



Rt Hon Ed Balls MP
Secretary of State

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Steve Munby
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Dear Steve

**NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (NCSL) PRIORITIES:
2009-10**

I am writing to set out my priorities, together with the associated funding, for the NCSL in 2009 -10.

I would first like to put on record my thanks to the College for its work over the past year and to acknowledge the progress that has been made, including the successful launch of the redesigned NPQH in September. I welcome the steady progress that has been made in National Leaders in Education (NLE) recruitment, which will play a key role in delivering the National Challenge. I am also pleased that succession planning is achieving its current development targets. I look to the College to continue to make progress in these areas.

I would also like to thank the College for its significant and positive contribution to the development of the implementation of the Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy. An early part of the implementation of the strategy is a review of the roles of the organisations concerned with the Children's Workforce. NCSL forms part of that review, which I expect to look at how the College's remit can be refocused to the benefit of the whole children's workforce. We have already agreed that the College will undertake the vital work of setting up a programme for the training and development of Directors of Children's Services. At the end of the review we will need to discuss whether there are other aspects of the workforce strategy to which the College should contribute.



department for
children, schools and families

CONTEXT: CHILDREN'S PLAN ONE YEAR ON

The Children's Plan, the Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy and the vision for the 21st Century School set out our ambitions for what we can, and should, achieve for our children and young people in terms of their educational attainment and wider well being. The recently published Children's Plan One Year On sets out the progress that has been made in working towards these aims, demonstrating examples of good practice, and highlighting the work that still needs to be done. The College has a significant role in delivering this vision, and I am grateful for the contribution it has already made to this key Departmental priority. It will be vital for the College to work with this Department, and, where appropriate, other government departments, key children's workforce organisations, local authorities and government regional offices to share and overcome the challenges of delivery. The public rightly have higher expectations than ever. They must be assured that we are organised so that the system will deliver the promises made in the Children's Plan and the Workforce Strategy and that we are capable of meeting new challenges as they evolve.

The College has always been, and will continue to be a key partner in our strategy to ensure that schools have the capacity to fulfil their role and deliver the outcomes we are committed to for children and young people. I am also looking to the College to become involved in the ways specified below in supporting the wider children's workforce developments.

PRIORITIES

The College's work in 2009 -10 needs to be clearly linked to the Department's and the Government's wider aim for a society where all children and young people are able to achieve their full potential. These are set out in the Department's Strategic Objectives (DSO's) and I expect all of the college's work to be focussed on supporting the delivery of these. The single biggest priority for the College will be succession planning. Another priority for the College will be to support the Department in making a reality of PSA Delivery Agreements 10 and 11. The College has a vital role to play in our aim to raise standards and narrow gaps in educational achievement by working with the Department to ensure the supply of high quality school leaders and to help improve the system by enabling such leaders to, lift the performance of weak and coasting schools, and improve their leadership skills. In addition we look to NCSL to support the Department in delivering its commitment in the Children's Plan One Year on to strengthen the leadership of SEN. This will be subject to further discussions and additional funding.

As I have already mentioned, a new priority for the College will be the development and delivery of a programme which will offer structured training and support to every Director of Children's Services and those close to stepping up to this role. NCSL will lead on this work, but in partnership with the ADCS Staff College and CWDC. Separately, I am also asking the College to be responsible for chairing a group of partners to develop proposals for a more coherent offer of support for senior and middle managers throughout the children and young people's workforce.

The College continues to have a central responsibility in respect of the recruitment,

development and deployment of effective school leaders. I will be looking to you to take forward the following:

a) Recruitment

Through your work on succession planning, accelerated leadership development and working alongside Future Leaders, ensure the continuing supply of high quality school and system leaders who make a significant impact on outcomes for schools and developing leaders who engage with the community and contribute to outcomes across the wider system.

b) Development

Building from your Review of Leadership Development Provision, I will expect to see compelling options for the continuous professional development of school leaders, before, as and after they come into post.

c) Deployment

As you know, I am a particularly keen supporter of the National and Local Leaders of Education programmes, and I will expect both to expand in pursuit of more effective school-to-school arrangements for school improvement.

The College should continue to ensure that the system has the volume and quality of school leaders needed to implement the drive on standards and well-being. The College's success in 2009 -10 will again continue to be judged largely by its performance on these issues. I welcome the fact that the College has carried out a review of its commissioned Leadership Development provision to ensure that it is coherent and avoids duplication. It is very important that the College is operating at maximum efficiency, especially at this time of change and severe economic pressures.

There are a number of new challenging policy developments on the horizon, such as the Social Mobility White Paper and 21st Century Schools, which will have implications for the College's work and we will need to get back to you to review your remit in due course to ensure these policies are reflected in your activities.

In particular, my officials will want to discuss your contribution to improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners, so narrowing achievement gaps between those from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds. As you know, this is integral to our approach to personalised education, ensuring that the education system responds effectively to the needs of those from all backgrounds and abilities, and to our efforts to strengthen social mobility. I look to NCSL to consider how it will apply these principles throughout its work.

In addition, following the ministerial review into school governance NCSL will also support the DCSF and relevant partners to design a programme for new chairs of governors to support leadership that is fit for the 21st Century school.

The other important strands of work and related key performance indicators I expect to be delivered by the College are described in the Annex to this letter.

WORKING WITH DCSF

Along with other NDPBs, the College is playing a key role in the DCSF Group. The relationship between the Department and the College should continue to be associated with: openness; trust; consistency; challenge and a sense of shared purpose, both at an operational level and through membership of the DCSF Group. The College is required to continue to support the development of an effective education, skills and children's services system including the adoption and embedding of a system-wide Information Strategy and underpinning enterprise architecture. The College will also continue to support system-wide governance including the DCSF/DIUS Group CIO Council and the Information Standards Board for education, skills and children's services.

It is essential that the College has in place robust processes which provide assurance for the effective delivery of its remit. The College must produce, maintain and manage a portfolio of major programmes and projects, and work with the Department to apply Gateway and other assurance approaches as required by the Permanent Secretary. I expect the College to immediately raise with the Department any potential issues/problems related to delivery including any arising with associated contractors or partners involved. I also look to the College to continue to share its knowledge of the system and its expertise in school leadership development with the Department and/or other parts of the Group. I also expect it to provide the Department with timely and accurate advice about key issues that impact on school leadership, along with options for resolving them, reporting progress and highlighting potential shortfalls and other issues.

My Department is and will remain a direct employer of apprentices and we will ensure all our agencies and NDPBs also recruit and employ apprentices. I therefore expect you to employ apprentices within your own organisation and to report progress against a target level set in agreement with my officials.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

This Government is committed to developing a world class and integrated children's workforce delivering better outcomes for children young people and their families. The implementation of the 2020 Children's Workforce Strategy will support this aim. This will require Children's Trusts and Local Authorities to lead workforce reform locally, to have a strategic plan for the children's workforce and to have an effective approach to workforce planning and development that secures a strong workforce in each sector, which is able to deliver outcomes by working more effectively together. The NCSL will have an important part to play in contributing to the new National Children and Young People's Workforce Partnership.

I look to the NCSL, CWDC and TDA to build on their current partnership and work collaboratively to achieve this reform at national, regional and local level. I expect the three agencies to address the challenge of achieving better outcomes particularly for

vulnerable groups of children and young people and to ensure the workforce has the skills and confidence to work in partnership with children, parents and carers and with each other.

I would like the three organisations to agree, in partnership with my officials, some joint delivery priorities for regional and local support in 2009-2010 with each agency using their existing resources and remit focus to complement these. These priorities should be set in the context of a single coherent offer to LAs and Children's Trusts within an agreed framework for developing a reformed workforce. This approach will then be reviewed in 2010-11.

FUNDING, EFFICIENCY, REDUCING BURDENS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

To deliver the priorities set out in this letter; NCSL's baseline budget for 2009-2010 is £85,035,000 which is made up of £74,035,000 (grant in aid - programme and running costs and non-ring fenced funding for Succession Planning) and £11m ring fenced funding for Fast Track. Where additional funding is being made available these are identified separately in the Annex along with an indication of whether ring fenced restrictions apply.

NCSL has a vital role to play in helping the Department meet the public commitment to reduce administrative costs in NDPBs by at least 5% year on year in real terms by 2010-11, measured against your 2007-08 baseline. We have not removed from the headline figure above the 5% efficiency savings that we expect NCSL to make in 2009-2010. The College must ensure that these agreed efficiency savings are recycled into front-line activities, such as work on succession planning. I expect NCSL to agree monitoring arrangements with the NCSL Sponsorship Unit. Those arrangements should provide for quarterly reporting on actual administrative spend over the spending review period.

The Department and its NDPBs are operating with the tight confines of the CSR07. I therefore expect the College to deliver efficiency and value for money in ways that both reduce burden and re-direct valuable resource to the frontline. This includes an expectation that the College will follow the Department's Star Chamber process and support DCSF in reducing data collection burdens on schools and local authorities

The DCSF is committed to embedding sustainable development in schools and I am grateful for the College's continuing efforts in improving its environmental management and sustainable procurement practices. I expect the College to continue ensuring that sustainable development is a core part of its efforts to supply, develop and reform the school workforce, and in supporting the provision of extended schools.

FUTURE WORK

I have already mentioned the Department's review of the remits of a number of organisations who work with children and young people's workforce policy. The purpose of the review is to ensure that, looking forward to 2020, we have the right arrangements to support the new and important priorities contained in the 2020

Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy. It will consider the efficiency and effectiveness of the current arrangements in delivering these priorities and make recommendations about whether any changes to roles, remits or structures are needed to bring about improvements. Decisions about implementation will be made in collaboration with the organisations concerned.

This review has already started and will report by Easter. We will involve and inform stakeholders throughout the review period. Together with other organisations, NCSL will have a central contribution to make and we will work closely with the College at all stages of the review.

CONCLUSION

The Department or the College can propose amendments to this Remit letter in-year provided that both organisations are in agreement. The College should seek the prior agreement of the NDPB Sponsor Unit in the Department's School Resources Group before taking on any significant new work during the year.

I expect the College to agree with me the key performance indicators which will be included in NCSL's 2009-2010 Corporate Plan and I look forward to agreeing this plan in the spring of 2009 and subsequently hearing about the College's further progress on its activities.

I am copying this letter to Vanni Treves as the Chair of NCSL.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ed Balls', written over a horizontal line.

ED BALLS MP