

# News story: Partnership is key to creating more good school places

The Secretary of State spoke at the [Celebrating Partnerships](#) event hosted by the Independent Schools Council (13 September) to showcase the success of the existing partnerships between the independent and state school sectors.

The Department for Education is working in collaboration with the Independent Schools Council to support more joint working between the independent and state school sectors. Support will include drawing on the experience and the expertise of independent schools in leadership, teacher training, curriculum support, school improvement and sponsorship, or setting up a free school.

Ms Greening reiterated the importance of sharing knowledge and spreading expertise so that every child, regardless of their background or circumstances, could go on to fulfil their potential.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

We want every child, regardless of their background or where they live, to have access to a good school place.

Many independent schools are already undertaking partnership activities with state schools, helping raise attainment across the wider school system.

We want to continue to harness the resources and expertise of leading independent schools through more partnership activities, sponsorships or setting up new free schools, so more young people have the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills to fulfil their potential.

The Independent Schools Council highlighted thousands of existing partnerships including academic, sporting or musical support, which are estimated to benefit around 10,000 state schools and 175,000 pupils.

Truro Prep School, in Cornwall, is already supporting the state sector with music and sport partnerships, with 29 independent and state schools involved in the music partnerships and 18 schools involved in the sports partnerships.

New Hall School, in Essex, was the first independent school to sponsor a primary school. It set up an academy trust to sponsor Messing Primary School, which was in special measures at the time. Since the partnership was formed, performance at the primary school has improved and Ofsted has rated its leadership and management 'Outstanding'.

Speaking at the event, National Schools Commissioner Sir David Carter commended the positive work being done by independent schools and echoed the

Secretary of State's comments about continuing these efforts. He spoke about the Department for Education's newly formed System Partnership Unit that is working to support the independent schools sector to broker partnerships and relationships with the state sector. The department also launched a leaflet to offer further guidance in setting up or expanding existing partnerships.

The Celebrating Partnerships event was attended by independent school headteachers, stakeholders and teaching union representatives, all sharing the common goal of breaking down barriers to social mobility so that every child has access to a good education.