
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 23 January 2008

SUBJECT: Academy Protocols

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a process of consultation with identified stakeholders to determine a framework of protocols against which Expressions of Interest for Academies in Leeds will be evaluated.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting on 17 October 2007, the Executive Board asked for further reports outlining the outcome of consultations and any expressions of interest in sponsoring an Academy in Leeds. In advance of receiving such reports, it is important that the Executive Board has a framework that will inform any final decisions.

2.2 We have been working with colleagues at the DCSF to develop and agree a framework within which any Academies could be developed. This includes collaborative approaches to:

- social responsibility and partnership;
- delivery of a Leeds learner entitlement
- admissions and exclusions;
- curriculum planning and provision.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to:

- i) agree that Education Leeds carry out the consultation on the protocol framework
- ii) note that further reports will be brought to the Board outlining the outcome of consultation and expressions of interest in joining the Alliance and sponsoring any Academies in Leeds

Agenda Item:

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SUBJECT: Academy Protocols

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality & Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call-in

Not Eligible for Call-in
(Details contained in the Report)

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a process of consultation with identified stakeholders to determine a framework of protocols against which Expressions of Interest for Academies in Leeds will be evaluated.
- 1.2 The recommendations contained in this report will help shape the future delivery of secondary and post-16 learning in Leeds and as such will have a major impact on the lives of thousands of young people accessing learning in schools, colleges and with other providers across the City.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At its meeting on 17 October 2007, the Executive Board asked for further reports outlining the outcome of consultations and any expressions of interest in sponsoring an Academy in Leeds. In advance of receiving such reports, it is important that the Executive Board has a framework that will inform its response to such consultations.

- 2.2 Increasingly the role of the Local Authority is changing from ‘provider’ of services and schools to the ‘commissioner’ of provision to serve local communities: Academies are independent schools whose success critically depends on the absolute responsibility given to their sponsors, their governing bodies and their principals. However, most Academies are jointly commissioned by the DCFS and the Local Authority on a partnership basis. They are established through an agreement between the DCFS, the Local Authority and the sponsor on the size, specialism and age range of the Academy and agreements around essential elements such as admissions and special educational provision.
- 2.3 Our vision for learning in Leeds places schools at the heart of universal provision. Schools that develop, nurture and maintain strong, innovative and creative relationships with each other and with their stakeholders and partners to drive good attendance, positive behaviour, high standards and significantly improved Every Child Matters outcomes for all our learners.
- 2.4 We are exploring a cluster model for the development of further Academies here in Leeds. We aim to develop, with partners and stakeholders and our children and young people, the potential for establishing Academies in South Leeds, West Leeds and the Centre of Leeds to complement the existing David Young Community Academy in East Leeds. These Academies would work within area clusters and establish strong, dynamic partnerships with other local schools.
- 2.5 We have been working with colleagues at the DCSF to develop and agree a framework within which any Academies could be developed. This includes collaborative approaches to:
- social responsibility and partnership;
 - delivery of a Leeds learner entitlement
 - admissions and exclusions;
 - curriculum planning and provision.
- 2.6 We have agreed with the DCSF that any further Academy in Leeds will sign up to an agreed set of policies and protocols for these aspects of provision whilst ensuring their ‘independent state school status’ is not compromised. These protocols will be included within Expressions of Interest and Memorandums of Understanding for any Academies which are to be established here in Leeds.

3.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

The following sections outline the key elements of the protocols.

- 3.1 Social responsibility and partnership
- 3.1.1 Academies in Leeds would serve discreet local communities and support the implementation of the Leeds Inclusive Learning Strategy. Thus an Academy in Leeds must have clear policies and procedures in place to ensure that it effectively engages with its local community and parents and that it provides effectively for all the young people it serves.
- 3.1.2 As these policies and procedures would be applied and developed by staff of the Academy, **it must** have clear arrangements for communicating, and where appropriate consulting and negotiating, with

staff.

- 3.1.3 Partnerships and collaborations across schools that add value are essential if we are to create a viable and sustainable learning infrastructure with learning pathways for all our young people. An academy in Leeds would be expected to build on existing successful local partnerships across schools and between schools, colleges and universities utilising the good practice that has developed over recent years. The Education Leeds School Improvement Policy works to ensure that all Leeds schools have a strong partnership with Education Leeds and actively builds partnerships between schools where there will be a mutual benefit. Thus all new Academies in Leeds must ensure these partnership arrangements continue to develop.
- 3.2 Delivery of the Leeds Learner Entitlement
- 3.2.1 Headteacher Forum in Leeds has agreed to develop a new vision for learners in Leeds that would take the form of a learner entitlement. There is an existing 14-19 entitlement to which schools, colleges and other partners have agreed. The new entitlement will be developed over the spring and summer terms 2008. It is suggested that an agreed entitlement would be an appropriate element of an academy protocol.
- 3.3 Admissions and exclusions
- 3.3.1 In addition to the statutory requirements of the Admissions Code of Practice, we would expect all new Academies in Leeds to work with other local schools to develop common approaches that ensure the establishment of high quality viable local provision for local young people. We would expect an Academy to apply the recently adopted "In year fair access protocol" for all Leeds Schools – attached at Annex One. Finally we would expect all new Academies in Leeds, to work actively with other local providers in the city to avoid any exclusions and to make suitable and appropriate provision for all children irrespective of their individual needs.
- 3.4 Curriculum planning and provision
- 3.4.1 Work is currently underway on the development of a Leeds Curriculum Framework that will ensure that Leeds is able to meet the statutory requirement to ensure that all young people can access all 14 specialised Diploma lines by 2013. This framework will ensure an agreed 14-19 curriculum offer for the city where all programmes have clear progression routes. All new Academies in Leeds will contribute to the implementation and development of this framework. This will include ensuring that the Academy develops its post 14 curriculum offer using;
- the Leeds on-line Area Prospectus that is now available
 - a Common Application System for Post 16
 - appropriately quality assured 14-16 vocational learning providers
 - the cross sector city-wide e-learning strategy
- 3.4.2 We would expect any new Academy to be an active contributor to the planning and quality assurance of post 14 provision in its locality.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1 The Executive Board will wish to be reassured that this framework properly ensures that it responds to the national Academies programme with a clear local perspective. It is therefore important that key stakeholders including young people, ward councillors, school governors and headteachers, recognised trades unions, the LSC, diocesan authorities serving Leeds, and neighbouring local authorities, are consulted on these protocols. Education Leeds will undertake such a consultation and to report back its findings immediately after Easter
- 4.2 The issues addressed in this report will impact on the 'Narrowing the Gap' and 'Going up a League' agendas. Academies in Leeds have the potential to contribute to the ambitious targets to meet key priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan and the work on the Local Area Agreement.
- 4.3 The development of new models of provision, such as Academies, will have significant implications for Council policy and governance which will be addressed in any proposals that are developed for further consideration by Executive Board.

5.0 **LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The funding of secondary and post-16 provision in Leeds is a significant part of the Children's Services overall budget and part of the Learning and Skills Council budget. The establishment of an Academy in Leeds has the potential to have major financial implications for Leeds City Council as it increasingly takes total responsibility for all 14 – 19 provision here in Leeds. A detailed financial plan will be developed alongside any specific proposal that is developed for further consideration by Executive Board.

6.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Members are asked to:
- iii) agree that Education Leeds carryout the consultation on the protocol framework
 - iv) note that further reports will be brought to the Board outlining the outcome of consultation and Expressions of interest in joining the Alliance and sponsoring any Academies in Leeds

Annex one

In Year Fair Access Protocol (previously Hard to Place Protocol)

The New Schools Admissions Code came into force on 28 February 2007 and there is a requirement in section 3.15 for all Admissions Forums to have an In Year Fair Access Protocol in place by September 2007. All schools and Academies in the Authority must participate, and all children who may have difficulty in securing a place must be included in the protocol. As a minimum the protocol must include Looked After Children and those Permanently Excluded from a school. Admission Forum must monitor how the protocol is working, how quickly children are found places, and the contribution every school in the area is making. A report will be produced for the Admissions Forum each term.

It is proposed that the protocol cover the following groups:

- Looked After Children
- Permanently Excluded
- Traveller Children
- Persistent non-attenders (less than 85% attendance)
- Children on School Action Plus or disabilities that require particular support or reasonable adjustments
- Young Offenders
- Children coming out of a PRU
- Children out of education for more than one term
- Children living in vulnerable accommodation
- Children returning to mainstream following elective home education

Where agreement is in place with regard to the sharing of particular groups such as permanently excluded then it is expected that this will continue to be followed. It is further expected that the draft on placing Looked After Children outside of the normal admission round also be considered to offer some further guidance on that group.

It is envisaged that all requests for transfer be submitted to the Admission Team and those falling within the agreed categories of the protocol will be submitted to the relevant AMB for consideration. In agreement with the AMB Project Director Admissions may approach schools prior to the AMB meeting with Looked After Children where admission needs to be arranged quickly. Where a school takes a child in these circumstances the details will be taken to the next AMB for information as part of the sharing agreement. Where a school feels unable to admit the child they will be referred to the AMB meeting under the proviso that the child must then be admitted within 5 days of the meeting by the receiving school.

A flow chart is included for further clarity.

Annex one

Admissions receive a transfer request for a child to move school.

Non-automatic transfers

Child already has a place in a Leeds school, has not moved house and does not meet any of the protocol categories.

Parent / carer advised that moves will only take place at the beginning of each term. Where requested school have a place, school advised of impending transfer for the following term, otherwise right of appeal offered to parent.

Automatic transfers

Child has moved house and does not have an accessible school place, but does not fit fair access protocol categories

Parent offered highest preference where a place exists, and right of appeal for higher preferences, or where no place exists. When a place is offered an expected start date will be given.

In Year Fair Access

Child is referred to the AMB re-inclusion panel

AMB project directors updated weekly on incoming transfers that fall into one or more of the Protocols categories

In agreement with Project Director Admissions will approach schools with Looked After Children to facilitate quick admission

School agree, child admitted, details to next AMB for information and inclusion in sharing agreements

AMB re-inclusion panel meet monthly to agree and share children covered by the Protocol

Admission Forum receive termly information on the contribution of all schools and how quickly children are found places