

BARNSLEY ALLIANCE

EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY 2019-21

Foreword

The mission of the Barnsley Alliance is to promote a cohesive approach to improving education. Our goal is that we all work together to ensure the very best education outcomes for children and young people in Barnsley.

We share a collective commitment that education in the borough should support the Council's vision for Barnsley to have a **thriving and vibrant economy**; be a place where **people achieve their potential** and where they live **within strong and resilient communities**. We share the vision of the **Children and Young People Plan 2019-22** for **every child to attend a school rated 'good' or better by Ofsted**, to achieve **success in learning and work** while growing up in **strong and resilient families**. Success in education and engagement in lifelong learning is the key to good employment prospects, good health and well-being, and to building thriving communities. Improving education quality and outcomes is a shared priority, fundamental to achieving our broader vision for Barnsley.

Our strategy is founded on high aspirations for all of our children and young people, regardless of their starting points or the challenges they may experience in life. We recognise that delivering a high quality education in contexts where children and young people don't always enjoy the same access to opportunities isn't straightforward. Barnsley has a steady trajectory of improving education outcomes but we recognise the need to do more, faster, to ensure life chances improve for all our children and young people.

Barnsley has made great strides in bringing educational outcomes into line with, or in some cases exceeding, national expectations. While excellent teaching and school leadership is central to improving education outcomes, this alone will not succeed in accelerating improvement to bring attainment and progress above national standards and to achieve the excellence we aspire to. Our response needs to ensure that we support and strengthen families and communities where children may experience barriers to well-being and achievement, so that we break the cycle of poor outcomes and quality of life that endure in some of our communities. The circumstances of some young people's lives should not hinder achievement. Therefore this strategy is supported by, and operates in conjunction with, others such as the Barnsley SEND Strategy, the Neglect Strategy and our All-age Early Help Strategy.

Whatever their background or circumstances, our children and young people deserve the most positive educational experience and to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Rachel Dickinson **Executive Director People, Barnsley MBC**

Nick Bowen **Co-Chair Barnsley Alliance (Secondary)**

Yvonne Gray **Co-Chair Barnsley Alliance (Primary)**

SECTOR LED EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT – HOW THE BARNLSLEY ALLIANCE WORKS

What is the Barnsley Alliance?

- The Barnsley Alliance is a strategic partnership between early years settings, schools, academies, colleges and the local authority. Its purpose is to raise the quality of education and improve outcomes for children and young people across Barnsley.
- The Alliance is the custodian of effective education within Barnsley.
- The Alliance recognises the needs of children and young people as a whole and so works with education providers, families and the community to identify and meet need holistically (see SEND, Early Help and Neglect strategies).
- The Alliance represents a sector-led model that works in partnership with the Local Authority.
- Sector-led improvement means that all schools take a collective responsibility for the outcomes of Barnsley children and all partners have a mandate to mutually support and challenge each other.

What does the Alliance do?

- Barnsley Alliance holds schools and academies to account for their outcomes and challenges school leaders & governors where outcomes are not meeting expectations.
- The Alliance will broker support for schools to help them develop and improve.
- The Alliance also works to ensure effective leadership & governance and works system-wide to develop current and future leaders.
- The Alliance works to promote a cohesive education system that will minimise the risk of fragmentation in a multi-provider context.
- The Alliance researches, promotes, supports and sources best practice to inspire and motivate innovation and excellence.
- The Alliance works to develop and deploy school improvement capacity from local schools to improve other Barnsley schools.
- The Alliance Board determines the priorities for improvement across the Barnsley education sector.
- The Alliance initiates specific projects and case studies to support school improvement and good outcomes for children and young people.
- The Alliance engages with other key partnerships to improve children's outcomes; notably the Children and Young People's Trust and the Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership

Aims of the Alliance

To ensure every school/academy:

- has effective leadership & governance.
- is at or above the national average (P8 in secondary schools; positive progress measures in reading, writing and mathematics).

The Barnsley Alliance strategic responsibilities are to:

- agree the Barnsley Education Improvement Strategy to ensure that all children have access to good and outstanding educational opportunities.
- support the development of collaborations and partnership arrangements that effectively enable individual schools to secure good outcomes for all pupils.
- ensure cohesion across the Barnsley education system through recognising and challenging the potential for fragmentation in a multi-provider environment while acknowledging and celebrating the successes of different providers in driving and supporting improvement for Barnsley pupils.
- monitor the quality of education and school performance.
- ensure all schools are receiving appropriate support and challenge in proportion to their success and effectiveness.
- support and challenge schools and academies to promote aspiration for all our pupils and to provide access to opportunities to enhance ambition and help pupils realise their full potential
- contribute to and support the delivery of the Barnsley SEND Improvement Plan and the Barnsley SEND strategy
- contribute to, and support the development of, Early Help arrangements so that all children have the best opportunities to achieve their potential.

It is recognised that schools are self-managing and largely autonomous and are, therefore, responsible for their own performance and improvement. Effective self-evaluation is the most important process of school improvement and it is expected that all schools should be able to make an accurate self-evaluation of their performance and take clear and decisive action to improve weaknesses.

While the Council has a role to play in supporting and challenging schools, it largely fulfils this role through its participation in the Barnsley Schools' Alliance. The Alliance Board has, therefore, a defined role in securing high quality provision and standards in Barnsley schools and settings.

All schools, maintained and academies, are equal partners in The Alliance and are represented on The Alliance Board, by a member of their local 'cluster' or network.

Barnsley schools and settings proactively engage with sector-led improvement to share best practice, promote inclusion, improve outcomes and offer peer-to-peer support across the whole education system.

Barnsley schools and settings recognise their role in educating and supporting children and young people as part of the Barnsley community and engage with early help, inclusion and SEND support systems to assist in improving outcomes for vulnerable groups;

How the Alliance measures success:

- The number of Barnsley schools judged 'good' or better by Ofsted increases
- Following the annual risk assessment process, the number of green and yellow schools increases
- Impact evaluations following intervention and support for individual schools and settings.
- The attainment and progress of Barnsley pupils improves at all key stages (detailed performance framework attached at tables one and two).
- Attendance improves (at least in line with national comparators) and persistent absence in primary and secondary schools reduces.
- Improved inclusion practice demonstrates a reduction in exclusions from primary and secondary schools (fixed term and permanent) and a narrowing of the gap in the attainment and progress of vulnerable groups.

Risk assessment process

The support and challenge process is underpinned by a number of key principles:

- That the criteria for risk assessment is clear and understood by all schools and academies.
- When a concern is identified, members of the Quality of Education Group will communicate the precise nature of the concern to the head teacher and chair of governors at the earliest opportunity and that advice/guidance and support will be made available.
- That school-to-school support and partnership working is central to the Alliance's approach to ensuring effective support to all schools, but particularly those causing concern.
- In all circumstances, schools' individual contexts will be taken into consideration when determining RAG rating and risk assessment.
- That all schools, maintained and academies, will take part in the process in order to ensure that all Barnsley children receive their entitlement to a good education.

Full risk assessment process is attached at appendix two

Through the Quality of Education sub-group, the Alliance provides and oversees the statutory school improvement and challenge functions of the LA, primarily by:

- **Monitoring** – The regular and systematic collection and analysis of performance data (quantitative and qualitative) and discussion with schools about the outcomes of their own self-evaluation processes. This informs school and Alliance planning and

prioritisation, provides opportunities for quality assurance and ensures that statutory requirements are met.

- **Supporting** – Working in partnership with schools to address identified areas for development through the brokerage or commissioning of external support via Tykes Teaching School Alliance and Positive Regard Teaching School Alliance.
- **Challenging** – Within the process of rigorous self-evaluation, challenging schools to meet ambitious targets, make full use of the range of evidence available and ensure the right questions are asked. The aim is to identify success, share good practice and determine appropriate actions to secure continuous improvement.
- **Intervening** – Where performance, self-evaluation and improvement planning are judged to be inadequate, the Local Authority is able to use its statutory powers of intervention to ensure that a maintained school's performance improves. It is expected that academies and any future free schools will also engage in self-evaluation procedures and engage in the same way as maintained schools, to enable the Alliance to champion **ALL** pupils in the borough.

Local Authority Maintained Schools: escalation of concern The local authority has a statutory duty to intervene where there is a concern about standards in the school, a breakdown in governance or leadership, or where safety at the school is seriously compromised. Where there are such concerns, the local authority will seek to work with governors and school leaders to address the issues.

Where there is not sufficient improvement as a result of the support and challenge provided by the Alliance, or a school will not engage with the support offered, the local authority will consider issuing a statutory warning notice. This requires the governing body to respond with an acceptable plan and proposal for improving the school. Where the governors do not respond to the authority's satisfaction, the local authority can also take other action, including removing the school's delegated budget; appointing additional governors; or applying to the DfE to replace the governing body with an Interim Executive Board. In these circumstances the DfE will expect the IEB and the local authority to work towards a structural solution, namely conversion to an academy.

Before issuing a statutory warning notice, the local authority will invite the school leaders and governors to a challenge meeting with the Executive Director, or their representative and will also issue a Pre-Warning Notice in writing. This Notice will set out, exactly as a warning notice would, the basis of the local authority's concerns; what it requires the governing body to do, and in what timescales. The main difference is the Pre-Warning Notice does not trigger statutory powers or intervention.

In maintained schools with low attainment, inadequate progress and in an Ofsted category or not improving, recommendation will be given to seek academy sponsors where this structural solution is deemed to be in the best interests of rapidly improving outcomes for children and young people.

Academies: escalation of concern

Where there has been lack of sufficient improvement as a result of support and challenge provided by the Alliance, the concern will be escalated to the Executive Director, People. On behalf of the local authority the Director will write to the Academy Trust, outlining the concerns. Academy senior leaders and Trust representatives will be invited to a challenge meeting with the Director, and to share its plans for improving the school. The academy will also be asked to provide termly updates on progress against the improvement plan.

Promoting opportunity for children and young people to fulfil career aims and life ambitions

“Young People have aspirations and we want better employment and work experience opportunities to help achieve them”. A young member of the CYP Plan working group

Barnsley’s Employment and Skills Strategy: **More and Better Jobs** aims to raise the ambition of Barnsley businesses, education institutions, people and communities, through three priorities:-

- Getting Ready For Work - Education and Employability
- Getting Into Work – Routes into Work
- Getting On (and staying in) Work – Businesses and Progression

It outlines the need to **strengthen collaborative work with schools and colleges, businesses and communities to ‘create a shared belief in a brighter future, a better Barnsley, with buoyant business growth, rising productivity, and a more skilled workforce’**. It also tells us **good jobs are a vital first step to progress and improved life outcomes, including for peoples’ health and wellbeing. This agenda is very important to children and young people and we will continue to work together with Barnsley Youth Council to deliver against this strategy.**

The new Ofsted framework for schools places a much greater focus on personal development, including careers and enterprise and preparing young people for life beyond school in relation to further education, training and work.

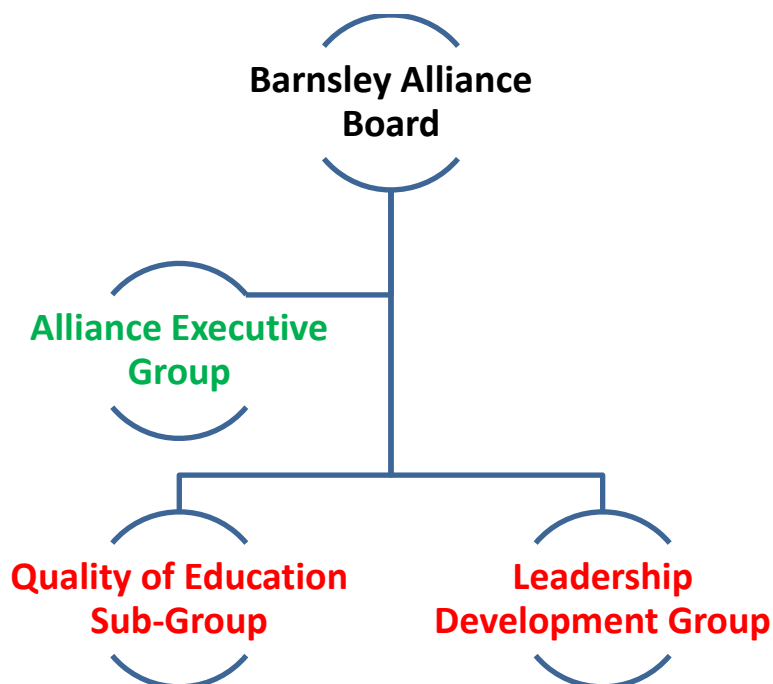
“Barnsley schools are focussing sharply on this area in order to further raise aspirations through better personal guidance and the development of appropriate skills and competencies. Barnsley has responded to the national career and enterprise strategy by ensuring an Enterprise Advisor is assigned to and a Careers Leader appointed in every school, so that all students have an entitlement to meaningful encounters with the world of work, FE and Universities, as part of a stable and strategic Careers Programme.” Chair of the Barnsley Schools Alliance

As an integral part of the Barnsley Children and Young People’s Trust, the Schools Alliance is therefore committed to supporting the CYPT work towards:

- Continuing to improve the attainment of children and young people in school and further education.
- Increasing participation of 16–18 year-olds in education, training and employment.
- Increasing apprenticeships and the uptake of higher education.
- Continued support to schools to develop employability of their students.
- Enhance engagement between the education and business sectors to increase young people’s understanding of the work place and improve work readiness.
- Enhancement of post 16 education, employment and training provision across the borough.
- Clear pathways to enable young people with special educational needs and disabilities prepare for adulthood and successfully for employment.
- A clearly structured pathway to enable care experienced young people to gain and sustain employment.

- Continue to promote the 'Employer Promise' which encourages all types and sizes of organisation to offer what they can to actively help young people and adults prepare for work, find the right job and make good progress when they are in work.
- Work with Barnsley Youth Council to achieve their campaign priorities; Equal Pay for Equal Work, Quality Work Experience, and a Curriculum to prepare us for life.

ALLIANCE GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE



A full governance diagram is attached at appendix two

Alliance Board is made up of Secondary and primary co-chairs of alliance board; Primary cluster leads; Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention); Head of Barnsley Schools' Alliance; Governor representatives; Teaching school representatives; Early Years representative; Elected member representative; Education Welfare representative; SEND representative and school evaluation officers.

Alliance Executive is made up of Alliance board co-chairs; Service Director (Education, Early Start and Prevention); Head of Barnsley Schools Alliance.

Alliance Sub Group: Quality of Education is made up of Board Co-chairs; school evaluation officers; Head of Barnsley Schools' Alliance, teaching school representatives, early years representative)

Alliance Sub Group: Leadership is made up of Board Co-chairs, headteacher representatives, Head of Barnsley Schools' Alliance, LA officers – invitation)

What does each group do?

Alliance Board

- Is the overall strategic partnership board of the Alliance.
- Brings together all key stakeholders.
- Sets the strategic direction and priorities of the Alliance.

Alliance Executive

- Provides executive capacity to the Alliance Board.

- Facilitates agile and appropriate decision-making.
- Gives a strategic overview.
- Commissions strategic leads (champions).
- Develops and implements alliance strategy on behalf of the Board.
- Evaluates Alliance impact.
- Evaluates LA risk assessment and evaluation processes.
- Evaluates school and academy risk assessments and determines next steps.
- Receives updates from and sets the work programme of the sub-groups.

Alliance Sub Group: Quality of Education

- Areas of responsibility – Student/pupil progress, attendance, inclusion, SEND, budget, and curriculum.

Alliance Sub Group: Leadership

- Areas of responsibility – Challenge and support, leadership development, succession planning and governance.

Accountability

- Colleague head teachers and LA officers hold school leaders to account on behalf of the Alliance. School intervention is brokered at the Quality of Education and Leadership groups where decisions are taken about which person will lead the intervention process.
- Significant individual school-based issues, leadership and governance issues and/or more general issues are escalated to the Alliance Executive.
- The performance and risk assessment outcome for every school is discussed at the Quality of Education group.
- Peer-to-peer support is implicit to the working of the Barnsley Alliance. Therefore, if a school receives Alliance support, it should be willing to support and engage in peer review and other improvement activities.

There are three key principles of Alliance (sector-led improvement) activity:

1. Reciprocity

Good practice is shared willingly.

2. Core offer

All schools and academies receive a core offer from the Alliance of:

- Risk assessment
- Continuing professional development

3. Evaluation of impact:

An annual evaluation of the impact of the Alliance is completed within each sector. Performance measures are included as table one (primary) and table two (secondary).

A more comprehensive Barnsley Alliance governance structure diagram is attached in appendix one.

The role of school governors and leaders

Governors:

- Develop, with senior leaders, a vision and strategic direction for the school.
- Monitor progress and outcomes for pupils and hold school leaders to account for the quality of education in the school.
- Make sure the school uses its finances efficiently and properly, particularly ensuring resources are deployed to support pupils' learning.
- Ensure the school regularly evaluates how well it is doing and oversee plans for improvement.

School leaders:

- Provide leadership in school which focuses on securing excellent teaching and learning.
- Are accountable for the educational outcomes for all pupils in the school.
- Ensure there are good monitoring and evaluation systems in place so they know the strengths of their school and are clear about areas for improvement.
- Develop and implement school improvement plans to support continuous improvement.
- Ensure the resources in the school are managed well to support pupils' achievement.

In addition to the Alliance structure, school leaders come together through the **Barnsley Secondary Head Teacher Group** which meets monthly and the **Barnsley Primary Heads Executive** which meets each half term and facilitates the participation of primary heads in broader partnership work through conferences and meetings. Both the Secondary Head Teacher Group and the Primary Executive contribute to the work of the Alliance.

The role of the Council:

All local authorities have a legal duty to promote high standards of education. This means it is a partner with all education providers in the area, including early years settings, maintained schools, academies and post 16 colleges. Within this partnership the council acts as a champion for children and parents to ensure all communities have access to and benefit from good education opportunities. To fulfil its responsibilities the council will:

- Invest in strong partnership to shape the quality of education provision and improve standards.
- Hold education providers to account for quality of provision and outcomes for children and young people.
- Ensure that a range of multi-agency services work effectively to remove barriers to educational achievement for vulnerable young people and their families.
- Ensure there are arrangements of fair access to schools for every child.

- Promote high quality early years education.
- Enable children and young people to participate in decision making.
- Ensure the participation of young people in training or education.
- Ensure there are arrangements locally, and across partners, to enable families to access early help when they need it – the right support at the right time.

Barnsley Alliance Strategic Priorities 2019-21

The Alliance has identified seven areas of priority in order to realise our ambitions for young people across Barnsley:

1. To continue to improve attainment and progress for all pupils at all key stages
2. To further improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better.
3. To close the achievement gap between vulnerable groups and their peers with a particular focus on those pupils who have a special education need or disability and / or those who are eligible for pupil premium funding (including children in care and those eligible for free school meals)
4. To improve attendance, reduce the use of permanent and fixed-term exclusions and develop better access to alternative provision for pupils at risk of exclusion.
5. To build leadership capacity which empowers leaders at all levels to develop a sustainable model of continuous improvement across all Barnsley schools.
6. To promote access to greater opportunity for children and young people through supporting the aims of the More and Better Jobs Strategy
7. In addition to the priorities set out above, the Alliance has recognised the need to improve inclusion in Barnsley schools and academies by focussing on developing practice to support children and young people with SEND.

These priorities will inform the work programme of the board and its sub-groups throughout the period 2019-21.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Alliance has established a number of priorities through the SEND (Area Partnership) Improvement Plan and supporting programme, including:

1. Developing practice to identify SEND at the earliest stage and promote effective early intervention and support
2. Developing and implementing specific risk assessment criteria around SEND practice and outcomes to identify schools and academies in need of targeted support
3. Supporting the deployment of skilled Barnsley SENDCOs to challenge and develop practice in schools across the borough through secondment to the council's SEND Service
4. Working pro-actively with the council to support placement sufficiency needs and ensuring wherever possible that children and young people can be placed in schools and academies within Barnsley
5. Developing sector-led challenge through peer reviews and implementation of London Leadership reviews
6. Working together to understand , challenge and reduce the high level of fixed-term and permanent exclusions experienced by children and young people with SEND
7. Supporting the development of a revised borough-wide SEND Strategy

Table One - Barnsley Schools Key Performance Indicators - PRIMARY

1. % of schools at or above the national average KS2 level for R/W/M combined
 2. % of children in good/outstanding schools (Internal Risk Assessment)
 3. Number of Red Academies/Schools
 4. Number of Inspections within the last academic year and outcomes in relation to last inspection
 5. Number of academies/schools anticipating inspection in current year
 6. Number of academies/ schools at risk of a declining grade
 7. Authorised absence
 8. Unauthorised absence
 9. Persistent absence
 10. Permanent exclusions
 11. Fixed term exclusions
 12. Referrals to FAP
 13. In PRU provision
 14. Mobility
 15. Barnsley Headline Data:
 - GLD
 - Yr 1 phonics
 - Yr 2 phonic resits
 - KS1
 - KS2
 16. Disadvantaged gap
 17. SEN gap
 18. Gender gap
 19. EAL gap
 20. Number of EHE
 21. Number of CME
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Table Two - Barnsley Schools Key Performance Indicators - SECONDARY

1. % of children in good/outstanding schools (Internal Risk Assessment)
 2. Number of Amber Academies/Schools
 3. Number of Red Academies/Schools
 4. Details of Inspections within the last academic year and outcomes in relation to last inspection
 5. Details of academies/schools anticipating inspection in current year
 6. Details of academies/ schools at risk of a declining grade
 7. Authorised absence
 8. Unauthorised absence
 9. Persistent absence
 10. Permanent exclusions
 11. Fixed term exclusions
 12. Referrals to FAP
 13. In PRU provision
 14. Data:
 - Progress 8
 - Attainment 8
 - Eng and maths 4-9
 - Eng and maths 5-9
 15. Disadvantaged gap:
 - Progress 8
 - Attainment 8
 - ENG
 - MATHS
 16. SEN gap
 17. Gender gap
 18. EAL gap
 19. Number of NEETS
 20. Number of EHE
 21. Number of CME
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