

Improving Educational Outcomes in Swindon

Action plan to address issues identified by Ofsted in its inspection of the local authority arrangements to support school improvement

Date: October 2015

**Children Services
Swindon Borough Council**

Ofsted Inspection findings December 2014

Areas for Improvement	What needs to improve further?	Pages
1	Set out the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholder groups involved in school improvement so that they work cohesively together.	3/4
2	Increase accountability by implementing the proposed Education Improvement Strategy Board and setting out the incremental improvement necessary to improve educational provision in Swindon, especially for disadvantaged and the most able pupils.	5
3	Check rigorously the quality and effectiveness of the support brokered to maintained schools so that improvement is more consistent and the proportion of good or outstanding maintained schools exceeds the national average.	7
4	Ensure that concerns about standards and leadership in academies are referred promptly and directly to the Regional Commissioner for Schools so that standards rise at the end of Key Stage 4 and all secondary pupils have access to education that is at least good.	8

Activity	Pages
Monitoring and evaluation process	9
Resources	9
Glossary	9

- Appendix 1: Incremental improvement in standards - data set 2016 -18
- Appendix 2: Inspection outcomes for maintained primary schools.

CONTEXT STATEMENT

This action planned is being revised at the request of Ofsted in October 2015. Much has happened since the LASI in November 2014 and this is reflected in the revised plan. A new Head of Education took up his post in May 2015 and he has appointed two Education Commissioners to post. One of these took up her role in September and a second appointment will take up post permanently in February 2015 although she is working on secondment with the local authority currently. A Head of SEN has also been appointed to provide strategic leadership in this key area and the Looked After Children's Service has been reorganised. The Education Strategy Board chaired by the Regional Schools Commissioner, has had two successful meetings with the first taking place in July. This established membership and set the parameters for the group. The second took place in September when school outcomes were reviewed and several schools attended to discuss their outcomes and how they were going to improve further. A further aspect of this meeting was to identify schools in need of support and ensure that appropriate school support and improvement strategies were in place. A further 4 meetings will take place this academic year with the next being in November.

A strong partnership is being established with the two teaching schools and also the Regional Schools Commissioner's Office. The teaching school is already leading some school to school support arrangements in a number of schools both primary and secondary. External support is also being sourced from outstanding schools to some of the stand-alone secondary academies and to local authority schools whose outcomes need to improve. Local authority advisers are continuing their work with maintained schools and also academies and have facilitated strong partnerships such as with the Local Authority's only school which is in special measures. This is in both primary and secondary phases – for example a review of teaching and learning took place at an academy secondary school and was led by the Local Authority with 2 local headteachers and a deputy principal (all of whom are Ofsted inspectors). The Local Authority with the RSC are working together to promote MATs particularly for stand-alone secondary academies to build capacity and improve outcomes.

The teaching school and the local authority are working together to further develop leadership capacity through CPD, improving communications and creating a climate of focusing on outstanding education. A new headteachers' induction event was held for the first time for 5 years and this will lead on to further development programmes as a result. A headteachers' briefing event was also held and attended by 95 delegates – the vast majority of schools attended – and this will be a regular event. Part of the focus of this meeting was what the outstanding criteria in the new Ofsted evaluation schedule expects. There was also a similar well attended event for governors. It is recognised that there is a lot to do to improve outcomes in Swindon schools but a strong contribution is starting to be made by all partners in the process.

Areas for Improvement 1: Set out the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholder groups involved in school improvement so that they work cohesively together

Success Criteria:

- **Incremental improvement in standards - Appendix 1: data set 2016- 18**
- **Stakeholders have clear understanding of roles and responsibilities and their part in working together and actively engage in school improvement.**

Ref	Objectives	Specific Actions	Lead	Start date	Milestones with dates		RAG rating
1.1	Revise the Education Improvement Strategy (EIS) in order to raise further aspirations for children and young people in Swindon and ensure that different stakeholders understand their role in school improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise Swindon's vision with stakeholders to gain commitment to achieving excellence and high standards for all children and young people in the Borough • Clarify roles and responsibilities of all stakeholder groups involved in arrangements to support school improvement, including the teaching schools, the RSC's office, the leaders of good and outstanding schools, academy trusts and the SEND board • Ensure there are explicit links to both the SBC Corporate Plan and the Education Strategy Board (see priority 2) • Quality Performance and Review Group (LA) to monitor outcomes on a bi-monthly basis and take action as appropriate 	Head of Education	<p>October 2015</p> <p>July 2015</p> <p>October 2015</p> <p>From September 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision draft revised and shared with headteacher fora, ESB, governors, teaching school. Roles and responsibilities clarified • Links to Corporate Plan in place • Links to Education Strategy Board established • Data made available and collected by data officer to inform reporting and actions 	End of Autumn term 2015	Green

APPENDIX 11

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Cttee to review school outcomes earlier (December) in Cttee cycle to ensure that appropriate actions can be taken Revise our strategy for risk assessing schools, to include performance indicators for national priorities e.g. more able, disadvantaged pupils Revise the visit pattern to match that of the new Ofsted 'Common Inspection Framework' Clearly identify incremental improvement, across a range of measures and over time, using current and future national indicators e.g. for end of phase, Ofsted grades Create a Swindon Governing Bodies Association to effectively represent governance in both maintained and academy schools and to support governor development. 		<p>December 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p> <p>October 2015</p> <p>November 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change agreed with Scrutiny Chair and data made available Revisions to risk assessment strategy Pattern of visits completed Ambitious targets set for end of phase & Ofsted outcomes and reviewed by ESB Governor services to work with governors to create organisation 		
1.2	Secure agreement and commitment of all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate and consult on the draft revision of the EIS e.g. through headteacher groups – SASH, SAPH, ASSSH, the Educational Strategy Board (ESB), 	Head of Education	November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation completed Revisions completed 	End of February 2016	

IMPACT STATEMENT – KEY ISSUE ONE

Success criteria will have been met with an improvement in standards as identified in appendix 1. The Education Improvement Strategy will be in place and stakeholders will know and understand their roles. This will be evidenced by:

- The teaching school working effectively with the local authority in school to school support to raise standards and Ofsted gradings targeting schools causing concern.
- A strong working relationship being in place with the RSC to identify, work with and support academy schools which are RI or at risk
- Headteachers of outstanding and strongly good schools working in partnership with schools in need of support as appropriate. For example to support leadership and management and/or key curriculum areas.
- Headteacher groups such as SASH, SAPH and ASSSH having an effective school improvement agenda and working with appropriate partners to develop RIG projects for example focusing on raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, more able pupils.
- Effective arrangements in place to support, develop and improve governance through school to school support and through the Swindon Governors Association.
- The SEND board working effectively with all schools to ensure that SEN pupils have good provision and achieve well.
- EOTAS, the Tuition Service and LACES have effective relationships with all schools ensuring that the most vulnerable pupils attend school, have excellent provision and achieve well.
- The local authority Quality and Performance Review Group monitoring outcomes on a bi-monthly basis to ensure strategy effectiveness.

Areas for Improvement 2: Increase accountability by implementing the proposed Education Strategy Board and setting out incremental improvement necessary to improve educational provision in Swindon, especially for disadvantaged and the most able pupils

Success Criteria:

- **Incremental improvement in standards - Appendix 1: data set 2016 - 18**

Ref	Objectives	Specific Actions	Lead	Start date	Milestones with dates		RAG rating
2.1	Establish the Education Strategy Board (ESB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope out the terms of reference and membership of the ESB • Secure an external ESB Chair • Gain corporate commitment to the programme to address key priorities for Swindon children and young people with secure links to both the Corporate Plan and Education Improvement Strategy (see priority 1) • Share baseline data with all partners on ESB to scope the improvement needed – data to include all assessment outcomes and Ofsted grade outcomes • Agree year plan of meetings including meeting structure – 2015/16 	DCS/Head of Economy & Skills DCS DCS/ Head of Education (from 05/15) Head of Education Chair of ESB/Head of Education	1 November 2014 February 2015 October 2015 September 2015 July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference and membership agreed • ESB chair secured • Included as a priority in 2015-16 Corporate Plan • ESB Strategic plan completed • Report to Quality Performance Review group 	 End of January 2015 End of March 2015 September 2015 September 2015	Green

APPENDIX 11

Ref	Objectives	Specific Actions	Lead	Start date	Milestones with dates		RAG rating
2.2	The ESB ensures that the appropriate support is in place for Swindon schools causing concern and that the impact of the support is monitored for impact (and revised if needed).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agendas agreed with RSC to ensure appropriate focus Up to date data provided to ensure validity and accuracy of decision making Schools invited to ESB to share reasons for outcomes and future plans and/or support needed. Partners clear about specific roles in school improvement in identified schools 	Chair of ESB with Head of Education	July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners evaluation of role of ESB is of high value and impact ESB meetings reduce to 1 per term as all are much clearer about roles and need for scrutiny lessens. 	July 2016 September 2016-17	
2.3	The impact of specific projects for specific groups is quality assured robustly by the ESB so that provision improves rapidly for targeted children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ESB to oversee the performance and impact of specific projects targeted at areas of priority e.g. KS4 provision and performance; outcomes for disadvantaged & most able pupils through detailed audit of provision 	ESB Chair	November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Un-validated data impact evaluated (primary October 2015/secondary November 2015) Validated data evaluated 	End of November 2015 End of February 2016	

IMPACT STATEMENT – KEY ISSUE TWO

The ESB will be functioning effectively and playing a full part in ensuring that outcomes in Swindon schools are improving, particularly in the secondary phase. It will ensure that all partners are engaged in the school improvement process and that all schools including academies that are in need of support and challenge receive this. The ESB will monitor the support provided to ensure it has impact and will alter the support and challenge provided if required. The ESB will ensure that there is a strong partnership between all key stakeholders and ensure direct communication with the RSC as regards academies.

Areas for Improvement 3: Check rigorously the quality and effectiveness of the support brokered to maintained schools so that improvement is more consistent and the proportion of good or outstanding maintained schools exceeds the national average (Appendix 2)

Success Criteria:

- The percentage of maintained schools judged as good or better is above the national average by July 2017

Ref	Objectives	Specific Actions	Lead	Start date	Impact Milestones with dates		RAG rating
3.1	All support, brokered by the LA to schools, is effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of school needs using outcomes data, inspection outcomes, governance information (including website audits), school visits and local information • Strong partnerships in place with Teaching School, NLEs, NLGs, external advisers, outstanding (and strongly good) headteachers. • Match support to school's needs through discussions with ESB & teaching school and prioritisation meetings • QA the impact of support through SIA visits and school reviews,, regular meetings with teaching schools, feedback from headteachers and governors and the monitoring of documentation • Carry out joint visits with the support partners • Provide targeted CPD, as required. 	Head of Education with Commissioners for Education	September 2015	<p>All Ofsted reports highlight the strong contribution of LA support to individual schools as appropriate.</p> <p>Externally commissioned review (September 2016) highlights the improvement in brokered support and its strong impact.</p> <p>By July 2016, proportion of good or better schools is close to or matches the national average.</p>	<p>As inspections take place</p> <p>September 2016</p> <p>July 2016</p>	

IMPACT STATEMENT – KEY ISSUE 3

Local authority support for school improvement is highly valued by schools and is of high quality with a high level of trust. This includes direct advice and support and brokered support through the teaching school and other routes. This is validated by external scrutiny and internal headteacher and governance scrutiny. The school improvement strategy is based on quality data gathering and analysis, Ofsted outcomes and internal school reviews and other local information leading to considered and high impact actions. Outcomes in inspections will be close to or match the national average by July 2016 and be above the national average by July 2017.

Areas for Improvement 4: Ensure that concerns about standards and leadership in academies are referred promptly and directly to the Regional Commissioner for Schools (RSC) so that standards rise at the end of KS4 and all secondary pupils have access to education that is at least good

- Incremental improvement in standards - Appendix 1: data set 2016 -18
- The proportion of secondary students attending a good or better school matches the national proportion by July 2017
- All secondary schools are judged by Ofsted good or better by July 2018

Ref	Objectives	Specific Actions	Lead	Start date	Impact Milestones with dates	RAG rating
4.1	The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) is fully informed about the performance of Swindon academies so that he can take robust action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Strategy Board in place with 5 meetings planned for 2015/16 Data shared openly in ESB meetings so that schools outcomes can be discussed individually and actions to support schools shared and monitored for impact, Key schools invited to ESB to share outcomes and school strategies for improvement LA to formally write to RSC about academies that are underperforming. LA/RSC to carry out risk assessments/school reviews of schools causing concern to ensure the areas for improvement are clear so that appropriate actions can be taken – e.g. on governance. 	Head of Education	July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of meetings show that strengths and weaknesses have been shared Minutes from ESB show the Chair/LA is driving school improvement strategy RSC formally written to where 	<p>On-going from Summer term 2015</p> <p>July 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings in place with Teaching School and RSC sub-regional chair to ensure actions are being taken to address schools causing concern. 			academies are causing concern and warning notices may be required.		
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IMPACT STATEMENT – KEY ISSUE 4

The Education Strategy Board is working very effectively chaired by the RSC. The RSC is very clear about academy school performance enabling him to take effective action to improve schools causing concern. This will include the use of support within and external to Swindon. The LA will formally notify the RSC of academies that are causing major concern.

Monitoring and Evaluation			
Who	When	Focus	Evidence
Head of Education and Quality Performance Review Group (chaired by the DCS)	6 x per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal review of the action plan with stakeholders and written report to DCS and Lead Member 	The QPR minutes demonstrate that the review group have rigorously challenged Officers about the pace of improvement, including through the use of interim milestones
Swindon Borough Council Health, Adults and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Ctte	3 x per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of School standards. Review of ESB impact and effectiveness. 	The minutes from the meeting demonstrate that Elected Members have rigorously challenged LA Officers about the pace of improvement,
Swindon Borough Council Health & Well Being Board	5 x per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of action plan and status of milestones 	The minutes from the meeting demonstrate that Elected Members have rigorously challenged LA Officers about the pace of improvement, including through the use of interim milestones

Resources	
NCTL funding for projects lead by the Teaching Schools and National Leaders of Education	
Deployment of resources identified by the RSC	

Glossary	
CPD	Continuing professional development
DCS	Director Children Services
DfE	Department for Education
EIS	Education Improvement Strategy
ESB	Education Strategy Board
LA	Local Authority
LACES	Looked after children education service
NCTL	National College for Teaching and Leadership
NLE	National Leader of Education
NLG	National Leader of Governance
QA	Quality Assure
QPR	Quality Performance Review (group)
RSC	Regional Schools Commissioner
SBC	Swindon Borough Council
SIA	School Improvement Adviser