



Insite

Partnerships for Schools
Quarterly
Spring 2007





Message from Tim Byles, Chief Executive

Welcome to *Insite*, the new quarterly update from Partnerships for Schools.

To those of you who are reading this first edition at our Annual Conference, welcome, and I hope you enjoy the day. We've been talking with the BSF pathfinders and key stakeholders to get their tips, advice and support, which will be shared with you throughout the day. You will also have seen that we have been out and about filming in new schools to capture how young people feel about their new learning environments and how it is making a difference to them. Their 'voxpops' will also be available on our website for those of you who missed the event, as will a video message from the Prime Minister, which we have also reproduced on the back cover of this edition.

On to business: I'm now coming towards the end of my first five months at PFS, and it's fair to say it's been a most exciting and eventful time. We've addressed all but a few of the most pressing programme issues, including delays, and I'm pleased to report that progress is now back on a positive footing.

Since the New Year I've been travelling the length and breadth of the country, meeting with local authorities that joined BSF as part of Wave 4, visiting new schools and Academies, and donning my hard hat and boots to visit sites of new schools. For those entering the BSF programme, for clarity and to ensure mutual commitment, we've established a Memorandum of Understanding, which I have personally signed with all Wave 4 Chief Executives, and will do the same as each new local authority joins BSF.

We welcome your comments on this first edition of *Insite*. We aim to publish quarterly – all future editions will be distributed electronically – and hope it will develop into a useful online resource for anyone interested in BSF and the Academies programme.

Tim Byles



Project update & news

Waves 1-3

Progress is really speeding up for pathfinder and Wave 1 local authorities. Six projects have now reached financial close, with a further five or six due to close in March and April. We will publish these announcements on our website as they happen.

Apollo Construction have started work on the first of London's BSF schools: Tim Byles attended the turf-cutting at the future site of Michael Tippett School for children with special educational needs in Lambeth.

Wave 4

We welcomed eleven new – and five repeat – local authorities on to the programme in January. Remit meetings have been held with Tim Byles and Project Directors from the PFS Education & Planning team have been allocated (in box right).

Wave 5

We are also beginning to work with Wave 5 local authorities in advance of them officially joining BSF in September 2007. All 19 have received feedback on their Strategy for Change submission, and briefing meetings were recently held in London and Sheffield for them to meet and network with other Wave 5 entrants. We will be planning further events for Wave 5, including a launch around September: we'll keep you up to date in *Insite*.



Local Authority	Project Director
Barking & Dagenham	Ros Asher
Blackburn with Darwen	Jon Metters
Bristol*	Malcolm Dodds (Mike Coleman)
Cambridgeshire	Shirley Goodwin
Coventry	David Walker
Essex	Ros Asher
Haringey*	Mike Walsh (Michael Edwards)
Hertfordshire	Mike Walsh
Kent*	Shirley Goodwin (Sunil Patel)
Manchester*	David Walker (David Ogden)
Oldham	Peter Hodge
Rochdale	Peter Hodge
Sheffield*	Michael Thompson (James Wood)
Somerset	Malcolm Dodds
Telford & Wrekin	Jon Metters

*indicates a local authority already in Waves 1-3: the name in brackets is the Project Director working on those projects.

Academies

The National Framework for the design and build of Academies, small-scale BSF projects and one school pathfinders was launched in January. PFS held marketplace events in London and Leeds, also in January, for the six framework contractors to meet and network with the local authorities needing to use the framework. The first framework contracts will be signed before the end of 2007.

The successful framework contractors are listed below in alphabetical order.

- Balfour Beatty
- Carillion
- Kier
- Laing O'Rourke
- Skanska
- Wilmott Dixon

If you are working on a BSF or Academy project and have some project news or pictures to share with *Insite* readers, please let us know at insite@partnershipsforschools.org.uk

The thumbnail pictures on the front cover are taken from the DfS publication *Transforming Schools: an inspirational guide to remodelling secondary schools*.

For more information about what PFS has been up to and plans for the months ahead, see the inside back cover.



Image: Dennis Gilbert & Southwark Building Design Service

Sustainable schools: the green issue

Sustainability is undoubtedly the 'big issue' at the moment: everyone is keen to prove their green credentials and contribute to the fight against global warming. We are facing a future of carbon targets, 'green taxes' and substantial changes to the way we currently live our lives: at home, work or school, at play or on holiday, we are being asked to consider the environmental impact of our actions.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) has a huge part to play in contributing to the Government's targets on sustainability. As the agency responsible for delivering the 3,500 new or remodelled BSF schools, Partnerships for Schools has also been tasked with delivering the Academies programme, with an overall target of 400 schools, so we have a considerable responsibility in helping deliver the sustainability agenda.

The bigger picture

The 2006/7 academic year is a 'year of action' on sustainable schools. The new National Framework for Sustainable Schools from the DfES has introduced eight 'doorways' through which schools may choose to initiate or extend their sustainable school activity:

- Food & Drink
- Energy & Water
- Travel & Traffic
- Purchasing & Waste
- Buildings & Grounds
- Inclusion & Participation
- Local Wellbeing
- Global Citizenship

The Framework focuses on ways in which sustainable development can be embedded into whole-school management practices and provides practical guidance to help schools operate in a more sustainable way. All of the doorways encompass a long-term expectation of where the Government would like schools to be by the year 2020. Although every school will start from a different place, with different priorities and needs, all schools can take some immediate action to meet these targets.

Each doorway may be approached individually or as part of a whole school action plan, though undoubtedly schools will find that many of the doorways are actually interconnected. While the Buildings & Grounds and Energy & Water doorways are the most obviously relevant for BSF, a number of others have a role to play. For example, Purchasing & Waste is also key for the long-term running of schools – something that the 'whole life costing' in BSF addresses. If new kitchens, dining spaces or even vegetable patches are being planned, this naturally leads into Food & Drink. Local Wellbeing is embraced if the school's facilities are being extended into community use. 'Travel & Traffic' issues can be addressed through BSF works – extra bicycle storage space, car parks with flower beds to allow drainage – the possibilities are endless.



Building (Sustainable) Schools for the Future

Sustainability is one of the four key pillars to successful delivery in BSF. Overall, schools are thought to contribute to around 15% of public sector carbon emissions, so going forward it is critical that the environmental impact of our schools is reduced. We recognise there are real challenges in designing carbon neutral schools, not least because of the additional costs this entails. But it is not impossible. It is generally accepted that offsetting carbon emissions is a valid means of becoming carbon neutral (this is already widely accepted in travel where flights, events and publications are promoted as carbon neutral through offsetting).

Building Regulations alone have improved energy efficiency by 40% in the past five years, and several pioneering school projects have aimed for low-emission or carbon neutrality through a combination of sustainable features. Bideford College in Devon is aiming to be carbon neutral in use, predominantly through the use of biomass generation and offsite wind energy generation.

The first step to addressing a carbon footprint is, of course, to recognise it. And so, in addition to reducing the carbon emissions in the actual running of schools, there is also the important consideration of the pollution, waste and emissions created by the construction itself. Good practice among local authorities and their private sector partners is already beginning to emerge. For example, the partnering agreement between Bristol City Council, one of BSF's pathfinder local authorities and their construction partner Skanska, includes several key performance indicators relating to sustainability. These include construction waste reduction targets; use of recycled materials in construction; monitoring of CO₂ emitted during construction; impact on bio-diversity, use of local labour and resources, and the promotion of students' awareness of environmental sustainability.

Other key performance indicators for sustainability in BSF include the required use of BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) to assess and credit the environmental performance of the construction process and completed buildings. New and refurbished schools in BSF are required to achieve the BREEAM standard of 'Very Good'. This exceeds the current statutory minimum of the Building Regulations and DfES Building Bulletins.



Renewable Energy Sources for Schools

The main sources of renewable energy are biomass heating, solar water heating, photovoltaics, wind- and ground-source heating and cooling. There is, of course, no set formula for sustainability in schools. No school sites are the same, so the solutions must fit the local environment and location. Biomass boilers in urban areas, for example, could potentially create higher pollution from the transport of fuel than they can save.

Getting the basics right is important – a foundation of principles that can be built upon. These are outlined below.

- Natural ventilation
- Good insulation
- Night cooling
- Thermal mass/passive solar
- Good light controls
- Water conservation
- Rainwater collection
- Sustainable urban drainage

Educating the users

In a speech on climate change in 2004, the Prime Minister highlighted the importance of sustainability in school building for BSF and Academies. He stated that “sustainable development will not just be a subject in the classroom: it will be in its bricks and mortar and the way the school uses and even generates its own power. Our students won’t just be told about sustainable development, they will see and work within it: a living, learning, place in which to explore what a sustainable lifestyle means.”

Involving pupils in the planning and development of sustainable schools not only gives the school community a sense of ownership of the facilities, but can be a learning resource right from the beginning of the process. Pupils that are aware of – and responsible for – their environmental impact will take that knowledge beyond the school gates too.

Easy to use controls and displays that can be read and monitored by pupils can bring the energy consumption – or production – and water usage right into the classroom to be used as a learning tool across many subjects.



Case studies

The very first school to open with BSF funding (a part-funded 'quick win' project), the co-located Forest Oak and Merstone special educational needs schools in Solihull, has already led the way with impressive commitment to sustainability. Ground-source heating and a grass sedum roof were major features, while smaller innovations like 'sun pipes' – bringing natural light into windowless rooms – all diminish the school's overall carbon footprint.

We aim to feature sustainable school BSF and Academy case studies in future editions of *Insite*. In the meantime, the DfES publication 'Schools for the Future – Design of Sustainable Schools' highlights a range of impressive case studies from educational facilities around the country. The pictures in this article are all taken from the book. The publication be downloaded from the PfS website.

The DfES Sustainable Schools toolkit and information on the year of action can be found at:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools/



Extended schools

Building Schools for the Future is providing local authorities across England with the opportunity to develop ambitious plans for their secondary school estates, to support the delivery of better educational outcomes for pupils. By granting the capital investment to rebuild or renew school buildings and integrate ICT, BSF is also providing schools and their wider communities with valuable resources for use outside school hours. This allows schools and local authorities to meet the Government's agenda for all schools to become 'extended schools' by 2010.

What is an extended school?

Extended schools provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community. Many schools are already providing extended services, such as breakfast clubs and homework clubs. There is no 'model' of what an extended school should be like – they are simply services that meet the needs of individual communities. Each school needs to work in partnership with its local community to determine what provision is required.

The prospectus *Extended schools: Access to opportunities and services for all* listed the facilities and services of an extended school as:

- 8am-6pm childcare, including school holidays
- Study support
- Parenting support, including family learning
- Access to specialist support services
- Access to learning and recreational facilities for the wider community

In practice, this could mean that a school shares its existing buildings or services – such as libraries, sports, music or arts facilities and ICT suites – with the wider community, either during the day or at night. Or, it could mean that a school develops new buildings, services or facilities (on school grounds or elsewhere) using joined-up funding with other agencies.

Making better use of school buildings not only serves the community, but can also benefit schools. Research shows that one in eight schools nationally suffers some form of arson attack each year – two thirds of which occur outside normal school hours. Many extended schools report reductions in vandalism due to increased use and ownership of the school spaces by the local community.



Images David Barbour: © BDP/David Barbour

What considerations need to be made when designing extended schools?

Funding

Local authorities should aim to join up funding from BSF and the DfES with other funding streams such as Sure Start, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) or the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG – formerly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). External sources of funding could also be considered, such as the Lottery or charitable trusts.

Different funding streams are likely to become available at different times, so the design of the school should allow for new facilities to be added later. Building Bulletin 98 (published by the DfES and available to download from the PFS website) lists potential sources of funding.

Running costs, bills and repairs are likely to increase with extended school use, so hard-wearing fixtures and fittings should be planned in the design stages, and whole-life costing should include use of the school outside normal hours.

Layout

A school that is used by the wider community must address several issues before opening the school gates, especially during school hours. The safety and security of pupils and staff is paramount, but the community users must also be welcomed and their needs catered for. Sections of the school may need to have controlled access during the day, and others will need to be locked out-of-hours. A supervised reception and single entrance point for community users can help to achieve a secure school.

Other considerations include the accessibility of public transport, parking facilities, access and signage, and lighting in areas that will be used at night. Storage and catering facilities may be needed if community groups meet regularly in school buildings, or if they are hired out for events.

Consultation

Extended schools' facilities are for the benefit of the wider community, so it is important to consult and involve the community when developing plans, so that local needs are met. Identifying stakeholders and potential users of extended services – which may range from parents to local businesses – will help in developing a baseline plan of the facilities and services which could be provided.

PFI Schools and extended services

A substantial proportion of BSF projects – most of the new build schools – are being funded through Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits. This has implications for out-of-hours use of a school building: the PFI contract will specify the hours of use, and additional or extended hours will have to be negotiated with the contractor. The PFI contractor may charge community users directly. More information and guidance about extended services in PFI schools can be found in the DfES publication mentioned below.

Case studies

As BSF progresses, we will feature case studies to demonstrate how schools and local authorities are embracing the challenges and opportunities of the extended schools agenda. For example, South Tyneside and Gateshead, a Wave 1 BSF project, is working with their local Primary Care Trusts to plan the delivery of health care services on school grounds.

The DfES publication *Schools of the Future: designing schools for extended services* can be downloaded from the Partnerships for Schools website: www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk



Picture 1

Delivery in action: the story of change

PfS recently paid a visit to Bristol City Council's BSF projects – four schools are currently at various stages of construction. These pictures tell the story of the first BSF school – opening in September. The re-building of Speedwell Technical College will transform the educational facilities in one of the most deprived areas in Bristol.

The image on the front cover of *Insite* also shows the building works in progress: thanks to Skanska for permission to use the picture.

Picture 1 shows the Project Director explaining to the PfS team the purpose of the corrugated temporary roof in front of them. The centre of the school will be a full-height atrium allowing natural light to flood each floor, and providing a great social space for the school. The temporary roof on the first floor has allowed Skanska to complete the ground floor internal fixtures and fittings while construction is still going on above, allowing the project to keep to the September 2007 deadline regardless of the weather! This advanced work includes the 'test' classroom being developed in **Picture 2**.



Picture 2



Picture 3

Picture 3 shows Gordon Clements from Bristol City Council and Tim Byles looking at the old school buildings that the new buildings will replace, and the new all-weather pitch that is already in use by the school and wider community.



Diary Dates

26 March Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award 2007. Tim Byles will be attending the launch of this year's award. The Award recognises new public buildings and spaces that make the biggest difference to the lives of those who use them. Last year, the City of London Academy in Southwark won. The 2007 shortlist will be announced in June and the winner in October 2007.

17 April Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) Spring Conference. Tim Byles (as former Chairman of SOLACE) will be speaking at their annual conference, on the subject of Partnering & Influencing.

19 April Association of County Chief Executives (ACCE) Spring Seminar. Tim Byles will be giving a presentation at the event.

24 May Third Annual Education Conference, QEII Centre, London. Russell Andrews, Education & Planning Director will be speaking at the event.

The next two issues of *Insite* will be published in summer and autumn this year. From edition two, it will be electronic only, to reduce our paper use and the unnecessary waste of resources. Please only print the newsletter if you really need to. Please send an email to insite@partnershipsforschools.org.uk if you would like to be added to the newsletter mailing list.

PfS Dispatches

Lessons Learned

We have undertaken some qualitative and quantitative research among pathfinder and Waves 1-3 local authorities and private sector bid teams: much of this will be shared with conference attendees, but we aim to publish it online, for use by all stakeholders in early April 2007.

As well as publishing this research, we will also be developing dedicated pages on our website designed to help share best practice and disseminate lessons learned.

Chief Executives Advisory Group

On 22 March, Tim Byles announced the establishment of a new Chief Executives' Advisory Group. This group, comprising a small number of CEOs from local authorities, will meet on a quarterly basis and be tasked with identifying ways in which we can work together more effectively to deliver educational outcomes for young people. The group will also be looking at ways to assist local authorities that are either new to the BSF programme or those that are already in the programme but encountering difficulties.

PE & Sports

PfS has recently been joined by two PE & Sports advisers, Liz Delany and Mark Perkins, co-funded by Sport England and the Youth Sports Trust. Their role is to promote the strategic consideration and development of sports facilities within BSF projects, and to share good practice between local authorities. Liz and Mark will be advising project directors on a diverse range of topics, such as incorporating ICT into sport facilities, management of community spaces and funding opportunities.



Message from the Prime Minister

Every edition of *Insite* will feature an interview with a key industry player. Who better to start with than the Prime Minister? Tony Blair agreed to open our annual conference with a video greeting. Here's what he said:

"There is probably no more ambitious school building programme in Europe than Building Schools for the Future.

Hundreds of schools that saw decades of underinvestment have already been renewed and rebuilt. Over the last five years there has been as much school building as in the previous 25.

This programme now gives us a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform every secondary school in the country over the next 15 years.

This about more than bricks and mortar: it is an opportunity to revolutionise education by harnessing the best of the public and private sectors.

PFS will also help us to deliver 400 academies – schools that are already transforming inner city education.

But every new or renewed school is an opportunity for reform.

Of course, schools where teachers and pupils are not distracted by crumbling walls, broken windows and leaky roofs are schools where they can instead focus their full attention on teaching and learning.

But many new schools are also combining the innovative use of ICT, allowing students to learn outside the normal school routine.

And with every school becoming an extended school in the years ahead, there will be far more opportunities for breakfast and homework clubs, extra sports and arts as well as adult education and wider community activities.

Our new build and renewed schools will not only re-energise staff and students, but will revitalise our communities as well.

This is a programme that is, quite simply, about investing in the futures of our children and the future of our country.

It is something that I am proud this government has been able to begin. And I thank all of you for the contribution you are making to its success."

