



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DATE:	Thursday, 13 June 2024

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Children, Young People and Education
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	N

SUBJECT: School Effectiveness Partnership Strategy 2023-2026

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackburn with Darwen have operated a borough wide sector led school improvement system for over ten years. This means that schools and settings work collaboratively in small School Improvement Groups (SIGs), which are clusters of around 12 schools, to plan and deliver improvements in attainment, achievements, and outcomes. School Improvement Groups are accountable to the School Effectiveness Board (SEB). Following the pandemic and given the changing educational landscape outlined in the Schools White Paper 2022, an independent review of Blackburn with Darwen's School Improvement Strategy and Model (last reviewed in 2018) was undertaken. The review was carried out just over 18 months ago, by Professor Steve Munby, an advisor to the Department for Education (DfE) and leading authority on education system and leadership reform.

The review involved engaging with key stakeholders; Headteachers, Principals, CEO of Trusts operating in Blackburn with Darwen (BWD), the Dioceses, the Local Authority and DfE. Following the review a further period of consultation took place focused on the outcomes of the review and the six recommendations made.

The review findings and consultation feedback were then shared at BWD's Partnership Conference in March 2023. In September 2023 the co-produced revised School Effectiveness Partnership Strategy for 2023-2026 was shared with BWD Stakeholders at the newly refreshed School Effectiveness Board.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Acknowledge and support the strategy including the work of the wider system and cross sector leadership.
- Note the 5 missions, 6 Public Commitments and 6 School Effectiveness Partnership Priorities for 2023-2026 outlined below.
- Continue to champion the collaborative work already in place noting how it will used to drive forward improvements across the borough for schools and settings in Blackburn with Darwen.
- note the position with School Improvement funding as set out in the report.

3. BACKGROUND

The strategy builds on the Council's Corporate Mission,

'Every child and young person have the opportunities to fulfil their potential.'

And it outlines the following:

5 Missions;

- Every child and adult in the borough to feel proud to belong to Blackburn with Darwen.
- Every child and young person to be a powerful learner, continuing to improve on previous best. Progress is our key focus.
- Every teacher in every classroom to be as good as they can be in what they teach and how they teach.
- Strong and transparent commitment across all schools and partners to collective responsibility for the children and young people of Blackburn with Darwen
- A rich and broad educational offer that is powerful and outward facing so that Blackburn with Darwen is a compelling place to teach, to lead and to learn.

6 Public Commitments;

- We will work together to provide civic leadership in Blackburn with Darwen and as schools and trusts we will act as "anchor institutions". We will do all we can to advance education as a wider common good, creating the conditions for purposeful collaboration with other schools and with other public sector partners, the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector and stakeholders.
- We will be ambitious for children and young people. Always setting the bar high, even if it makes us feel uncomfortable, because by working together anything is possible.
- We will seek to be a learning community. We will identify best practice and research to generate a professional learning community. We will not be afraid to ask for help and we will offer support and expertise wherever we can, openly sharing and exchanging data and intelligence.
- We will focus on quality and impact. We will hold ourselves to account with clear goals that clearly link to outcomes for children and young people. We will be open to the scrutiny of others, knowing that accountability and review is key to the continued success of any learning community.
- We will celebrate diversity. We will respect the diversity of schools across the borough and we will see this as a strength, whilst ensuring no one is excluded or left behind. We will continue to acknowledge the respective accountability roles of the Dioceses, the Regional Department for Education Director, the boards and CEOs of multi-academy trusts and the Local Authority with regard to schools, academies and early years settings in Blackburn with Darwen.
- We will lead with moral purpose. We will be committed to the success of children and adults in all of our schools and settings across the borough. We will celebrate the successes of our partners as we would our own.

6 agreed joint priorities that all schools across the borough will collectively work on;

- A common speech, language, and communication framework delivered across all Early Years settings.
- Improving attainment for all children.
- Improving emotional health and wellbeing of all children of young people.
- A consistent approach to improving school attendance.
- Delivering on a high-quality RSHE curriculum.
- Improving provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The School Effectiveness Partnership Strategy also provides the current education context and further details on how schools and settings will continue to work collaboratively in School Improvement Groups around the key identified priorities. Progress towards achieving the outcomes will involve creative problem solving to overcome barriers which is the focus of the refreshed School Effectiveness Board that meets three times a year.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

This three-year co-produced partnership strategy builds on the borough's well-established school led system approach. Clear roles, responsibilities and communication channels are in place that enable

all stakeholders to work collaboratively, fostering a coordinated effort towards achieving the key priorities, mitigating against the risk of underperformance of schools.

Next Steps Include:

- Supporting the work of the School Improvement Groups including facilitating collaborative working and helping schools to achieve their key priorities over the next three years.
- Supporting the School Effectiveness Board with the quality assurance of School Improvement Group action plans, highlighting best practice and reducing the barriers to children achieving their full potential.
- Supporting the work of the School Effectiveness Board ensuring it robustly monitors, challenges and supports the progress of the School Improvement Groups.
- Supporting the School Effectiveness Partnership in fulfilling the 5 key missions and 6 public commitments.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications with regards to the strategy.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications with the refreshed School Effectiveness Partnership Strategy.

Funding for the delivery of activity in support of this Strategy, particularly in relation to School Improvement, was previously made available by the Government through a Monitoring and Brokering Grant. That grant is no longer provided but the Council has a reserve (of unused grant) which is currently being used to fund School Improvement expenditure.

At 1st April 2023, the balance of the Monitoring and Brokering Reserve was £486k. Of this, £45k is being used to upgrade the Liquid Logic System and £215k was used to fund School Improvement expenditure in 2024/25 leaving a balance of £226k at 31st March 2024

At the rate of expenditure incurred in 2023/24, it is anticipated that the Monitoring and Brokering Reserve will be used by the end of the current financial year at which there will be no further funding for School Improvement activity unless new funding is identified. The extent to which this is possible in the context of the Council's current financial position may have a bearing in the delivery of the Strategy as set out.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications with regards to the strategy.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications as the School Effectiveness Partnership is responsible for the delivery of this strategy building on and using the well-established structures and collaborations across schools and settings to work toward better outcomes for all children and young people.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

As outlined above a full independent review took place which involved consultations with

- School Improvement Lead Headteachers
- Local Authority Head of Service for School Effectiveness and SEND
- National Leader of Education
- Representative for the Diocese of Blackburn - Anglican
- Representative from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford
- Representative from the DfE and Regional Director
- CEOs of all Multi Academy Trusts operating in Blackburn with Darwen

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Michelle Holt
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DATE:	14 th May 2024
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	Appendix 1 – School Effectiveness Partnership Strategy
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