

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

6 July 2016

Report title **School Improvement and Governance
Strategy (revised version) 2016**

Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Cllr Claire Darke Education
Wards affected	All
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Report to be/has been considered	Strategic Executive Board 3 May 2016

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Scrutinise the updated School Improvement and Governance Strategy (Appendix 1) for 2016.
2. Comment on the scope and effectiveness of City of Wolverhampton Council's response in securing the highest possible standards across all Wolverhampton schools.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To inform The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel updated School Improvement and Governance Strategy (Appendix 1) for 2016.
- 1.2 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel is invited to scrutinise the contents of the report and make any suggestions or recommendations that strengthen the council's ability to carry out its functions to monitor the performance of schools in its area and ensure that where improvements are necessary, these are carried out effectively and expeditiously.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The School Improvement and Governance Strategy (Appendix 1) has been in use since September 2014 (first in draft form and then following approval by Cabinet).
- 2.2 The implementation of the strategy has had a significant impact on the number of schools in the City being judged to be good or better by Ofsted – increasing from a low of 63% in September 2013 to 79% in April 2016 with further significant improvements expected by September 2016.
- 2.3 The strategy has now been revised and refreshed based on experiences in the first 12 months of implementation and a consultation with Headteachers and Officers.

3.0 Discussion

The main changes to the document are:

- 3.1 Update of paragraph 1.6: to ensure alignment with Education's Corporate plan aims.
- 3.2 Update of Section 2 – Statutory Context: Updated to include the amendments to the Education and Inspections Act 2006 by the Education and Adoptions Act 2016. The amendments are:
 - a) Stating that every school judged 'inadequate' by Ofsted will be turned into a sponsored academy.
 - b) Giving new powers to the Secretary of State for Education to intervene in schools considered to be underperforming.
 - c) Expanding the legal definition of the 'eligible for intervention' category to include 'coasting' schools, and enable (but not require) the Secretary of State to turn such schools into sponsored academies or intervene in them in other ways.
 - d) Allowing the Secretary of State to issue directions, with time limits, to school governing bodies and local authorities, to speed up academy conversions.
 - e) Placing a new duty on schools and local authorities in specified cases to take all reasonable steps to progress the conversion
 - f) Requiring schools and local authorities in specified cases to work with an identified sponsor toward the 'making of academy arrangements' with that sponsor.
 - g) Removing the requirements for a general consultation to be held where a school 'eligible for intervention' is being converted to a sponsored academy.

- 3.3 Update of paragraph 4.2: to include the LA's actions should a school fall below government floor standards.
- 3.4 Inclusion of a paragraph on challenge and accountability of academies (paragraph 4.4)
- 3.5 Update of paragraph 4.5 to include the process for RAG rating of governing bodies.
- 3.6 Update of Annex 1 - Support Categories for Wolverhampton Schools to ensure an even more robust categorisation process for schools.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 The cost of implementation and monitoring of the Council's actions to challenge and support schools to improve their end Ofsted outcomes has been included in the approved revenue budget for the Schools Standards service.

The cost of educational failure is however significant for the school, for the community and for the City in economic terms - It is therefore evident that the role of the LA in supporting raising standards in schools has financially significant implications for the Council and for the City.

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 Under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 the Council has a duty to contribute to the development of the community by securing efficient primary and secondary education and promote high standards in the city.

Recent improvements in attainment and in the performance of schools suggest that the Council's duties are being discharged.

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 Some pupils and some schools face greater challenges in achieving educational success; there are therefore profound Equalities implications to the LA and to schools in ensuring that every child and young person achieves their full potential and every school provides good educational outcomes.

A coherent and effective strategy to support schools is in place and Ofsted regularly audit all of this work.

7.0 Environmental implications

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report

8.0 Human resources implications

- 8.1 Where the Headteacher, staff or governors require support or training there can be significant HR implications.

The wider social costs of educational underachievement or failure have been previously referred to.

9.0 Corporate landlord implications

9.1 There are no direct Corporate Landlord implications arising from this report

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.1 N/A

Appendix 1

School Improvement and Governance Strategy 2016

School Improvement and Governance Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The council's vision is to create an education system in Wolverhampton that promotes the very highest standards for all children and young people, closes the attainment gap and allows every pupil in Wolverhampton to reach their full potential. The council celebrates school autonomy and supports school leaders and teachers in leading City wide collaboration and school improvement.
- 1.2** Educational standards across the City are improving rapidly and this upward trend will be built upon in order to ensure that the children and young people of Wolverhampton have the skills and confidence needed to reach their aspirational potential and who can then support the longer-term development and prosperity of the City.
- 1.3** We believe that all families in Wolverhampton want their children to succeed in education. We believe they want an education system that values and celebrates high standards, and where no child is left behind as they learn and achieve through a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 1.4** We will ensure that our education system prepares all children and young people to become confident and responsible adult citizens. We will equip them with the skills they need for their own future economic prosperity, and that of the City.
- 1.5** In partnership with our schools we will build a school system where: the highest quality education is delivered in all Wolverhampton schools, all schools work together in a self-improving, self-sustaining school to school support system. Together we will act as the champion of pupils and families, particularly our most vulnerable.
- 1.6** The City of Wolverhampton Council will:
- Maintain and build upon the effective working relationships with schools to facilitate the development of strong, local school to school support networks through a systems leadership and partnership working approach that involves all relevant stakeholders in the school improvement work across the City.
 - Implement a robust and effective challenge and support programme to all schools across the City through a staged and differentiated approach based on a schools individual position, in order to hold them fully to account for school improvement.
 - Complete a full audit of all governing boards to have a rag rated system to enable them to fully understand their needs and or requirements in regards to training and support, instigate an effective recruitment and retention programme for governors and ensure there is a comprehensive training package for governors at every level.
 - Ensure that safeguarding is accorded with the highest priority in all Wolverhampton schools.

2. Statutory Context

- 2.1** The local authority's current statutory responsibilities for educational excellence are set out in section 13a of the Education Act 1996. That duty states that a local authority must exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards. Local authorities must discharge this duty within the context of increasing autonomy and changing accountability for schools, alongside an expectation that improvement should be led by schools themselves.
- 2.2** The Education and Inspections Act 2006 defined the strategic role of the local authority in the school improvement process:
- As 'champion' of the needs of children and young people and their families;
 - In the planning, commissioning and quality assurance of educational services;
 - In challenging schools and, where appropriate, to commission support and, if necessary, to intervene in the management and governance of the school; and
 - Where a local authority has concerns about academy performance it must raise them directly with the Department for Education.
- 2.3** The 2006 Act requires local authorities to respond to parental concerns about the quality of local schools and grants new powers to intervene earlier, in maintained schools, where performance is poor. Part 4 of the Act sets out measures for tackling school underperformance by:
- Enabling early action to tackle school underperformance so that it does not become entrenched and lead to formal school failure;
 - Ensuring that effective support and challenge is provided immediately when unacceptable standards are identified, so that improvements can be made quickly; and
 - Securing decisive action if a school in Special Measures fails to make sufficient progress, so that the education and life chances of pupils are safeguarded.
- 2.3** The Act differentiates between absolute low attainment (below floor standards) and relative under-performance where there may be declining or static performance by children and young people, under-performance by specific groups, or in specific subject areas. In all cases, early intervention is seen as the key in preventing school failure.
- 2.4** The Act gives revised powers to the local authority to intervene in maintained schools causing concern which builds on existing statutory powers to ensure that every child is provided with the education and opportunities they deserve. Wolverhampton City Council will apply these powers of intervention when deemed to be appropriate. Further statutory guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-causing-concern>.
- 2.5** The Education and Adoptions Act 2016 amends the 2006 act by:
- Stating that every school judged 'inadequate' by Ofsted will be turned into a sponsored academy.
 - Giving new powers to the Secretary of State for Education to intervene in schools considered to be underperforming.
 - Expanding the legal definition of the 'eligible for intervention' category to include 'coasting' schools, and enable (but not require) the Secretary of State to turn such schools into sponsored academies or intervene in them in other ways.
 - Allowing the Secretary of State to issue directions, with time limits, to school governing bodies and local authorities, to speed up academy conversions.

- Placing a new duty on schools and local authorities in specified cases to take all reasonable steps to progress the conversion
- Requiring schools and local authorities in specified cases to work with an identified sponsor toward the 'making of academy arrangements' with that sponsor.
- Removing the requirements for a general consultation to be held where a school 'eligible for intervention' is being converted to a sponsored academy.

3. Shared principles

The Wolverhampton School Improvement Strategy is underpinned by the following key principles:

3.1 That every child or young person in Wolverhampton will reach their full potential and have a happy and positive school experience.

3.2 That every school in the City will make effective provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities so that they can make good progress in their learning and can move easily on to the next stage of their education and have aspirations for employment and independent adult life.

3.3 That the outcomes of every child or young person in Wolverhampton are a collective responsibility:

While responsibility for improvement rests with individual schools as self-managing institutions; Wolverhampton City Council has a statutory duty (as outlined in Section 2) to challenge and, where it deems it necessary, to undertake timely interventions in schools to raise standards.

3.4 That transparency, mutual trust and partnership are vital to a self-improving system:

A clear and robust criteria for categorising each school, based on their level of effectiveness in providing a good level of education, will be shared with school leaders (See Annex 1). Once categorised, schools will receive differentiated levels of challenge and intervention from the local authority (see Annex 2) to ensure rapid and sustainable school improvement. Where a local authority has concerns about academy performance it will raise them initially with the school and then, if necessary, directly with the Secretary of State via the Regional Schools Commissioner and through Ofsted.

3.5 That strong leadership, management and governance are essential:

Headteachers and governors are ultimately responsible for the performance of the schools they lead. Governing bodies, therefore, need to effectively challenge and hold school leadership teams appropriately to account to ensure good outcomes for all pupils. The effectiveness of school governance will therefore be quality assured with a robust system for evaluating the effectiveness of all governing bodies all set within the context of the Council's Governance Strategy (See Annex 3).

3.6 That an effective self-improving school led system of support is vital:

School to school improvement networks that are built on autonomy and strong professional relationships, are vital to ensure effective support is available to all schools. Through these networks, schools will take ownership and responsibility for their own and each other's performance and improvement.

3.7 Additional and strengthened teaching school alliances will further support schools working in partnership to improve the quality of education provision within the City.

3.8 The City of Wolverhampton Council will work in partnership with Schools Forum to ensure that resources are effectively deployed to improve schools standards and the outcomes for all pupils, including the most vulnerable, using best value principles.

4. Local authority judgement of school effectiveness:

4.1 School Improvement Advisors (SIAs)

Where School Improvement Advisors are deployed they will seek to:

- Focus on the overall quality of education provided by the school, in particular the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils
- Respect the schools autonomy to plan its own development and commission its own support.
- Give professional challenge to school leaders and governors.
- Provide evidence based judgements on school performance through core meetings, LA reviews and data analysis.

4.2 Categorisation of schools;

- Each Wolverhampton School will be placed in one of four local authority categories based on published criteria, (see Annex 1). **No school, however compelling its quantitative or qualitative data may move to a Category A until it has been judged to be at least good through a recent Ofsted Inspection.**
- **In addition, any school that is below DfE Floor Standards cannot be judged to be higher than a B2 regardless of the schools other circumstances and therefore will be issued with a pre-formal warning notice which may then lead, if effective action is not taken in a timely manner, to the LA using its formal powers of intervention.**
- In the Autumn Term, schools will be informed, by letter, of their local authority category and the reasons for it. This categorisation will be reviewed every term and if the risk factors for the school increase/decrease the schools category may be changed; schools will then be informed of any changes and the reasons why.
- Local authority School Improvement Advisors (SIAs) will be allocated to work with schools on the basis of need, as identified through the categorisation process.
- All schools will be provided with a core programme of challenge and intervention (see Annex 2). Where a local authority has concerns about academy performance it will raise them initially with the school and then, if necessary, directly with the Secretary of State via the Regional Schools Commissioner and through Ofsted.

4.3 Challenge and Accountability – Maintained Schools;

- Once categorised, schools will receive a differentiated level of challenge and intervention from the local authority through School Improvement Advisors (SIAs) (see Annex 2).
- School Improvement Advisors (SIAs) will provide differentiated levels of professional challenge to schools, in order to evaluate performance, identify priorities for improvement and plan effective change.
- School Improvement Advisors (SIAs) will act for and on behalf of the local authority and are the main conduit for local authority communication on school improvement.

- Specific allocations of time will be determined by the local authority according to school category (see Annex 2) and individual school circumstances.
- All maintained schools in Categories B and C will also be challenged and held to account through regular individual School Improvement Board meetings (SIB) (see Annex 3). SIB meetings will be chaired by a local authority officer and there will be a minimum expectation of attendance from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, although wider participation from school leadership teams and governors will be encouraged.
- The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will present evidence of impact since the last SIB against the schools priorities for improvement.

4.4 Challenge and accountability – Academies;

(Set out in more detail in City of Wolverhampton Academies Protocol)

- Where the local authority has concerns about the performance of an academy, for example following the annual desk top data analysis, it will in the first instance write to the individual establishment to raise the issue with the Head teacher / Principal, Chair of Governors and, where appropriate, the provider. If necessary this will be followed by a visit from a school improvement advisor in order to be informed about potential solutions within an agreed timescale. If the Local Authority is then not satisfied that the concerns raised have been effectively addressed it will report its concerns to the Regional Schools' Commissioner.
- Where the Local Authority has concerns about an academy's safeguarding arrangements or procedures (arising as a result of investigations about individual children or otherwise), these concerns will be reported to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) who have the responsibility to take any necessary improvement action and monitor the situation.

4.5 Governance;

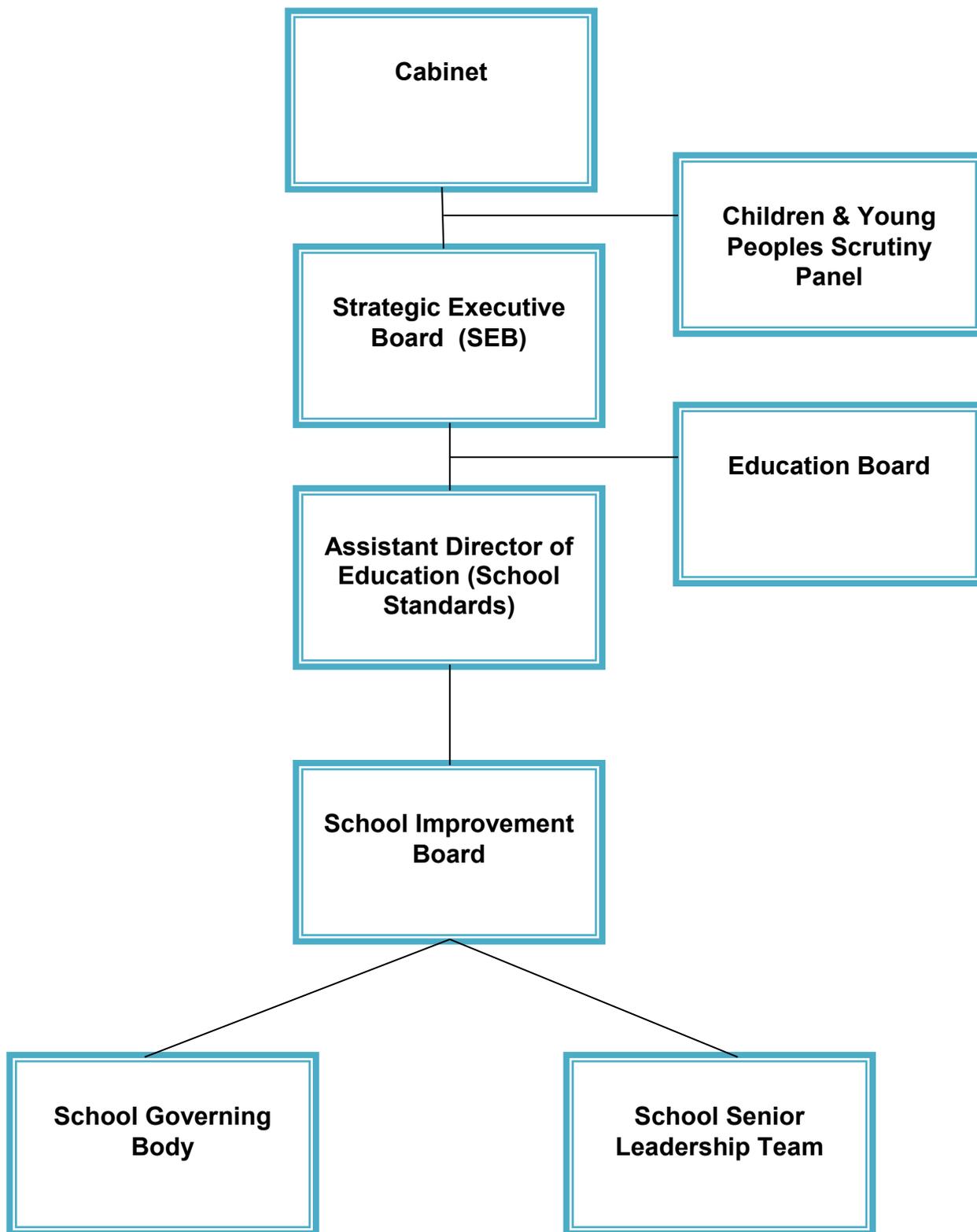
- The council's Governance Strategy (see Annex 4) outlines a robust system for evaluating the effectiveness of governing bodies which will include, a minimum of:
 - Scrutiny of schools most recent Ofsted reports for comments on governance
 - The school's website and the publication of statutory information
 - Information on the SFVS and from School Finance about how well the budget is managed
 - Scrutiny of Governing Body minutes from last three full Governing Body meetings and any committees
 - An audit and quality assurance of recent CPD undertaken by the whole Governing Body.
 - A requirement for Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors to complete the local authority's self-review tool
 - Intelligence gathering from School Improvement Advisors
 - Evidence from School Improvement Board meetings (if in place).

- The culmination of this evidence will enable the LA to give each Governing Body an overall rating (RAG), and make subsequent recommendations to immediately improve standards of governance.
 - **RED** - **Fails to meet all critical standards**
 - **AMBER** - **Critical standards are all met; some core standards are missing**
 - **GREEN** - **All standards to enhance practice are effectively implemented**
- Any schools where the governing body has been rated as Red or Amber may be directed by the local authority to participate in a full review of governance by an independent National Leader of Governance (NLG), or, where support fails to see quick results, an Interim Executive Board (IEB) may be established (see 4.4 below).

4.6 Further Powers of intervention;

- The council reserves the right, where maintained schools are not making adequate improvements or are below floor standards to implement its further powers of intervention as outlined in 'Schools Causing Concern - the statutory guidance for local authorities' (March 2016).
- Where a local authority has concerns about academy performance it will raise them initially with the school and then, if necessary, directly with the Secretary of State via the Regional Schools Commissioner and through Ofsted.

5. Accountability Summary



Annex 1

Support Categories for Wolverhampton Schools

It is important for the Local Authority to consider how it groups schools with differing needs in order to proportionally justify targeting of finite support and resources (Judgements are based on the range of evidence available to the LA at the time of categorisation)

Schools are placed in the category that is “best fit” based on the evidence gathered by School Improvement Advisors through their work in school and their professional judgement.

Categorisation	Rationale
<p data-bbox="85 124 295 277">A Providing a good or better level of education</p>	<ol data-bbox="338 124 2047 1442" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Judged good or outstanding by Ofsted at the last inspection. and 2. Judged securely good or outstanding by the LA through School Improvement Advisor work with the school and is therefore likely to be judged so at the schools next Ofsted inspection. 3. Leadership and management at all levels particularly senior leaders, middle managers and governors consistently demonstrate, through evidence and analysis of data, effective processes and structures which have a good impact on pupils' achievement and behaviour. 4. School Governors are RAG rated at Green by the LA. 5. School leaders and managers are accurate in their self-evaluation and judgements are evidence based, including robust data analysis. 6. School data is presented in a manner that is accessible to teachers, governors and school leaders and facilitates forensic analysis and rapid action to improve pupil outcomes 7. In mainstream schools, pupil achievement for reading, writing and mathematics for all groups of pupils is consistently above the national standards over the last 3 years. The school is able to evidence progress and attainment across foundation subjects. 8. In-year progress across the vast majority of year groups, pupil groups and core subjects is consistently strong and/or the gap is rapidly narrowing. 9. Nursery school child development and learning assessments on exit demonstrate that different groups make good and often outstanding progress from their starting points, and progress rates contribute to narrowing the attainment gap.. 10. In Special Schools the vast majority of pupils with shared starting points are making more than expected progress (Median and Upper Quartiles defined in Progression Guidance 2011); robust benchmarking and rigorous moderation of assessment ensures that challenging targets are set, and careful analysis of progress and development is leading to improved attainment, and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. 11. The vast majority of teaching over time is good with an increasing percentage of outstanding teaching being evidenced. Any teaching requiring improvement is effectively and rapidly tackled by school leaders. No inadequate teaching is evident. 12. Provision for safeguarding meets all statutory requirements. 13. Behaviour is managed consistently well, all groups of pupils attend regularly and there are no or very few exclusions. 14. Special School and PRU attendance shows consistent improvements with secure systems and processes evidencing impact on upward attendance trends within school context where overall attendance is below national levels. 15. The school can evidence highly successful strategies for engaging with parents. There are very few concerns expressed by parents. 16. The school is effective in its outward facing links with other partners which contribute to and support school improvement processes, including working with and supporting other schools.

17. Other risk factors are considered to be low by the LA

Categorisation	Rationale
<p>B1 Level of education provided requires improvement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schools that have previously been judged good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection but are considered to be vulnerable sat the next inspection by the LA through the work of the School Improvement Advisor or school performance data. <p>Or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. School is judged as requiring improvement by Ofsted with Leadership and Management judged to be good and demonstrating good capacity to improve and this judgement continues to be evidenced through the work of the School Improvement Advisor with the school <p>Or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. School is judged to be requiring improvement at its last historic inspection (up to two years ago) but all evidence to the LA, through School Improvement Advisor work with the school, indicates that the school is likely to be judged to be good at its next inspection. 4. Leadership and management at all levels particularly senior leaders, middle managers and governors are secure and improving which is leading to improvements in pupils' achievement and behaviour and this can be clearly evidenced particularly through the analysis of data. 5. School Governors are RAG rated at least Amber by the LA with a clear action plan for improvement. 6. School leaders and managers are generally accurate in their self-evaluation and judgements are increasingly evidence based, including robust data analysis. 7. School data is presented in a manner that is accessible to teachers, governors and school leaders and facilitates forensic analysis and rapid action to improve pupil outcomes. 8. In mainstream schools, pupil achievement for reading, writing and mathematics for all groups is at or above the national standards or is improving rapidly over the last 3 years. The school is beginning to be able to evidence progress and attainment across foundation subjects. 9. Achievement shows a trend of improvement over time; although there may be some variability between one year and the next and/or between different groups. 10. In-year progress across most year groups, pupil groups and/or core subjects shows a trend of improvement over time and/or the gap is narrowing; although data may show a variable picture over the last three years. 11. Nursery school child development and learning assessments on exit demonstrate consistently good progress from their starting points. 12. In Special Schools most pupils with shared starting points are making expected/more than expected progress (Median and Upper Quartiles defined in Progression Guidance 2011); where benchmarking and rigorous moderation of assessment indicates pupils making less than expected progress/ are unlikely to make expected/higher attainment, a robust response is being made to increase progress and raise attainment.

	<p>13. The quality of teaching is rapidly improving and there is very little inadequate teaching evident. Any teaching deemed inadequate is effectively and rapidly tackled by school leaders.</p> <p>14. Provision for safeguarding meets all statutory requirements</p> <p>15. Behaviour is managed well, all groups of pupils attend regularly and there are very few or reducing numbers of exclusions.</p> <p>16. Special School attendance and PRU shows consistent improvements with secure systems and processes evidencing impact on upward attendance trends within school context where overall attendance is below national levels.</p> <p>17. Engagement with parents is secure and the vast majority of parents express contentment with the school.</p> <p>18. Outward facing links are increasing. School leaders are taking the opportunity to work with other schools in the network and beyond.</p> <p>19. Risk factors such as a no substantive headteacher in post, newly appointed headteacher, high turnover of staff, a high number of NQTs and exceptional circumstances are accurately identified and are considered to be having minimal impact on standards by the LA.</p>
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Categorisation	Rationale
<p>B2</p> <p>Level of education provided requires improvement</p>	<p>1. School is judged as requiring improvement by Ofsted and demonstrates limited capacity to improve; this judgement continues to be evidenced through the work of the School Improvement Advisor and/or school performance data</p> <p>Or</p> <p>2. Schools that have previously been judged good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection but are considered to be very vulnerable at next inspection by the LA through the work of the School Improvement Advisor work with the school and/or school performance data</p> <p>Or</p> <p>3. The school is below DfE floor standards.</p> <p>4. Aspects of leadership and management, teaching and learning or behaviour and safety require improvement and/or school leaders do not yet consistently demonstrate effective processes and structures, or accuracy in its self-evaluation and they demonstrate limited capacity to improve.</p> <p>5. School Governors are RAG rated Amber or Red by the LA and there is little evidence of capacity to improve.</p> <p>6. The LA, through School Improvement Advisor work with the school, has identified areas of fragility within attainment & progress data in specific subjects, with particular groups or in identified year groups</p> <p>7. Pupil progress for English and mathematics has fallen below the national standards over the last three years and/ or the school has fallen below government floor targets in one or more area. In-year progress across certain year groups, pupil groups and/or core subjects shows a declining picture over time and/or the gap is not narrowing or is widening.</p>

	<p>8. Nursery school child development and learning assessments on exit do not consistently evidence expected progress from their starting points In Special Schools there is inconsistent evidence of pupils making expected/more than expected progress from their starting points; benchmarking and moderation of assessment have limited impact on pupils making less than expected progress/ are unlikely to make expected/higher attainment.</p> <p>9. Special School and PRU attendance shows limited improvements with systems and processes that do not consistently evidence impact on upward attendance trends within school context where overall attendance is below national levels.</p> <p>10. The majority of teaching is requires improvement across the school and there may be some elements of inadequate teaching that is slow to be effectively tackled.</p> <p>11. Behaviour is managed appropriately, most groups of pupils attend regularly or attendance is improving and there are few or a reducing number of exclusions.</p> <p>12. Provision for safeguarding meets requirements.</p> <p>13. The school is starting to develop suitable strategies for engaging with parents.</p> <p>14. The school does not fully participate in its outward facing links with other partners, including the LA and, in particular, the School Improvement Advisors, to contribute to or support their school improvement processes.</p> <p>15. The school is not effectively using its budgets and resources to improve academic outcomes for all pupils and/or holds a deficit balance and/or holds a surplus balance above the recommended limits.</p> <p>16. Risk factors such as a no substantive headteacher in post, newly appointed headteacher, high turnover of staff, a high number of NQTs and exceptional circumstances are considered to be significant by the LA.</p>
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Categorisation	Rationale
<p>C</p> <p>Level of education provided has serious weaknesses or school is in special measures</p>	<p>1. School is judged as having serious weakness or requiring special measures by Ofsted.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>2. Overall the LA, through the work of the School Improvement Advisor with the school, judges that the quality of education to be inadequate. There are key aspects that require significant improvement.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>3. The school is below DfE floor standards and demonstrates limited capacity to improve outcomes.</p> <p>4. Leadership and management does not consistently demonstrate effective processes and structures including the accuracy of self-evaluation and data analysis. Leaders and managers are not taking sufficiently effective steps towards securing good behaviour..</p>

5. Leadership and management of the school particularly senior leaders, middle managers and governors may or may not have the capacity to make the necessary improvements in a timely manner.
6. School Governors are RAG rated at Red by the LA and there is little evidence of capacity to improve.
7. Pupil progress is inadequate over the last three years in English and/or mathematics, and/or for different groups.
8. Nursery school child development and learning assessments on exit do not consistently evidence expected progress from their starting points.
9. In Special Schools there is limited evidence of pupils making expected/more than expected progress from their starting points; as a result of inconsistent benchmarking and moderation, there is insufficient evidence of pupil progress and attainment being impacted.
10. The vast majority of teaching over time requires improvement and does not secure the good progress of pupils. Inadequate teaching is not effectively addressed by school leadership.
11. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements and give cause for concern. The number of exclusions is high, or rising.
12. Attendance is consistently low for all pupils or groups of pupils and shows little sign of improvement
13. Special School and PRU attendance shows limited improvements with systems and processes that do not consistently evidence impact on upward attendance trends within school context where overall attendance is below national levels.
14. The schools strategies for engaging parents are weak and parents have expressed little confidence in the school.
15. The school does not engage effectively in outward facing links with other partners, including the LA and, in particular, the School Improvement Advisors, to contribute to or support their school improvement.
16. The school is not effectively using its budgets and resources to improve academic outcomes for all pupils and/or holds a deficit balance and/or holds a surplus balance above the recommended limits (Supported through evidence from Finance Officers)

Annex 2:
Notional School Improvement Advisor Time Allocation

<u>Work Plan</u>	<u>Time Allocation/year</u>
<p><u>Academies/Free Schools</u> A minimum of: 1 day desk-top data analysis and evaluation of school development plan (if shared), write up of summary report identifying key priorities and letter to headteacher/Autumn Term.</p>	<p>1+ day Total = 1+ day/year</p>
<p><u>Category A schools</u> 1 day data analysis and evaluation of school development plan, write up of summary report identifying key priorities and letter to headteacher/Autumn Term. 0.5 core visit/term* 0.5 completion of Note of Visit, update of LA summary report, monthly strategic updates with AD, additional support for headteacher appointments/term.</p>	<p>1 day 1.5 days 1.5 days Total = 4.0 days/year</p>
<p><u>Category B1 schools</u> 1 day data analysis and evaluation of school development plan, write up of summary report identifying key priorities and letter to headteacher/Autumn Term. 0.5 core visit/term* Attendance at SIB Meeting/term 1 day monitoring and review in school of identified and agreed priorities (from the SIB) and writing of report/term** 0.5 completion of Note of Visit, update of LA summary report, monthly strategic updates with AD, additional support for headteacher appointments/term.</p>	<p>1 day 1.5 days 1.5 days 3.0 days 1.5 days Total = 8.5 days/year</p>

<p><u>Category B2 schools</u> 1 day data analysis and evaluation of school development plan, write up of summary report identifying key priorities and letter to headteacher/Autumn Term.</p> <p>0.5 core visit/term*</p> <p>Attendance at SIB Meeting/half term</p> <p>1 day monitoring and review, in school, of identified and agreed priorities (from the SIB) and writing of report/half term **</p> <p>0.5 completion of Note of Visit, update of LA summary report, monthly strategic updates with AD, additional support for headteacher appointments/term.</p>	<p>1 day</p> <p>1.5 days</p> <p>3 days</p> <p>6 days</p> <p>3 days</p> <p>Total = 14.5 days/year</p>
<p><u>Category C schools</u> 1 day data analysis and evaluation of school development plan, write up of summary report identifying key priorities and letter to headteacher/Autumn Term.</p> <p>0.5 core visit/term*</p> <p>Attendance at SIB Meeting/half term (or more regularly if necessary)</p> <p>1+ day monitoring and review, in school, of identified and agreed priorities (from the SIB) and writing of report/half term * *</p> <p>Full 2 day 'Inspection Health Check' review of school and report/year**</p> <p>0.5 completion of Note of Visit, update of LA summary report, monthly strategic updates with AD, additional support for headteacher appointments/term.</p>	<p>1 day</p> <p>1.5 days</p> <p>3+ days</p> <p>6+ days</p> <p>2 days</p> <p>3 days</p> <p>Total = 16.5+ days/year</p>

Schools are able to purchase additional SIA time through an SLA if they should so wish.

*** School Improvement Advisors termly core visits to schools will follow a set agenda (to be shared with school leaders prior to the visit) that is linked to the criteria of the LA category that the school is placed in and may cover school data analysis, Ofsted four judgement areas, impact and progress against Ofsted priorities since the last inspection and any actions set from the previous core meeting. The meetings will form part of the statutory support and challenge function of the Local Authority. Judgements made will be based on Ofsted principle of Discussion, Observation, Data, and Documents (DODD).**

**** School Reviews and 'Inspection Health Checks' will be led by School Improvement Advisors and fully involve school senior leaders at every stage, (these reviews may be announced or unannounced). They will provide an objective and evidence led evaluation of the school's work, support for the school's self-evaluation and evidence for the Local Authority to support the categorisation process. Judgements made will be based on Ofsted principle of Discussion, Observation, Data, and Documents (DODD). The structure of such reviews or health checks will be determined by SIA/SIB Chair based on school context.**

Other School Improvement Advisor Time:

- Attendance at and reporting of Ofsted/HMI Meeting @ 0.5+ day/meeting
- Additional support for Headteacher (all maintained schools) & senior leadership) appointment processes. Academies/Free schools are able to purchase this support through an SLA should they so wish.
- Completion of Headteacher references only.

Annex 3: **School Improvement Board (SIB)**

Membership

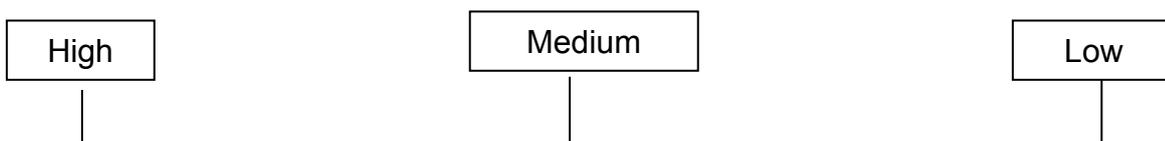
At-Risk School Advisor (Chair)
School Improvement Advisor
Headteacher*
Other senior School Leaders
Chair of Governors (or appropriate substitute)
Other school governors*

*Mandatory (Meeting will be rearranged if no governors are in attendance)

Terms of reference

- All schools judged by the local authority as being 'at risk' and placed into Category B or C of the local authority categories (see annex 1) will be subject to challenge through regular individual School Improvement Board meetings (SIB).
- SIB meetings will be chaired by a senior local authority officer.
 - C Cat schools will receive at least half termly SIB Meetings (more if required)
 - B2 Cat schools will receive half termly SIB Meetings
 - B1 Cat Schools will receive termly SIB Meetings
- There will be a minimum expectation of attendance from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, although wider participation from school leadership teams and governors will be encouraged.
- The meetings will follow a set agenda that will be shared with all members of the SIB prior to the meeting. All meetings will be minuted by a LA administrator.
- The body of the meeting will be led by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors who will present evidence of impact against the schools priorities for improvement; both since inspection and/or since the previous SIB meeting.
- At the end of the meeting the following School Risk Assessment will be completed:
 - Each member attending the SIB the meeting will be asked the following question and be expected to indicate where they think the school is on the continuum.

“What is the risk of this school **not** being judged good/outstanding at the next Ofsted inspection?”



- The key factors which will prevent the school being judged good/outstanding at the school's next Ofsted inspection will then be outlined and form the priorities for improvement that will be checked on at the next SIB meeting.

Annex 4:

Governance Strategy:

Vision

Improving School Leaders → Improving Schools → Improving Outcomes

“All children and young people in Wolverhampton’s schools achieve outcomes which exceed expectations by attending outstanding schools, where every governing body drives improved outcomes for young people through effective strategic leadership, challenge and support to the school.”

“We want governors to work with the leaders of their schools to be both strategic and pragmatic in delivering good outcomes from all children and young people. We want them to strengthen schools’ professional leadership by appointing the right people to the right jobs and we want them to hold school leaders to account for the progress and outcomes they achieve in schools.”

Sir Michael Wilshaw (Chief Inspector of Schools)

1. Background and Scope:

- 1.1 New forms of governance are becoming more widespread, and increased levels of responsibility are being demanded of governors as schools become more autonomous, whilst at the same time the local authority’s role is being challenged through political, social and fiscal pressures.
- 1.2 This increased level of challenge means governing bodies will need to be better equipped to take on the responsibility and accountability for the school’s strategic leadership, and to develop their role of challenge and support.
- 1.3 The Local Authority’s new School Improvement and Governance Strategy will support the development of strong and effective school leadership ensuring all schools in Wolverhampton offer an outstanding level of education for all of our children and young people.

2. The council’s Statutory Duties with regard to School Governance

- 2.1 The council has a duty to promote educational excellence as set out in section 13a of the Education Act 1996. That duty states that a local authority must exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 further defined the strategic role of the local authority in the school improvement process:
 - As ‘champion’ of the needs of children and young people and their families;
 - In the planning, commissioning and quality assurance of educational services; and,
 - In challenging schools and, where appropriate, to commission support and, if necessary, to intervene in the management and governance of the school.
- 2.2 With regard to school governance each local authority has a duty towards:
 - Recruiting Local Authority Governors,
 - Ensuring that information and training is available to governors to enable them to undertake their role effectively.

- Strengthening governing bodies and creating Interim Executive Boards (IEB's) where a governing body is failing in its responsibilities.
- Using statutory powers of intervention under the Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- Agreeing and Making Instruments of Governance for all maintained schools.

3.0 The Council expects its school governors to:

- (i) Champion improved outcomes for all children and young people in Wolverhampton
- (ii) Consider national and local priorities and challenge decisions that could be detrimental to improved educational outcomes.
- (iii) Set high expectations through promoting Wolverhampton as a place that children and young people can be proud of
- (iv) Focus on challenging schools to close gaps in attainment and progression and exceed national averages, particularly for vulnerable groups of children and young people.
- (v) Maintain an understanding of and communicate the council's priorities and developments at governing body meetings
- (vi) Maintain an awareness of the school's local area, community and local priorities
- (vii) Promote the expectation that to be retained as a Governor who can effectively drive school improvement, the core training offered by the LA will be taken up by all governors.

4. Recruitment & retention:

(While these principles are aimed at local authority governors and prospective IEB members in the first instance, they will apply universally to the recruitment and retention of all governors)

4.1 Recruitment and retention of local authority governors

(Please see the full policy and procedure on the recruitment and retention of Local Authority Governors for further information regarding criteria for appointments, qualifications and disqualifications, expectations, and the procedure appointment to an IEB or Governing Board.)

- The Local Authority is committed to working with schools, employees, and the wider community to develop a pool of prospective Local Authority Governors and Interim Executive Board members recruited from a broad professional field with wide ranging skills.
- The Local Authority runs a termly recruitment campaign and seeks to raise the profile and status of governance through regular media coverage of the excellent work and achievements of our governors.
- As well as doing outreach promotions of school governance and the work of IEBs at high profile community events, we also advertise any governor vacancies schools ask for support with, on the council website, and seek to facilitate skill based appointments.

4.2 The Local Authority Nominations Panel

- All expressions of interest must be submitted to the Local Authority for consideration by the nominations panel
- Membership of the Panel consists of:
 - Assistant Director for School Standards (Director of Education for IEB members)
 - School Workforce and Governance Manager
 - School Workforce and Governance Coordinator

4.3 Local Authority (LA) support and development for governors

- The LA will provide support through forums, training and the development of resources for our members of governing boards to ensure all governors are fit for purpose and can effectively support and challenge schools' Senior Leadership Teams and act as a conduit for information between the LA and schools.

5. Evaluating the effectiveness of Governing Bodies

5.1 The council has implemented a robust audit system for evaluating the effectiveness of governing boards. The minimum evidence taken into account is:

- Scrutiny of schools most recent Ofsted reports for comments on governance
- The school's website and the publication of statutory information
- Information on the SFVS and from School Finance about how well the budget is managed
- Scrutiny of Governing Body minutes from last three full Governing Body meetings and any committees
- An audit and quality assurance of recent CPD undertaken by the whole Governing Body.
- Intelligence gathering from School Improvement Advisors
- Evidence from School Improvement Board meetings.

5.2 The culmination of this evidence will enable the LA to give each Governing Body an overall rating (RAG), and make subsequent recommendations to improve standards of governance immediately.

- **RED** - **Fails to meet all critical standards**
- **AMBER** - **Critical standards are all met; some core standards are missing**
- **GREEN** - **All standards to enhance practise are effectively implemented**

5.3 This rating will then be communicated to all Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors with recommendations for action, who will then be given the opportunity to respond to the rating by providing further evidence, if appropriate.

5.4 The authority will then make a final judgement for each school. Any schools rated as red or amber may be directed by the local authority to participate in a full review of governance by an independent National Leader of Governance (NLG), or, where support fails to see quick results, an Interim Executive Board may be established. See DfE 'Schools Causing Concern Jan 2015)

6. Training and development for governors

6.1 There is a need to improve standards of Governance across the city and therefore a programme of continuous professional development is critical if governors are to fulfil their statutory roles and contribute to excellent outcomes for children and young people across the City.

6.2 The local authority recruitment and retention policy therefore includes a core programme of training and support aimed at ensuring all governors are fit for purpose and can effectively support and challenge schools' Senior Leadership Teams.

6.3 This core package will include:

- A 12 month training programme that supports new chairs of governors in their first year in post through a range of twilight training sessions and personalised support. This training package will

also target 'Chairs in Waiting' and those chairs highlighted as ineffective through the local authority's RAG rating system.

6.4 Running in conjunction with the above, and capitalising on the school to school support model, will be a package of networking, mentoring and coaching from effective Chairs of Governors from other local schools. For all other governors, a series of critical twilight training sessions will target the essential skills to be an effective governor.

6.5 The core training will be funded by the Local Authority, wherever possible, and as outlined in the 'Role Profile' and retention policy, there will be a high expectation that all governors will attend this training in order to become, and remain, an effective governor of a Wolverhampton School.

6.6 In addition to the core training programme, described above, the local authority will increase its use of bespoke training to meet specific needs of Governing boards National Leaders of Governance (NLG's). NLG's are highly effective chairs of governors, who use their skills and experience to support the development of effective governance in other schools. The use of NLG's will be targeted at those governing bodies who are judged to be the most vulnerable through the local authority RAG rating.

This strategy clarifies the expectations of governors across the city. Wolverhampton City governors will be motivated, skilled school leaders, recruited and retained through more efficient and effective practices, who champion early evaluation and identification of where training and development, support and challenge or indeed LA intervention is required in their schools.