

Education and Skills Director's Report to Governors

SPRING 2017

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***DEVELOPING THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF
YOUR GOVERNING
BODY***

For more information
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'Family Friendly' Barnet and Resilience

Summary

We know that Barnet is a great place to live for most families, children and young people. Barnet has some of the best schools in the country, some of the best parks and open spaces in London, and low levels of unemployment among the adult population. The borough is benefitting from large-scale regeneration projects, which are creating more housing, infrastructure and opportunities for all. In Barnet, most children and young people achieve well and successfully make the transition into adulthood

Our vision is focused on making Barnet an even better place to live for all families. Our strategy to achieve this is to focus on developing families' resilience, which evidence tells us is pivotal to delivering the best outcomes for children and young people.

The term resilience is used to describe a situation when good outcomes occur for individuals or families in the face of adversity. An approach based on resilience involves looking for strengths and opportunities that we can build on, rather than for issues or problems to treat.

Clearly there are strengths and opportunities in Barnet we can build on. There is a growing body of evidence which outlines ways that we can support parents and families to be more resilient and these will need to be incorporated into practice across the borough. Schools play a central role in promoting resilience in relation to both poverty and family difficulties. This can relate to factors such as academic stimulus, support by teachers, learning opportunities and access to friends and peers.

Staff from Barnet Education and Skills are working in partnership with schools, public health and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) in producing an Action Plan for how we can support children, young people and their families in schools in being more resilient. Further information to follow.

For more information about the Barnet vision please see the Children and Young People's Plan:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:d2bb54cc-5085-4fae-81b6-1ee1179f0fd3/Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Plan%202016-20%20final.pdf>

To note the information above

Governors' Role

All Governors

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Summary

Thank you to all Governing Bodies, who completed and returned the Effective Governance Checklist in the Autumn Term 2016.

All schools who submitted a return before the 31 December 2016 will receive individual feedback from the LA in the spring term. In response to comments received last year, the feedback will be more school specific. The forms have been amended to allow you to complete these in autumn 2017 and provide a year-on-year benchmark.

If your Governing Body did not submit its audit before the deadline of 16 December and still wishes to do so, please complete and **return to Sarah Beaumont before the end of January 2017** in order to receive feedback.

A number of key themes have so far emerged from the audit:

1. A number of Governing Bodies continue to highlight that they do not have formal succession plans in place for leadership positions and that this is a key area of concern. To help address this issue, Governor Services ran courses last year for Aspiring Chairs and Vice-Chairs, for new Chairs, and on the role of the Committee Chair. Further courses can be included in future programmes to continue to support Governing Bodies.

2. A number of Governing Bodies flagged that they were not always as involved as they could be in driving school improvement through the development of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the Self Evaluation Form (SEF), and in developing the vision and ethos of the school.

Courses to help support Governors in these areas are planned in the summer term.

3. The importance of ensuring that all Governors undertake continuous professional development and attend Governor training remains a priority.

Governors' Role

All maintained schools to complete and return Audit to Sarah Beaumont at sarah.beaumont@barnet.gov.uk by Tuesday 31 January 2017 if not already submitted.

All Free Schools and Academies to respond at their discretion

For information by Contact

All Governors

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Summary

Why is Attendance Important?

“New research [provides] further evidence that missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances” - Schools Minister Nick Gibb, March 2016

Why is Attendance a Priority for Barnet Schools?

- Barnet is ranked 98th out of 152 LAs for primary attendance
- Barnet is ranked 15th out of 152 LAs for secondary attendance
- Barnet’s aim is to be in the top 10% of LAs nationally (i.e. ranked 15th or higher)

Appointments in Barnet

- In 2014/15 and 2015/16, Unauthorised absence was in line with the national average
- Authorised absence was above the national average (ranked 122nd out of 152 LAs)
- The authorisation of Appointment absences is particularly poor in Barnet over the past 3 years

What do Effective Schools do to Promote Good Attendance?

We have found that common elements in successful schools are:

- Good attendance is part of a whole school culture and is driven by senior leaders *and* governors
- There is an attendance champion in the school who is tenacious in driving improvements
- The school has clear actions to bring about improvement and governors know what these actions are and the impact they are having
- The active involvement of children – including the effective use of incentives
- Regular slots in newsletters encouraging parents to make appointments out of school time
- Regularly providing term dates
- Encouraging parents to make routine appointments in the school holidays
- Give parents some guidelines e.g. don’t take siblings out of school at the same time
- If an appointment must be in school time, then encourage them to take the minimum amount of time, so children lose as little learning time as possible

Governors can support leaders in promoting good attendance by:

- Setting an example – attend meetings and ensure your children attend school regularly
- Promote the importance of good attendance by having discussions with parents and children
- Support the school’s policies
- Have a thorough understanding of what the school is doing either to tackle poor attendance, or if successful, what strategies are particularly impactful

Governors’ Role

For information by Contact

All Governors

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Summary

Introduction

In April 2016, Barnet entered into a new seven year strategic partnership with Cambridge Education (CE) to provide the council's education services. The partnership was established in consultation with Barnet schools following a detailed options appraisal and procurement process as set out in the report approved by the Council on 8 December 2015. The aim of establishing the partnership was to:

- Maintain Barnet's excellent education offer;
- Maintain an excellent relationship between the Council and schools;
- Achieve the budget savings target for the service up to 2020.

The partnership is governed by a series of boards on which schools are represented that steer the strategic direction of the partnership in delivering school improvement, services for children with special educational needs and school place planning.

Progress since commencement of contract

The key objectives in the first year of the new strategic partnership were:

- The seamless transition of services at the start of the contract;
- Business as usual – delivery in accordance with service specifications, including existing traded services;
- Completion of detailed service reviews in the first 100 working days of the contract, then implementation of agreed actions.

There was a successful TUPE transfer of staff from the council's Education and Skills service to Cambridge Education and from its catering service to Cambridge Education's catering sub-contractor, ISS, on 1 April. There was a smooth transfer of all services previously provided to schools and the council, and new governance and performance monitoring regimes have been put in place.

100-day reviews

Between May and August Cambridge Education established a number of service reviews and all of these '100-day' reviews were completed by September. Each review was led by an external adviser with specialist knowledge and experience in the service area. The reviews were undertaken to provide a clear understanding of current delivery and performance of the service area and to identify opportunities for service improvement, business development and efficiency savings within the context of national and local requirements over the period of the contract.

The reviews involved:

- Scrutiny of a range of documentation across the service areas;
- Meetings/interviews with Heads of Service and team leaders;
- Discussions with staff;
- Stakeholder meetings;
- Desktop analysis of current performance data.

Overall the key findings were very positive with most services reported to be effective and well-regarded by schools. Relationships between services and schools were found to be good and a sound basis for an ongoing tri-partite partnership between Cambridge Education, the council and schools.

However, some aspects of statutory SEN service provision were performing less well. The council had alerted Cambridge Education to weaknesses in this area during the

procurement process. In some cases, assessments were taking longer than required and some schools reported difficulties in liaising and communicating with the service. The review also identified that more could be done to communicate effectively with parents and families. As a result of the review, changes were introduced in June and July and performance has improved significantly, as indicated below.

Traded services with schools were found to be of good quality with some having potential for expansion. One area of concern, however, was the traded Governing Body clerking service, which is relatively expensive and expenditure is exceeding income.

Catering

Cambridge Education's catering sub-contractor, ISS, carried out a similar baseline assessment of catering services. Since contract commencement they have worked closely with schools to ensure that catering staff in their kitchens receive training appropriate to their roles and that school kitchens meet the highest health and safety standards.

Over the summer all school kitchens were wi-fi enabled to ensure access to CYPAD, an online kitchen management system that allows kitchen managers to order supplies, manage staff pay, etc. CYPAD also allows parents to pre-select and order meals for their children from their homes.

A programme of visits to schools is currently being delivered by the ISS development manager to enable discussion about service delivery and the opportunities for schools to attract investment from ISS in their kitchens.

A separate Catering Contract Management Board has been established to discuss and resolve issues as they arise and to monitor the performance of ISS against the agreed Key Performance Indicators.

Changes arising from the 100-day reviews

1. Organisational structure

The Education and Skills service is being re-organised to increase the efficient use of business support resources and to provide a stronger infrastructure for supporting the growth of traded services.

In order to ensure efficient and effective business support functions across a range of specialist areas (communications, complaints and members' enquiries, FOIs, data, IT systems, financial administration) most of these services will now be brought together under a single Corporate Services umbrella, under the direction of an Assistant Director, School Access and Corporate Services.

In order to hit the aspirational growth targets that are needed to balance the budget over the period of the contract, it is necessary to develop a common approach and infrastructure for traded services by merging some traded services with BPSI and developing a Barnet Partnership infrastructure for traded services. The new Barnet Partnership team will offer a one stop shop for traded services to schools whilst also developing common systems and processes and a centralised approach to business planning, service pricing and marketing.

2. Investment in IT systems

The reviews have identified that IT systems and applications in use across the service are fit for purpose and cost effective but in some cases systems or applications have not been used effectively to date or there is duplication between applications or databases, which is often wasteful in terms of staff time.

The main priority developments proposed as a result of the 100 day reviews are:

- Upgrading the existing servers and creation of additional data storage space;
- Improvements in the existing functions of the main pupil database (Synergy) and development of new workflows in line with the revised processes identified in the SEN service review. Users in the SEN team will be trained on any new functions and workflows which are added;
- A review of scanning capability available to the SEN team and development of a short-term approach to scanning, while considering longer-term options for the implementation of an EDRMS system (Electronic Document and Records Management System) in liaison with the council and CSG (who continue to provide the IT service to the Education and Skills service through their contract with the council);

3. Efficiency savings

The main areas of potential efficiency savings identified include bringing together business support functions, reducing the cost of SEN transport and reducing the cost of printing.

Over time, staff savings will be possible as a result of the re-organisation of business support functions (corporate services). Future savings will be possible by not filling vacancies and by reducing agency costs.

Efficiency savings have already been made in 2016/17 by the Transport Brokering team through the careful management of external contracts and by securing various efficiencies through the service level agreement for the provision of SEN Transport by the council's Passenger Transport Service (PTS).

Additional savings are felt to be possible through:

- Further changes to the service level agreement with PTS
- The re-tendering of services for external transport providers
- Market-testing of transport services and exploration of options for future delivery in collaboration with the council's commissioning team.

There is a substantial amount spent on printing and the storage and retrieval of hard copy documents. It is hoped to secure significant efficiencies, partly through changing staff behaviours and moving to paperless services, but mainly through the development of the proposed electronic document and records management system.

4. Business development and growth

Building on the success of the Barnet Partnership for School Improvement, the traded school improvement service, which transferred to Cambridge Education along with other services, it is proposed to develop a Barnet Partnership service that will provide a one stop shop for Barnet with Cambridge Education traded services to schools, enforcing common systems and processes across traded services and a centralised approach to business planning, service pricing and marketing.

Opportunities to sell to other local authorities, independent schools, Multi Academy Trusts, out of borough schools, Academy chains, etc. will be pursued.

CE will also explore the option of developing and marketing school performance data products – e.g. the Route MAP application that CE have developed and shared with a number of Barnet Primary schools.

CE are in the process of re-shaping governor support services. The current traded service offer is being revised in the light of feedback from schools and a new model is in development. A small team of Governor Advice Officers (GAOs) will offer strategic advisory support to Governing Bodies. Schools will be given an option of paying a higher

rate than they currently pay for these staff to clerk the governing bodies as well as providing the GAO role or of saving money by using the GAO for strategic advice whilst employing their own clerk or using a clerk engaged by the Governor Services team on an associate basis. Moving to this new model will require fewer permanently employed staff and every effort will be made to avoid redundancies.

CE are reviewing the traded offer and charging arrangements for non-statutory Educational Psychology support provided to schools. Statutory functions will continue to be carried out without charging schools. CE also plan to extend the range of traded services offered to schools by our High Incidence Support Team, with a particular focus on offering support and training to school SENCOs.

In collaboration with the council's commissioning team, CE have bid successfully for project funding (including ESF funds) for post-16 activities (e.g. in relation to NEETs).

5. Special educational needs

Key recommendations from the service reviews included a review of business processes to remove bottlenecks, identifying particular caseworkers to focus on different tasks to build up expertise, prioritising new Education, Health and Care plans to ensure they are completed on time and developing ways to increase stakeholder participation in the assessment process.

A major priority identified was the improvement in performance in relation to the completion of statutory processes. Under the SEN reforms introduced under the Children and Families Act, 2014 and a revised statutory SEN Code of Practice, which took effect in September 2015, local authorities are required to follow new procedures for assessing the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. New statutory assessments, leading to the production of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for individual pupils must now be completed within 20 weeks (previously 26 weeks) and all existing statements (approximately 2000), and learning disability assessments for college students with learning difficulties and disabilities, must be converted to EHCPs by 31 March 2018.

The 100-day review for the SEND and Inclusion service identified a number of weaknesses and insufficient progress with the transfers to EHCPs and the timely completion of new assessments. In the first quarter of 2016/17 the percentage of new assessments completed within 20 weeks was below 25%.

Following, and arising from, the review, CE has:

- Completed a Business Process Review of SEN statutory processes;
- Developed improved use of the Synergy database and associated workflows;
- Removed bottlenecks to processes (e.g. reviewed use of the Complex Needs Panel and increased delegation of decision-making);
- Established some new posts and changed reporting lines;
- Revised the transfer plan to ensure that resources are matched to the need to complete all transfers by March 2018.

The rate of completions of new assessments within 20 weeks has risen each month since June:

- July 32%
- August 63%
- September 78%
- October 88%
- November 94%

Action has also been taken to improve involvement of schools and other stakeholders in

designing processes and documentation, including:

- Co-production sessions held with school SENCoS and parents;
- A new Voice of the Child SEN forum;
- Maintaining and developing SENCo networks;
- Local Offer reviewed and improved;
- A Strategic Advisory Group established, including a range of partners, to advise on SEN strategy.

**Governors’
Role**

To note information

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by
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All Governors

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Barnet with Cambridge Education: Update on Governing Body Clerking

Summary

Background

The council has offered a clerking service to schools for many years and nearly 50% of schools buy into the service and feedback suggests high levels of satisfaction from most schools. The importance of high quality clerking of Governing Body meetings cannot be over-stated and schools clearly appreciate that this is most valuable when it is combined with high quality strategic advice on a range of school governance issues. The service transferred to Cambridge Education on 1 April 2016 and we are determined to continue to offer schools high quality support for the clerking function, whilst offering schools a range of options over how this is provided.

Feedback from schools has highlighted:

- Cost is a major factor in school choice of clerking service; cheaper alternative clerks are being sourced by many schools either from within the school or through school networks or other third parties – over 50% of schools already get their clerks in this way;
- Some Chairs have told us that their school operates with limited clerking (e.g. just for the full governing body meetings) due to the price of the local authority service;
- Accurate and timely clerking is of vital importance to schools;
- Training and strategic guidance on school governance remains key to all schools, regardless of who provides the clerking.

The Governing Body Clerking Service is a fully-traded service and income from schools needs to cover the costs of the service. Orders for the Clerking Services fell by 17% for the current academic year, meaning that the service is no longer covering operating costs. The service attracts no statutory or government funding and relies entirely on school purchases. As a result, we developed a new service offer, which we presented to a meeting for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of school governing bodies on 7th November 2016.

Proposal

Feedback was sought on the proposal that a standard local authority clerking offer could be replaced with an alternate model that separated strategic guidance from the minute taking and administration. As proposed, this had the advantages of:

- Schools being free to source their own clerk, if preferred;
- Schools having the option of using a clerk supplied by the Education and Skills service and engaged by us on an associate basis;
- Schools having the option of supplementing either of the above with strategic support from a 'Governor Advice Officer' to work with the school and clerk.

The Governor Advice Officer (GAO) would be able to monitor and quality assure the minutes provided by the clerk, provide guidance and advice to the governing body as required, facilitate training requirements and offer other important guidance. By dividing the work between lower cost 'administrative' and higher cost 'guidance' responsibilities, the proposal was intended to allow for a more cost-effective deployment of resources in order to save money.

Feedback

The feedback from the meeting with Chairs and Vice-Chairs of school governing bodies was largely negative and could be summarised into 3 key points:

1. Extra complication: with two individuals (clerk & GAO) responsible for one set of minutes, many attendees thought that both timeliness and quality may suffer;

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2. Expertise in the room: with clarification occasionally needed during a meeting, the lack of an expert clerk in the room will inevitably lead to delays or mistakes;
 3. The need for an alternative option which makes the expertise of the GAO available during a meeting and combines the role with the minute-taking/administrative function.

Conclusions

In the light of this feedback, we have looked further at the options under consideration and propose to offer schools a further option of buying in the support of a Governor Advice Officer who will also clerk Governing Body meetings. The key issue here is that this will cost schools more than they are paying for the current clerking service, because the current service is not breaking even, and it is necessary for it to do so in future. At the same time, we are looking at ways of making the service more efficient in order to keep any increase in charges to a minimum.

We will still offer schools the other options already proposed, to support those schools that wish to make savings by paying less for the minute-taking and administrative functions.

Transitional arrangements

To enable us to plan the staffing requirements in the future we first need to know which service options schools wish to buy into.

As we appreciate that schools will need time to consider and decide on which option to choose, we propose to maintain the current service offer at current prices (pro-rata) until the end of the summer term 2017. We are then offering schools the new options with effect from September 2017.

Options from September 2017

The new options from September will be:

1. Governance advice and guidance only – provided by a Governor Advice Officer (schools source their own clerks);
2. Governance advice and guidance – provided by a Governor Advice Officer - and a clerk supplied by the Governor Services team (and engaged by us on an associate basis);
3. Governor advice and guidance – provided by a Governor Advice Officer who also clerks the Governing Body meetings.

All three options will give schools the benefit of advice and support from experts in school governance on a range of school governance issues and quality assurance of governing body minutes to ensure they are suitable and ‘inspection-ready’.

Option 2 also gives schools an associate clerk at a market rate to take accurate minutes of any type of meeting.

Option 3 is the premium service in which the GAO also clerks the meetings and produces the minutes of Governing Body meetings.

As is normal practice, schools will be asked to complete their ‘Buy-Back’ forms as soon as possible, and in any event by 1st April 2017 in order to allow for proper resource planning. We will be asking schools to indicate, first, whether they wish to buy into the current service for the summer term, and secondly, whether they wish to buy into one of the three new service options from September.

Governors’ Role

To note the information above

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information
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All Governors

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Summary

The government has announced a number of proposals for changes to school funding, including plans to introduce a national funding formula for schools. This paper provides governors with brief updates on:

- Barnet school budgets in 2017/18;
- Barnet school budgets in 2018/19 and 2019/20;
- Education Services Grant.

School Budgets in 2017/18

The government's proposals for a national funding formula will be phased in from 2018/19 and so will not impact on school budgets in 2017/18. The Schools Forum, which is made up mainly of representatives of headteachers and governing bodies, agreed in December that the funding formula for Barnet schools will remain substantially the same as in 2016/17.

Following a re-profiling of the income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI) bands by the DfE, minor adjustments have been made to the deprivation element of the formula. However, the same overall percentage of the schools budget will be distributed through IDACI as in previous years.

The other main variable still to be finalised is the Minimum Funding Guarantee cap for winners under the formula. Schools that lose under the formula will continue to be protected in that their per pupil funding will not reduce by more than the maximum -1.5% set by the DfE. The illustrative figures shared with the Schools Forum indicated a possible cap of +2.25% for winners, but that was subject to change once final DSG allocations are known and actual October 2016 census data has been received. The final figure may therefore be less than +2.25%.

School Budgets in 2018/19 and 2019/20

In December the government launched the second stage of its schools National Funding Formula (NFF) consultation, providing local authorities and schools with a guide to how much funding they stand to gain or lose.

The new consultation states that under the proposed funding formula changes, a total of 10,740 schools (54 per cent) in England would be funded at a higher level than in 2016-17. However, it also confirms that 9,128 schools (46 per cent) would be funded at a lower rate. It is the intention of the DfE to move towards this new funding formula in 2018-19, which will be a transitional year, with a view that the hard formula will be implemented for 2019-20.

Set out within the consultation, the DfE has also committed to allocating an additional £200million in 2018-19 and 2019-20 (a total of £400m over a two year period) on top of the current value of the schools block. This money has been found to provide protections for schools facing reductions and faster increases for those set to gain.

A total of 101 local authority areas will see gains and 49 will see reductions. Losses at the local authority level range from 0.1 per cent to 2.8 per cent. Most London authorities will lose funding, but some will gain, with the biggest gains in London being Croydon (5.6 per cent) and Merton (4.3 per cent). Barnet is expected to lose approximately 1% of its funding in total.

At a school level, within each local authority there will be winners and losers. We anticipate that a small number of schools in Barnet will gain funding but most schools will

lose out. However, the DfE proposes to set a Funding Floor which will mean no school will see their per pupil funding amount decrease by more than 3%. In the first year of funding under the formula (2018/19) it is expected that the maximum loss per pupil for Barnet schools will be 1.5%.

Schools that will see their per pupil funding amount increase will receive gains of up to 3% per pupil in 2018-19, and then up to a further 2.5% in 2019-20. So a school could see its per pupil amount increase by a maximum 5.5 % compared to current levels within a two year period. Only a handful of Barnet schools will be affected by this.

The DfE has also published a high needs national funding formula consultation and has indicated that no school will lose any funding for their high needs per pupil funding.

Education Services Grant

In the 2015 Spending Review, the government announced a saving of £600 million from the ESG general funding rate by 2019/20. Barnet council currently receives an Education Services Grant (ESG) of £3.6million. Last year the DfE announced that it proposed to phase out ESG funding to local authorities in 2017/18.

The ESG is additional funding given to academies and local authorities for services such as school improvement, education welfare services, asset management and strategic planning. It is made up of two elements – a retained duties element which covers statutory duties in relation to all schools (including Academies and Free Schools) and a general fund element that relates to local authority statutory duties in respect of maintained schools.

The retained duties element of the ESG is based on a flat rate, currently £15 per pupil, and amounts to £824,000. Rather than cutting this, the DfE decided to move it into the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and allow local authorities to retain the funding for statutory purposes relating to all schools. The Schools Forum considered this at its December meeting and agreed to the council retaining this funding, noting that it was an in-out transaction with no negative effect on school budgets.

The remaining £2.6m of ESG funding relates to statutory duties in respect of maintained schools only. This will be withdrawn entirely by 2018/19. However, there are three mitigating factors.

Firstly, local authorities will also receive a separate grant for School Improvement, which was previously funded from the ESG. This grant will be to cover statutory intervention functions and services such as monitoring and commissioning of school improvement support. This will enable local authorities to play a transitional role, as the school-led system of school improvement continues to mature. The amount available to Barnet in 2017/18 is £170,000.

Secondly, the DfE has indicated that Schools Forums may agree to de-delegate further funding for additional school improvement provision. As central expenditure on school improvement services is significantly greater than £170,000, this is a relevant issue for Barnet. Any decision on de-delegation would require the support of a majority of maintained schools' representatives on the Schools Forum.

Thirdly, local authorities will receive transitional ESG funding from April 2017 to August 2017. The ESG Transitional funding for Barnet has been confirmed at £985,000.

As a result, the council will suffer a funding loss of £1.6m in 2017/18, rising to £2.6m in 2018/19 (assuming the School Improvement grant continues).

The DfE recognises that local authorities will need to use other sources of funding to

meet the central costs of education services once the general funding rate has been removed. It has also indicated that regulations will be amended to allow local authorities to retain some of their schools block funding to cover the statutory duties that they carry out for maintained schools which were previously funded through the ESG. Any amount to be retained by the local authority will need to be agreed by the maintained schools members of the Schools Forum. If the local authority and Schools Forum are unable to reach consensus on the level of the DSG to be retained by the local authority, the matter will need to be referred to the Secretary of State.

At its December meeting, the Schools Forum agreed to defer discussion on:

- the option of de-delegation by maintained schools of funding for additional school improvement support for maintained schools in 2017/18;
- the possible retention of DSG funds to pay for services currently funded from the general funding element of the ESG (for services to maintained schools).

In the light of the allocation of transitional funding for 2017/18, the council is not proposing to ask for de-delegation of school improvement funding or for retention of DSG funds (from the allocations to maintained schools) for 2017/18. However, it will need to consider the position in respect of 2018/19 and future years, having regard to the overall budget position facing the council and the various factors impacting on school budgets. This also has the advantage of allowing time for detailed consideration of the issues and consultation with the Schools Forum ahead of any decision.

**Governors’
Role**

Governors to note information

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All Governors

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Summary

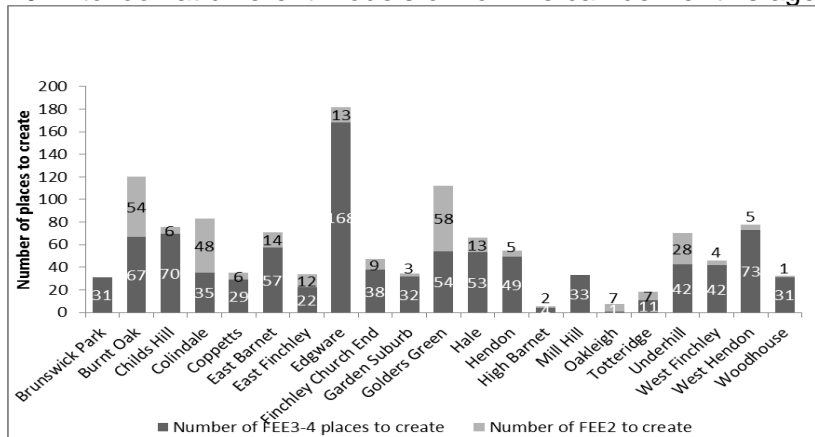
Currently, all 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours free Early Education. From September 2017, eligible children will be entitled to an additional 15 hours.

The new entitlement to 30 hours free childcare is intended to support working parents with the cost of childcare and enable them, where they wish, to return to work or to work additional hours.

The additional 15 hours will be available to families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), and each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage or national living wage. Parents must earn less than £100,000 each to be eligible.

Schools and settings are not obliged to offer the 30 hours and can continue to offer 15 hours. However, you will note below that the funding rate for 3 and 4 year olds is increasing shortly and some schools may want to take this opportunity to consider reconfiguring or extending their early years offer to either attract more families into their early years provision or to encourage nursery pupils to take advantage of the additional hours.

We have carried out initial work around sufficiency and are anticipating a shortfall of over 900 places in Barnet for eligible families. A working party will be meeting on 10 January 2017 to look at different models of how we can deliver this agenda in September.



Early Years Funding Formula

Following both the National and local consultation on early years funding changes, the new local funding formula for 3 and 4 year olds will be introduced in April 2017. Schools and settings in Barnet will see an increase in funding of approximately £1 per hour for all 3 and 4 year olds in their Nurseries.

As well as the increase in the hourly rate, the DfE will be introducing a disability access fund (DAF) to support the provision of care for children with disabilities. This equates to a one-off payment of £615 per year per eligible child.

Governors' Role

To note the information above

For information by Contact

All Governors

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Governor information on Edubase

Summary

In November 2017 the Department for Education (DfE) reported that only 38 percent of schools had registered their Governors' details on Edubase. Governing Bodies are reminded that it is a statutory duty to submit this information, and that the DfE has urged all those schools that have not sent the information to do so as soon as possible.

The obligation in maintained schools resides with the Governing Body under the powers given in the Education Act 1996 (section 538) to the Secretary of State to demand such information about Governing Bodies as he/she needs. In academies it is the trust's responsibility, as stated in the *Academies Financial Handbook* of September 2016.

The [Governance handbook](#) will be updated on the constitution of maintained schools governing bodies to reflect this new requirement.

You may find more information at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-database-of-governors>

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by

All Governors

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Summary

Sir Michael Wilshaw's final report as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools was published at the beginning of December and can be found online at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/574186/Ofsted_annual_report_education_and_skills_201516_web-ready.pdf.

It contains a short section on governance, which identifies weak governance as being commonly at the root of school failure and which sees changes in education making governance even more important in the coming years. In one third of schools judged inadequate or requiring improvement during the year, inspectors recommended a review of governance.

While welcoming an overall improvement in schools during the last six years, Sir Michael said that secondary schools in the north and west of England lagged significantly behind those in the south and east. For example, 3 in 10 secondary schools in Manchester are now less than good, but only 1 in 10 in inner London.

He also identified a growing shortage of teachers at secondary level, with a considerable gap between the number of postgraduate entrants to secondary school teaching and the DfE's target figure. The shortfall is especially pronounced in design and technology, art and design, religious education, business studies, computing, music and physics. He quoted a government figure that one quarter of qualified teachers have left the profession within three years of starting.

New Ofsted chief

Sir Michael Wilshaw retired as HMCI on 31 December and has been replaced by Amanda Spielman, previously chair of Ofqual, the examinations and qualifications regulator.

Governors to note the information above

Governors' Role**For information by**

All Governors

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Improving Governance: Governance arrangements in complex and challenging circumstances

Summary

Ofsted's last separate report on school governance was *School Governance: Learning from the Best*, published in 2011. It has now looked again at schools that exhibit high-quality governance, to identify features that can provide models for others. *Improving Governance: governance arrangements in complex and challenging circumstances* describes what inspectors discovered from examining 24 improving primary, secondary and special schools, situated in some of the poorest areas of the country, supplemented by the findings from routine inspections and 2632 responses from calls for evidence.

The report's key findings are unlikely to surprise many people involved in governance:

- Many Governors lack the expertise needed in an increasingly complex education system to hold school leaders to account.
- Governors need better access to highly skilled people who have the educational expertise to help them meet the increased demands of their role.
- Recruitment and retention of Governors is a serious challenge, particularly in some of the poorest areas of the country.
- Clarity about lines of accountability, roles and responsibilities is an essential part of effective Governance.
- Weak Governance, is at risk of going undetected until the school is inspected by Ofsted.
- Governors from within the community make an essential contribution, particularly in areas of deprivation.

More controversially, the report suggests that there is a case for paying Chairs of Governing Bodies in certain circumstances, which could improve the professional expertise of Governing Bodies, leading to a more open and balanced relationship with the headteacher. Where governance is poor, Governing Bodies are over-reliant on their headteachers.

The report recommends Governing Bodies to:

- ensure clarity of roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability for governance, particularly where multi-level governance makes accountability complex
- publish information about governance on the school website in line with statutory requirements or the academy funding agreement to ensure transparency and clarity of roles and responsibilities
- ensure that they have a robust review method in place to assure themselves that the board is effective
- secure professional support and governor training as needed to ensure effective governance.

Governors to note the information above

All Governors

Governors' Role For information by Contact

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Summary

The Governance Handbook, produced by the Department for Education (DfE), is a valuable resource to support Governors in their role. It provides guidance for Governing Bodies in local-authority-maintained schools and Boards of trustees in academies and free schools.

The Handbook explains the roles and functions of Governing Bodies and Boards, their legal duties, and where they can find support.

The DfE have advised that the Governance Handbook will be updated during the spring term 2017. At the time of publishing this report, the new publication had not been released, but, once available, will be accessible on the DfE website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Governors' Role

To note the information

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All Governors

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