

department for
children, schools and families

partnerships for schools
building schools for the future

Dear Sir / Madam

25 February 2008

Building Schools for the Future – An early start for wave 7 to 9 projects that are ready to deliver

The experience of managing BSF shows that to ensure timely delivery, authorities must be well prepared when they enter the programme. The package of measures we introduced at the end of 2006 has resulted in a significant reduction of up to 6 months in the delivery timescales of BSF for the most recent waves. This means that pupils and teachers will benefit earlier from the massive investment in the programme.

We wish to ensure the continuity of BSF projects entering the programme while we consult on the management of Waves 7 onwards. This will begin in due course. In the meantime, we are proposing that a limited number of those authorities in Wave 7 to 9 who can demonstrate that they are ready be invited to enter the programme now.

As you are prioritised in Waves 7 to 9, we are writing to invite you to apply. In order to be considered for entry into this interim wave, authorities must be able to demonstrate that they will be in a position to make progress immediately with their BSF project when they enter the programme in summer 2008. We would therefore not expect authorities to put themselves forward unless they meet all of the following requirements:

- commitment to the BSF model, the LEP, standard procurement route and individual schools' commitment in principle to an ICT Managed Service;
- agreement with the Office of the Schools Commissioner on plans to address diversity, choice and access;
- a clear and cohesive strategy for Educational Transformation within the geographical area identified;
- school organisation and pupil place planning to be well advanced;
- clear plans for consultation in place, including a timeline for completion, including statutory school organisation consultations prior to submission of the OBC;
- Project Director, BSF Team and Advisers able to be in place for June 2008, prior to the start of the project; and
- a clear commitment in writing from the Chief Executive to support revenue funding for the delivery of the project at a rate at least equivalent to 3% of the estimated project value.

If your authority meets all of these requirements and would like to be considered for a summer 2008 start, you are invited to make a Readiness to Deliver application, using the same criteria as set out in the guidance for Waves 4-6, which can be accessed online at www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/documents/ReadinesstoDeliver140606_000.pdf. Please do not make an application unless you can provide evidence that your authority meets all the criteria set out above.

Not all applications will be successful even where they meet all these criteria as there are only a small number of places available. Whilst there are no precise limits to the size of projects considered, it is likely that Ministers may give preference to smaller projects of around £100 million capital value.

Authorities that do not apply, or who are not prioritised for this interim wave, will be fully eligible for consideration for prioritisation in Waves 7 onwards, following the consultation.

We expect remit meetings for authorities who are successful to be held in June/July 2008, with Strategy for Change Part 1 submitted in August/September.

Next Steps

If you would like your authority to be considered for a summer 2008 start, please email Anthony Walker, Strategic Director, (Anthony.walker@partnershipsforschools.org.uk) to register an interest by 4 March. You will then be required to submit an electronic Readiness to Deliver to Anthony by 11 April. We welcome submissions in advance of this date.

The anticipated timetable for local authorities who enter this interim wave is set out below.

LAs to register an expression of interest in early start	4 March 2008
Interested LAs to submit electronic version of their Readiness to Deliver submission	11 April 2008
The Department announces the interim wave projects	June 2008
Remit meetings for interim wave projects to take place	June-July 2008
Submission of SfC1 for interim wave projects	August/September 2008 (8 weeks following Remit)
Submission of SfC2 for interim wave projects	December/January 2009 (28 weeks following Remit)
Submission of OBC for interim wave projects	June/July 2009 (50 weeks following Remit)

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Anthony Walker at the email address above.

Copies of this letter will be sent to Government Offices, Learning and Skills Councils and Dioceses.

Yours sincerely



Sally Brooks
Head of Schools Capital
DCSF



Tim Byles
Chief Executive
PfS