

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 24th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Strategy for Support and Intervention for Schools in Halton

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to set out the methodology for co-ordinating the Local Authority's Support and Intervention Strategy for schools causing concern.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 That the Executive Board approves the Strategy for Support and Intervention for Schools in Halton.

2.2 That the Strategic Director Children and Young People be authorised to take any decisions available to the Council under Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

3.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines in Part 4 new powers for a Local Authority to intervene and take action and provide support to schools causing concern. This builds on existing statutory powers and good practice to ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities that they deserve.

3.2 To support this Act, new statutory guidance has been issued.

3.3 The Act gives Local Authorities new powers to enable earlier intervention and take more decisive action and bring more support to bear to address school underperformance and remove the possibility of poor standards. The powers include:

- Authorities will have a new power to force a weak school to federate or take another partner for school improvement;
- The ability of Authorities to warn under performing schools and to intervene in them when necessary is strengthened; and

- Authorities will have a duty to consider taking action immediately whenever a maintained school fails an inspection, and must reconsider action if progress is deemed unnecessary.

3.4 The Local Authority has consulted with schools on the proposed Local Authority procedures for identifying and intervening in schools causing concern, with a view to a revised policy being approved by Executive Board (see Appendix A).

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this policy. However should a specific school require additional support this would be resourced through “Intervention Grants”.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

School failure can result in young people not being prepared for future life opportunities.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Achieving high standards within schools equips young people for future life.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Not directly from this report.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Not directly from this report.

6.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal

Not directly from this report.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Failure to take this decision would mean that the Local Authority has no agreed procedure to exercise its statutory powers in relation to schools causing concern. The Local Authority’s ability to secure improvement in specific schools would therefore be limited. There are a range of ways of risk evaluating school performance available to the Local Authority.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 All pupils are entitled to have access to high quality teaching and learning experiences. School failure and underperformance impacts negatively on pupil's life chances.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

9.1 Strengthened powers of intervention to prevent school failure and underperformance is a key component of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Local Authorities are expected to demonstrate deployment of these powers where appropriate.

10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The Council is duty bound to implement the requirements of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

January 2008.

12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Strategy for Support and Intervention	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk
Statutory Guidance on Schools Causing Concern	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk