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**WORKING WITH OTHER  
SCHOOLS**

**#SBM15**



# School Business Management Conference 2015

Bringing brilliance to each other...

How to work with other schools

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# Before Collaboration

- Ten diverse primaries in the Outer West of Newcastle.
- All schools LA maintained.
- Informal network of Head Teachers.
- Working parties involved in Trust formation.
- SBMs were involved in the city wide network and had spoken to each other on the phone occasionally.



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EXPLORING & SOARING

# Before Collaboration

- The HTs of one maintained secondary school and its four feeder primary schools had established a network group that met half termly.
- SBMs attended the county support network meetings.
- The SBMs/administrators had met at meetings and occasionally supported each other by telephone.



# Collaboration

- Each school makes a financial contribution to the Trust based on their pupil numbers.
- Operations Lead and Admin Officer appointed.
- SBM/Admin Network was the second group to form.
- In the initial meeting, we shared our skills and backgrounds and produced a skills matrix.
- We discussed SLAs and compared our business relationships with a range of providers.
- We decided to meet termly with each meeting taking place at a different school.
- We worked to be included in the initial Trust planning meeting.



# Collaboration

- A loose but more formal collaboration with a statement of common purpose and terms of reference was established (September 2009).
- The level of financial contribution was agreed.
- Partnership website established.
- HR and Operations Director appointed, contract held by the secondary school (November 2009).
- A SWOT analysis was conducted and the collaboration priorities and action plan were established.
- SBM group established from the five partnership schools.
- 1 June 2013 three schools in the collaboration converted as a multi –academy trust



*Outer West Learning Trust*

# What have we done?

- We regularly share information via our email network.
- We have a range of experience and our schools are very different. Therefore, we are able to support in most situations.
- We have carried out three procurement exercises.
- We thoroughly enjoy our termly meetings and find them to be extremely useful.
- As we get to know each other better, the meetings have become a time to reflect and plan together – rare for SBMs and school administrators.



# What have we done?

## **Pre – Conversion (2009 – 2013)**

- Ethos and terms of reference developed for SBM group.
- Meetings held every month.
- Support for professional development.
- Value for Money - Quick wins and long term priorities established.
- Work with the DfE schools procurement team.
- Annual Development Days.
- Academy conversion work.

## **Post conversion**

- Reviewed all major SLAs e.g. Catering, Caretaking and cleaning – moved to ‘in-house’ provision.
- Appointed shared staff – EWO, Trust Clerk and Operations Assistant, cleaners, catering staff.
- Reviewed the administration teams and functions – all staff have had roles re-evaluated and re-graded.
- Harmonised policies and procedures.
- Accessed other funding streams - £500,000 from ACMF for premises improvement.
- VfM review of all other procurement, contracts and leases – 20% saving on statutory testing and maintenance.
- Completed a premises and buildings conditions review.





# Quick wins

- Stationery procurement (particularly paper)
- Supply procurement
- Staff absence insurance procurement



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# Quick wins

## Pre – conversion

- Supply insurance
- Supply cover
- Stationery
- High volume consumables
- Library books
- Waste management
- Recycling
- PAT
- Grounds maintenance

# What do we hope to do?

- Improve procurement skills across the Trust, both in individual schools and as a Trust. Complete ‘train the trainer’ procurement training with DfE and deliver bite-size procurement training at the termly meetings.
- Support the Trust activities and functions through advance planning and procurement of venues and transportation.
- Compile a list of planned works and changes to Trust buildings and land in order to support the Trust Board’s work on land and assets.
- Ensure that we are included in the planning meeting next year.

# What do we hope to do?

- Continue to improve efficiency and effectiveness by negotiating discounts with key suppliers and through group procurement.
- Improve capacity and effectiveness in the delivery of central services.
- Succession planning.
- School to school support.



# Perceived Benefits

- Amount of knowledge that we have between us.
- Ability to bounce ideas off others.
- Time savings due to the sharing of experiences between colleagues.
- Recommendations for suppliers.
- Sharing of 'behind the scenes' information.
- Savings due to group procurement.
- Morale is improved through team work.

# Perceived Benefits

- All of the above!!
- Autonomy.
- Increased capacity.
- Increased sense of security.