



THE Partnership

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Partnership

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PROSPECTUS
Improving Schools together

LETTER FROM THE INTERIM CHAIR, CHRISTINE GILBERT, CBE

Dear Colleagues,

Education has always been important to Tower Hamlets and remains a top priority for everyone who lives and works here. It is a powerful force for regeneration and change. I know that is why so many of you work so hard to ensure your schools are strong and your children thrive. Many of your schools are among the very best in the country; Tower Hamlets' schools have a national and even international reputation for excellence. You should all be tremendously proud of what you are achieving.

But this educational excellence has not come about by chance. Just over 20 years ago, Tower Hamlets was one of the very worst-performing local authorities. Children and young people were not being served well. In response to this situation, schools, local communities and the Council worked tirelessly together, united in moral purpose, to improve education and raise standards in Tower Hamlets' schools.

The scale of transformation has been huge and our schools have come a long way. But there is still much to do before every young person in Tower Hamlets leaves school with the qualifications and skills he or she needs in the 21st century. Tower Hamlets Education (THE) Partnership is being established to help continue this journey of transformation.

The role of the Local Authority in education has changed in the last 20 years. However, it has always been important for councils to work in partnership with schools, communities and the business world. Although the government intends to remove formal responsibility for education from local authorities, I know that Tower Hamlets Council will remain ambitious for education because it is ambitious for its communities.

In recent years, we have seen a school-led approach to improvement go from strength to strength. Not only have Tower Hamlets' schools taken on responsibility for their own improvement, but they have also ensured that other schools have the support they need to improve. It is in this context that our schools have worked together to design and establish THE Partnership as a schools-led vehicle for driving continued school improvement and innovation. It is a new partnership, but it is rooted in the highly successful collaboration that has characterised and underpinned education in the borough over the last two decades.

In this prospectus, we present a vision and values that will resonate with most of our schools. We want to establish a partnership that operates as a family – where schools support, learn, and sometimes even argue with each other in their determination to do the very best for every child.

We have not yet pinned down every last detail about how THE Partnership will work. This will change over time as THE Partnership develops and grows in response to its members' views and needs.

What will remain constant is our passionate ambition for our children and young people to succeed. Please join THE Partnership and make a vigorous contribution to the next chapter of the Tower Hamlets' successful transformation story.

Sincerely

Christine Gilbert



IMPROVING SCHOOLS TOGETHER

A. OUR VISION AND VALUES

The schools in THE Partnership are united in striving to deliver sustainable high-quality services with a shared moral purpose. The vision and values of THE Partnership lie at the heart of the collaboration between members and form the basis for each member's participation.

A1. OUR VISION

THE Partnership's vision is that our schools and other educational settings should build on an existing culture of collaborative working — initially focused on school improvement — to enable all the borough's children and young people to experience the best possible educational opportunities, outcomes and life chances.

A2. OUR VALUES

The core values to which THE Partnership members are committed are:

Aspiration

- Promoting and striving for excellent outcomes for all children
- Continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning
- Developing best practice
- At the forefront of school improvement, both nationally and internationally



Trust and support

- Collegiality and mutual support as part of a family of schools
- Investing in collaborative working within THE Partnership
- A voice for all members
- Supporting one another as critical friends to improve teaching and learning and outcomes for children and young people
- Innovation through working together

Equality and inclusion

- Equal opportunities
- Fairness in operation and decision-making
- Fair admissions and fair access policies
- Promoting and supporting cohesion and integration
- A voice and involvement for parents, for children and young people, for school staff and for the wider community

Transparency and accountability

- Open and transparent partnership governance and decision-making
- Welcoming challenge from each other, local people and elected representatives
- Working to agreed accountability measures

B. OUTCOMES TO BE ACHIEVED

Outcomes are important to THE Partnership. We want to be sure that a school-led approach is accelerating progress and serving children and young people in Tower Hamlets better and better each year. THE Partnership intends to measure its performance against the expected outcomes set out in the table opposite. We will be discussing these with members of THE Partnership over the next few months to ensure they reflect shared ambitions and aspirations.

Baselines, targeted outcomes and means of measurement will be set after discussion with members of THE Partnership. They will be specific, ambitious and focused on the local context in Tower Hamlets.

Outcomes to be achieved	Measured by:
All schools in THE Partnership at least 'good', and proportion of 'outstanding' schools among the highest in the country	Ofsted
Overall attainment and progress levels among member schools and other educational settings at all stages of education (from nursery through primary to secondary and including special schools and alternative provision) among the best in the country	Benchmarked attainment levels
Improved outcomes and progress for different groups of children and young people, with evidence of attainment and opportunity gaps being identified and addressed (including for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities; post-16; young people not in education, employment or training)	Benchmarked attainment levels
Attendance figures in member schools among the best in the country	Benchmarked performance
Exclusions figures in member schools among the lowest in the country	Benchmarked performance
A reputation for excellence at national and international levels	Examples of accreditation, feedback, press reports, conference invitations etc
	Recruitment and retention
A year-on-year increase in THE Partnership membership	Membership levels
High levels of member participation and satisfaction	Number of schools making use of THE Partnership additional services
	Satisfaction levels
Strong staff motivation and commitment in member schools	Recruitment and retention figures
	Staff surveys
Strong leadership development in member schools at all levels, including governance	Number of staff moving into leadership positions
	Examples of strength of leadership
Effective development of innovative practice	Examples of innovative partnership working
High levels of satisfaction among local communities	Feedback from parents and pupils
	Feedback from local councillors
	Feedback from partners
	Demand for places in member schools

WHAT CAN FULL MEMBER SCHOOLS EXPECT FROM THE PARTNERSHIP AS IT DEVELOPS?

CURRENT MODEL: Local Authority Provision

School Improvement Services (statutory plus traded)

Other services

The Local Authority provides a wide range of other statutory and traded services: THE Partnership may explore with the Local Authority the potential for commissioning some of these.

Examples include:

- Admissions & Appeals
- Attendance & Welfare
- Careers Service
- Educational Psychology
- Energy services
- Governor Services
- Professional Development Centre
- Schools Library Service & HEC

COMMISSIONED

THE FUTURE: THE Partnership provision

(This list is not exhaustive and will be developed with member schools)

- Support for research
- Commissioned innovation projects
- Support for school-to-school working
- Bespoke support for collaborative project work
- Support for identification and sharing of good practice

- Leadership development programmes, including for executive and system leadership, at all levels
- New headteacher mentoring and support
- NQT training, support and accreditation
- CPD and staff development
- Information tracking and management
- Support for Ofsted i.e. inspections
- Improving management of behaviour and attendance
- Improving safeguarding practice, including Prevent

- Peer review: critical friend support and challenge
- Support for headteachers appointment panels
- Support for governor / trustee appointment panels
- Support for governor / trustee development
- Monitoring of impact

School Improvement Services, including:

- Monitoring and analysis of academic results and performance
- Critical friend discussion of analysis
- Brokerage of interventions where a significant issue for concern is identified
- Annual report for the Council on the quality of education in Tower Hamlets

Certain of the Local Authority's current traded services

Continued Local Authority education statutory duties will focus on:

- Ensuring every child has a school place
- Ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are identified and met
- Acting as champions for all parents and families

C. THE PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

A school-led system of improvement is one in which:

Leaders, teachers and schools are in control of, and responsible for, their own improvement

Leaders, teachers and schools learn from each other so that effective practice spreads more quickly

The best schools and leaders extend their reach across other schools so that all schools improve

Groups of schools (such as clusters, MATs and teaching school alliances) facilitate, commission and broker support and challenge to individual schools and other groups of schools

Schools collaborate and access the support they need

By leaders we not only mean headteachers and staff in schools but also governors. There are many examples of school-led improvement now in Tower Hamlets and THE Partnership will seek to advance what is already happening. This will be reflected in the programme offered for 2016/17 and the long-term work of THE Partnership will develop it further.

The freedom offered by THE Partnership's status as an independent organisation will allow it to build on the foundation of a school-led model of improvement. We want to grow an organisation which can invest in innovative development to strengthen its impact on the education of the children and young people in its member schools.

THE Partnership's immediate focus will be school improvement as described briefly below. This has become even more pressing with the publication of the *Educational Excellence Everywhere* White Paper (DfE, 2016), which sets out the government's intention to remove the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities for school improvement from September 2017.

In short order, however, we would expect to be able to broaden THE Partnership's role.

NOW → JULY 2016 → SEPTEMBER - APRIL 2017 → FUTURE

INNOVATION
Collaborative research & new directions

DEVELOPMENT
Schools, leaders & staff

PEER REVIEW
Support & challenge for improvement & development

AMBITIOUS SUPPORT
Based on monitoring & review of local information

Local Authority Commissioning
THE Partnership SCHOOLS-LED

LOCAL AUTHORITY-LED
All services & functions



C1. LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets intends to commission THE Partnership to provide the school improvement services currently provided by the Local Authority. THE Partnership will therefore have a role with all Tower Hamlets schools, not just those that are its members. The commissioning agreement between the Local Authority and THE Partnership, which is currently being formulated, will include specific expectations of THE Partnership's delivery of school improvement services.

C2. REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

During 2016/17, THE Partnership will assume responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the quality of education in Tower Hamlets. This will entail identifying schools causing concern and making sure they have an effective support programme. It will also involve identifying aspects of good or interesting practice so that all schools can learn from it.

Over the next few months, we will contact each school to identify specific issues of concern and areas for development and ways of meeting those needs. We would also hope to identify areas of strength so we can begin the process of identifying centres of excellence which can be a resource for other schools.

THE Partnership has been asked to provide an annual report to the Council about the quality of education in schools in Tower Hamlets.

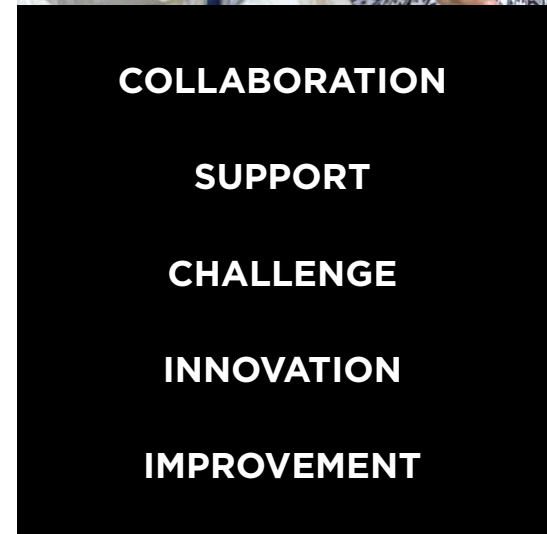
C3. SUPPORT OFFER FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

Overall, THE Partnership will act as a broker and conduit of knowledge of good practice to help member schools and groups of schools to support each other, and to ensure that the education for local children and young people continues to improve and standards continue to rise.

THE Partnership will draw on the expertise of school leaders – in all types and phases of schools, both across and outside of the borough – to support improvement and development work. This may involve secondments to THE Partnership.

Educational Excellence Everywhere underlines the importance of Teaching Schools and indicates that numbers will grow considerably in the next few years. Currently Tower Hamlets has four Teaching Schools and – more importantly – four Teaching School Alliances with much larger numbers of participating schools. These schools should prove a rich resource for THE Partnership, particularly in the three areas of their work emphasised in *Educational Excellence Everywhere*:

- Coordinating and delivering high-quality, school-based initial teacher training
- Providing high quality school-to-school support
- Providing evidence-based professional development for teachers and leaders



C4. PEER REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT

Peer review will be central to THE Partnership’s improvement and development work. It is a powerful way of raising aspirations and driving professional accountability. All member schools will be encouraged to participate in a process of peer review which is invariably a very positive development experience, both for the individuals taking part and the schools themselves. The peer review process will promote and stimulate innovation and school-to-school projects, and it will provide ‘critical friend’ challenge to drive continuous improvement and avoid coasting and complacency.

Peer review is likely to be focused around ‘clusters’ of schools. Peer review clusters may be one of several self-defining groups to which a school belongs: e.g. geographical, MATs, phase, cross-phase, mainstream, special / alternative provision, nursery, diocese. These clusters will be underpinned by a shared understanding of peer review protocols, and a joint commitment to both challenging and supporting one another.

The entire peer review process will be quality-assured to ensure consistency, fairness, challenge and continuous improvement. THE Partnership intends to ‘grow’ and develop peer review and challenge as an improvement tool.

C5. SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

THE Partnership support packages for member schools are likely to focus on specific areas, which might include:
Leadership and management development support, including executive leadership
Support for governors as school leaders and trustees
Training for staff in school and for governors on the skills necessary for school-to-school work
Advisory support for headteacher interviews and for deputy-head and assistant head appointments
Mentoring and support for newly appointed headteachers
NQT training, support and accreditation
CPD and staff development
Support to develop better teaching and learning, including access to specialist programmes
Innovative practice through the promotion of active research projects
Managing and using data
Support for Ofsted inspections
Pupil premium review
Improving management of behaviour and attendance
Improving safeguarding practice
Improving practice around Prevent

C6. BESPOKE PACKAGES

THE Partnership will be able to arrange tailored support for individual member schools or groups of schools.

C7. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT

Member schools will have access to a range of improvement opportunities such as:
Workshops for leaders on specific issues
Aspect and subject networks
Teachmeets and forums
Excellence visits
Best practice initiatives
Involvement in research studies

THE Partnership team will also signpost schools, as appropriate, to a range of other school improvement support providers. It will make connections with the professional development opportunities provided by the teaching unions, for example. It will also seek to connect with pan-London opportunities such as those provided by the London Leadership Strategy, the Mayor’s Education Programme, the Education Endowment Fund and local universities.

The role of THE Partnership in school improvement will be further developed to ensure a strong focus on innovative practice and a proactive approach to changes in national and local context. For example, the policy direction set out in *Educational Excellence Everywhere* will have significant implications for teacher recruitment and training, leadership development, and close and effective working relationships with teaching schools, MATs, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Local Authority.





D. WHO IS 'THE PARTNERSHIP'?

THE Partnership is made up of its member schools. It is intended to register it as a 'School Company' – a company limited by guarantee with charitable status – 100% owned by schools and other educational settings in the borough.

D1. MEMBERSHIP

There will be two categories of membership: 'full' and 'associate'. Initially, all publicly-funded schools within Tower Hamlets (including those within MATs) are eligible for full membership. Other schools, institutions and individuals wishing to support and be involved in

THE Partnership can become 'associate members', and access certain services. For further details about membership, and about the proposed structure and governance arrangements, please see the paper entitled "Arrangements for Membership & Governance" on our website: www.the-partnership.org.uk.

THE Partnership will not itself be a MAT. However, MATs are a growing feature of the education landscape and a good working relationship between THE Partnership and academy trusts, and the individual academies within them, will clearly be essential.

The government has signalled its intention that all schools become academies. THE Partnership would be well-placed to advise and support local schools through the conversion process. Responding to requests from schools, THE Partnership will investigate the possibility of setting up a subsidiary company to create a Multi-Academy Trust that could act as a 'sponsor' for local schools.

D2. GOVERNANCE

All full members of THE Partnership will be entitled to attend and vote at general meetings of all members – on a "one school, one vote" principle. At the AGM, they will appoint (or re-appoint) the directors of THE Partnership.

The directors of THE Partnership will collectively form the Board. The Board will provide strategic guidance for THE Partnership and hold the executive, operational management of THE Partnership to account. Board members will not be paid.

The Executive Director of THE Partnership will lead the day-to-day operation of THE Partnership's services and management of its staff. The Executive Director will be a paid employee of THE Partnership and will be expected to join the Board.

The Advisory Council will be a representative body made up of current school leaders and governors elected by the members to reflect the diversity of schools in the borough by phase, character and geographical spread. The Advisory Council will meet with the directors at least once per term, and more in the initial stages, to discuss the strategic direction and performance of THE Partnership.

D3. TRANSITIONAL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

THE Partnership's existing Steering Group has agreed transitional arrangements to get THE Partnership up and running. The Steering Group, made up of governors, heads and other school and staff representatives will perform the role of the Advisory Council until its final structure and composition are settled. This is expected to happen no later than March 2017.

The Steering Group has appointed an Interim Board of Directors to lead THE Partnership until the first formal Annual General Meeting of members. This is expected to take place in April 2017. The Interim Board will have a mandate to establish THE Partnership and bring it into full operation.

INTERIM BOARD

CHRISTINE GILBERT, CBE (INTERIM CHAIR)

Christine, a former teacher and secondary school headteacher, is a well-known figure in education. She was Her Majesty's Chief Inspector at Ofsted from 2006 to 2011, and she has worked as Chief Executive of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Corporate Director of Education in Tower Hamlets and Director of Education in the London Borough of Harrow. Christine is currently Visiting Professor at the UCL Institute of Education, and is involved in a number of local and national education projects. She is the Executive Chair of the charity, Future First.

AZIZ CHOUDHURY

Aziz is Chair of the Spitalfields Small Business Association, with whom he has worked for over 30 years. In the 1980s and 1990s he was Finance Director at Spitalfields Housing Association. He formed the Spitalfields Business Club, ran the local business newspaper, *East End Enterprise*, and has been involved in the governance of many local community projects: *East London Small Business Centre*; *ELBA*; *Bangla Housing Association* and *Consortium of Bengali Associations*. He is Director of the Montefiore Centre. Aziz also founded Jalalpur Degree College in Sylhet, and is General Secretary of the ROSAE Trust, which helps hospitals in Bangladesh.

SIR KEVAN COLLINS

Kevan has worked in public service for over 30 years and became the first Chief Executive of the Educational Endowment Foundation in 2011, having previously been Chief Executive of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Having started off as a primary school teacher, he went on to be National Director of the Primary Literacy Strategy and then Director of Children's Services in Tower Hamlets. Kevan also international experience having worked in Mozambique and supported the development of a national literacy initiative in the USA.

ROBERT CROTHERS

Rob has served as a school governor in Tower Hamlets for over ten years, including as a member of the Interim Executive Board of a school in special measures. He is also a partner at Clifford Chance LLP and a member of THE Partnership Steering Group.

MICHAEL KEATING

Michael first became a school governor in 1986, serving several local schools and Tower Hamlets College. From 1994 to 2002 he was a councillor and served as Chair of the Education Committee and Lead Member for Education. He later worked as a senior council officer with responsibilities including scrutiny, equality, cohesion and partnerships. Michael is currently supporting the development of integrated health and social care in Tower Hamlets and is chair of THE Partnership Steering Group.

SIR ALASDAIR MACDONALD

Alasdair was Headteacher of Morpeth School for 21 years until 2013, a school which was one of 12 schools nationally recognised by Ofsted as 'Achieving against the odds'. Alasdair has also worked in Malawi and Papua New Guinea, was a member of the DfE's Headteacher Reference Group and led a national review of PSHE. He is currently working for the Welsh Government on their Schools Challenge programme and as Advocate for their Pupil Premium initiative.

In addition, to provide continuity, the following are non-voting observers on the Interim Board:

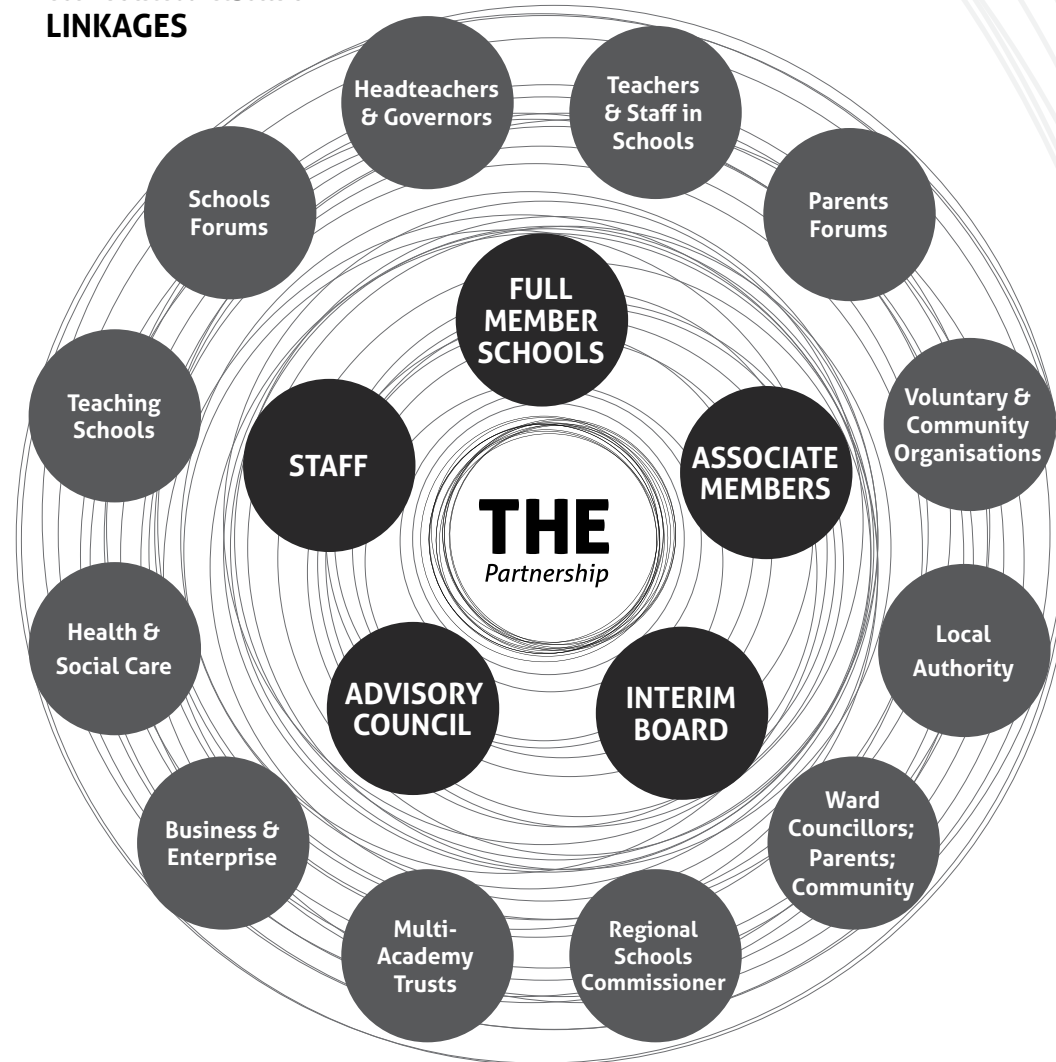
KATE BINGHAM – Service Head, Resources, Children's Services, London Borough of Tower Hamlets and an observer on the current Steering Group.

CATH SMITH – Headteacher, Bow School and current Steering Group Vice Chair.

An Interim Executive Director will be appointed on a temporary contract as soon as possible for an interim period, and will also sit on the Board. The substantive post will be filled through an open recruitment process as soon as possible.

The Interim Board intends to establish and incorporate THE Partnership as a legal entity by 30 June 2016, although applications for membership will be accepted immediately.

THE PARTNERSHIP: LINKAGES





E. FINANCE

E1. SERVICES TO SCHOOLS AND REVENUE STREAMS

Over the past decade schools have increasingly had greater delegation of their budgets and control over their spending. All schools, whether maintained or otherwise, purchase traded services to some degree. This process is accelerating, and THE Partnership will develop and deliver a range of services to all types of schools and other settings.

Income will be from the following sources:

Membership subscriptions from schools
Contracts with the Local Authority or central government for specific purposes
Income from traded services
Income from bespoke assignments
Income from grants or awards
Payment in kind, such as the use of the Professional Development Centre (PDC)
Hopefully, Local Authority seed funding and in-kind support for three years

Note: no specific figures for the Local Authority contract or seed funding are provided here as they need to be confirmed by the Council. However, the Mayor, John Biggs, has made clear his commitment to THE Partnership. The Cabinet meeting on 10 May 2016 will consider a report from the Corporate Director, Children's Services, on THE Partnership. Seed funding from the Council for the early years of its life would give very valuable support to THE Partnership in its progress towards sustainability.

E2. MEMBERSHIP FEES

These will be set initially at £5 per pupil for a full academic year, payable in advance.

No member school will have to pay any fees for the period from 1 September 2016 to 31 March 2017. Fees will then be charged from 1 April 2017 (for the period from 1 April to 31 August 2017). Full annual fees will be charged from 1 September 2017.

In general, to provide some budgeting certainty for THE Partnership, a member school will have to give one year's notice, in order to withdraw from THE Partnership. However, for an initial period up to 31 December 2016, a school will be able to withdraw from membership at any time (i.e. without giving one year's notice) in the unlikely event that it decides not to continue as a member after joining.

For the avoidance of doubt, bespoke packages of additional services to member schools will be priced and charged separately.



E3. MINIMUM ENTITLEMENT FOR MEMBERS

All members (both full and associate members) can expect to receive:
Access to and support from a named link member of THE Partnership staff
Critical friend discussion of analysis of results and performance
Discussion and advice on available THE Partnership improvement and development programmes
Networking opportunities for improvement – for staff in schools and for governors to share good practice
Brokerage of interventions where a significant issue for concern is identified
Opportunity to purchase bespoke support and services from THE Partnership (such as the current school improvement SLAs offered by the Local Authority)

In addition, full member schools can also expect to receive:
Access to the full suite of improvement and development support shown in the future box in the chart on page 6 – many of which will be included in the membership fee and some of which will be available to purchase separately
The opportunity to shape a bespoke school-led system of improvement for Tower Hamlets
A say in the direction and governance of THE Partnership (including electing the Board, and electing and participating in the Advisory Council)

E4. COSTS

Full costings will be included in the final business plan, but will include: salaries and support costs for the Executive Director and staff (including school improvement and development and administration).

Other than the Executive Director, Board Members will not be paid.

F. GROWTH AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

THE Partnership will need to be flexible, adaptable and proactive, and to evolve and develop over time, both as a result of local innovation and response to the national and local context, including the *Education and Adoption Act 2016*, *Educational Excellence Everywhere* and the *National Funding Formula* proposals. The strategic direction this development takes will be steered by the Board, guided by the Advisory Council.

Opportunities to grow and develop THE Partnership by creating new ways of working in a school-led system and by establishing other services – including existing services offered by the Local Authority and new services – will be explored from the outset.

‘Not for profit’ does not mean that THE Partnership cannot realise a surplus from its core activities in any given year. The health of THE Partnership’s model will depend on its ability to invest in improving and developing its services and support programmes, in developing new ones and in our staff. We also need to build a modest reserve to enable us

to mitigate risks. However, our priority must be to ensure that funding intended to improve outcomes for children does exactly that – and that any surplus is reinvested to that end.

Our five-year Growth Strategy will focus on:
Retaining founding schools
Attracting new member schools
Developing a school-led model of improvement for Tower Hamlets
Improving current support services
Developing and introducing new services and support
Marketing our services
Managing and mitigating the key risks to our success and sustainability

But we must not lose sight of our underpinning vision and values. These are essential to ensuring that we retain strong support from our founding schools and expand our services and support to others.



HOW TO JOIN THE PARTNERSHIP

To become a member of THE Partnership, a school must:

- Commit to support the aims and values of THE Partnership
- Commit to pay up to £25.00 in the event that THE Partnership is wound up owing debts
- Commit to pay the annual membership fee from April 2017

Details of how to join and an application form can be found on our website

www.the-partnership.org.uk