



BPSI

Barnet Partnership for School Improvement

BPSI Sharing Information Statement

Context

When BPSI was formed in April 2011 there was an understanding amongst schools and the Local Authority (LA) that it was a traded service paid for by schools and therefore it was generally accepted that any information gained about the school by BPSI consultants was retained within that relationship and not shared with the LA.

As the capacity of the Local Authority (LA) reduced, it looked to BPSI to provide consultant support to schools as it benefits the LA to be able to refer schools to a known quality provider when schools are in need of professional support. This is particularly true when a school is on the LA's 'Schools Causing Concern' list. Sometimes the LA will pay for this support direct, therefore becoming the customer of BPSI, but more often the school pays BPSI to work with a BPSI consultant on issues mutually agreed with the LA.

This has effectively resulted in BPSI securing the LA as a further, but somewhat different, customer. The issue then arises as to whom one can ethically share the information gained about schools when engaged as a BPSI consultant.

Guiding Principle

Sharing information can be uncomfortable, for individuals and organisations. However, it can also lead to great benefits. Therefore, BPSI has a guiding principle that:

“Sharing information between schools the Local Authority and BPSI should be encouraged in order to foster a culture of honest supportive feedback and the sharing of practice between practitioners which then results in continuous improvement of practice and outcomes for children.

Furthermore, if a BPSI consultant becomes aware of information or circumstances that could negatively impact upon the school's effectiveness they have a duty to make their concerns known to the headteacher.”

(See note 3 overleaf)

Different Schools – Different Expectations

This principle influences the relationship with all schools but the particular expectations of BPSI consultants are determined by the specific circumstances of the school as outlined below.

1. **If a School commissions BPSI – and is NOT a ‘School Causing Concern’**

BPSI consultants will not share their intelligence of the school with the LA but specific ‘Products’ (such as BPSI School Reviews and Governance Reviews) will include a statement that assumes sharing after a set time period which the school can veto and refuse to share with the LA. *(BPSI consultants should bring this statement to the attention of headteachers when conducting reviews).*

e.g. Please note that after 7 days from receiving the report and in the interests of good practice, BPSI will pass a copy of the report on to the school’s Learning Network Inspector (LNI). If the school does not want the report sent to their LNI they should contact BPSI within the 7 days. (BPSI Governance Review, BPSI School Review documents.)

Note: Headteachers may also wish to share such reports with their School Partnership.

2. **If a School or LA Commissions BPSI – and IS a ‘School Causing Concern’**

Schools are informed via the ‘Schools Causing Concern’ notification letter that all interactions with BPSI consultants may be shared with the LA.

3. **If a School commissions BPSI – and is NOT a ‘School Causing Concern’ AND “the consultant becomes aware of information or circumstances that could negatively impact upon the school’s effectiveness ...”**

a) *... the consultant has a duty to make their concerns known to the headteacher.” (See Guiding Principle overleaf.)*

b) The consultant should also seek permission to share their concerns with the LA to assist in school improvement.

c) If this permission is **not** granted, the BPSI consultant will respect the head teacher’s wishes.

Note: BPSI needs to be fair and open and headteachers need to be aware that if, at a later date, the school is added to the LA’s Schools Causing Concern list then previous information that would have been withheld from the LA will be made available to it, in line with the Schools Causing Concern notification provided to such schools.

If the Consultant needs support or guidance in relation to the implementation of these principles, they should contact the BPSI Manager.