

Briefing for Governors

10 June 2011



EducationKingston

the learning partnership

Owned and operated *by schools, for schools*

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Introduction

The EducationKingston school improvement trust has been developed in collaboration between officers of the Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) local authority (LA) and headteachers of schools in the borough.

The initial proposal was shared with headteachers on March 8th, 2011. Since that time a working party comprising headteachers and officers has met on a number of occasions to discuss the original proposal, amend it where necessary in the light of those discussions. The proposal was shared with Chairs of Governors on 16th May and in the subsequent Director's Report to Governors. Opportunities to share and develop the proposal with colleagues will continue at various forum events during the summer and early Autumn term 2011. This paper is intended to provide further detail to aid Governors in consideration of the proposal. Governors are invited to attend a meeting at the King Charles Centre (KCC) on July 11th, 2011 to discuss the draft proposal.

On 7th June 2011, the Council Executive agreed that the proposal could be fully pursued with the establishment of a project board to complete preparatory work and consult stakeholders. <http://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=26094> The final proposal will be sent to Chairs of Governors on September 8th, 2011 and there will be a second discussion meeting for Governors, at KCC, on September 12th, 2011, prior to the need for decision-making.

The formal 'sign up' deadline for Governing Bodies is October 14th, 2011 and on October 18th, 2011 a formal proposal which takes full account of schools' views will be presented to Council.

Context

The EducationKingston proposal was developed in response to the implications for the schools sector that stem from the changed political climate that has been in place since May 2010. In the Autumn of 2010 an Education White Paper was published which gave a clear indication of the new relationship that is envisaged between schools and local authorities and this was developed further in the Education Bill published in the spring of 2011. It is believed that further legislation will follow to allow the government to realise other aspects of its vision for education.

Central to this vision is the granting of greater autonomy to schools to determine how best to address their development needs and shape their provision for their children and young people.

Developments within the education sphere have to be seen also against the backdrop of some very challenging financial conditions. These have led to significant reductions in the levels of resource available to local authorities to support schools.

Guiding principles and beliefs

In developing the EducationKingston proposal we have been keen not to lose sight of some key principles. We:

- wish to continue to secure the best outcomes for children and young people
- believe that good schools strengthen communities and enhance life chances
- wish to preserve positive and effective relationships and partnership
- need to continue to work to close gaps in achievement between different groups
- believe in the importance of schools sharing their excellence with others
- believe that all schools possess expertise from which other schools could benefit
- believe that school leaders, including Governors, benefit from external challenge underpinned by rich local knowledge and practical support
- know that strong leadership welcomes external challenge
- know that schools share common challenges which are often more difficult or expensive to solve alone
- recognise increasing school autonomy whereby schools are gaining extra freedoms to determine for themselves how to meet their challenges
- appreciate that schools are facing challenging financial conditions

Local factors

We know that the quality of relationships between schools and between schools and the LA is very high in Kingston. RBK LA's approach to school improvement has been recognised nationally as being of high-quality and very effective. The partnership that exists within the school sector in Kingston is collaborative, productive and highly-valued. Additionally, RBK recognises the strategic value of promoting and supporting high-quality schools in Kingston.

Within the new educational climate the LA will retain powers of intervention in under-performing maintained schools but will have no direct powers of intervention in under-performing Academies or free schools. The LA role in school improvement is largely non-statutory and will be subject to difficult budgetary considerations. Overall it is a greatly reduced statutory role.

The EducationKingston proposal should be seen as being a response to all of the above and an expression of the clear desire on the part of schools and the LA to maintain the benefits of working in partnership and a willingness to explore new ways of achieving that.

So what is EducationKingston?

NB: All of the details that follow are correct at the time of publication but subject to change before the release of the final proposal in September 2011.

EducationKingston will be a not-for-profit organisation owned by its founding schools and operated by and for them. Its primary business activity will be to provide school improvement services to support and challenge to its members. Membership is open to maintained schools and Academies. The main purpose of this partnership is to aid schools in improving provision and raising achievement. The service will provide support, challenge, advice, guidance and training for schools, staff and governors. It will also provide reports on school performance to governing bodies and the local authority

EducationKingston will have a strong relationship with RBK LA which will commission EK to maintain and improve standards, support and challenge schools and provide reports. RBK will make an annual contribution to the work of EK equivalent to approximately £750000, per annum, largely in the form of seconded staff and infrastructure support for data, ICT, CPD etc.

The work to establish the legal and operational parameters of EducationKingston, including its status as a trust/charitable company, and its formal governance and quality assurance will be completed in the period June to September 2011

How will EducationKingston work?

EducationKingston will operate on a subscription basis. In return for the annual subscription schools will receive an entitlement to a basket of school improvement services (see later section for further details).

Following discussions within headteacher groups and the EK working party it is likely that schools will be required to sign-up for five years in the first instance.

The precise figure for the subscription fee will be decided nearer to the time of the publication of the final proposal but it is likely to be in the region of £6000. It has been agreed that this will be the same for all schools; exceptions will be considered by the board as no school will be refused membership because of an inability to pay.

It is proposed that governance is minimally bureaucratic. An EducationKingston Forum will be established on which all founding schools will have one vote. There will be an EducationKingston Executive Board made up of a smaller group of headteachers appointed by the EK Forum and agreed stakeholders, which will have responsibility for the regular periodic oversight of the operation of the organisation. Governor representation will be discussed at the governor meetings.

What will the Subscription Service provide?

EducationKingston is greater than the subscription service. The trust is intended to support schools to ensure that all children and young people have the best experience of education in order to achieve their best. The subscription service sets out each school's entitlement but schools are also expected to support each other in a variety of mutually supportive ways and much of this support is already in existence.

EducationKingston will provide full subscription member schools with the following:

- An assigned EducationKingston Partner (EKP) – see below details of role
- Termly report to Governors on Joint Evaluation and Review
- Attendance at EK/RBK events:
 - Headteacher partnership meetings
 - Governors partnership meetings
 - EK Forum meetings
 - Headteacher conferences
 - School improvement forum – 2 places per school
 - Secondary leadership forum – 2 places per school
 - English/Literacy network meetings
 - Maths/numeracy network meetings
 - SEN network meetings
 - Assessment co-ordinator meetings
 - EYFS network meetings
 - Primary Deputies' forum
 - 14-19 partnership
- Access to:
 - Data collection, reports and analysis service
 - Support for new Headteachers
 - Brokering additional support
 - Quality assurance and coordination of School to School Support
 - Additional support for schools in challenging circumstances or causing concern
 - A wide range of other EK network and forum meetings and conferences
 - Discounted access to open EK events and conferences
 - Quality assurance of alternative provision
 - Procurement service
- Liaison and interface with other local and national agencies and council departments
- NQT support:
 - Registration
 - Quality assurance of assessments
 - Attendance at induction day
- **60 credits for purchasing additional and bespoke support (see Page 8)**

The role of the EducationKingston Partner (EKP)

EKPs are ‘partners’ with schools. They are expected to establish excellent working relationships with schools and exercise their functions as equal professionals in the school improvement process. The EKP’s central role is to provide schools, including governing bodies, with support and robust external challenge. This should happen directly through the school improvement dialogue, analysis of written evidence and through accessing and brokering external support. The guiding principles for the work are as follows.

The EKP, Headteacher and Governing Body will:

- Build excellent mutually respectful relationships;
- Focus on pupil progress and attainment across the ability range and the factors which influence it;
- Provide and receive professional challenge and support that contributes to school self-evaluation and consequent improvement planning to build on strength and support developments so that practice and performance continues to improve;
- Use evidenced based assessment of performance to identify strategies to improve leadership, provision, teaching, learning and pupil outcomes;
- Recognise and respect the school’s autonomy to plan its development;
- Recognise and respect the EKP’s responsibility to report accurately and honestly without ‘fear or favour’;
- Jointly contribute to the Joint Review document and termly updates, communicating this to key school staff, governors and EK colleagues.

The core function of the EKP role is to support and challenge schools to raise standards and achievement. In order to fulfil this function EKPs, in partnership with the Headteacher and senior staff, will carry out the following tasks:

- Evaluate the school’s:
 - Self-evaluation in line with the current Ofsted criteria
 - Performance in terms of pupil outcomes and the quality of teaching
 - Priorities for improvement
 - Targets for the current and following academic year
 - Overall effectiveness, including agreeing the school’s categorisation prior to moderation
- Make recommendations about the external support needed and how to access this, including the use of the schools 60 credits.

In addition the EKP will:

- Be available to provide support, advice and guidance via email and telephone
- Advise Governors on the appointment of a new headteacher
- Be available to attend Governing Body meetings as necessary
- Support recruitment to deputy headteacher posts

EducationKingston Partner (EKP) possible Schedule for working with schools to fulfil the monitoring and review expectations of EK

Term	EKP
As necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Familiarisation visit if new to school ● Support Governors with recruitment of a new Headteacher ● Support school with preparation for Ofsted inspection and attend feedback meeting
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make sufficient regular visits to the school to aid its review and development, and to be able to have a shared professional and reflective dialogue, following agendas agreed in advance with the headteacher, ● Gather evidence through discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The headteacher; ○ The senior leadership team; ○ The Chair of Governors; ○ Teachers (including joint lesson observations with senior staff); ○ Pupils. ● Complete documentation required by EK and submit within the specified time frame
Autumn <i>Focus on achievement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion and analysis of documentation, including data, school self-evaluation and school improvement plan. ● Arrange and carry out Joint Review meeting to discuss evaluation and make judgements ● Review priorities for improvement ● Review targets for current academic year and agree targets for coming academic year as appropriate ● Draft Joint Annual Review report ● Secure confirmation from Headteacher before submitting Joint Review report to governors and EK.
Spring <i>Focus on provision</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review progress on school improvement plan, note impact and necessary adaptations ● Jointly review quality of teaching and learning ● Broker additional support as necessary ● Agree targets for coming academic year ● Update the Joint Annual Review report and secure confirmation from Headteacher before submitting to governors and EK
Summer <i>Focus on leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review progress on school improvement plan, note impact and necessary adaptations ● Broker additional support as necessary ● Update the Joint Annual Review report and get confirmation from Headteacher before submitting to governors and EK ●

Menu for Use of Subscription Credits for Additional and Bespoke Support

Full subscription member schools receive 60 credits which can be used to access additional school improvement support activities from EducationKingston.

NB: This is not an exhaustive list.

<p>Possible activities for EducationKingston Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for staff recruitment • Support for Governors for HT performance management • Observation of classroom teachers • Observation and assessment of NQTs • Pre-inspection support • Post-inspection action planning and review • Support for disciplinary and capability issues • Support for bid and/or policy development • Conducting reviews requested by school • Bespoke training for staff and/or governors
<p>Possible activities for other EducationKingston staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of and support for classroom teachers • Support for middle leaders • Observation of and support for NQTs • Data advice & training • Support for staff recruitment • Pre-inspection support • Support for bid and/or policy development • Participating in reviews requested by school • Bespoke training for staff and/or governors
<p>Possible additional EducationKingston events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme networks (e.g. EAL , G&T, subject networks) • Phase and year group networks • NQT training sessions • Open EK events & conferences

Work is underway to establish the equivalent value of credits.

For example a One Credit = One Hour of support/training might look like this:

<p>Sample school A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recruitment support = 6 credits • In class support for improvement in classroom teaching =14 credits • Whole school Ofsted type review = 18 credits • Maths learning walk, feedback and report = 10 credits • Attendance of staff at training duration = 8 credits • 2 bespoke training sessions for governors on data/self evaluation = 4 credits
