



Notice of a Meeting

Education Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 14 November 2013 at 10.00 am County Hall

Membership

Chairman

Deputy Chairman - Councillor Michael Waine

<i>Councillors:</i>	David Bartholomew Yvonne Constance Mark Gray Simon Hoare	John Howson Richard Langridge Caroline Newton Neil Owen	Gillian Sanders Val Smith
<i>Co-optees:</i>	Mr Chris Bevan	Mrs Sue Matthew	Mrs Liz Smith
<i>By Invitation:</i>	Ian Jones	Carole Thomson	

Notes:

Date of next meeting: 6 February 2014

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

- a focus on the following key areas:
 - work in relation to the education strategy, and including review of an annual report on progress;
 - constructive challenge on performance issues highlighting issues where the Committee can support the improvement dialogue;
 - reviewing the Council's education functions including early years, Special Education Needs and school place planning;
 - reviewing the progress of, and any issues emanating from, the School Organisation Stakeholder Group with regard to admissions patterns and arrangements;
 - reviewing issues raised by the Schools Forum.
- assists the Council in its role of championing good educational outcomes for Oxfordshire's children and young people;
- provides a challenge to schools and academies and to hold them to account for their academic performance;
- promotes jointed up working across organisations in the education sector within Oxfordshire.

How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	-	Councillor
Policy & Performance Support Officer	-	E.Mail: @oxfordshire.gov.uk
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Peter G. Clark.

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County Solicitor

November 2013

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About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 63 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 10 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session.

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

AGENDA

1. Election of Chairman

Committee are asked to elect a new Chair for the remainder of the municipal year.

2. Introduction and Welcome

10.05am

3. Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

4. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note of the back page

5. Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2013 (**ESC5**) and to receive information arising from them.

6. Petitions and Public Address

7. Revised proposals for the Home to School Transport Policy. (Pages 7 - 64)

10.10am

Roy Leach, School Organisation & Planning Manager to report verbally to Committee on the revised Consultation Paper on the Proposed Home to School Transport Policy for 2015, issued on the 4 November 2013.

The Consultation Document (pg 7), Frequently Asked Questions (pg 21), current Home to School Transport Policy (pg 27) and both proposed Home to School Transport Policies, Options A1(pg 41) and A2 (pg 51), are attached to this agenda, together with a copy of the standard letter sent to all parents (pg 63) (**ESC7**).

The full consultation documents, including dates of Public Meetings and maps of the school areas affected can be found at the following link:-

<https://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/transport2015/consultationHome>

Revised Guidance from the Department of Education is also due to be released but as at today's date is still awaited. The Guidance currently in place, the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance (issued 2007) can be found at the following link:-

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DFES-00373-2007>

8. **OFSTED Framework for Local Authorities** (Pages 65 - 104)

11.10am

Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education and Early Intervention, and Sue Bainbridge, Schools & Learning Manager, will present the finalised Oxfordshire County Council Schools Improvement Framework (**ESC8**), identifying the support offered to schools, how the impact of the support is measured and how the impact is then used to improve schools work.

Also presented is the OFSTED Local Authority Inspection Framework, and for note, the OFSTED letter to Norfolk County Council, to highlight how the strengths and weaknesses identified can be used in terms of current practice at Oxfordshire County Council.

9. **Externalisation Proposals** (Pages 105 - 114)

12.10pm

Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education and Early Intervention, and Graham Shaw, Deputy Director – Oxfordshire Customer Services, will verbally update the Committee on the current situation regarding the externalisation proposals.

The attached report (**ESC9**) went before Cabinet on 15 October 2013. The Committee are asked to consider how best to scrutinise this process and the timetabling of Children Education and Family proposals into the Working Plan for Committee.

10. **Provisional GCSE Results in Oxfordshire Maintained Schools and Academies** (Pages 115 - 122)

12.35pm

Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education and Early Intervention, and Sue Bainbridge, Schools & Learning Manager, to present an up-dated report of the validated figures for GCSE's and A-Levels (**ESC10**), previously considered by the Committee at the 19 September 2013 meeting.

11. **Attainment Working Group Update**

12.45pm

The Committee to are receive a verbal update from Councillor Howson on behalf of

the Attainment Working Group.

12. Work Plan and Committee Business (Pages 123 - 124)

12.50pm

An opportunity to discuss and prioritise future topics for the Committee, potential approaches to its work and to discuss the schedule for future meetings.

CLOSE OF MEETING

1.00pm

Declarations of Interest

The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *“You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself”* or *“You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned.....”*.

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

Employment (includes *“any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain”*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members’ conduct guidelines. <http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or contact Rachel Dunn on (01865) 815279 or rachel.dunn@oxfordshire.gov.uk for a hard copy of the document.

Agenda Item 5

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 19 September 2013 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.45 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Lynda Atkins – in the Chair

Councillor Michael Waine (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor David Bartholomew
Councillor Simon Hoare
Councillor John Howson
Councillor Caroline Newton
Councillor Lawrie Stratford (In place of Councillor Neil Owen)
Councillor Gill Sanders
Councillor John Christie (In place of Councillor Val Smith)
Mr I. Jones
Mr Chris Bevan
Mrs Sue Matthew

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Tilley, Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families
Councillor Rose, Deputy Leader (Agenda Item 7)
Councillor Brighthouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee (Agenda Item 8)

By Invitation: Mr Stan Terry

Whole of meeting Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education & Early Intervention; James Kanimba and Andrea Newman (Chief Executive's Office)

Part of meeting

Agenda Item	Officer Attending
Urgent Business Item 7	Roy Leach, School Organisation & Planning Manager Graham Shaw, Deputy Director - OCS

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

9/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Langridge and Constance. Councillor Owen also sent apologies (Councillor Stratford substituting), as did Councillor Smith (Councillor Christie substituting) and Carole Thompson (Stan Terry substituting).

10/13 MINUTES
(Agenda No. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 4 July 2013, were approved and signed subject to amending:-

- the attendance list to show Carole Thompson as attending.

11/13 URGENT BUSINESS - HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

The Chair agreed to hear a verbal report from Roy Leach, School Organisation & Planning Manager, arising from a report to Cabinet on the 17 September 2013 on the proposed Home to School Transport Policy 2014-15.

Committee heard that the Department of Education had now withdrawn its Guidance issued in March 2013, and some of the assumptions underpinning the Council's proposed Policy are therefore null and void. Cabinet have deferred consultation on the proposed Policy until further Guidance has been issued by the Department of Education, which is anticipated in September/October 2013.

During discussion Committee recognised the need for the Council to reduce expenditure and the need for change. The need for real consultation with everyone who will be affected was also identified, although it was also raised that everyone who pays Council Tax has an interest in the services provided by the Council, hence there was a need to consult not just those immediately affected. Councillor Stratford asked that School Governors be consulted directly.

It was noted that the process is now with Cabinet, and the timetable is with stakeholders.

12/13 PROVISIONAL REPORT ON GCSE & A-LEVEL RESULTS
(Agenda No. 5)

The Committee had before them a report on the Provisional GCSE & A-Level results in Oxfordshire maintained schools and academies.

Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education & Early Intervention explained that 34 schools had provided feedback in respect of their GCSE results. The 60% point milestone achieved by schools is an important figure, and no secondary school had provided feedback to indicate that they were below the 40% floor standard for intervention. Of note was the improvement of 16% points by Oxford Spires Academy.

It was reported that 20 schools had improved on their GCSE results, 2 remained the same and of the 12 that had decreased their performance, 2 had asked for re-counts in English as the results were not reflective of their predicted grades. 13 of the secondary schools have been underpinned by a strategy which had resulted in pupils who might have achieved D grades, now getting C's and B-grade pupils achieving A's. There was also a noted increase in those pupils achieving A* grades.

Committee received a presentation highlighting the difference between girls and boys and the grades achieved in GCSE English and Maths. Frances Craven also confirmed that the Oxfordshire Secondary Schools Group had been looking at schools which do well, and then encouraging those schools to share with other schools the methods used to achieve their improvements.

Councillor Waine asked for the figures on Science results to be included with the validated figures. The Chair confirmed that a report should be received in January in order that Committee can see a full analysis.

The Committee expressed their thanks to the teachers, parents and grandparents of pupils throughout Oxfordshire, and noted their collective pride in schools partnerships and students, in achieving the progress made this year.

13/13 SCHOOL REVENUE RESERVE BALANCES

(Agenda No. 6)

The Committee received an amended report on the School Revenue Reserve Balances circulated immediately prior to the meeting.

Councillor Howson commented that school finances were moving away from Local Government and into the hands of the schools themselves. Committee heard that this was having a major impact on schools and ancillary services. It was noted that academies are now allowed to put money into funding for capital projects, meaning that monies for today's children is being used on spending for tomorrow's children.

It was queried how schools can have more than 10% of their budgets held in reserve, in an authority where over a number of years there had been complaint of underfunding from central government. It was suggested that a key question for Committee was whether they were satisfied that schools have sufficient processes in place to ensure that public money is used to provide the best education, and to ensure that swift action can be taken if this is not taking place. Concern was raised that by saving for tomorrow, schools may be depriving educational outcomes now. Councillor Waine questioned whether there may be a correlation between the figures of achievement and reserves.

Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education & Early Intervention confirmed that this was a complex issue as shown by the paper. Challenge meetings were looking at budgets in terms of improvement; a deficit had been agreed with one school. With regards to collecting details of reserve balance from Academies, their co-operation would be needed, and this was not the responsibility for the Local Authority.

It appeared that the national picture had been reflected locally with regards to this issue, and there was no correlation of figures in relation to revenue balances and performance of the school. However, Committee heard that if the budget of the school was not being managed effectively, there was a possibility that neither was the school.

The Committee discussed the use of excessive balances for the improvement of education at the present time, in particular to be able to assist both less able, as well as more able children. The need to keep sensible balances was acknowledged, and it was discussed whether larger balances should be used. Encouraging governors to suggest, probe and inspect at grass-roots level was also discussed.

The Committee considered the changing relationship that needed to be adjusted to; local authorities were no longer in charge of schools, and the public needed to also realise that. The authority had limited responsibilities now, and did not appoint staff within schools, Head Teachers or inspect school buildings, yet it was recognised that children still needed to be educated, and that this was still a local authority responsibility.

14/13 REPORT ON SOFT MARKET TESTING

(Agenda No. 7)

Frances Craven, Deputy Director for Education & Early Intervention, confirmed to Committee that discussions had been taking place between providers and local authorities and this process was part-way through. A report was due back to Cabinet on the 15th October 2013 in relation to points 1-4 of paragraph 3 of the report before Committee.

Graham Shaw, Deputy Director for Oxfordshire Customer Services highlighted the extent of the savings to be made. There were a number of key learning points to be taken from the process so far. Firstly that one size does not fit all; there won't be one provider and there were a range of possible models. Secondly there was a need to take schools and governors with the authority on this journey as they would shape the services to be provided. Committee heard that officers were engaging schools, listening to their comments and factoring these comments in. Councillor Rose added that the intention was to end up with a service that schools valued and used. The Music Service would be protected in whatever way possible.

During discussion the Committee questioned whether or not the Council would remain an interface between a provider and schools, having heard that there was an existing interface between providers and academies, and a confidence in known faces. The challenge in particular for small rural primary schools having to deal with several providers was raised. There was a feeling that Head Teachers should be able to focus on improving schools and education, rather than business management.

Concern was also raised as to the timescale involved in the decision making of Cabinet in this matter, and the importance of scrutiny in this and other forums. The need to have input from schools was vital.

There was some discussion on the need to ensure continuity of service particularly through any transition period. Schools and governors needed clear advice and options at an early stage.

15/13 FORWARD PLAN AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

(Agenda No. 8)

Committee discussed the recent case of Daniel Pelka, and whether advice or guidance need be issued to governors, teachers and support staff, in order the ensure that as an authority staff in schools are well-versed and up-to-date. However, this was felt to be beyond the remit of the Committee. In order that work was not duplicated it was suggested that Committee ask to receive a report for information from the Cabinet Advisory Group which had been set up to deal with these matters,.

The Chair noted that at the next meeting reports would be required in relation to a mock OFSTED Inspection, the revised Home to School Transport Policy, pupil premium as a measure of funding schools and externalisation of services, and that a Work Action Plan should be drawn up to reflect this.

Other areas to be considered for future meetings were suggested including the broader landscape for education and the ability of Committee to be provide a positive influence on this. The formation of working groups to cover performance and achievement, and the demands of Special Educational Needs and Gifted children was also discussed.

Committee was addressed by Councillor Brighthouse, who confirmed that there were issues about feeding into Performance Scrutiny Committee across the board. It is now envisaged that there will be briefings before budgets are set, and open sessions in terms of the proposals, in order that they may be fed into Performance Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair confirmed that she would like to see if a further meeting of this Committee could be convened after the relevant open meeting, in order that members of Committee can have the opportunity to meet and share views.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2013

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Home to School Transport Consultation Oxfordshire County Council

Introduction

Oxfordshire County Council's budget is being reduced as part of the government's plan to get the nation's finances in order. Between 2010/11 and 2017/18, our government grant will have been reduced by 40%. As a result we need to reduce spending on services, including Home to School Transport, which currently costs about £15 million per year.

Background

The current Oxfordshire Home to School Transport Policy is more generous than the national 'statutory minimum' (what we must provide by law) and therefore the council spends more than it is legally obliged to. In addition, current charges to families for 'concessionary fares' on Home to School Transport (i.e. where spare seats on school bus services are paid for by children who are not entitled to free transport) do not cover the full cost to the council i.e. they funded by public subsidy. This level of spend is not considered sustainable given the on-going pressure on public finances and the need for Oxfordshire County Council to identify large savings across all service areas.

Following extensive feedback during the summer, when the council deferred its decision on potential changes to the policy, revised proposals now being put forward. The proposed changes set out in this consultation document do not affect parents' or carers' rights to express preferences for any three schools, nor will they reduce the rights of low income families to receive free transport to any of the three nearest secondary schools within 2 to 6 miles or end the general entitlement to free travel to the nearest school with an available place if it is over the statutory walking distance (3 miles for those aged 8 to 16 and 2 miles for those of school age who are below the age of 8).

Supporting information

We have produced a series of maps and some frequently asked questions about our Home to School Transport Policy proposal to accompany this consultation.

Information about the council's current provision for home to school travel is available on the county council's website.

Public meetings

The council is also holding a series of public meetings to support this consultation. All meetings run from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

- Monday, 11 Nov: Carterton Community College, Carterton
- Thursday, 14 November 2013, Matthew Arnold School, Cumnor
- Friday, 22 November 2013, Bartholomew School, Eynsham
- Friday, 29 November 2013, The Marlborough CE School, Woodstock
- Monday, 2 December 2013, Icknield Community College, Watlington
- Wednesday, 4 December 2013, Wheatley Park School, Holton
- Tuesday, 10 December 2013, Larkmead School, Abingdon-on-Thames
- Thursday, 12 December 2013, The Warriner School, Bloxham

Have your say

Read the consultation document and supporting information and complete the online form. The deadline for your response is Friday 20 December 2013.

If you require a hard copy of the consultation document please contact the council by telephone on 01865 815175 or email admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk

What happens next?

All consultation responses received by the closing date will be collated and analysed. The results of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet on 28 January 2014.

Councillors will weigh the views expressed in the consultation against a wide number of other factors when making decisions including statutory requirements, government guidance, cost, risk, demography and other issues captured as part of the council's service and community impact assessment process. In light of all the evidence presented to them, Cabinet will decide whether or not to take the proposed changes forward.



Section A: To which school(s) should free travel be provided?

Oxfordshire County Council is proposing to change its Home to School Transport Policy.

At present the council provides free travel to *either* the nearest school *or* the catchment school when they are over the 'statutory walking distance' of two miles for children under 8 years and three miles for children aged 8 - 16.

The law only requires that free transport be provided to the nearest school that could accommodate the child (the 'nearest available school'). If the nearest school is full, the entitlement to free transport transfers to the next nearest school with a spare place, and so on.

There are two proposed options for change.

Option A1: Provide free transport to the nearest available school only

This is the nearest school to a child's home address at which a place could be allocated at the time that school places are allocated. It may not necessarily be one of the three preferred schools chosen by families on the application form, but it is the only school to which they would be entitled to free transport.

This option:

- Is the 'statutory minimum' that the council can provide
- Is estimated over time to save the council between £1 million and £2 million per year
- Reduces the financial risk to the council from additional transport costs caused by schools changing their admission arrangements.

Option A2: Provide free transport to the nearest available school but introduce adjustments to the policy to avoid splitting villages

This is the nearest school to a child's home address at which a place could be given when school places were allocated. However, children living in a particular 'travel area' would have a defined school to which free transport could be provided. For most children this would be the nearest school but for a minority, this could also be to the second nearest school – for instance, where opposite ends of a village are nearest to different schools.

The school may not necessarily be one of the three preferred schools chosen by families on the application form, but it is the only school where they would be entitled to free transport.

This option:

- Is slightly more generous than the 'statutory minimum' that the council can provide
- Is estimated over time to save the council between £1 million and £2 million per year
- Reduces the financial risk to the council having to meet additional transport costs caused by schools changing their admission arrangements.

Q1. Which of these options do you prefer?

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

Option A1

Option A2

None

Don't know

Comments:

Q2. If you have an alternative suggestion, please put it in the box below.

Comments:

Section B: When should the policy change be implemented?

There are two proposed options for when either of the policy changes described in section one of this consultation could be implemented.

Option B1:

Introduce the new policy from September 2015 for all children starting primary school or transferring to secondary school and change the entitlement for all other children in September 2017, including those currently in receipt of free travel.

- Parents expressing preferences for school places in September 2015 would be able to take account of whether free transport would be provided when making their choice.
- Parents of children currently in receipt of free travel would have time to prepare for having to pay for this if their children are not attending their nearest school.
- This option would enable the maximum saving to be made from September 2017.

Option B2:

Introduce the new policy from September 2015 for children starting primary school or transferring to secondary school and phase the policy change in year by year as children start schools. Children in receipt of free travel to the school they currently attend would not be affected by the policy change.

- Parents expressing preferences for school places in September 2015 would be able to take account of whether free transport would be provided when making their choice.
- Parents of children currently entitled to free transport would be unaffected.
- This option would enable the maximum saving to be made from September 2019 for secondary aged children and September 2021 for primary aged children.

Q3. Which of these options do you prefer?

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

Option B1

Option B2

Neither

Don't know

Comments:



Q4. If you have an alternative suggestion, please put it in the box below.

Comments:

Section C: Concessionary Fares Scheme

Oxfordshire County Council is proposing to change the Concessionary Fares Scheme within its Home to School Transport Policy to reduce the subsidies and save money.

The Concessionary Fares Scheme sets out the prices and terms for seats on Home to School Transport routes operated by the council that can be used by children and young adults not eligible for free travel.

Low income families do not have to pay the concessionary fare. All other seats for children and young adults using the concessionary fares scheme are heavily subsidised by the council.

In 2013/14 the typical cost to the council of a seat on a mainstream Home to School Transport vehicle is £700 per year. The council charges families with children aged up to 16 travelling using the concessionary fares scheme

- £264 per year for each child who lives up to three miles from the school
- £492 for those who live over three miles from the school.

For post-16 students, the charge to families is based on whether or not they attend their catchment sixth form. The council charges families with young people £264 per year for those that who live within the catchment area and £492 for those who live outside the catchment area, irrespective of whether it is over or under three miles.

The overall cost of the contracts used to run the Home to School Transport service increases at a rate of 2% a year. Between 2009 and 2012, the council chose not to pass on these costs to families using the Concessionary Fares Scheme. Charges were however increased in September 2013.

There are three proposed options for changing the Concessionary Fares Scheme within the Home to School Transport Policy.

Option C1:

From September 2014, to introduce a 10% increase in the price of concessionary fares and post16 fares to £290.40 for those who live under three miles from the school attended and to £541.20 for those who live over three miles from the school attended.

- This increase in fares would reduce the overall amount Oxfordshire County Council subsidises the concessionary fares scheme by at least £18,000 in 2014/15 only. This option would not reduce year on year the amount of subsidy from the council.
- This would involve ending the current practice of charging the lower fare to post16 travellers who live in a school's catchment area. Post16 and those in younger year groups would all be charged according to the distance travelled.

Option C2:

From September 2015 to increase concessionary and post-16 fares by 8% per year for the next three years

- This on-going increase would reduce the amount Oxfordshire County Council has to subsidise the concessionary fares scheme year on year by £14,000 per year from September 2015.
- Assuming an increase to £290.40 in 2014, fares for those living less than 3 miles from the school/college attended would increase to £313.63 in 2015, £338.72 in 2016 and £365.82 in 2017.
- Assuming an increase to £541.20 in 2014, fares for those living over 3 miles from the school/college attended would increase to £584.50 in 2015, £631.26 in 2016 and £681.76 in 2017.

Option C3:

From September 2015, to increase concessionary and post-16 fares by 5% each year for the next five years

- This on-going increase would reduce the amount Oxfordshire County Council has to subsidise the concessionary fares scheme year on year by £9,000 per year from September 2015.
- Assuming an increase to £290.40 in 2014, fares for those living under 3 miles from the school/college attended would increase to £304.92 in 2015, £320.17 in 2016, £336.18 in 2017, £352.99 in 2018 and £370.64 in 2019.



- Assuming an increase to £541.20 in 2014, fares for those living over 3 miles from the school/college attended would increase to £568.26 in 2015, £596.67 in 2016, £626.51 in 2017, £657.83 in 2018 and £690.72 in 2019.

Q5. Which of these options do you prefer?

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

Option C1

Option C2

Option C3

None

Don't know

Comments:

Q6. If you have an alternative suggestion, please put it in the box below.

Comments:

Section D: Collaborative Learning Transport

Oxfordshire County Council is proposing to remove all reference to Collaborative Learning Transport from its Home to School Transport Policy.

Collaborative Learning Partnerships were part of an initiative by the previous government which envisaged groups of secondary schools working together to provide pupils with access to a broader curriculum, particularly including access to a range of specialist vocational courses that no one school could provide on its own.

The current government does not support this approach and Collaborative Learning Partnerships are not operating in Oxfordshire.

Removing reference to Collaborative Learning Transport from the Home to School Transport Policy will have no material implications for schools, pupils or parents; however the council is required to consult on any change to its Home to School Transport Policy.

Q7. What are your views on the proposal to remove references to Collaborative Learning Transport from Oxfordshire County Council's Home to School Transport Policy?

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

Comments:

Section E: General Comments on Home to School Transport Proposals

Q8. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about the proposed changes to the Home to School Transport policy?

In this section, you may wish to specifically comment on the impact of the proposed changes on different groups of people and in particular the nine 'protected characteristics' specifically referenced in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Comments:



Section F: About You

It would be helpful to know a bit about you so we can check whether views differ across the communities we serve.

Q9. Are you responding to this consultation as a member of the public or as a stakeholder? *(By stakeholder we mean a councillor, representative of a school, group, organisation etc.)*

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

Member of the public Go to Q10

Stakeholder Go to Q13

Q10. Where do you live? Please tell us your postcode.

Why do we want this information? Your postcode will allow us to map where the respondents come from and to check if all communities are represented.

Q11. Do you or does any child/ children in your household currently receive free or subsidised Home to School Transport from Oxfordshire County Council?

(Please tick ✓ ONE box only)

Yes

No

Don't know

Q12. If you are a stakeholder, are you responding as a...

- | | |
|---|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Councillor | Go to Q13a |
| <hr/> | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of an early years setting or school | Go to Q14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of a group or organisation | Go to Q14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | Go to Q14 |

Q13a. If you are councillor, are you responding as a...

- Parish/Town Councillor
- District Councillor
- County Councillor

Q13b. What is the name of the area, ward or division you represent?

Q14. If you are another type of stakeholder, please provide details:

Role:

Name of school, setting, group or organisation:

Thank you for responding to the Home to School Transport Consultation.

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Home-to-school transport proposal

Published 04.11.2013

Oxfordshire County Council is consulting on plans to change the criteria for free home-to-school transport which would bring its policy in line with neighbouring councils and reduce its annual bill. It is also consulting about the amount it charges for spare seats on the transport it provides for children who are entitled to travel to and from school for free

The following has been produced to address some frequently asked questions about our Home to School Transport Policy proposal.

Why is the council proposing to make changes to its Home to School Transport Policy?

The council needs to make very large reductions in the amount it spends on providing services, including Home to School Transport, on which it currently spends about £15 million per year. The current policy is more generous than what the law says must be provided (the 'statutory minimum') and therefore costs the council more than it is legally obliged to spend. Current charges for spare seats ('concessionary fares') do not cover the full cost of these to the council i.e. they are subsidised.

Also, as more schools become responsible for their own admissions arrangements (academies, free schools, University Technical Colleges, Voluntary Aided School) there is a growing risk that they will introduce changes which will increase the costs to the council; the most obvious example is extending or introducing very wide catchment areas.

Oxfordshire's neighbouring authorities including Gloucestershire, Buckinghamshire, Swindon, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Reading and West Berkshire, and many other authorities in England, have already adopted similar school transport policies to what is now being proposed in this county.

How much does the Council spend on Home to School Transport?

These are the budgets and actual expenditure for the past three financial years:

Year	2010-11 (£)	2011-12 (£)	2012-13 (£)
Plan	14,929,242.00	14,465,413.00	14,361,915.00
Actuals	13,112,172.94	13,350,087.23	14,703,473.11
Variance overspend (+)/ underspend (-)	- 1,817,069.06	- 1,115,325.77	 341,558.11

This year's budget is about £15 million and £200,000 of savings are already earmarked against it from previous financial plans. Current forecast indicate that without identifying in-year savings there may be an overspend of up to £¹/₂ million.

The expenditure is split roughly 60:40 between mainstream transport and transport for pupils with Special Educational Needs attending special schools (£8.9 million and £5.8 million in 2012-13). It is not possible to divide mainstream expenditure into 'primary schools' and 'secondary schools' as some transport serves both types of school. However, the majority of mainstream transport expenditure is on behalf of secondary aged children.

How much of this expenditure was for taxis?

2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
Number Of children	Sum of Payments	Number Of children	Sum of Payments	Number Of children	Sum of Payments
1644	£6,554,603.63	1693	£7,011,535.29	1751	£7,922,764.01

To which schools are children conveyed by taxi?

See the attached spread sheet.

How many children currently use home to school transport?

Primary age

NCY 1 = 290

NCY 2 = 322

NCY 3 = 364

NCY 4 = 370

NCY 5 = 396

NCY 6 = 312

TOTAL = 2052

Secondary age

NCY 7 = 1573

NCY 8 = 1598

NCY 9 = 1672

NCY 10 = 1576

NCY 11 = 1785

TOTAL = 8204

Post-16

NCY 12 = 537

NCY 13 = 417

TOTAL = 954

GRAND TOTAL = 11,210

Of these 1,350 occupy a 'concessionary seat' so 9,860 children currently receive free transport.

What does the law say?

Free transport must be provided to children who attend the 'nearest available school' if it is over the 'statutory walking distance' (2 miles for children aged under 8 years and 3 miles for children aged 8 - 16 years; there is no entitlement to free transport for children attending sixth forms or Further Education Colleges). Free transport is also provided for shorter journeys when there is no 'safe walking route'.

What does 'nearest available school' mean?

This is the nearest school to a child's home address at which a place could be allocated at the time that school places are allocated. It doesn't have to be one of the three preferences on the application form but it is the only school to which there would be an entitlement to free transport. For instance, if a place couldn't be offered at any of a parent's three preferences, the Council would identify the next nearest school to the home address with a spare place; this would qualify as the 'nearest available school' and free Home to School Transport would be provided.

Who does the council currently provide free school transport for?

Currently the council offers free transport for all children under eight, to either their nearest school or their catchment school if they live more than two miles from school, and all children over eight who live more than three miles from school, regardless of whether the catchment school is the closest to the child's home. This is above the national statutory level of provision. Free transport is also provided for shorter journeys where it would be unsafe for an accompanied child to walk to school.

So how would this change under the new proposals?

There are two options, both of which would reduce expenditure and protect the Council against changes to schools' admission arrangements. The first would comply with the statutory minimum and limit free transport to only the 'nearest available school'. The second would establish 'travel areas', based upon which is the nearest school to each home address, but adjusted so that every child in a village would have the possibility of free transport to the same school. This second option goes beyond the statutory minimum but might actually prove cheaper if it avoids the

Council having to provide free transport from opposite ends of a village to two different schools.

My child already receives free transport to our catchment school, although it is not the nearest school to us. Will we lose this entitlement?

The Council is consulting on two options. The first would withdraw the entitlement after two or three years, allowing parents to plan for the withdrawal of free transport. The second option would not affect those currently in receipt of free transport and would be phased in over 5 (for secondary schools) or 7 years for primary schools; the first children to be affected under the second option would be those starting school in September 2015. Those who currently receive free transport, despite not attending their nearest school, would continue to receive it until the end of Year Six for primary school children and Year 11 for secondary school children.

If I applied for a place at my nearest school to get free transport but the council could not offer me a place there because it was oversubscribed, would I still be ineligible for free transport to a school further away?

No. In this scenario, the council would offer free transport for the next nearest available school.

When would the new policy come into force?

The proposal would become active in September 2015. If the move away from free transport to other than the 'nearest available school' were phased in over 5/7 years, new starters at primary and secondary schools for September 2014, would not be affected. If it was brought in over a shorter time scale then children starting in September 2014 could be affected.

Which schools / catchment areas would be affected by the proposal?

Most secondary schools could be affected but the greatest *potential* negative impact would be on Matthew Arnold School, Burford School, The Warriner School, Wheatley Park School, Icknield School and Marlborough School. Other schools, most notably Carterton Community College, could be *potential* beneficiaries.

The vast majority of children across the county would not be affected by the change in policy, as for most children qualifying for free transport, the nearest school is their catchment area school.

The Council has published maps showing secondary school catchment areas and the addresses which would be affected by the proposals. Whether schools are affected will depend upon whether parents change patterns of preferences to reflect the school to which free transport will be provided rather than the school in whose catchment area they live.

What about families on low incomes?

Children from low income families – i.e. those entitled to free school meals - would continue to be offered free transport to any one of the three nearest secondary schools between two and six miles from their home.

How many children does the council estimate will be affected in September 2015?

It is difficult to be precise, but currently c.3,000 children are transported to other than their nearest school. We are anticipating that in its first year, the proposal to limit the schools to which free transport is provided could affect around 500 children across the county (principally in the areas identified above), out of around 10,000 children eligible for free transport in 2014. The proposed increases to the costs of concessionary fares would affect around 1300 children.

How much does the council estimate it will save if ceases to provide free transport to other than the 'nearest available school'?

It is estimated the council could make an annual saving of between £1 million and £2 million after a five-year period (i.e. once the policy had become established throughout all secondary school years) as a result of an anticipated reduction in free transport provision. The actual saving will depend upon the proportion of parents who choose to send their children to other than the 'nearest available school'

Does the proposal mean that I can no longer choose which school I send my child to?

No. parents will still be able to express three preferences and the council will allocate a place at the highest ranked one that can accommodate their child. If the one that is allocated is not the nearest with an available place, the council won't provide free transport.

So the council is changing school catchment areas, isn't it?

No. Changes to school catchment areas can only be made as part of the annual consultation about schools' admission rules. Most secondary schools in Oxfordshire

are already academies and so are responsible for setting their own rules, including catchment areas. Catchment areas will still determine which children will be prioritised for admission, but not who is entitled to free transport. Schools will be able to change their catchment areas without committing the council to fund additional transport.

How will the policy change affect new schools such as free schools?

The policy will treat all schools equally i.e. if it is the 'nearest available school' and over the statutory walking distance from a child's home, free transport will be provided. It means that new won't be obliged to have a catchment area if they have been established to serve a wide area or to provide a particularly distinctive education. A good example is the University Technical College in Didcot which will have a catchment area covering most of the south of Oxfordshire and parts of Reading and Buckinghamshire.

Why is the Council proposing to increase 'concessionary fares'?

Most Home to School Transport contracts have a built in annual inflation factor of 2% but concessionary fares haven't been increased for a number of years. The proposed 10% increase for 1014-15 fares would enable fares to catch up with the increased costs to the Council.

So why isn't the Council proposing to increase 'concessionary fares' by 2% in future years?

The average cost of a seat on Home to School transport costs the Council about £700 per year so 'concessionary fares' are *subsidised* fares. The two options are intended to remove, over time, this public subsidy. An annual increase of 8% would remove the public subsidy in 3 years, one of 5% in 5 years (based on the over 3 miles rate; the subsidy on shorter journeys is greater and would take much longer to remove).

Can I have my say on the plans?

Yes. The easiest way to respond is by completing the online questionnaire. If you need a hard copy of the questionnaire please contact the council by telephone on 01865 815175 or email admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The deadline for your response is Friday 20 December 2013.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Current Home to School Transport Policy

Introduction

1. The County Council is keen to encourage young people to walk or cycle to school or college or to make use of public transport, but it also provides free transport and some assisted transport as set out in the Home to School Transport Policy set out in this document.
2. The legal basis for the provision of home to school transport is set out in sections 508A, 508B, 508C, 508D and 509AD and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Part 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) and where appropriate the Equality Act and English and European case law. In addition local authorities are under a statutory duty to have regard to the Home to School Transport Guidance issued by the then DfES (now DfE) in 2007.
3. The Home to School Transport Policy applies to young people who live in the County of Oxfordshire. Those who are not resident in Oxfordshire are advised to contact their own home local authority for details of any policy that their home authority may have regarding home to school/college transport.
4. Parents of those aged from 4 (Rising Five's) to 16 need to complete and submit a Transport Application Form if they wish to apply for free or subsidised home to school transport. If they wish to apply for subsidised travel an 'Application for Concessionary Travel on a School Bus' needs to be completed.
5. When, under the Home to School Transport Policy, children and young people are entitled to free transport it is provided by the most cost effective means. This will usually be by the provision of a free bus pass. However, where numbers are small children sometimes have to be transported by taxi. Where parents wish to take their children to school and it is therefore possible to avoid the provision of a taxi the Local Authority may agree to the payment of a mileage allowance. The mileage allowance is provided for the child's journey to school and the return to the child's home. Parents are not provided with a mileage allowance for their own return to home in the morning or their journey to the school in the afternoon, i.e. the LA pays a mileage allowance for two journeys per day rather than four. The mileage allowance is the Revenue and Customs All Car Rate (currently 40p). If through a change in circumstance¹ the payment of the mileage allowance proves no longer to be the cheapest way of transporting the child to school the alternative means of travel will be offered and the parent will be given up to 6 weeks to consider the new arrangement. At the end of that period or when the alternative means of transport is taken up, whichever is the sooner, the mileage allowance will be withdrawn.

¹ For example if a taxi contract is awarded to transport another nearby child to the same school and there is a spare seat in the vehicle.

6. Where free or concessionary travel has been agreed it is provided for attendance at the beginning and end of the school day and not for extracurricular activities.
7. The responsibility for determining entitlement issues rests with the School Admissions Team since transport decisions relate to the school attended. The responsibility for organising transport rests with the Integrated Transport Unit.
8. Any information regarding Oxfordshire's Home to School Transport Policy obtained from any source other than the Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council or the Oxfordshire public website should be disregarded.
9. Buses and coaches used for home to school transport are public service vehicles and are subject to specific safety legislation. This is enforced by an initial inspection and certification of the vehicle followed by subsequent annual checks. Vehicles are also subject to random roadside checks undertaken by the 'Vehicle and Operator Service Agency' (VOSA). VOSA are able to prohibit any vehicle that is non-compliant, i.e. is in a dangerous condition, not roadworthy and/or the driver's hours are irregular. Any Service Provider using sub-standard vehicles may lose their operator's licence.

Statutory Walking Distance

10. In understanding home to school transport and what can and cannot be provided free of charge it is important to understand what is referred to as "the statutory walking distance". This is 2 miles for children who are under 8 years of age, and 3 miles for those of statutory school age who are 8 and over. It is measured along the shortest route along which a child, accompanied by a responsible adult, may walk with reasonable safety. The route may include footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. All such routes need to be open to the public. When there are issues raised over the possible safety of a walking route the Admissions Team will arrange for an initial assessment and, if necessary, a full risk assessment by Road Safety.

Distance Measurement for Free Transport for Children of Low Income Families

11. The 2 mile limit is measured in the same way as the "statutory walking distance". However, the 6 mile and 15 mile upper limits are not walking routes. They are measured along routes that are passable using a road route suitable for motorised vehicles.

Home

12. A child's home is considered to be the child's main place of residence during the normal school week. Free transport can only be provided from that one address.

Travel to a Friends Home

13. No seat can be provided on an ad hoc basis to children wishing to travel to the homes of children who are entitled to free transport.

Escorts

14. Escorts are normally only provided when it has been established through the assessment or review process that a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs has a specific need to be accompanied.
15. Escorts will not normally be provided in any other circumstances.

Parents accompanying children in OCC transport

16. Parents will not normally be able to travel in OCC provided transport.

Assessment of Eligibility for Free Transport on Admission to Primary or Secondary School

17. An assessment of eligibility for free transport is made as part of the normal admissions process for entry to school. Parents are normally notified of the decision in the letter offering a school place.
18. If a child ceases to be eligible during the course of the school term, for example due to moving address, the provision should cease at the end of that term.

Free transport for those of school age (F1 to Year 11)

19. Children within the following categories are eligible for free transport:
 - a. Children attending the designated (catchment) school for their address if the distance from home to school is over the "statutory walking distance" of 3 miles if 8 or over or 2 miles if less than 8 and of statutory school age. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the Common Admissions Form (admissions application form).
 - b. Children attending the nearest available school or educational placement to their address, if the distance from home to school is over the "statutory walking distance" of 3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the Common Admissions Form (CAF).

- c. Children who are aged 8 or over and are under 11 years old who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and attend the nearest school if it is over 2 miles from their home.
- d. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and who attend one of their three nearest suitable schools (or places other than school at which they might receive education under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996), where they live more than two but not more than 6 miles from that school. The 2 mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 6 mile distance is measured by road route.
- e. Children attending the nearest available school to their address even if it is less than the statutory walking distance, if it would not be safe for a child accompanied by an adult to walk from the home to the school. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the CAF. If the route is subsequently determined to be safe the free transport will be withdrawn after the parent will be given up to 6 weeks to consider the new arrangement. At the end of that period or when the alternative means of transport is taken up, whichever is the sooner, the mileage allowance will be withdrawn.
- f. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and want their child to be educated in accordance with their religion or belief and they attend the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief that is over 2 miles but no more than 15 miles from their home. The 2-mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 15-mile distance is measured by road route.
- g. Children entitled to free transport who then move house during Year 11 and continue to attend their original school subject to the following limits:
 - i. Transport can be provided other than by taxi
 - ii. The distance travelled is no more than 15 miles

Taxis will only be used in exceptional circumstances.
- h. Children with a disability who do not have a Statement of Special Educational Need who by reason of their disability are unable to walk even relatively short distances to school and children with a mobility problem caused by a temporary medical condition, for example a broken leg. This assistance is subject to confirmation of the medical reasons for the provision by a GP or consultant.
- i. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs where one of the following applies:
 - (1) The school attended is the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their address that has an available place, if the distance from home to school is over the “statutory walking distance” of

3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age.

- (2) The school attended is the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their address that has an available place and the distance from home to school is less than the distances set out in h(1) but it would not be safe for a child accompanied by an adult to walk from the home to the school.
- (3) The children concerned are unable to walk to school by reason of their special educational need or, if disabled, their disability or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

Free Travel to Out County Residential Schools for those with Special Educational Needs

Out County Weekly Boarding

20. The beginning and end of each term of each school week to a total of 76 single journeys per year.

Termly Boarding (3 terms per year)

21. Children of 11 or over are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term up to a maximum of 16 single journeys per year.
22. Children aged up to 11 are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term, plus 4 discretionary journeys home per year, up to a maximum of 24 single journeys per year.

Termly Boarding (4 terms per year)

23. Children of 11 or over are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term up to a maximum of 16 single journeys per year.
24. Children aged up to 11 are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term, plus 4 discretionary journeys home per year, up to a maximum of 24 single journeys per year.

Out County 52 Week Boarding (joint placement with other agency)

25. All boarders (or parents) are entitled to 12 single trips home per year (broadly relating to term times). Any additional trips will be the responsibility of the other agency.

Payment of parental journeys for those with children at out county residential special schools

26. Payment will be made if one of the following applies:

- a. Attendance at their child's annual review
- b. Attendance at any meeting called by the LA at the pupils school
- c. Journeys necessitated by a child's sickness or emergency medical appointments
- d. An agreed journey to visit a new school placement
- e. To attend up to three additional meetings per year at the school (called by the school or requested by the parents) if sanctioned by the LA in advance.

Overnight Accommodation

- 27. The LA will not normally reimburse the cost of overnight accommodation for parents/carers.

Applications for Transport Assistance on Grounds of Religion and Belief

- 28. In making decisions on assistance with transport the LA will respect parents' religious and philosophical convictions as to the education to be provided for their children in so far as this is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure (as per para.134 of the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance issued by the then DfES in 2007).
- 29. However, a parent will need to satisfy the LA of the genuine nature of the religious and/or philosophical belief and that the application is made in good faith. The burden of proof lies with the child's parent/parents.
- 30. Examples of acceptable evidence are:
 - a. The provision of a baptismal certificate.
 - b. A statement of atheism.
 - c. A statement of adherence to a particular faith.
 - d. A letter of support from a priest or rabbi stating that the child belongs to a particular congregation.

Normally two pieces of evidence will be required.

- 31. It is important to note that the LA will take into account the financial consequences of any applications for assistance and that setting up new coach services or taxi routes or specifically continuing them when they could be discontinued in order to accommodate new travellers would normally fall within the definition of "unreasonable public expenditure". However, where there are spare seats on already existing home to school transport routes, or scheduled public transport services, the LA will be able to consider applications for places under the concessionary travel arrangements.
- 32. The LA will not take into academic grounds for preferring a particular school when making a decision on whether to provide assisted transport on grounds of faith or belief.

33. Decisions on applications for transport assistance on grounds of faith or belief will normally be taken by a panel of three. The chairman will normally be the Service Manager for Admissions.

16-19 Home to School/College Transport

Annual 16 to 19 Transport Policy Statement

34. Details of travel provision for the 16 to 19 age group will be published by 31 May of each year in the 16-19 Transport Policy Statement. This is intended to ensure that young people can make informed choices regarding post-16 education. The Policy Statement can be amended in year in response to complaints or a direction from the Secretary of State. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals Sub-Committee of the Democratic and Organisation Committee (DOC).

Free Travel

35. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are beyond statutory school age and who are aged 16 to 19, will receive free travel to that placement when they attend the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their home address that has an available place and one of the following applies:
- a. It is over 3 miles from their home to the educational placement.
 - b. It is less than 3 miles from their home to the educational placement but it would not be safe for the young person, even if accompanied by an adult, to walk from home to that placement.
 - c. The young person is unable to walk to the school or education placement due to their learning difficulty and/or disability, or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

Subsidised Travel (16-19 age group)

36. Students who do not have learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are beyond statutory school age, are aged 16 to 19, and who attend either a college or a school may use the concessionary travel scheme where it is necessary to enable them to access the designated school or college for their area (lower concessionary charge payable) or to access a non-designated area school or college (higher concessionary charge payable). The concessionary travel scheme makes places available on transport provided for those who are eligible for free home to school transport.
37. Oxfordshire residents aged 16-19 living within the catchment area of Henley College will continue to be eligible for subsidised travel to that college if the

college is over 3 miles or if there is no safe walking route (lower concessionary charge payable). The latter charge will be reviewed on an annual basis.

38. In exceptional circumstances, and only where places on relevant home to school transport routes are unavailable, season tickets on public transport may be provided for travel to the designated college or school from the student's home address at the relevant concessionary charge rate. This is meant to apply where a home to school transport route is full and it would be possible to use public transport and so avoid the unnecessary additional public expense of contracting for additional capacity on that route.

Travel Arrangements for Learners with Learning Difficulties Assessments (aged 19-24)

39. An annual Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Transport Policy Statement will be issued by the LA either with the 16-19 Transport Policy Statement or separately. This document will specify any transport or other arrangements, any payment of travel expenses and concessionary schemes which the LA plans to make available to this group of learners in the following academic year to publication. The Policy Statement will also set out the arrangements for facilitating boarding provision outside both the further education and higher education sectors. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

The Concessionary Travel Scheme

40. Concessionary seats are spare seats on home to school transport routes. These are routes that are operated for the benefit of those who are entitled to free transport to and from school. The key points regarding this scheme are set out below:
 - a. The Council cannot guarantee that a young person will keep the seat for longer than two terms
 - b. Fare prices are reviewed annually
 - c. The parent, or in the case of Years 12 and 13 must complete an application form for concessionary travel
 - d. Parents are required to pay for two terms travel in advance
 - e. The price charged covers a return journey for every school day of the relevant period
 - f. There will be no rebates for those deciding to travel for less than the maximum number of possible journeys per term, for example there is no rebate if a young people decides to use his/her bus pass for morning travel and returns by some other private means in the afternoon
 - g. If a seat is available a bus pass will only be issued on receipt of a completed application form, and correct payment

- h. No guarantee can be given that the bus will continue to run throughout a young person's time at a school, or that the place on the bus will not be withdrawn at some future date if the place is required for a young person who is entitled to free travel
- i. The concessionary charge will be waived for those eligible for Free School Meals or for those whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit. In addition the cost of the concessionary charge will be waived for the third and subsequent children of families where they have more than two children using the same home to school transport service.
- j. When there are more requests to pay for seats on a particular route than there are seats available they will be allocated in the descending order of priority shown in the table "Priority for Concessionary Places".

Priority for Concessionary Places

Priority	Category
1.	Those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school
2.	Looked After Children
3.	Years 12 and 13
4.	Children in receipt of Free School Meals or whose parent /parents are in receipt of the maximum of Working Tax Credit
5.	Those who travelled on the route the previous term
6.	By year group, in ascending order of priority from F1 to Year 11
7.	Those living closest using the shortest designated public route on the County Council's Geographic Information System

41. The current charges payable under the concessionary fares scheme are shown in the table "Charges 2013/14". These charges are subject to annual review and the current prices may be increased for 2014/15.

Charges 2013/14

F1 to Year 11 Under 3 miles	£ 264 per annum (£88 per two terms of the 6 term year)
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F1 to Year 11 Over 3 miles	£492 per annum (£164 per two terms of the 6 term year)
Post 16 Designated area school or college	£ 264 per annum (£88 per two terms of the 6 term year)
Post 16 Non designated area school or college	£492 per annum (£164 per two terms of the 6 term year)

Collaborative Learning Transport

42. The cost of collaborative learning transport is met from the budgets of 14-18 Partnerships, not the Home to School Transport Budget and decisions on provision will be made by those Partnerships.
43. Transport assistance to access collaborative learning opportunities is determined by distance as set out below:
- a. Any arrangement applies to the nearest provider of that course
 - b. If a single journey from the home school to the nearest course provider is over 3 miles then transport will be provided
 - c. If journey from home to home school is less than 3 miles but the distance from the home school to the nearest provider is over 1.5 miles then transport will be provided from home school to the provider only
 - d. If the distance from the student's home to school is over 3 miles but the distance from the home/school to the nearest provider is less than 1.5 miles (safe/reasonable walking distance) then transport will not be provided to continue on to the provider
 - e. If a pre-existing route from the child's home to their nearest provider is available then a place may be offered on that transport if the distance is over 3 miles (with the consortium paying for concessionary places). If the distance is less than 3 miles and a concessionary place is available the student must apply and pay as set out in the Home to School Transport Policy
 - f. If a course runs over 2 hours of the normal school day then transport will be provided to the child's home but only if that child is living over 3 miles from their home school.
44. Diagram 1 illustrates how the Home to School and Collaborative Learning Transport Policy would affect the normal journey for a student to their nearest provider.

**Diagram 1
“Hub & Spoke”
Journey Criteria Model A**

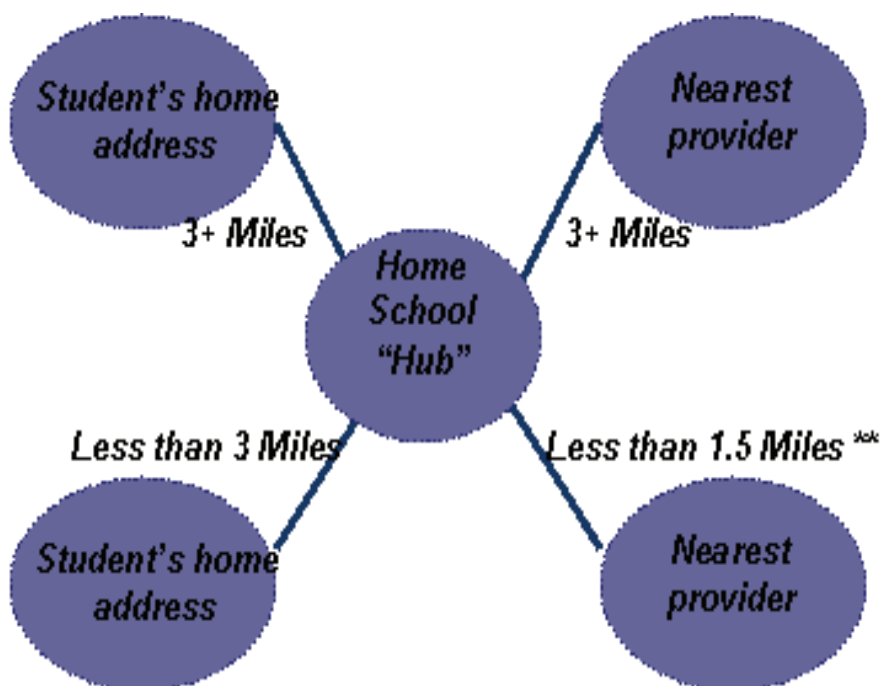


*** If this journey is greater than 1.5 miles then transport would be provided on the grounds that it is not a reasonable journey time.*

45. Diagram 2 illustrates when a student would not normally be eligible for transport but a seat on a concessionary bus route is available from close to

their home address to the nearest provider. If the journey is over 3 miles the relevant consortium may apply for and pay for the seat. If the journey is less than three miles then it would be the responsibility of the parent to apply and pay for the seat.

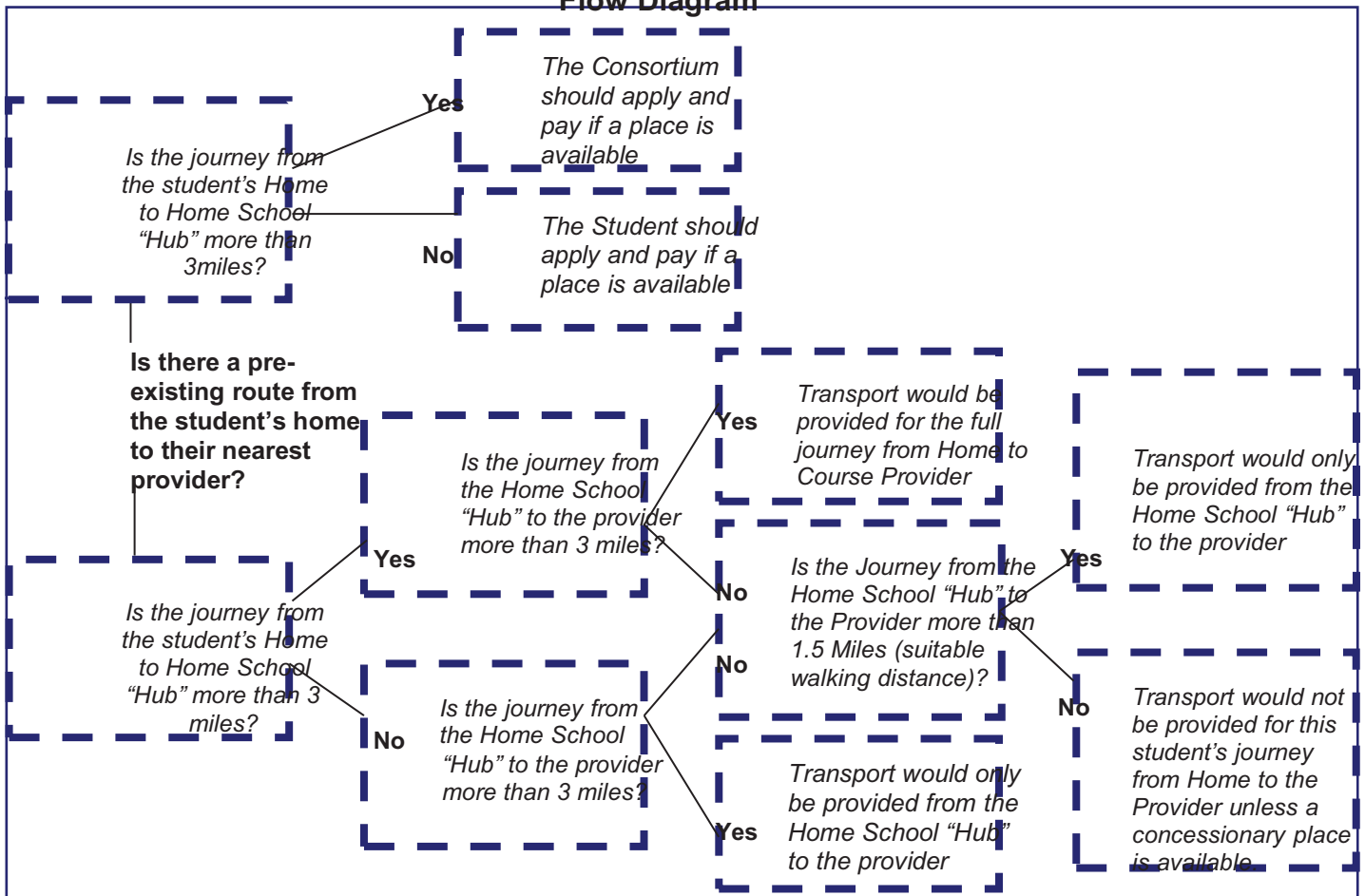
Figure 2
Concessionary Travel
Journey Criteria Model B



*** If this journey is greater than 1.5 miles then transport would be provided on the grounds that it is not a reasonable journey time.*

46. Diagram 3 expresses the criteria in a flow diagram.

**Diagram 3
Flow Diagram**



Transport Appeals

47. Parents can request an appeal to the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee regarding decisions taken by officers within the Admissions Team or the school Social Care and Transport Team should they have cause for complaint or disagreement concerning the eligibility of their child for travel support.
48. The Clerk to the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee will not be a member of the Admissions Team or the Social Care and Transport Team.
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- a. Presentation of the LA's case by the LA representative
 - b. Committee members and the parent are able to ask questions of the LA representative
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51. The decision of the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee will be considered binding by the LA and there is no further right of appeal.
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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Proposed Home to School Transport Policy 2015/16

Introduction

1. The County Council is keen to encourage young people to walk or cycle to school or college or to make use of public transport, but it also provides free transport and some assisted transport as set out in the Home to School Transport Policy set out in this document.
2. The legal basis for the provision of home to school transport is set out in sections 508A, 508B, 508C, 508D and 509AD and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Part 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) and where appropriate the Equality Act and English and European case law. In addition local authorities are under a statutory duty to have regard to the Home to School Transport Guidance issued by the then DfES (now DfE) in 2007.
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¹ For example if a taxi contract is awarded to transport another nearby child to the same school and there is a spare seat in the vehicle.

6. Where free or concessionary travel has been agreed it is provided for attendance at the beginning and end of the school day and not for extracurricular activities.

7. The responsibility for determining entitlement issues rests with the School Admissions Team since transport decisions relate to the school attended. The responsibility for organising transport rests with the Integrated Transport Unit.
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Statutory Walking Distance

10. In understanding home to school transport and what can and cannot be provided free of charge it is important to understand what is referred to as "the statutory walking distance". This is 2 miles for children who are under 8 years of age, and 3 miles for those of statutory school age who are 8 and over. It is measured along the shortest route along which a child, accompanied by a responsible adult, may walk with reasonable safety. The route may include footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. All such routes need to be open to the public. When there are issues raised over the possible safety of a walking route the Admissions Team will arrange for an initial assessment and, if necessary, a full risk assessment by Road Safety.

Distance Measurement for Free Transport for Children of Low Income Families

11. The 2 mile limit is measured in the same way as the "statutory walking distance". However, the 6 mile and 15 mile upper limits are not walking routes. They are measured along routes that are passable using a road route suitable for motorised vehicles.

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12. A child's home is considered to be the child's main place of residence during the normal school week. Free transport can only be provided from that one address.

Travel to a Friends Home

13. No seat can be provided on an ad hoc basis to children wishing to travel to the homes of children who are entitled to free transport.

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14. Escorts are normally only provided when it has been established through the assessment or review process that a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs has a specific need to be accompanied.
15. Escorts will not normally be provided in any other circumstances.

Parents accompanying children in OCC transport

16. Parents will not normally be able to travel in OCC provided transport.

Assessment of Eligibility for Free Transport on Admission to Primary or Secondary School

17. An assessment of eligibility for free transport is made as part of the normal admissions process for entry to school. Parents are normally notified of the decision in the letter offering a school place.
18. If a child ceases to be eligible during the course of the school term, for example due to moving address, the provision should cease at the end of that term.

Free transport for those of school age (F1 to Year 11)

19. Children within the following categories are eligible for free transport:
 - a. Children attending the nearest available school or educational placement to their address, if the distance from home to school is over the “statutory walking distance” of 3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the Common Admissions Form (CAF).
 - b. Children who are aged 8 or over and are under 11 years old who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and attend the nearest school if it is over 2 miles from their home.
 - c. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and who attend one of their three nearest suitable schools (or places other than school at which they might receive education under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996), where they live more than two but not more than 6 miles from that school. The 2 mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 6 mile distance is measured by road route.
 - d. Children attending the nearest available school to their address even if it is less than the statutory walking distance, if it would not be safe for a child accompanied by an adult to walk from the home to the school. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the CAF. If the route is subsequently determined to be safe the free transport will be withdrawn after the parent will be given up to 6 weeks to consider the new arrangement. At the end of that period or when the alternative means of transport is taken up, whichever is the sooner, the mileage allowance will be withdrawn.

- e. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and want their child to be educated in accordance with their religion or belief and they attend the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief that is over 2 miles but no more than 15 miles from their home. The 2-mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 15-mile distance is measured by road route.
- f. Children entitled to free transport who then move house during Year 11 and continue to attend their original school subject to the following limits:
 - i. Transport can be provided other than by taxi
 - ii. The distance travelled is no more than 15 miles

Taxis will only be used in exceptional circumstances.

- g. Children with a disability who do not have a Statement of Special Educational Need who by reason of their disability are unable to walk even relatively short distances to school and children with a mobility problem caused by a temporary medical condition, for example a broken leg. This assistance is subject to confirmation of the medical reasons for the provision by a GP or consultant.
- h. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs where one of the following applies:
 - (1) The school attended is the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their address that has an available place, if the distance from home to school is over the “statutory walking distance” of 3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age.
 - (2) The school attended is the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their address that has an available place and the distance from home to school is less than the distances set out in h(1) but it would not be safe for a child accompanied by an adult to walk from the home to the school.
 - (3) The children concerned are unable to walk to school by reason of their special educational need or, if disabled, their disability or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

Free Travel to Out County Residential Schools for those with Special Educational Needs

Out County Weekly Boarding

- 20. The beginning and end of each term of each school week to a total of 76 single journeys per year.

Termly Boarding (3 terms per year)

21. Children of 11 or over are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term up to a maximum of 16 single journeys per year.
22. Children aged up to 11 are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term, plus 4 discretionary journeys home per year, up to a maximum of 24 single journeys per year.

Termly Boarding (4 terms per year)

23. Children of 11 or over are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term up to a maximum of 16 single journeys per year.
24. Children aged up to 11 are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term, plus 4 discretionary journeys home per year, up to a maximum of 24 single journeys per year.

Out County 52 Week Boarding (joint placement with other agency)

25. All boarders (or parents) are entitled to 12 single trips home per year (broadly relating to term times). Any additional trips will be the responsibility of the other agency.

Payment of parental journeys for those with children at out county residential special schools

26. Payment will be made if one of the following applies:
 - a. Attendance at their child's annual review
 - b. Attendance at any meeting called by the LA at the pupils school
 - c. Journeys necessitated by a child's sickness or emergency medical appointments
 - d. An agreed journey to visit a new school placement
 - e. To attend up to three additional meetings per year at the school (called by the school or requested by the parents) if sanctioned by the LA in advance.

Overnight Accommodation

27. The LA will not normally reimburse the cost of overnight accommodation for parents/carers.

Applications for Transport Assistance on Grounds of Religion and Belief

28. In making decisions on assistance with transport the LA will respect parents' religious and philosophical convictions as to the education to be provided for their children in so far as this is compatible with the provision of efficient

instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure (as per para.134 of the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance issued by the then DfES in 2007).

29. However, a parent will need to satisfy the LA of the genuine nature of the religious and/or philosophical belief and that the application is made in good faith. The burden of proof lies with the child's parent/parents.
30. Examples of acceptable evidence are:
 - a. The provision of a baptismal certificate.
 - b. A statement of atheism.
 - c. A statement of adherence to a particular faith.
 - d. A letter of support from a priest or rabbi stating that the child belongs to a particular congregation.

Normally two pieces of evidence will be required.

31. It is important to note that the LA will take into account the financial consequences of any applications for assistance and that setting up new coach services or taxi routes or specifically continuing them when they could be discontinued in order to accommodate new travellers would normally fall within the definition of "unreasonable public expenditure". However, where there are spare seats on already existing home to school transport routes, or scheduled public transport services, the LA will be able to consider applications for places under the concessionary travel arrangements.
32. The LA will not take into academic grounds for preferring a particular school when making a decision on whether to provide assisted transport on grounds of faith or belief.
33. Decisions on applications for transport assistance on grounds of faith or belief will normally be taken by a panel of three. The chairman will normally be the Service Manager for Admissions.

16-19 Home to School/College Transport

Annual 16 to 19 Transport Policy Statement

34. Details of travel provision for the 16 to 19 age group will be published by 31 May of each year in the 16-19 Transport Policy Statement. This is intended to ensure that young people can make informed choices regarding post-16 education. The Policy Statement can be amended in year in response to complaints or a direction from the Secretary of State. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

Free Travel

35. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are beyond statutory

school age and who are aged 16 to 19, will receive free travel to that placement when they attends the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their home address that has an available place and one of the following applies:

- a. It is over 3 miles from their home to the educational placement.
- b. It is less than 3 miles from their home to the educational placement but it would not be safe for the young person, even if accompanied by an adult, to walk from home to that placement.
- c. The young person is unable to walk to the school or education placement due to their learning difficulty and/or disability, or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

Subsidised Travel (16-19 age group)

36. Students who do not have learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are beyond statutory school age, are aged 16 to 19, and who attend either a college or a school may use the concessionary travel scheme where it is necessary to enable them to access the designated school or college for their area (lower concessionary charge payable) or to access a non-designated area school or college (higher concessionary charge payable). The concessionary travel scheme makes places available on transport provided for those who are eligible for free home to school transport.
37. Oxfordshire residents aged 16-19 living within the catchment area of Henley College will continue to be eligible for subsidised travel to that college if the college is over 3 miles or if there is no safe walking route (lower concessionary charge payable). The latter charge will be reviewed on an annual basis.
38. In exceptional circumstances, and only where places on relevant home to school transport routes are unavailable, season tickets on public transport may be provided for travel to the designated college or school from the student's home address at the relevant concessionary charge rate. This is meant to apply where a home to school transport route is full and it would be possible to use public transport and so avoid the unnecessary additional public expense of contracting for additional capacity on that route.

Travel Arrangements for Learners with Learning Difficulties Assessments (aged 19-24)

39. An annual Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Transport Policy Statement will be issued by the LA either with the 16-19 Transport Policy Statement or separately. This document will specify any transport or other arrangements, any payment of travel expenses and concessionary schemes which the LA plans to make available to this group of learners in the following academic year to publication. The Policy Statement will also set out the arrangements for facilitating boarding provision outside both the further education and higher education sectors. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

The Concessionary Travel Scheme

40. Concessionary seats are spare seats on home to school transport routes. These are routes that are operated for the benefit of those who are entitled to free transport to and from school. The key points regarding this scheme are set out below:
- a. The Council cannot guarantee that a young person will keep the seat for longer than two terms
 - b. Fare prices are reviewed annually
 - c. The parent, or in the case of Years 12 and 13 must complete an application form for concessionary travel
 - d. Parents are required to pay for two terms travel in advance
 - e. The price charged covers a return journey for every school day of the relevant period
 - f. There will be no rebates for those deciding to travel for less than the maximum number of possible journeys per term, for example there is no rebate if a young people decides to use his/her bus pass for morning travel and returns by some other private means in the afternoon
 - g. If a seat is available a bus pass will only be issued on receipt of a completed application form, and correct payment
 - h. No guarantee can be given that the bus will continue to run throughout a young person's time at a school, or that the place on the bus will not be withdrawn at some future date if the place is required for a young person who is entitled to free travel
 - i. The concessionary charge will be waived for those eligible for Free School Meals or for those whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.
 - j. When there are more requests to pay for seats on a particular route than there are seats available they will be allocated in the descending order of priority shown in the table "Priority for Concessionary Places".

Priority for Concessionary Places

Priority	Category
1.	Those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school
2.	Looked After Children
3.	Years 12 and 13 (if there is no available service bus route)

4.	Children in receipt of Free School Meals or whose parent /parents are in receipt of the maximum of Working Tax Credit
5.	Those who travelled on the route the previous term
6.	By year group, in ascending order of priority from F1 to Year 11 (or to Year 13 if there is an available service bus route)
7.	Those living closest using the shortest designated public route on the County Council's Geographic Information System

41. The current charges payable under the concessionary fares scheme are shown in the table "Charges 2015". These charges are subject to annual review.

Charges 2015/16

F1 to Year 13 Under 3 miles	£304.92 per annum (payable in three instalments)
F1 to Year 13 Over 3 miles	£584.39 per annum (payable in three instalments)

Transport Appeals

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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Proposed Home to School Transport Policy

Option A2

2015/16

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 - b. Children living within the travel area of a designated school if the distance from home to school is over the "statutory walking distance" of 3 miles if 8 or over or 2 miles if less than 8 and of statutory school age. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the Common Admissions Form (admissions application form).
 - c. Children who are aged 8 or over and are under 11 years old who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and attend the nearest school if it is over 2 miles from their home.

- d. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and who attend one of their three nearest suitable schools (or places other than school at which they might receive education under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996), where they live more than two but not more than 6 miles from that school. The 2 mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 6 mile distance is measured by road route.
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 - b. Attendance at any meeting called by the LA at the pupils school

- c. Journeys necessitated by a child's sickness or emergency medical appointments
- d. An agreed journey to visit a new school placement
- e. To attend up to three additional meetings per year at the school (called by the school or requested by the parents) if sanctioned by the LA in advance.

Overnight Accommodation

- 27. The LA will not normally reimburse the cost of overnight accommodation for parents/carers.

Applications for Transport Assistance on Grounds of Religion and Belief

- 28. In making decisions on assistance with transport the LA will respect parents' religious and philosophical convictions as to the education to be provided for their children in so far as this is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure (as per para.134 of the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance issued by the then DfES in 2007).
- 29. However, a parent will need to satisfy the LA of the genuine nature of the religious and/or philosophical belief and that the application is made in good faith. The burden of proof lies with the child's parent/parents.
- 30. Examples of acceptable evidence are:
 - a. The provision of a baptismal certificate.
 - b. A statement of atheism.
 - c. A statement of adherence to a particular faith.
 - d. A letter of support from a priest or rabbi stating that the child belongs to a particular congregation.

Normally two pieces of evidence will be required.

- 31. It is important to note that the LA will take into account the financial consequences of any applications for assistance and that setting up new coach services or taxi routes or specifically continuing them when they could be discontinued in order to accommodate new travellers would normally fall within the definition of "unreasonable public expenditure". However, where there are spare seats on already existing home to school transport routes, or scheduled public transport services, the LA will be able to consider applications for places under the concessionary travel arrangements.
- 32. The LA will not take into academic grounds for preferring a particular school when making a decision on whether to provide assisted transport on grounds of faith or belief.

33. Decisions on applications for transport assistance on grounds of faith or belief will normally be taken by a panel of three. The chairman will normally be the Service Manager for Admissions.

16-19 Home to School/College Transport

Annual 16 to 19 Transport Policy Statement

34. Details of travel provision for the 16 to 19 age group will be published by 31 May of each year in the 16-19 Transport Policy Statement. This is intended to ensure that young people can make informed choices regarding post-16 education. The Policy Statement can be amended in year in response to complaints or a direction from the Secretary of State. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

Free Travel

35. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are beyond statutory school age and who are aged 16 to 19, will receive free travel to that placement when they attend the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their home address that has an available place and one of the following applies:
- It is over 3 miles from their home to the educational placement.
 - It is less than 3 miles from their home to the educational placement but it would not be safe for the young person, even if accompanied by an adult, to walk from home to that placement.
 - The young person is unable to walk to the school or educational placement due to their learning difficulty and/or disability, or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

Concessionary/Subsidised Travel for those aged 16-19

36. Students who do not have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who are beyond statutory school age, are aged 16 to 19, and attend either a college or a school may use the concessionary travel scheme where it is necessary to enable them to access school or college. The concessionary travel scheme makes places available on transport provided for those who are eligible for free home to school transport.
37. Oxfordshire residents aged 16-19 for whom Henley College is the nearest post-16 provision will need to pay the distance related charges set out in the concessionary scheme if they obtain places on transport operated directly, indirectly or in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council. The charge will be reviewed on an annual basis.
38. In exceptional circumstances, and only where places on relevant home to school transport routes are unavailable, season tickets on public transport may be provided for travel to the designated college or school from the student's home address at the relevant concessionary charge rate. This is meant to

apply where a home to school transport route is full and it would be possible to use public transport and so avoid the unnecessary additional public expense of contracting for additional capacity on that route.

Travel Arrangements for Learners with Learning Difficulties Assessments (aged 19-24)

39. An annual Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Transport Policy Statement will be issued by the LA either with the 16-19 Transport Policy Statement or separately. This document will specify any transport or other arrangements, any payment of travel expenses and concessionary schemes which the LA plans to make available to this group of learners in the following academic year to publication. The Policy Statement will also set out the arrangements for facilitating boarding provision outside both the further education and higher education sectors. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

The Concessionary Travel Scheme

40. Concessionary seats are spare seats on home to school transport routes. These are routes that are operated for the benefit of those who are entitled to free transport to and from school. The key points regarding this scheme are set out below:
- a. The Council cannot guarantee that a young person will keep the seat for longer than two terms
 - b. Fare prices are reviewed annually
 - c. The parent, or in the case of Years 12 and 13 must complete an application form for concessionary travel
 - d. Parents are required to pay for two terms travel in advance
 - e. The price charged covers a return journey for every school day of the relevant period
 - f. There will be no rebates for those deciding to travel for less than the maximum number of possible journeys per term, for example there is no rebate if a young people decides to use his/her bus pass for morning travel and returns by some other private means in the afternoon
 - g. If a seat is available a bus pass will only be issued on receipt of a completed application form, and correct payment
 - h. No guarantee can be given that the bus will continue to run throughout a young person's time at a school, or that the place on the bus will not be withdrawn at some future date if the place is required for a young person who is entitled to free travel
 - i. The concessionary charge will be waived for those eligible for Free School Meals or for those whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of

Working Tax Credit.

- j. When there are more requests to pay for seats on a particular route than there are seats available they will be allocated in the descending order of priority shown in the table “Priority for Concessionary Places”.

Priority for Concessionary Places

Priority	Category
1.	Those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school
2.	Looked After Children
3.	Years 12 and 13 (if there is no available service bus route)
4.	Children in receipt of Free School Meals or whose parent /parents are in receipt of the maximum of Working Tax Credit
5.	Those who travelled on the route the previous term
6.	By year group, in ascending order of priority from F1 to Year 11 (or to Year 13 if there is an available service bus route)
7.	Those living closest using the shortest designated public route on the County Council’s Geographic Information System

41. The current charges payable under the concessionary fares scheme are shown in the table “Charges 2015”. These charges are subject to annual review.

Charges 2015/16

Reception (F1) to Year 13 and under 3 miles from home to school/college	£313.63 (Option C1 and C2) or £304.92 (Options C1 and C2) per annum (payable in three instalments)
Reception (F1) to Year 13 and over 3 miles from home to school/college	£584.50 (Option C1 and C2) or £568.26 (Option C1 and C3) per annum (payable

Transport Appeals

42. Parents can request an appeal to the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee regarding decisions taken by officers within the Admissions Team or the school Social Care and Transport Team should they have cause for complaint or disagreement concerning the eligibility of their child for travel support.

43. The Clerk to the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee will not be a member of the Admissions Team or the Social Care and Transport Team.
44. The Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee hearings will be organised as soon as possible following the request from parents to lodge an appeal. The timing of the appeal will depend upon the availability of councillors.
45. A representative of the Admissions Team will present the LA's reasons for not providing transport and appellants can present a case in writing and /or in person (if the parent wishes, accompanied by a friend). The format of the appeal is set out below:

- a. Presentation of the LA's case by the LA representative
 - b. Committee members and the parent are able to ask questions of the LA representative
 - c. Presentation of the parent's case
 - d. Summing up by the LA representative
 - e. Summing up of the parents case
 - f. Both the LA representative and the parent/parents friend leave the hearing together.
 - g. Consideration of the case by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee
 - h. The Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee makes a decision as to whether to uphold or refuse the appeal
46. The decision of the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee will be considered binding by the LA and there is no further right of appeal.
47. The LA will not consider requests for a further transport appeal within the school year unless there has been a significant change of circumstance.

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31 October 2013
Our Ref: **EEI/FC/TW**



**School Organisation & Planning
School Admissions**

County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND

Jim Leivers

Director for Children, Education &
Families

Parent/Carer
<Address1>
<Address2>
<Address3>
<Address4>
<Postcode>

Dear Parent/Carer

Home to School Transport Consultation - have your say

Oxfordshire County Council is running a new consultation on proposals to change its Home to School Transport Policy - following a decision in July to look again at the plans.

The current Home to School Transport Policy is more generous than the national 'statutory minimum' (what we must provide by law), which means the Council spends more than it is legally obliged to. In addition, charges for 'concessionary fares' on Home to School Transport (i.e. where spare seats on school buses are used by children who are not entitled to free transport) do not cover the full cost to the Council, which means they are subsidised by public funds.

Given the on-going pressure on public finances and the need for the Council to identify large savings across all service areas, this level of spending is not considered sustainable. We want a thriving Oxfordshire, and pledge to make savings as fairly as possible, while protecting services for those in greatest need.

Following extensive feedback during the summer, when the Council deferred its decision on potential changes to the Home to School Transport Policy, revised proposals to reduce the range of schools to which children would qualify for free transport are now being put forward for consultation. These proposals would bring the Council's policy into line with the national statutory level, as well as with similar policies adopted by neighbouring councils.

The Council is also consulting on options to raise concessionary fares on school buses and a proposal to remove references to Collaborative Learning Transport in its Home to School Transport Policy.

The proposed changes would not affect parents' or carers' rights to express preferences for any three schools, nor would they reduce the rights of low income families to receive free transport to any of the three nearest secondary schools between two and six miles. The general entitlement to free travel to the nearest school with an available place if it is over the statutory walking distance (three miles for those aged 8 to 16 and two miles for those of school age who are below the age of 8) would also remain unaffected.

Have your say

The Home to School Transport consultation will run from 4 November to 20 December 2013. The proposals, supporting information and online consultation form can be found on the Consultation Portal of Oxfordshire's public website.

Please read the proposal and respond to the consultation online at:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation

There will be a series of public meetings to support this consultation. All meetings will start at 7.00 pm and are scheduled to finish by 8.30 pm:

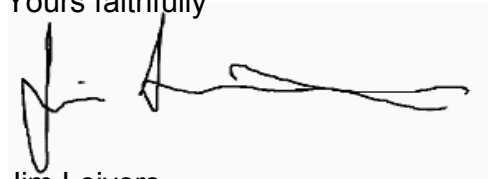
- Monday, 11 November 2013 Carterton Community College, Carterton
- Thursday, 14 November 2013 Matthew Arnold School, Cumnor
- Friday, 22 November 2013 Bartholomew School, Eynsham
- Friday, 29 November 2013 The Marlborough CE School, Woodstock
- Monday, 2 December 2013 Icknield Community College, Watlington
- Wednesday, 4 December 2013 Wheatley Park School, Holton
- Tuesday, 10 December 2013 Larkmead School, Abingdon-on-Thames
- Thursday, 12 December 2013 The Warriner School, Bloxham

No decisions have yet been taken about the proposals. After the consultation has closed, a report will be written and discussed by Cabinet on Tuesday, 28 January 2014.

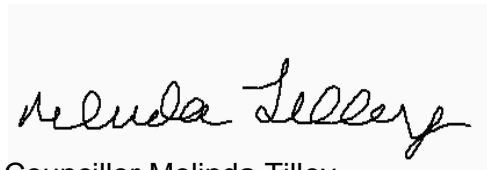
Any agreed changes to entitlement to free transport would apply from September 2015 onwards. The consultation includes separate options for the phasing-in of any changes. Changes to the Concessionary Fare Scheme, if agreed, would be implemented from September 2014.

We look forward to receiving your response to this important consultation.

Yours faithfully



Jim Leivers
Director for Children, Education & Families



Councillor Melinda Tilley
Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families

Contact Number: 01865 815175
Email: transport.consultation@oxfordshire.gov.uk (comments)
 admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk (questions)
Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation



School Improvement Framework

'Creating a culture of personal accountability and holding others to account in a consistent and transparent way is one of the most significant elements in securing and sustaining outstanding performance'

John West-Burnham - 'The Reality of Autonomy' 2011

Contents

A.	Introduction & Context	Page 3
B.	Guiding Principles and Working Assumptions	Page 4
C.	Procedures: identification and categorization of schools	Page 5
D.	Narrative and flowcharts to show escalation of interventions	Page 8
E.	Use of data and strategic intelligence to measure impact of interventions	Page 12
F.	Glossary	Page 13
	Appendices	Page
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statutory guidance on schools causing concern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1 Schools causing Concern Section 2 Giving a warning notice Section 3 Powers and types of interventions – LA Section 4 Secretary of States powers Section 5 IEB application form Section 6 Appropriate forms of evidence for issuing a performance standards and safety warning notice 2. Ofsted inspections for schools in a category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant Improvement timeline Special Measures timeline 3. County Council powers of intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1 Power to require the governing body to enter into partnership arrangements Section 2 Power to suspend the schools right to a delegated budget Section 3 Power to appoint additional governors Section 4 Power to provide for the governing body to consist of interim executive members 4. Protocol for intervention in schools 	

Many of Oxfordshire's children perform well when compared with their peers however we know that we need to improve the number of good and outstanding schools and the rate of progress by which our children learn compared with national trends. 2013 data indicates that 76% of our schools are judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' – our target for 2015 is 85%

In Oxfordshire we believe that school improvement is everyone's business. Whatever type of school or setting you are in we all have a collective moral and professional responsibility to ensure Oxfordshire's learners are supported to fulfil their potential. This view is endorsed by current government policy and practice which recognises the autonomy of schools whilst exhorting them to work as part of a locality and connected system. Where we have targeted our support in the past it has been successful in helping schools to improve and the County has received positive feedback from HMI monitoring visits to schools causing concern. However we recognise that we need to work more preventatively to stop schools becoming a cause of concern

This School Improvement Strategy for the Council has been developed with our partners in educational provision and draws upon our statutory accountabilities, historical processes, and emerging practice in response to the rapidly changing agenda. At the heart of all that we do together are the needs of learners and the Council's intent to fulfil its pupil advocacy role consistently.

As befits the complex nature of improving schools within a diverse system with a multitude of providers our strategy is comprised of a number of different elements. No one element alone can enable schools to fulfil their potential for excellence but by working in synergy and deploying the appropriate element for the specific development/improvement needs of the school or group of schools we hope to break down barriers to progress and create the optimal conditions for success. This Framework outlines our strategies for:

1. Maintaining the **overview of school quality and impact** across Oxfordshire (in Academies, Maintained and Foundation Schools).
2. **Identifying categories of schools** in order to focus resources and improvement
3. Developing excellence and enabling **school to school system support**
4. Supporting Maintained **Schools that find themselves unable to maximise their potential** at any point in time.

Oxfordshire is striving to be a responsive commissioning local authority working in partnership with schools (whatever their status) and a range of providers to grow a proactive self-improving system and a quality programme of support, challenge and intervention that will impact positively on all learners and meet the dynamic of 21st century requirements.

We want to achieve this through finding locally led solutions driven by those who understand school systems the best rather than adopting off the shelf external packages. Our aim is to enable sustainable schools of the future as well as effective schools of the present.

Section B Guiding Principles & Working Assumptions

'For Oxfordshire to be a dynamic and forward looking place for education and learning, providing the best quality experiences for children to grow up, learn, develop and achieve'

A Strategy for Change - Improving Educational Outcomes in In Oxfordshire 2012

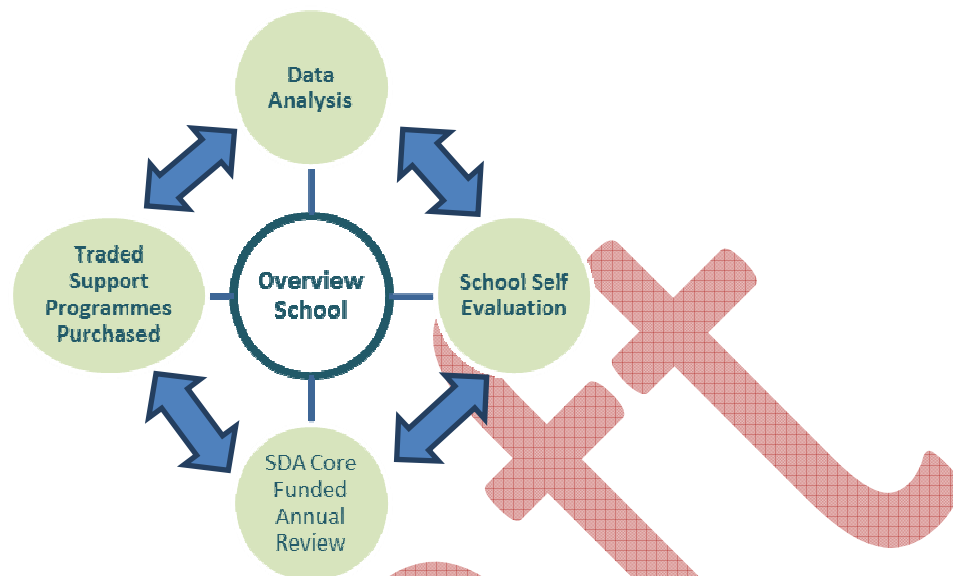
As educational partners we strive to provide the best possible deal for our learners and are connected and driven by the following shared principles:

1. Children are always at the heart of our decision making and school improvement interventions which are designed to build capacity across the education system.
2. Schools are ultimately responsible for their own performance however school improvement is everyone's responsibility and we share a collective moral, social and professional accountability for the maximum progress of all learners – wherever they are educated.
3. Over a period of time we recognise that schools will be relatively more or less successful depending on a variety of factors and nationally changing thresholds and that this requires differential support.
4. Our intervention and support processes will use risk based inverse proportionality to ensure that the schools that need more get the support they need to make a difference to children's outcomes and that successful schools are free to make the best use of their autonomy.
5. Current school systems are diverse – what matters is impact, outcomes and benefits for learners.
6. Developing comprehensive self-aware learning and quality assurance cultures with all stakeholders using evidence based interventions.
7. Valuing cultural diversity across Oxfordshire - ensuring support is geared towards achieving inclusivity for all learners and enabling our most vulnerable groups to succeed in line with their peers.
8. Successful school development requires effective and integrated multi-agency working with expertise drawn from a range of services and partners effectively knitted together at the school level.
9. There is rarely a single 'one size fits all' solution - although learning from effective practice is valuable - context matters and bespoke solutions from a menu of interventions are preferable.
10. A range of data will be used to make decisions about schools quality and impact including quantitative and qualitative data (audit reports, comparative performance outcomes, local knowledge, school visits, first preferences, attendance and exclusions returns, parental complaints, Ofsted inspections, budget management).

The LA commissions a range of providers to support its schools and secure its statutory and strategic intentions with respect to school improvement. Annually it internally commissions its 2013 reconfigured Schools and Learning Service (SLS) against a range of specified projects. In addition it brokers support for specific schools using its School Improvement Associates Provider Database (SIAPD) and commissions a range of related school support functions from its Teaching School Alliance. In addition an increasing range of bespoke traded programme support is available for schools to purchase from their delegated budgets.

Section C Procedures: identification and categorization of schools

1. All Schools



Our desktop monitoring and evaluation of each maintained school's effectiveness and improvement is on-going and draws on all available data, including school self-review. The Schools and Learning Manager and Improvement and Development Managers work closely with the County Council's Performance and Information Manager to interpret the data and identify the key focus areas to inform future actions.

Where information is available, outcomes and indicators for academies in our desk top analysis will be included and steps will be taken to alert the relevant authority where concerns are indicated.

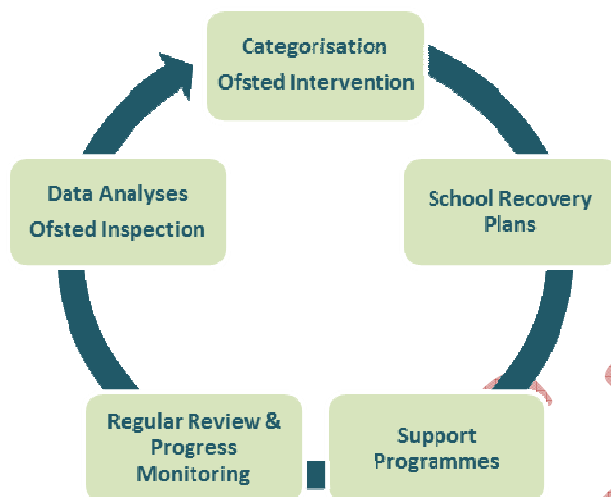
For each school, we will:

- analyse Ofsted reports
- analyse recent test and examination data and all other relevant data and consider value-added evidence
- make comparisons with other schools against national benchmark criteria
- categorise each school in terms of its quality and level of intervention and support needed
- encourage and support the process of school self-review

The outcomes of this monitoring will lead to challenge and the option of brokered/traded support, appropriate to need and in line with the identified category. Support will always be time-limited and targeted.

The expectation is that schools will use their delegated budgets to fund school improvement and where necessary, recovery. The centrally held commissioning fund for school improvement is allocated for the purposes of strategic oversight of schools, data analysis, quality assurance, research and development, monitoring and reviews. In exceptional cases, where budget deficit is a contributory feature to the failure of a school, the council take steps to remove delegated budgets but may also allocate additional funding or other capacity resources to support the school's recovery action plan in the intervening time.

2. Schools causing Concern



A School Causing Concern may be defined as any school that is temporarily or persistently experiencing under performance in any of the key Ofsted judgement areas: Achievement of pupils; Quality of teaching; behaviour and safety of pupils; Quality of leadership and management.

The school may have the capacity to secure its own improvement in a timely manner in which case the role of the county council will be light touch. Where additional intervention, challenge and support are needed to ensure pupil outcomes are secured the county council will exercise its full statutory rights and intervention powers (see annex 1).

All schools should be reviewing their own performance as part of their ongoing self-evaluation. As part of that process they are able to self-nominate to be placed on the Schools Causing Concern Register as a route to securing the step change they need. This process would be triggered by a discussion with the Improvement and Development manager for schools and should secure the commitment of the governing body.

The following criteria will be used to support identification of Schools Causing Concern.

A. Standards

- Pupil performance is persistently below levels expected when pupils' prior attainment and the school's context is taken into account, even if the absolute level of attainment is apparently satisfactory.
- Quantitative evidence of 'unacceptably low standards' may take one of the following forms and usually a combination of several of these indicators will apply:
 - the school is in the bottom quartile nationally in one or more of the key performance indicators as evidenced in the Data Dashboard
 - the school's data indicates that pupils are not making sufficient progress
 - the school's data indicates that particular groups of pupils are not making sufficient progress
 - attainment data shows that the school is very weak in one or more of the core subjects
 - attainment levels are low, not improving or decreasing over time
 - the school is below floor standards

B. Behaviour and safety

The concerns are based on reported and observed practice in and around the school and may include:

- safeguarding concerns
- high levels of reporting on bullying practice
- high or increasing absence or truancy rates
- high number of referrals for exclusions or managed moves

C. Concerns about leadership and management

These concerns will be based on the expectations set out in the Ofsted framework. School intervention leaders, support services, governing bodies and other professionals involved with the school or setting will report inaccuracy on the quality of the school's self-evaluation, target-setting, value for money and capacity to improve. These may include data trends such as:

- declining school popularity, possibly revealed through school rolls falling more rapidly than might reasonably be expected from demographic changes
- on-going absence of key leaders within the school
- high rates of staff turnover, or numbers of staff grievances
- feedback from parents or significant or increasing numbers of parental complaints
- failure to manage and operate the school within its delegated budget, to provide value for money or having a large surplus budget

Where potential causes for concern are identified, the Development and Improvement Manager or their representative will discuss these with the headteacher or a school representative and the chair of governors.

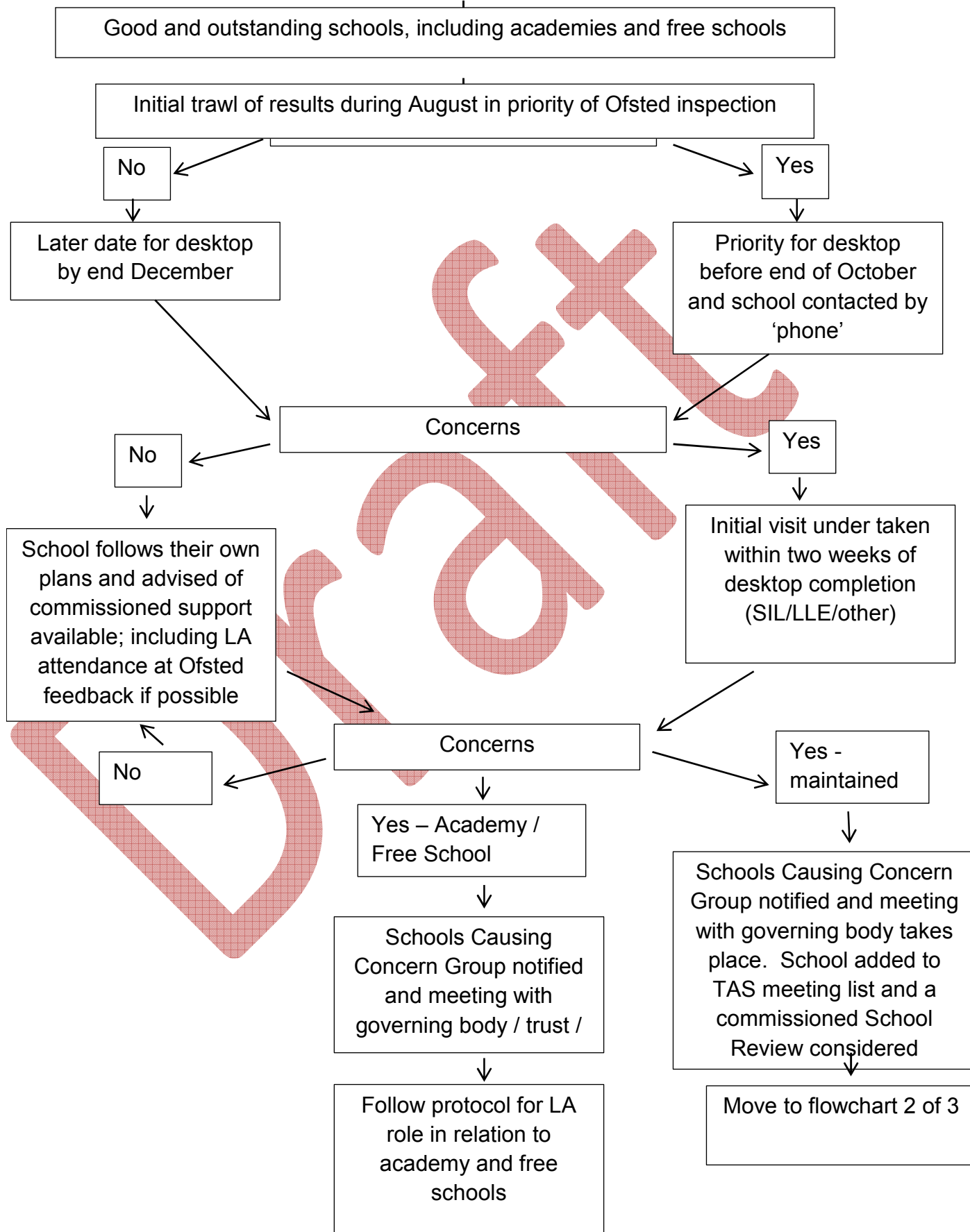
This will clarify the school's context and actions and identify the degree of support or intervention required to effect improvement. This information will be used to revise the level of intervention and challenge offered to the schools and the category of support.

Section D

Narrative and flowcharts to show escalation of interventions

Description of school	Support / intervention	Monitoring	Links to documentation
<p>Light touch support – see School Support Flowchart 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly effective schools with high achievement and/or attainment. - Likely to be graded 1 or 2 for their overall effectiveness, leadership and management and have many outstanding/good features. - Know their strengths and weaknesses well and are proactive and successful in dealing with any concerns. - Successful in securing, maintaining and approving appropriate standards. - Have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to bring about further improvement and they carry this out effectively. - Examples of good practice exist within these schools which would be beneficially disseminated. - Have the capacity to effect necessary improvements within their own resources, and may be in a position to support developments in other schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual data analysis following statutory tasks and tests. All schools receive an early data package in July from the Data team which supports data analysis of all groups of pupils, particularly vulnerable learners. - Annual Risk Analysis (RA) for schools graded 1 or 2 by Ofsted. These are prioritised in relation to concerns about achievement over time and next Ofsted visit. Any concerns highlighted are followed up by an initial visit by a School Intervention Leader (SIL) or an LLE/NLE. - All schools have access to LA progress guidance - Successful schools will continue to identify, broker and purchase the support they need, to maintain standards and to develop further. -The county council offers a package of training and support to all schools in the form of Oxfordshire Partners in Learning (OPL) - Schools will be expected to deploy their budgets to support improvement. - Current Ofsted updates and materials are available via the Intranet. All schools receive a phone call from a SIL when inspection is announced and the SIL will speak to the Lead Inspector (LI). Attendance at feedback is optional for schools graded outstanding or good. The SIL for Inspections reports outcomes weekly to the county council’s DLT. - Headteachers and Chairs of governors will have access to regular newsletters and briefings. - Additional support available from Oxfordshire Teaching School Alliance. 	<p>These schools will be light touch monitored through an analysis of all available data held centrally and accessible to them.</p>	<p>Example of NEXUS data</p> <p>INSERT HYPERLINK TO JACKIE HIBBERTS ALERT SHEET</p> <p>..\Risk Analysis for good and outstanding schools.docx</p> <p>..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Progress and target setting (September 2013) b.docx</p> <p>..\OPL\School Improvement OPL Brochure Sep 13- Apr 14.pdf</p> <p>INSERT HYPERLINK TO OFSTED PAGES ON INTRANET</p> <p>Example of governors newsletter.</p> <p>OTSA website link</p>

SCHOOL SUPPORT FLOWCHART 1

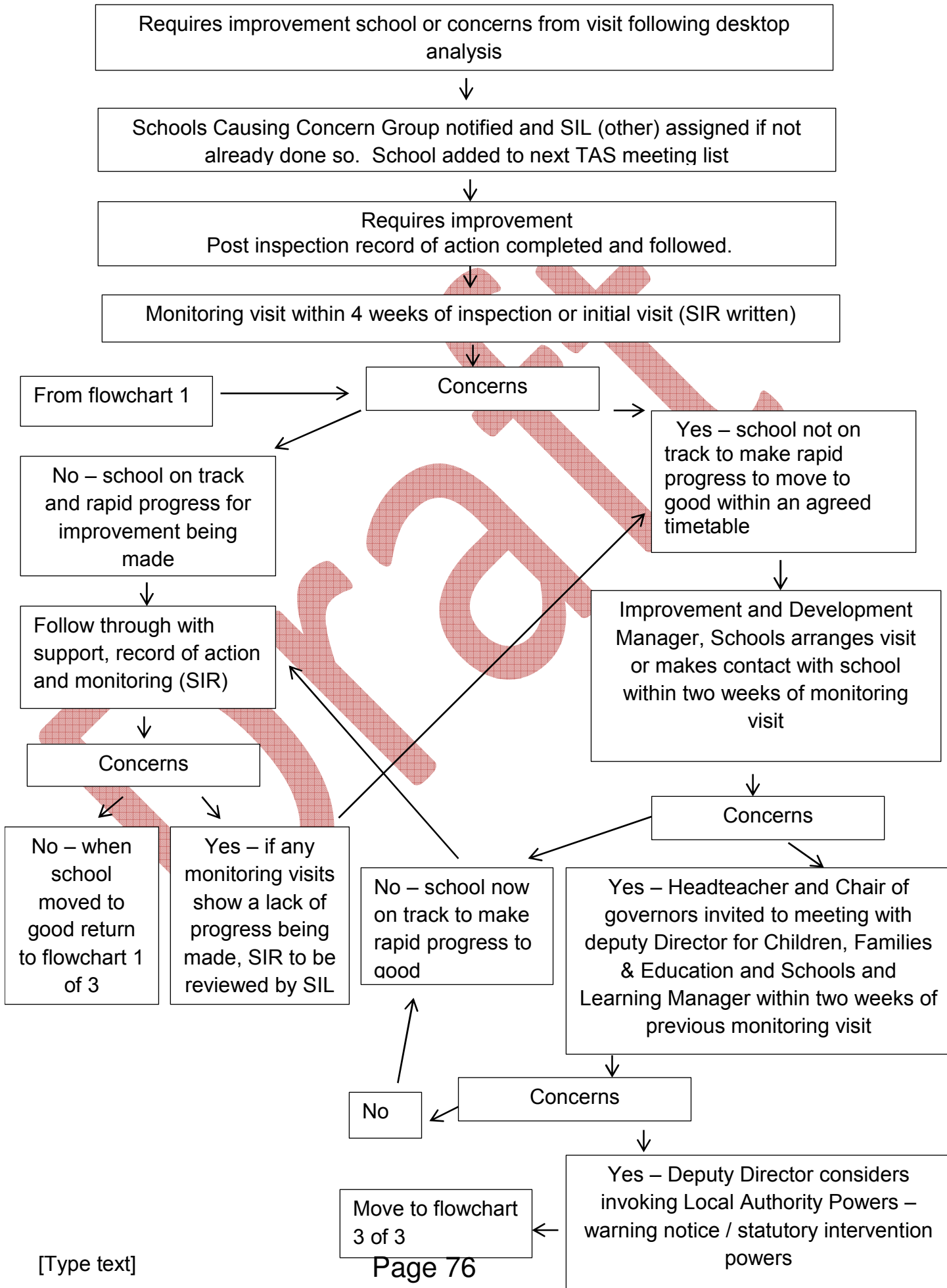


<p>Additional support schools – see School Support Flowchart 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likely to be graded as requiring improvement (3), but may sometimes be graded as good (2). - In need of support to build their own capacity to sustain improvement. - Have no inadequate features and many have some features that are good or better. - School Intervention Leaders will have judged the capacity of leadership and the Governing Body to secure the necessary improvement as good or better. - Generally recognise that there are specific improvements that they need to make. - Require extra support to enable them to build capacity and increase the rate of progress and improvement against their plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual data analysis following statutory tasks and tests. All schools receive an early data package in July from the Data team which supports data analysis of all groups of pupils, particularly vulnerable learners. - Additional support will be from either a School Intervention Leader (SIL) or brokered targeted support. These schools will receive a centrally commissioned allocation of SIL support time (between 1 and 3 days annually) comprising both off-site preparation/reporting and on-site activity. - Current Ofsted updates and guidance available via the Intranet. All schools receive a phone call from a SIL when inspection is announced and the SIL will speak to the Lead Inspector (LI). LA Attendance at feedback is mandatory. - Schools receiving an RI judgement are visited within 2 weeks of the inspection and a Post Inspection record of Action (PIR) is completed and followed. At this point, discussions will be held between the school, the SIL and the Improvement and Development Manager (IDM) to clarify next steps. - The school will, where necessary, revise its School Improvement Plan (SIP) and SEF summary in line with the outcomes of these discussions. - A planned programme of specific support and/or intervention will also be negotiated. The LA will make use of its Approved Providers List (APL) when commissioning support. - Monitoring visit within 4 weeks of inspection (SIR written) - Six weekly Team Around the School (TAS) meetings are held involving colleagues across the service who work with individual schools to secure relevant support. 	<p>The school's progress including the impact of support will be monitored on a termly basis by the SIL.</p> <p>An on-going record of action plan progress is kept in the School Intervention record (SIR). This is monitored by the IDM. Schools that fail to make adequate improvement within an appropriate timescale will be contacted by the IDM and may be re-allocated to Maximum Support. If necessary this could trigger a Warning Notice under the Education & Inspections Act 2006.</p> <p>Independent reviews will be commissioned to confirm judgements, school progress rates and the impact of county council interventions and support as required</p> <p>The Deputy Director for Children will meet with identified headteachers and chairs of governors to provide additional challenge where progress is slow.</p>	<p>..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Planned Support for Schools 2013-14.xlsx</p> <p>..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Ofsted Outcome Form1314 template.docx</p> <p>..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Post Inspection Record of Actions V4.docx</p> <p>..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\SEF and RAP 2013 - 2014.docx</p> <p>..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\School Improvmt Record Primary 2013 2014.doc</p> <p>Example of a letter inviting school to</p>
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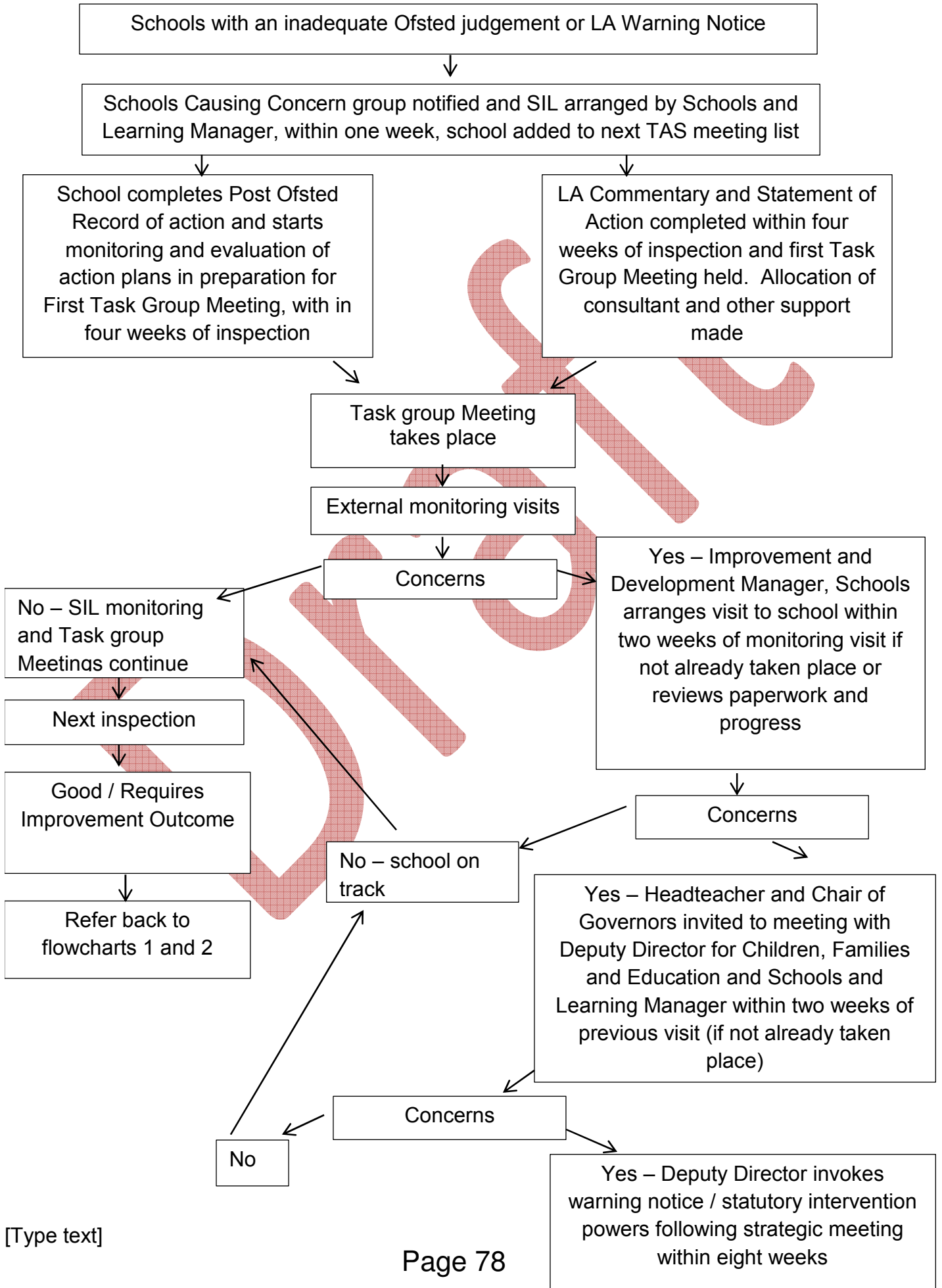
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SCHOOL SUPPORT FLOWCHART 2



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<p>High Level Support Schools – see School Support Flowchart 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This phase includes Ofsted category schools of Special Measures and Significant Improvement or serious concerns that they may fall into an Ofsted category of concern. - The following features are likely : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • below or close to floor standards • little or no sustained improvement over time. • a record of more than two successive satisfactory/requires improvement Ofsted judgements • significantly low attainment Value Added and/or rates of conversion • weak/ineffective leadership and management • inadequate learning and teaching • lack of compliance with statutory obligations • difficulty in recruitment and retention of staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persistent poor behaviour and attendance • significant under performance of particular individuals and groups • concerns over safeguarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual data analysis following statutory tasks and tests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LA Commentary and Statement of Action submitted within 10 days of the publication of the Ofsted report. - The SIL will advise the school and governors on the effectiveness of the SIP in identifying priorities to raise standards. -The SIL will be the external adviser to the governors for the headteacher’s Appraisal. - Tailored support available to secure swift and significant improvement. This may include the support of other schools, headteachers, NLEs/LLEs etc. - A commissioned allocation of SIL/OCC colleagues support time between 10 and 30 days annually comprising both off-site preparation/reporting and on-site activity. More support can be purchased by school.. - Consideration of replacing the GB with and IEB - A Task Group established, chaired by IDM and senior SILs to monitor improvement, co-ordinate support and ensure everyone remains focused on areas requiring improvement. - Six weekly Team Around the School (TAS) meetings are held to secure appropriate support from all teams. - Ofsted updates and briefing available via the intranet. All schools receive a phone call from a SIL when inspection is announced and the SIL will speak to the Lead Inspector (LI). Attendance at feedback is mandatory. 	<p>The SIL will monitor the impact of the school’s implementation of its SIP at least every 6 weeks and update the SIR for the school as required, reporting to the IDM.</p> <p>School data analysis and HMI monitoring visit reports will feed into the overall monitoring schedule and will regularly be reported to the Director for Children’s Services and elected members.</p> <p>Independent reviews will be commissioned to confirm judgements, school progress rates and the impact of county council interventions and support as required.</p> <p>The Deputy Director for Children and Schools and Learning Manager will meet with identified headteachers and chairs of governors to provide additional challenge where progress is slow.</p> <p>If appropriate the Deputy Director invokes a Warning Notice under the Education & Inspections Act 2006.</p> <p>Potential use of sponsor explored to secure improvement</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SIR</p> <p style="text-align: center;">..\\For Sept13onwards\\SIL Paperwork 13-14\\Primary SIL's HT Appraisal (A & B) 2013-2014.doc</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HYPERLINKS TO ALL OF THESE PLUS LIF</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Statutory guidance on schools causing concern.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IEB application forms.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence forms for issuing a performance, standards and safety warning notice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Secretary of State’s powers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ofsted inspection guidance on schools in a category.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Significant improvement timeline.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Special measures timeline.</p>
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SCHOOL SUPPORT FLOWCHART 3



[Type text]

Section E Use of data and strategic intelligence to measure impact of interventions

1. Generic overview of all schools

A monthly school data meeting takes place between the Schools and Learning manager and the Performance and Information manager to secure a clear county wide picture in relation to the current Ofsted outcomes. The data set produced secures a clear picture to include:

- The proportion of schools that have been judged good or outstanding
- The number of pupils taught in good or outstanding schools
- The proportion of schools in an adverse Ofsted category
- The number of schools in an adverse category that are not making progress

The data set enables the county to evidence the impact of any support and intervention which may have contributed to the outcomes. Termly tables showing the movement of schools which have been inspected are produced enabling the Improvement and Development manager to work with School Intervention Leaders to reprioritise interventions for static schools or those who have received a worse judgement than previous inspection.

Statistical First Release data, validated information regarding Key Stage results and government announcements re school monitoring will also be reviewed at this stage to determine whether a reprioritisation of school support is required and to reflect on the generic interventions which may have impacted on identified groups such as looked After Children..

2. Schools causing concern

Termly Team Around the School (TAS) meetings

These meetings are coordinated by the Improvement and Development manager for schools and involve all service providers working with a group of schools identified for discussion. The interventions being delivered in each school are evaluated and further actions identified. Actions include:

- Task Group to monitor progress in underperforming schools
- Governance review
- Local Leader of Education (LLE) deployment
- Specific themed schools reviews EG, SEND, behaviour
- Identified support from specialised programmes from Primary consultants to address underperformance in maths and English

Monthly Schools Causing Concern meeting

The focus of these meetings is to review the actions taken each month and to reflect upon any HMI visits, Ofsted updates and Notes of Visits from School Intervention Leaders and related support services. Decisions can be made about allocation of funding, deployment of officers and the identification of best practice schools that could offer school to school support for identified schools. We are very keen to examine the impact of each intervention to ensure we get best value for money and accelerate the rates of progress.

We have recently begun working with the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance (OTSA) to develop school intelligence based in the 9 Oxfordshire localities. The Local Authority intelligence on school leadership can inform the way schools staff can examine local solutions to school improvement and build upon the capacity of the LA support offer.

There are termly feedback sessions on schools causing concern to the Deputy Director for Education effectiveness and Early Intervention and to the elected member responsible for education.

Glossary

EY	Early Years
HMI	Her Majesty’s Inspectorate
IDM	Improvement and Development Manager
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA	Local Authority
LIF	Leadership Intervention Framework
LIPS	Leadership of Initiatives & Partnerships in Schools
LLEs	Local Leaders of Education
NLEs	National Leaders of Education
NLGs	National Leaders of Governance
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PIR	Post Inspection Report
SIL	School Intervention Leaders
SIR	School Improvement Record
SIP	School Improvement Plan
S&LS	Schools & Learning Service
SCC	Schools Causing Concern
SDA	Service Delivery Agreement
SDACS	Service Delivery Agreement – Commissioned Specification
SEN	Special Educational Need
SIAPD	Service Level Agreements
SLE	Specialist Leaders of Education
TAS	Team Around the School
TSA	Teaching School Alliance



Appendices

The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement

The framework for inspecting local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement responsible for schools and for the wider education of children and young people in England under section 135 and section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Age group: 0-19

Published: May 2013

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Contents

Preface	6
Introduction	8
What is the purpose of inspection?	8
How does inspection promote improvement?	8
Inspection policy and principles	10
What is the statutory basis for the inspection?	10
What determines the timing of an inspection?	12
Who carries out the inspection?	12
What will be inspected?	13
What grading will inspectors use when making judgements	14
What happens during the inspection?	14
What happens after the inspection?	18

Preface

This framework constitutes the basis for the inspections of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement in schools, and the education of children and young people, from May 2013. These arrangements have not been inspected by Ofsted and other inspectorates since 2004/05, when the former local education authority (LEA) inspections by Ofsted were replaced by joint area reviews.

The reintroduction of inspection aims to assist local authorities in their duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in schools and other education and training providers so that all children and young people benefit from at least a good education.

This new inspection framework will be implemented using Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI's) powers to carry out an inspection of the performance of a particular local authority function as set out in section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Specifically, HMCI can use this power to inspect how well the local authority is fulfilling its general duty to promote high standards and fulfilment by every child of their educational potential as set out in section 13A of the Education Act 1996.

Reports of the findings of an Ofsted inspection under section 136 may be of assistance to the Secretary of State in the use of powers under part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which enables the Secretary of State to effect swift improvement in the local authority's exercise of its functions and to the improvement of educational performance in the area.

HMCI's Annual Report 2011/12 drew national attention to the marked inequality of access by children and young people to a good education across England. This inequality can limit the life chances of children and young people. This framework acknowledges that the role of local authorities has changed in relation to schools and for those 14-19-year-olds attending a college where these sit outside of local authority control. However, local authorities still have an important statutory duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential.

From January 2013, Ofsted has a more focused regional presence. This enables closer scrutiny of local education arrangements and provides greater support for schools and other education providers. This inspection framework will act as a powerful lever for improvement in helping to challenge inconsistencies and will enable Ofsted to report more rigorously on the contribution of local authorities to improving education in England.

Inspection will not be universal. We will inspect only where concerns about performance are apparent or where requested to do so by the Secretary of State. Where inspections are undertaken they will report on the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the local authority functions for promoting improvement in relation to education. We believe this will help local authorities to improve their own performance in

supporting and challenging schools, and other providers as relevant, in order to raise standards for all children and young people.

We will introduce these new inspection arrangements from 1 June 2013.

Sir Michael Wilshaw

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills

Introduction

What is the purpose of inspection?

1. The inspection of a local authority provides an independent external evaluation of how well it carries out its statutory duties in relation to promoting high standards in schools and among other providers so that children and young people achieve well and fulfil their potential as defined by section 13A of the Education Act 1996. This includes support for schools causing concern as set out in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
2. Ofsted inspections of local authorities perform four essential functions and lead to a published report of findings that:
 - provides parents¹, elected council members, schools and other providers and those who lead and manage the local authority with an assessment of how well the local authority is performing in supporting and challenging its schools and other providers to improve
 - provides information for the Secretary of State for Education about how well the local authority is performing its role in promoting high standards, ensuring equality of access to opportunity, fulfilling children's potential and providing support to schools causing concern²
 - promotes improvement in the local authority, its schools, children and young people and the education system more widely
 - requires the local authority to consider the actions that it should take in the light of the report and prepare a written statement setting out those actions and the timetable for them.

How does inspection promote improvement?

3. Inspection acts in the interests of children, young people, their parents and employers. It encourages high-quality provision and outcomes that meet diverse needs and foster equal opportunities. Ofsted is required to carry out its functions in ways that encourage those it inspects and regulates to improve, be user-focused and be efficient and effective in the use of resources.³ By inspecting and reporting, Ofsted will ensure that the local authority is able to consider the steps that need to be taken to effect improvement and set out formally the actions it intends to take to achieve this.

¹ The term 'parents' refers to mothers, fathers and/or carers.

² Under section 118 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

³ Under sections 117(1) and 119(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

4. Inspection supports improvement by:
- raising expectations about the standards of performance and effectiveness expected of local authorities in supporting and challenging educational provision in a local authority area
 - identifying good or better practice so that it can be shared more widely
 - providing a sharp challenge and the impetus to act where improvement is needed
 - recommending specific priorities for improvement and, when appropriate, checking on subsequent progress
 - promoting rigour in the way that local authorities evaluate their own performance, enhancing their capacity to improve their functions.

Local authority inspections will:

- support and promote improvement by:
 - reporting on whether or not local authority strategies, support and challenge for schools and other providers are effective in raising standards
 - identifying the weakest local authorities, providing challenge and support to elected members, senior leaders, school and other provision improvement staff as relevant, and those responsible for supporting governance in schools
 - explaining and discussing inspection findings with those whose work has been inspected
 - identifying precise actions to underpin recommendations
 - adjusting the focus of inspection to have the greatest impact
- be proportionate by:
 - inspecting where concerns are raised through inspection outcomes for individual schools and other providers, or groups of schools and other providers, or through other means
 - adjusting the frequency of inspection, having regard to any previous inspection outcomes and risk assessment
 - deploying resources where improvement is needed, or where inspection can add value
- focus on the needs of children and young people by:
 - drawing on the views of those that lead and manage the schools and other providers, to inform inspectors' judgements and the outcomes of inspection
 - taking account of relevant views expressed by users

- evaluating the extent to which local authorities foster an inclusive and aspirational environment, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training in schools and other providers that meets the needs of all pupils
- focus on the needs of local authorities by:
 - making use, as far as possible, of the existing data, documentation and systems of a local authority area and avoiding placing unnecessary burdens on them
 - taking account of any self-evaluation by the local authority
- be transparent and consistent by:
 - making clear and transparent judgements based on sound evidence
 - inspecting and reporting with integrity
 - having clear, brief evaluation criteria, procedures and guidance that are well understood by local authorities and other users and that are readily available
- be accountable by:
 - reporting the findings of inspection without fear or favour
 - publishing clear, accurate, timely letters that report independently on the effectiveness of the education functions of the local authority
 - gathering the views of schools and other stakeholders, and those who have a significant interest in the local authority, to inform inspection
- demonstrate value for money by:
 - targeting inspection resources and deploying them effectively and efficiently
 - evaluating the outcomes and processes of inspection and making improvements where necessary.

Inspection policy and principles

What is the statutory basis for the inspection?

5. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes provision for the Chief Inspector to inspect the overall performance by any local authority of particular functions that are within the Chief Inspector's remit.
6. This framework applies to all local authorities responsible for schools and other education providers in England who have a legal duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in relation to their relevant education functions under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The general duty for local authorities to promote high standards of education is set out under section 13A of the Education Act 1996, as follows:

'Duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential

(1) A [Local Authority] in England must ensure that their relevant education functions and their relevant training functions are (so far as they are capable of being so exercised) exercised by the authority with a view to—

- (a) promoting high standards,
- (b) ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training, and
- (c) promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom this subsection applies.

(2) Subsection (1) applies to the following—

- (a) persons under the age of 20;
- (b) persons aged 20 or over but under 25 who are subject to learning difficulty assessment.

(5) In this section—

"education" and "training" have the same meanings as in section 15ZA;

"relevant education function", in relation to a [Local Authority] in England, means a function relating to the provision of education for—

- (a) persons of compulsory school age (whether at school or otherwise);
- (b) persons (whether at school or otherwise) who are over compulsory school age and to whom subsection (1) applies;
- (c) persons who are under compulsory school age and are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority;

"relevant training function" means a function relating to the provision of training.'

7. HMCI may inspect a local authority's education function at any time under section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This may happen, for example, where concerns are identified through the performance of individual schools and other providers or if Ofsted becomes aware of concerns about the standards of education of children and young people.
8. The reported findings of Ofsted's inspection may be of assistance to the Secretary of State in relation to his powers to effect swift improvement in the

local authority's exercise of its functions. The Secretary of State has powers to require HMCI to carry out an inspection of a local authority's education functions under s136(3).

What determines the timing of an inspection?

9. Ofsted does not intend to inspect all local authorities to a regular cycle or interval. Where inspections of schools or other providers, under either section 5 or section 8 of the Education Act 2005, raise concerns about the effectiveness of a local authority's education functions or where Ofsted becomes aware of other concerns, an inspection may be carried out.
10. In practice, this means that some local authorities may not be inspected at all, while others may be inspected more than once over a particular period.
11. HMCI may cause a local authority to be inspected, in relation to its support and challenge for schools and other providers, so that they improve, including where one or more of the following apply:
 - where the proportion of children who attend a good or better school, pupil referral unit and/or alternative provision is lower than that found nationally
 - where there is a higher than average number of schools in an Ofsted formal category of concern and/or there are indicators that progress of such schools is not securing rapid improvement
 - where there is a higher than average proportion of schools that have not been judged to be good by Ofsted
 - where attainment levels across the local authority are lower than that found nationally and/or where the trend of improvement is weak
 - where rates of progress, relative to starting points, are lower than that found nationally and/or where the trend of improvement is weak
 - where the volume of qualifying complaints to Ofsted about schools in a local authority area is a matter of concern
 - where the Secretary of State requires an inspection of local authority school improvement functions.
12. Notice of up to five days will normally be given and the purpose of the inspection, the powers under which it is carried out and the arrangements for reporting on the inspection will be sent in writing to the relevant local authority.

Who carries out the inspection?

13. All inspections will be led by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), employed directly by Ofsted, with at least one other inspector. HMI may be accompanied by other HMI (including Senior HMI) or Additional Inspectors.

14. All inspectors undertake regular training to ensure that they are familiar with changes in inspection frameworks, inspection methodology and developments in educational practice.
15. An inspection team will normally comprise of two HMI irrespective of the size of the local authority. However, where circumstances dictate, the team may be larger although Ofsted will not use any more inspectors than is required and will always seek to minimise disruption to the local authority and stakeholders during inspection.
16. Ofsted will also quality assure inspections by visiting a sample of local authority inspections during fieldwork and reviewing a sample of letters reporting inspection findings.

What will be inspected?

17. Ofsted will inspect the effectiveness of local authority education functions in promoting improvement, high standards and the fulfilment of educational potential of children and young people in schools. Ofsted recognises that the configuration of school improvement functions will be diverse and relevant to local circumstances. Ofsted has no fixed view on the configuration of such functions, but will focus on their impact and effectiveness. In particular, Ofsted will evaluate:
 - the effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement
 - the clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting schools' and other providers' improvement, and how clearly the local authority has defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles
 - the extent to which the local authority knows schools and other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need
 - the effectiveness of the local authority's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools, including, where applicable, the use of formal powers available to the local authority
 - the impact of local authority support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving
 - the extent to which the local authority brokers support for schools and other providers
 - the effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in schools and other providers
 - support and challenge for school governance, where applicable
 - the way the local authority uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is focused on areas of greatest need.

What grading will inspectors use when making judgements?

18. Inspections are not universal and are likely to be carried out only where a concern has been identified or where HMCI has received a request to inspect from the Secretary of State. Ofsted will not use the overall effectiveness grade descriptors of outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate to evaluate and report the effectiveness of the local authority support and challenge for schools and other providers.
19. In judging the local authority's effectiveness, inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements to support school improvement and identify the strengths and weaknesses of support and challenge for schools and other providers. The evaluation will take account of a local authority's statutory duties set out in section 13A of the Education Act 1996 and the key areas of focus as set out in paragraph 17 above, in so far as they are capable of being exercised.
20. In doing this, they consider all the evidence gathered to support the overarching judgement they will make on their effectiveness. Inspectors will consider and report on whether the arrangements are being exercised effectively or not. If it does not meet an acceptable standard, inspectors will consider whether or not the local authority requires re-inspection.

What happens during the inspection?

How many days do inspectors spend in the local authority?

21. Inspections do not normally last longer than five days, which in most cases will be consecutive. In some instances, inspections may be shorter, as concerns leading to the inspection and its circumstances will vary. In other instances, inspections may be extended in order to gather additional evidence.

How do inspectors use their time during the inspection?

22. Inspectors will spend their time gathering robust, first-hand evidence to inform their judgements. This will involve meeting with key leaders and other stakeholders, and scrutinising relevant written documentation and analysis of numerical and other data.

How is evidence recorded?

23. During the inspection, inspectors will gather, analyse and record evidence in an evidence notebook (EN) and note their judgements in a summary notebook (SN). Both notebooks are part of the evidence base for the inspection. The lead inspector is responsible for compiling and assuring the quality of the evidence base.

How are judgements secured?

24. The lead inspector has responsibility for ensuring that judgements about the local authority are collectively agreed by the inspection team and based on the guidance contained in the inspection handbook and that they are supported convincingly by recorded evidence. Inspectors will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the local authority school improvement functions and what it must do to improve. Emerging findings will be discussed with the nominee/senior officers at regular intervals and, where appropriate, other senior staff. The local authority will be given the opportunity to provide evidence, where it is relevant.
25. Final judgements will be made only when all evidence has been collected and considered. These judgements represent the corporate view of the inspection team. They will be subject to quality assurance before the report is published.

How do senior officers and senior staff engage in the inspection?

26. Inspection has the strongest impact on improvement when those inspected understand the evidence and findings that have led to the judgements and what it needs to do to improve. The lead inspector, therefore, will ensure that the senior officers and senior staff:
 - are kept up to date about the inspection
 - understand how the inspection team reaches its judgements
 - have opportunities to clarify how evidence is used to reach judgements
 - are given the opportunity to present evidence.
27. Senior officers will be invited to:
 - support the planning of the inspection
 - attend the formal inspection team meetings during the inspection
 - receive regular updates from the lead inspector

and, unless there are compelling reasons not to do so,

 - comment on the inspectors' recommendations to ensure that these are understood.
28. Participation in inspection activities, such as attendance at team meetings, will not be mandatory and senior officers/nominee may choose whether or not to accept.
29. The absence of the Director of Children's Services, or their equivalent, will not normally be grounds for the deferral of an inspection.

What is the code of conduct for inspectors?

30. Inspectors are required to uphold the highest professional standards in their work and to ensure that everyone they encounter during inspections is treated fairly and with respect. These standards are assured through a code of conduct, which is set out below.

Inspectors should:

- evaluate objectively, be impartial and inspect without fear or favour
- evaluate provision in line with frameworks, national standards or regulatory requirements
- base all evaluations on clear and robust evidence
- have no connection with the local authority that could undermine their objectivity
- report honestly and clearly, ensuring that judgements are fair and reliable
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy, respect and sensitivity
- endeavour to minimise the stress on those involved in the inspection
- act in the best interests and well-being of service users
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with those being inspected, and communicate judgements clearly and frankly
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about individuals and their work
- respond appropriately to reasonable requests
- take prompt and appropriate action on any safeguarding or health and safety issues.

31. When inspectors meet senior officers, elected members, school-based staff and governors or other stakeholders, every endeavour will be made to ensure that individuals and individual comments are not identified in the further exploration of issues or in the inspection report. However, there may be circumstances where it will not be possible to guarantee the anonymity of the interviewee, for example where a safeguarding issue is disclosed. Inspectors have a duty to pass on disclosures that raise child protection or safeguarding issues and/or where serious misconduct or potential criminal activity is involved.

How should local authority staff engage with inspectors?

32. To ensure that inspection is productive and beneficial, it is important that inspectors and local authorities establish and maintain an appropriate working relationship based on courtesy and professional behaviour. Ofsted expects senior officers, elected members or other stakeholders to:

- apply their own codes of conduct in their dealings with inspectors
- enable inspectors to conduct their visit in an open and honest way
- enable inspectors to evaluate the local authority objectively against the inspection framework
- provide evidence that will enable the inspectors to report honestly, fairly and reliably about their provision
- work with inspectors to minimise disruption, stress and bureaucracy
- ensure that the health and safety of inspectors is not prejudiced while they are on local authority premises
- maintain a purposeful dialogue with the inspectors
- draw any concerns about the inspection to the attention of inspectors promptly and in a suitable manner
- understand the need for inspectors to secure evidence and talk to staff and stakeholders without the presence of a senior officer.

What feedback do inspectors give to local authority staff during the inspection?

33. Inspectors will offer oral feedback on emerging inspection findings to senior officers and elected members in order to promote improvement. Constructive dialogue is essential between inspectors and local authority staff and particularly between the lead inspector and the Chief Executive or Director of Children’s Services and/or her/his representatives.

How is the quality of inspection assured?

34. Ofsted monitors the quality of inspections through a range of formal processes. Some local authorities may be visited by an HMI to check the quality of the inspection. Their assessments are confidential to the inspectors. As part of quality assurance, a sample of inspection evidence bases will be evaluated.
35. In the rare event that an inspection and/or inspection letter report are judged by Ofsted to be seriously flawed, the local authority will be notified that the inspection is incomplete and that a further visit may be necessary, to make sure that enough evidence is gathered to make the inspection judgements secure.

What feedback is provided to the local authority?

36. Before leaving the inspection, the lead inspector must ensure that the local authority is clear:
- about the relative strengths and weaknesses of functions for supporting and challenging schools and other providers
 - that the main points provided orally in the feedback will be referred to in the text of the report letter subject to quality assurance

- about the procedures leading to the publication of the report letter
 - where relevant, about the implications of the local authority being deemed to require re-inspection
 - about what to do if there are complaints.
37. After the inspection team has reached its conclusions, the draft judgements will be presented and briefly explained to senior representatives of the local authority. In some instances, inspectors may need to return to the local authority to provide oral feedback if there remains a need to consider evidence further. While any oral feedback should be consistent with the inspection findings, all final judgements will be subject to moderation and quality assurance by senior Ofsted staff.

What happens after the inspection?

The written reporting arrangements

38. Ofsted will publish the inspection findings in letter form, setting out briefly the context of the inspection, the evidence gathered, any strengths and weaknesses and areas recommended for improvement. Letters will constitute an inspection report under section 137 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
39. Ofsted will offer local authorities the opportunity to make factual accuracy comments on the report in line with other inspection remit reports.
40. Local authorities will be required to respond with a written statement setting out what action it proposes to take in light of the report of inspectors' findings and setting out a timetable for those actions. The local authority must publish the letter report and action plan.
41. Where there is evidence that the local authority is not exercising its functions effectively, or does not have adequate capacity to support schools and other providers to improve, the inspection findings will report this to the Secretary of State and Ofsted may arrange for a further inspection.

When is the report letter issued?

42. The report is normally sent to a local authority within 20 working days of the end of the inspection, and published on Ofsted's website within 25 working days of the end of the inspection.

43. A copy of the report is sent to:⁴
- the Chief Executive of the local authority
 - the Director of Children's Services in the local authority (or their equivalent) and the lead elected member for Children's Services in the local authority
 - the Secretary of State
 - other prescribed persons.

How do local authorities complain about their inspection or inspection report letter?

44. Any concerns that the local authority has about the inspection should be raised and, where possible, resolved with the lead inspector (and/or visiting inspector who is carrying out a quality assurance visit) during or as soon as possible after the inspection.
45. If it has not been possible to resolve concerns directly, then individuals or local authorities are able to lodge a formal complaint. The complaints procedures are available on Ofsted's website.⁵

Review and evaluation

46. This framework, the accompanying handbook for inspection and other inspection instruments will be evaluated and reviewed at the end of 2013 as set out in Ofsted's consultation report. The instruments will also be reviewed to ensure that the inspection process and methodology are aligned to any wider accountability systems.

⁴ Under sections 14(1) and 14(2) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended).

⁵ Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted (130128), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130128.

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13 May 2013

Mrs Lisa Christensen
Director of Children's Services
Norfolk County Council
Children's Services
County Hall
Norwich
NR1 2DL

Dear Lisa

Norfolk local authority focused inspections – 12 to 22 March 2013

Thank you for our meeting on 14 March 2013. It was a good opportunity to meet you and your senior team, to discuss Ofsted's new regional structure and to explain how we might provide support and challenge to help improve Norfolk's schools. You described to me Norfolk's developing strategy for school improvement 'A Good School for Every Norfolk Learner' that arises from your work with headteachers, governors and others. Thank you for letting me know that your Cabinet has since approved the strategy.

As you are aware from our discussion, Ofsted is focusing some of its section 5 school inspection activity in particular local authorities into concentrated periods. We are doing this in areas where we have concerns about the relatively low proportions of good and outstanding schools, and as such where too few pupils enjoy an acceptable standard of education. This approach, coupled with the outcomes of a telephone survey of a sample of school leaders about their perception of the support and challenge from the local authority, enables us to obtain a clearer picture of the education provided for children and young people in those areas.

I am writing to inform you of the outcomes of the school inspections and the survey carried out in Norfolk during the focused period of 12 to 22 March 2013.

Outline of inspection activities

Twenty eight schools were inspected as part of the focused inspection activity: two infant schools; two junior schools; 16 primary schools; seven secondary schools; and

one pupil referral unit (PRU). Twenty four of these schools were judged to be satisfactory at their last inspection, three were found to be good and one school had not been inspected before. The schools were located in three areas surrounding Norwich (17 schools), Great Yarmouth (6 schools) and King's Lynn (5 schools). These schools were selected for this exercise from all those due for inspection by the end of this academic year.

During the inspections, lead inspectors gathered information on the use, quality and impact of local authority support for school improvement by asking the following three additional key questions of headteachers and governors:

- How well does the local authority know your school, your performance and the standards your pupils achieve?
- What measures are in place to support and challenge your school and how do these meet the needs of your school?
- What is the impact of the local authority support and challenge over time to help your school improve?

A further 21 schools were surveyed by telephone during the focused inspection period. These included one nursery school, ten primary schools, eight secondary schools and two special schools. These schools were selected randomly from the county's good and outstanding schools: nine were outstanding and 12 were judged to be good at their last inspection. Headteachers in these schools were asked the same three questions and a fourth, which reflected their status as good or outstanding schools:

- How well is the local authority making use of your schools' strengths to help others improve?

Inspection and survey outcomes

Of the 28 schools inspected as part of the focused inspection activity:

- one improved from being judged good at its previous inspection to be judged outstanding this time
- nine schools were judged to be good, including the PRU which had not been inspected previously; two schools sustained this outcome from the previous inspection, six improved from satisfactory
- 12 schools were judged to require improvement; previously these were all judged to be satisfactory
- six schools declined in their overall effectiveness; all were placed into special measures.

It is of considerable concern that, while six of the 24 schools previously judged satisfactory have improved and are now good, of the remaining 18 schools, six have declined and become inadequate, and 12 have not improved their inspection grades.

This will be worrying to parents and carers, and means that the pupils in these schools continue not to have access to a good quality of education.

Responses to the key survey questions asked of those schools inspected during the focused period and those contacted by telephone were analysed.

A summary of the findings is set out below.

Strengths

- Inspection evidence has provided individual examples where the local authority has intervened successfully in schools that were previously declining and so vulnerable to becoming inadequate. The support provided to strengthen and stabilise senior leadership and governance appears to have been particularly effective.
- The impact of the local authority's work is most evident where constructive and well-established relationships exist between schools and their Intervention Advisers and Improvement Advisers, and where the headteacher has actively sought support that is targeted well at key priorities.
- Governors are generally positive about the support provided by the local authority, particularly in relation to their statutory duties. Some have benefited from a range of training provided to enable them to fulfil their roles more effectively.
- Most schools are positive about the impact of support from the county's Human Resources service in managing staff redundancies and underperformance.

Areas for development

- The survey responses suggest that the local authority has not established a well understood, strategic approach to building a sustainable model for school improvement. Not all schools are aware of the long-term strategic direction for education in the local authority, although they do have a clear understanding of the protocols that determine the level of local authority support. Furthermore, it is unclear how the local authority evaluates the impact of its challenge and support on promoting improvement.

- Although a number of examples of programmes to improve teaching were given by different schools, the local authority does not appear to have communicated to schools a clear, coordinated strategy to improve the quality of teaching.
- The local authority makes decisions about the type and extent of support a school receives on the basis of a risk assessment that includes an analysis of available performance data and discussions with the school about pupil performance. Through these assessments, many of the schools inspected were identified as requiring 'light touch support'. A frequent response from headteachers and governors was that the local authority officers accept too readily the data and school's self-evaluation, and do not provide sufficient challenge. In a small number of schools, this lack of challenge has meant that the local authority has not intervened early enough, for example, where there has been a decline in standards.
- Support provided by the local authority for those schools found to require special measures has not been effective. Known weaknesses and barriers to progress were not tackled soon enough. Local authority officers have been too accepting of the school's self-evaluation and reached an over-generous view of performance. Some inspection evidence suggests that the local authority withdraws its support too quickly before improvement has become embedded.
- Partnership working is not well established between schools, although federations and cluster arrangements are developing. A number of good or outstanding schools referred to the local authority instigating and commissioning support from them for other schools. Schools would welcome the local authority playing a more strategic role in this, especially in terms of ensuring consistency in the quality of such support. Although there is some strong evidence of improvement in some schools, not all appear to be committed to a collaborative approach of working together. It is perceived that an opportunity has been missed by the local authority to develop a strong learning community where best practice can be shared routinely. However, the local authority is hopeful that it's recently adopted strategy, 'A Good School for Every Norfolk Learner', will help to address this.
- Where headteachers have not been proactive in seeking well-focused support, and this has gone unchallenged by the local authority, the schools have not improved.

- In a small number of schools, significant weaknesses in governance over time have not been tackled with sufficient urgency or rigour by the local authority.
- Responses to the telephone survey from good and outstanding schools indicate that too many schools think that structural change, for example amalgamation or federation, is the only local authority solution to improving weak schools.

In summary, Norfolk schools do not articulate a clear enough understanding of the local authority's strategy for school improvement. There is a wide divergence of opinion amongst schools about the quality and impact of support and challenge provided by the local authority. Some value its role in helping them to bring about improvement, but others are clear that improvements in teaching and achievement have not been as a result of support or challenge from the local authority, or indeed a coordinated, strategic approach to promoting school to school support.

The proportion of good or better schools has risen in Norfolk this year, albeit at a slower rate than seen nationally. However, the weak outcomes of the focused inspection activity and the key areas for development identified by the survey, demonstrate that there is an urgent need for the local authority to provide greater challenge and support to the county's schools in order to bring about sustained improvement.

I hope these observations are useful as you seek to improve further the quality of education for the children and young people of Norfolk.

Please pass on my thanks to the headteachers, governors and local authority officers who gave their time to talk with our inspectors during the focused inspection period. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss the outcomes of this work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Harford".

Sean Harford HMI
Regional Director, East of England

cc Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education

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Division(s): N/A

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CABINET – 15 OCTOBER 2013

EXTERNALISATION PROPOSALS FOR OCS & CEF SERVICES

Report by the Director for Environmental Services

INTRODUCTION

1. Following the completion of soft market testing, this paper is intended to update Cabinet on the outcomes and to consider recommendations for the future direction of Oxfordshire Customer Services (OCS) and Children, Education and Families (CEF) services.

BACKGROUND

2. Proposals for the externalisation of a range of back office services provided by OCS plus the Schools and Learning Service and the Foundation Years Services provided by CEF were considered by Cabinet in July 2013.
3. There are serious concerns over the continuing viability of in-house back office services and support services for schools.
4. Cabinet has agreed that maintaining the status quo is no longer possible. Cabinet agreed that following Soft Market testing, updated proposals for the scope of externalisation, potential new delivery models and decisions on procurement should be brought to a future cabinet meeting – now scheduled for 15th October.
5. Soft market testing with a range of national providers and with a number of local providers has now been completed.

KEY POINTS FROM PROVIDERS IN SOFT MARKET TESTING

- 1.1 A timeline beginning in Autumn 2013 to deliver new delivery models for April 2015 is very feasible.
- 1.2 There will be market interest in all the service areas currently in scope.
- 1.3 With one exception, it is unlikely that providers will compete for all the service areas under consideration.
- 1.4 The most viable local interest appears to be in the Skills and Learning area.

- 1.5 Providers see Corporate Back-Office services as outsourcing opportunities and are highly unlikely to consider joint ventures. Joint Ventures for Corporate Back-Office services are a thing of the past.
- 1.6 Providers are more inclined to consider our current CEF Schools and Learning Service, Foundation Years Service and Skills and Learning for joint ventures.
- 1.7 Providers acknowledged that the Council has already reduced costs and taken a range of savings and that further savings will be required.
- 1.8 Providers were clear that without schools engaged as active participants and contributors in the areas that affect them, throughout the procurement process, future delivery models cannot succeed.
- 1.9 The Council needs to have a clear view of the Strategic client to be retained and the outputs and outcomes required of any service provider.
- 1.10 In broad terms, providers will deliver savings and efficiencies by end to end process re-engineering, introducing further automation, economies of scale and eliminating posts to reduce costs.
- 1.11 Providers expressed greatest confidence in delivering savings (up to 30% of current operational costs) if they were able to run Corporate back-office HR and Finance (including Procure to Pay) services.
- 1.12 Competitive Dialogue is likely lead to better outcomes than a restricted process.

Further Learning Points

6. Whilst discussion took place with a range of national and local providers, further information has also been gathered.
7. More work has been completed internally to clearly identify and validate current running costs and overhead costs. Individual services have been subject to further review and analysis in terms of service specifications and key performance indicators.
8. Work has continued with other Councils to ascertain their experience of the procurement process, the scope of externalisation and their views on delivery models. It is clear that a large number of Councils are faced with the same issues as Oxfordshire and are taking similar journeys.

Further learning points have emerged as follows:

- 1.13 The savings requirement for OCS (£3 Million from 2015/16) cannot be met if current service delivery models are maintained

- 1.14 The scope for savings from supplies and services is severely limited. To deliver savings on the scale required can only be found through a significant reduction in posts. Post reductions could be mitigated by TUPE to some degree but will still play a large part in business change driven by any external partner in any service delivery model.
- 1.15 Service commissioning in ICT will reach 50% of the current budget by the end of this financial year.
- 1.16 There is continuing concern over the suitability of SAP as a financial system for Primary schools in particular.
- 1.17 There is a lack of understanding about the mutual dependency of Corporate and School Back office HR and Finance services. They share common processes, the same central system and functional teams. Future consultation with schools needs to highlight this dependency.
- 1.18 Discussions with other County Councils have allowed us to examine 2 different models for continuing access to services schools need

Scope of Externalisation and Procurement

9. In Soft Market testing, providers confirmed that services currently in scope were sensible and there would be market interest. Several were keen to see a greater range of services on the basis that greater volume and scale would create better opportunities for savings and for a commercial return.
10. However, for the Council, this view needs to be balanced against the need to ensure continuing control and accountability.
11. Internal discussion has now led to most of HR services now being in scope and for inclusion of commissioning as well as delivery for Skills and Learning..
12. Further reconfiguration of Schools and Learning may lead to inclusion of the Virtual School. There are different potential solutions for the Music Service.
13. The scope for externalisation by lot as follows:
 - OCS Corporate Back Office Services
 - OCS School Back Office Services
 - CEF Schools & Learning/Foundation Years (this **includes** out-county Outdoor Learning and **excludes** Hill End, Meadowbrook, the Hospital School and the Music Service)
 - Oxfordshire Learning & Skills
14. Note that an exercise is currently underway to externalise Occupational Health from 1st January 2014 and the Staff Care Service at a later point in 2014 (as previously reported due to current contracts expiring and staff changes).

15. Through soft market testing we have established that whilst there are advantages to a single provider, only one supplier we spoke with would have an interest in all the lots we might offer. Likewise, it is very unlikely that the Council would end up with a single delivery model.
16. It is most likely that the Council will arrive at a position where there is more than one provider and more than one delivery model.

Proposed Direction for Each Potential Lot

OCS Corporate Back Office Services

17. **ICT Business Delivery** is already subject to considerable change that is being managed internally and will lead to 50% of the service being fully commissioned by April 2014. There is no real advantage to the Council in having ICT considered alongside HR & Financial transactional services. It is proposed that the reshaping of ICT and extension of commissioning should continue as an internally managed programme.
18. **HR & Financial Services** provide very little opportunity for further improvement or additional savings using the current delivery model.. This is the most mature part of the market place for both the private and public sector and outsourcing in some form is the only real option. Our view is that the Council should seek a fully outsourced service from one of the national providers which could see cost reductions of between 20 and 30%.
19. **OCS School Back Office Services** could be linked in a procurement exercise with Corporate back office (5.1) or with Schools and Learning/Foundation Years services (5.3) but the £2.5M trading position will not be attractive in its own right.
20. Schools value HR services most and as with other school related services below, they are most unlikely to participate in an outsourced solution.

CEF Schools & Learning/Foundation Years

21. Pure outsourcing is not the market preference and is also very unlikely to be supported by schools and settings locally. The most likely options are **either** a joint venture with a national provider **or** new public sector providers established by other Councils acting with local schools..
22. Engagement and discussion with local school organisations has started and market feedback and that of other Councils suggests that the active participation and commitment of schools will be essential to any option. There has not yet been any active participation of early years providers other than nursery schools. The externalisation of the Foundation Years Service is dependent on other strategic decisions due to the service being funded by a finite and reducing Dedicated Schools Grant.

CEF Music Service

23. There are Trust options that can be considered:
 - As a trust where the service operates independently from the Local Authority.
 - Joining an existing trust arrangement.
24. **Oxfordshire Skills & Learning** is really a 2 part business where there is opportunity for continuing local delivery.
25. **Oxfordshire County Council skills and learning** requirements is already largely externally sourced and the few remaining areas of direct delivery should take the same route using local Oxfordshire providers where possible. Some skills/learning is currently delivered free of charge by in-house staff to social care providers in Oxfordshire and this needs to be reconsidered
26. **Community Learning and Workforce (former Adult Learning activity). This activity is, by and large, funded by the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency.** One choice would be to simply stop delivering these services, however taking that choice would deliver no real savings.. The other choice would be to construct a joint venture partnership and we know there is interest from national and local providers. The Joint Venture could also include the residual skills and learning activity for the Council. A Joint Venture would reduce the Council's risk and costs (from redundancies) and would be more likely to safeguard national funding (SFA/EFA) for Oxfordshire.
27. Whichever route is taken, there is an operational need to reduce the number of centres used for delivery in order to maintain service viability. This is still work in progress.

Maintaining a Strategic Client Function

28. Soft market testing provided a number of examples where Councils have taken quite different approaches to the strategic client function, contract monitoring and provider accountability. The Council now has considerable experience to draw upon from joint commissioning in S&CS to a range of high profile contracts running elsewhere in the Council.
29. At this stage, our view is that where services are to be commissioned, the strategic client function to be retained for each service area has to be part of the planning process. Likewise, best practice here and elsewhere points to the need for a dedicated OCC staffed unit to monitor and manage and to ensure continuing value for money. This will need to be quantified and costed.

Financial and HR Implications

30. Total current budget of services in scope is £25 Million, comprising £17 Million from OCS and £8 Million from CEF.

31. Approximately 526 FTE are in scope comprising 306 FTE in OCS and 196 FTE in CEF. Because of part-time working, this represents in excess of 600 staff.
32. £750,000 has already been agreed by council to support the Externalisation programme through to April 2015. Given the multiple strands to the programme, further costs may be incurred and a definitive position will be reported back to Cabinet in December 2013.
33. Soft market testing has confirmed that externalisation of the services in scope should yield annual seven figure savings but the final position will not be clear until a procurement process is complete. Key to this will be the service specifications that will be developed over the next 3 month period and whether services continue as now or are required to stop in whole or in part.
34. It is clear that from April 2015, there will be fewer posts in these services. Until the procurement process is complete, it is not possible to estimate how many of the 600+ staff in scope will transfer from the Council to employment by other providers. Equally, we cannot be clear at this stage, how many staff redundancies could result. We will seek to minimise redundancies but they are likely to occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS

35. **The Cabinet is requested to endorse the following recommendations:**
 - (a) **a single major procurement exercise with multiple lots should be undertaken, commencing January 2014 to address the following requirements:**
 - (i) **a fully outsourced service to replace existing back office Corporate facing HR and Finance Back office services;**
 - (ii) **a joint venture with a national private provider OR another public sector provider to cover school back office, Schools and Learning and Foundation Years support from April 2015 –subject to (3) below;**
 - (iii) **skills and learning requirements should be sourced locally if possible but otherwise we should seek a joint venture with a national provider;**
 - (b) **ICT should continue as an in-house service with the expectation that work to re-shape ICT will continue and thereby, ultimately, the majority of the service requirements will be commissioned;**
 - (c) **final decisions about schools back office and CEF services should be taken in December after there has been an opportunity during the Autumn to shape proposals with Headteachers, Governors, Schools Forum and other stakeholders. Proposals should include arrangements for school representatives to participate directly in the major procurement exercise to begin in January 2014;**
 - (d) **trust options for the future of the Music Service should be considered in consultation with stakeholders during the Autumn**

with a proposed direction of travel to be considered by Cabinet in December;

- (e) The remaining in-house delivery to meet the Council's own skills/learning needs should cease and all future requirements should be commissioned as necessary;**
- (f) discussion should be opened now with local Oxfordshire providers first with a view to externalising qualification based learning and to determine the future of the remaining skills and learning provision.**

GRAHAM SHAW

Deputy Director, Oxfordshire Customer Services

FRANCES CRAVEN

Deputy Director, Children, Education & Families

October 2013

Glossary

Outsourced - the whole transfer of a business process to another provider, involving the transfer of staff and typically for a finite period of time

Joint Venture – 2 or more parties establish a new entity, jointly resourced and controlled to deliver agreed outcomes. Shared revenues, costs and risks.

Annex A – Supportive Information

National provider meetings and their primary interest(s) in OCC services

Provider	Back Office	School Improvement	Skills & Learning
A	✓		
B	✓		
C	✓	✓	✓
D	✓	✓	
E	✓		
F	✓		
G	✓		
H		✓	
I		✓	✓
J		✓	

44 Oxfordshire Based SMEs were invited to the local event with the following finally attending:

Provider	Back Office	School Improvement	Skills & Learning
K	✓		
L	✓		
M	✓		
N)	✓		
O			✓
P			✓
Q		✓	

New models of delivery to schools advanced by two Local Authorities

One Local Authority has a school based company where schools have shares in the company. The Board consists of mainly of schools with LAs reps. The services that are located in this are those that contribute to the School Improvement agenda, including Schools HR and Finance. There is a recognition of the broad range of statutory functions that exist for the LA and the delivery of this is commissioned from the school company.

The other Local Authority has established a user-led Trust. The LA is giving the trust a grant and in five years time the service will go out to the market. The services that are included in this Trust are about direct services to schools but do not include the back office services.

Oxfordshire Skills and Learning

Community Learning and Social Inclusion

Creative
Healthy Living
Modern Foreign Languages
English and Maths
GCSEs
ESOL
Family Learning
£3.425m
)

Workforce

Apprenticeships
Traineeships
Vocational Qualifications
NEETs
IAG
£1.15m
)

OCC Workforce Training Plan

Management Development
Staff Development
Career Coaching
ICT
Health and Safety
Social Work / Care Development
)

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Division(s): Children, young people and families

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 14 NOVEMBER 2013

A REPORT FOR EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON THE PROVISIONAL GCSE RESULTS IN OXFORDSHIRE MAINTAINED SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Report by Sue Bainbridge, Schools and Learning Manager

N.B. This is an amended and up-dated version of the report which previously came to Committee on the 19 September 2013. Amendments and up-dated information is shown marked in italic print.

Introduction

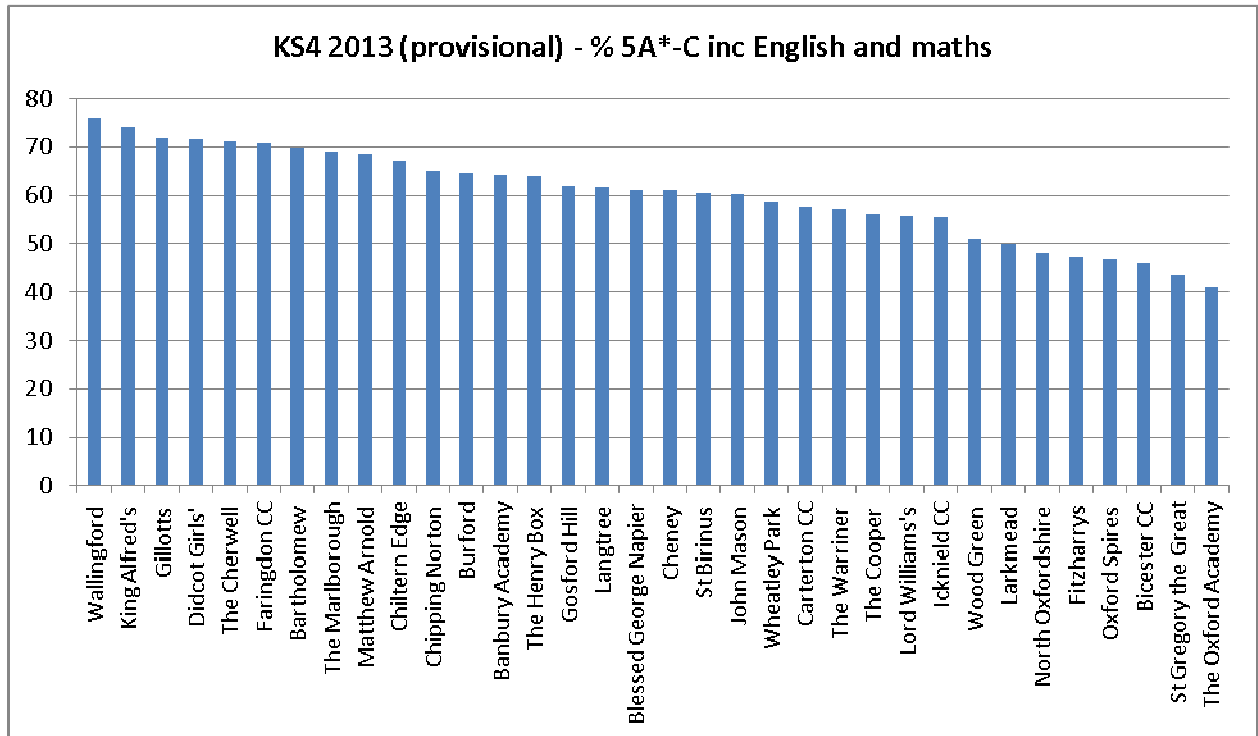
1. GCSE results were provided to the Local Authority by schools and academies on Thursday the 22nd August. All 34 schools provided their results to show the percentage of pupils who gained 5A* to C with English and mathematics. Many schools provided more detailed information regarding other indicators as shown on the spreadsheet at appendix 1.
2. *Please note the Local Authority now has access to updated Key Stage 4 results from EPAS (online educational attainment and achievement performance analysis tool). This data still remains provisional until the Performance Tables are published in January 2014 and so do not take into account any discounted pupils or re-marks that may have taken place during the summer.*

Headline results showing the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and maths

3. *Following the publication of the Statistical First Release (SFR) for Key Stage 4 in October figures show that provisionally 60.3% of Oxfordshire pupils achieved 5A*-C GCSE's including English and maths – this is an increase from 57.9% in 2012.*
4. There is a large variation in results across Oxfordshire schools. The school with the highest percentage of pupils achieving 5A* to C with English and maths is Wallingford with 76%. This figure has been maintained from 2012. Oxford Academy however have the lowest percentage of pupils with 41% achieving 5A* to C with English and maths. Although this result is low, it is an improvement of 50% on the outcome for 2012 which was 26%. *Provisionally, no Oxfordshire primary schools are below floor standards (ie. minimum standards that the Government expects schools to meet).*

5. Table 1 shows the range of performance.

Table 1



Comparisons with 2012 results for 5A* to C with English and maths

- 6. Appendix 2 shows a summary outline of the results by school. Schools highlighted in green have improved, orange shows schools that have remained the same since last year, and those highlighted pink have decreased in performance.
- 7. 20 out of the 34 Oxfordshire schools (59%) have shown an increase in performance this year – most noticeably Henry Box (up 20%pts) and Chipping Norton (up 19%pts).
- 8. 2 schools remained the same – Wallingford (76%) and Gillotts (72%).
- 9. 12 schools showed a decrease in performance compared with last year. Most noticeably, *The Cooper School, North Oxfordshire Academy and Oxford Spire Academy are all down 11%pts.*
- 10. Further work will need to be done to examine the results over time once the next set of validated data is *returned in January 2014.*

Oxfordshire schools performance in English and maths

11. There has been a greater focus on improvements in English and maths across all phases over the last 10 years. The key indicator at GCSE now measures 5A* to C's with English and maths included. However for those schools where we currently have all of their provisional data sets, some show big differences in the percentage of children achieving 5A* to C with English and maths and those without both English and maths included.
12. Schools to note are:
 - *The Oxford Academy – 42%pt difference (83% 5A*-C and 41% 5A*-C with E/M)*
 - *North Oxfordshire Academy – 41%pt difference (89% 5A*-C and 48% 5A*-C with E/M)*
 - *The Cooper School – 34%pt difference (90% 5A*-C and 56% 5A*-C with E/M)*
13. Further analysis will be carried out within subjects and across different pupil groups.

English (%A*-C)

14. There is a wide variation in English results especially for boys.
15. Across all schools and all pupils the biggest variation in English results is from
 - Faringdon at 84% to St Gregory's 47%.
 - Focusing on boys' English results, the greatest variation is Faringdon 83% to
 - St Gregory's 35%
 - Focusing on girls' English results, the greatest variation is from Gillotts at 91% to *The Oxford Academy* 56%
16. *Girls outperform boys in all schools except Faringdon Community College (9%pts), Oxford Spires Academy (3%pts) and The Marlborough School (4%pts).*
17. *Greatest gender differences:*
 - *Icknield School* 26%pts difference (girls 74%, boys 48%)
 - *St Gregory's* 24%pts difference (girls 59%, boys 35%)
 - *Bicester Community College* 22%pts difference (girls 65%, boys 43%)
 - *The Warriner* 23%pts difference (girls 76%, boys 53%)
18. Across core subjects further analysis will be carried out with regards to other pupil groups, for example, those on free school meals and with English as an additional language to look at trends in performance over time.

Maths (%A*-C)

19. There is a similar variation in maths results between the performance of boys and girls.
20. Across all schools and all pupils the biggest variation in maths results is from Chipping Norton at 87% to *North Oxfordshire Academy* 53%.
Focusing on boys' maths results, the greatest variation is Bartholomew 89% to *North Oxfordshire Academy* 45%.
Focusing on girls' maths results, the greatest variation is from Chipping Norton at 89% to Oxford Spires at 56%.
21. Boys outperform girls in maths in 17 schools. This is particularly noticeable in Wood Green (15%pts difference) and BGN (11%pts). *However at North Oxfordshire Academy girls outperform boys by 17%pts.*

NB. It seems to have been maths results that have contributed to Lord Williams's decrease in results this year. They have the lowest % of boys with A*-C in maths and one of the lowest girls results.

The National context

22. Most students taking GCSEs are aged 16 (Year 11) and at the end of Key Stage 4, but GCSEs can be taken by students of any age.
23. There are several differences with GCSEs this summer, which means that the cohort of students who took GCSEs this summer is likely to be different from the 2012 cohort of students, even though the standard set will be the same as in summer 2012. For example:
24. There are more entries this year from students in Year 10 or earlier years. See table 2.
Overall results will be dependent upon the extent to which early entry pupils are ready to take GCSEs.

Table 2

Table to show the percentage of students taking GCSEs in year 11		
	2011	2012
Maths	72%	67%
English	79%	75%
English language	80%	83%

25. Entries for International GCSEs (IGCSEs) have increased significantly this summer. If schools with high ability students are moving to IGCSEs, then we could see a lower proportion of higher grades at GCSE than in 2012.

26. Some students, particularly in maths, enter for more than one qualification in the same subject, either with the same exam board or with different exam boards.
27. Changes have been made to the GCSE science suite to make these qualifications more challenging. New qualifications in biology, chemistry, physics, additional science and additional applied science will be awarded for the first time. These new GCSEs are designed to be more challenging, because the previous syllabuses did not adequately test the subject content and were not sufficiently demanding.
28. Spelling and Grammar are now being considered in humanities assessment.

Actions

29. Schools Intervention Leaders will be visiting all schools and academies to review the GCSE outcomes and to identify priority actions and any challenge required for schools and academies.
30. In the term 2 training will be available for all heads of English and maths to review OFSTED requirements and to meet with exam boards to explore new requirements in relation to each subject.

Financial and Staff Implications

32. Within Schools and learning there are 5 school intervention leaders who will provide support and challenge to schools to secure further analysis and follow actions and training as required.

RECOMMENDATION

33. **The Education and Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to note this report which is currently based on provisional data and to comment on the proposed actions to be taken.**

Background papers:

Appendix 1 GCSE full set of provisional BCSE data
Appendix 2 GCSE summary data

Contact Officer: Sue Bainbridge, Schools & Learning Manager
Tel: (01865) 328508

November 2013

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2013 Key Stage 4 - EPAS Results for Schools

		% 5+ A*-C GCSE inc English and maths			
		NOR	2013 provisional results for schools (excl special schools)	2012	
Oxfordshire		6290	60.3%	57.9	
Maintained Only		2122	56.6%		
Academy Only		4089	63.3%		
Maintained	Bicester Community College	174	46	48	Pink
	Blessed George Napier Catholic School	146	61	64	Pink
	Carterton Community College	127	58	55	Green
	Chiltern Edge School	122	67	65	Green
	Fitzharrys School	125	47	42	Green
	Icknield Community College	137	56	54	Green
	John Mason School	169	60	48	Green
	Larkmead School	164	50	48	Green
	Matthew Arnold School	177	68	60	Green
	The Cooper School	211	56	67	Pink
	The Warriner School	229	57	66	Pink
	Wheatley Park School	165	59	64	Pink
	Wood Green School	176	51	53	Pink
	Academy	Banbury Academy	187	64	49
Bartholomew School		176	70	64	Green
Burford (Secondary) School		197	65	56	Green
Cheney School		233	61	48	Green
Chipping Norton School		177	65	46	Green
Didcot Girls' School		191	72	56	Green
Faringdon Community College		179	71	66	Green
Gillotts School		171	72	72	Orange
Gosford Hill School		173	62	70	Pink
King Alfred's Academy		300	74	75	Pink
Langtree School		107	62	51	Green
Lord Williams's School		326	56	65	Pink
North Oxfordshire Academy		162	48	59	Pink
Oxford Spires Academy		162	47	58	Pink
St Birinus School		216	61	59	Green
St Gregory the Great Catholic School		191	44	46	Pink
The Cherwell School		270	71	70	Green
The Henry Box School		211	64	44	Green
The Marlborough CofE School		168	69	68	Green
The Oxford Academy		105	41	26	Green
Wallingford School	187	76	76	Orange	

Results taken from EPAS - Updated by DfE - will not include changes made as part of the schools data checking exercise
 Oxfordshire figure taken from the KS4 SFR - Released October 2013

Performance & Information Team

28/10/13

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EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2013

WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

2013

Thursday 14th November 2013

Mock OFSTED Inspection and Framework for Local Authorities and how to respond.

Together with a reading list including a summary of the Norfolk case including what was said, the expectations and an explanation.

(CEF/relevant officer)

Revised proposals for the Home to School Transport Policy.

Consultation paper is due out in the next few weeks from CEF. To include Guidance from Department of Education, or ensure this is covered in the report.

School Balances.

Pupil premiums and how this impacts on attainment in terms of assistance/improvement.

Externalisation – Soft Market Testing.

When the proposals are due to go to Cabinet and how best to Scrutinise this process. What can be externalised? Roles within OCS. Report to Cabinet in mid-October. Timetabling of CEF proposals to be woven into Working Plan.

Validated Figures for GCSE's and A-Level's 2013

To include a column with reserves(?) Consequences (or not) of including this figure. Total budget per school, together with reserves and per pupil reserves.

(Frances Craven / relevant officer)

James - I also have a note from the meeting that Cllr Waine asked if science figures could be reported back to Committee in January along similar lines to the English and maths figures, as the science papers were noted as being more rigorous this year.

OTHER MATTERS

Changing role of Oxfordshire County Council within Education.

Whether to take a hands-off approach/structure? Do we continue to scrutinise? Note Norfolk "on notice"

Standing Groups

- Educational Attainment – Cllrs Waine, Constance, Sanders & Atkins
- SEN & Gifted Children(?)

Pen portraits to be formed of proposed working groups; to be settled what is to be discussed/covered.

Budget

Educational Budget is due in December. How to handle this? Meeting suggested before Performance Scrutiny, now decided to be seminars by Directorate in order that queries can be raised/explanations given, then queries can be passed to Performance in December. Possibility of a short meeting for Education Scrutiny Committee following that?

Trends for the Future/Joined-up working

Recommendations re the changing landscape in the next 5-10 years, and the attainment/achievement in all schools given less involvement over.

Externalisation

Councillors Atkins, Waine, Sanders to meet with Frances Craven and James Kanimba after 18th October. Briefing note direct to school governors to contextualise consultation?

Soft Market Testing – what can be off-loaded? Report to Cabinet mid-October. Concerns over timetabling of CEF proposals.

Changing Role of Governing Bodies within Schools

Thriving Families

Consistency of OFSTED reporting for schools

Constitution

“Joined-up working” – note typo in “Terms of Reference”. Needs up-dating for next time.

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