

**MATTERS ARISING:-  
EXCELLENCE IN CITIES PRIMARY FUNDING**

*Report of the Director of Children Schools and Families*

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**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To inform the Forum about the use of the Excellence in Cities (EiC) primary funding.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 In May 2004 the DfEs announced an expansion to the EiC pilot programme to other local authorities. In Hertfordshire, this grant was made available to five schools where the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals was generally above 35%. These schools, which were identified by the DfES, are Holdbrook, Waltham Cross; Barncroft, Hemel Hempstead; Bellgate, Hemel Hempstead; Camp, St Albans; and Mandeville, St Albans.
- 2.2 The initial grant for 2004/5 was £50,654, with a further £105, 530 in 2005/6, £109, 751 in 2006/7 and a final allocation of £113,254 for 2007/8. The grant is fully devolved to the five schools and distributed in proportion to pupil numbers in accordance with DfES guidelines.
- 2.3 The purpose of the grant is to raise expectations and overcome barriers to learning so that pupils from the most disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from equal opportunity to excel.
- 2.4 The use of the grant is managed by an EiC partnership group consisting of the heads of the five schools and a SEA, who reports directly to the head of primary school effectiveness.

**3. Main areas of focus for the EiC schools.**

- 3.1 The grant is allocated to three main areas, as agreed by the group:

- 3.1.1 **Raising aspirations in the Early Years:** This provides specialist support for early years practitioners so that they can tackle the challenges faced by disadvantaged children on entry to the Foundation Stage.
- 3.1.2 **Overcoming barriers to learning:** This focuses on the development of learning mentors to make an impact on behaviour, self-esteem and progress
- 3.1.3 **Supporting each other:** This focuses on sharing resources and expertise as part of a 'Learning network' of the five schools.
- 3.2 Additionally, individual schools have used part of the grant to develop aspects of their work pertinent to their needs, such as supporting gifted and talented pupils.

#### **4. Impact.**

- 4.1 Given the levels of need presented by some of the pupils and their families across the schools, the levels of mobility and the variability on cohorts, there is not a clear measurable impact of standards of achievement in terms of raw results.
- 4.2 There is evidence of impact in terms of the effective support of particular learners and their parents, and on supporting the work of teachers and support staff.
- 4.3 More significantly, the impact of the EiC programme has contributed to the favourable outcomes of Ofsted inspections in the schools. Three of the schools have been inspected recently and all three judged as good in terms of overall effectiveness, even where attainment has been low compared to national figures.