



## Lewisham Schools Forum

**Report title: Proposed de-delegation for Lewisham Learning (school improvement) 2024/25**

**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Key decision:** No

**Item number:** 6

### Outline and recommendations

To maintain the 2023-24 level of de-delegation from April 2024 for 1 year and increase the TRIIE budget (£40K) if agreed by Schools Forum. If forum agrees to this, the partnership board will:

- ensure the LA, through the Lewisham Learning partnership can carry out its statutory role,
- further develop the TRIIE workstream to focus on:
  - Curriculum Toolkit for schools – launch September 2024
  - Young Mayors Team – working directly with students in Y6,7,8,9,
  - Continue to deliver Governors Toolkit Training,
  - Develop an evaluation tool to share with governors and identify how governors are using the toolkit to share as good practice,
  - Future Leaders programme, delivered by the South London Teaching Alliance – 20 places for Lewisham Leaders (September 2024)

### Timeline of engagement and decision-making

To implement funding arrangements to ensure spend for 2024/25 is within budget allocations.

Schools Forum to support the Lewisham Learning partnership by funding an additional £40K for 2024/25 and to maintain the current level of de-delegated funding.

Schools forum to agree a further report in January outlining the revised offer for 2025/26.

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## 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Schools Forum with;
- A summary of the current funding arrangements for Lewisham Learning to August 2024.
  - A report on the impact of Lewisham Learning 2023-24.
  - **A recommendation from the Lewisham Learning Strategic Board to maintain the 2024-25 level of de-delegation as recommended from April 2024 for one year and to contribute a further £40,000.00 towards the Tackling Race Inequality in Education project.**

## 2. Background

- 2.1. Lewisham Learning is a partnership of Lewisham schools and the Local Authority. The purpose of the partnership is to improve school performance amongst member schools.
- 2.2. The partnership is overseen and governed by the Lewisham Learning Strategic Board. The board provides overall strategic direction and approves an annual work programme including the monitoring of the budget.
- 2.3. The board meets at least six times a year.
- 2.4. Membership of the board is kept under review but seeks to represent key stakeholders including:
- Executive Director CYP
  - Lead Council Member with responsibility for Children & Young People
  - Director of Education
  - Maintained Secondary Governor Representative
  - Maintained Primary Governor Representative
  - Leadership Forum Representative
  - Secondary School Leadership Forum Representative
  - Maintained Nursery and primary School Head Teacher Representative
  - Maintained Special School Head Teacher Representative
  - Non-Maintained, Academy Head Teacher/ CEO Representative
  - Tackling Race Inequality Steering Group Head Teacher Representative
  - London South Teaching School Representative

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### 3. De-delegation, School Improvement

- 3.1. DfE guidance enables Local Authorities to provide services centrally which are funded by a process known as de-delegation. The de-delegation process must be agreed every year by school forum.

### 4. Recommendations

- 4.1. The Lewisham Learning Strategic Board met on 19 April 2024 and considered the future funding and role of Lewisham Learning.
- 4.2. The board agreed to recommend that school forum agree to:
- **maintain the 2023-24 level of de-delegation from April 2024 for 1 year and increase the TRIIE budget (£40K) if agreed by Schools Forum**
  - **agree to receive a further report in December, to consider the 2025/26 offer recognising further changes in funding arising from additional de-delegations.**
- 4.3. If forum agrees to this the partnership board will:
- ensure the LA, through the Lewisham Learning partnership can carry out its statutory role;
  - further develop the TRIIE workstream to focus on:
    - Curriculum Toolkit for schools – launch September 2024,
    - Young Mayors Team – working directly with students in Y6,7,8,9,
    - Continue to deliver Governors Toolkit Training,
    - Develop an evaluation tool to share with governors and identify how governors are using the toolkit to share as good practice,
    - Future Leaders programme, delivered by the South London Teaching Alliance – 20 places for Lewisham Leaders (September 2024).

### 5. Funding and the offer

- 5.1. Since September 2023 the partnership has been funded from 2 sources:
- An amount de-delegated from maintained school budgets, through the school forum, to deliver a range of discretionary school improvement activities to maintained schools.
  - An amount provided by the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to fund a 3-year pilot to develop Oracy – “Talk Matters”. The aim of the pilot is to develop effective practice which will be disseminated nationally. The aim is to reduce exclusions/suspensions, increase attendance, reduce the need to Speech and Language referrals and support parental health and wellbeing.

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## 5.2. The Universal Offer

- Since 2017 discretionary school improvement activities have been provided to maintained schools in Lewisham. These have been funded by de- delegation from maintained school budgets, through the school forum.

## 6. Expenditure

### 6.1. The Core Offer

- The core improvement activities included in the LA commission (The universal offer) are set out in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) and on page 47 of the Schools Causing Concern guidance. They include:
  - understand the performance of maintained schools in their area, using data as a starting point to identify any maintained school that is underperforming, while working with them to explore ways to support progress,
  - brokering school improvement provision for maintained schools,
  - intervening in maintained schools as appropriate,
  - encouraging good and outstanding maintained schools to take responsibility for their own improvement; support other maintained schools; and enable other maintained schools to access the support they need to improve,
  - making provision to carry out statutory assessment duties for key stage 2,
  - advising on the appointment of headteachers in maintained schools,
  - limited duties in relation to school governors.
- The Lewisham Learning School Improvement Framework 2024-25 sets out the processes and procedures by which the Lewisham Learning partnership works to ensure all schools offer the highest quality of education to all pupils. It reaffirms the statutory roles and responsibilities of school governors and the Local Authority and should be read in conjunction with the Local Authority Education Strategy.
- The allocation of resources for the universal programme is transparent and in inverse proportion to success. Schools are categorised in line with the School Improvement Framework and those with the greatest needs or carrying the greatest risk of not securing good outcomes, receive higher levels of support than those with less need or risk. This programme is highly successful in assessing risk and intervening early so that the LA can accurately predict Ofsted outcomes and ensure schools get the right levels of support and challenge in a timely way. The universal programme provides a suitably qualified School Improvement Partner (SIP) for all schools to support accurate

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categorisation and ensures resources and interventions go where they are needed. It also provides a framework for good and outstanding schools to support other schools.

## **6.2. The Universal Programme for LA Maintained Schools**

- Currently the universal programme is driven by the needs of maintained schools as agreed by the strategic board. These priorities reflect issues identified through a range of sources, including data and emerging issues
- The allocation of the universal programme is transparent. Its aims are to meet the school improvement needs of the maintained primary and secondary schools. In 2023/24 the programme funded;
  - Management costs of the programme (£114,000)
  - Primary, Secondary & PRU funds including the core school offer, support for schools expecting an Ofsted inspection and new Head teacher induction (£312,000)
  - Tackling Race Inequality programme (£26,148, with a further £82,500 ringfenced)
  - Data analysis services and reports for schools – MIME (£55,900)
  - VRU funding for “Talk Matters” – 3 year funding (£137,500 pa)
  - Communications (£20,000 reducing in 2024/25)

## **6.3. Central costs of running the partnership to include leadership and management.**

- In 2023/24 the central costs are estimated to be around £114k. The partnership has a Head of Service and a part time project manager. The partnership uses the expertise of Lewisham school leaders whenever possible. This is a key strategy and highly successful.
- Where staff are engaged in the delivery of programmes their costs are apportioned to those programmes. For example, the Head of Service carries out school improvement partner work, implements statutory assessment duties and delivers projects (VRU – Talk Matters).

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## 7. Impact of the work of Lewisham Learning

### 7.1. Lewisham Learning:

- Has a good understanding of the performance of partnership schools.
- Encourages good and outstanding schools to take responsibility for their own improvement and to support other schools. School Develop Groups (SDGs) and Core schools highlighted the benefits of collaborative working:



- Enables maintained schools to purchase from a diverse market of providers and be the broker where collective buying power can be used to best effect.
- Signposts where schools can access appropriate support.
- Secures strong and effective leadership and governance for maintained schools that are not providing a good enough education, by identifying and supporting successful partners.
- Facilitates the identification and sharing of most effective practice

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## 7.2. The Universal Programme

- The partnership provides support and challenge for all Lewisham maintained schools. Depending on their agreed category some schools benefit more from the service than others. In 2023-24 there are **2** schools were categorised as needing a high level of support, **4** schools categorised as needing a medium level of support, and **73** schools categorised as needing a core level of support. The numbers of schools categorised as high level and medium level has reduced significantly since the creation of Lewisham Learning in 2017.
- The universal programme is intended to ensure Lewisham Learning monitors performance, broker's appropriate support and intervenes in schools that are causing concern.
- Evidence suggests **monitoring performance** is done well. Each school is visited regularly and their performance against key performance indicators is evaluated and verified. Support is offered in a targeted way to ensure any strengths are maximised and weaknesses addressed. Lewisham Learning evaluations are consistently found to match those of Ofsted inspectors.
- As the approach is **preventative** and designed to ensure schools get the best outcomes it is difficult to quantify how many schools have better Ofsted reports than they would have without Lewisham Learning but the percentage of Lewisham schools with better than national judgements from Ofsted is a good indicator that the approach is successful. There is also evidence that those outcomes have been improved over the life of Lewisham Learning (Table 1) and that the approach has been most successful for all schools.

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**Table 1 – Ofsted % of schools as of May 2024 (source Watchsted website).**

Please note that since 2021 Outstanding schools are no longer exempt from routine Ofsted inspection. Nationally the % of Outstanding schools has declined this trend is reflected in Lewisham.

All schools	Outstanding 2019	Outstanding 2024	Good 2019	Good 2024	Requires Improvement 2019	Requires Improvement 2024	Inadequate 2019	Inadequate 2024
National	18.2%	12.3%	67.5%	78.1% ↑	10.8%	8.1% ↓	3.6%	1.5% ↓
London	33.9%	23.7%	59.9%	72.0%	4.5%	3.9%	1.7%	0.3%
Lewisham	27.3%	16.7%	62.3%	82.1% ↑	10.4%	1.3% ↓	0%	0% ↓
Primary Schools	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Inadequate
National Primary	17.6%	11.7%	70%	79.9% ↑	9.6%	7.2% ↓	2.6%	1.1% ↓
London Primary	32.4%	22.9%	63.1%	73.8%	3.4%	3.2%	0.9%	0.2%
Lewisham Primary	32.4%	15.6%	66.7%	84.4% ↑	4.8%	0% ↓	0%	0% ↓
Secondary Schools	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Inadequate
National Secondary	21.2%	15.0%	54.9%	68.9% ↑	16.8%	12.6%	7.1% ↓	3.5% ↓
London Secondary	40%	26.9%	46.9%	65.9%	9.1%	6.6%	4%	0.6%
Lewisham Secondary	21.4%	14.0%	42.9%	79.0% ↑	35.7%	7.1%	0% ↓	0% ↓

- Table 2 is also evidence that the approach to **brokering support** is successful. School improvement partners match a good or outstanding school with one needing support and monitors and quality assures this support. School improvement partners are, in the main, leaders of Lewisham Schools so this also provides good opportunities for leaders to improve their practice and share that practice with other local schools.
- The third role of the universal programme is to **intervene in schools “causing concern” or inadequate** (DfE criteria). As table 2 shows Lewisham does not have any schools that meet those criteria. Lewisham Learning’s preventative approach and robust support and challenge for schools categorised as needing high level support is a significant factor in maintaining that.

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**Table 2- Number of schools in each category (Direction of travel →)**

	High			Medium			Core			Total		
<b>Maintained Schools</b>	21	22	23	21	22	23	21	22	23	21	22	23
<b>Primary/Nursery</b>	5	1	0	10	8	4	49	54	59	64	63	63
<b>Secondary</b>	2	2	2	4	0	0	4	8	8	10	10	10
<b>Special/ Pru</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	6	6	6	6
<b>Total</b>	7	3	2	14	8	4	59	68	73	80	79	79

### 7.3. The universal programme

- The activities provided through the universal programme are generally well received and have high levels of engagement. The School Development Group (SDG) model is popular with schools and an increasing option for schools across the borough.
- The Council wide commitment to tackling race inequalities, includes work in services across the Council and a key piece of this work is actively tackling race inequality in our schools. Tackling race inequality funded by Lewisham Learning involving all Lewisham schools and the college commenced in September 2021. It was funded for 3 years.
- The main aims are to:
  - Close the historic attainment gap which was 7-10% at the start of the programme and improve life chances;
  - Tackle systemic bias and racism;
  - Address and reduce disproportionately high rates of exclusions; and
  - Support parents and communities
- In January 2024, a report was submitted to CYP Select Committee to update the Council on the progress of the TRIIE work across Lewisham schools. The report highlighted some positive outcomes in relation to the first 3 years of the project. It was agreed at the Steering Group in March 2024 that more focused activities and funding will allow the Board to deliver

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significant tangible outcomes against the agreed performance indicators.

- 7.4.** It was agreed that the following actions would be the focus going forward:
- Curriculum Toolkit for schools – launch September 2024
  - Young Mayors Team – working directly with students in Y6,7,8,9
  - Continue to deliver Governors Toolkit Training
  - Develop an evaluation tool to share with governors and identify how governors are using the toolkit to share as good practice
  - Future Leaders programme, delivered by the South London Teaching Alliance – 20 places for Lewisham Leaders (September 2024)
- 7.5.** The primary and secondary projects or “core school offer” is very popular with schools. It enables all school leaders to ring fence funds for school improvement partners to monitor that schools are prioritising activities appropriately.

## **8. Options for the future of Lewisham Learning (see table 3 for costings)**

- 8.1.** At the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024 the strategic board considered the following option for 2024/25 funding of Lewisham Learning.
- 8.2** Maintain the 2023/24 programme and maintain de-delegation at the 2023/24 level of £405k and protecting the universal programme, plus contribute £40,000.00 to continue the Tackling Race Inequality in Education project. The likely risk of impact on the quality and scope of the universal programme is a decline in the percentage of schools that are judged good or better and pupil outcomes at Key Stage 2 and 4 remain below London and do not improve. Outcomes for pupils of Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean heritage remain well below national and London and the gap in education outcomes does not improve.

**Table 3 Options**

Income	2023/24	2024/25
De-delegated School Improvement Funding	450,000	405,000
Carry Forward	207,000	157,000
Additional known income (sales of training places to academies, schools topping up support etc)	11,193	
De-delegated funding requested for TRIIE		40,000
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>668,193</b>	<b>602,000</b>

- Carry Forward – The carry forward is dedicated to school improvement so that SIP deployment responds to the changing needs of schools in a timely manner and secures the quality of education. This is decreasing as resources are allocated throughout the year. As part of the core offer to schools, Lewisham Learning has been more robust in processing funds linked to school improvement activities and we are committed to ensuring that all schools access the funded offers. We are currently reviewing the funded core offer to schools so that it better reflects school improvement priorities.

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Expenditure	2023/24	2024/25
Central / Management costs	109,000	114,000
<b>Universal programme</b>		
Primary projects	203,000	203,000
Secondary/PRU projects	109,500	109,500
Training offer	0	42,000
Data analysis services	55,900	60,000
Tackling Race Inequality <small>*Spent £26,148 with ringfenced funds of £82,500 from 2023/24 committed to delivery in 2024/25</small>	108,648	40,000
Communications	20,000	15,000
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>606,048</b>	<b>583,500</b>

- Talk Matters (VRU ringfenced funded programme) £137,500 for 3 years working with 5 identified schools in Years 1 and 2 and including a further 5 schools in Year 3.

### 8.3 Funding changes going forward in 2025/26:

**Table 4**

<b>School converted/converting to academy status:</b>	
<b>Leathersellers' Federation Trust</b> (Date of academy transfer: Monday 1 January 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prendergast School</li> <li>• Prendergast Ladywell School (including Primary)</li> <li>• Prendergast Vale School (including Primary)</li> <li>• Prendergast Sixth Form</li> </ul>
<b>St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust</b> (Date of academy transfer: Monday 1 April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonus Pastor Catholic College</li> <li>• Our Lady and St Philip Neri</li> </ul>
<b>United Learning</b> (Date of academy transfer: Monday 1 April 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conisborough College</li> </ul>
<b>Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Multi-Academy Trust</b> (Date of anticipated academy transfer: 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St James Hatcham Primary</li> <li>• St Michaels</li> <li>• St Stephens</li> </ul>

**8.4** As a result of the completed and anticipated academy transfers, funding for Lewisham Learning is likely to be reduced by at least £40K.

**8.5** In December 2024, Schools Forum will receive an update that will outline the proposals listed below. A bespoke offer will be created for academies in Lewisham.

### 8.6 Current funding options being considered for 2025/26:

- Increasing the number of School Development Groups in primary schools
- Revisiting the core visit offer to schools
- Reshaping the secondary school offer that reflects the School Development Group (SDG) offer that currently existing in the primary universal offer
- Reducing the number of School Improvement Partners
- Producing a traded school improvement offer for schools in Lewisham who are part of a Multi Academy Trust, based on pupil numbers

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## 9. Financial implications

- 9.1. Following from the January forum report that confirmed the 2024/25 de-delegation, schools forum agreed that Lewisham Learning would provide a paper for consideration with a view to securing additional funding from schools contingency to support the fall out of funding arising from schools academizing. This report therefore requests a one off value of £40k
- 9.2. The report further seeks agreement that a report is presented to the January 2025/26 meeting to clarify the 2025/26 Lewisham Learning offer

## 10. Legal implications

- 10.1. There are no significant legal implications of this report.

## 11. Equalities implications

- 11.1. There are no direct implications arising from this report

## 12. Climate change and environmental implications

- 12.1. There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

## 13. Crime and disorder implications

- 13.1. There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

## 14. Health and wellbeing implications

- 14.1. There are no direct implications arising from this report

## 15. Report authors and contact

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