

The Southend Challenge

Aim:

- **Every child in Southend will attend a good or outstanding school**

Objectives:

- **Every Southend school will have outstanding leadership and governance**
- **There will be no inequalities in attainment between children eligible for Pupil Premium and those not eligible**

Introduction

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is a unitary authority established in 1998 providing education to children living in a densely populated urban area with a total population of over 173,700 residents.

There are 53 schools in Southend comprising 12 secondary schools, 35 primary schools and 5 special schools including a Pupil Referral Unit. From September 2013 one special school and the Pupil Referral Unit will federate to form a BESD (Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties) College named Seabrook. In January 2013, a total of 27,928 children attended schools within the secondary, primary and special schools sectors in Southend.

Currently 63% of both secondary and primary schools in the authority are judged as good or outstanding. 68% of children attend a good or outstanding school. This proposal aims to support the improvement of the 37% of schools not yet judged as good or outstanding to ensure that the 32% of children not accessing good or outstanding provision have the opportunity to do so.

Southend is about to commence the third year of 'Improving Learning Together' the School Improvement Strategy. In September 2012 the Strategy was revised to take account of the new Ofsted framework. The revisions, which have placed greater emphasis on data-based self-evaluation, the quality of teaching and the quality of leadership, management and governance, have resulted in a series of inspection outcomes that in the main accord with our own judgement of the schools. The Local Authority has formed a strong partnership with the South Essex Teaching School Alliance to implement a model of school support and networking.

A further revision of the Strategy took place in June 2013 to update the aims, to advise of the requirements of the Local Authority to deploy formal powers of intervention where appropriate and to advise of amendments to the annual cycle of review, evaluation, support and challenge.

A key aspect of this proposal is to strengthen the self-improving school system in Southend. School review and categorisation will no longer be a function attributed

entirely to the Local Authority but will be under the remit of the individual School Review Groups.

Proposal

To refocus priorities to ensure that the standards of leadership and governance are raised to outstanding and that gaps in attainment are narrowed. This will be achieved by:

1. developing four School Support and Review Groups of cross-phase schools (see tables below) – each Group to be initially chaired by a senior LA Officer
2. developing a self-improving strategy for each School Support and Review Group
3. developing a Pupil Premium Strategy Group chaired by a Headteacher

School Support and Review Group 1

Name of School	Phase
Southend High School for Girls	Secondary
Shoeburyness High School	Secondary
Hamstel Infant School	Infant
Hamstel Junior School	Junior
St Nicholas School	Special
Thorpe Greenways School	Primary Federation
Bournes Green Infant School	Infant
Bournes Green Junior School	Junior
Thorpedene Primary School	Primary
Richmond Avenue Primary School	Primary
St George's Catholic Primary School	Primary
Friars Primary School	Primary
Hinguar Community Primary School	Primary

School Support and Review Group 2

Name of School	Phase
Southend High School for Boys	Secondary
Cecil Jones College	Secondary
Futures Community College	Secondary
St Bernard's High School	Secondary
Prince Avenue Primary and Foundation	Primary
Seabrook College	BESD
The Westborough Primary School	Primary
Milton Hall Primary School	Primary
St Mary's Church of England Primary	Primary
St Helen's Catholic Primary School	Primary

Barons Court Primary School	Primary
Porters Grange Primary School	Primary
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	Primary
Bournemouth Park Primary School	Primary
Temple Sutton Primary School	Primary

School Support and Review Group 3

Name of School	Phase
Westcliff High School for Boys	Secondary
Chase High School	Secondary
Belfairs High School	Secondary
The St Christopher School	Special
Lancaster School	Special
Kingsdown School	Special
Edwards Hall Primary School	Primary
Darlinghurst Primary School	Primary
West Leigh Infant School	Infant
West Leigh Junior School	Junior
Leigh Infant School	Infant
Leigh North Street Junior School	Junior

School Support and Review Group 4

Name of School	Phase
Westcliff High School for Girls	Secondary
St Thomas More RC High School	Secondary
The Eastwood School	Secondary
Heycroft Primary School	Primary
Eastwood Primary School	Primary
Fairways Primary School	Primary
Blenheim Primary School	Primary
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary	Primary
Chalkwell Hall Infant School	Infant
Chalkwell Hall Junior School	Junior
Earls Hall Junior School	Junior
Earls Hall Infant School	Infant

The role of the School Support and Review Groups:

- Support the improvement of schools in the Group
- Develop shared accountability for the performance of the schools in the Group
- Support, challenge and categorise the schools in the Group
- Improve standards of leadership and governance
- Address the issue of inequality between children eligible for Pupil Premium and those not eligible
- Share data across the Group
- Identify areas of strength and weakness
- Disseminate success
- Identify support requirements
- Support in the delivery of interventions
- Support the LA in relation to school improvement issues
- Distribute leadership across the Group
- Develop trust between schools in the Group
- Develop leadership capacity within the schools in the Group including training and support for future school leaders
- Pool resources where appropriate
- Develop bids for additional funding to support the improvement of the schools
- Report into the School Support and Improvement Board
- To develop Terms of Reference for the Group
- To develop a Self-improvement Strategy for the Group

The role of the Local Authority:

- Chair the School Support and Improvement Board monitoring and evaluating risk for each of the schools in a Group
- Provide operational frameworks for the Groups
- Provide challenge where a Group is unable to do so effectively
- Broker academy sponsors and school federations/amalgamations
- Broker school-to-school support
- Manage Governor Services
- Provide liaison between the Group, Department for Education, elected members and other agencies
- Co-ordinate communication between Groups and the Success for All Group
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategy in supporting school improvement and value for money
- To have a key role in the categorisation of the schools
- To initially chair each Group meeting
- To deliver formal intervention when triggered by a Group Chair

The role of the School Support and Improvement Board:

- To hold the Groups to account
- To sign-off school categorisation
- To monitor and evaluate risks for schools which could lead to them failing to achieve at least good when measured against the Ofsted grade criteria
- To consider all schools at each meeting using the framework of:
 - Achievement
 - Teaching
 - Behaviour and Safety
 - Leadership and Management
- To discuss schools in detail according to known and emerging needs using data and intelligence provided by:
 - Learning
 - Human Resources
 - Finance
 - Safeguarding
 - Audit
- To agree actions applying the principle of intervention in inverse proportion to success

Recommendations:

1. Every school to be part of a Group
2. Every school with an overall effectiveness judgement of 3 or 4 **must** actively engage with the Group to which they have been assigned. Those not engaging with a Group will receive an LA Formal Warning Notice
3. Every school with an overall effectiveness judgement of 3 will have an LA Action Plan
4. The Governing Body of a school with an overall effectiveness judgement of 3 or 4 will undertake full re-training. The action for this will be documented in the LA Action Plan
5. Further Headteacher School Support Partners (SSP) to be appointed and the current SSP Programme to be reviewed in the spring term
6. Governor training to be delivered in Groups
7. Every Children's Centre to be part of a Group
8. Southend Adult Community College and South Essex College to be consulted on with regard to improvements in lifelong learning

Proposed structure

