

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

#### **SCHOOL TO SCHOOL SUPPORT IN SLOUGH**

**1. Purpose of Report**

To provide an overview of Slough Borough Council's approach to facilitating the school led improvement system, focusing on the role of the Slough Teaching School Alliance, the Local School Improvement Fund, the role of the Slough School Improvement Board and the impact of sponsor-led academies in Slough.

**2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Panel is requested to note the report and comment as appropriate.

**3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

**3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

*Priorities:*

2. Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities

**3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes**

**This report refers to priority outcome 1**

1. Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.

#### 4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no significant financial implications associated with this report.

(b) **Risk Management**

Each of the targets within the Outcome 1 plan are already included within the service planning framework of the relevant council directorates and overseen by the corporate Five Year Plan Board, Cabinet and Scrutiny Panels.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	
Employment Issues	None	
Equalities Issues	Seeking to close gaps between peers and vulnerable groups	
Community Support	None	
Communications	None	Promoting Slough's educational successes
Community Safety	None	
Financial	None	
Timetable for delivery	None	
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no significant Human Rights Act or other Legal implications.

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

There is no need for an equalities impact assessment.

(e) **Workforce**

There are no workforce implications

#### 5. **Supporting Information**

##### **Teaching Schools**

- 5.1 **Teaching schools** were first proposed in the 2010 White Paper '*The Importance of Teaching*'. Designated teaching schools are good and outstanding schools that work with others to offer high-quality training and development to new and experienced school staff. They remain part of the government's plan to give schools a central role in raising standards by developing a self-improving and

sustainable school-led system. A **Teaching School Alliance** is a network of schools which offer and are involved in support, training and development opportunities, led by one or more designated teaching schools which act as a conduit for funding and opportunities and a hub for organising the activities. There are now around 800 designated teaching schools across the country, forming around 600 separate teaching school alliances.

5.2 The **Teaching School Council** provides a developing structure of organisation and accountability for teaching school alliances, championing the aim of creating a mature, school led, self-improving system. The Teaching School Council is organised into eight regions, with clear regional and sub-regional network structures which operate across local authority boundaries and aim to provide a collaborative, coherent and coordinated approach to sharing effective practice, resources and provision.

### The Slough Teaching School Alliance

5.3 The Slough Teaching School Alliance comprises the designated teaching schools, strategic partner schools and other partner organisations.

Designated teaching schools	Strategic partner schools	Strategic partner organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Langley Grammar School</li> <li>• Lynch Hill Primary Academy</li> <li>• Upton Court Grammar School</li> </ul>	Partner schools provide support to other schools either individually or through programmes and networks, supported by funding from the designated teaching schools.	Organisations other than schools which work closely with the teaching school alliance.
Designated by DfE through NCTL as a multiple teaching school alliance  Conduit of funding from DfE Able to bid for grants on behalf of the Alliance  Potential conduit for school improvement funding  Initial Teacher Training coordination  Appropriate Body for NQT Leadership of large-scale programmes/activities	Various roles which include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Support Schools</li> <li>• National Leaders of Education (NLEs)* and Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs)**</li> <li>• Leaders of teacher/middle leader networks</li> <li>• Centres of pedagogical excellence and expertise</li> <li>• Coordinators/leaders of training programmes</li> <li>• Leaders of particular initiatives</li> </ul>	These include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slough Borough Council</li> <li>• Higher Education Institutions for initial teacher training and research-based teacher development</li> <li>• Other organisations such as               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CAS Network of Computing Excellence</li> <li>○ National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics</li> <li>○ Surrey Maths Hub</li> <li>○ Local Science Learning Partnerships</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- \* National leaders of education (NLEs) are strong school leaders, who have experience of effectively supporting schools in challenging circumstances. NLEs work alongside teaching schools and other system leaders to provide high quality support to those who need it most.
- \*\* SLEs focus on developing leadership capacity. While other roles focus specifically on developing classroom expertise, this role is about developing the capacity and capability of other leaders so that they have the skills to lead their own teams and improve practice in their own schools.

### Slough Teaching School Alliance Activities

5.4 The table below outlines what the Slough Teaching School Alliance does:

<b>Initial Teacher training</b>	<i>Teach Slough</i> Schools Direct programme Support for assessment-only route
<b>Appropriate Body service for NQT induction</b>	NQT assessment process, mentor training Quality assurance of induction process and assessments Statutory returns to NCTL* on induction completion.
<b>Ongoing teacher professional development</b>	Access to nationally recognised ITP and OTP programmes Themed network meetings for NQTs Teacher development networks Teach-meet programme (organised by strategic partner schools) Conference-style training as appropriate to school needs, focusing on the development of pedagogy Training and development programmes in Computing and Mathematics through NCETM and CAS links.
<b>Leadership development</b>	Access to franchised leadership development programmes e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPQML/NPQH and their successor programmes,</li> <li>• SSAT National Award for Middle Leadership (NAML)</li> <li>• Inspired to Lead.</li> </ul> Annual Slough-focused headteacher conference on relevant themes. Targeted leadership development programmes.
<b>School to school support</b>	Maintenance of directory of local and regional system leaders and school expertise. Liaison with Slough Borough Council to broker school-to-support. Management of Slough's local School-to-School support fund. Recruitment, designation and ongoing support for SLEs.
<b>Economies of scale</b>	The Alliance acts as licence holder for the currently operational brokered deals eg Educare online training package, Sophos system

\* National College for Teaching and Leadership

## Funding and Accountability

5.5 The Teaching School Alliance receives an annual core grant of £40k from the DfE. Additional income is generated from CPD activities and NQT appropriate body fees.

5.6 The Slough Teaching School Alliance is accountable to a range of stakeholders:

Who?	How?
<b>Department for Education (NCTL)</b>	The NCTL requires an annual return which assesses the impact of the £40k annual Collaborative Fund grant
<b>Teaching School Council</b>	Representation on the Pan-Berkshire teaching schools sub-regional group, and on the South East regional board of the Teaching School Council
<b>Local schools' community</b>	Through an advisory board of representatives from primary, secondary, special and nursery phases

### The Slough Local School Improvement Fund

5.7 The Slough Local School Improvement Fund arises from of an agreement by schools forum to use an underspend of £150,000 centrally retained funds to support local school improvement initiatives from 2016/17. In the same year the fund was topped up (from centrally retained funds) with an additional £30,000 for specific primary school projects. In the 17/18 financial year a final top up from centrally retained funds of £49,500 was made, making the total of the local school improvement fund £229,500. Schools are able to 'bid' for funding for school to school support or to work on collaborative projects, linked to local priorities. The funds are held by the Slough Teaching School Alliance on behalf of the Slough schools' community and can be accessed through a simple application and assessment process.

5.8 The Slough Teaching School Alliance (STSA) and Slough Borough Council (SBC) work in partnership to oversee the bids and are responsible for quality assurance once funds have been released. Action plans and outcomes of the bids are monitored to ensure value for money and maximum outcomes.

5.9 SBC has seconded a local headteacher (2 days a week) as a Senior Education Liaison Officer, who acts in a 'bridging' role between the council and the Slough Teaching School Alliance. The purpose of this role is to work with the Slough Teaching School Alliance to broker support for schools and ensure quality assurance of the bids that are received and also to monitor and assess impact of successful bids. The role is being fulfilled by Rachel Cross, headteacher at St Mary's CoE Primary. Further details of the bidding process can be seen in Appendix A.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

- 5.10 As of March 2018, 39 of 52 schools in Slough have accessed funding, which is 75%. A total of £77,375 has been released enabling widespread collaboration amongst schools. One project involves 11 primary schools working on an early language development project. A further overview and breakdown of projects and schools involved is provided in Appendix B.

## **Impact**

- 5.11 The aim of the local school improvement fund was to encourage schools to work together in order to be at the forefront of the school led improvement system. This level of participation indicates that this has been a success; the initiative has facilitated Slough schools to work together on a scale that has not been seen previously.
- 5.12 Bids were initiated in summer 2017, so most projects started in September. Projects are monitored against their criteria and action plans from respective bids. The first set of 'mid-reviews' have recently taken place and have been, so far, very positive. A full impact analysis will take place once the initiatives have had time to be fully embedded.

## **The Slough School Improvement Board**

- 5.13 The Slough School Improvement Board was set up by Slough Borough Council in January 2018. The aims of the board are:

“The board will have a strategic overview of primary and secondary school performance in the Local Authority (LA) and facilitate the school-led improvement system. The board will promote best practice to support all schools in their aim of providing high quality education to their students.”

- 5.14 Main functions of the board are to:

- Support the LA in statutory monitoring function
- Scrutinise the 'risk assessment' process and evaluations of each school according to the school improvement strategy
- Support the brokering of school to school support
- Share information and expertise about the Slough school system
- Agree LA wide priorities and issues of concern and develop systemic approaches to address these
- Identify and encourage areas of strength to aid the school led improvement system
- Monitor the progress of Local School Improvement Fund Projects
- Act as an advisory group on school improvement issues to the Slough Education Partnership Board (SEPB)\*\*

\* taken from the terms of reference, attached in Appendix C

- 5.15 The SSIB has met twice this year and will be the key driver in facilitating the School led improvement system with local stakeholders. The board is currently in the process of updating the Slough School Improvement Strategy which articulates the role of the LA and schools in our approach to school improvement.

## Sponsored Academies

- 5.16 **Academies** are publicly funded schools, independent of the local authority, and held accountable through a legally binding funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE). Staff are employed by the academy trust. Academies have more flexibility over curriculum design and staff pay and conditions. There are three different routes to becoming an academy:

**Sponsored academies:** Underperforming maintained schools Taken out of local authority oversight and given to an academy sponsor to provide support in improving pupil achievement and attainment. The first academies were all sponsored academies. Examples of sponsors include other schools, universities, businesses, individuals, charities and faith communities. While early sponsors were initially asked to provide schools with financial support, the role is now primarily to provide school improvement support.

**Converter academies:** These are schools deemed by the DfE as performing sufficiently well that they can choose to opt out of LA oversight and become an academy; either as a single academy trust (SAT) or as part of a multi-academy trust (MAT). It is now rare for the DfE to agree to the formation of a SAT, new academy convertors are expected to join or form a MAT.

**Free schools:** Free schools are essentially new academies, as this is now the only way in which new schools can be created. Free schools can be set up by groups such as charities (including MATs), universities, community and faith groups, parents or businesses. Sometimes these groups are invited to tender to set up a new school by a local authority as a way of meeting the need for more school places in their area.

### Sponsored Academies in Slough

- 5.17 In Slough there have been 8 schools that have become sponsor-led academies since 2010. All have been primary schools. Arbour Vale is under an academy order and will be the 9<sup>th</sup> school convert to a sponsor-led academy. This is currently in progress.
- 5.18 The table below shows the difference made to schools from having no previous sponsor to becoming a sponsored academy (note only sponsor academies from 2010):

School	Ofsted rating before sponsor conversion	Sponsor	Ofsted rating after conversion
<b>Montem Academy</b>	Requires improvement (2013)	The Park Federation	Outstanding (2016)
<b>Western House Academy</b>	Requires improvement (2014)	The Park Federation	Good (2017)
<b>James Elliman Academy</b>	Satisfactory (2012)	The Park Federation	Good (2015)
<b>Godolphin Juniors</b>	Requires improvement (2014)	The Park Federation	No Designation
<b>Colnbrook</b>	Special measures (2012)	SEBMAT	Good (2015)

<b>Willow Primary</b>	School causing concern	Marish Academy Trust	Good (2016)
<b>Foxborough</b>	Special measures (2013)	The Pioneer Education Trust	Requires Improvement (2016)
<b>Parlaunt Park Primary</b>	Good (2011)	The Arbib Foundation	Requires improvement (2017)
<b>Arbour Vale</b>	Special measures (2017)	TBD	N/A

5.19 The Park Federation has sponsored the most schools in Slough and is the largest local multi academy trust with schools in Hillingdon as well as Slough. It has a very successful track record with 3 of 4 Slough schools sponsored by the Park Federation having moved to good or better with the 4<sup>th</sup> school yet to be inspected. Colnbrook improved from special measures to good under SEBMAT and Willow Primary improved to good following sponsorship by the Marish Primary School Trust. Foxborough Primary school has moved from special measures to requires improvement since partnering with the Pioneer Education Trust, the recent Ofsted monitoring visit (2017) showed positive progress was being made. One school Parlaunt Park has seen its Ofsted grade decline since becoming a sponsored academy, however overall the impact of sponsor-led academies has been positive in terms of improving school quality.

## 6. **Comment of Other Committees**

This report has not been considered by other Committees at SBC.

## 7. **Conclusion**

Slough Borough Council has been on a rapid journey in the last 18 months (since the return of all education services from Cambridge Education, completed in December 2016) to re-establish its key role as a champion for high educational standards across the town. In a mixed economy of single academies, MATs, free schools and maintained schools the council's aim is to facilitate the best support through the school led improvement system as key partners with all stakeholders. This will enable us to maximise the best possible outcomes for all young people, in line with the ambitions of our 5-year plan.

## 8. **Appendices Attached**

- 'A' - LSIF Funding Process April 2018
- 'B' - School Improvement Funding Report March 2018
- 'C' - Slough School Improvement Board Terms of Reference

## 9. **Background Papers**

1. Slough School Improvement Strategy (on request)
2. Slough Education Partnership Board terms of reference (on request)