

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Camden's Education Strategy – Update	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO:</b> Schools Forum	<b>DATE</b> 13 September 2022
<p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b> Schools Forum received updates of the development of the Education Strategy and were consulted on the draft strategy on 8 December 2021. On 19 January 2022 Cabinet approved the Camden Education Strategy 'Building Back Stronger'. This report provides a brief update of the development of the Council's approach to the School Planning Workstream element of this strategy.</p> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b> No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Nicholas Smith – Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation <a href="mailto:Nicholas.smith@camden.gov.uk">Nicholas.smith@camden.gov.uk</a>; 0207 974 1149 5, Pancras Square, London. N1C 4AG.</p>	
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>  That Schools Forum is asked to note the update on the school planning workstream.	

**Signed:**



Nicholas Smith, Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation

**Date:**

02/09/22

## 1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council has adopted its education strategy 'Building Back Stronger' which has been developed in consultation with schools and a wide range of communities, partners and agencies involved in education within Camden.
- 1.2 The Education Strategy sets out a bold and exciting vision for education within Camden in 2030, including the goal of "a good local place available for every Camden child". This goal is placed in the context of challenging financial pressures and a reduction in the demand for school places. The strategy is clear that "to ensure continuing viability, there is a pressing need for our schools to consider a range of collaborative arrangements, including federating"
- 1.2 The strategy outlines four foundations, listed below, that underpin its approach to driving change:
- A strong place-based system that understands and reflects local demographics, histories, and values.
  - An ambitious, inclusive system that breaks down the barriers to learning by calling out inequalities, acting to address them, making sure children and young people feel a strong sense of belonging to school and community so that no one is left behind.
  - A collaborative and federating system: a system where we use collaboration to motivate, learn and achieve better, taking collective responsibility for all our children, working together in formal and informal partnerships, including federations, so they are served well.
  - Think, test, and learn: a system where we are constantly developing ideas and new practice and approaches, learning from research and staying at the leading edge of new and effective practice in education by trialling new ways of working.
- 1.4 The strategy sets the goal of ensuring that, 'a good, local school place is available for every Camden child'. Alongside this is the need and requirement to safeguard the sustainability of the pattern of school provision within our borough. Specifically, the strategy makes the following statement about the necessity for schools to consider their approaches to collaboration to achieve this goal:
- "We cannot ensure children and young people have an excellent school experience unless our schools are financially secure. In the face of falling pupil numbers, reducing school budgets and a high proportion of 11-year-olds who do not transfer from our primary schools into our secondary schools, we will need to think creatively and proactively about how we ensure that a good, and viable, school place is available for every child. Specifically, schools will need to consider a range of strategic, collaborative arrangements, including federating."
- 1.5 As part of its advisory role the Schools Forum has agreed to receive regular reports on the school planning workstream of the Education Strategy and, if necessary, provide comments to the Council and the Education Strategy Board on developments towards the goal of ensuring a good local place for every Camden child.

## **2. School Place Planning Workstream**

2.1 To achieve this goal a range of tasks have been set out within the strategy which are to:

- Raise awareness across the system of the benefits of collaboration for deepening learning and achievement and for economies of scale
- Include a discussion on future planning for collaboration on the agenda of every school's annual Standards Meeting
- Ensure all schools are supported to produce an action plan, in the context of Camden's School Places Plan, that considers a range of collaborative arrangements, including federating

## **3. White Paper**

3.1 Following the approval of the Camden's Education Strategy the Government published the Schools White Paper that outlined an approach to system wide academisation. As part of Camden's to School planning and ensuring high quality outcomes and system security the Council together with Camden Learning is considering its response to the White paper and how this aligns with 'Building Back Stronger'.

3.2 The white makes provision for Local Authority established MATs. Camden already has a mixed range of schools including Academies, Faith and Community schools that would necessarily impact on any system wide response to this issue. However, the Council and Camden Learning has started the work to understand in detail how the process of establishing a MAT or MATs would work so that in advance of any decisions we are well placed to understand and assess its implications. To do this in more detail the Council will establish a small group, including some Headteachers, to work with Natalie Parish from the ISOS partnership and Camden Learning to develop options in the Camden context.

3.3 Ultimately, the Council has statutory responsibility for school place planning but ensuring the viability of the Camden schools is a shared endeavour for the whole system and will need concerted effort by all partners.

## **4. Updates**

4.1 This term schools are undertaking their annual standards meeting, a collaboration section forms part of all of these meetings.

4.2 During July and August the Council received new planning data from the GLA, this will be included and sent to schools in advance of standards meetings.

4.3 On 23 September Camden Council and Camden Learning will be discussing how to develop our approach to the White Paper with schools at our Annual Conference.