barnet Partnership for School Improvement that since its launch in 2011, now attracts the business of 97 schools that purchase school improvement services.

- 9.10 Appendix B contains a template Barnet Academy Accord that will be used to set out the relationship between the local authority and an Academy Trust that provides education in the borough. The agreement with each Academy Trust may vary depending on local circumstances or on the complexion of a particular Academy Trust. Academy Trusts are not obliged to enter into this accord but it offers the opportunity to set out expectations of each party, providing a firm foundation for future partnership working. In particular, sharing data and intelligence is essential to monitor the progress of Barnet's children and young people and for the Local Authority to carry out its role to monitor, challenging and champion the performance of all schools effectively.
- 9.11 The Education Strategy for Barnet will be supported by a range of other policies and plans that are either complete or are in development though a process of consultation:
- Commissioning school and learner places (see 10.1)
 - Local authority monitoring, challenge and support (see 10.1)
 - Early years Commissioning Plan (due Autumn 2013)
 - Alternative Provision Commissioning Plan (due Autumn 2013)
 - Inclusion Strategy and Commissioning Plan (due Autumn 2013)
 - Participation, progression and employability strategy (due Autumn 2013)

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Underpinning commissioning documents for the Barnet Education Strategy

- Commissioning School and Learner Places 2013/14-2015/16
- Local authority monitoring, challenge and support 2013/14

10.2 The Mayor of London Education Enquiry Report.

Background documents are available from Heather Storey, Senior Strategy Officer, 0208 359 3057

Cleared by Finance (Officer's initials)	CS
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