

# CASE *briefing*

A Briefing from Campaign for State Education

## A GOOD LOCAL SCHOOL

### Introduction

All individuals are entitled to high quality and properly resourced education appropriate to developing their full potential, thereby fostering life long enjoyment of learning and enabling them to live free and fulfilling lives in a diverse, multicultural society.

This is best achieved through democratic and locally accountable partnerships working in a spirit of mutual respect and co-operation. However the perception of what is considered a Good Local School, has, over the years, become increasingly confused, partly due to the increased number of providers, uneven distribution of schools and/or serious shortages of school places in parts of the country. This has not been helped by the policy of successive governments which have, in promoting competition between schools as the primary means of school improvement, impeded effective collaboration and exacerbated inequality and disadvantage.

A Good Local School would ideally be part of an education service in which all schools are treated equally and which is fully accountable to the local electorate. While we recognise there will sometimes be good reasons for a child to attend a more distant school, CASE is committed to working towards the provision of a Good Local School for every child.

What follows is a frame of reference against which schools can be assessed objectively.

### Basic principles and characteristics

We believe that a good local school should:

1. Have effective leadership through the Head Teacher, senior staff and governors.
2. Be a vibrant focal point for and accountable to the local community, fostering evolving shared cultural values and aspirations, working in partnership with their Local Authority for planning monitoring and development.
3. Work in a spirit of mutual respect, co-operation and partnership with other local schools.
4. Be a place where all parents, pupils and staff feel welcomed and valued, irrespective of their differing educational and cultural needs and which provides a happy, secure, supportive learning environment celebrating diversity and respecting individuality.

*CASE believes in a fully comprehensive, locally accountable and democratic education system.*

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5. Provide a range of learning challenges necessary to help all pupils to become autonomous learners who can take control of their own lives and live as confident, responsible future citizens.
6. Meet the individual needs of all pupils through a variety of teaching styles and learning experiences engendering a love of learning for its own sake.
7. Be inclusive, using a transparent admissions process and without recourse to testing or selection.
8. Provide fully comprehensive education at all levels valuing equally all aspects of education - academic, technical, vocational, physical, emotional and social. This includes providing equal access for all learners giving appropriate support for those who need it.
9. Employ governance and management systems based on principles of local democratic accountability and a spirit of mutual respect, co-operation and partnership between parents (including Home/School Partnerships and Parent Councils etc.), teachers, governors and the elected representatives of the local community.
10. Have a Governing Body composed of balanced numbers of elected parents, staff and representatives from the Local Authority and community.
11. Allow teachers to have an effective voice at all levels of decision making processes.
12. Have a school development plan that is based on the principles of continual organic development, employing resources effectively to provide a high quality learning environment.
13. Have an effective Student Council contributing to improving the life of the school.

**CASE believes that state-funded education must be a force for equipping future generations with the knowledge and skills to enable them to live free and fulfilling lives in a tolerant and civilised society.**

**The above principles should be the basis for equal support and funding to all schools. This should have the flexibility to meet the needs of the community/area in which individual schools are situated.**

**This should be, as much as possible, a statutory provision.**

## **Who We Are**

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