



Brent

The Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness in Brent

2017 – 2020

Updated and extended to 2021

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board (refer to 4.1) agreed on 19 May 2020 that the Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness 2017-20 should be updated and extended for one year until 2021 because:
- Several national policy developments affecting the support and monitoring of school effectiveness including the reorganisation of Teaching School Alliances to support schools on a regional basis are currently underway or have been delayed
 - The impact of the pandemic on schools and the continuity of education when schools closed on 20 March 2020 for all pupils except vulnerable children and the children of key workers
 - Ofsted has paused its cycle of school inspections because of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 The Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness sets out the local authority's role working in partnership with local schools to ensure that the priorities for improving education provision in Brent are addressed. These priorities were identified through analysis of performance data and consultation with partners. The framework stresses the importance of school-led and collaborative solutions, and Brent's commitment to a self-improving school system alongside the statutory role of the local authority in relation to monitoring, challenge, support and intervention.
- 1.3 The local authority has a statutory duty (Children Act 2004, 2006) to act as the champion for all children and young people in the borough and is responsible for maintaining an overview of the effectiveness of all schools including academies, free schools, the local college, and registered early years settings and registered training providers. The local authority also has a statutory duty to 'exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards.' (The Education Act 1996). Any child learning within the borough is a Brent pupil regardless of the form of governance of the school. Brent Council is therefore responsible for maintaining a full overview of the effectiveness of all schools and local education provision.
- 1.4 The overall effectiveness of Brent schools is measured by the proportion of schools judged good or outstanding by Ofsted at their most recent inspections. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 sets out the requirement for Ofsted to carry out its work in ways that encourage the schools it inspects to improve, to be user-focused and to be efficient and effective in their use of resources. Ofsted inspections provide assurance to the public and to government that minimum standards of education are being met, that public money is being spent well and that arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- 1.5 The Education Inspection Framework was significantly revised with effect from September 2019. This more challenging framework gives most of its weighting in determining a school's overall effectiveness to 'The quality of education' which is a new judgement on the substance of education delivered by a school. Good schools and outstanding special and nursery schools are inspected within a five year cycle, normally in the fourth year. The government intends to bring outstanding schools into this cycle because they are currently exempt from routine inspection.
- 1.6 National policy for school improvement has continued to change. In May 2018, The Department for Education published 'Principles for a clear and simple accountability system'. These principles clarified the lines of accountability for schools as these had become more complicated following the increase in the number of single academy and multi-academy trusts. The changes were implemented for the 2019 results and published in 'Schools causing concern - Guidance for local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners on how to work with schools to support improvements to educational performance, and on using their intervention powers' in September 2019.
- 1.7 This guidance removed the floor standards and coasting school standards which had previously been used to identify schools that would be subject to intervention from the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC). The RSC now only mandates academy conversion, leadership change or trust transfer of a school if Ofsted has judged it inadequate. Any intervention by the RSC now only takes place following direct contact with the school's responsible body; for academies the academy trust and for maintained schools the local authority.

- 1.8 The statutory guidance also states that local authorities should act as champions of high standards of education across their schools, and in doing so should:
- Understand the performance of maintained schools in their area, using data as a starting point to identify any that are underperforming, while working with them to explore ways to support progress
 - Work closely with the relevant RSC, diocese and other local partners to ensure schools receive the support they need to improve
 - Where underperformance has been recognised in a maintained school, proactively work with the relevant RSC, combining local and regional expertise to ensure the right approach, including sending warning notices and using intervention powers where this will improve leadership and standards
 - Encourage good and outstanding maintained schools to: take responsibility for their own improvement; support other schools; enable other schools to access the support they need to improve.

2 The Brent context

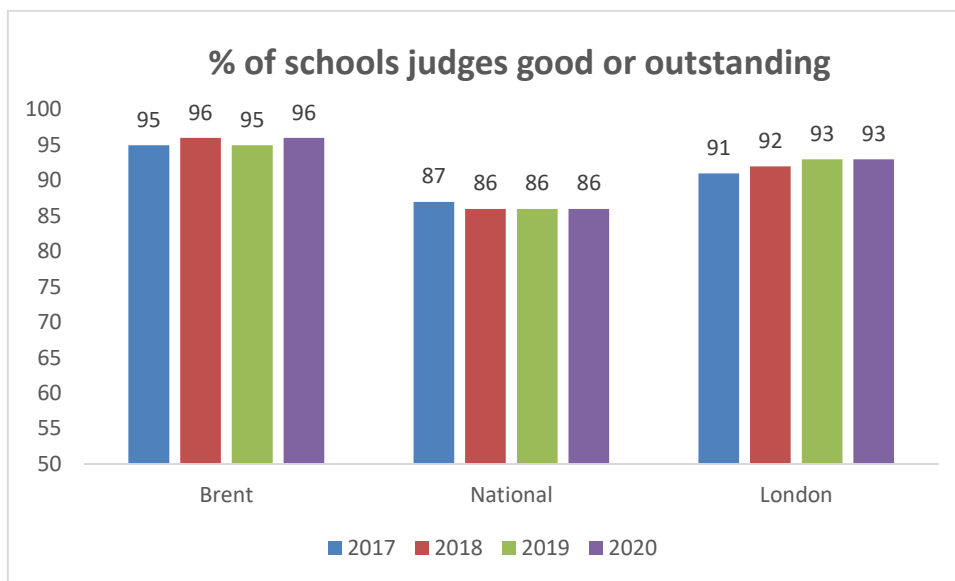
2.1 The school population

- 2.1.1 Brent is one of the most culturally diverse areas in England. The dynamic mix of communities continues to enrich and inform the social, economic and cultural make-up of the borough.
- 2.1.2 The total school population has stayed stable over the last three years. The number of children and young people of statutory school age is 48,512¹. There has though been a change in demographics affecting the primary and secondary phases differently. Over the three years the number of primary age pupils has fallen by 2.6 per cent, whereas at secondary there has been an increase of 5.2 per cent. The largest ethnic groups of statutory school age are: Asian Indian (16 per cent), White British (eight per cent), White Eastern European (eight per cent), Black Somali (seven per cent), Black Caribbean (six per cent), Asian Pakistani (four per cent) and Afghan (three per cent).
- 2.1.3 The diverse nature of Brent's population poses a range of challenges for schools, the most significant of which include the integration of pupils arriving late to the UK education system, high general mobility, language development needs and deprivation. This diversity is not a fixed picture but rather there are rapid changes to the population. A very high proportion of pupils have English as an Additional Language (65 per cent) and a large proportion of under 16s were born outside the United Kingdom, many starting formal education in England much later than their peers, often with little or no English, and sometimes with no experience of any formal education. The largest spoken first languages other than English are: Gujarati (nine per cent), Arabic (eight per cent), Somali (six per cent), Romanian (five per cent), Urdu (three per cent), Tamil (three per cent), Portuguese (three per cent) and Polish (two per cent).
- 2.1.4 In addition to new arrivals, socio-economic pressures placed on many of Brent's families combined with a housing stock which relies heavily on privately rented accommodation, contribute to relatively high levels of pupil turnover in many of our schools. The proportion of Brent pupils who are disadvantaged² is 24 per cent. There is a higher proportion of pupils identified as disadvantaged in the secondary phase (28 per cent).

¹ Most recent data on school characteristics is taken from the School Census, January 2020

² Measured by the percentage of pupils allocated Pupil Premium funding

2.2 Overall school effectiveness



2.2.1 Over the period of the strategic framework 2017 to 2020, the overall effectiveness of schools in Brent has improved and the proportion of good and outstanding schools has continued to be above the national and London averages. At the end of the last academic year (August 2020), 96 per cent of Brent schools were judged as good or outstanding. This is well above national average of 86 per cent and three percentage points above the London average of 93 per cent. All nursery schools, secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units that have been inspected have been judged good or outstanding.

2.3 School governance

2.3.1 School governing boards and their executive leaders are ultimately accountable for the standards and achievement in their schools. The Department for Education (DfE) reaffirmed this in its September 2019 'Schools causing concern' guidance:

“High quality and effective governance is key to the success of any school.”

“We are building a supportive schools culture in which local authorities and RSCs work with school leaders to drive school improvement for the benefit of pupils and parents.”

2.3.2 The governance arrangements of Brent schools have continued to change over the last three years in response to national policy and to meet the needs of the borough and school communities. As at September 2020, Brent's schools are organised as follows:

Type of school	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	All-through	Special	Pupil Referral Unit	Total
Maintained Community	4	30	0	0	1	2	37
Maintained Voluntary-aided	0	15	2	0	0	0	17
Maintained Foundation	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Multi Academy Trust	0	12	8	1	4	0	25
Single Academy Trust	0	1	4	1	0	0	6
Total	4	60	14	2	5	2	87

2.3.3 Over the last academic year, three primary schools joined a locally led multi-academy trust and from September 2020 a new secondary school has opened as part of another locally led multi-academy trust.

2.3.4 The local authority has a statutory duty for the outcomes of all pupils. Its powers of intervention in schools are restricted to the maintained sector. Where there are concerns about an academy's standards, leadership or governance, the local authority is expected to raise them directly with the Regional Schools Commissioner. If the concern is safeguarding, the local authority has a statutory responsibility to address this directly with the academy.

2.4 Pupil outcomes

2.4.1 In 2019, Brent was above the national averages for all primary school headline indicators. At Key Stage 2, the borough performed well in all the measures of pupil progress. Brent was above the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics, equal to the London average for reading and above the London average for mathematics. Attainment at Key Stage 2 in Brent increased faster in 2019 than the national and London averages, and as a consequence attainment of the headline measure of the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined rose to 68 per cent which is three percentage points above the national average and the gap with the London average fell by four percentage points.

2.4.2 For all of the secondary headline progress and attainment measures, in 2019, Brent performed very well against the national and London averages. Brent's score on Progress 8 was 0.47 which indicates that on average the students in Brent made half of a grade more progress in each of their eight subjects at secondary school than students nationally (-0.03). This is well above the average progress made by students in London (0.22). Brent's Attainment 8 score rose to 50.2, above the London average of 49.7 and well above the national average of 46.7. This indicates that students in Brent attained an average of grade 5 (a strong pass) in eight GCSE subjects.

2.4.3 At Key Stage 5, Brent also performed well in 2019 compared to the national and London averages for each of the three measures. Brent's A Level average point score per qualification was 33, equal to both the London and national averages. Brent students attained an average grade of C (31 points) in Applied General qualifications which is two points above both the national and London averages, and for Tech Level courses Brent's average point score was 42 which is well above the national average of 29 and the London average of 30.

2.4.4 In 2019, Brent's outcomes for disadvantaged pupils continued their upward trends. The outcomes for this group are above the national averages for disadvantaged pupils, and the attainment gaps have narrowed with both non-disadvantaged pupils nationally and in Brent.

3 School effectiveness principles and priorities

3.1 The strategic framework reflects the Brent 2019-23 Borough Plan's strategic priority: 'Every opportunity to succeed – working in partnership to support children and young people's educational attainment and training'. Within this strategic priority there is a commitment to support the continued improvement of provision for early years settings and schools – particularly helping the very small number which are not yet rated good by Ofsted. The Borough Plan also commits to collaboration with local school-led partnerships to improve the quality of education in Brent's primary and secondary schools.

3.2 Principles

The principles underpinning this framework are that:

- The local authority leads on school effectiveness which includes safeguarding. It acts as a champion for children and young people by holding schools to account for the standards they achieve
- Keeping children safe while they are in their care is the paramount responsibility of schools
- School improvement is the responsibility of school leaders
- All schools in the borough have shared ownership for the education of all children in every Brent school, and successful schools support lower performing schools

- School-led and collaborative approaches to school effectiveness are supported by schools through the active participation of local schools, with the local authority brokering, commissioning and quality assuring provision
- Underperformance is identified at an early stage, robustly challenged and concerns are swiftly addressed
- Schools facing challenging circumstances draw on the wider capacity and expertise of other Brent schools and the local partnerships
- Governing boards are recognised as an important force for support, challenge and improvement
- All school effectiveness partners, and school leaders and their governing boards are guided by the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

3.3 Brent school effectiveness priorities 2017-2020

The 2017-2020 improvement priorities for school effectiveness in Brent were agreed in 2017 by the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board (SSEP) following consultation with partners and the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's examination of the Annual School Standards and Achievement Report 2015-2016. The Brent Schools Partnership, Teaching School Alliances, schools, the local authority and other partners have been addressing the issues over the last three years through their action plans and strategic groups, and the SSEP has monitored their impact. The priorities for improvement and the progress made over the last three years are:

3.3.1 Sustaining Ofsted good and outstanding judgements for all schools

At the end of the academic year 2020, 96.5 per cent of schools were good and outstanding schools. This is an increase of 1.5 percentage points compared to 2017. Whilst the proportion of good and outstanding provision is high compared to the national and London averages, there are two primary schools not yet judged good or outstanding.

3.3.2 Building leadership capacity across the borough including headteacher succession planning

In June 2018, the Schools Forum approved funding for 'Strengthening Leadership Development and Succession Planning in Brent schools' programme led by the Brent Schools Partnership. This programme has developed 108 current and future Brent school leaders over the last two years. Some have already progressed in their careers in Brent schools including two being appointed to headteacher posts at Brent schools during the last academic year.

3.3.3 Ensuring that school governance meets national quality expectations, and that governing boards are equipped to challenge school leaders to address the underperformance of groups in their schools

To highlight the national quality expectations for school governance, the theme of the local authority's Annual Brent Governors' Conference in July 2018 was "Strengthening school governance across Brent". At the conference, the council launched its project "Developing strong governance across all Brent Schools" to support governing boards with their recruitment of skilled governors. The project has led to a significant increase in skilled applicants to the local authority's governor recruitment pool, and chairs of governors have fed back on the high calibre of candidates available through the pool. In addition, the local authority supports the evaluation of the quality of governance at maintained schools by commissioning external reviews of governance from Brent Schools Partnership.

3.3.4 Raising the standards and progress of pupils at the lowest performing schools

At Key Stage 2, in 2019, the difference between the school with the highest proportion of pupils attaining the headline measure (meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics) and the school with the lowest proportion fell to 57 percentage points. 68 per cent of Brent primary schools are now above the national average for this indicator compared to 52 per

cent of schools in 2017. At secondary the gap between the school with the highest proportion of students attaining the headline Attainment 8 measure and the school with the lowest proportion has marginally fallen to 24 points. However, it should be noted that GCSEs have been significantly reformed over this period to be more challenging and terminally assessed.

3.3.5 Raising the attainment of priority groups

Most of Brent's significant ethnic groups continue to perform well compared to either the same group nationally or all pupils. In 2017 there were three priority groups identified: Black Caribbean boys, Somali boys and girls, and Travellers of Irish heritage.

In June 2018, the Schools Forum approved funding for 'Raising the Achievement of British boys of Black Caribbean heritage in Brent schools' programme also led by the Brent Schools Partnership. The most recent 2019 data shows that schools in Brent have closed the gaps between the attainment of British boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils at the end of EYFS, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 2 the gap significantly narrowed in reading, writing and mathematics (RWM) combined. There was an improvement of 15 percentage points representing a 65 per cent fall in the size of the gap. The gap is now eight percentage points. The data for Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 also shows a significant improvement. The gap was reduced by five points between British boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils, down from 13 points to 8 points.

The 2019 data shows that Somali boys and girls are now performing above the national averages for all of the performance measures at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. The numbers of pupils in the Travellers of Irish Heritage group are too small to report because of data protection restrictions.

Improving the outcomes for Brent children and young people with SEND was also a priority. The attainment and progress for Brent pupils with SEND compare well to pupils with SEND nationally. However, large gaps remain when comparing the averages of pupils with SEND to all pupils in both the primary and secondary phases.

3.4 Brent school effectiveness priorities 2020-21

- 3.4.1 The partial closure of schools in March 2020 pupils has highlighted the importance of prioritising:
1. Maintaining high quality education provision and support for mental health and wellbeing for all pupils during the pandemic
- And based upon the review of the priorities for the last three years (which is summarised in 3.3), the following will continue to be Brent school effectiveness priorities for 2020-21:
2. Sustaining Ofsted good and outstanding judgements for all schools
 3. Raising the standards and progress of pupils at the lowest performing schools
 4. Raising the attainment of priority groups
- 3.4.2 Schools have reopened for all pupils in September 2020. With the support of local partnerships, schools will need to focus on ensuring high attendance, re-establishing routines for learning, delivering the full curriculum and closing identified gaps in the pupils' learning. In preparation for any further temporary closures of schools during the pandemic, it will be important to ensure that all pupils have access to online learning and that schools have developed high quality blended learning to ensure that all pupils continue to make good progress and attain well.
- 3.4.3 The priority groups will change with a focus specifically on vulnerable pupils. This is because the Timpson Review of School Exclusion in May 2019 highlighted the low attainment of this group nationally, and the work of local schools and the local authority over the last six months to support vulnerable children's continued attendance at schools during the pandemic has also highlighted the need to improve the outcomes of vulnerable children in Brent. Brent's definition of vulnerable children is:

- Children who are assessed as being in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- Children who have an education, health and care plan
- Children who have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or at the local authority's discretion (including children's social care services). This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers.

Continuing the rapid improvement in the outcomes for British boys of Black Caribbean heritage will remain a priority.

4 The Partnership for School Effectiveness in Brent

- 4.1 Brent's Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board is responsible for monitoring the impact of the strategic framework, and supporting and challenging its delivery. The board was established in 2014 to ensure that there is a clear strategic oversight of educational provision in Brent and to keep this framework which governs the work of the Setting and School Effectiveness Service under review. The board provides a forum for agreeing local arrangements for the provision of school-to-school support and intervention in schools causing concern, and the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the support and intervention. It also offers a strategic forum to discuss challenges and opportunities including responses to government consultations on policy changes, for example, the national funding formulae for schools and high needs, and changes to the Ofsted inspection framework.
- 4.2 The board is convened and chaired by the Director of Children's Services (DCS), and has representation from all school effectiveness partners in Brent. Its membership includes school leaders (headteachers and governors) from each phase of education, the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP), and the local Teaching School Alliance led by a Brent school.
- 4.3 To agree the practical operation and implementation of the board's decisions and to determine agenda items for the board, there is also a School Effectiveness Partnership Group. The group's members are the leaders of school-to-school support in Brent (the Teaching School Alliance and Brent Schools Partnership), and the Setting and School Effectiveness Service.
- 4.4 The Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness recognises that school leaders have the proven expertise and experience to support school improvement. The collaborative school-led partnerships are a key feature of Brent's education provision with improvement being driven by local schools. The school-led Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) and the Brent Teaching School Alliance (BTSA) are excellent examples of schools taking a leading role in supporting school effectiveness. Where the local authority needs to intervene in schools to bring about rapid improvement it commissions and brokers school-to-school support from its partners: the BTSA, BSP, National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and National Leader of Governance (NLG), and the leaders of outstanding and good schools.
- 4.5 The BSP is a network of schools which have come together with the common aim of securing the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Brent. The BSP aims to support each school to ensure that high quality educational opportunities are provided in all Brent schools. The BSP has continued to develop its role in offering school-to-school support over the last three years.
- 4.6 The Brent Teaching School Alliance was established in 2014. It is led by Byron Court Primary School. Its partnership includes eleven primary schools, two secondary schools, one higher education institution and the Brent Schools Partnership. In addition, in Brent there are three headteachers who are NLEs and there is one chair of governors who is an NLG.

- 4.7 During the pandemic, the Brent school clusters (Harlesden, Kilburn, Kingsbury, Willesden and Wembley) have played a key role in providing mutual support in addressing the extraordinary issues that have impacted on the leadership and operation of schools. The clusters have in a short space of time re-established themselves as a key component of the borough's school-to-school support.

5 School effectiveness categorisation

- 5.1 The work of the Setting and School Effectiveness Service is guided by this framework and is focused on meeting the local authority's statutory responsibilities. For the academic year 2020-21, the school effectiveness categorisation process will be paused because of the impact of the pandemic on the schools. The category³ agreed in the last academic year will therefore remain in place to determine the level of support and intervention that the school receives from the service. However, if any evidence arises that causes concern about a school (Appendix 1, Local authority evaluation) or a school's leaders notify the local authority about a change in the quality of provision, the category will be reviewed. The service has a small team of centrally-based officers, School Effectiveness Lead Professionals (SELPs), (Appendix 3) who are assigned to work with a group of schools.
- 5.2 Schools categorised as LA1 and LA2 are expected to lead their own improvement with the support of the school-led partnerships. When a school is identified as vulnerable or underperforming (LA3 and LA4), the service establishes a Rapid Improvement Group (Appendix 2) chaired by a senior school effectiveness officer to monitor and challenge the leadership on the impact of the school's improvement plan. The group meets half termly for up to 18 months (extended in exceptional circumstances for schools issued a warning notice to 24 months). The membership of a group includes the headteacher, the chair of governors and the link SELP. The Rapid Improvement Group is tasked with agreeing the necessary school improvement support from BTSA, the BSP and other schools. Where issues remain or there has not been rapid enough improvement, the local authority uses its powers of intervention which include issuing a warning notice and applying to the Secretary of State to replace the governing board with an Interim Executive Board (IEB).
- 5.3 Schools identified as LA3 and LA4 may be entitled to access additional funds from the Schools Causing Concern Budget if they meet the criteria (Appendix 4). Rapid Improvement Groups are required to submit a formal application for funding, with the support of a SELP, outlining the purpose for which the funding is required, the anticipated impact on pupil outcomes together with information about the school's own budget. In exceptional circumstances, when an unforeseen emergency arises which causes a school to be in difficulties, a bid from a school without a Rapid Improvement Group can be submitted for funding support.

³ LA1 Outstanding, LA2 Good, LA3 Vulnerable or Requires Improvement, LA4 Underperforming or Inadequate

Appendices

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Appendix 1
Local authority categorisation

<p>School self-categorisation</p> <p>This exercise has been paused for 2020-21. However, should school leaders identify significant changes in the school’s effectiveness of provision against the Ofsted evaluation schedule they can notify the local authority to discuss a change in category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA1 Outstanding LA2 Good LA3 Requires Improvement (or Vulnerable) LA4 Inadequate (or Underperforming) <p>This could be based on the following evidence: school self-evaluation document; school improvement plan, a recent report(s) from a school improvement specialist and/or review report, for example Challenge Partners; recent Ofsted letter or report.</p>	<p>Local authority evaluation</p> <p>The School Effectiveness Lead Professional (SELP) will also use information held by the local authority (LA) to identify any significant changes to the effectiveness of schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leadership including the impact of recent changes • Governing board constitution, vacancies, turnover and attendance • Attendance • Exclusions • Ofsted Parent View • Complaints and the effectiveness of the school leaders’ investigations • The effectiveness of safeguarding processes • Website compliance • Recent Ofsted letter or report • SELP records of visit • LA commissioned reviews • Provision for pupils with education, health and care plans • Audit reports, including finance, health and safety and human resources • School roll including the impact of expansion or falling rolls.
<p style="text-align: center;">Local Authority categorisation</p> <p>In 2021-21 re-categorisation will only occur in exceptional circumstances.</p>	

Appendix 2

Rapid Improvement Group Purpose and Protocols

Purpose

Schools are ultimately responsible for their own improvement and should develop their own capacity to develop and sustain improvement. However, the local authority (LA), through the Setting and School Effectiveness Service, has a statutory responsibility to provide challenge to all schools and support schools to provide children and young people with at least a good standard of education.

The purpose of a Rapid Improvement Group (RIG) is to provide a structured framework for those maintained schools with an agreed LA category 3 or 4 to secure rapid progress and improvement.

The RIG ensures that appropriate and co-ordinated support and challenge are provided at all levels: school, local authority and, if appropriate, diocese, foundation or trust. The RIG aims to support the school to build its capacity, to sustain and continue the process of improvement. As part of this role, the RIG evaluates the impact of support to ensure that appropriate and sustained progress is made.

Process

Typically, the RIG operates over an 18 month cycle normally meeting on a half termly basis. However, if necessary, the group may meet more frequently. The RIG is held at the school premises and the chair of the RIG will be a senior officer of the Setting and School Effectiveness Service. He/she will be responsible for drawing up and distributing the agenda. Minutes will be kept of all meetings, in most cases, by the school's School Effectiveness Lead Professional (SELP). Written reports should be provided where possible against agenda items and circulated at least two school days in advance of meetings.

Membership of the group includes: the headteacher, chair of governors, the SELP and LA chair. Depending on the size of the school and/or the area of focus, other members of the senior leadership team or leaders from a partner school may be invited to attend for all or part of a meeting.

The meetings will be administered by the Setting and School Effectiveness Service and the SELP will help the school to prepare for the meetings.

The RIG will:

- Ensure the right balance of challenge and support
- Focus the efforts of the school on improving standards of achievement and pupil well-being
- Support the school to address barriers to improvement
- Provide a dynamic forum where support needs are identified
- Ensure actions are planned, implemented and that impact is monitored and evaluated
- Provide a route for contact between the local authority and the school
- Oversee and ensure that all support and/or intervention is well co-ordinated
- Hold the school staff and governors to account for improvement
- Quality assure and monitor the effectiveness of the support provided, holding providers to account for the quality of support and school leaders to account for impact
- Monitor the progress against the school improvement plan
- Report to the Strategic Director Children and Young People via the Head of Setting and School Effectiveness.

The first RIG will clarify the purpose of the group, and the roles and responsibilities of the members of the RIG. The meeting should also agree a baseline on key areas of school improvement against which subsequent progress will be assessed.

The first RIG meeting will discuss the actions taken to address the recommendations in recent audits and reviews. Meetings typically follow a standardised agenda which is aligned to the Ofsted Section 5 inspection handbook evaluation schedule.

Following the first RIG meeting an action plan will be produced. The production of the action plan will be the responsibility of the school, working with the SELP. If the school already has a robust post-Ofsted plan or school improvement plan which adequately describes the improvement required, then that can be used in this context. The school may add some supplementary sections, if necessary. The action plan should be specifically tailored to the needs of the school to include support for leadership and management (including

governance, quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, and personal development. There is an expectation that progress will have been made in all areas, and against all targets and milestones.

Key indicators of success will typically measure improvement in:

- Leadership and management including accurate self-evaluation
- Quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development.

It is essential that the action plan is SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound) and that targets focus on outcomes and impact, with a clear allocation of resources. The content of the action plan will lead to the implementation of a support programme, including where appropriate, commissioned input from the teaching school alliance and/or Brent Schools Partnership (BSP). The action plan should also include the monitoring role of the LA. The plan will be monitored and reviewed at each half termly meeting of the RIG.

The action plan will identify the resources required to implement the plan. In some instances, where the school's budget is limited, the RIG process may trigger external financial support funded through the Schools Causing Concern budget. The school would submit a bid via the SELP to the Setting and School Effectiveness Service clarifying the school's financial circumstances and stating clearly how the additional funds will be allocated and the expected impact. If the school has not already bought into the BSP core offer, the RIG will determine whether it should do so.

Expected outcomes

Within 12 to 18 months, the school should make rapid improvement and be evaluated by the RIG as self-sustaining.

Improvement for schools in these circumstances must be swift and embedded in good sustained practice, recognised by Ofsted monitoring visits or local authority reviews. If a school is deemed to be self-sustaining before the end of the cycle, then the RIG will no longer be required and the school will be expected to enter into partnership arrangements with an agreed LA category 1 or 2 school.

If the required level of improvement has not been achieved, or there are concerns relating to sustainability of improved standards, as a precursor to the local authority using its statutory powers of intervention, the local authority might issue a LA Letter of Concern. In this letter the local authority will detail its concerns and the action it expects the governing board and the senior leadership team to take together with a timeline (no longer than 20 working days) within which the school is expected to comply. In these circumstances it might be agreed to extend the duration of a RIG to a total of two years.

Protocols

Members of the RIG undertake to:

- Attend all meetings where possible
- Prepare and circulate written reports at least two school days in advance of meetings
- Read all documents in advance of the meeting
- Treat all RIG discussions as confidential to members of the RIG (unless agreed otherwise)
- Agree that information and data about school performance can be shared with key partners (e.g. TSAs and BSP) if required in planning support.

In accepting a RIG, the leaders (including the governing board) of the school agree to the above processes.

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Head of Setting and School Effectiveness

Appendix 3

The role of the School Effectiveness Lead Professional (SELP)

All schools and academies

- All schools and academies/free schools will be allocated a named contact from the Setting and School Effectiveness Service.
- SELPs will be allocated a range of maintained and non-maintained schools, the performance of which they will monitor exercising the LA's statutory duty in ensuring a good standard of education for all its children and young people.
- Academies and free schools will be able to seek advice from their named contact.

LA maintained schools

In the case of their allocated maintained schools, the SELP will work in partnership with school leaders and governors to secure continuous improvements in the outcomes and progress achieved by all pupils. This will entail the following:

- In addition to analysis of publicly available school performance data, the SELP will agree or challenge a school's annual evaluation of its effectiveness and agree an LA category with school leaders. A school's agreed LA category will act as a quality kite mark indicating a school's capacity to support other schools as well as the effectiveness of the standard of education it offers or, in the case of LA3 schools, act as an entitlement to support and, in the case LA4 schools, act as a trigger for intervention to secure rapid improvement.
- LA3 or LA4 schools will be entitled to half termly visits to provide challenge and support to secure accelerated improvement.
- A SELP's main role in supporting LA3 and LA4 schools will be to work with school leaders to support their accurate evaluation of educational provision and academic performance, and to develop their capacity to secure ongoing and rapid improvement.
- SELPs will attend the Rapid Improvement Group meetings of their own schools as well as acting as chairs to RIGs in other schools.
- LA1 and LA2 schools will be entitled to a one day review within the inspection cycle unless requested earlier. Otherwise, the SELP will not usually visit on a regular basis.
- SELPs will represent the Director of Children's Services at the headship appointments of all maintained schools, providing professional advice and guidance to governing boards.

Appendix 4

Schools Causing Concern budget

The Schools Causing Concern budget is de-delegated by maintained schools at the Schools Forum from the Dedicated Schools Grant. The budget falls under the contingency class of de-delegations.

The Section 251 guidance on budgeted expenditure states:

1.1.1 Contingencies: include here expenditure as defined in Part 1 of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2015. This “expenditure on the schools specific contingency” is central expenditure deducted for the purpose of ensuring that monies are available to enable increases in a school’s budget share after it has been allocated and where it subsequently becomes apparent that a governing board has incurred expenditure which it would be unreasonable to expect it to meet from the school’s budget share which may include expenditure in relation to:

- Schools in financial difficulty
- The writing-off of deficits of schools which are discontinued, excluding any associated costs and overheads
- New, amalgamating or closing schools
- Other expenditure where such circumstances were unforeseen when initially determining the school’s budget share.

Appendix 5 References

The education inspection framework; Ofsted; May 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework>

School inspection handbook; Ofsted; November 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>

School inspection handbook - Section 8; Ofsted; November 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-8-school-inspection-handbook-eif>

Inspecting schools: guide for maintained and academy schools; Ofsted; September 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inspecting-schools-guide-for-maintained-and-academy-schools>

Interim phase visits to state-funded schools; Ofsted; September 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/interim-phase-maintained-schools-and-academies>

Schools causing concern - Guidance for local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners on how to work with schools to support improvements to educational performance, and on using their intervention powers; Department for Education; September 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-causing-concern--2#history>