Update for plenary meeting for School Networks
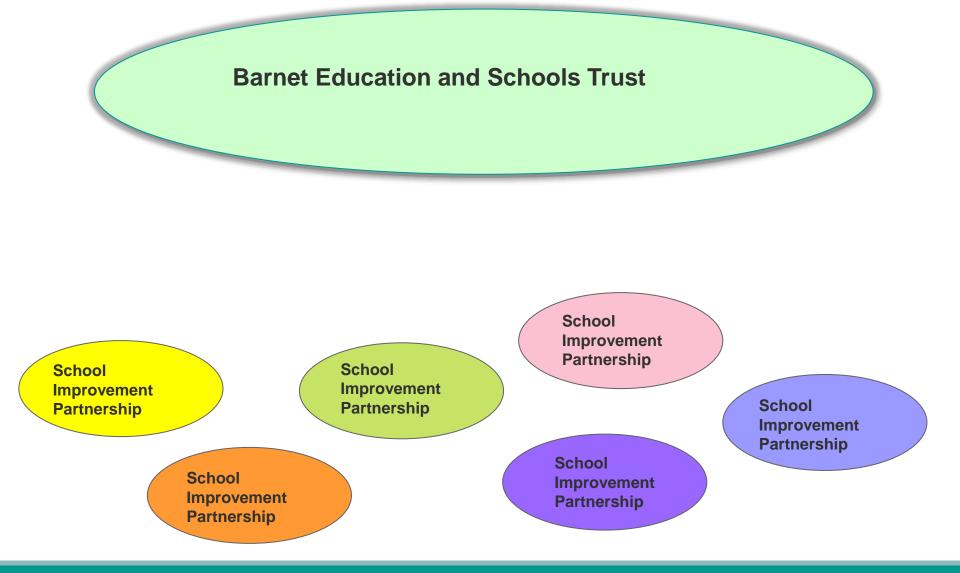
- Alternative Delivery Models
- School Improvement

18 September 2014

Two sides of the same coin

- **models** for delivering services to schools

- **models** of school improvement support for schools

- **increased role** for **schools leaders** in strategic oversight of services

- **increased role** for good and outstanding **school leaders** in supporting other schools

- **stronger partnership governance** at education service level

- **stronger partnership governance** at school to school level

Fast forward a year…….

Fast forward a year…….

Barnet Education and Schools Trust

Future delivery of Education services

School Improvement – a new approach

School Improvement Partnership

School Improvement Partnership

School Improvement Partnership

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School Improvement Partnership

School Improvement Partnership

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Future delivery of Education services

Results of the initial survey of heads and governors

- 136 responses
  - mainly primary schools
  - good mix of heads and governors

- Strong support for vision, aims and drivers

- Clear desire to be involved (stronger with heads than governors)

- Strong messages about the need for more information and time

Summary of initial views on the different options:

Three single-partner models

➤ Moderate support for a **Local Authority Trading Company:**
- All respondents: 11% positively for it and 41% willing to consider, a **total of 52%** with 23% tending not to support, 5% strongly opposed (**30% against**).
- Primary head teachers are even more strongly in favour: 21% positive and 35% willing to consider, **a total of 56%**, with 17% tending not to support and 9% strongly opposed

➤ Some support for the **In-house model:**
- All respondents: **10% strongly support** and a further 15% positive; and 26% are willing to consider, **a total of 51%,** with 25% tending not to support and 7% strongly opposed (**32% against**).
- Primary head teachers 31% positive and 35% willing to consider, **a total of 66%,** with 17% tending not to support and 4% strongly opposed

➤ Little support for the **Outsourcing model:**
- All respondents: 7% positive and a further 16% are willing to consider, **a total of 23%**, with 24% tending not to support and 36% strongly opposed (**60% against**).
- Primary head teachers 9% positive and 13% willing to consider, **a total of 22%,** with 30% tending not to support and 35% strongly opposed.

Summary of initial views on the different options:

Three partnership models

➤ Strong support for a **social enterprise model:**
- All respondents: **17% strongly support**, and a further 18% positive and 37% willing to consider, a **total of 72%** with 10% tending not to support, 5% strongly opposed (**15% against**).
- Primary head teachers are even more strongly in favour: 43% positive and 35% willing to consider, **a total of 78%**, with 4% tending not to support and 4% strongly opposed.

➤ Good support for the **Joint Venture commissioning model:**
- All respondents: 30% positive and a further 41% are willing to consider, **a total of 71%,** with 14% tending not to support and 5% strongly opposed (**19% against**).
- Primary head teachers 33% positive and 46% willing to consider, **a total of 79%,** with 8% tending not to support and 4% strongly opposed

➤ Good support for the **Joint Venture ownership model:**
- All respondents: **7% strongly support**, and a further 22% positive and 31% willing to consider, **a total of 60%**, with 20% tending not to support and 8% strongly opposed (**28% against**).
- Primary head teachers 48% positive and 22% willing to consider, **a total of 70%,** with 13% tending not to support and 9% strongly opposed.

Alternative delivery model

Option	Committee decision to explore options further
In house	✔
Local authority trading company	✗
Outsource	✗
Schools led social enterprise	✔
Joint venture company (schools, council and third party)	✔
Joint venture (council and third party)	✔

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Committee decision

- The Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee (CELS) agreed on 15 September:

    - to **further consultation and engagement** on the three partnership models, alongside the existing in-house model

    - to refer the draft outline business case to the **Policy and Resources Committee** in **December** for consideration of whether to approve the setting up of a new legal entity to deliver the service, should CELS choose a new legal entity at its meeting in January

    - a final Outline Business Case setting out the **preferred option** will be considered by CELS in **January 2015**

Next steps

- **Consultation and engagement** with residents, schools (heads and governors), staff, trade unions and third parties/private sector - September to November

- Updates to chairs and vice-chairs (17 Sept) and heads (18 Sept)

- **Headteacher reference group** – 23 September and further meetings

- Work up **description of each of the three partnership models,** as well as the in-house model – governance, funding, relationships, how schools would be involved.

- Detailed analysis of the **business case** for each of the three new models, alongside the in-house model

- **Briefing pack** with more information on each model available early October with invitation to early morning/twilight briefing sessions

- **Workshops** for headteachers and governors during October/November

- Final **survey** of schools during November – all schools asked to give a view

- Final **decision** by CELS Committee 12th January 2015

- **Go Live**: October 2015

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School Improvement in Barnet – a new approach

Towards a self-improving school system

Recap

- **Schools Standards Partnership Board** discussed papers on 'School Improvement support in Barnet' and 'School Improvement – the national context' - 22 May

- Papers sent to heads with **letter from Ian** H – 24 June

- Discussion with IH at **network meetings** – 26 June

- **SSPB** considered a paper 'Review of School Improvement – towards a schools-led school improvement system' – 22 July

- **Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee** (CELS) considered a report 'School Improvement in Barnet – an update and a new approach' and approved proposals as basis for consultation. – 15 Sept

- **School Circular** reported on this, with links to the report – 10 Sept

National policy context - Gilbert

- The **federation of primary schools be encouraged** without an immediate emphasis on academy status. This should not be simply about federating to secure economies of scale in purchasing, but should be **based on principles of professional collaboration for school-to-school improvement** and for better development of practice. In particular, struggling primaries should join federations with outstanding schools for the purposes of school improvement.

- Ofsted should support a **school-led, collaborative approach to systemic improvement** by recognising the importance of collaborative development as well as individual excellence.

  Unleashing Greatness – Getting the best from an academised system' - Report of the Academies Commission (chaired by Christine Gilbert, January 2013)

National policy context – Labour Party

- Community schools not currently part of a federation, multi-academy or sponsor framework should be encouraged **to join a partnership** – the LA should broker the combining of all such community primary schools into broad **Community Trust arrangements.**

  Review of Education Structures, functions and the raising of standards for all: 'Putting students and parents first' (part of the Labour Party's policy review, David Blunkett, April 2014)

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National policy context - OfSTED

- 'Every effort must be made to **coordinate partnership arrangements** and expertise residing within schools.

- 'The LA must have **engaged system leaders**, (such as National and Local Leaders of Education or Training Schools) **to support and challenge those in need and actively promote sector led improvement**.

- 'The LA **must broker or commission effective school-to-school or other support for leadership and management in weaker schools**.
  The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement – OfSTED May 2013

- Ofsted chief wants 'exceptional' headteachers to lead federations. All schools should be forced by law to join a cluster or federation led by a new cadre of "exceptional" headteachers, *Sir Michael Wilshaw said.*
  TES 5.9.14

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Vision: Towards a self-improving school system

Every Barnet school should be part of a **formal school partnership** with a number of other schools.

Within these partnerships schools will work together and share best practice and **the best schools and best headteachers will play a key role** in enabling other schools in the partnership to improve towards outstanding.

A **self-managing, self-improving school system** will become established where **co-operation and structured and planned improvement are driven by school leaders**, every school benefits and standards are continuously raised.

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Proposal

To establish a series of school improvement partnerships **by April 2015** in Barnet so that **every school is a member of a partnership** and able to benefit from or contribute to system leadership and a self-improving school system.

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Rationale

- Schools should be **responsible for their own improvement** and so we need a self-improving school system

- **System leaders** in schools should be driving improvement across the school system

- Nearly all schools need to have **regular external challenge** in order to identify key areas for development and to improve continuously.

- The **local authority** is no longer able to offer such challenge to all schools or to pay for it for most schools (from April 2015).

- With the **removal of the scaffolding** provided by the LA – some time ago for secondary schools and now for primaries – schools that work in isolation are likely to be putting their own school improvement at risk. This is especially the case with primary schools, which are generally too small to maintain a sufficiently robust internal challenge function.

- The **way forward** is for schools to join together in school improvement partnerships.

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Contextual Factors

Phase issues

- **Different starting points for primary and secondary schools**, with secondary schools far more likely to be capable of operating completely independently in relation to school improvement, because of their size.

- Many Primary schools are likely to feel uncomfortable about being in a formal partnership with a Secondary school if they feel that the Secondary school would be **"in control".**

Existing partnerships

- There are various **existing partnerships** operating across Barnet schools – we need to complement those rather than seek to replace them.

Faith schools

- **Diocesan Boards** are key stakeholders in relation to partnership and governance arrangements for Church of England and Roman Catholic voluntary-aided schools.

- Some other faith schools may object to **joint governance** arrangements with other schools that do not share the same faith perspective

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Types of Partnership

- A **hard partnership** with a strong internal structure and clear lines of accountability to an **executive leader** and **a partnership governance board** – e.g., school **federations**, **multi-academy trusts** or academy **chains**.

- A **structured partnership** - a slightly looser internal structure but still very clear **agreements on roles and accountabilities for challenge, support, intervention**. This may involve an **executive board of headteachers**, with roles allocated to different heads according to their strengths, experience etc.

- A **loose partnership** – less structured than either of the above - two or more schools agree to **work together to challenge and support each other**.   Likely model for partnerships of two or three secondary schools.

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Contextual Factors

Academies

- 17 out of 24 Secondary schools are Academies (including 2 Free Schools) and 9 out of 90 Primary schools (including 3 Free Schools).

- 4 of the Primary Academies operate in partnerships with a chain or Trust:

  - Deansbrook Juniors with the London Academy

  - The Hyde and Parkfield – sponsored by the Elliot Foundation

  - Millbrook Park, part of the London Diocesan Board for Schools (LDBS) Academy Trust.

- Grasvenor and Broadfields Primary Academies are stand-alone academies, but now each has a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) currently consisting of just one school.

- 3 Roman Catholic primary schools currently considering forming a MAT.

- Other interest in MATs from primary schools

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Local authority school improvement functions

- **Hard partnerships** should have a similar role to Academy chains – i.e. where the chain manages **all aspects of school improvement**, including **intervention** in maintained schools (on behalf of the LA)

- **Structured partnerships –** The LA would **commission the partnership to provide support and challenge** services. The LA would continue to play a key role in schools causing concern but may commission the partnership to provide some of the challenge and support

- **Loose partnerships** - Schools would continue to be monitored or challenged by the **LA**, but the LA may commission one of the partnerships to provide related services on its behalf

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Possible approaches to the development of local school improvement partnerships

1.   Leave it to schools to decide amongst themselves as to their preferred partnerships

Advantages

- Schools are in control and do not feel it is being done to them
- Schools can build on existing partnership arrangements and this may include schools not in their locality

Disadvantages

- This may take a long time to establish partnerships
- There may be tensions that develop between schools
- Some schools may feel left out and may end up having to be a "second thought" in a partnership

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Possible approaches to the development of local school improvement partnerships

2. The LA comes up with the partnerships

Advantages

- LA can ensure the partnerships have a variety of types of schools and a range of effectiveness of schools within them

- Likely to be done more quickly

- LA can use its knowledge of schools, leaders and Governing Bodies in developing partnership proposals

Disadvantages

- Schools may feel this is being done to them

- LA may not be aware of some existing partnerships

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Possible approaches to the development of local school improvement partnerships

3.   An iterative process combining 1 and 2

A mixture of the two approaches above where:

- we ask schools to consider which schools they feel they would work best in a partnership with and what sort of partnership they would like to move towards in the first instance

- we collate this information and draw on other information LNIs have about schools to develop draft/proposed partnership groups

- we present proposals back to schools and consult on them.

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Next steps

Primary schools

a) We will begin by asking all primary schools to:

- Indicate which schools they already have **informal partnerships** with
- Give an **initial indication** of **which schools** they would like to **partner** with and the **type of partnership** they are interested in.

b) Then we will have **discussions** with individual schools and attempt **'match-making'**.

c) We will then **publish proposals** for a set of partnerships that seems to represent the **'best fit'**, whilst ensuring all primary schools are offered membership of a school improvement partnership. We will **consult** on those proposals.

d) **Next term** we will ask schools to make **formal decisions** over setting up/joining local school improvement partnerships

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Next steps

- **Secondary schools** – we will simply **encourage and invite** all secondaries to consider or re-consider the value of entering into some form of school improvement partnership with one or more other secondary schools and/or with primary schools.

- **Special schools** - we will **consult** with Special Schools about the most **appropriate partnerships** for them and the schools with which they might wish to partner.

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Next Steps

- Develop **pro-forma** for discussion with:

- **School Standards Partnership Board** – by end of September

- then **write to schools** to invite them to consider response and fill in the pro-forma

- **Individual discussions** with schools – Oct/Nov

- Director's Meeting/ **workshop sessions:**

  - Secondary Heads on 7th October

  - Primary Heads on 23rd October

- Heads discuss with staff and governors

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Next Steps

- Ask schools to **complete pro-forma** by mid-November with indicative preferences

- Proposed **primary (and any cross-phase) partnerships** published by end of November

- **Consult** schools (heads and chairs of governors) on partnership proposals

- Develop Partnership **Frameworks**, Contracts, Memorandum of Understanding etc.

- Schools make **formal decisions in the Spring term** if possible

- The aim is to get as many schools as possible into operational school improvement partnerships by **April 2015**, so the partnerships can plan their activities and resources in advance of the new school year.

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Issues to consider / discuss

- Is a geographical model of partnership/clusters the best way to proceed for your school?

- What is the proposed the model of governance for your partnership?

- What will happen if a school is not in a partnership?

- Will there be a lead person organising the activities of the partnership?

- Will resources be pooled?

- Will staff be employed to work across schools in the partnership?

- Will the partnership employ a School Improvement Professional to monitor and challenge the schools across the partnership?

- Will LA Network Meetings for Headteachers need to change?