

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP

<b>TO:</b>	ADULTS SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
<b>DATE:</b>	13 DECEMBER 2016	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	9
<b>TITLE:</b>	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	CLLR TONY JONES	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	CHILDREN'S SERVICES
<b>SERVICE:</b>	CHILDREN'S SERVICES	<b>WARDS:</b>	BOROUGHWIDE
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide an overview on the framework that the School Improvement Team is undertaking to work with schools towards a self-improving school system. The framework outlines:

- The LA investment in school improvement
- A continued focus on vulnerable learners
- The roles and responsibilities of key partners and stakeholders
- The LA categorisation process
- The definitions of each category for schools
- The monitoring and evaluation process, including exit strategies for those schools requiring intervention

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To ratify the processes within the school improvement framework
- 2.2 To ratify the process within the framework on the categorisation of schools
- 2.3 To commit to support the continued focus on ensuring that all schools are at least good and on the more vulnerable learners

#### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The LA's overriding purpose is to work in partnership with schools and other agencies, to raise attainment and safeguard the educational aspirations and achievement of individuals, groups and communities.
- 3.2 The role of the LA is to ensure that the needs of all children and young people are met. We are guardians and champions of all Reading children with particular responsibility for the most vulnerable learners in our community.

- 3.3 The LA has a duty to categorise all schools and settings according to how effective they are in delivering a high standard of education.
- 3.4 The LA is unequivocal in its determination to raise the educational achievement of all its learners irrespective of ability, age, gender or ethnicity and to counter any disadvantages they may experience. It recognises and values the diversity and distinctiveness of individual learners, groups and institutions. It actively promotes the concept of schools as self-regulating institutions within a professional, supportive and collegiate framework which sustains a climate of continuous improvement.
- 3.5 The LA will discharge this duty through monitoring all provision and outcomes; challenging, providing support and, where necessary, intervening when a school is not providing a good standard of education.
- 3.6 Although academies are responsible to the Secretary of State for Education for their achievement and standards; the LA will challenge any academy that is not offering a good quality of provision for local children and young people. We will do that initially through contact with the Headteacher, governing body and/or sponsors. If necessary we will alert the Secretary of State through the Regional Schools Commissioner.

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 There was no clear and transparent process in relation to the categorisation of schools in September 2015. Headteachers were unaware of the criteria used to arrive at the categorisation and there were no published criteria behind each categorisation. Discussions about the categorisation made on a school did not take place before they were informed of which category they were.
- 4.2 Schools and Headteachers have been consulted on the framework in order to finalise the current framework. This has also been scrutinised by the lead HMI for the region.
- 4.3 School Partnership Advisers are meeting with Headteachers and Governors during this term to discuss the categorisation after the summer meeting of the School Monitoring Group.

#### **5. WORK UNDERWAY/PLANNED**

- 5.1 The LA categorisation process
- On three occasions each year officers of the LA meet to discuss the categorisation of schools.
  - The system of categorisation helps the LA triage its support and challenge in a way that is timely, fair, and effective; focussing on the unique needs of each school.
  - Categorisation may change as the year progresses as outcomes can change suddenly, for example, as a consequence of changes to the leadership team or because of particular environmental stresses.

- The grades draw on the criteria in the Ofsted framework for the inspection of maintained schools and academies, however, they do not correspond to Ofsted categories.
- The LA categorisation of schools is reviewed and overseen by the Strategic Lead for School Improvement.
- The School Improvement Team RAG rate the categorization spreadsheet according to the evidence gathered from; time in classrooms, triangulation activities with school leaders, SPA meetings, RAISE, Ofsted, the DfE, centrally held LA data, and discussions with Governors.
- The School Improvement Team RAG against a range of rigorous key performance indicators. These include: Data (consistency, inconsistency, decline or improvement, performance against National standards), Level of concern/risk with regard to Ofsted inspection judgments, figures for overall attendance, latest figures and/or information about exclusions, LA reviews or reports, SIAM's inspections reports (where relevant), findings of HMI monitoring visits, any significant safeguarding issues, the number and nature of any parental complaints received by the LA, Ofsted or DfE and their outcomes.

5.2 There are four Categories:

- System Leaders (S)
- Strengthening Good Schools (G)
- Raising Achievement Schools (R)
- Schools in a Category (C)

5.3 An initial category is shared with each school at the start of the autumn term for the following year and where midyear changes are made.

5.4 Where schools are categorized as R or C, the school's SPA will arrange a visit to the school to collect additional information and discuss the issues of concern with the Headteacher.

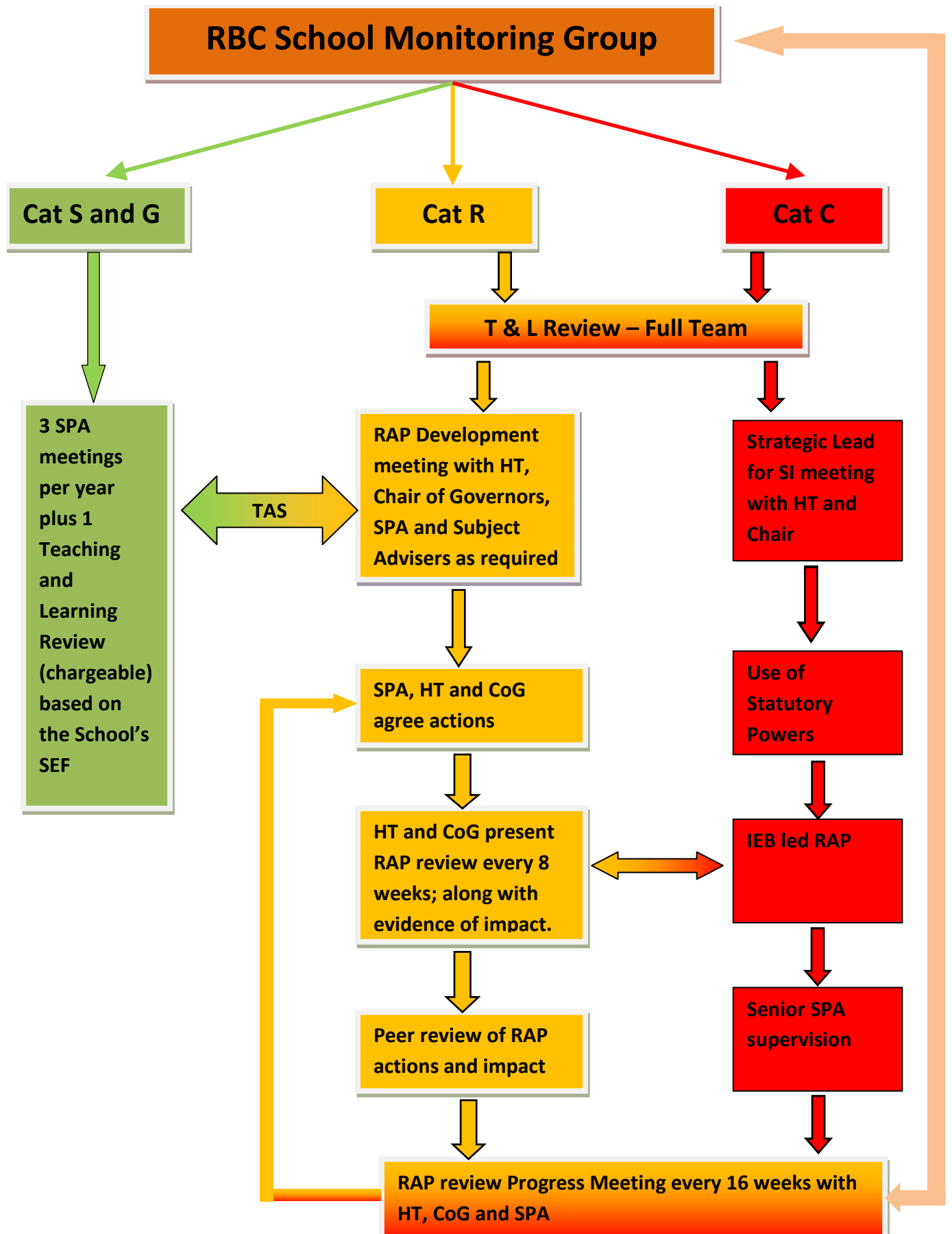
5.5 The school is required to work with the LA to develop a Raising Achievement Plan or where a school is subject to Special Measures a Statement of Action.

5.6 LA categorization R and C trigger an entitlement to a package of support designed to accelerate improvement; this is planned in collaboration with the school, the implementation of which is overseen by the school's SPA.

5.7 A school would be expected, with support, to demonstrate significant improvement and to move out of a category of concern within a year.

5.8 A Governing Body can also request LA intervention. Any such request would be reviewed by the Strategic Lead for School Improvement.

5.9 The process is outlined within the School Improvement Framework as a flowchart and is shown overleaf.



## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 6.1** One of Reading Borough Councils strategic aims is to “Increase the proportion of Schools that are judged good and outstanding” .

This is a core aim of the School Improvement Framework and will accelerate the improvements already made (from 77% in 2015 to 83% by October 2016).

- 6.2** Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable is a core aim of Reading Borough Council and is a central element of the categorisation process within the framework.
- 6.3** A central part of the framework is around data and as more schools become system leaders and strengthening good schools the more pupils will exceed national average measures at all Key Stages and become comparable with other top quartile local authority areas.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1** All stakeholders and partners will be treated in a fair and equitable manner as the process is clear and transparent.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1** As more schools become good or better there will be less need for intervention from the school improvement team.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1** School Improvement Framework Document.

## Reading Borough Council

### School Improvement Framework 2016

# Reading Borough Council School Improvement Framework

## Introduction

- The purpose of School improvement is to ensure that all of our children have access to the best quality education system and are educated in a school graded good or better by Ofsted.
- Whatever structure or form of governance our schools choose to take, we regard them all as our partners, central to our work to improve outcomes for all children and young people.
- The Local Authority (LA) retains a legal responsibility for performance in the borough as a whole and we take this responsibility very seriously. Accordingly, we are determined to hold all schools, including academies, to account for their performance, acting as a guardian and champion for local children and families.
- The LA has specific duties and powers in relation to monitoring, challenge, support and intervention in maintained schools. This document sets out the way in which we carry out these functions, including our school categorization process and arrangements for targeted intervention where necessary.
- To ensure our approach to school improvement continues to reflect national and local priorities and is focused on securing ongoing improvement, this document will continue to be kept under review.

## Towards a self-improving school system

- To sustain our improvement we continue to monitor and evaluate both the quality of educational provision and the progress achieved by all groups of pupils, challenging schools to raise standards where necessary, commissioning support to help them in addressing weaknesses and intervening where standards remain inadequate or show little sign of improving.
- The LA and individual schools cannot achieve this alone and we recognize the importance of bringing together all sources of support and expertise, working in partnership to achieve the best for the children and young people of Reading.
- Recognizing the role of the LA to work across the local system, we have worked with our partners to develop school improvement capacity.
- A key priority for the LA is to develop its commissioning role, working with partners to deliver targeted and integrated support leading to better outcomes for children and young people. The LA retains the responsibility for monitoring the quality of provision, identifying the need for improvement and brokering or coordinating appropriate support for schools where LA intervention is required. In order to do this, we have established the Reading First Partnership who will be involved in agreeing local arrangements for the provision of school to school support in LA intervention schools and monitoring and evaluating the impact of this. The RFP will also consider how best to co-ordinate the local school to school support offer to all schools, not just those in LA intervention categories.

## LA investment in school improvement

- the following activities and services are centrally provided to support continued improvement in schools and sustain and promote a high standard of education for all Reading children:
  - A named LA School Improvement Partnership Advisor (SPA).
  - Specialist subject advisors for; Leadership, English, Mathematics, Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Under-performing Ethnic Groups (UPEG).
  - Virtual school for Children Missing out on Education (CME) and Looked After Children (LAC).
  - Continued investment in improving early years practice across both settings and schools, led by the Early Years Quality Improvement Team.
  - Continuation of a Governor Support Service and a comprehensive package of governor development activities.
  - Provision of support to schools in the moderation of teacher assessments at the end of key stages in primary schools.
  - The LA will discharge its statutory duties, acting in its role as the Appropriate Body to quality assure the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers.
  - Retention of a coherent induction and development programme for newly appointed Headteachers and the provision of a coaching and mentoring service.
  - The development and support of a network for Executive Deputy and Assistant Headteachers.
  - The development and support of a network for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs).
  - Facilitation of Headteacher consultative group meetings with the Director of Education.
  - Provision of information and briefings through our regular electronic newsletters and website content.
  - Facilitating and supporting subject network meetings for primary and secondary schools.

## Focusing on more vulnerable learners

- A continuing priority for the LA is to support and challenge schools to close the gap in both outcomes and the quality of experience between those who are vulnerable to educational underachievement and their peers.
- The LA keeps the progress of its underperforming and vulnerable groups under review, targeting support in schools with higher proportions of these children and young people.
- We promote the well-being of all children and young people through a policy of equality and inclusion. In parallel with this school improvement



framework, the LA has a plan to ensure successful outcomes and accelerated progress for vulnerable children and young people, particularly learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### **Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers**

- The Virtual School supports the education of children in care from the time they enter education to the time they leave education, including care leavers up to the age of 25. It is responsible for monitoring the educational achievements of Children in Care and for challenging and supporting schools so that the children and young people have access to high quality educational provision.
- The Virtual School strives to ensure that every child in care reaches their full potential wherever they are placed. To achieve this, the Virtual School works closely with other schools and other professionals both within Reading and in local authorities across the country. In addition the Virtual School has a role of liaising with other local authority Virtual Schools in relation to pupils in their care who are educated in Reading schools.

### **Promoting good behaviour and attendance**

- The LA and its partners in schools recognise that the most effective way of improving behaviour (including attendance) is to intervene at an early stage. The LA has a strategy for early help which has led to the creation of three locality-based, multi-disciplinary teams called Childrens' Action Teams. These teams work with schools to identify children, young people and their families with additional or considerable needs, creating plans to intervene effectively.
- There is a good and growing partnership between mainstream schools, our Special Schools, the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and the Behaviour Support Service.
- The LA is committed to reducing persistent absence and increasing overall attendance in our schools. With the support and guidance offered to schools through CATS and by working together with School Partnership Advisers and pupil support services, we continue to work towards improving regular attendance and reducing exclusion.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Local Authority**

- The LA's overriding purpose is to work in partnership with schools and other agencies, to raise attainment and safeguard the educational aspirations and achievement of individuals, groups and communities.
- The role of the LA is to ensure that the needs of all children and young people are met. We are guardians and champions of all Reading children with particular responsibility for the most vulnerable learners in our

- community.
- The LA has a duty to categorise all schools and settings according to how effective they are in delivering a high standard of education.
  - The LA is unequivocal in its determination to raise the educational achievement of all its learners irrespective of ability, age, gender or ethnicity and to counter any disadvantages they may experience. It recognises and values the diversity and distinctiveness of individual learners, groups and institutions. It actively promotes the concept of schools as self-regulating institutions within a professional, supportive and collegiate framework which sustains a climate of continuous improvement.
  - The LA will discharge this duty through monitoring all provision and outcomes, challenging, providing support and, where necessary, intervening when a school is failing to provide a good standard of education.
  - Although academies are responsible to the Secretary of State for Education for their achievement and standards, the LA will challenge any academy that is not offering good quality provision for local children and young people. We will do that initially through contact with the Headteacher, governing body and/or sponsors. If necessary we will alert the Secretary of State.

### **School Partnership Advisors (SPA)**

- A fundamental aspect of the SPA role is in holding schools and settings to account for standards and supporting them to improve.
- SPAs are expected to verify the validity of leader's self-evaluation through scrutiny of teaching, learning and assessment with school leaders. This will involve SPAs spending a good proportion of their time in class.
- The involvement of SPA's in the work of the school will be in inverse proportion to success and those schools judged most effective will have only light touch monitoring. The work of the SPA will include:
  - Acting as a representative of the LA in championing the children and young people served by the school.
  - Providing professional challenge and support to improve the school's performance.
  - Monitoring the performance of LA category S and G schools and supporting them as appropriate to their identified needs.
  - Carrying out regular visits to LA category R and C schools. These more frequent and extensive visits will form part of the Raising Achievement Plan (RAP). These meetings will differ from school to school and will be driven by the needs of the school and agreed RAP actions.
  - Providing notes of visits to the Chair of Governors, Headteacher and the LA.
  - Providing advice to the Governing Body to inform the Headteacher's performance management and in Category R/C schools on the effectiveness of the school's performance management systems.

- Providing training.
- We believe it is important that a simple set of principles guide the work of SPAs These principles include;
  - Working in the best interests of Reading children without fear or favour.
  - Making evidence-based assessments of a school's performance and its strategies to improve learning and teaching - all SPAs are expected to spend time in classrooms, review school data and consider work in books when making judgments.
  - Demonstrating respect for the school's autonomy in planning its development, starting from the school's self-evaluation and the needs of the community, especially the pupils.
  - Providing intervention in inverse proportion to success, reporting on any causes for concern and agreeing an external support package as appropriate.
  - Ensuring coherence so that all partners consistently support the school's normal cycle of evaluation, planning and action
  - Providing written records of their work with schools within five working days of any meeting.
  - Written records comply with an agreed and common format **and are periodically** quality assured by the LA.
  - Ensuring judgments are periodically moderated through peer challenge and commissioned external review.

### School Leadership teams

- It is the responsibility of the Governing Body and the Headteacher to secure high standards. Leaders are expected to be self-regulating and self-evaluating, monitoring their performance and planning for continuous improvement.
- Leaders and managers are charged with realising an ambitious vision for the setting or school, having high expectations of children and securing appropriate support from partners, including the LA.
- They should use challenging targets to raise standards and secure the well-being of all children, eliminating low attainment among particular groups.
- Headteachers are expected to provide key documentation to their SPA. They should provide self-evaluation comments against our information, including data analysis under agenda headings at least seven days in advance of meetings.
- Headteachers are expected to carry out agreed actions from SPA meetings and report on their impact by dates specified or by the next meeting.
- The Governing Body has the responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the school and for the standards achieved. Our expectation is that they;
  - Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
  - Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
  - Ensure the effective performance management of staff.

- Oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure resources are efficiently and effectively used.
- Provide the LA with an annual Governance Self-Evaluation to support the LA to provide appropriate support and challenge.

## Teaching Schools

- Teaching schools are responsible for the recruitment, designation, brokering and quality assurance of Subject Leaders in Education (SLEs). Each Teaching School has a pool of SLEs for which it is responsible. Multiple teaching schools may choose to join their SLEs together to offer an even wider range of expertise.

## National Leaders of Education

- National Leaders of Education (NLEs) are outstanding Headteachers or principals who use their skills and experience to support other schools. NLEs' own schools are 'outstanding', with consistently high levels of pupil performance or continued improvement over the last three years. They have outstanding senior and middle leaders who have demonstrated the capacity to provide significant and successful support to underperforming schools. Their schools are designated as National Support Schools (NSSs) in recognition of the fact that their staff are likely to work alongside them in any support they may provide. The aim of the programme is to support schools in the most challenging circumstances. Usually, this means schools identified as being in need of significant improvement by the Department for Education (DfE), Ofsted or in LA Category C.
- The focus of NLE/NSS work is to assist underperforming schools in making significant and rapid progress. Deployment is tailored to suit the needs of the supported school. For example, in a school lacking the capacity to improve, an NLE could take the role of full-time acting or executive Headteacher and or work alongside an acting or executive Headteacher for a number of days each week.
- Where the NLE is not engaged in a specific deployment, he or she is expected to undertake other work with a school or schools in challenging circumstances.
- NLEs are responsible, on behalf of the NSS, for negotiating appropriate funding for deployments. It is up to the NSS Governing Body to decide whether the NLE or other staff are rewarded financially for their individual work as part of a deployment.

## Local Leaders of Education

- Local Leaders of Education (LLEs) are serving Headteachers or principals with at least three years' headship experience, good outcomes in attainment and Ofsted outcomes, and a successful track record of school leadership and management.
- LLEs work outside their own school, providing support to another Headteacher and his or her school. The two Headteachers work

together to drive forward improvements. Through a coaching and mentoring approach, the LLE's support builds the supported Headteacher's leadership capacity to ensure that these improvements can be sustained.

- The LLE role is flexible but typical activities include:
  - Negotiating objectives for improvement and reviewing school documentation, policies and procedures.
  - Coaching and mentoring the Headteacher to develop skills, judgment and professional effectiveness.
  - Supporting or arranging coaching or training for key staff in the school.
  - Inviting the Headteacher or other staff to visit the LLE's own school for discussion, observation, development activities, coaching or placements.
  - LLEs also act as professional partners, providing mentoring support to new Headteachers in their first two years of headship as part of the Head Start programme.
  
- Deployments with a school improvement focus may last from six months to three years, with LLEs normally spending between half a day and one day a week working with the supported school. The LLE can allocate some of the contracted days to other members of staff in his or her own school.

### The LA categorisation process

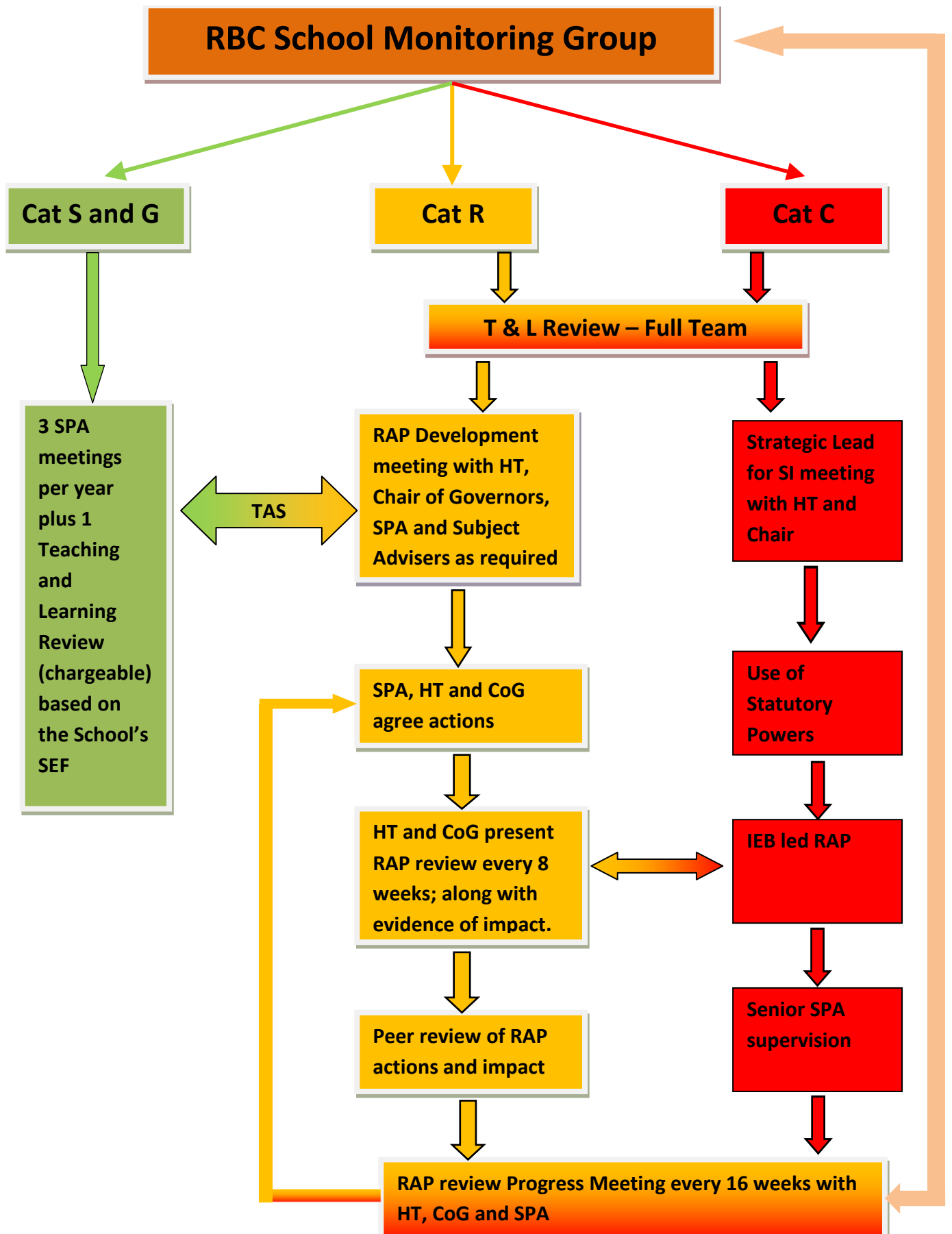
- On three occasions each year officers of the LA meet to discuss the categorization of schools.
- The system of categorisation helps the LA triage its support and challenge in a way that is timely, fair, effective and focused on the unique needs of the school.
- Categorisation may change as the year progresses as outcomes can change suddenly, for example, as a consequence of changes to the leadership team or because of particular environmental stresses.
- The grades draw on the criteria in the Ofsted framework for the inspection of maintained schools and academies, however, they do not correspond to Ofsted categories.
- The LA categorisation of schools is reviewed and overseen by the Strategic Lead for School Improvement.
- The School Improvement Team RAG rate the categorization spreadsheet according to the evidence gathered from; time in classrooms, triangulation activities with school leaders, SPA meetings, RAISE, Ofsted, the DFE, Centrally held LA data, and discussions with Governors.
- The School Improvement Team RAG against a range of rigorous key performance indicators. These are detailed in appendix A and include:
  - Data: consistency, inconsistency, decline or improvement, performance against National standards.
  - Level of concern / risk with regard to Ofsted inspection judgments.
  - Figures for overall attendance.

- Latest figures and/or information about exclusions.
  - LA reviews reports.
  - SIAMs inspections reports (where relevant).
  - Findings of HMI monitoring visits.
  - Any significant Safeguarding issues.
  - The number and nature of any parental complaints received by the LA, Ofsted or DfE and their outcomes.
- Other LA officers involved with the school make judgements on areas outside of the Ofsted Framework that impact on school performance (such as budget, engagement with early help etc.). The Judgements on the categorization spreadsheet will then be discussed at the categorisation of schools meeting and an overall categorization will then be provisionally agreed.
  - An initial category will be shared with school at the start of the autumn term for the following year and where midyear changes are made.
  - Where schools are categorized as R or C the school's SPA will arrange a visit to the school to collect additional information and discuss the issues of concern with the Headteacher.
  - The Strategic Lead for School Improvement with (or without the agreement of the Headteacher), will recommend that the school is placed in LA intervention. This recommendation will be considered by the Head of Education, who will determine if there is sufficient evidence to proceed and hear any alternative evidence provided by the school. If the recommendation is endorsed, a letter will be sent to the Governing Body confirming the re-categorisation and outlining the improvement plan process. In addition, a senior officer will visit the school to explain the process to the Headteacher and a representative from the Governing Body (normally the Chair).
  - The school will be required to work with the LA to develop a Raising Achievement Plan or where a school is subject to Special Measures a Statement of Action. The process for monitoring this plan is detailed in Fig1 below.
  - LA categorization R and C trigger an entitlement to a package of support designed to accelerate improvement, this will be planned in collaboration with the school, the implementation of which is overseen by the school's SPA.
  - A school would be expected, with support, to demonstrate significant improvement and to move out of a category of concern within a year.
  - A Governing Body can also request LA intervention. Any such request would be reviewed by the Head of School Improvement.

#### **Funding of school to school support**

- Financial assistance can be made available by the LA to fund school to school support for Category R and C schools. There is a limited budget set aside by the LA for this purpose.

Figure 1: RAP Process



## Definitions of the Four LA categories for schools

### Category LA1: System Leaders (S)

These are excellent schools that are consistently successful in securing very good outcomes for learners and offer many examples of good and excellent practice. Common features of these schools will likely include:

- The impact of Leadership is significant and there is a well-established culture of raising achievement for all children.
- Outcomes for children have been consistently above national averages in the last three years.
- The attainment of almost all groups of pupils is above or broadly in line with national averages or, if below these, is improving rapidly.
- In the current year throughout each year group and across the curriculum, current pupils make substantial and sustained progress, from their different starting points.
- For pupils generally, and specifically for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs, progress is above average across nearly all subject areas.
- Pupils are confident, self-assured learners. Their excellent attitudes to learning have a strong, positive impact on their progress. They are proud of their achievements and of their school.
- The schools culture and curriculum means that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good and much is excellent across all key stages.
- Leaders undertake work with other schools to help raise standards and improve educational provision beyond their own gates.
- There is an expectation that schools identified as System Leaders will support schools in other categories

### Category LA2: Strengthening Good Schools (G)

These are schools where performance is good overall and capacity for sustained improvement is good. Common features of these schools will likely include:

- Leaders are embedding a culture that allows pupils and teachers to thrive from all starting points
- Where there are any minor aspects that may need further improvement, leaders have identified them and can provide robust evidence of activities which have led to improvement.
- Attainment over the last three years is likely to be above national averages for all groups or have been improving rapidly over this time
- Across almost all year groups and in a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, current pupils make consistently strong progress from their starting points.



- There is a high level of consistency in the quality of outcomes in the current year across all phases and groups.
- Pupils' progress is above average or improving across most subject areas. Overall progress of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs is above average or improving.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good and excellent practice is shared.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and have good attitudes to school.

### **Category LA3: Raising Achievement Schools (R)**

These are schools identified by the LA or themselves as providing a variable standard of provision. Some aspects may be good and improving. The degree of support and range of needs for schools in this Category is wide and therefore the degree of LA support will vary accordingly. Schools in this category are expected to work with the LA to develop and implement a Raising Achievement Plan.

- In the current year, across all year groups, outcomes for pupils are variable.
- Progress and/or attainment for some groups of children are below national averages.
- There may be a risk in relation to the next inspection judgment of the school not being graded "good".
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent.
- There may have been a lack of significant improvement in outcomes, or decline in standards for pupils over the last three years.
- There may be insufficient evidence to show that the progress of underperforming groups is accelerating and enabling them to catch up.
- The school remains vulnerable having recently been removed from Ofsted category 4.
- There may be limited evidence of leadership impact and or school culture does not support rapid improvement.
- Systems may not be embedded across the school and there is an over reliance on one person for success.
- The school has a new Headteacher and/or may have undergone significant staff changes.

### **Category LA4) - Schools in a category (C)**

These schools have been identified by Ofsted, the LA or the Governing Body as having significant weakness in one or more aspects of provision. Schools will require immediate intervention or radical solutions to prevent further decline because the school has limited capacity to make necessary changes. The LA may categorise schools as C where:

- Groups of children and young people are failing to make progress in line

with national averages and this has been a feature of the school in the last three years.

- Attainment and progress data shows a significant downward trend and/or is below national averages in one or more key stages.
- The schools results are below national floor standards.
- Where learners are likely to be at risk because of poor behaviour, poor attitudes to learning or poor attendance.
- A school that has been judged as Requiring Improvement and is not able to provide sufficient evidence of effective action to secure rapid improvement.
- Safeguarding is ineffective.
- Where groups in particular year groups or key stages are failing to make good enough progress year on year.

### **Schools Judged Inadequate by Ofsted**

- Where a school or setting has been judged Inadequate by Ofsted, an LA Statement of Action will be produced and submitted to Ofsted within ten days of the publication of the report. This will consider options for the future of the school. This will include exploring with Governing Bodies the brokerage of a sponsored academy solution and or appointment of additional governors and the use of an Interim Executive Board. The SPA will maintain regular contact with such schools in order to intervene early to avert further decline.
- The LA is committed to working in partnership with the Diocesan Authorities where appropriate to develop any intervention necessary to improve performance.
- The school will be required to demonstrate that it is making best use of its delegated funding to support the improvement process. Where the needs of such a school require additional support, the LA will assist the school in brokering support from external sources, firstly through the arrangements agreed through the Statement of Action, then through the RFP where appropriate. The SPA will, where required, commission support from officers in the wider council, prepare monitoring information as required by HMI and work with the school to adapt activities in the light of monitoring information.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of RAP intervention**

- The impact of RAP Intervention programmes are evaluated at each review meeting against the success criteria agreed- where possible these will be written in terms of changes to pupil outcomes.
- Meetings are chaired by a senior LA officer. This on-going scrutiny ensures consistency in approaches and the development of an exit strategy to secure ongoing improvement. Schools that are successful in being removed from LA intervention are categorised as Category G and receive reduced support from a School Partnership Adviser.

## Exit strategy

- The five non-negotiable criteria for exiting from intervention are made clear to all RAP schools at the beginning of the process.
- Where a school is able to show evidence of the criteria it is likely that independent sustainability of improvement can be maintained without additional input from the LA. These are:
  - Robust, rigorous, accurate and regular School Review and Self-Evaluation processes including evidence of regular reporting to the Governing Body and subsequent challenge.
  - A credible School Improvement Plan with outcomes focused milestones and monitoring in place.
  - Leadership is stable and suitably skilled at senior and middle leader level
  - Regular tracking and monitoring of progress and attainment against age-related expectations for all groups. Regular quality assurance and moderation of assessment to ensure accuracy across all subjects
  - A continuing professional development programme integrated into the School Improvement Plan and monitored for impact

### Impact evidence will include some or all of the following:

- Consistent practice in teaching, learning and assessment across all year groups which has led to rapidly improving outcomes.
- The school is achieving the attainment and progress targets established in the Raising Achievement Plan.
- The school's monitoring of in-year progress data indicates an upward trajectory is secure.
- Test results are above national floor standards.
- Evidence of additional capacity in the school's leadership team (including governance).

When the Strategic Lead for School Improvement judges that the school is ready to exit from intervention, they will request that the Head of Education approves removal and that this is communicated in writing to the School's Governing Body and Headteacher.

## Disputes about LA intervention

- Where the Governing Body does not agree with the concerns raised, discussions will take place between the SPA, Headteacher and Governors in the first instance.
- The LA may choose to work within the framework available for formal warning procedures, as required (In extreme circumstances this could result in the following:
  - Issuing of a formal performance and safety warning notice requiring the school to take specified action.
  - Nominating additional governors to a school's Governing Body.
  - Suspending the school's delegated budget.
  - Requiring the Governing Body to enter into collaborative arrangements.
  - Issuing of a formal performance report where there is a concern about the performance of the Headteacher.
  - Replacing the Governing Body with an Interim Executive Board (IEB) or Executive Governing Body.
- The Secretary of State has the intervention powers to appoint additional governors, nominate and pay the Chair, or direct the closure of the school.
- The LA has the power to intervene to prevent the breakdown of discipline in a maintained school. The LA will only use this statutory power as a last resort. It is possible that it may come into operation when a school is failing to respond to support or when an Ofsted inspection judges a school to be inadequate (or having 'Serious Weaknesses' or requiring 'Special Measures').

## Quality Assurance of the LA's work with schools in Category R and C

QA takes place through:

- RAP review meetings.
- Reviews of school/LA action plans.
- Appraisal meetings.
- Ongoing scrutiny through the LA Management Board and RFP.
- HMI letters following monitoring inspections of schools in Ofsted categories that comment on the work of the LA.
- Feedback reports from Ofsted.
- Feedback from schools.

## Raising Achievement Plan (RAP) meetings

RAP meetings will focus on the impact of intervention and LA/school commissioned activity to improve outcomes. The purposes of the RAP meetings are to:

- Monitor the impact and effectiveness of the work of school leaders to bring about required change.
- Monitor the impact and effectiveness of LA commissioned support, agreeing redirection where necessary.
- Hold the school to account for the impact of external support and achieving accelerated improvement.
- Celebrate success.
- Membership of the RAP includes the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher where agreed by the head, Chair of the Governing Body, the SPA and will be chaired by the Strategic Lead for School Improvement or Head of Education.

### **Schools in LA intervention category R and C - RAP responsibilities**

**The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that he/she or members of the Senior Leadership Team:**

- Draft the Raising Achievement Plan (School Improvement Plan).
- Agree the RAP with the SPA and Strategic Lead for School Improvement.
- Present evidence for the RAP review. This should draw on existing data and analysis, be relevant to the success criteria and milestones in the RAP and be provided at least 5 working days before the review meeting.
- Ensure that 'next steps' identified in these meetings or following partner visits are effectively actioned, including the identification of success milestones and target groups.
- Makes clear to the School Partnership Advisor any challenges, difficulties or barriers to progress they may be unaware of.

**The Governing Body is responsible for:**

- Ensuring the Chair of Governors or agreed representative attends the RAP development and review meetings.
- Ensuring RAP minutes are an agenda item on the full Governing Body agenda.
- Engaging with the School Partnership Adviser, where appropriate, when prospective candidates for teaching posts are discussed prior to short listing.

**The SPA is responsible for:**

- Providing an agenda for all members of the RAP at least 10 working days in advance of the meeting.
- Ensuring key points and actions are minuted and circulating the minutes within 10 days of the meeting.
- Regularly reviewing and verifying the evidence of progress against success criteria in the RAP provided by the Headteacher (minimum once per half term).
- Commissioning support where appropriate.
- Providing written and oral reports of their work with the school at RAP meetings.
- Bringing information about the impact of support from LA colleagues not attending the RAP meeting.

- Keeping relevant LA colleagues informed of any decisions of RAP meetings which impact on support.
- Communicating with the Diocese where appropriate.