

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Executive Director of Children's Services

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	10 March 2017
Subject:	Sector-Led School Improvement Model - Update Report

Summary:

This report enables the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider updates relating to the Sector-Led approach to School Improvement.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

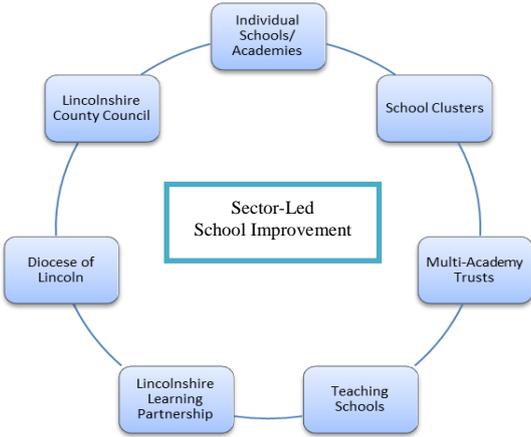
1. Consider and comment on the update regarding the Sector-Led school improvement model.
2. Receive six monthly updates on its further implementation and development.

1. Background

The role of the Local Authority in school improvement has changed greatly over recent times with the introduction of academies, multi-academy trusts and teaching schools. The increased expectations from Ofsted and the new role of the Regional Schools Commissioner have all contributed to a changing educational landscape. There is no longer a straight-forward two way relationship between the local authority and its schools; instead we are working in an environment of multiple relationships and a fragmented system. For the last 14 years Lincolnshire has commissioned CfBT to deliver its statutory duties and provide a traded offer of school improvement to its schools. However, Lincolnshire has always recognised the need to work in partnership with its schools to meet the needs of its children and over the last two year has been working with its schools towards a transition between the end of the CfBT contract and the development of an autonomous sector-led system.

In Lincolnshire, the Local Authority is now one of a range of partners who together are supporting school improvement moving forward. These partners include our teaching schools, the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership, the diocese and academy chains. This approach is echoed in the White Paper with its clear indication that

schools and groups of schools will have increased autonomy and responsibility for their own outcomes through working in a sector-led system.



From its initial task and design stage the "Lincolnshire Learning Partnership" or "LLP" has grown over the last two years to a partnership of over 340 schools. These 340 schools have made a commitment to developing a sector-led approach to school improvement and school to school support. All schools are engaged in Peer Review and work together in clusters to improve outcomes for children. This includes schools from all phases; primary, secondary and specials as well as academies, multi-academy trusts, free schools and church schools.

The Lincolnshire Learning Partnership is led by a group of elected Headteachers who work with the Local Authority to set the strategic direction for Lincolnshire. These Headteachers represent a broad range of school types and structures. The LLP is excited to be currently working with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to bring the latest educational research into Lincolnshire. Currently, the vast majority of our schools are involved in a research project aimed at making the very best of our teaching assistant (TA) workforce to further enhance their impact on teaching and learning. At this point nearly 300 schools are signed up to the "Mobilise" TA project and 400 school leaders have been trained in the materials. This is the start of making evidence-based research a key component of our school improvement in the future.

Our teaching schools are growing in their influence and we are delighted that we have been able to work with them to develop a cohesive interface for our schools. Rather than being in competition, a number of the Teaching Schools have committed to a joined up approach and have united under the "Lincolnshire Teaching Schools Together" (LTT) banner. The Local Authority has provided funding for a website where schools can find out what LTT has to offer and has also commissioned LTT to provide our statutory Moderation & Monitoring responsibilities, to develop and lead a Leadership programme for prospective Headteachers and to support us in Risk Assessing academies. The LLP has utilised the reach and capacity of LTT to deliver the Education Endowment Foundation teaching assistant project.

In Lincolnshire currently 90% of our schools are rated "Good or Outstanding" by Ofsted and it is the focus of all those working in the sector to continue to increase

this figure so that every child has access to a "good local school". Ofsted is beginning to recognise and comment on the effective working of clusters, school to school challenge and engagement in joint professional development. The introduction of Peer Review and school to school support has been one of our key strategies in improving school outcomes. When Peer Review was first introduced into Lincolnshire Schools through the formation of the "LLP" the Local Authority took the decision to invest in training for all Headteachers of its 362 schools. This training was provided free of charge to all schools and academies. This investment was vital in ensuring that Headteachers felt confident in providing reviews for each other that were suitably robust and that the subsequent improvement workshops supported schools in moving forward and developing key priorities for the future. The reviews have also acted as a catalyst for the sharing of good practice and further joint working between schools. Key outcomes of these reviews are shared with the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership board enabling them to strategically consider forthcoming issues and trends for the county and respond accordingly by commissioning projects and appropriate research.

The Local Authority has been creative and proactive in its response when schools have found themselves in difficulty. We have worked with schools to find local solutions by brokering support from other local schools, by liaising with the Regional Schools Commissioner to seek local sponsors when they are required and by utilising our teaching schools to provide National Leaders of Education or National Leaders of Governance to drive up performance. This work is led by our Locality Leads who are a small team of Educational Advisers who monitor the performance of schools, signpost schools to relevant support and work alongside our most vulnerable schools. The Sector-Led approach is building capacity within the county and ensuring the expertise stays within our school system hence our continual focus on finding local solutions. We have a growing number of small local Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) as well as a large number of Executive headships which all add to the pool of system leaders working in Lincolnshire. Lincolnshire leaders are getting increasing recognition for the way in which they collaborate and we were delighted that the "LLP" was recently referenced in a school's Ofsted inspection as a positive collaborative arrangement.

The Education team at the Local Authority (LA) not only undertakes statutory duties but has a focus on ensuring that the culture of sharing and reciprocity is at the forefront of the way our schools do business. To this end we continue to provide fully funded Headteachers briefings three times per year and an equivalent meeting for Governors. The LA and the LLP also run an annual conference for Headteachers. The LA Education team operates as the glue within our new system responding to the needs of the sector, brokering relationships and working as a strategic partner to the LLP and our teaching schools.

2. Conclusion

Sector-Led school improvement is becoming increasingly embedded and accepted as common practice by school leaders. However, it is important to recognise that it is still in its infancy and will require continued promotion and support for it to grow and develop. The Lincolnshire Learning Partnership is building a long term

strategic plan with this aim and to identify how it best supports schools in tackling key trends following the analysis of pupil outcomes.

Key areas moving forward to further develop the Sector-Led approach are:

- Peer Review training for new school leaders.
- Governor Peer Review Training to ensure Governors are able to share best practice.
- County Wide Success Workshops to celebrate school innovation and achievements.
- Cluster Training to ensure schools get the most from working together.
- Implementation of further EEF research around effective Literacy & Numeracy intervention.
- Development of a LLP website for sharing best practice & School to School Support.
- Improving protocols for working with Teaching Schools.

The above are now key areas of consideration within the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership's strategic plan for the coming year. The LLP has developed a committee structure responsible for and based upon delivering their broad aims of:

- Championing learners and leaders to shape their own futures.
- Promoting success, innovation and evidenced practice to benefit all.
- Empowering schools to meet the needs of their communities.
- Challenging all schools to keep getting better.

The LA role will continue to focus on championing effective collaborations, monitoring and intervening where necessary in the most vulnerable schools and developing cohesion amongst the different elements of the sector-led model.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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