



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED:  
NORTH BRAUNSTONE WARD**

**CABINET**

**15<sup>th</sup> January 2001**

---

**RETURN OF FINANCIAL DELEGATION – QUEENSMEAD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

---

**Report of the Director of Education**

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**1. Details of Report**

On 2 February 1998, the Education Committee withdrew financial powers from Queensmead Junior School following the discovery of evidence raising concerns over the financial and educational management at the school.

The school had had a history of budget problems which necessitated close working with officers of the Education Department. A range of concerns over the management of the school were identified, and a full Internal Audit review of the school was commissioned by the Director of Education. This review identified concerns over the financial probity and the level of value-for-money achieved by the school. Following advice from the Department, the Governing Body passed a resolution, in January 1998, to ask the LEA to withdraw delegation. There were also concerns over the leadership and management at the school and the Headteacher later left the school. In June 1998 OFSTED placed the school in Special Measures.

In the intervening period a great detail of progress has been made by the school to address the serious weaknesses which were identified by the Department and by OFSTED.

The Department established a Joint Management Group (JMG) to oversee the management of the school and to undertake effective consultation and development of the Governing Body. The JMG consists of officers within the Department and the Headteacher of the school.

During the financial year 1998/99 the school had a deficit budget of £35,000. However, the school now has a stable budget and its strategy to recover the deficit budget has been implemented successfully.

A new Headteacher has been appointed and the school was re-inspected in July 2000, the judgement being the school no longer required special measures. The school received a positive OFSTED report, which praised the improvements achieved under the strong leadership of the Headteacher, and acknowledged the effective support of the LEA.

The Governing Body have had time to develop their skills and they have addressed weaknesses in processes. They are now in a position to offer appropriate management with the strategic and financial direction of the school. The Headteacher supports the governors by providing timely and appropriate reports to indicate major spending and the alignment with key policy priorities.

The JMG considers that the school is capable of self-management of its finances, and fully supports the return of delegation to the school. However, the JMG believes that it would be beneficial for the school to be supported over a transitional period of 6 months following the return of delegation. Following this period the JMG will be formally dissolved.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Cabinet is recommended to return financial delegation to the school.