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School Improvement Strategy

London Borough
of Barnet

2017 - 2020

Barnet Local Authority – School Improvement Strategy

Part A

A Introduction

Barnet is well known for the excellent quality of its schools and the diversity of its educational offer. These are at the heart of Barnet's continuing success as a desirable place where people want to live, work and study. Excellent educational outcomes and ensuring children and young people are equipped to meet the needs of employers are vital to Barnet's future success.

Barnet has 126 schools serving 57,875 pupils (May 2017). There are 22 secondary schools, 90 primary schools, 3 all through schools, four nursery schools, five special schools and two pupil referral units. There is also one sixth-form college and one General Further Education College.

In recent years children's achievements in Barnet's schools have been among the best in the country and a high proportion of Barnet's young people progress on to higher education. Over 95% of Barnet pupils are at schools which were graded good or better at their last Ofsted inspection.

This School Improvement Strategy sets out the priorities for ensuring that children and young people continue to benefit from an excellent, high quality education offer. It is set out in two parts:

Part A sets out our vision and aims, current achievement in Barnet, the strengths, areas for development and priorities for improvement, and the plans for how we are going to address these.

Part B outlines our approach to monitoring, challenging and supporting all of our schools and how we give intensive support and close monitoring to our Schools Causing Concern.

B Resilience

We want to make Barnet the most Family Friendly Borough by 2020. Our approach to achieving 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 role that schools play in the day to day life of children and their families provides a unique opportunity to promote and embed resilience. Resilience based practice sits at the heart of improving outcomes for children and young people; an approach that is based on looking for strengths and opportunities to build on, rather than for issues or problems to treat.

At the same time our education vision recognises the barriers facing many disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people and includes a clear commitment to accelerating their progress and closing the gap between them and their peers.

C Ambition and Aims

Barnet is a growing borough and the quality of education plays a crucial part in making the borough a popular and desirable place to live.

Our strategic vision for education in Barnet is:

Resilient schools – resilient communities: We want Barnet to be the most successful place for high quality education where excellent school standards result in all children achieving their best, being safe and happy and able to progress to become successful adults.

In order to achieve this, our mission is: To ensure:

- Every child attends a **good or outstanding school**, as judged by Ofsted

- The attainment and progress of children in Barnet schools is **within the top 10%** nationally
- There is accelerating progress of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in order to **close the gap** between them and their peers.

To do this we need:

- Enough school places
- All schools to be good or outstanding
- High levels of attainment and progress in all phases
- A relentless focus on meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND, children looked after, children in need and children eligible for free school meals.

The Barnet Education Strategy (2017–2020) dictates the overall direction of travel for all Education and Skills Services. The Strategy outlines 5 overall strategic goals:

- **Strategic goal 1 - Access**

To ensure there are sufficient high-quality school places to meet the needs of Barnet residents, including local specialist provision when required for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and that school organisation and governance arrangements are financially sustainable.

- **Strategic goal 2 - Inclusion**

To ensure the provision of high quality local placements and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged from 3 to 25.

- **Strategic goal 3 – Achievement - School Improvement**

To ensure that every school is good or outstanding.

- **Strategic goal 4 – Achievement - Educational outcomes**

To improve the educational progress and outcomes for all children and young people across all phases and types of institution from early years to post-16, including progress into Higher Education, Apprenticeships or employment.

- **Strategic goal 5 – Achievement and Inclusion - Closing the gap and building resilience**

To close the gap in attainment and progress between the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils and their peers by accelerating their progress and building resilience.

In order to achieve these, a number of key drivers need to be taken into account. The full list is within the Education Strategy but those relevant to School Improvement are:

Achievement

- Maintaining a core Learning Network Inspector service to monitor and challenge, and, where necessary, intervene in, maintained schools, whilst keeping in touch with Academies. If necessary, LNI support services will be offered as a traded service to schools.
- The continuing development of quality traded services in order to support school improvement.
- Building on the work of School Improvement Partnerships and Teaching Schools.
- Working with schools on strategies for recruiting and retaining the best teachers and headteachers. This includes supporting governing bodies with the recruitment of new headteachers/principals and supporting headteachers with the recruitment of deputy headteachers/vice principals.
- Focus on good leadership and governance

- Active promotion of good behaviour and good safeguarding practices
- A strong focus on improving attendance, especially in Primary schools
- Collaboration between the council's Early Years Standards Team, Cambridge Education, schools and settings to ensure high quality Early Years provision in all of our settings and effective transition.
- Continued intervention to support young people at risk of being Not in Employment, Education or Training and work with providers to ensure suitable progression pathways including high quality technical and vocational provision.

D Governance

The implementation of the Education Strategy is overseen by the Barnet with Cambridge Education Strategic Partnership Board (SPB), which consists of representatives from the council, Cambridge Education and schools.

Underpinning this School Improvement Strategy is the School Standards Partnership Board (SSPB) which reports into the SPB. SSPB includes representatives of the council, Cambridge Education and schools. There are headteacher representatives from each Network on the Board.

The SSPB is responsible for the strategic approach to promote the continuous improvement of school standards in Barnet.

The SSPB acts as a forum:

- To keep under review those aspects of the Barnet education strategy that relate to:
 - school standards
 - pupil attainment, attendance and progress
 - narrowing gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers
 - the authority's monitoring, challenge and support of maintained schools
 - other relevant statutory functions.
- To review performance data across all Barnet schools for all stages and to consider areas where joint and targeted work is needed to secure improvements
- To identify and review priorities for improvement each year and assist in communicating these priorities across the partnership of schools.
- To identify and overcome any systemic barriers to continuous improvement
- To support and embed a secure and sustainable system of school to school support
- To consider ways to promote a positive image of Barnet schools as high-performing and highly-aspirational schools that provide excellent standards of education for all pupils.
- From time to time the SSPB will also assume responsibility for specific commissioned projects to support the strategy

E Context: Number of Good and Outstanding Schools

At the end of October 2017 the number of good and outstanding schools at each phase was:

Nursery - All 4 of the Nursery Schools are rated Good or Outstanding

Primary - 84 of the 87 schools who have had an Ofsted Inspection are rated Good or Outstanding

Secondary/All Through – 24 out of the 25 schools who have had an Ofsted Inspection are rated Good or Outstanding

Special – All 4 of the Special Schools who have had an Ofsted Inspection are rated Good or Outstanding

PRUs – Both Pupil Referral Units are rated Good or Outstanding

F Context: Achievement in Barnet Schools 2017 (provisional)

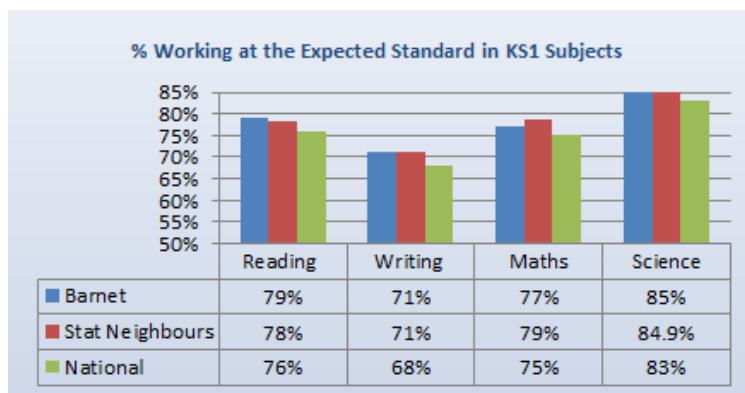
Early Years

Attainment increased in Barnet at a greater rate than statistical neighbours and national between 2016 and 2017. In 2017 73.3% of pupils achieved a Good Level of Development which was above national and in line with statistical neighbours. For this measure Barnet is ranked **39th** in 2017 (out of 152 LAs)

Phonics (Year 1)

The percentage of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard for phonics increased in Barnet at a greater rate than statistical neighbours and national between 2016 and 2017. 85% met the phonics standard which was above national and statistical neighbours. For this measure Barnet is ranked **10th** in 2017 (out of 152 LAs)

End of Key Stage 1

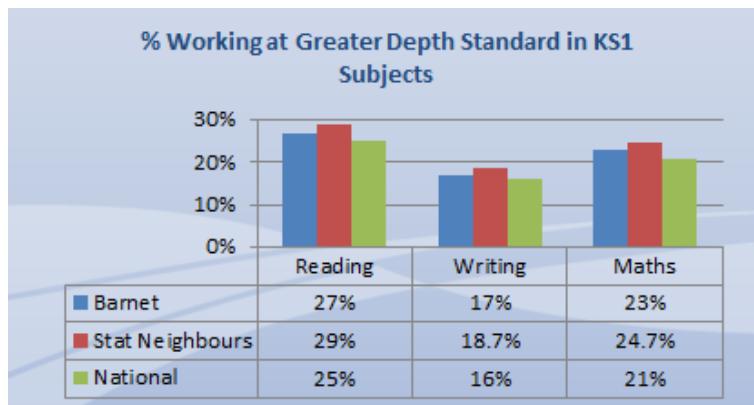


Percentage working at the Expected Standard or above

Attainment in all subjects (% EXS+) was above the national average.

For the proportion of pupils working at or above the expected standard, Barnet was ranked:

- **34th** in Reading (out of 152 LAs)
- **36th** in Writing (out of 152 LAs)
- **44th** in Maths (out of 152 LAs)
- **47th** in Science (out of 152 LAs)



Percentage working at Greater Depth

Attainment in all subjects (% GDS) was above the national average.

For the proportion of pupils working at or above the expected standard, Barnet was ranked:

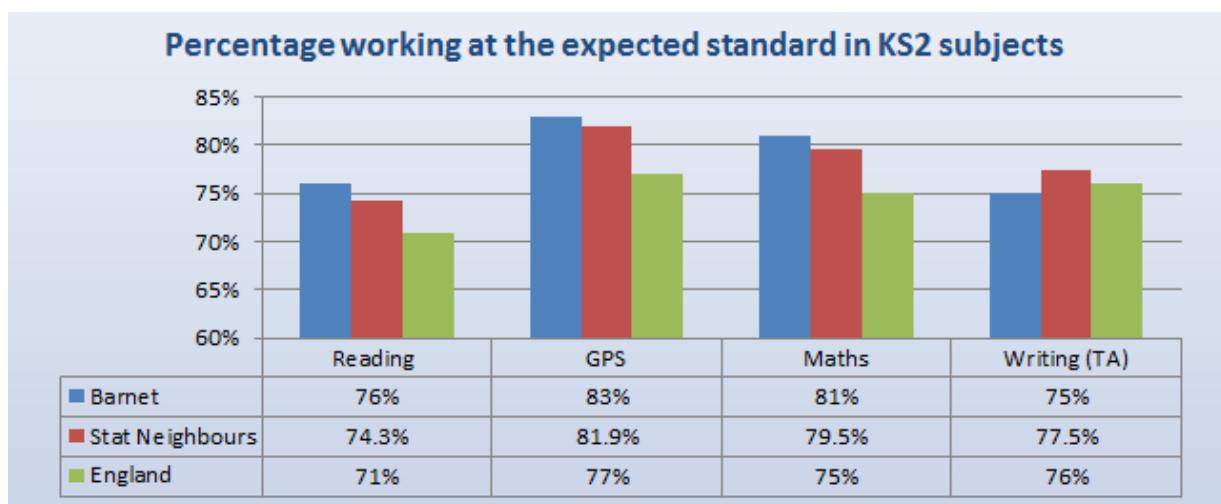
- 44th in Reading (out of 152 LAs)
- 59th in Writing (out of 152 LAs)
- 37th in Maths (out of 152 LAs)

Groups Achievement data (from FFT):

LA KS1 higher and lower performing pupil groups 2017

	Higher performing	Lower performing
Overall achievement pupil progress	Chinese (58) + Any Other (528) + First language not English (2028) + Indian (174) + Lower attainers (1128) +	EHC Plan (105) - SEN Support (544) - Unknown (51) Black Caribbean (108) FSM (542)

End of Key Stage 2

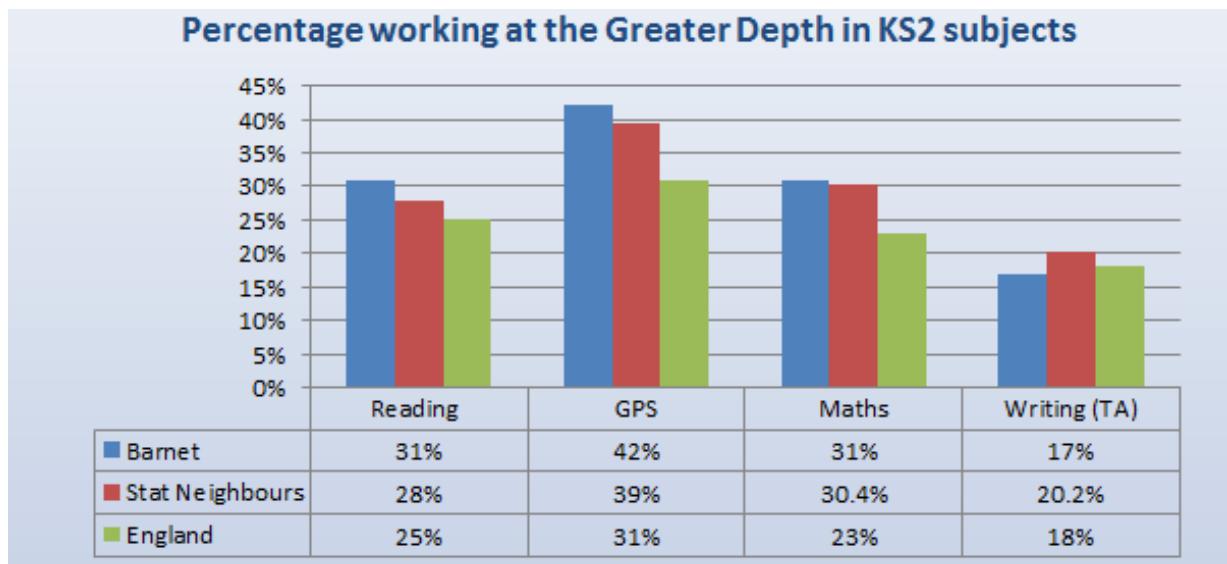


Percentage working at the Expected Standard or above

Attainment in Reading, GPS and Maths was above the national average but Writing was 1% below the national average.

For the proportion of Barnet pupils reaching at least the expected standard:

- Barnet is ranked **17th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Reading
- Barnet is ranked **13th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for GPS
- Barnet is ranked **17th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Maths
- Barnet is ranked **92nd** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Writing

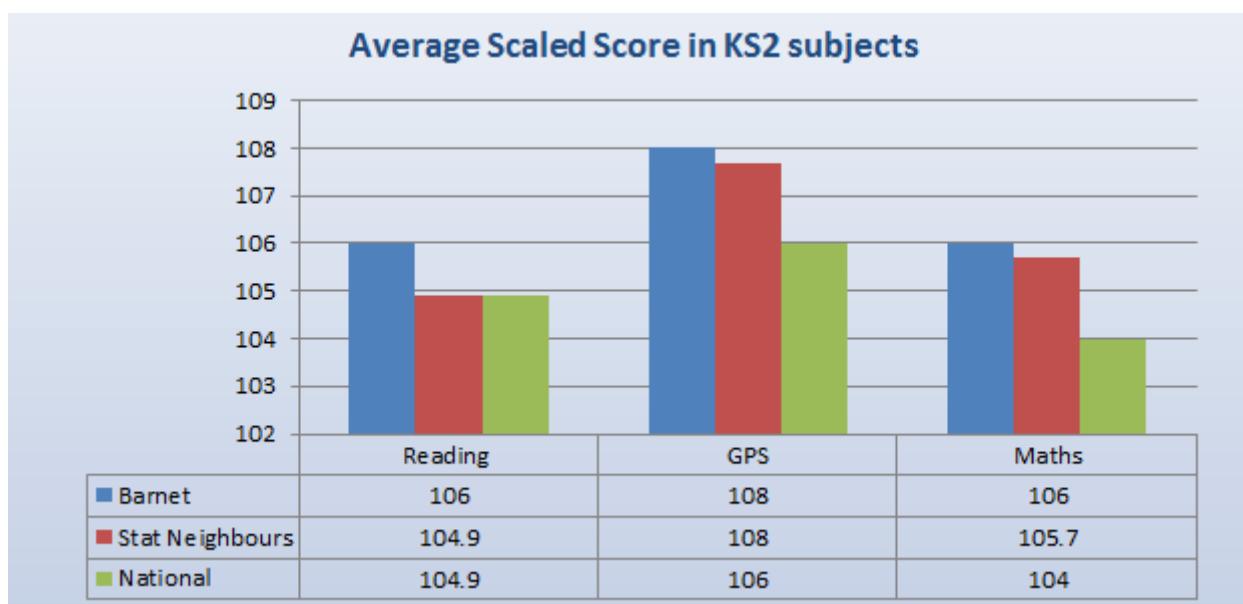


Percentage working at Greater Depth

Attainment in Reading, GPS and Maths was above the national average but Writing was 1% below the national average.

For the proportion of Barnet pupils reaching at least the expected standard and working at greater depth:

- Barnet is ranked **14th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Reading
- Barnet is ranked **8th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for GPS
- Barnet is ranked **11th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Maths
- Barnet is ranked **86th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Writing



Average Scaled Score

The Average Scaled Score was above the national average in all subjects.

For the average scaled score of Barnet pupils' test results:

- Barnet is ranked **5th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Reading
- Barnet is ranked **5th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for GPS (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling)
- Barnet is ranked **8th** nationally (out of 152 LAs) for Maths

Progress from KS1 to KS2

Progress in all subjects from KS1 to KS2 was significantly above national:

- Reading +1.7 (sig+)
- Writing +0.4 (sig +)
- Maths +2.0 (sig+)

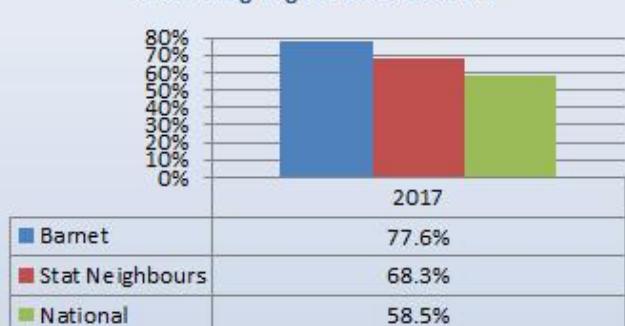
Groups Achievement Data (from FFT)

LA KS2 higher and lower performing pupil groups 2017

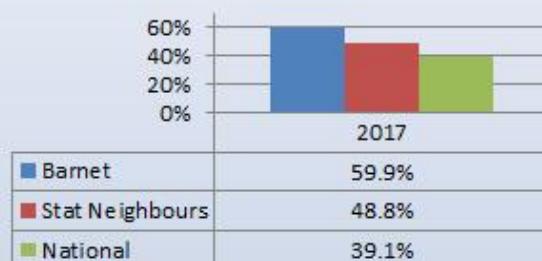
Overall achievement pupil progress	Higher performing	Lower performing
	Chinese (40) ↗ Bangladeshi (36) ↗ Other Asian (268) ↗ Pakistani (62) ↗ ↑ Any Other (465) ↗ ↑	EHC Plan (123) ↘

End of Key Stage 4

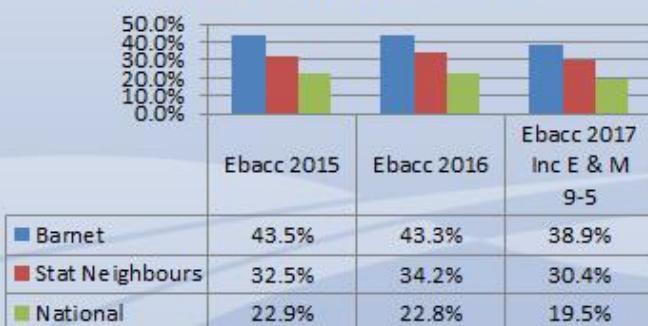
% Achieving English and Maths 9-4



% Achieving English and Maths
9-5

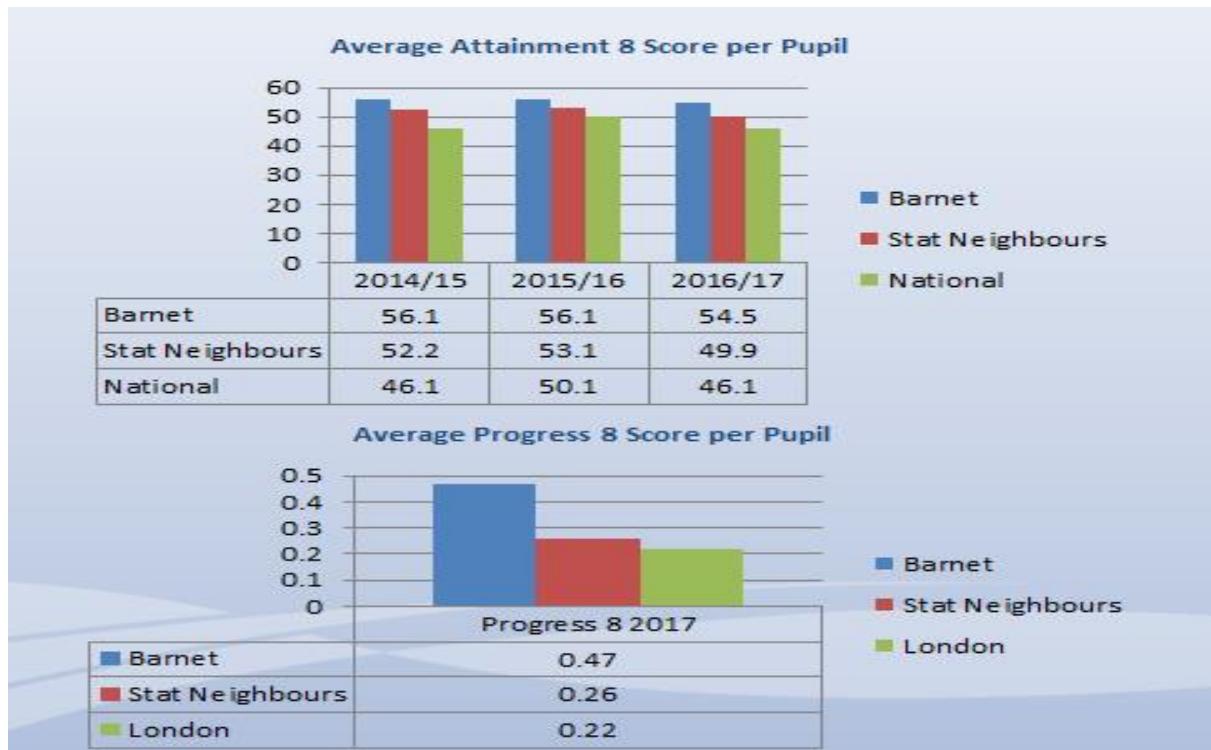


% Achieving the English Baccalaureate



For the proportion of pupils achieving:

- 9 – 5 in English and Maths, Barnet is ranked **5th** nationally (out of 152 LAs)
- 9 – 4 in English and Maths, Barnet is ranked **6th** nationally (out of 152 LAs)
- The English Baccalaureate, Barnet is ranked **4th** nationally (out of 152 LAs)



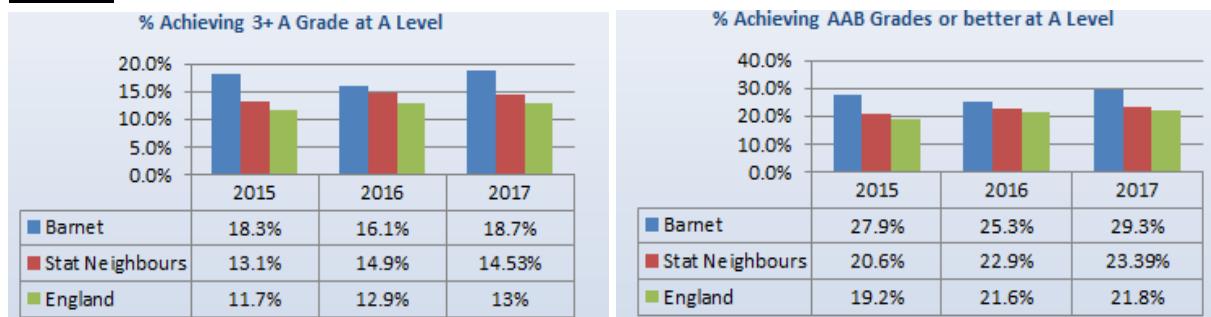
- For the average Attainment 8 score, Barnet is ranked **4th** nationally (out of 152 LAs)
- For the average Progress 8 Score, Barnet is ranked **4th** nationally (out of 152 LAs)

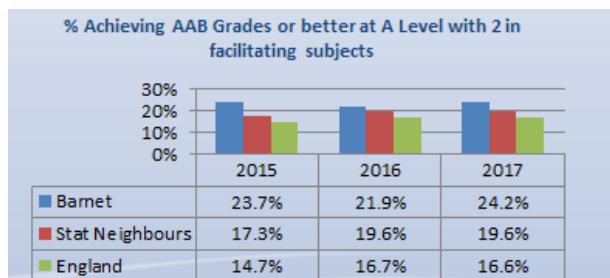
Groups Achievement Data (from FFT)

LA KS4 higher and lower performing pupil groups 2017

	Higher performing	Lower performing
	Indian (214) + Other Asian (239) + Pakistani (61) + Female (1521) + ↑ Chinese (43) +	EHC Plan (116) - SEN Support (276) - Black Caribbean (133) FSM (439)
Overall achievement pupil progress		

Post 16





For the proportion of pupils achieving:

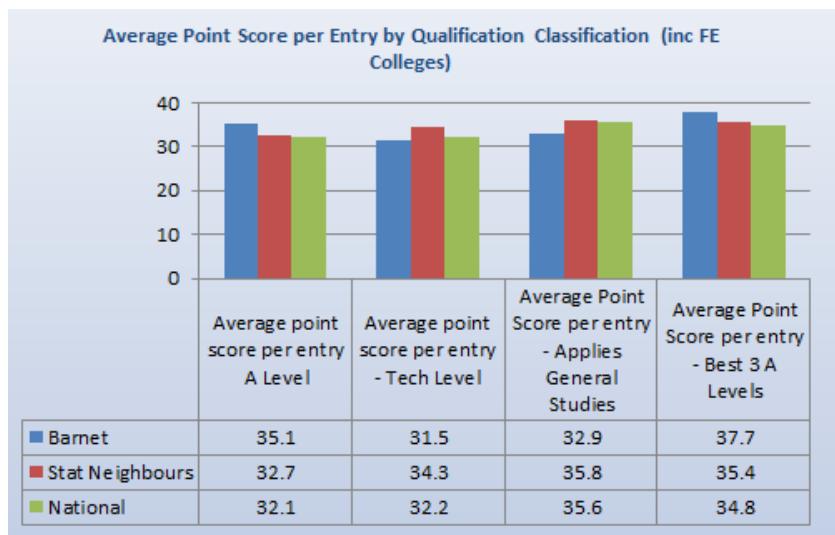
- 3 or more A grades, Barnet is ranked **6th** nationally
- AAB grades or better, Barnet is ranked **7th** nationally
- AAB grades or better with 2 facilitating subjects, Barnet is ranked **6th** nationally

16-19: Level 3 qualifications

From September 2014, vocational qualifications at level 3 have been classified as either Tech Levels or Applied General qualifications if they are approved for performance tables.

Tech Levels are for students wishing to specialise in a specific industry, occupation or occupational group, enabling entry to an apprenticeship or other employment, or progression to a related higher education course.

Applied General qualifications are for students wanting to continue their education through applied learning, and which fulfil entry requirements for a range of higher education courses.



For the average point score across:

- A level cohort, Barnet is ranked **6th** nationally (**14th** excluding FE colleges)
- Tech level cohort, Barnet is ranked **127th** nationally (**53rd** excluding FE colleges)
- Applied General studies, Barnet is ranked **90th** nationally (**120th** excluding FE colleges)
- Across the pupils' best 3 A level, Barnet is ranked **6th** nationally (**10th** excluding FE colleges)

G Key Strengths

1. Arising from the achievement data

- Year 1 Phonics – achievement in top 10% nationally
- End of KS2 attainment in Reading, GPS and Maths – in top 10% nationally
- Progress between KS1 and KS2 in all subjects – significantly better than national
- End of KS4 GCSE achievement – in top 5% nationally
- End of KS5 A Level achievement – in top 5% nationally

2. Other particular strengths

- Percentage of Good and Outstanding schools above National, Inner London and Outer London
- 96% of pupils attending a Good or Outstanding school
- Positive and productive relationship with schools, particularly primary
- Know our schools well. Accurate identification of vulnerable schools.
- Strong track record of supporting Schools Causing Concern to make the necessary improvements
- High expectations and aspirations for schools in Barnet
- Thriving and popular school improvement traded service (BPSI)
- Successful NQT Induction programme
- Continued delivery of a governor training programme and associate clerking service
- Knowledge, skills and successful experience of School Improvement Team – credibility and track record of success
- Links, contacts and involvement with key organisations e.g. Ofsted, Teaching Schools, DfE Sub Regional Improvement Board, Diocesan Boards, Academy Trusts
- Strong communication and teamwork between members of the team
- Robust procedures for monitoring, challenging and supporting schools (see School Improvement strategy Part B – Monitoring, Challenge and Support including Schools Causing Concern Policy)
- Processes and structures are dynamic in order to meet the diverse needs of schools

H Areas for Development - School Standards Partnership Board Priorities

Based on available provisional education performance data, the following areas have been identified as a priority for improvement by the School Standards Partnership Board:

• Primary Attendance

Although it is pleasing that recent data (Autumn/Spring Terms 2016/17) shows attendance has improved in Barnet schools (overall absence was 3.9% compared 4.1% for the same period in 2015/16) and we are now above the national average of 4.0% we are ranked 50th, well below the top 10% of LAs. However the ranking is an improvement from 98th for the same period in 2015/16.

- **Early Years**

The percentage of pupils who achieved a GLD was above National, Inner London and Outer London averages in 2017. Barnet's national ranking, for percentage of pupils achieving a GLD, has increased from 87th in 2016 to 39th in 2017. However, as this is still below the top 10% of LAs it remains a priority

- **Key Stage 1 Achievement**

KS1 relative attainment (ranking) is well below the top 10% of LAs for all KS1 subjects. Maths is ranked the lowest (44th) for the proportion of pupils achieving at least the expected standard, then Writing (36th) with the best relative attainment being in Reading (34th).

- **KS2 Writing**

Attainment is below the national average and our ranking, although improved from 2016 is still 92nd. Although it is clear that there are inconsistencies nationally with teacher assessment of writing, we still need to maintain a focus on this subject in order to continue to raise relative attainment.

- **Achievement of Disadvantaged Pupils and other Vulnerable Groups (inc Black Caribbean)**

This remains a priority for improvement to eliminate differences in the performance of groups of pupils.

- **Looked After Children**

Although there is no confirmed data available on the performance of looked after children in 2017, results collected from schools indicates the performance of this group of young people remains significantly below that of non-looked after children. We also provide advice and information for previously looked after children who are now adopted or permanently placed.

- **Transition**

Transition between all Key Stages was identified as a priority by the School Standards Partnership Board.

- **Recruitment**

Recruiting and retaining good quality teachers and school leaders is a challenge for schools across Barnet. The Recruitment and Retention Working party is working to address these challenges.

- **Progress and Progression Pathways of low attaining pupils across all key stages**

To ensure that sufficient quality and learning opportunities exist for children and young people to succeed across a range of skills and abilities

- **Safeguarding**

To support the implementation of Barnet Children's Services Improvement Action Plan following the Inadequate judgement by Ofsted in July 2017

The above priorities are underpinned by:

- Schools who deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn and helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning. This supports pupils' good progress. The curriculum also contributes well to pupils' behaviour and welfare, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leaders who take effective steps to secure good behaviour from pupils and a consistent approach to discipline.

It is recognised that schools are having to manage pupils with more complex behaviour challenges. We work closely with colleagues from the SEND and Inclusion Teams to offer support to schools in managing more complex behaviour.

I Key Actions arising from these priorities

The School Improvement Team Plan is allied to the priorities and objectives set out in the Education and Skills Business Plan and the agreed schedule of performance indicators.

Elements of the team's activities are traded e.g. BPSI, Governor Services, NQT support, Connect, Secondary SI offer and we are looking to expand our offer to Barnet schools as well as trading beyond the Borough boundary.

Outcome	Owned by	Action	Key partner/s	Deadline	Target for actions in 2017/18 (including KPIs, SKPIs & OKPIs)	Monitored via
All schools successfully monitored, challenged and supported by Learning Network Inspectors	Neil Marlow / LNIs	See Monitoring , Challenge and Support Action Plan	Schools	March 2018	Percentage of primary schools rated as 'good' or better Percentage of secondary schools rated as 'good' or better	SRG, SSPB
Ensure all Schools Causing Concern are effectively supported and closely monitored	Neil Marlow / Lead Officers	See Monitoring , Challenge and Support Action Plan	Schools, BPSI Advisers	March 2018	Produce an action plan for each school causing concern and progress reports on each SCC at least once a term.	SRG, SSPB
Achievement of pupils to be in top 10% nationally	Neil Marlow / LNIs	See Monitoring , Challenge and Support Action Plan	Schools, BPSI Advisers	March 2018	The percentage of primary pupils achieving the 'expected standard' in English Reading, English Writing and Mathematics (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2 The average of: a) Primary pupils' average progress in English Reading b) Primary pupils' average progress in English Writing c) Primary pupils' average progress in Mathematics Secondary achievement Points allocated: 6a 15pts (37.5%); 6b 15pts (37.5%); 6c 7pts (17.5%); 6d 3pts (7.5%): 6a Average Attainment 8 Score 6b Average Progress	SRG, SSPB

Outcome	Owned by	Action	Key partner/s	Deadline	Target for actions in 2017/18 (including KPIs, SKPIs & OKPIs)	Monitored via
					8 Score 6c Percentage of pupils achieving the threshold in English and mathematics (In 2016, the threshold is grade C, in 2017 the threshold is grade 5) 6d Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate	
Progress of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils accelerated in order to close the gap between them and their peers	Neil Marlow / John Paxton	See Narrowing the Gap Action Plan	Schools, BPSI Advisers	March 2018	Primary 50% of points each to: 5a: % of pupils eligible for disadvantaged pupils (this includes Free School Meal 6 and Children Looked After pupils) achieving the 'expected standard' in English Reading, English Writing and Mathematics (combined) at the end of Key Stage 2 AND 5b: Difference between attainment level of pupils on disadvantaged pupils (this includes FSM 6 and CLA pupils) and their peers ('expected standard' in RWM combined) at the end of Key Stage 2 Secondary 25% of points for each of 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d: 7a Average Attainment 8 Score for pupils eligible for FSM in the past 6 years (disadvantaged pupils) 7b Average Progress 8 Score for pupils eligible for FSM in the past 6 years (disadvantaged pupils) 7c Attainment gap between pupils eligible for FSM (disadvantaged) pupils (Average Attainment 8 Score for pupils on FSM - Average Attainment 8 Score for pupils not disadvantaged) 7d Achievement gap between pupils eligible for FSM (disadvantaged) pupils (Average Progress 8 Score for pupils on FSM - Average Progress 8 Score for pupils not disadvantaged)	Data collection Census
Improve Primary Attendance	Neil Marlow / LNIs	See Attendance Action Plan	Schools, EWT	March 2018	Average percentage attendance levels in Primary schools for the Autumn and Spring terms in line	SSPB, Attendance Working Party

Outcome	Owned by	Action	Key partner/s	Deadline	Target for actions in 2017/18 (including KPIs, SKPIs & OKPIs)	Monitored via
					with London Average	
Improve achievement at Early Years	Neil Marlow / Katie Dawbarn	See Early Years Action Plan	Schools, Early Years Standards, BPSI Early Years Adviser, BEYA	March 2018	GLD to be above national	SSPB
Improve achievement in phonics	Neil Marlow / LNIs	See Phonics Action Plan	Schools, Early Years Standards, BPSI Early Years Adviser, BEYA	March 2018	Percentage of pupils meeting phonics standard above national	SSPB
Improve attainment in mathematics at KS1	Neil Marlow / LNIs	See Mathematics Action Plan	Schools, BPSI, Teaching Schools	March 2018	Attainment in mathematics at KS1 in top 10% of LAs	SSPB
Improve attainment in writing at KS2	Neil Marlow / LNIs	See Writing Action Plan	Schools, BPSI, Teaching Schools	March 2018	Attainment in writing at KS2 above national	SSPB
Improve achievement of Vulnerable Groups including Disadvantaged, Black and EAL Pupils	Neil Marlow / John Paxton / LNIs	See Narrowing the Gap Action Plan	Schools, BPSI, Teaching Schools	March 2018	Improved achievement of vulnerable groups and more in line with national	SSPB
Improve achievement of Looked After Children particularly at Secondary	Neil Marlow / Jane Munroe	See Virtual School Action Plan	Schools, Social Care, Placements	March 2018	a) 20% - Average Attainment 8 score of looked after children b) 20% - Average Progress 8 score of looked after children c) 10% - Closing the gap between Barnet LAC and Barnet average on Attainment 8 and Progress 8 d) 20% - the quality of PEPs e) 10% - KS2 performance (expected standards in RWM) f) 10% - 16-18 year old NEETs g) 5% - Attendance of LACs h) 5% - Exclusions	SSPB, VS Challenge Committee
Improve quality of transitions between key stages	Neil Marlow / Katie Dawbarn	See Transitions Action Plan	Schools, Colleges	March 2018	Protocols in place Pupils benefitting from smoother transitions	SSPB
Recruitment of high quality staff in schools improved	Neil Marlow / Helen Morrison	See Recruitment and Retention Action Plan	Schools, Agencies, Media Team, Housing, Parking	March 2018	Reduced vacancy rate in schools (baseline 6%)	SSPB, Recruitment and Retention Working Party
To ensure that sufficient quality and learning opportunities exist for children and young	Neil Marlow / Charles Rice	See Progress and Progressio	Schools, Colleges, Post 16	March 2018	Improved achievement in vocational qualifications	SSPB

Outcome	Owned by	Action	Key partner/s	Deadline	Target for actions in 2017/18 (including KPIs, SKPIs & OKPIs)	Monitored via
people to succeed across a range of skills and abilities		n Pathways Action Plan				
To ensure schools meet statutory requirements for safeguarding	Neil Marlow / Jane Morris	See Safeguarding Action Plan	Schools, LADO, Social Care, BPSI	March 2018	Produce an action plan for monitoring and improving arrangements for safeguarding in the Education and Skills service and in all Barnet schools and regular progress reports.	SMT
To support schools in dealing effectively with pupils with more challenging behaviour	Neil Marlow / Simon James	See separate Action Plan	SEN Teams	March 2018	Increased offer of support to schools	SEND Partnership Board, School Standards Partnership Board
To further develop Traded Services: • BPSI • Secondary SI Offer • Governor Services • NQT • Connect	Neil Marlow / Richard Griggs	See separate Action Plans	Schools, Advisers, NGA, School Bus,	March 2018	Increased trading and income Improved service as demonstrated through satisfaction surveys	BPSI Steering Group Connect Council of Management

Separate Action Plans for the following areas have been produced and are being monitored:

- EYFS
- Phonics
- Writing
- Mathematics
- Attendance
- Transitions
- Narrowing the Gap
- Progress and Progression Pathways
- Safeguarding in Schools
- Virtual School
- Monitoring, Challenge and Support
- Recruitment and Retention
- BPSI
- Connect
- NQT

Associated resources

- Barnet Education Strategy 2017-2020
- School Improvement Overall Team Plan 2017/18
- School Improvement Individual Action Plans 2017/18
- SEND Strategy 2017-20

Barnet Local Authority – School Improvement Strategy

Part B

Monitoring, Challenge and Support - 2017/18

A Introduction

- 1 This document sets out how the local authority will fulfil its statutory duties in relation to local authority maintained schools and provides the framework for engagement with Academies, Free Schools and Academy Sponsors in relation to standards and attainment. It supports the delivery of Barnet's Education Strategy in delivering the vision which is for:

"Barnet to be the most successful place for high quality education where excellent school standards result in all children achieving their best, being safe and happy and able to progress to become successful adults?"

With the specific aims of:

- *Every child attending a **good or outstanding school**, as judged by Ofsted*
- *The **attainment and progress** of children in Barnet schools is within the top 10% nationally*
- *Accelerating the progress of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in order to **close the gap** between them and their peers*

- 2 Barnet's Education Strategy was developed during a period of significant change in the education landscape with increasing autonomy of schools and increased delegation of funding and responsibilities. Schools are now at the forefront in leading a more autonomous and self-improving school system.

The local authority retains a range of statutory responsibilities. In particular the Education and Inspection Act 2006 identifies a duty to promote high standards and requires local authorities to take early action to address school underperformance as well as absolute low attainment. It provides revised legislation in relation to the Performance Standards and Safety Warning Notice system so that local authorities are able to challenge and support those schools that are underperforming as well as those that do not achieve the minimum standards expected for all schools. The Education Act 2011 gives further powers to the Secretary of State to direct local authorities to intervene.

In March 2016, the Government updated statutory guidance for local authorities in fulfilling their duties with Schools Causing Concern.

- 3 The principles underpinning the council's approach are:

- Every school is different and self-evaluation should reflect the values and beliefs of the school and its distinctive ethos.
- Schools operate within a framework of autonomy with accountability. They are responsible for their own management and development and have the primary responsibility for their own performance. It is the responsibility of the LA to respect, encourage and support autonomy but also, through the LNI, or other commissioned professionals, to monitor, challenge and intervene where appropriate.
- School improvement is based on building the capacity of the leadership and management of schools.
- Barnet supports the principles of 'intervention in inverse proportion to success'. Whilst LA monitoring and challenge is an entitlement for all LA maintained schools, support is differentiated according to need and direct formal intervention in LA maintained schools should only be used in the most serious of cases and where other approaches have failed.

B Local Authority procedures for monitoring and challenging schools and for supporting and intervening where necessary

Much of the available expertise to support school improvement exists in schools. Self-evaluation is at the heart of effective school improvement and schools need to have a very clear knowledge of their own strengths and areas for development based on their own rigorous monitoring, evaluation and performance management. It is expected that all schools in Barnet will undertake regular self-evaluation that is:

- based on openness, honesty, robust feedback and respect
- follows systems and procedures which are shared and understood by all
- is evidence based and is fair and transparent
- leads to strategies to manage change
- is embedded in school improvement planning
- has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.

Monitoring, challenge and support

The local authority monitoring and challenge function is undertaken by the School Improvement Team within Barnet with Cambridge Education. Each school in Barnet is assigned a named Learning Network Inspector (LNI). In addition, some schools are assigned a Barnet School Improvement Partner (BSIP). These are Cambridge Education Consultants who are commissioned by the Local Authority to conduct monitoring, challenge and support on behalf of the LA.

- a) For LA maintained schools, the LNI/BSIP visits to maintained schools are in line with the arrangements for differentiated support:

Judgement of school based on a combination of their current Ofsted grading and LA RAG Rating	Number of Visits
Outstanding schools	At least one visit a year (an Achievement and Target Setting Review (Autumn Term for Primaries and Spring or Summer Term for Secondaries))
Securely Good schools	A minimum of two visits a year with one of those visits being an Achievement and Target Setting Review (Autumn Term for Primaries and Spring Term for Secondaries)
Good but of concern and vulnerable to a judgement of RI at next inspection	Regular visits or contact across the year (at least half termly)
Schools causing concern/Requiring Improvement where the local authority consider there is good or better capacity to improve	A minimum of six visits a year
Schools requiring improvement where the capacity to make rapid and sustained improvement is not secure	A programme of visits identified through the schools causing concern protocol. Approximately one visit or contact per fortnight.
Schools that are deemed to require 'special measures' or to have 'serious weaknesses'	See below

Secondary Maintained schools will receive three visits (if they have a 6th Form) – these visits will take place across the year according to school needs. PRUs receive two visits.

Schools with the following issues may get additional visits:

- Schools recruiting new headteacher or deputy headteacher
- New or Acting/Interim Headteacher
- New school to the LA
- Schools with governance or leadership issues
- Schools expecting an Ofsted
- Schools who have experienced a Critical Incident
- Schools who are considering a change in organisational structure e.g. federation, MAT etc

b) For Academies, the authority will offer at least one keeping in touch visit a year

This is a guide and there may be circumstances where additional visits are undertaken because of a significant change in the school's circumstances, for example where there is a change of Headteacher, or a marked change in performance indicators. These visits will be agreed between the LNI and Headteacher or Chair of Governors and will be within the spirit of intervention in inverse proportion to success.

A local authority desk top exercise, reviewing the attainment and achievement data for a school, will inform a visit (e.g. achievement review, target setting meetings or 'keeping in touch' meeting). LA maintained schools are expected to use the range of data available to them from national sources to undertake their analysis in preparation for an attainment review. The local authority will provide data sets to support maintained schools in their self-evaluation and LNIs/BSIPs in preparation for visiting schools

Self-evaluation which includes robust data analysis is the starting point for the LA monitoring of schools. With the passing of the Ofsted SEF, schools are no longer required to use a standard format. The local authority expectation is that LA maintained schools will update their self evaluation on an annual basis utilising Ofsted categories

The local authority produces a 'note of visit' report for each formal meeting held throughout the year. 'Notes of visit' are agreed with the Headteacher. For maintained schools, the Headteacher is required to share the report with their Governing Bodies. For Academies, it would be the expectation of the local authority that the Headteacher would share it with their Chair.

Challenge is an integral part of the school improvement process and should be carried out in the true spirit of partnership. Evidence should be presented, searching questions asked and possible alternative approaches posed, with the LNI/BSIP operating as a critical friend. Challenge is a shared responsibility. Schools have a right and duty to challenge the LA when the provision of services does not meet their needs. Equally it is the duty of the LA to challenge schools to set targets that are ambitious as well as realistic and to secure high outcomes for all learners.

Challenge from the local authority will cover the following:

- targets for the improvement of pupil performance
- the school's self evaluation judgements against each aspect of the school's provision and outcomes
- any aspect of school performance where there are concerns.

At all times challenge will be based on evidence where standards or aspects of provision are not as good as might be expected and/or to promote high expectations and continuous improvement.

All schools in Barnet grade themselves for overall effectiveness during their annual self-evaluation process. At least annually, taking into account the monitoring and challenge of achievement data and the school's self evaluation, the LNI will agree the category in which the

school has placed itself and reflect this in the ‘note of visit’. Where the LNI does not agree the grades in the self evaluation this will be made clear to the headteacher and recorded in the note of visit.

LA maintained schools in Barnet are placed (through the process above) in one of the following categories which are based on Ofsted grades and criteria. They are as follows:

- 1 Outstanding
- 2 Good
- 3 Requires Improvement
- 4a Inadequate – serious weaknesses
- 4b Special measures.

Schools placed in categories 3, 4a and 4b through the mechanism identified above, are classified by Barnet as Causing Concern and will receive extra support in order to help them to overcome their difficulties.

Local authority support

LA maintained schools may receive support from the local authority (over and above the monitoring visits described above) according to the category agreed with the school. ‘Outstanding’ and ‘Good’ schools will only receive additional support which they broker (and for which they pay). The exception to this is in the recruitment of a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher where, for all schools, the LNI assigned to the school will support the recruitment process.

Schools requiring improvement but with good capacity to improve (Ofsted or local authority judgement) will also be deemed to have the capacity to manage (and pay for) the support they need for their ongoing growth.

Schools in Ofsted categories and those designated by the local authority as causing concern will receive additional support as set out above and will be expected to commission (and pay for) additional support in accordance with the improvement plan they agree with the local authority. The local authority may broker this support on behalf of the school but the school will be required to pay for it other than in exceptional circumstances where the school is facing significant financial difficulties. The local authority’s strategy for working with Schools Causing Concern is outlined below.

For all schools, the local authority will signpost and facilitate the sharing of good practice and the access to the range of local sources of expertise.

School Reviews

There are two types of whole School Review available in the local authority:

- **LA School Review for schools with new headteachers** - an in-depth local authority commissioned review, carried out in a spirit of partnership, with senior leaders from the school involved in the process. Peer headteachers will form part of the review team. These reviews are funded by the local authority.
- **BPSI School Reviews** – led by a BPSI Adviser/Ofsted Inspector, supplemented by peer headteachers on the team, these reviews are commissioned and paid for by the school (e.g. using BPSI hours). For Schools Causing Concern or schools of concern to the LA, the school will be advised to commission a BPSI Review at a time deemed most appropriate and helpful.

Recruitment of a new headteacher

We encourage governing bodies to work closely with the LA throughout the recruitment and selection process for headteachers. In the case of voluntary aided schools the diocesan board or relevant body will also have advisory rights. The following outlines the key points in the legislation which must be followed.

Governing bodies of maintained schools must notify the LA of a headteacher or deputy headteacher vacancy. The LA has a statutory right to an advisory place on the selection panel of Community Schools. Governing bodies of voluntary aided schools, which have not accorded advisory rights to the LA for the appointment of head and deputy headteachers must:

- Send a list of shortlisted candidates to the LA
- Provide as much information as possible to the LA on each person selected for interview, to enable the LA to determine their suitability for appointment
- Consider any representations the LA may make within 14 days regarding shortlisted candidates and notify the LA in writing of its response to those representations
- Take the final decision on who to recommend for appointment
- Take steps to ensure that the appointee meets the regulations regarding qualifications, health, fitness, safeguarding requirements and other grounds

The LA produces a “Toolkit for Governing Bodies in the Recruitment of a New Headteacher” and a “Handover Checklist for a New Headteacher” which we encourage all schools to use.

Formal mechanisms for maintaining a positive relationship and a strong partnership with schools

- School Circular sent by e mail weekly from the LA to schools
- Every school has a named Learning Network Inspector (with some schools having an additional BSIP to carry out formal monitoring and challenge visits)
- Half-termly Network Meetings with primary headteachers led by the relevant Learning Network Inspector
- Termly Meeting with Deputy and Assistant Headteachers (all phases) led by the Learning Network Inspectors
- Termly Newsletter sent by the Assistant Director – Head of School Improvement to secondary school headteachers
- Termly Directors Meeting with all headteachers
- Termly Director’s Meeting with chairs and vice chairs of governors
- Welcome Event for New Headteachers, Deputy Heads and Assistant Heads
- New Headteacher Forum and New Deputy Headteacher Forum
- Termly Safeguarding Breakfast Briefing for leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Notes of Visit system (Perspective Lite) recording all school improvement visits to a school
- Encouraging schools to purchase School Improvement Traded Services e.g. Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI), Governor Services, Data Services, NQT support etc

Towards a schools-led school improvement system

Vision

The vision for what we are trying to achieve through a new approach to school improvement in Barnet is:

Every Barnet school is encouraged to be part of school partnerships 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, working in collaboration with, and in addition to, the local authority monitoring, challenge and support. Co-operation and structured and planned improvement are driven by school leaders, every school benefits and standards are continuously raised.

- Schools should be **responsible for their own improvement** and so we need a self-improving school system
- **System leaders** in schools (e.g NLEs, experienced school leaders) should be driving improvement across schools
- All schools need to have **regular external challenge** in order to identify key areas for development and to improve continuously. This external challenge will come from the local authority and any other appropriate organisations
- The **local authority** will continue to have a named Learning Network Inspector (LNI) for each school and either the LNI, the Assistant Director – Head of School Improvement or a Barnet School Improvement Partner (BSIP) will conduct monitoring, challenge and support activities to each school and each partnership. This may need to be charged for
- 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. This means that the Local Authority encourages schools to join together in school improvement partnerships
- The Local Authority provides high quality consultancy and training to schools through the Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI)

To supplement the schools-led school improvement system, the LA may use other strategies to build capacity in schools. These may include the following:

- the use of experienced Barnet Headteachers to act as coaches for inexperienced new Headteachers especially where they are taking over fragile schools
- the secondment of Headteachers and experienced Deputy Headteachers to cover Headteacher vacancies in fragile schools
- creative use of teaching expertise identified in other schools in the LA to build capacity in challenging schools.
- the use of National Leaders of Education (NLEs), National Support Schools (NSS), Local Leaders of Education (LLEs) or Teaching Schools to support, monitor and challenge schools
- the use of other recognised school improvement programmes such as the “Securing Good” Programme or support funded from the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF)
- the use of National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) to support Chairs of Governors and whole Governing Bodies in vulnerable schools
- the use of BPSI to deliver a range of monitoring, challenge and support activities including a range of reviews
- working in partnership with other LA departments and agencies e.g SEN, safeguarding, social care, education welfare

School Partnerships

Loose partnerships

Schools are encouraged and supported to be in loose partnerships. The make up of these partnerships is reviewed annually and schools are encouraged to discuss with their Learning Network Inspector if their partnership is not proving to be effective and demonstrate impact. Network Meetings and other forums, including Chairs and Vice Chairs Briefings, are used to disseminate good practice in partnerships and Learning Network Inspectors will attend partnership meetings and activities where necessary and resources allow.

In 2017-18 we are part of an Education Endowment Foundation funded trial of a Schools Partnership Programme which aims to develop leadership capacity in collaborative school improvement across our local system. A team from UCL Institute of Education (IOE) will independently evaluate whether a rigorous cluster-based approach to peer review and school-to-school support can lead to improved outcomes for pupils. The programme starts in January 2018 and finishes in July 2020 and will involve between 5 and 10 clusters of schools (3-7 schools in each cluster). The aim is to build significant senior and middle leadership capacity and capability to support a culture of continuous and sustainable improvement.

More formal partnerships

The Local Authority will support any schools or partnerships who want to explore the potential benefits of a more formal partnership arrangement i.e. federating or creating or joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

The resignation or retirement of a school's serving headteacher can present the governing body with a good opportunity to review the school's future leadership arrangements. The governors might want to consider new models of school leadership ranging from entering a federation or a multi-academy, through to becoming a co-operative trust, or remaining a standalone school or academy. The Local Authority will support a governing body with this decision making process.

C Schools Causing Concern

All schools in categories 3, 4a and 4b are classified by the local authority as causing concern through the mechanism identified above. This is regarded by the local authority as an informal Warning Notice and rapid improvement is expected.

The DfE guidance on Schools Causing Concern (March 2016) states:

"It is expected that local authorities will use their powers to issue warning notices in the schools which they still maintain. When a maintained school becomes an academy then the intervention role will fall solely to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)."

"Both local authorities and RSCs (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) have powers to issue warning notices to maintained schools where there are concerns about performance standards and safety. Such a warning notice may be given by a local authority or an RSC in one of three circumstances:

- 1. the standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so;*
- 2. there has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, such standards of performance; or,*
- 3. the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise)."*

"Local authorities should work with RSCs to discuss where they judge that a performance standards and safety warning notice is necessary. Local authorities are expected to continue to use warning notices to challenge schools they maintain to improve."

"By having the same powers, RSCs will be able to issue a warning notice where, in the RSC's opinion, it is appropriate to act – for example, where the local authority has failed to act swiftly enough in a specific case, has generally not acted swiftly or robustly enough in the past, or lacks capacity to act. The Secretary of State's power to issue a warning notice takes precedence over the local authority's, so the RSC will also act where the local authority issues a warning notice that the RSC does not consider to be robust enough, or the RSC does not consider that the action that follows a warning notice issued by a local authority to be robust enough."

"A copy of any warning notice issued by a local authority must be given to the relevant RSC, as must a copy of any warning notice given by an RSC to a maintained school be given to the local authority that maintains it."

Barnet's policy is to designate schools with unacceptably low standards as schools causing concern and to subject them to an improvement regime, as described below. We see this designation as an informal warning and an invitation to co-operate with the authority in taking the necessary steps to bring about the required improvements.

There is thus 'a particular reason' not to issue a warning notice to a Barnet SCC, which is that the LA has notified the school that they are a school causing concern and they are cooperating fully with the LA's approach to supporting and challenging such schools to improve.

The same approach would apply if the school were regarded as a cause of concern due to a serious breakdown of management or governance or where the safety of pupils is threatened. In these cases the LA will designate the school as a school causing concern in relation to these specific grounds and seek their full co-operation in remedying the situation.

The LA's policy is therefore to issue a warning notice:

- Where schools have not responded positively and fully co-operated with the LA's SCC framework as set out in this document.
- If a school does not take adequate action to secure a review of its use of the Pupil Premium or a review of governance when recommended by OfSTED

- Where a school has been a cause of concern for more than 12 months and still seems unlikely to become good within the next 6 months.

Triggers for schools causing concern:

- All schools judged Inadequate or Requires Improvement by OfSTED
- All schools that the LA believes would be judged as RI or worse by OfSTED if inspected now or in the near future
- All schools where there is a serious breakdown of management/leadership or governance or where the LA believes overall leadership (governance and management/leadership) to be RI or worse
- All schools where the LA believes the safety of pupils is threatened, including any schools whose safeguarding arrangements are unsatisfactory
- All schools where achievement of pupils is unacceptably low, because they fall under the government's definition of coasting schools or where there has been a serious decline in levels of attainment or progress and the LA has not been provided with sufficient evidence that the school has the capacity to reverse this trend.

Schools Review Group

The list of schools causing concern is reviewed half termly at a local authority School Review Group meeting which considers the performance of all schools across the authority. The review body comprises senior local authority officers and is chaired by the Assistant Director - Head of School Improvement.

Concerns expressed at this meeting will already have been discussed with the headteacher of the school concerned. If the School Review Group identifies a school as causing concern, this will be communicated to the headteacher and Chair of Governors in writing. A Lead Officer (LO) is identified and an appropriate plan of support is set in place. Each school's progress is monitored and the need for the school's continuing categorisation is reviewed at each School Review Group meeting.

The support provided to Schools Causing Concern and the overall progress of each school is reported to the School Standards Partnership Board, which is a partnership board of council officers, Barnet with Cambridge Education Officers and headteachers, chaired by the Assistant Director - Head of School Improvement. See Appendix A for a flowchart showing the processes followed for Schools Causing Concern.

a) LA maintained schools

Lead Officer Role

When a school is placed in an OFSTED category or begins to cause the LA concern then a LO is appointed. The LO may be the school's Learning Network Inspector, or another suitably qualified professional.

The LO role is as follows: The LO is the LA representative who will work in partnership with the Headteacher of the school which has been identified, either through the moderated school self review procedure or as a result of an OFSTED inspection, as requiring support.

In partnership with the Headteacher and senior colleagues the LO will:

- Identify key issues impacting on the school's capacity to improve through the following:
 - Focusing on substantial, current and unresolved issues that have an impact on standards
 - Identifying any underlying, hidden issues
 - Identifying blocks to progress
 - Identifying key areas for action.

- Help the Headteacher and senior colleagues to develop a future vision for the school by:
 - Identifying where they want the school to be in a year's time
 - Identifying interim milestones and goals
- Support the writing of an action plan which will translate the goals into a sequence of actions to address the key issues by:
 - planning the actions to be taken by both school and LA
 - planning the involvement of others, including teachers and advisers brokered through Barnet Partnership for School Improvement, commissioned either by the school or the LA
 - planning systematic monitoring and evaluation so that all the actions agreed are kept under review
 - Agree with the Headteacher that enough progress has been made so that the category can be withdrawn. This to be as a result of self review, LA review, BPSI Review or HMI review which acknowledges that sufficient progress has been made against key issues, that the school is sustaining improvement and no longer requires intensive support. A school judged as RI or inadequate by OfSTED will not be removed from the SCC list until a subsequent OfSTED inspection judges them to be good or better.

Throughout this process, the LO is responsible for co-ordinating the LA intervention. This involves:

- formulating and keeping updated a SCC Action Plan
- regular visits to school in order to monitor progress
- liaison between all those identified in joint school/LA action plan
- supporting aspects of the action plan
- holding regular (usually termly) School Progress Review Team Meetings, where appropriate, with relevant council officers and senior school staff to review progress and discuss next steps
- reporting on progress, making a judgement and suggesting next steps
- attending governing body meetings as appropriate
- attending regular (usually termly) Monitoring and Challenge Meetings with Assistant Director - Head of School Improvement

In addition to the measures identified above, the LA may use other strategies to build capacity in schools (see list in Section B above) and will look to the School Improvement Partnership that the school is a part of to deliver support and challenge.

Statement of Action (including the Action Plan)

For each LA maintained school judged by Ofsted to be in 'Special Measures' or with 'Serious Weaknesses' the LA has to draw up a Statement of Action. In these cases the school will always be assigned a Lead Officer. The Statement of Action will be written by the Lead Officer the LA deploys to work with the school and who has the principal function of co-ordinating all of the LA support and challenge. An action plan will be written by the LO in partnership with the school detailing what the school will do and what the LA will do in order to move the school forward.

Progress with the plan will be kept under review by the Lead Officer either in individual meetings or at a formal School Progress Review Team Meeting which will take place at least termly. The meetings will be convened by the Lead Officer and will ensure that the LA and school resources are deployed effectively to help the school to be removed from the category as quickly as possible. Progress will be evaluated termly at a Monitoring and Challenge Meeting with the Head of School Improvement.

School Progress Review Team Meeting

The LO will convene a termly School Progress Review Team Meeting which will include the HT, other members of the school SLT if appropriate, key officers from the LA and advisers who are providing support identified in the action plan. The Chair of Governors and Voluntary Aided Board Officer may also attend where this is appropriate. The purpose of the meeting is to monitor and evaluate the progress made against the key priorities, and to ensure that the action plan is effective in bringing about the necessary rapid and sustained improvement and that there is measurable impact. Any required adjustments to the plan of support and challenge are made at this meeting. Minutes of these meetings are shared with the HOSI and the school.

Monitoring and Challenge Meeting

Following the School Progress Review Team Meeting, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors of a School Causing Concern will be invited to attend a termly meeting with the Head of School Improvement. The Lead Officer will also attend these meetings where the purpose is for the Head of School Improvement to evaluate the progress that the school is making to move out of the School Causing Concern category and to assess the quality of monitoring, challenge and support that the Local Authority has given to the school.

Quality Assurance Procedures

Quality assurance for the programmes of support for all Schools Causing Concern is carried out by the Schools Review Group which meets half termly and discusses support and progress of all schools which cause concern.

Informal Warning Notice

A school which is designated by the LA as causing concern is regarded as having been issued with an informal Warning Notice. It is expected that the leadership of the school (including the governors) will engage with the Schools Causing Concern process and will work in partnership with the local authority. This partnership working includes:

- attendance at key meetings including School Progress Review Team Meetings and Monitoring and Challenge Meetings
- acceptance by the school that they are in a vulnerable position and are at risk of an adverse Ofsted judgement at their next inspection
- full and effective use of Lead Officer to support school improvement
- full and effective use of BPSI or other school improvement support
- full and effective use of governor support and training
- willingness to accept suggestions of further support needed to add to the capacity to improve e.g. support from an NLE/NSS, support from an Outstanding Headteacher, signing up to and engaging with the Securing Good Programme, support for governors from an NLG
- willingness to commission a Review to evaluate effectiveness e.g. LA Review, BPSI School Review, Challenge Partner Review, BPSI Governance Review, BPSI Pupil Premium Review
- demonstration at School Progress Review Team Meetings and Monitoring and Challenge Meetings that progress is being made

Formal Warning Notice

If a school does not engage with the School Causing Concern process then the LA will issue a formal Warning Notice. Section 60 of the 2006 Act sets out the provisions relating to warning notices:

"A warning notice should be used where there is evidence to justify both the local authority's concerns and the school's reluctance or inability to address those concerns successfully within a reasonable time frame. Before deciding to give such a warning notice, local authorities must draw on a suitable range of quantitative and qualitative information to form a complete picture of a school's performance.

Warning notices should be used as an early form of intervention, particularly where standards are unacceptably low and other tools and strategies have not secured improvement.

A warning notice may be given by a local authority in one of three circumstances:

- *the standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so unless the authority exercise their powers under Part 4 of the 2006 Act; or,*
- *there has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, such standards of performance; or,*
- *the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise)."*

Statutory powers of Intervention

Where a school is eligible for intervention there are a number of powers the local authority may use to drive school improvement. These powers are set out in DfE guidance. Part 4 of, and Schedule 6 to, the 2006 Act set out that a (maintained) school is "eligible for intervention" where:

- *"a warning notice has been given (section 60) with which the school has failed to comply or has failed to comply to the satisfaction of the local authority and the local authority have also given the governing body a written notice that they propose to exercise one or more of their powers under Part 4 of the 2006 Act;*
- *teachers' pay and conditions warning notice has been given (section 60A)4 with which the school has failed to comply and the local authority have also given written notice to the governing body that they propose to exercise one or more of their powers under Part 4 of the 2006 Act;*
- *a school requires significant improvement (section 61); and,*
- *a school requires special measures (section 62)."*

The interventions that the LA may make are:

1. Power to suspend the delegated authority for the governing body to manage a school's budget
2. Power to appoint an Interim Executive Board (IEB)
3. Power to appoint additional governors
4. Power to require the governing body to enter into arrangements

Section 63 enables a local authority to require a school which is eligible for intervention to enter into arrangements with a view to improving the performance of the school. The local authority may give the governing body a notice requiring them:

- to enter into a contract or other arrangement for specified services of an advisory nature with a specified person (who may be the governing body of another school);
- to make arrangements to collaborate with the governing body of another school;
- to make arrangements to collaborate with a further education body; or,
- to take specified steps for the purpose of creating or joining a federation.

Structural and Academy solutions

It is an expectation of the Secretary of State that where a school has been judged to have 'serious weaknesses' or requires 'special measures', conversion to an Academy with a strong sponsor will be the normal route to secure improvement. Where a school is in this position the LA will consider whether there is an appropriate structural solution to meeting the needs of the pupils, such as closure and amalgamation with another school. At the same time and in case such an option is not available, the Local Authority will work with the DfE and the Regional Commissioner for Schools to identify an appropriate academy sponsor, where possible through local networks – as set out in Barnet's Education Strategy.

For schools judged as requiring improvement the LA and the DfE will expect the school to have a clear plan for rapid improvement. Where a school is found to require improvement the LA will work with the school to ensure there is a robust plan for rapid improvement but will also consider possible structural options in discussion with the school the DfE and the Regional Schools Commissioner.

The Education and Adoption Act 2015 outlined the new regulations relating to 'coasting schools' which require schools deemed to be coasting to move rapidly towards Academy status. The definition of a 'coasting school' is found in the DfE School Accountability documents.

Governance

The Schools Causing Concern statutory guidance first published in January 2015 included, for the first time, some non-statutory guidance relating to governance. It states:

"Local authorities should take an active interest in the quality of governance in maintained schools. To prevent schools becoming eligible for intervention local authorities should promote and support high standards of governance. To do so, they should: be champions for high quality in school governance; help ensure that governors have the necessary skills; and have in place appropriate monitoring arrangements to identify signs of failure in relation to governors' oversight of finance, safety or performance standards.

Maintained schools have codes of conduct for their governors, which will include what training is considered necessary for their governors.

Local authorities should also be able to provide governors with high quality training that is necessary to prevent schools from becoming eligible for intervention or at least be able to signpost governors to such training. Section 22 of the Education Act 2002 and the Ofsted inspection framework for local authority school improvement arrangements place strong duties and expectations on local authorities in relation to promoting and providing appropriate training programmes for governors. Local authorities should note that governing bodies have the power to suspend governors who refuse to undertake necessary training.

Local authorities should have arrangements in place for maintaining up to date records of governors in maintained schools. This should include contact details for chairs of governing bodies, to aid communication with those accountable for schools. It should also enable the carrying out of any necessary due diligence. Ideally, the records should also include schools' registers of interests and enable identification of governors who sit on more than one governing body. Information held by the local authority should also be made available to the Department for Education upon request. Local authorities should also encourage their schools to publish up to date and full details of their governors on the school website (in line with their statutory duties) to ensure transparency to parents and to aid oversight.

In carrying out these responsibilities in respect of voluntary and foundation schools, local authorities will also need to work closely with religious bodies or other bodies who appoint the governors.

Where a local authority has concerns about the governance of an academy or free school in their area they should raise this with the relevant RSC or the EFA.”

Action on governance

Partly in response to this and partly in continuance of existing arrangements, the LA will:

- ensure that high quality training and information is provided to school governors, to prevent schools from becoming ‘eligible for intervention’
- put arrangements in place for maintaining records of governors in all LA maintained schools to be used to aid communication with governors. Records to include schools’ registers of interests.
- promote and support high standards of governance, act as a champion for high quality in school governance, help ensure that governors have the necessary skills, and have in place appropriate monitoring arrangements to identify signs of failure in relation to governors’ oversight of finance, safety or performance standards.
- consider recommending governing bodies of LA maintained schools to suspend governors who refuse to undertake necessary training
- encourage schools to publish up to date and full details of their governors on the school website (in line with their statutory duties) to ensure transparency to parents and to aid oversight.
- in carrying out these responsibilities in respect of voluntary and foundation schools, local authorities will also need to work closely with religious bodies or other bodies who appoint the governors.
- where a concern has been identified about governance within an academy in Barnet, alert the academy to these concerns and raise it with the local Regional Schools Commissioner and the DfE.

Interim Leadership Models

Barnet has adopted a range of creative leadership and management models in order, where required, to strengthen this aspect of schools in OFSTED categories and those causing Barnet concern. The most common model has been one where an Executive and Associate Headteacher are appointed to lead a school for a fixed term until the school is out of trouble and stable. The model allows for the strategic lead to be taken by a part-time Executive Headteacher who is an experienced and effective leader from another Barnet school. The day to day management of the school is undertaken by an Associate Headteacher who is either a member of current school leadership team or is recruited from inside or outside the Local Authority through DfE or other contacts. The federation model has also been used very effectively to combine one very successful school and a school causing significant concern.

These leadership models have been very successful and all of the schools involved have made rapid progress.

Where concerns are around the capacity of senior leadership to bring about rapid and sustained improvement, the LA will follow the separate protocol that has been agreed with representatives of HT professional organisations.

b) Academies

Where the council has particular concerns about the performance of an academy, it will ensure that the Academy Trust is fully informed of the concern. This will include any cases where the council has concerns about the Academy’s arrangement for safeguarding children. In the first instance the council will contact the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Where appropriate, the local authority will make the Academy Trust aware of its recommended actions to meet the concern. The Academy Trust will share its plans for improvement with the local authority e.g. through an appropriate statement of action. The local authority may offer advice about (or broker access to) locally recommended school improvement support services.

The Academy Trust should clearly set out where it requires support from the local authority to resolve any issues about services for which the local authority has responsibility. The local authority will seek to resolve any identified issues for which it is responsible.

The local authority recognises that there may be circumstances where this arrangement is not effective. Where serious concerns arise (such as the school is in an Ofsted category requiring intervention or improvement: the school meets the criteria set out in the section 60(2) of the 2006 Education and Inspections Act, 2006 where for a maintained school the local authority could consider a warning notice or there is evidence of poor leadership and/or governance) and the engagement has not been effective, the council will consider contacting the Regional Schools Commissioner, the ESFA and the Regional HMI setting out its concerns, and the attempts it has made to agree with the Academy Trust action to tackle the issues that have been identified. The local authority commits to informing the Academy Trust before taking this course of action.

Support strategies to build capacity in academies

Where possible and at the academy's request, the LA will support the academy trust in building capacity in the school. These include the following:

- the use of experienced Barnet Headteachers to act as coaches for inexperienced new Headteachers especially where they are taking over fragile schools
- the secondment of Headteachers and experienced Deputy Headteachers to cover Headteacher vacancies in fragile schools
- creative use of teaching expertise identified in other schools in the LA to build capacity in challenging schools.
- the use of National Leaders of Education (NLEs), National Support Schools (NSS), Local Leaders of Education (LLEs) or Teaching Schools to support, monitor and challenge schools
- the use of other recognised school improvement programmes such as the "Securing Good" Programme
- the use of National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) to support Chairs of Governors and whole Governing Bodies in vulnerable schools

The LA's role is to help broker and facilitate this support. The academy trust will need to fund any support.

Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF)

In March 2017 the DfE announced the creation of the SSIF, a £140 million grant to support primary, secondary, middle, all-through, alternative provision and special academies and maintained schools, and pupil referral units. It is intended to further build a school-led system, and aims to target resources at the schools most in need to improve school performance and pupil attainment; to help them use their resources most effectively, and to deliver more good school places. The fund supports a broad range of school improvement activities including, but not limited to, improving leadership, governance, teaching methods and approaches, and financial health and efficiency. The fund also supports medium- to long-term sustainable activities across groups of schools with a preference towards school-led provision, that is, support provided by schools, for schools.

We will work with our Teaching Schools and MATs in order to submit joint applications to the DfE to access money from this fund in order to address local improvement priorities across groups of schools.

Details of the SSIF can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-school-improvement-fund>

Associated resources

- Schools Causing Concern – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (DfE March 2016)
- The Academies Act 2010
- The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (amended the 2006 Act) - makes provision for apprenticeships, education, training and children's services.
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Act 2011 (amended the 2006 Act and also the 2010 Academies Act in respect of land transfers to academies. Schedule 14 applies)
- Education and Adoption Act 2016 (which amends the 2006 Act and the Academies Act 2010)
- Education Act 2002 Schedule 2 Effect on Staffing on suspension of delegated budget
- Education Act 2005
- School Governance (Transition from an Interim Executive Board) (England) Regulations 2010 – you can download the School Governance Regulations 2010 from the Opsi website
- The School Governance (Role, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 – associated departmental guidance can be found here.
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 - contains provisions for schools and nursery education. This covers further education for young people at school, and in FE institutions across the UK.
- Ofsted: monitoring inspections for maintained schools and academies - information about the types of monitoring inspections carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement

Appendix 1: SCC Flowchart

