

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report of the Executive Director of Children’s Services

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THE VISION FOR EDUCATION IN PETERBOROUGH

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consult the Scrutiny Committee on the proposed Education vision for Peterborough in light of the changes at the national level around the increasing role of school self-improvement and the new roles of local authorities. The report suggests a way forward and the committee as asked to give its view on the proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee is asked to consider and agree the proposals in reports around the future role of the LA in supporting education in the city.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Single Delivery Plan - Programme 1 – Creating jobs through growth and improved skills and education.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In November 2010, the Department for Education published the schools White Paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’, which set out a radical reform programme for the schools system with the inference that schools would be freed from the constraints of central Government direction and teachers placed firmly at the heart of school improvement.

- 4.2 Drawing heavily on evidence from education systems around the world, its implications have been far reaching and have resulted in the many changes in the education system which were enshrined in the Education Act 2011. They key implications are -

- An increase in the number of Academies and Free Schools
- Local Authorities seeing significant funding reductions including grants and in school improvement services
- Floor standards for schools being raised and they will be raised again
- The revised Ofsted framework increasing pressure on schools with satisfactory schools now becoming “requires improvement”
- A requirement for low performing schools to join Academy chains and the encouragement of Academy led federations
- School-led school improvement replacing top-down initiatives.

- 4.3 Alongside these changes has been a changes by government of the expectation of Local Authority roles. The key roles for Peterborough as a Local Authority for education in the future will be to:

1. Support parents and families through promoting a good supply of strong schools – encouraging the development of Academies and Free Schools which reflect the local community and ensuring outstanding maintained schools.
2. Ensure fair access to all schools for every child through providing sufficient school places and a range of different schools to support the community.
3. Use their democratic mandate to stand up for the interests of parents and children.
4. Support vulnerable pupils including Looked After Children, those with Special Educational Needs and those outside mainstream education.
5. Support maintained schools performing below the floor standards to improve quickly or convert to Academy status with a strong sponsor, and support all other schools which wish to collaborate with them to improve educational performance. Likewise work with academy governors to ensure all schools exceed the government floor targets on standards and progress.
6. Support schools to develop their own school improvement strategies and work between schools within the city and traded with those schools outside of the area.

4.4 Peterborough has continued to provide a full education service for its schools and little has changed since the authority was established under local government re-organisation in 1996. The national incentives that previously set the school improvement structure are no longer valid. In addition:

- Peterborough Schools' continue to underperform in the national picture and must improve. Key data provides strong evidence that maintaining the current approach to intervention is not an option
- Peterborough has a fast growing child population – 36.3% growth in 0-4 years in last 10 years
- It is becoming more ethnically diverse and the authority need to cater for everyone's needs
- There are areas of significant poverty and the health indicators for the community are worse than statistical neighbour

4.5 The national and local factors combined provide a compelling rationale for change as Peterborough embraces its new strategic role at a time of financial austerity. The authority has already committed to becoming a strategic commissioning authority and recognises the need for modernising its approach to school improvement in order to accelerate improved outcomes in a new landscape.

5. KEY ISSUES

Designing a New Education Service

5.1 In order to address the situation outlines in section 4, there has been a significant amount of research commissioned externally to help inform the authority around best practice and how to address areas of concern. This research identified the effective characteristics of high performing authorities:

- A passion for all the children and young people in their area to succeed;
- Undertaking forensic analysis and application of data – both hard and soft
- Good knowledge of and relationships with schools with regular visits and meetings where the LA is willing to intervene early and hold honest and sometimes difficult conversations with Heads and Governors
- There are strong collaborative partnerships with the LA playing a significant brokerage role in school improvement e.g. where outstanding schools use their strengths to support others
- Good quality research is used with partners
- The LA employ highly effective staff who are either Ofsted and/or SIP trained and often come from a successful headship themselves to work with schools
- The LA understand school leadership is key and find ways of growing their own

outstanding leaders, attract people to the area and develop and utilise the skills of successful head teachers.

- Strategically revisit and plan for the future, developing new approaches in partnership with schools

5.2 Peterborough Council has been considering the need to do things differently in supporting school improvement at a time when their role in education has changed, and is continuing to change. It is now timely to fast track a clear strategy of change that recognises:

1. The responsibility for much of education lies with individual schools – a strategy is needed to support them whilst they take over a wider remit
2. Strong school to school partnerships are required by the DfE and are shown to be effective by authorities that have successfully implemented them. Existing school led partnerships do however demonstrate that a number of Peterborough schools have considerable strengths that with incentive could support more schools in the area and disseminate best practice.
3. The Local Authority is responsible for strategic leadership which requires them to have robust engagement with school leaders as well as ensuring schools have access to the services they need to help drive up standards.
4. The new model must be economically affordable but highly credible in education expertise – therefore smaller but more strategic

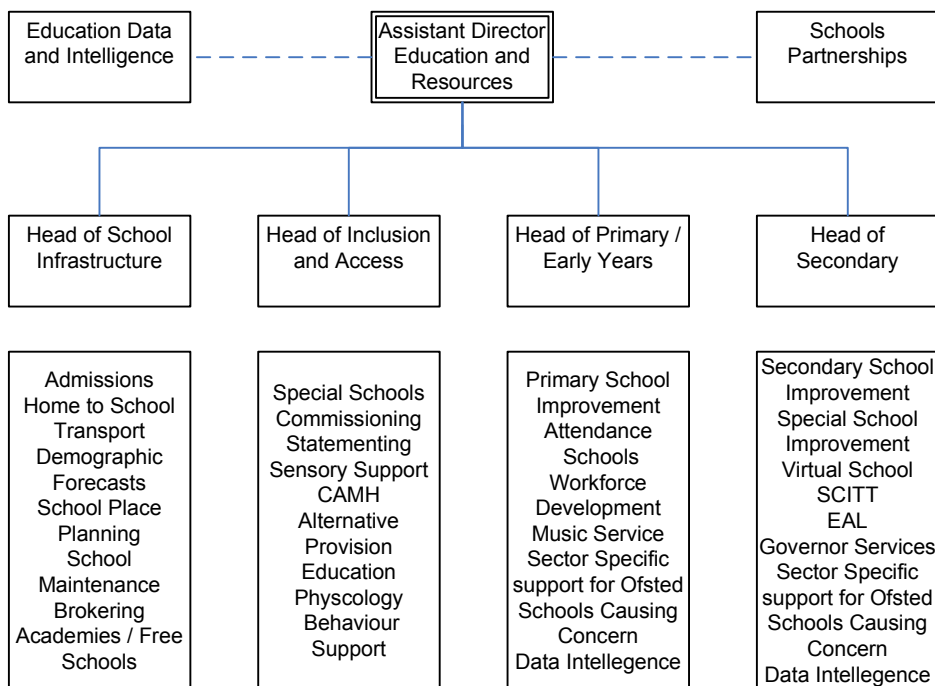
5.3 In order to address these roles and ensuring further improvement in outcomes two areas have been considered going forward–

1. Leadership and Delivery in the Local Authority
2. Ensuring an effective school to school partnership(s)

Leadership and Delivery in the Local Authority

5.4 It is key that there is a robust strategic relationship between Local Authority officers and the leadership of schools through a highly experienced and credible leadership team. It is also required that the new Ofsted inspection of Local Authority services is considered in developing a new function. In designing a new structure, consideration has also been given to the requirements placed upon the local authority around school improvement. The role of the Director of Children's Services is educational outcomes remains unaltered despite many changes in the education landscape. The Education Act 1996 makes clear that regardless of the type of the school a child attends (including academies), the Director is responsible for the outcomes of all children within the authority. Appendix 1 outlines these considerations.

5.5 It is therefore proposed the following structure is developed -



5.6 The new structure focuses the education service into 4 Heads of Service. The key features include –

1. Education Data and Intelligence – Data and intelligence should go beyond just providing just school based, pupil and SEN data and completing statistical returns. It is the backbone to Peterborough’s statutory responsibility of ensuring educational excellence and taking decisive action in poorly performing schools. A new intelligence framework is required to create systems that collect all data, including soft information that can be converted to intelligence which allows for early intervention when needed but also identification of the very best practice for dissemination. Added value areas include levels of exclusions, levels of pupils seeking to move to a different school, first preferences from parents, complaints from parents, staff or residents, governor vacancies, staff turnover and vacancies, and staff sickness. The aim is to create pictures and data mine patterns that allow for early conversations with school improvement staff and school leaders that are challenging and seek early interventions.
2. School Infrastructure – this function is currently managed between two different teams and it is proposed to bring these together with a staff consultation due to start imminently. This is a key pressure area for the authority in meeting its statutory requirements in terms of providing school places.
3. Inclusion and access remains a key pressure of the city in supporting the most vulnerable children in the city. The role is currently vacant and it is proposed to fill this role shortly.
4. Primary / Secondary – It is proposed to create two separate roles to reflect the different evolution and requirements of the sectors. These roles will lead on the new approach to school improvement including effective intervention in schools causing concern but will also manage a range of responsibilities / services that impact upon outcomes. These roles will be key in developing the school to school partnership.
5. School Partnerships are key and need to be recognised in the delivery of outcomes for the city. It is the intention to commission activities through these partnership.

5.7 Further discussion is needed around the role and management of the Pupil Referral Service going forward following the recommendations of the Taylor report on alternative education. The PRS is a key service in the city and more focus is need on supporting behavioural issues in schools and many successful developments are being made in this area.

5.8 In order to meet the new requirements of a commissioning organisation and to develop the

school to school support model, an exercise has been undertaken to review the current services delivered by the Local Authority and to consider them under 3 headings –

- Retained – those services / activities that are either statutory and need to remain within Children’s Services or those services which are considered to be of high importance to the organisation.
- School-to-School Support Partnership / Devolved to Schools – services that over time could be devolved / commissioned to the school to school partnership for the wider benefit of schools
- Potential Areas for External Commissioning / Trading – these are areas which intend to be retained but further work will be undertaken to see whether these could be externalised or be expanded to operate on a trading basis.

5.9 Retained Services

- Commission and quality assurance of the School to School Partnership and the services the LA devolves.
- Data & Intelligence on schools and their performance.
- Develop market for support functions to support schools and the quality assurance of the suppliers
- Coordinating education policy and strategy for City
- Brokering function for school operations e.g. Academy trusts, university technical colleges.
- Asset Management i.e. school buildings
- School Admissions
- School place planning
- Support for improving attendance
- Advice, challenge and monitoring of school improvement
- Schools causing concern – intervening in schools which are below floor standards or an in an Ofsted category and preventing other schools from becoming a cause for concern.
- Statutory requirements around assessment, moderation and reporting to the DfE
- Statutory assessments of special education needs and vulnerable groups such as elective home education, children missing education and LAC outcomes.
- Commissioning specialist places for high needs children
- Educational psychology service
- Exclusions and Pupil Referral Services

5.10 School-to-School Support Partnership / Devolved to Schools

- School Improvement
- HT Partnerships forums and conferences
- Support for development school governors including forums and training
- Information and Guidance
- Behaviour support e.g. BESD outreach services
- Sensory Support – much of this service is currently delivered in schools.
- Support for Children with English as an Additional Language
- Early Years Quality Assurance (EYFS moderation/network)
- Autism support
- Alternative provision
- Speech and Language Services
- CAMH – mental health support

5.11 Potential Areas for External Commissioning / Trading

- Statutory Assessment of SEN
- Educational Psychologists

- Parent Partnership
- Alternative Education Provision

5.12 Further work is required with schools to assess the pace in which these functions can be delivered and developed by schools. An effective school to school partnership is needed to develop this provision and until that is in place, the LA will continue to support these functions.

Ensuring an effective school to school partnership(s)

5.13 There is emerging evidence that effective school-to-school collaboration is central to whole system improvement strategies, it is also a responsibility of local authorities to take the initiative in promoting them.

“The primary responsibility for improvement rests with schools, and the wider system should be designed so that our best schools and leaders can take greater responsibility, leading improvement work across the system.” (White Paper: The Importance of Teaching, DfE 2010)

5.14 One of the key development areas for the DfE is around the development of teaching schools. Teaching schools are part of the government’s drive to give schools more freedom and to enable schools to take increasing responsibility for managing the education system. Funding that previously was passed to the Local Authority and Higher Education providers will now be channelled into teaching schools. The vision for teaching schools is to have established a network of around 500 outstanding teaching school alliances by 2014 that will drive significant improvement in the quality of professional practice, improving the attainment of every child. There is currently no teaching school in the Peterborough area but there are two schools bidding to be part of the 500 nationally from September 2014 and the Local Authority is supporting this development. Teaching schools help to cement the need for school to school partnership. Further details on teaching schools can be found in Appendix 2.

5.15 The identification of schools as leaders of school improvement has profound implications for the future activity and structure of LAs. The rationale for Peterborough now taking a strong lead in supporting and promoting a school to school partnership (StSP) includes:

1. Much school improvement work is the responsibility of schools and they should hold the budgets, make decisions and ‘own’ the vision and strategic approach – they may need help to do this consistently well across all providers
2. Some schools need clear incentives for them to commit to a collaborative arrangement and the local authority, as the leader of education excellence for the City is best placed to facilitate this
3. The local authority wants and needs a strong relationship with schools in order to identify concerns early on and broker improvement before the school has already failed a school to school partnership can provide an effective and efficient mechanism for engagement. (This means being able to have difficult conversations with schools and them responding positively).
4. Research provides evidence that school to school partnerships are valued by schools and local authorities as important in improving educational outcomes, if they are well constituted and run, by drawing on the strengths of successful schools. However, it is too soon for hard evidence of success, and the social context of differing authorities has not be gauged, but schools themselves provide information to support the approach. In some situations eg when a strong school supports a school in challenging circumstances – there is a view that a ‘broker’ outside of the schools involved, is needed

5.16 Peterborough already has a school-to-school partnership working of which the majority of schools are members. The Peterborough Learning Partnership (<http://www.peterboroughlearning.org.uk>) was originally formed in 2002 in response to the Excellence in Cities programme which developed partnerships to work together to raise standards in schools facing a range of serious issues. These issues included FSM, SEN (especially number of statements), fixed term/permanent exclusions, dual registration, mental health services involvement, turnover/mobility, fresh starts for challenging

children, attainment on entry, and percentage of children having pre-school experience. It originally covered 14 schools and although the original scheme has ended, the benefits have been recognised and school numbers have now expanded to over 50. Take up is lower in secondary schools though. Schools operate on a subscription basis and the partnership is delivering a nationally regarded programme of CPD and support for improving schools. There are currently proposals in place for PLP to become a community interest company. Schools understand the principle of school to school partnership and view this a step to keep the 'family' of schools in Peterborough together. The Local Authority completely supports these moves and is keen to support PLP to develop and become the school to school partnership for Peterborough. However, the partnership needs to grow, evolve and mature whilst it takes on a wider remit and responsibility and the LA's role is support this development.

- 5.17 In order to develop the school partnership, the Local Authority is proposing two actions –
1. Investment into creating capacity within PLP to enable services to be developed to take on the additional roles from the Local Authority and to engage the remaining schools to join the partnership.
 2. Deliver a pilot to encourage school to school working for wider impact on outcomes around school improvement.
- 5.18 Schools need to own their approach to school improvement. However, there are some interesting models from across the country to support the development of schools helping schools to improve. A suggestion has been made to school on a potential method to develop school to school support. Appendix 3 outlines the proposal made to schools which is currently being considered and discussed.
- 5.19 The approach develops the principle that schools work in clusters to target underachievement and develop as a group. The clusters are overseen with a central board for reviewing outcomes, data and the priorities for improvement. It will be led by schools for the benefit of schools with the local authority being an equal partner around the table. It is intended that the local authority would provide funding for agreed improved in outcomes along with resources from schools and the success of interventions would be reviewed by the board and shared if successful. Given the responsibility that rests with Local Authorities for outcomes of all schools, academies and free schools would be part of the process. Support would be brokered by the board and the clusters through other schools, PLP, academy trusts, teaching schools the private sector, other authorities and from the resources within the local authority. The key benefit is that expertise in schools is shared, schools receive funding to support other schools and there are excellent development opportunities for staff to work in other schools. The ultimate aim is for the school partnership to own a model to drive improvement and this needs to be an objective of any new ways of working.
- 5.20 The proposals are currently being discussed and further updates will be made to the task and finish group on how schools wish to proceed.

Timescales

- 5.21 The key dates for delivering the changes are as follows –
- April – School Task / Finish groups established to discuss proposals
June – Staffing consultation / detailed restructure proposals
September – new arrangements in place.

Other Developments

- 5.22 In addition to the reforms of the education function and the role in school improvement, a number of other programmes are running to develop our approach to education in the city -
- Behaviour outreach services (Behaviour strategy) to ensure schools have the strategy

- and support to keep children in mainstream settings.
- A pilot programme for Home to School Support workers to bridge gap on social care issues and provide much needed capacity into groups of schools. The roles would be matched funded by schools and be supported by social care.
- Support for EAL (EAL Strategy)
- Planning for in-year growth / longer term forecasting of pupil demographics / socio-economic profile (School Organisation Plan)
- Development of services for SEN (SEN Strategy)

5.23 These proposals will be shared with the committee at future meetings.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The need for change outlined above will impact significantly across the city. There is currently dialogue ongoing with schools over the change and staff will be fully consulted on the potential structural change that results from these proposals in June.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 A full consultation will take place in the new year once the strategy has been fully developed. Key stakeholders will be involved in the development of the strategy during the autumn.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 Following feedback from the committee and schools, a final response document will be produced to outline the detailed changes proposed.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

9.1 None

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1 – Key Statutory Roles of Local Authorities in School Improvement
 Appendix 2 – Teaching Schools
 Appendix 3 – School Improvement Boards

Appendix 1 – Key Statutory Roles of Local Authorities in School Improvement

The Local Authority's key responsibilities are to achieve educational excellence, fair access to services and services for vulnerable children and young people as described by the DfE¹.

- Working with headteachers, school governors and academy sponsors/principals to promote educational excellence for all children and young people and tackle underperformance
- Taking rapid action in relation to poorly performing schools, using intervention powers in maintained schools and considering alternative structural/operational solutions when needed;
- Ensuring robust school improvement strategies which can be delivered through an open market
- Promoting school to school collaboration to support local leadership in tackling cross cutting problems
- Support for maintained schools in delivering the national curriculum, early years foundation stage (EYFS), and leadership and management.
- Maintenance of the Schools Forum, finance scheme for maintained schools and financial information
- Undertake specific responsibilities in relation to staffing and governance of maintained schools (includes training and information for governors).
- A diverse supply of strong schools
- Acting as effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children,

In addition Peterborough will want to be mindful of their duty/power to:

- Ensure religious education is delivered in accordance with regulations including the support of SACRE
- Undertake responsibilities of KS1 and KS2 assessments
- Have regard to statutory guidance on sex education issued by the secretary of state
- Help facilitate any Ofsted investigation of a parental complaint about a maintained school
- Issue a performance, standards and safety notice to a governing body of a school causing concern
- Require a school eligible for intervention for the purpose of school improvement to enter an 'arrangement' eg federation
- Prepare a statement of action following a section 5 Ofsted inspection if a school is placed in category
- Appoint additional governors or an Interim Executive Board or suspend delegation in order to achieve school improvement if needed

¹ *Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services – Department for Education 2012.*

Appendix 2 – Teaching Schools

The White Paper The intention of Government is to see 500 teaching school alliances taking responsibility for many of the functions that have formerly rested with local authorities and with higher education institutions. This intention is reflected in the switching of funding and in the encouragement of outstanding schools to become leaders in teaching school alliances.

Teaching schools are part of the government's drive to give schools more freedom and to enable schools to take increasing responsibility for managing the education system.

The vision for teaching schools is to have established a network of around 500 outstanding teaching school alliances by 2014 that will drive significant improvement in the quality of professional practice, improving the attainment of every child.

Teaching schools will play a fundamental role in developing a self-sustaining system where:

1. trainee teachers learn from the best teachers, supported by a culture of coaching and mentoring
2. professional development is school-based and classroom focused – teachers, support staff and leaders improve through exposure to excellent practice within and beyond their immediate school, through observation, mentoring, coaching, practice, reflection and sharing with peers
3. talent development and distributed leadership are the norm – staff demonstrating potential are encouraged to lead and are given structured and stretching opportunities to grow and develop
4. leaders have local knowledge and can identify where key resources and expertise lie

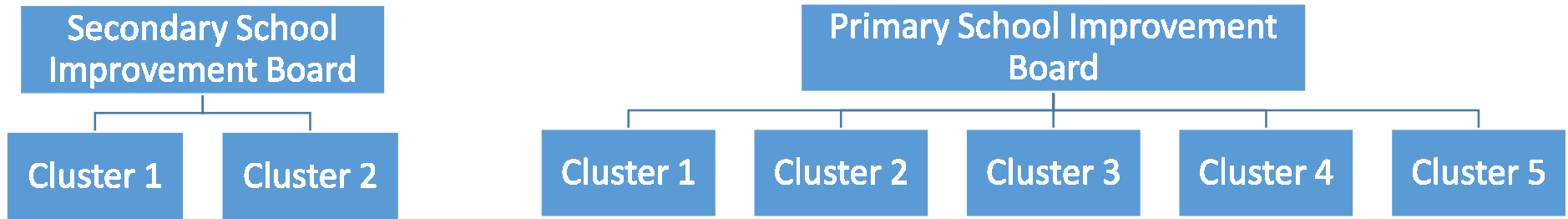
As well as offering training and support, teaching schools will identify and co-ordinate expertise in partner schools, using the best leaders and teachers to:

- play a greater role in recruiting and training new entrants to the profession (initial teacher training)
- lead peer-to-peer professional and leadership development (continuing professional development)
- identify and develop leadership potential (succession planning and talent management)
- provide support for other schools
- designate and broker specialist leaders of education (SLEs)
- engage in research and development activity

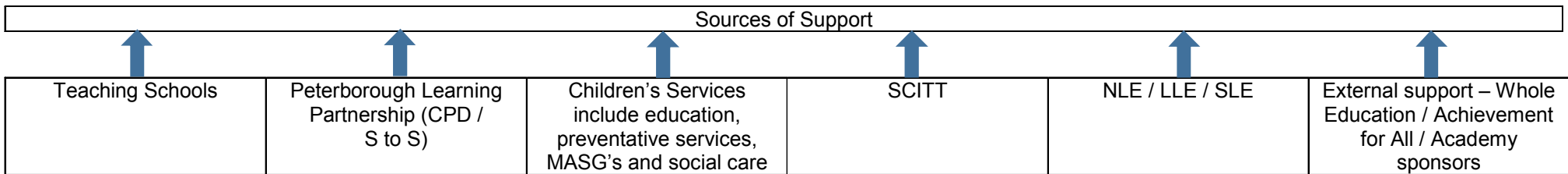
Collaboration is at the heart of the teaching school model. All teaching schools will be expected to work with a number of schools and other strategic partners to form a teaching school alliance. Working together, the alliance will deliver support for other schools in their wider network to:

- play a greater role in recruiting and training new entrants to the profession (initial teacher training)
- lead peer-to-peer professional and leadership development (continuing professional development)
- identify and develop leadership potential (succession planning and talent management)
- provide support for other schools
- designate and broker SLEs
- engage in research and development activity

Appendix 3 – Developing School to School Support – potential option – School Improvement Boards



<p><u>LA Role / Function</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to support strategy • Issues, monitors and evaluates formal agreement with clusters • Works with clusters to create a system to identify schools at risk of underperforming and those offering good practice • Retrieves, interprets and provides appropriate information for cluster • Provides operational framework for cluster • Provides liaison with cluster and DfE, Elected members and other bodies • Co-ordinates communication between schools, clusters and SI board • Facilitates the sharing of good practice • Evaluates the effectiveness of the strategy in supporting improving standards and value for money • Ensures compliance with statutory requirements. • Brokering external support 	<p><u>School Improvement Board Function</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers requirements in formal agreement with LA • Oversees constitution and effectiveness of cluster • Ensure appropriate schools in receipt of support • Supports the LA in relation to school improvement issues • Disseminates a profile of success and good practice across the city. 	<p><u>Cluster Function</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the self improvement of the whole cluster so that all children achieve their best • Work together to pool cluster resources and share expertise in order to improve the practice of all schools within the cluster • Works collaboratively to prevent schools in our cluster falling below floor standards or being graded as inadequate by Ofsted • Focus primarily on improving standards of teaching and learning and leadership and management.
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