



CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 April 2016

SECOND DESPATCH

Please find enclosed the following items:

Item 2 Alternative Provision: Notes of Scrutiny Visits and Concluding Discussion

- *Notes for Concluding Discussion*

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Item 3 Information Item: The Educational Attainment of BME Children

5 - 22

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Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Alternative Provision Scrutiny Review

Notes for Concluding Discussion

The below notes have been compiled from the evidence received and are intended to facilitate discussion on the committee's conclusions. It is recommended that these are considered in relation to the overall aims of the review:

- 1. To identify how we can reduce the numbers of children on alternative provision.**
- 2. To identify how we can ensure that provision is of the highest quality.**
- 3. To make recommendations to further improve the outcomes, attendance, and accountability for those in alternative provision.**
- 4. To identify how schools and academies are ensuring the best possible outcomes for the most vulnerable children, including their emotional well-being, and make recommendations about how best practice can be in place in all schools and Academies.**
- 5. To evaluate the quality, standards and value for money of alternative provision providers, and the range of provision.**
- 6. To identify how early intervention and 'Think Family' approaches can be mainstreamed once the pump priming funding is no longer available.**

The conclusions of the committee will be incorporated into the draft recommendations, to be considered at the next meeting.

What works best for AP pupils?

Pupils responded to:

- Boundaries
- Consistent discipline
- Small classes
- Positivity about their aspirations linked to the comprehension of the purpose of education
- Pastoral support
- Access to health and fitness
- Getting to mix with different pupils from themselves
- Horizon widening activities
- Mentors

How can schools adopt best practice?

- Adopt a “never give up” attitude
 - Early intensive support
 - More creative and flexible in dealing with difficult students: timings, differing activities
 - Greater focus on speech and language issues from a young age
 - Not use AP as a threat but as a fresh start
 - Have access to more behavioural specialists
 - Have access to mental health services
 - Interventions like “Achievement for All” – working with parents and pupils
 - Be sure that primary schools are using pupil premium to effectively support at risk children
 - Ensure that primary schools are using effective language and teaching methods that are about progress
 - Developing pupil resilience from an early age
-
- How can the council work to best support schools? IFIT pilot programme, integration with existing support mechanisms, improvement programmes, etc.

Referral processes and associated issues:

- Council ambition to reduce the number of pupils on AP – how best to achieve this? Links to referral processes, school support mechanisms, early help, reducing need and demand, etc?
- Schools approach referrals in different ways – referral numbers vary significantly
- The Alternative Provision service challenges schools on referrals; however schools can choose to refer outside of the local authority framework - difficult balance
- Could the “information passport” process be more robust? Should a formal referral panel be set up?
- The “out of sight, out of mind” issue and school accountability – how can schools be encouraged to engage?
- Potential for schools to learn from providers
- Referring back to mainstream – is this possible? Minimise disruption during GCSEs
- Schools should be encouraged to be honest when transferring pupils
- Suggestion that mid-phase admission can contribute to referral
- Pupil experiences of the referral process – most of those interviewed seemed pleased with their provision

Best practice and improvements for providers:

- Educational attainment is important, not just a focus on behaviour
- How pupils are assessed by providers on referral – could this be more effective?
- How challenging is the education provided? Academic quality and access to GCSEs, particularly English and Maths
- Attendance: reduction in access and engagement service – half of cohort are persistent absentees
- Setting expectations and managing behaviour is essential
- High aspirations for pupils
- Different assessment standards to schools – attainment and attendance differ due to cohort
- Provider quality – six rated “good”, five “requires improvement”
- More celebratory events?

The council's Alternative Provision service:

- Suggestion that more SEN and CAMHS support is needed
- Other agencies and services to be more forthcoming with information
- Suggestion that a stronger relationships with parents would be useful, but capacity issue
- Increase social care team engagement?
- There is regular contact and engagement with schools through attendance monitoring, reporting on progress, and quality evaluation
- Common quality evaluation framework across North London in line with Ofsted requirements; considered to be robust – schools have access to evaluation data and inadequate provision is terminated

Other:

- The girls issue – majority of AP pupils are boys, do girls need additional support? Suggestion that girls deal with problems differently: are less likely to be disruptive, and are less likely to be referred
- White British boys most likely to be referred – targeted interventions?
- Is demand for vocational qualifications in schools contributing to demand for AP? Is this appropriate and can this demand be better met through other means
- Communicating with parents – reported that some push for referral, whereas others prefer their children to be in school – letters sent home for non-attendance and to recognise improvements in attendance
- “Value for money” considerations; schools indicated that AP is good value, however positive outcomes and attendance are essential – how should value be assessed?
- Different local authority AP models – what can be learned from Redbridge? Comprehensive model of support which prioritises individual needs
Alternative provision available from early years onwards

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Report of: Corporate Director of Children's Services

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	12 April 2016	B3	All

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SUBJECT: Information Item: The Educational Attainment of BME Children

*This report will not be accompanied by an officer presentation.
Any comments of the Committee will be reported to the service after the meeting.*

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the achievement of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children in Islington schools and outlines the work of schools and the local authority in addressing areas of underachievement.
- 1.2 The council's annual education report provides an analysis of key issues and priorities for 2015-16. This includes detailed overall information on the attainment and progress of pupil groups at all key stages. Interrogation of the annual report and of other data sets allows for a nuanced analysis of cohort achievement and of the achievement of groups of pupils.
- 1.3 The School Improvement Service (SIS) works with individual schools, senior leaderships, middle leaders and teacher networks to support improved outcomes for individual pupils and groups of pupils and the development and continuation of outstanding provision across the Ofsted key judgement areas. LBI Children's Services also offer a range of services to schools that promote the achievement of disadvantaged groups of pupils. These have included direct support and challenge, specific teacher professional development and school-based projects that target the needs of particular groups of pupils.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report.

3. Discussion

3.1 Just over 70% of Islington primary and secondary pupils are from BME backgrounds. At **Key Stage 2**, the performance of all 14 recorded ethnic groups within Islington has improved over the last few years in each of the three key areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils from a Black Caribbean ethnic background continue to be the lowest performing on average. The main ethnic group with the most improved results were Somali pupils, whose average increase for all three subjects since 2009 was 17% points. The group with the least improvement across all three subjects is the largest of all ethnic groups, White UK pupils.

Figure 1: Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in reading by main ethnic categories (3-year rolling averages)

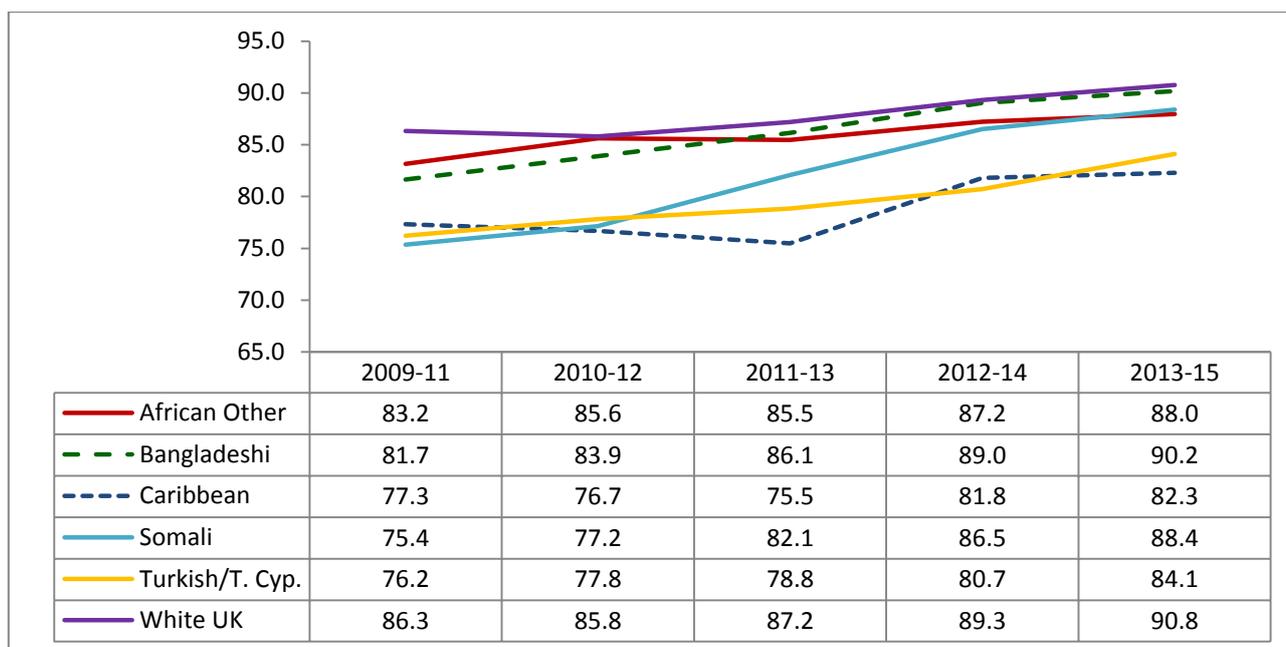


Figure 2: Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in writing by main ethnic categories (3-year rolling averages)

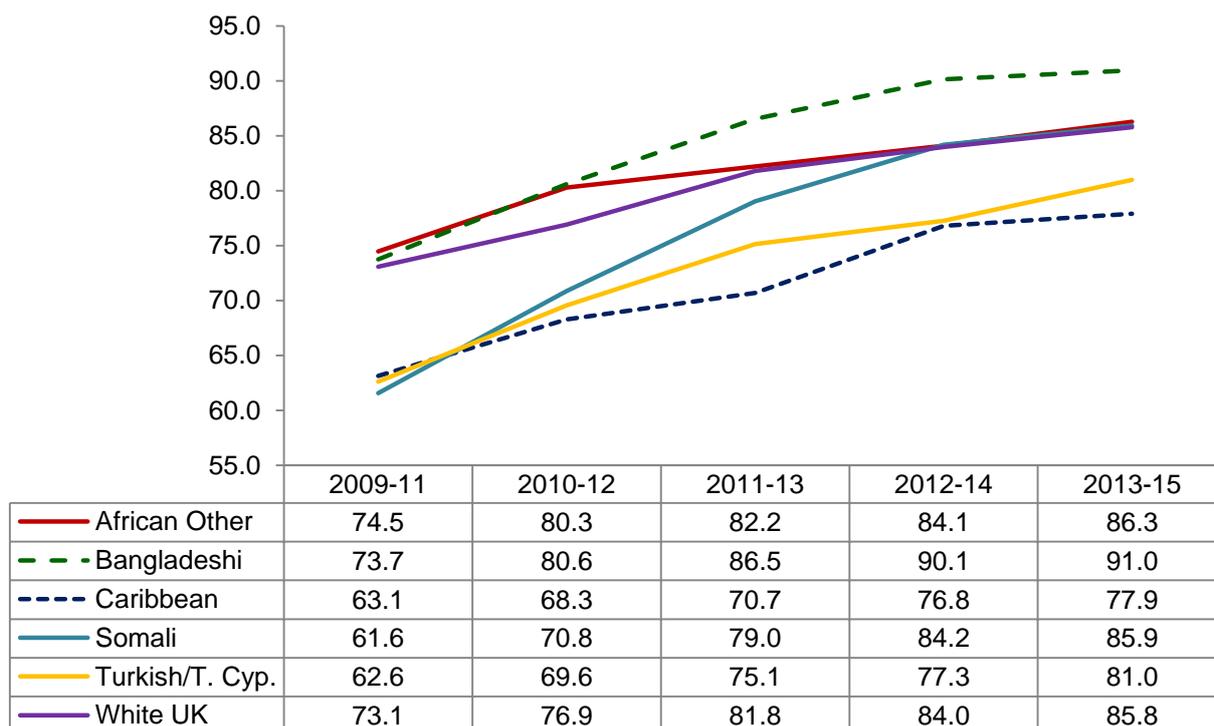
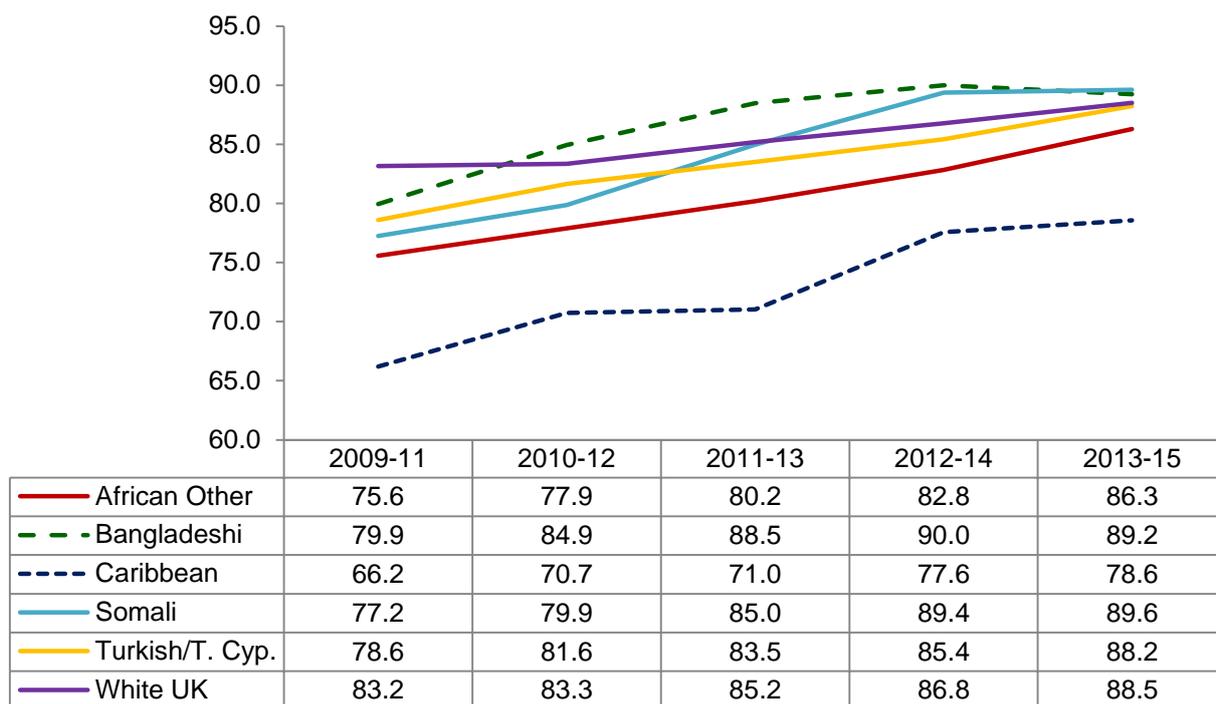
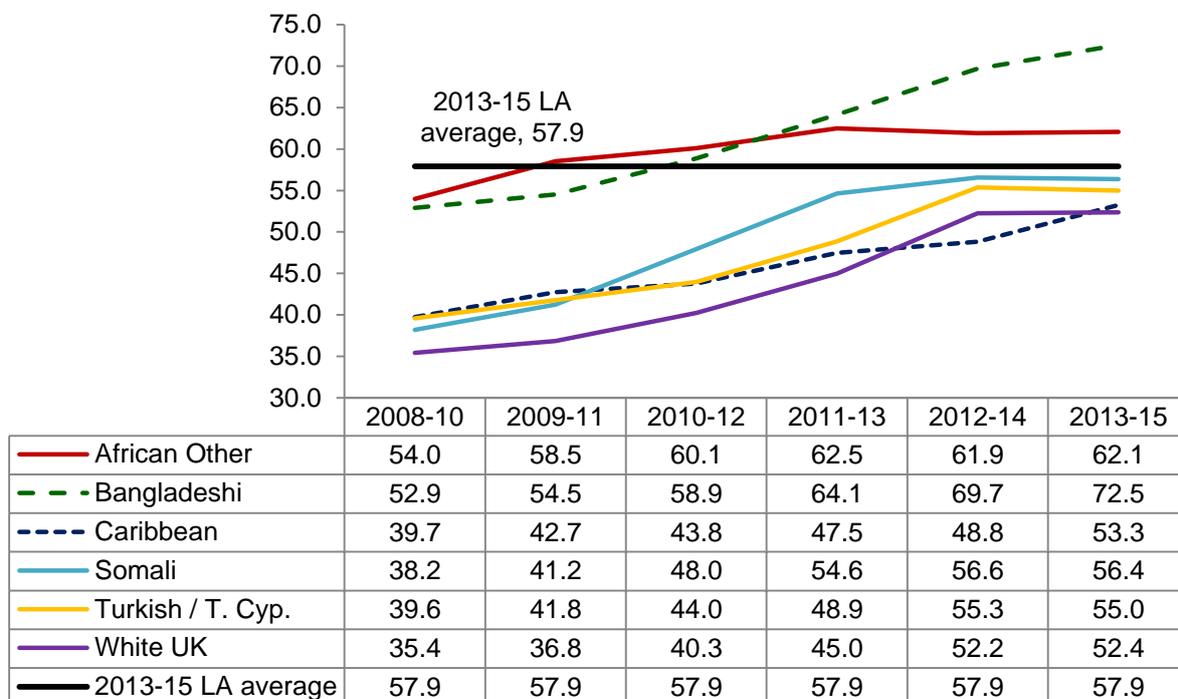


Figure 3: Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in mathematics by main ethnic categories (3-year rolling averages)



3.2 All the main ethnic groups in Islington schools have seen **GCSE** results improve over the last 5 years with Bangladeshi and Somali pupils most improved. The lowest performing groups are White UK pupils followed by Black Caribbean pupils.

Figure 4: Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C including English and maths by main ethnic categories (3-year rolling averages)



3.3 As the council's *State of Equalities in Islington 2016* report recognises, Islington has the third highest level of child poverty in England and children growing up in BME households in Islington are more likely than white children to be living in poverty. At GCSE Islington schools are among the best in the country

for helping disadvantaged pupils achieve good results. In 2015, 52.7% of disadvantaged pupils in Islington schools gained 5 or more good GCSEs including English and mathematics, placing Islington 6th out of 150 local authority areas in England. Islington's gap between disadvantaged and all other pupils was 15.7% points, compared to 28.3% nationally. The *State of Equalities* report is available from: [https://www.islington.gov.uk/publicrecords/library/Community-and-living/Information/Advice-and-information/2015-2016/\(2016-01-29\)-State-of-Equalities-Report-2016.pdf](https://www.islington.gov.uk/publicrecords/library/Community-and-living/Information/Advice-and-information/2015-2016/(2016-01-29)-State-of-Equalities-Report-2016.pdf)

- 3.4 English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners continue to outperform those whose first language is English at GCSE in Islington schools. In 2015 63% of EAL learners gained 5 or more good GCSEs including English and mathematics compared to 52.2% of monolingual English speakers. EAL learners make up 46% of the overall school role and there are over 140 languages recorded as being the first language of pupils in Islington schools.
- 3.5 The pattern of achievement at school level can be different to that for the local authority as a whole. The SIS helps schools to address underachievement in a number of ways, some systematic and bespoke to individual schools and their outcomes, some focused around subject-specific teacher professional development and school-based projects that target the needs of certain groups of pupils.

Processes to highlight and address underachievement

- 3.6 Systematic processes that allow SIS to challenge and support schools around the performance and underperformance of groups of pupils within their cohorts are well established. These are outlined in the Working in Support of Schools (WISS) document which sets out the approach to dealing with performance and underperformance of groups (Appendix A).
- 3.7 Schools intervene to improve outcomes by making changes to their internal practice, through accessing good practice in other schools via school-to-school support or through engaging with external bodies – including SIS. The emphasis is always on interventions that have been shown to be successful elsewhere. Schools and the local authority use internal data and Ofsted data to support discussions and the need for interventions to support pupils.
- 3.9 There are a number of ongoing development opportunities that allow SIS to train leaders so that they become skilled at looking for underachievement of pupil groups and at intervening effectively in their own school. These development opportunities include regular network meetings for heads of English, maths and science across primary and secondary as well as year network meetings in primary. SIS also co-facilitates a middle leadership professional development programme with the Angel Islington Teaching School Alliance centred around Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Teaching School. This programme is successful (35 participants this year) and has a focus on data-led intervention in underachievement.

School-based projects that target the needs of particular groups of pupils

- 3.10 SIS supports schools that receive the highest numbers of international new arrivals into Key Stage 4. Schools that are part of this programme ensure that BME pupils are supported quickly into school, studying full time alongside their peers in mainstream classrooms. The young people are welcomed and induction systems and the roles of key staff are developed to identify their prior learning and potential and to support immediate access to mainstream tutor groups, the core curriculum, other GCSE courses and post 16 settings. The programme seeks to ensure that targeted pupils achieve set targets on attainment and attendance.
- 3.11 In addition to supporting assessment and induction, a 10 week programme of after school workshops in four secondary schools. The workshops are open to students from all Islington schools and focus on supporting English language acquisition and social integration through creative activities. Students are able to express themselves creatively in a safe space in order to boost their self-esteem. This provision is facilitated by Creative ESOL, a participatory arts programme from the education charity REWRITE targeted at young people from refugee, asylum-seeking or migrant backgrounds.
- 3.12 Schools are also supported to meet their duties under the Equality Act 2010. This is through supporting the analysis of performance and progress data by gender and ethnicity, through providing some support

to schools in setting equality objectives and through running termly teacher professional networks on minority ethnic achievement, community cohesion, religious education and history.

3.13 Other projects include:

- In History - promoting culturally inclusive teaching and curriculum through support for the development of schemes of work and historical lines of enquiries. This has come about through in-school workshops to transform history lessons and increase engagement in the subject and through school-based training for secondary teachers on 'Black history and justice: challenging and transforming classroom practice'. The Council have provided funding to enable EveryVoice (formerly the BME Forum) to develop a primary teacher network promoting culturally inclusive approaches and facilitating partnerships with external history organisations.
- In RE - modelling effective teaching strategies and training RE youth champions and their teachers to promote interfaith understanding.
- Primary and secondary school-based workshops to promote critical thinking skills and to challenge stereotyping and prejudice-related bullying.
- Work with secondary English departments supporting schools in developing innovative work to raise the achievement of white British secondary pupils eligible for free school meals. Ongoing evaluation of this work shows a positive impact on promoting the engagement and achievement of BME pupils as well as White British pupils.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

None

4.2 Legal Implications

When considering their duties the Council should have regard to the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) and sections 13 and 13A of the Education Act 1996 which require local authorities to: ensure that efficient primary, secondary and further education is available to meet the needs of their population; ensure that their education functions are exercised with a view to promoting high standards ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and learning, and promote the fulfilment of learning potential.

4.3 Environmental Implications

None

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment

Both maintained schools, academies and the council must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). They have a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, and encourage people to participate in public life. Schools and the council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. This report does not include any recommendations that will have any adverse impact on equality groups. By the actions described in this report schools and the council are working to improve the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils, including BME groups, where there is underachievement.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The holding to account of schools in relation to the achievement of different groups within their population is important to ensure that there are high expectations and appropriate high quality provision for all pupils. The resource available to the Local Authority is reducing. This makes systematic approaches to support and challenge which help schools to identify and address underachievement themselves and as part of a self-improving school system all the more important.

Appendices

- Appendix A: The Work in Support of Schools

Background papers

- None.

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



5 April 2016

Corporate Director of Children's Services

Date

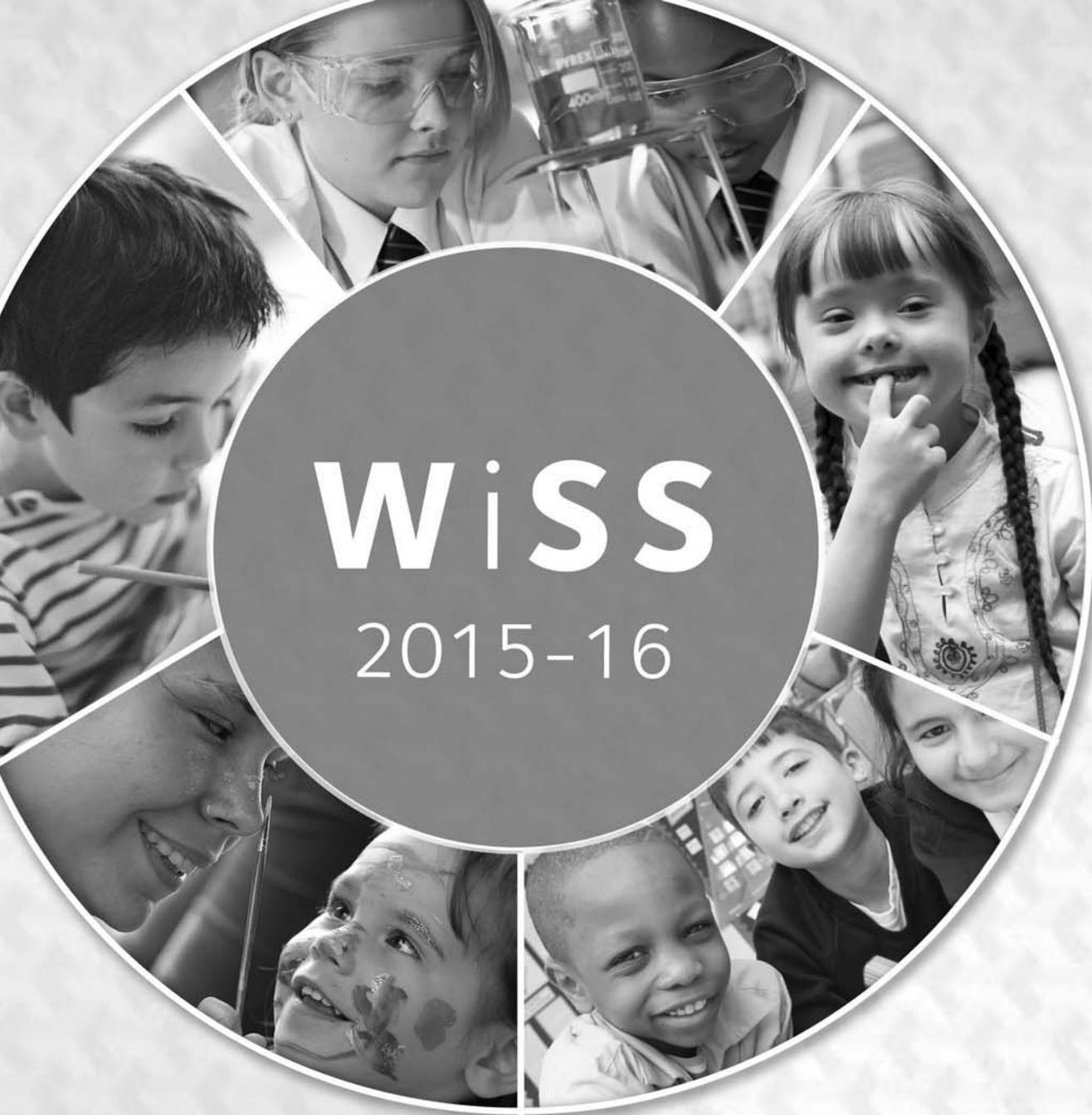
Received by:

5 April 2016

Head of Democratic Services

Date

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WiSS

2015-16

Work
in
Support of
Schools

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1 Introduction and context

The local authority has a **statutory duty** to **promote high standards** in schools and other providers so that children and young people **achieve well and fulfil their potential**.

Section 72 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all local authorities in England, in exercising their functions in respect to schools causing concern, as set out in Part 4 of the 2006 Act, to have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State. Local authorities must have due regard to this guidance. The 'due regard' is set out in this document, the WiSS.

'Schools', in this instance, means all Islington Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools and provision through Pupil Referral Units and the Virtual school.

Section 1 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to improve the wellbeing of young children, reduce inequalities between them and continue to improve outcomes and the quality of provision for children and young people is a key priority for the Council and a critical element of the wider corporate priorities of 'Fairness' and 'Reducing Poverty'. There is strong corporate leadership within the council to support this. Working in partnership with all schools and settings, the Council is continuously ambitious for the young

people of Islington, and the revised WiSS document sets out proposals and procedures to support the delivery of this ambition. The document embraces all schools within Islington's Community of Schools, though precise arrangements will differ according to the status of the school.

The Council is committed to providing a school and early years improvement service and a strong infrastructure of pupil support services to all schools and settings in Islington. These services are accountable to the Council and the Education Improvement Strategy Group (EISG).

The WiSS has been developed in conjunction with EISG and is updated annually, involving members from the School Improvement Service (SIS) and EISG. Schools Forum and EISG have high expectations that the number of schools in Category 2 and 1 will reduce over time and where there are risks identified with individual schools, a coherent plan is in place to secure outcomes.

The Local Authority engages with the Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner in order to facilitate an effective dialogue regarding the progress of schools who are judged as Requiring Improvement or in Special Measures.

2 Expected outcomes from the revised WiSS document 2015-2016

- 100% of schools are judged good or outstanding
- All schools are above national floor standards at each Key Stage. Where progress measures are released, the local authority is at or above the inner London average. Outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage meet or exceed national expectations
- 65% or more of pupils achieve the expected standard and the expected progress from KS1 – KS2 at the end of Key Stage 2
- At Key Stage 4, all schools consistently exceed 60% 5 GCSEs A* – C, including English and mathematics, and the overall borough average for 5 good GCSEs is 65% or better. An increasing proportion of schools achieve 70% or more. The local authority figure is at or above the inner London average
- From 2016 the DFE will define schools as potentially "coasting". This is determined by the following criteria:
 - ▶ For secondary schools, a coasting school will be one where fewer than 60% of children achieve 5A* – C including English and mathematics and they are below the median level of expected progress, and in 2016 they fall below a level set against the new progress 8 measure. This level will be set after 2016 results are available to ensure it is at a suitable level. By 2018 the definition of "coasting" will be set entirely on progress 8 and will not have an attainment element

- ▶ For primary schools, the definition will apply to those schools who for the first two years have seen fewer than 85% of children achieving level 4, the secondary ready level for reading, writing and maths, and which have also seen below average proportions of pupils making expected progress between ages 7 – 11, followed by a year below a “coasting” level set against the new accountability measure which will see children being expected to achieve a new higher expected standard and schools being measured against a new measure of progress
- Outcomes for Behaviour, Attendance and Inclusion are at least good in all schools
 - ▶ Attendance: 96% + over 3 terms
 - ▶ Persistent Absenteeism: 11% or below over 3 terms
- ▶ Inclusion: All schools have a secure capacity to promote inclusion as set out in the SEN Code of Practice
- All schools meet their duty to promote personal development and wellbeing
- All schools meet their duty to safeguard children, including the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers
- Schools are committed to ensuring the future employability of pupils and take action to ensure that young people do not become NEET
- Schools benefit from, and contribute to, the Islington Community of Schools. Where required, there are effective arrangements in place to ensure school-to-school support

3 Procedures to achieve the outcomes

There are a number of principles underpinning the procedures:

- A commitment to working as a partner within the Islington Community of Schools. This includes a shared commitment across all Islington schools to participate in Strategic Partnerships at some point of their school improvement journey. Schools will share a range of practice and expertise. This may also involve any of the following:
 - a. Accredited Teaching schools
 - b. National Leaders in Education
 - c. Ofsted trained Head teachers who can provide challenge and support to schools, brokered by the local authority
 - d. Clear service agreements and effective quality assurance procedures to ensure high quality services
 - e. Formal support arrangements between governing bodies to support individual governors and share expertise
 - f. School Business support: short or long term
- A commitment to securing high quality support and challenge in order to further raise standards and improve the quality of provision, including provision for young people’s safety and wellbeing
- Transparency in the procedures that are in place to achieve these outcomes
- A commitment to ensuring that support and challenge are planned in partnership with schools and are consistent and coherent in delivery
- A commitment to working in partnership with schools, Head teachers, EISG, Schools Forum and other advisory groups to ensure that resources are used effectively to support those most in need
- A commitment to ensuring that support and challenge, including the use of formal powers of intervention, is robust, timely and proportionate
- A commitment to monitoring and evaluating the impact and effectiveness of these procedures
- A commitment to looking outside the school gate to establish effective school-to-school partnerships, purposeful and effective cluster arrangements based on a premise of sharing good practice with all schools and settings in Islington. This will include:
 - ▶ formal Strategic Partnerships
 - ▶ Accredited Teaching schools
 - ▶ National Leaders in Education
 - ▶ Ofsted trained Head teachers who can provide challenge and support to schools, brokered by the local authority

- ▶ Clear service agreements and effective quality assurance procedures to ensure high quality services

Evidence base and process for notification

The category of support will be formally agreed with the Head teacher and Chair of Governors in the Autumn term each academic year. This process will be led by the Heads of School Improvement. The category of support will be based on evidence and an evaluation of the overall performance of the school. It will be mindful of the current Ofsted framework, the guidance provided to inspectors and the outcome of the school's last Ofsted inspection. The expectation is that the category of support will reflect the school's own evaluation of its performance. Schools will receive notification in writing from the Heads of School Improvement of the category of support by the 31 October each academic year. The processes will normally be annual but the category of support can be reviewed at any time during the academic year.

The evidence base for the categorisation will include:

- A scrutiny of pupil progress, attainment and achievement. This will include data sets provided by the local authority including the School Management Information File (SMIF), RAISE, the Ofsted data set and any other available data including school based data. It will focus on:
 - ▶ End of Key Stage outcomes, annually and over time
 - ▶ Performance in relation to floor standards at the end of each Key Stage
 - ▶ An analysis of achievement gaps and the performance of particular groups
 - ▶ Progress measures for individual pupils and groups of pupils
 - ▶ The outcomes for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, in particular the gap between the lowest 20% of children and the rest
 - ▶ The evidence base of projections for the progress, attainment and achievement of future cohorts
- An evaluation with the school of the quality of teaching and the arrangements that are in place to improve teaching, particularly in relation to securing good or better teaching in every lesson
- The most recent Ofsted report or letter after a subject inspection and progress against key issues identified
- An evaluation with the school on outcomes in relation to behaviour and safety, particularly behaviour for learning and the steps the school takes to eliminate low level disruption
- Evidence of the school's capacity to improve further, including the impact of the leadership on improving teaching and achievement, issues relating to financial management, the management of personnel and the effectiveness of governance
- An analysis with the school of other key indicators, for example attendance, persistent absence and exclusions
- Schools will, as part of the categorisation process, complete an audit of good practice that will then be shared across all Islington schools
- Additional data trends which might, in some circumstances, prompt the local authority to investigate the leadership in and management of a school. These may include:
 - ▶ Outcomes over a 3 year period as defined by the DFE for "coasting" schools. Outcomes at all Key Stages will be reviewed
 - ▶ Declining school popularity, possibly revealed through school rolls falling more rapidly than might reasonably be expected from demographic changes
 - ▶ High or increasing absence or truancy rates
 - ▶ High rates of staff turnover, or numbers of staff grievances
 - ▶ Feedback from parents, or significant or increasing numbers of parental complaints
 - ▶ Review of school balances and the use of resources which may indicate that the school is not achieving value for money. This would include the school's ability to meet an arrangement that is in place to eliminate a deficit
 - ▶ Review of recent financial audits and the current categorisation of the school's financial procedures. Schools with no or limited assurance will become project group schools for a limited time until the school has a follow up audit
 - ▶ The support for schools is funded from Schools De-delegating DSG from the schools block. Schools were thoroughly consulted on the proposals to provide additional financial and management support to support schools who are, or are

at risk of being in a category. The support is also extended to those schools who require or support Strategic Partnerships or those who are reorganising. There are 10-15 schools per year who fall into this category. All schools receive a termly visit from the Head of School Improvement and those schools in priority support receive additional support from finance, capital, ICT and HR management teams

- ▶ Any safeguarding concerns, including what actions the school has undertaken to meet the new "Prevent Duty" and the actions undertaken by the school to eliminate and/or reduce the risk of pupils and the community to radicalisation and extremism
- ▶ Where schools opt to buy services from external providers, where the local authority is the responsible body, the council will reserve the right to check that such external providers are fulfilling their responsibilities. This would apply to services such as Health and Safety and Payroll providers
- In most instances the Head teacher, Chair of Governors and Heads of School Improvement will be able to agree the recommendation for categorisation. Where there is disagreement, the local authority will reserve the right to determine the categorisation. Recommendations for categorisation will be reviewed, and formally agreed, by Children's Services Management Team (CSMT)

The Categories of Support

There will be 3 differentiated categories of support. These categories are not based solely on the most recent Ofsted report. The WiSS encompasses a range of performance information, both hard and soft to inform the overall categorisation of a school. This process does not apply to Academies and Free Schools.

Category 3

- ▶ Schools judged grade 2 (Good) or grade 1 (Outstanding) at the last Ofsted inspection and, where evidenced from the analysis of outcomes, school arrangements for self-evaluation and improvement planning demonstrate that

the capacity to continue to improve is secure and effective

- ▶ Where schools were judged to be grade 1 (Outstanding) at the last inspection, but since the inspection the provision of teaching is judged grade 2 (Good), there must be secure and substantial evidence that measures to secure an outstanding judgement for teaching are in place

Support provided

- ▶ Category 3 schools will receive a core entitlement from the School Improvement Service and other services, for targeted schools or where the school requires specific support for a particular issue, there will be additional resourcing or support from other services
- ▶ As part of the Islington Community of Schools they will be able to fully access any resource or programme that is in place
- ▶ Schools will be able to purchase additional support from a range of services

Category 2

- ▶ Schools where significant areas for improvement have been identified and agreed with the Head teacher and Governing Body, but there is substantial evidence that the school has the capacity to improve and is moving quickly to address the areas for improvement. This is particularly in relation to:
 - pupil attainment and progress
 - the quality and consistency of teaching
 - the performance of vulnerable groups
 - behaviour and attendance
 - any issues relating to the leadership in the school or the management of the school, or any issues in relation to safeguarding
 - schools where a new Head teacher has been appointed will be Category 2 schools for a defined period

- ▶ Where a school Requiring Improvement is judged in a HMI monitoring visit to be making good or better progress and the capacity for further improvement is secure, it may become a Category 2 school
- ▶ Schools in this category will be expected to work effectively with the local authority. Where progress is too slow, schools will become Category 1 schools
- ▶ These schools will have a Project Group and will receive support proportionate to the areas for improvement that have been identified. This will include those services indicated in Category 1
- ▶ At times schools that have been previously judged as Good or Outstanding may be placed in this category. The WiSS clearly outlines the criteria for reaching this judgement

Support provided

- ▶ The Director of Learning and Schools and the Head of School Improvement, in discussion with the Head teacher and Chair of Governors, will come to a view as to whether a Project Group will be required to support a Category 2 school in bringing about improvement. The effectiveness of the School Improvement Plan will be scrutinised and where this is not sufficiently robust the school will be required to produce an Action Plan to specifically address areas of concern
- ▶ Where a Project Group is required it will operate as in Category 1. The Project Group, and in its absence the Head of School Improvement, will monitor and evaluate the progress of the school in addressing weaknesses and the progress on the actions identified in the Action Plan. Where progress is too slow or other significant areas of weakness are identified, the school will become a Category 1 school
- ▶ The Head of School Improvement will report on progress in addressing the school's key issues to CSMT through the formal reporting mechanisms. The categorisation of the school will be kept under review

- ▶ The School Improvement Service and all other services within the local authority will prioritise the school for support
- ▶ Through the Project Group, or through the agreement of the Head of School Improvement and the Director of Learning and Schools, the school will be able to bid for additional resources; for example: teaching and learning consultant days, support from other services including HR and Finance, specific support from within the Islington Community of Schools, support from local and national initiatives or other projects which they have identified
- ▶ A proforma will be issued to schools in order to ensure that funding applications are robust and detailed. Costs for consultancy support or specific projects will be agreed with providers prior to the bid being submitted. The use of funds or a defined resource will be monitored by the school and an evaluation of impact will be provided as required to Project Group meetings
- ▶ Schools are encouraged to purchase the School Improvement Service Annual Support Package and other support packages including Early Years, HR, Finance and Governance where they are likely to enhance the school's capacity to improve and ensure that both challenge and support are delivered coherently

Category 1

- ▶ Category 1 schools are schools judged by Ofsted as grade 4 (Inadequate) and therefore requiring Special Measures or having serious weaknesses, schools judged by Ofsted as grade 3 (Requiring Improvement), or schools where a Warning Notice has been issued. These schools would be deemed to be a 'School Causing Concern' and would be eligible for intervention under the 'Schools Causing Concern Guidance' for local authorities

► Schools in this category are also schools about which the local authority has serious concerns, which include the following:

- outcomes at the end of Key Stages remain consistently below floor standards
- where performance has declined over a significant period
- where there is evidence that teaching is not consistently good or outstanding
- where there are concerns over the leadership in the school, the management of the school and the capacity to bring about improvement quickly enough
- where there is breakdown of discipline
- where the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened
- where a financial audit outcome is judged as inadequate or through financial monitoring the local authority and the school identify an unplanned deficit

These schools may be at risk of a grade 4 or grade 3 judgement at the next inspection. In this instance the local authority may issue a Warning Notice.

- These schools will have a Project Group and receive priority support from all appropriate services including School Improvement, Early Years, HR, Finance, Governance and Data/Performance
- The local authority may put in place, or propose that an Interim Executive Board (IEB) or a Strategic Partnership be formed in order to secure strong governance and continued rapid and sustained improvement. The Strategic Partnership arrangements will vary depending on the needs of the school. Further guidance on this is published in conjunction with this document

Support provided

- These schools will have a Project Group, chaired by the Head of School Improvement or the Director of

Learning and Schools. The Project Group will monitor and evaluate the progress of the school in addressing weaknesses and the progress on the actions identified in the school Action Plan and the local authority Action Plan. Progress will be reported to CSMT every 6 weeks and the categorisation will be reviewed by the Corporate Director of Children's Services

- The school must put in place an Action Plan to quickly address the key issues and indicate what the evidence will be for improvement (this will include issues set out in the most recent Ofsted inspection and must take account of any issues raised in a Warning Notice where that has been issued). Where practicable this will form part of the School Improvement Plan
- The local authority will put in place an Action Plan which will state clearly the action that the local authority will take to support and challenge the school, what the expected outcome of that action will be and by when, any specific arrangements that the local authority intends to make, for example in brokering school to school support or strengthening governance and any action the local authority intends to take in relation to the use of its formal powers. The school will be expected to cooperate fully with the actions set out in the local authority Action Plan, including arrangements for school to school support
- The School Improvement Service and other identified local authority services will prioritise the school for support and challenge
- Through the Project Group the school will be able to bid for additional resources, for example: teaching and learning consultant days, support from other services including HR and Finance, specific support from within the Islington Community of Schools, support from local and national initiatives or other projects which they have identified. A proforma will be issued to schools in order to ensure that funding applications are robust and detailed. Costs for consultancy support or specific projects will be agreed

with providers prior to the bid being submitted. The use of funds or a defined resource will be monitored by the school and an evaluation of impact will be provided as required to Project Group meetings. There will also be generic reporting to Schools Forum

- ▶ It is expected that the school will purchase the School Improvement Service Annual Support Package and other support packages including Early Years, HR, Finance and Governance, where they are likely to enhance the school's capacity to improve and ensure that both challenge and support are delivered coherently

Additional resources in each category

- Through Schools Forum, additional resources have been identified to support schools in Categories 1 and 2. Schools will be able, through the Project Group, to bid for specific resources to support improvement. The impact of these additional resources will be monitored by a subcommittee of the Schools Forum and reported generically to the full Forum
- The bids will make clear why the additional resources are needed (this will include a scrutiny of the school's current budget position), what the impact will be for children and young people and how the school will know. The Project Group will monitor the impact of the resource allocation reporting back to the Schools Forum on the outcomes. Where there is a clear need, schools in Category 3 will also be considered for additional resource

Strategic Partnerships

- To maximise school improvement and long term sustainability of a school led self-improving system, schools will have the option of entering into a partnership with another school or schools. These partnerships can include hard and soft Federations, partnership with a similar school or schools to develop leadership and management and/or teaching, learning and the curriculum. Guidance on these partnerships and the timeline for implementation can be obtained from School Improvement Service. Further information is published in conjunction with this document

- In light of the new DFE definition of "coasting" schools, the use of Strategic Partnerships are a legitimate and preferred option for the local authority and schools within Islington
- Strategic Partnerships will consist of a Strategic Board which will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership. The Board will report to the respective governing bodies involved in the partnership. The Board will meet in line with governing body meetings and consist of representatives from all schools involved and a local authority representative.

2B Good Project

- Schools currently judged Good by Ofsted are now subject to a new inspection framework. This will be a 1 day Section 8 inspection to judge that the overall effectiveness of the school remains good and that safeguarding is effective. Schools identified as at risk of being judged as Requiring Improvement will join this group to look specifically at what actions can bring about swift and self-sustaining system of improvement. Schools involved in the project are required to submit an action plan and linked to this will be financial support in order to bring about the improvement. Further guidance on this project is published in conjunction with this document

Project Groups

- Schools in Category 1, and where required Category 2, will have Project Groups. The Project Group will consider, monitor and evaluate actions taken by the school, the local authority and any other services or agencies used to bring about improvement. It will hold to account all those services or agencies employed or brokered to provide support
- The Project Group will normally meet once each half term or more frequently if that is required. The Project Group will be chaired by either the Head of School Improvement (who will make arrangements for a formal note of each meeting to be kept) or the Director of Learning and Schools. This note will specify the actions to be taken when and by whom
- Where a school is in Category 1, the Head teacher and Chair of Governors will meet with the Director of Learning and Schools and the Head of School Improvement every six weeks to evaluate progress. If required, there will be a summary evaluation meeting with the Corporate Director of Children's Services

- At the first meeting the Project Group will agree the key issues to bring about improvement at the school. This will be formalised and set down in the School Improvement Plan, or a separate Plan in a format agreed at the Project Group. At each meeting the Head teacher or a designate will report back on progress against these key issues, and identify other key issues as they emerge. The Project Group will agree the support to be provided by the local authority and other services to bring about improvement. There is a generic agenda for Project Groups which can be modified for a specific school. This is to ensure that progress can be consistently tracked, monitored and evaluated
- The core members of the Project Group will be the Head teacher, Chair of Governors, Head of

School improvement and Director of Learning and Schools

- Other senior staff at the school, officers from the local authority or other internal and external providers will attend as required by the Project Group
- All Projects Groups are evaluated on a yearly basis. The evaluation is completed by all stakeholders and will help to inform the following:
 - value for money
 - effectiveness in bringing about change
 - impact of key actions agreed and undertaken by stakeholders

4 Formal powers of intervention

Part 4 of Schedule 6 of the 2006 Act sets out that a school causing concern is one which is 'eligible for intervention'. This is where a:

1. Performance standard and safety warning notice has been given and the school has failed to comply.
2. Teacher's pay and conditions warning notice has been given and the school has failed to comply.
3. A school requires significant improvement.
4. A school requires special measures.

However the DfE guidance to local authorities on schools causing concern is clear that:

...'schools causing concern' are not just those schools 'eligible for intervention' within the meaning of Part 4 of the 2006 Act but are also those about which the local authority has other serious concerns, such as those consistently below the floor standards where the local authority may want to consider using their intervention powers and give those schools a warning notice.

Performance standards and safety warning notices – DfE guidance

The DfE guidance states:
Performance standards and safety warning notices

should be used as an early form of intervention where standards are unacceptably low and other tools and strategies have not secured improvement.

A performance standards and safety warning notice may be given by a local authority in one of three circumstances. Where:

1. *The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so unless the authority exercise their powers under Part 4 of the 2006 Act; or*
2. *There has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, such standards of performance; or*
3. *The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).*

The definition of what constitutes low standards of performance is set out in section 60 (3) of the 2006 Act. This is where they are low by reference to any one or more of the following:

1. *The standards that the pupils might in all circumstances reasonably be expected to attain*
2. *Where relevant, the standards previously attained by them; or*

3. *The standards attained by pupils at comparable schools.*

Cases where schools are performing below the floor standard would be covered by point 1 above.

Additionally the DfE guidance states that:

If following an inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005, Ofsted considers a school to be inadequate (Grade 4), it will give a judgment that the school requires either 'significant improvement', or 'special measures'. If the school has already been given a warning notice by a local authority, this judgment means that the school is eligible for intervention whether or not the period of compliance in the warning notice has expired or the governing body has made representations to Ofsted.

Also the guidance states that:

The Secretary of State now has the power to direct a local authority to give a warning notice in specified terms where he has previously directed the local authority to consider doing so, but the local authority has decided not to.

If after considering the reasons of the local authority the Secretary of State still believes one is necessary he may direct the local authority to give such a warning notice in those terms.

Powers and types of intervention where a school is 'eligible for intervention'

The DfE guidance states that:

Where a school is eligible for intervention there are a number of powers the local authority or the Secretary of State may use to drive school improvement. These interventions are set out in sections 63-66 of the 2006 Act in respect of

local authorities and sections 67-69 in respect of the Secretary of State. Local authorities must give reasonable notice that they propose to exercise their powers under any one or more of sections 63 to 66.

Local authority - powers of intervention

1. To require the Governing Body to enter into arrangements:
 - a) to enter into a contract or other arrangement for specified services of an advisory nature with a specified person (who may be the Governing Body of another school)
 - b) to make arrangements to collaborate with the Governing Body of another school
 - c) to make arrangements to collaborate with a further education body
 - d) to take specified steps for the purpose of creating or joining a federation
2. The appointment of additional Governors.
3. The appointment of an IEB.
4. The suspension of delegated authority for the Governing Body to manage a school's budget.

Secretary of State - powers of intervention

1. Power to appoint additional Governors.
2. Power to direct closure of a school.
3. Power to provide for the Governing Body to consist of interim executive members.
4. Power to make an Academy order.

Where appropriate the local authority will make full use of the powers embodied in the Act and any further amendments to those powers.

5 Review

The document will be reviewed in August 2016.

For more information on the **Work In Support of School (WiSS)** document, please contact:

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