



## **Allocation of Schools to the Excellence Clusters**

### **PROPOSED ACTION**

1. Recommend approval of the proposed grouping of schools for Excellence Cluster allocations.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

2. The Education Action Zone – EAZ – will be ending in March 2005 and the schools in the Excellence Cluster and the EAZ need to be re-assigned as some schools are currently in both.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The EAZ was established in Derby in April 2000. It was established under legislation as a separate legal entity with a Director and an Executive taking responsibility for the running of the organisation. Derby City Council is a significant partner in the EAZ Charitable Trust. The DfES is now implementing a programme of transforming EAZs into Excellence Clusters. Excellence Clusters are a number of designated DfES funded projects where schools work in partnership with their LEA in order to improve attainment, behaviour and attendance.
- 3.2 The Council already has an Excellence Cluster, which was established in September 2002. There are a number of schools which are members of both the EAZ and Excellence Cluster.
- 3.3 This change means that the Council will have overall responsibility for both the Excellence Cluster grants, although the activities and developments in schools must be planned and delivered in a partnership between schools and the Education Service and in accordance with DfES guidance. The grant for the Excellence Clusters is predicted to be £2.4M in 2005/06. This is subject to DfES agreeing to the proposed list of schools in Appendix 2. The proposed membership list aims to include as many schools as possible within DfES criteria in order to secure maximum grant. However, there is a possibility that DfES will decide to include fewer schools. The available grant would therefore be less than predicted.

- 3.4 The Education Service proposed a radical change to the arrangements proposed by the DfES. This change involved the transformation of the EAZ into an Excellence Cluster in March 2005 and the development of an Excellence Cluster Plus to include all schools in Derby. The reasons for this proposal were to:
- develop a coherent partnership between the Education Service and all schools to promote school improvement and inclusion
  - secure additional funding for those schools which would be outside the Excellence Clusters in order to promote dissemination of good practice
  - maximise the use of school improvement and inclusion grants in a co-ordinated way across all schools and services.
- 3.5 This proposal was given the strong support of the DfES, the EAZ and the current Excellence Cluster. The DfES has allocated an additional £0.55M to support the proposal which is regarded as highly innovative. The funding will be available from September 2005 – March 2006. DfES is proposing to make changes to the grant arrangements after March 2006. Further guidance will be issued to LEAs in due course. The Education Service and the schools will need to review the arrangements at that point.
- 3.6 It is proposed to allocate schools to the Excellence Clusters and the Excellence Cluster Plus on the basis of a set of indicators which include levels of deprivation, school performance, ethnicity data, SEN data, exclusions and attendance. The DfES require The proposed allocation is attached as Appendix 2. Those schools, which are not included, will be within the Excellence Cluster Plus as indicated in Appendix 2. (Littleover and Murray Park Schools have previously been identified with the DfES as Cluster members, and we will be required to extend their membership of Excellence Clusters up to 2006.)
- 3.7 The grant is allocated according to DfES guidance which includes an expectation of a high level of delegation of the grant to schools. The exact amounts to be delegated to each school will be determined on the basis of a formula agreed by the Education Service and the schools partnership.
- 3.8 The Education Service, in partnership with schools, is proposing to coordinate planning of professional development and other activities to promote school improvement and inclusion on a city-wide basis using these grants and other school improvement grants. This will improve coordination and the efficient and effective use of such grants with the purpose of continuing to raise standards in schools. The working arrangements for the Excellence Clusters will be developed in partnership with schools during autumn 2004.
- 3.9 The Education Service is currently consulting with schools on the proposal in this respect. This consultation will be completed on 21 July. There has been a minimal response to date, but if any major concerns arise at that time, the Executive Member for Lifelong Learning will be consulted.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4. Various approaches to the allocation of schools were considered, but the proposed model meets the DfES criteria for allocation to the Excellence Clusters and reflects the context of individual schools.

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**Background papers:** None

**List of appendices:** Appendix 1 – Implications  
Appendix 2 - Proposed Allocation of Schools

**IMPLICATIONS****Financial**

1. The overall grant allocated for these activities in 2005/6 is £2.9M (subject to final approval from the DfES). The grant is subject to current Council financial regulations. The Council is the accountable body for the use of the grant. Funding may be subject to claw-back by the DfES if targets are not met.

**Legal**

2. The closure of the EAZ as a legal entity is subject to detailed guidance from the DfES. The new Excellence Cluster will be subject to the same accountability as the existing Excellence Cluster in that the Council will have overall responsibility for the delivery of plans and financial management. From 17 April 2005 the EAZ will cease to exist as a separate legal entity.

**Personnel**

3. Personnel who are appointed to short-term contracts as part of the use of the Excellence Cluster grant will be employees of the Council. The transformation from the EAZ to the new Excellence Cluster will require changes in the conditions of employment for some staff currently employed by the EAZ. A long-standing agreement between the Council and the EAZ Executive to use the Council's policy on re-deployment will be used to ensure smooth transition to the new arrangement. It is anticipated that six staff will be affected by this procedure. However, it is likely that under the new arrangements, the Excellence Cluster will require the skills and expertise of some of these staff and they will transfer to similar posts within the Excellence Cluster arrangements. However, these posts will remain grant funded. This may have implications after March 2006, dependent on DfES arrangements for grant allocation. There is still a risk of redundancy for a small number of staff. Any redundancy costs will be funded by the EAZ grant. Consultation is already underway with trade union representatives about the Excellence Cluster and the exit strategy for the EAZ.

**Equalities impact**

4. The proposed allocation of schools to the Excellence Clusters has taken into account the needs of more vulnerable pupils, families and their communities.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 5.1 The proposal comes under the Council's objective of education. The resources allocated to the Excellence Clusters will promote the improvement of overall standards in schools.
- 5.2 The proposal will place a particular emphasis on tackling under-achievement in schools. Resources will be allocated to reducing poor behaviour, improving attendance and supporting schools in serious weaknesses and special measures.

<b>PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF SCHOOLS</b>
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Excellence Cluster funding should be targeted at those schools where barriers to learning are more likely to cause under-achievement, low attendance and higher than average exclusion.

A range of school data was analysed in order to give a picture of which schools faced the higher levels of need for additional support within this context. The data range included:

Attendance (3 year averages)

End of Key Stage attainment data (3 year averages)

English as an additional language

Number of children in public care

Number of asylum seekers + refugees

Number of pupils with additional educational needs as reflected by School Action Plus data

Number of statemented pupils

Percentage of ethnic minorities

Percentage of free school meals taken

Permanent exclusions (3 year averages)

Pupil turnover (transience)

School performance and assessment (Panda) data (3 year averages)

Temporary exclusions (3 year averages)

The data was combined into a formula which placed schools into a rank order of need. This ranking was used in order to identify which schools currently faced the highest levels of need. These schools are recommended for inclusion in the two Excellence Clusters from April 2005.

### **Secondary Schools**

Bemrose Community School

Derby Moor Community School

High View School and Technology Centre

Lees Brook Community Sports College

Littleover Community School

Merrill College

Murray Park Community School

Noel-Baker Community School

Sinfin Community School

West Park Community School

### **Primary, Infant and Junior Schools**

Allenton Community Primary School

Alvaston Infant School

Alvaston Junior School

Arboretum Primary School

Ash Croft Primary School

Ashgate Primary School

Asterdale Primary School  
Beaufort Community Primary School  
Bishop Lonsdale Church of England (Aided) Primary School  
Brackensdale Infant School  
Brackensdale Junior School  
Breadsall Hill Infant Top School  
Breadsall Hill Junior Top School  
Cavendish Close Infant School  
Cavendish Close Junior School  
Chaddesden Park Infant School  
Chaddesden Park Junior School  
Dale Community Primary School  
Derwent Community School  
Gayton Community Junior School  
Hardwick Primary  
Homefields Primary  
Markeaton Primary School  
Meadow Farm Community Primary School  
Moorhead Primary School  
Nightingale Infant School  
Nightingale Junior School  
Normanton Village Infant School  
Oakwood Infant School  
Oakwood Junior School  
Pear Tree Infant School  
Pear Tree Junior School  
Redwood Infant School  
Redwood Junior School  
Reigate Primary School  
Roe Farm Primary School  
Rosehill Infant and Nursery School  
Sinfin Primary School  
St Chad's Church of England (Controlled) Nursery and Infant School  
St George's Catholic Primary School  
St James' C of E Infant School  
St James' C of E Junior School  
St John Fisher Catholic Primary School  
Sunnyhill Infant School  
Wilmorton Community Primary School

### **“Primary Expansion” Schools**

These 5 schools featured towards the top of the needs index, but have previously been identified by the DfES as schools to be included in Excellence Clusters via the “Primary Expansion Scheme”. Thereby, the schools will be in an Excellence Cluster from September 2004 and are precluded from the list above.

Grampian Primary School  
Boulton Primary School  
Firs Estate Primary School  
Normanton Junior School  
Becket Primary School

## **Excellence Cluster Plus**

Schools which face a lower level of need, as measured by the needs index, will nonetheless face similar challenges to the schools listed above. These have therefore been identified to be members of the Excellence Cluster Plus. They are:

### **Secondary Schools**

Chellaston School  
Saint Benedict Catholic School and Performing Arts College  
Woodlands Community School

### **Primary, Infant and Junior Schools**

Borrow Wood Infant School  
Borrow Wood Junior School  
Brookfield Primary School  
Carlyle Infant School  
Chellaston Infant School  
Chellaston Junior School  
Cherry Tree Hill Infant School  
Cherry Tree Hill Junior School  
Griffe Field Primary School  
Lawn Primary School  
Mickleover Primary School  
Parkview Primary School  
Portway Infant School  
Portway junior School  
Ravensdale Infant School  
Ravensdale Junior School  
Ridgeway Infant School  
Shelton Infant School  
Shelton Junior School  
Silverhill Primary School  
Springfield Primary School  
St Alban's Catholic Primary School  
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School  
St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
St Peter's Junior School  
St Werburgh's Church of England (Aided) Primary School  
Walter Evans Church of England (Aided) Primary School  
Wren Park Primary School

### **Special Schools**

Ivy House  
St Andrew's  
St Clare's  
St Giles  
St Martin's