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Building Schools for the Future: a guide from Architecture Centre Network

Written by Nancy O'Brien
European Cultural and Learning Advisor

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1 - Frequently Asked Questions

1.1 What is Building Schools for the Future?

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a £45 billion government capital investment programme to renew or re-build every secondary school in England by 2020.

BSF will bring about transformation to school buildings and grounds and drive change and innovation in teaching and learning.

The BSF design process will ensure that school buildings:

- are built to last
- are inspirational spaces, both in terms of the indoor and outdoor environment
- will facilitate creative and flexible approaches to teaching and learning
- will promote a climate of learning that helps each young person achieve and thrive
- are positive working environments which promote recruitment and retention of the whole school workforce

BSF will bring about transformation in education by:

- improving learning and achievement outcomes for children and young people
- facilitating change through design alongside primary, secondary and 14 – 19 reform and the Extended Schools agenda
- facilitating personalised learning and a locally designed curriculum to meet the need of all learners
- building places for learning that are exciting, flexible, healthy, safe and secure

1.2 Who are the partners and what are their roles?

The main partners in the BSF process are government agencies, local authorities, schools and the wider school community.

1.2.1 Government agencies

Partnerships for Schools (PfS) is the government agency set up to run the BSF programme. It was established by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in 2004.

In its role PfS ensures that:

- investment in secondary schools is underpinned by coherent education strategies
- BSF schools are well designed
- schools are built on time and to cost
- schools are well maintained over their lifetime

4ps (Public Private Partnerships Programme) is the local government project delivery specialist. It works in partnership with all local authorities to secure funding and progress the development, procurement and implementation of PFI schemes. 4ps provides support to local authorities.

There are a number of additional supporting organisations who work with PfS to support different stages of the BSF process:

- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)
- BECTA
- National College for School Leadership (NcSL)

1.2.2 Local Authorities

Each local authority will take part in BSF at different times, but they will all undergo the same process.

To find a complete list of all local authorities in England and the stages when the schools in their local authority boundaries will be rebuilt or refurbished, please visit: www.direct.gov.uk/en/D11/Directories/Localcouncils/index/htm.

From April 2009 there have been a number of changes to England's local authorities. A total of 44 district councils have been replaced with 9 unitary authorities. For more information please visit: www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/restructuring/newunitarycouncils/.

As soon as a local authority hears that it has been invited to participate in BSF it begins preparing for the project.

Local authority project teams support local schools through the BSF process through:

- development of an area and local vision for BSF
- the design and the planning process
- mapping a local vision for transformation in education
- curriculum design and mapping
- financial planning
- identification of the preferred bidder and procurement

Stakeholders working with the local authority BSF team include:

- Arts Council England
- CABE
- Children's Centre
- CITB
- Community and voluntary sector
- Connexions
- Extended Schools
- Learning Through Landscapes
- Local Authority culture and leisure departments
- Primary Care Trusts
- Sport England
- Surestart

1.2.3 Schools

Schools enter BSF when its local authority joins the process. Some schools will wish to carry out preliminary work on pupil participation projects before they join BSF. They may have worked with local architecture centres in the past or taken part in other built environment learning initiatives.

Each secondary school will have a BSF representative. This may be one person or a group of people and is usually the Head teacher or member of the leadership team in the school.

The BSF representatives for the school will work with a number of stakeholders:

- pupils
- governors
- teachers
- non teaching staff
- feeder primary schools
- neighbouring secondary schools
- wider school community
- community groups
- GP surgeries
- police
- artists in residence or cultural organisations
- Youth Sports Trust
- private sector

1.2.3 The wider school community

The wider school community includes governors, parents, feeder primary schools, community groups using the extended services of the school and other local organisations. The role they play in the process is often guided by the BSF school representative, but will also be shaped by the local authority vision.

1.2.5 BSF and Extended schools

By 2010, the government wants all schools to deliver a core offer of extended services. The Children's Plan sets out how schools of the future will act as a hub for the whole community. Extended services will be provided, helping to support delivery of the Every Child Matters outcomes.

Between 2008 and 2011, the Government will be providing £1.3 billion to support the delivery of extended services. BSF will create schools that are hubs of their local community. It is anticipated that extended services will include adult and family learning facilities, sports facilities and ICT spaces.

2 - What is the BSF process?

There are nine main stages to the BSF process:

1 preparing for BSF
2 project initiation
3 strategic planning
4 business case development
5 procurement planning
6 procurement
7 contractual close
8 construction
9 operation

The government agencies and local authorities work with the architects, contractors and other consultants and with the school and the wider community to progress through the different stages.

Both the local authority and the school will develop a vision for what their school will look like and how the buildings and spaces can be created to support transformation in education.

3 - What is the role of CABE Enabling?

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) funds CABE to provide free support and guidance to all local authorities involved in BSF. CABE works closely with Partnerships for Schools (PfS), the specialist agency set up by the government to deliver BSF.

The CABE Enabling programme works with public sector organisations that are commissioning new buildings or urban masterplans.

The CABE schools enabling programme supports those involved in the BSF programme by:

- advising local authorities on the procurement process
- assessing school designs through the school design assessment panel
- training school leaders and client design advisors
- offering guidance and research
- reviewing designs put forward by bidders during the competitive stage of BSF

An enabler is assigned to each local authority working on BSF to give practical support from the pre-procurement stage through to the selection of shortlisted bidders.

Enablers advise on:

- project vision
- design aspirations
- appointment of the project team
- achievement of value for money through design
- developing briefs

3.1 BSF and the CABE design review process

CABE Schools design assessment panel samples proposals from bidders during the competitive stage and carries out an assessment of design quality. The local authority retains the decision making when choosing a bidder, but the advice from CABE supports them and helps inform the decision of the planning committee.

The review panel grades each design against 10 set criteria and gives an overall quality rating. Download the full description of the assessment criteria at: http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/schools-design-panel-criteria.pdf.

4 - How is the BSF programme funded?

Around 60 per cent of funding for BSF schools comes from government grants. Local authorities working with PfS must rise the remaining 40 per cent from banks (or similar) through PFI schemes.

Funding is ring fenced and has to be used for specific projects to achieve strategic renewal in secondary schools. Government support for BSF is given as a capital grant and/or private finance initiative (PFI) credits.

General funding principles and a detailed overview of Capital Investment for Schools 2009 – 2011 can be found at:
http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/capitalinvestment/

Around half of the total of government funding for schools is allocated to major strategic projects of which BSF has been the main recipient. The remainder is targeted capital which is used to support specific projects. Local authorities apply for this funding and can then allocate it to individual projects.

5 - What is the scope for architecture centre activity in BSF?

Architecture centres can engage at different stages with the main stakeholders in the BSF process. There is a need for advisory services across fields of work with all the key partners, working as an individual centre of as a consortia as has been successfully demonstrated with the DQI for schools[1] and Grounds for Optimism.

Architecture centres can work in partnership with in an advisory capacity for:

- government agencies
- Local authorities
- schools
- working with the project contractors and architects
- cultural organisations and cultural learning

5.1 Architecture centres working with government agencies

Architecture Centre Bristol brought together experts in the field of sustainable school design to demonstrate best practice in the South West. The seminar explored the issues around designing and constructing sustainable school buildings and brought together a range of stakeholders involved in the schools procurement process.

Kent Architecture Centre is one of a cluster of centres working with local authorities, CABE and PfS on the Design Quality Indicator (DQI).

Open House, **ARC** and **Fundamental Architectural Inclusion** shared best practice working with schools and learning providers as part of the Engaging Places and QCA co-development network.

Case study – Architecture Centre Bristol and BSF[2]

Architecture Centre Bristol worked with the Bridgewater consortia of schools, engaging the young people as stakeholders in the design process.

The following outlines the process of this activity and the young people's thoughts for working in the future with the designers of the new school, aiming keeping their needs at the forefront of design and advocating that they use the young people as a resource of opinion and information.

[1] Currently in development
[2] Photographs from Architecture Centre Bristol

Stage 1, formation of expert client group

- two students and one teacher rep from each of the six Bridgwater BSF Schools (4 secondary, 2 special schools)
- working together since November 2008 to gain knowledge and understanding about the BSF process, school design and public art in order to become 'Expert Clients'
- taking part in the procurement process to select 'preferred' bidder
- leading on other activities in school
- publicising, reporting back and evaluating the programme as a whole across the town

Stage 2, bidder feedback sessions

- bid teams presented their early design concepts of sample schools
- expert client group gave their initial feedback

Stage 3, presentation to bidder teams

- key school design issues
- skills, knowledge and experience gained through the programme
- ambitions for establishing a working relationship with bid teams

Moving forward...

How the expert client group would like to work with bidding teams

- come to us when you have design problems/issues – we might be able to give useful knowledge/insight
- have an ongoing dialogue with us – two way communication
- enjoy working with us – we are fun but sensible and really enjoy working with professionals
- please treat us with maturity – young people are often patronised but we'd like to be taken seriously throughout this process
- work with us through the WHOLE process – even after the preferred bidder team has been selected

What makes the project possible?

- open minded and forward thinking LA BSF team, ambitious to set high quality precedents, firm belief in stakeholder engagement, including Public Art as one of the tools for this
- Arts and Creative Education Stakeholder group – wider partnerships and strategies
- Clear statements and scored questions regarding Stakeholder Engagement and Public Art in ITPD and ITCD documents
- ensuring County Public Art policies are in place and will be applied as planning conditions

What next?

- ongoing consultation with bidder teams, up to and beyond preferred bidder stage
- Public Art commissioners and Design Review Panel for each school, wider stakeholder engagement
- Young Spaceshaper – school grounds
- evaluating the programmes and the wider strategic impact

5.2 Architecture centres working with local authorities

Kent Architecture Centre has developed toolkit to support the involvement of school stakeholder groups in the redevelopment of buildings school grounds as part of BSF. With support from PfS, the toolkit is being piloted with a range of partners, schools and local authorities.

ARC ran the Shaping Our Place design seminar for schools, a facilitated discussion on the benefits of engaging pupils in the BSF design process. The session was targeted at Head Teachers, building managers, local authority design teams, lead teachers, Academy teams and BSF co-ordinators. The day included an overview of the Design Quality Indicator (DQI) assessment process.

Urban Vision North Staffordshire places sustainability at the core of the work it delivers on BSF. In addition to client work in the sector, Urban Vision has worked with further education institutions and local schools to facilitate knowledge exchange develop networks and provide mentoring.

Open House runs the Learning by Design initiative which disseminates publications and resources and shares best practice on school design

5.3 Architecture centres working with schools going through BSF

The Building Exploratory has recently run a project called Faithspace, which supported the redevelopment of a school in Hackney, London and the development of a new worship space.

The Building Exploratory worked with Key stage 3 students to develop, test and present design ideas for a sacred space within a school building.

Architecture Centre Devon and Cornwall is currently working on Creative Spaces and Places, a series of case studies looking at successful developments centred on creative activity in the South West.

BEAM runs activities including inspirational trips to buildings and places and artist led consultations with young people and the wider community to support schools going through the BSF process. BEAM has recently run a programme of teacher training events, which help to promote teaching and learning through the built environment for teachers in schools going through the BSF process.

5.4 Architecture centres work on school landscapes

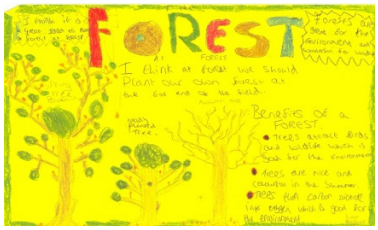
The school landscape is an integral part of the BSF process and **Solent Centre for Architecture and Design** has been at the forefront of innovative curriculum and whole school initiatives to support BSF and the spaces around school buildings. The Grounds for Optimism initiative is a model of best practice for collaborative and cluster working across centres.

Case study – Solent Centre for Architecture and Design, Grounds for Optimism

Devised and led by Solent Centre for Architecture and Design, Grounds for Optimism is a new award scheme that helps secondary schools plan innovative changes to their grounds. The scheme is not just about transforming space; taking part in Grounds for Optimism will transform learning, placing school grounds at the heart of the school.

Participating schools follow a four step process to engage in the design and evaluation process of school grounds, create and articulate their vision, and work with landscape architects and designers.

Grounds for Optimism was broken down into three levels of award. All participating schools were invited to enter their initial designs using the award competition website to gain a Bronze Award. Selected schools in each region then moved forward to Silver Awards and the opportunity to work with a professional landscape architect to develop their ideas further. Schools from the pilot scheme are now moving forward to the Gold Award competition in June.



More information on the scheme can be found at: www.groundsforoptimism.org.uk – for registration and http://microsite.groundsforoptimism.org.uk , the main competition website, with all the content for schools.

5.5 Working with the project contractors and architects

There are many examples of centres that have worked on programmes with BSF project contractors and architects such as **Open House**, **Architecture Centre Bristol** and **Opun**.

5.6 Architecture centres working in partnership with cultural organisations

Architecture Centre Bristol is running a project to support schools going through the BSF process in the South West. In partnership with the Real Ideas Organisation (RIO), the centre has worked with pupils and teachers from Bristol, Plymouth and Somerset. The project has supported the establishment of ambassador groups from the school community to become BSF 'expert clients'. Using toolkits such as design quality indicator (DQI), and Spaceshaper young people develop skills to become engaged in the consultation process around the design of their school buildings and grounds.

6 - How can Architecture centres shape the transformation of education?

Education transformation is seen as a long term objective of the BSF process and will be underpinned by current policy for children and young people through Every Child Matters, the Children's Plan and broad strategies such as those for play and through curriculum change.

In September 2008 the revised secondary curriculum was introduced in England and will be phased in over a three year period. The curriculum devolves more freedom to teachers and the school leadership team to design a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners in an individual school.

The secondary curriculum is now delivered through:

- statutory and non statutory subjects
- curriculum aims which enable young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens
- curriculum dimensions for cross-curricular learning

BSF and related themes such as sustainable development, citizenship and community participation can be integrated into the curriculum in a number of innovative and more traditional ways.

Key to understanding the new curriculum and its role in teaching and learning is that curriculum design is now localised and the school is able to deliver up to 25 per cent of the curriculum and whole school learning objectives in new ways. For example, learning can take place outside of the classroom and across subject areas, www.qca.org.uk/keystage-3and-4/subjects.

6.1 Curriculum Innovation and creative learning

Futurelab has published a series on online handbooks in 2009 which are useful for BSF and curriculum innovation. These include *Using digital technologies to promote inclusive practices in education* by Dr Leila Walker and Ann Logan; *Reimagining outdoor learning spaces* by Dr Tim Rudd and *Curriculum and teaching innovation* by Ben Williamson and Sarah Payton. www.futurelab.org.uk.

Many Architecture centres have a strong tradition of working with Creative Partnerships, the Government's established creative learning programme, including on BSF programmes.

Creative Culture Education (CCE) is the new organisation that includes Creative Partnerships and Find Your Talent. www.creativecultureeducation.org.

6.2 Find Your Talent and BSF

Find Your Talent is the Government's cultural offer pilot programme for children and young people investing £25 million across 10 pathfinders. Pathfinders can be contacted directly via findyourtalent@cceengland.org

The 10 Pathfinder regions are:

- Bolton
- Customs House, North and South Tyneside
- Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)
- Leeds
- Leicestershire
- Liverpool City Region
- North Somerset
- Shepway
- Telford and Wrekin
- Tower Hamlets

There are opportunities for architecture centres to work with a number of pathfinders and develop strategies for work on BSF and play, creative spaces and BSF and other broad built environment programmes.

In April 2009 pathfinders submitted the second phase of their programmes. Architecture centres will need to contact pathfinder teams and partner organisations direct.

6.3 BSF and Engaging Places

Engaging Places is an initiative from CABE and English Heritage to support teaching and learning through the built environment.

The Engaging Places website is a comprehensive guide to help teachers use the building and places in the curriculum and in whole school initiatives such as BSF.

The online component of Engaging Places can be used by architecture centres to learn about and disseminate projects and initiatives that there are involved with or deliver. For example, an article on Mortimer Community College in Tyne and Wear:
http://www.engagingplaces.org.uk/teaching+and+learning/art67433

Architecture centres have contributed to Engaging Places through the National Advisory Boards and more recently the Partnership Board and shared best practice models of learning through the built environment through the Engaging Places network programme for 2008/9.

6.4 BSF and inclusion

Architecture centres can support the approach that schools take to equalities, diversity and inclusion. Planning for inclusion means thinking about how teaching and learning can be designed to match the needs of all learners inside and outside the classroom, including:

- Gifted and Talented
- learning with specific learning needs and disabilities
- learners who speak English as an additional language
- children and young people who are in care
- learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

6.5 BSF and Sustainable Schools

Sustainability is one of the key criteria for assessment by the CABE schools design review panel. Sustainability is also a key agenda for curriculum change and for teaching and learning. In the DCSF sustainable schools guidelines sustainable school buildings and grounds are one of the eight 'doorways' to achieving a sustainable school.

To find out about sustainable development and the doorways to sustainability please visit www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/sd/.

A number of centres already carry out exemplar BSF work to support sustainable schools and this can be used to share good practice.

6.6 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Curriculum Network and built environment education

Curriculum co-development networks are set up to allow schools and learning providers to shape curriculum innovation. Schools take different approaches to co-development and there are a number of models that have been successful. Curriculum co-development facilitates disciplined innovation.

Building on architecture centres work on the Engaging Places curriculum co-development work, centres could work in clusters to develop a curriculum co-development network strand of activity and curriculum innovation on BSF for secondary learners: www.qca.org.uk

6.7 BSF and the skills based curriculum

The 14 – 19 agenda is the government's policy designed to provide continuity of learning for young people, so that skills and learning outcomes are more appropriate to meet the needs and aspirations of the future workforce. For recent developments on the 14 – 19 diploma based learning pathways. Skills based learning programmes linked to the Construction and Built Environment (C&BE) Diploma could be developed to support transformation through BSF.

7 - What are the Primary Capital Programme and the Primary Curriculum Review?

The Primary Capital Programme (PCP) was launched in April 2009 and is a major initiative that will see £1.9 billion invested in primary schools over the next three years and £7 billion by 2022.

The government will deliver a strategic approach to capital investment, providing joined up services for children and families. At least half of all primary schools will be rebuilt, remodelled of refurbished.

The Primary Curriculum Review final report was published on 30 April 2009 and will be followed by a 12 week statutory consultation period.

The report highlighted the importance of the transition from primary to secondary education for learners. As many BSF schools work closely with feeder primary schools, there is an opportunity for architecture centres to provide advice and guidance to schools.

From January 2010 the DCSF and QCA will offer guidance and provide exemplar case studies which will support curriculum planning and implementation.

The final report of the Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum can be downloaded at www.dcsf.gov.uk/primarycurriculumreview

8 - What are Design Quality Indicators?

The Design Quality Indicator (DQI) is a process for evaluating the design quality of buildings. Design Quality is seen as difficult to measure due to the subjective nature of design, but the DQI applies a structure to the process.

The DQI for schools has been developed for BSF. It measures design quality by applying three criteria:

- functionality
- build quality
- impact

Which Places Work is an online resource which has been developed for pupils in secondary schools to look at what design quality means and support teaching and learning about the design process and BSF: www.whichplaceswork.org.uk.

Architecture centres have already taken the lead through working with consortia and can continue to share best practice through disseminating DQI activity and developing a toolkit approach to the delivery and use of DQI in the BSF process. www.dqi.org.uk

9 - Additional Information

- Glossary of BSF terms http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/School/bsf_glossary.cfm
- Partnership for Schools A – Z of BSF www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/glossary/jsp
- Partnerships for Schools useful links www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/help/usefullinks
- Partnerships for Schools has a useful library of information on BSF guidance by themes, lessons learned and case studies www.paartnershipsforschools.org.uk/library
- National BSF-culture online resource www.bsf-culture.co.uk
- A summary of the BSF process www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbusieness
- Details of the Revised National Programme for BSF from February 2009 http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/bsf/rnp/
- Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) www.qca.org.uk
- CfBT Education Trust www.cfbt.com
- Every Child Matters www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

9.1 Organisations that fund cultural projects:

- Free Form Arts www.freeform.org.uk
- Business in the Community www.bitc.org.uk
- New Opportunities Fund www.nof.org.uk
- Big Lottery Fund www.biglottery.org.uk
- Foundation for Sports and the Arts www.thefsa.net
- Awards for All www.awardsforall.org.uk