



Title: **Torbay's Schools Improving Schools Partnership**

Ward Affected: **All Wards in Torbay**

To: **Overview and Scrutiny Board** On: **16 November 2011**

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1. Key points and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the way in which the education services within the Local Authority have developed over the last 12 months and to provide information about the Torbay's Schools Improvement Partnership. (Appendix 1)
- 1.2 In 2010 the Government published the White Paper which set out the ways in which changes to the education system would be developed. This dramatically reduced the expectations placed on Local Authorities to deliver school improvement and placed the responsibility for this at the doors of the schools.

“Our aim should be to support the school system to become more effectively self-improving. The primary responsibility for improvement rests with schools, and the wider system should be designed so that our best schools and leaders can take on greater responsibility, leading improvement work across the system”

- 1.3 Torbay Local Authority welcomed the recommendations as they reflected planned changes that were already being implemented. Over the past year there has been a systematic transformation of the way in which we deliver our services to schools while ensuring that we continue to meet our statutory responsibilities
- 1.4 The outcome of this transformation has been the development of Torbay's Schools Improvement Partnership which was launched in September 2011.

2. Introduction

2.1 Since September 2010 there has been a radical restructure within the LA education department. Learning and Standards has been replaced by School Support and Challenge. The new structure and ways of working with schools reflect the changes in government policy and the need to support and challenge schools more effectively to

be accountable for the outcomes they achieve. They need to be at the centre of the solutions to underperformance and have ownership of the interventions and strategies for school improvement. Torbay's School Improvement Partnership sets out the new relationship with schools and the developments that have taken place (see Appendix 1). It is through this partnership that improvements identified will be addressed. A focus of the primary partnership will need to include looking at effective ways to improve outcomes for more able pupils at KS1 and 2. It will support schools in accelerating the progress of children and young people to ensure that targets for 2 levels of progress are met for all children at the end of KS2 and 4. The partnership, along with services maintained at the LA, will look closely at how to support schools working with the most deprived communities and families to enable them to engage in education and raise aspirations for their children and young people.

The Local Authority has retained a small core team of people who have clearly identified roles and responsibilities. This team enables us to meet our statutory responsibilities and commission activity on behalf of the schools partnership. It maintains a monitoring role with schools, making effective use of data and published information about schools to target support effectively and intervene when schools are underperforming.

The Local Authority has an active role to play within the Torbay's Schools Improvement Partnership. It has facilitated and commissioned the majority of identified activity and has retained overall accountability for the performance of its maintained schools. It works closely with the leading schools in the partnership and continues to promote the leadership development and succession planning. It is a strategic partner in the newly appointed Teaching School at Oldway Primary School.

Teaching school designation is open to any phase or type of school in England that meets the criteria, including nursery, primary, middle, secondary, sixth form college, special, PRU/short stay, independent, academy, federated, faith schools and, once well-established, free schools.

Oldway Primary School is one of the first 100 teaching schools designated in the first cohort. The National College are aiming to fund a further 100 in April 2012 building up to a total of about 500 by 2014-15. Teaching schools will normally be designated for a four year period. There are now three teaching schools in the far south west, Oldway, a secondary school in Devon and another in Cornwall.

Oldway will continue to work closely with Torbay LA as a strategic partner to offer training and support themselves, to identify and co-ordinate expertise across a group of partner schools and use the best leaders and teachers to focus on:

- Initial Teacher Training (ITT) - training new entrants to the profession alongside other partners, including Exeter University and the University of Plymouth
- Continued Professional Development and leadership development - leading peer-to-peer learning and spotting and nurturing leadership potential
- School to school support - providing support for other schools, for example through the involvement of National Leaders in Education(NLEs) and Local Leaders in Education(LLEs)and the brokering of support from Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs).

The first year of the programme (2011-12) will be considered a design and development year and feedback from the profession will be used to continue to develop the model.

Each teaching school will lead an alliance – a group of schools and other members that work together. Some schools within the alliance will be strategic partners that will take responsibility for delivering some aspects of the teaching school role. Oldway's

strategic partners include Torbay LA, Exeter University, University of Plymouth, National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Maths, SW Grid for Learning, Paignton Community and Sports College and Torquay Boys' Grammar School, Ilisham Primary and Roselands Primary. However, whether they are strategic partners or not, all members of the alliance will have something to contribute.

A teaching school alliance will receive core funding to cover the management and coordination of their activities (£60,000 in the first year of designation, decreasing to £40,000 a year). They will receive additional funding if they are commissioned to deliver activity such as ITT, CPD, middle leadership development, support for the development of headteachers and specific school-to-school support.

The Local Authority is also working with its partners from the Department for Education in ensuring that our underperforming schools are supported to get better and that local solutions are sought to support those schools. This also includes working with our academies, many of whom are commissioned to support our underperforming schools.

We have continued to recognise the value and importance of a number of services to schools that provide statutory services as well as support, advice and guidance in meeting the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people. Through increased integration of these services (for example Educational Psychology, Primary Mental Health and SEN) we are better able to target support at the areas of greatest need and ensure that children and young people get the services they need at the right time enabling them to engage in the education offered to them.

We will need to continually review this new way of working with schools to ensure that it serves to improve outcomes for children and reflects changing needs locally and nationally.

Name of Head of Business Unit Suzie Franklin
Title of Head of Business Unit Acting Head of Schools

Appendices

Appendix 1 Torbay's Schools Improving Schools Partnership Strategy

Documents available in members' rooms

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report: