

## **Darlington Education Strategy Group**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of the Education Strategy Group is to support and oversee the work of the Primary Headteachers Forum and the 11-19 Partnership. It will provide overall strategic direction, and approve any partnership work programmes.

#### **2. Local context**

The establishment of the Education Strategy Group is in response to a number of drivers:

- the changing role of the local authority
- national emphasis on school led improvement and development of system leadership within schools including Opportunity North East
- evolving Tees Valley Combined Authority education, employment and skills agenda and potential funding opportunities

Consultation with schools, academies, Multi Academy Trust and post 16 providers has shown that there continues to be a strong appetite locally to further develop local collective arrangements, led by schools and colleges, which provide a vehicle through which education providers and wider stakeholders can take forward well founded joint projects and ensure that system resources can be effectively deployed across Darlington.

There is also a desire to maintain and build on historic strong relationships between schools and post 16 providers and between schools and post 16 providers and the local authority. Furthermore, there is a developing consensus around a number of key priority areas where collective action could add value, over and above the efforts of individual schools, academies, colleges and MATs.

#### **3. Scope**

The Education Strategy Group will consider all matters relating to the provision of education and schooling in Darlington in three broad policy areas:

- (a) School Organisation and Admissions – securing the supply of sufficient school places, including nursery to 19 provision in an increasingly autonomous context with a range of providers, and ensuring fair access for admission to school.
- (b) Education Excellence - supporting the role of the local authority to promote high standards in education and tackling underperformance through School Improvement and Intervention.
- (c) Provision for vulnerable children - including those with special educational needs and disabilities, exclusions and alternative provision, children missing education in the context of the changes to local authority central services and changes to admission arrangements.

#### **4. Membership**

The membership of the strategy group is as follows

- Head of Education and Inclusion, Darlington Borough Council (chair)
- Chair of the 11 – 19 Partnership
- Chair of the Primary Headteachers Forum
- Post-16 representative
- Secondary school representative
- Primary school representative
- Special schools representative
- Schools Forum representative, if not included above

#### **6. Ways of working, frequency of meetings and secretariat**

The group will meet at least termly and more frequently as and when the need arises. The quorum shall be 60% of the group present.

Minutes of the meetings of the Strategy Group will be circulated to all members soon as available and formally agreed at the next meeting of the Strategy Group. The agenda and supporting papers will be sent out at least one week in advance of each meeting.

The local authority will co-ordinate and administer the meetings, unless alternative arrangements are agreed by the group. The local authority will also provide dedicated support in terms of data analysis, administrative support and senior officer time to facilitate and contribute to the work of the Strategy Group.