

Supporting Transformation in Partnership: A Statement of Intent for partnership working

1. This Statement comprises an agreement between Local Authorities* and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to work in partnership to achieve better educational outcomes for children and young people in the short and medium term.
2. We share a vision of an education system in which every child:
 - a. is accorded equal worth;
 - b. enjoys learning;
 - c. is equipped with the learning and skills they need for life; and
 - d. achieves their full potential.
3. Underpinning this vision is a commitment to high standards for all that can best be realised through a partnership in which local authorities and the DfES support and respect each others' contribution and work together to meet key educational aims. This work operates within a context of shared responsibilities across the full range of central and local government services, but focuses specifically on the learning and development of children and young people.
4. Local authorities are democratically accountable and that gives them a distinctive leadership role in the local community to set a vision for education and to bring together different partners to achieve change and improvement. National government is also democratically accountable and sets a framework to be interpreted locally in ways which raise educational standards. The common goal is to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the system, by building capacity and providing flexibility at the front line, backed by an intelligent accountability framework and by targeted intervention to deal with underperformance.
5. This partnership agrees to focus on:
 - providing high quality early education and childcare for more children;
 - continuing the progress already made in primary education;
 - transforming secondary education;
 - developing a flexible and challenging 14-19 phase of education; and

- transforming the school workforce, and in particular freeing teachers to focus on their professional responsibilities.
6. The focus of this partnership is on improving education for children of school age. In the future, the Statement could be extended to reflect the role of the LEA in life-long learning.
 7. To implement the Statement of Intent nationally, DfES will: consider whether the Code of Practice on LEA School relations and other guidelines/regulations on LEA powers and duties could benefit from review; work towards improving communications, recognising the valuable role which local authorities can fulfil in local leadership and in the formation of national policy; give priority to working proactively with LEAs to ensure that all of the funding arrangements for 2004-05 are implemented effectively; and support and develop future planning arrangements, involving the introduction of a Single Education Plan for all local authorities by 2006.
 8. To implement the Statement of Intent locally, each local education authority and the DfES will agree a compact, setting out at a strategic level which of the areas in Annex to this Statement are of greatest short to medium term importance within that authority. There will be an annual discussion of the agenda, and agreement by each of the signatories to the Statement to a revised Annex.
 9. The focus is on partnership and developing the relationship between Local Authorities and DfES. The compact will not be a statutory requirement, and will be delivered within available resources.
 10. On behalf of DfES and LGA, we commit to partnership working between central and local government focused on a shared vision and jointly agreed agenda.

CHARLES CLARKE
Secretary of State for Education and Skills

SIR JEREMY BEECHAM
Chair of the Local Government Association

23 July 2003

- Upper tier local authorities which are Local Education Authorities in England

Annex

Agenda for the academic year 2003/04

1. The areas below are particularly important in: fulfilling our shared vision for a primary sector where high standards are obtained through a rich and varied curriculum; creating a coherent picture of secondary transformation; and improving performance and attainment for children at all key stages:
 - a. a continued focus on support for schools in setting appropriately challenging targets and achieving high standards;
 - b. action to improve performance in literacy and numeracy at key stage 2;
 - c. improved delivery of KS3;
 - d. tackling school underperformance at all key stages, including narrowing attainment gaps and exceeding floor targets;
 - e. removing barriers to achievement by improving standards of behaviour, improving attendance and tackling exclusion issues;
 - f. extending opportunities for all young people aged 14-19;
 - g. developing new approaches of teaching and learning using ICT, and transforming learning and working environments through capital investment in schools;
 - h. supporting and challenging schools to: improve the quality of teaching and learning; improve the quality of leadership, including financial management of schools; reform the school workforce; and reduce the bureaucratic burden consistent with Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: a National Agreement; and

- i. providing strategic direction and promoting a culture and systems at local level which encourage primary and secondary schools in: meeting the needs of the communities they serve; developing their own distinctive ethos; in innovating in teaching and internal organisation; and in collaborating with others to spread best practice and raise standards.

Local authorities have a wider role in provision of services to children, and locally derived issues arising from their particular circumstances, such as:

- j. improving the provision of services to children and young people at risk;
- k. developing provision in early education and implementing Sure Start programmes where appropriate to ensure a secure foundation for future development for every child;
- l. providing an inclusive education service for all pupils, including collaboration between all relevant agencies;
- m. (for authorities in London) contributing to achieving the objectives of the London Challenge; and
- n. other local strategic issues.