

Governor Briefing – School Improvement

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Overview of session:

- LA categorisation of schools
- Risk factors
- The 4 Tier Support Model
- Education Advisor activities
- Governor accountability
- Monitoring, challenging & evaluating performance



Categories: Intensive, Targeted, Watch & Self-Improving

Categorisation is based on the following risk factors:

- Ofsted
- Outcomes
- Progress
- Teaching & Learning
- Curriculum
- Behaviour
- Attendance
- SEND
- Safeguarding
- Leadership
- Governance
- Other contextual factors



LA Categorisation of schools - 'Watch'

As 'Self-improving schools' but with one risk factor identified. By identifying the right support and taking action has the potential to do even better. Risk factors such as:

- new Head teacher
- school approaching an imminent inspection
- financial concerns
- high number of parental complaints
- high turnover of staff
- long term/ repeated Headteacher/ Senior leadership absences
- individual circumstances/ needs which make the school low-level vulnerable



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LA Categorisation of schools - 'Watch'

- Or School is judged as requiring improvement by Ofsted with Leadership and Management judged to be good and demonstrating good capacity to improve and this judgement continues to be evidenced through the work of the Education Advisor with the school.
- Or School is judged to be RI at its last historic inspection (up to two years ago) but all evidence to the LA, through Education Advisor work with the school, indicates that the school is likely to be judged to be good at its next inspection.



LA Categorisation of schools - 'Targeted'

- Schools that have previously been judged good or outstanding at their last Ofsted inspection but are considered to be very vulnerable at next inspection by the LA as a result of the Education Advisor work with the school and/or school performance data



LA categorisation of schools

Four-Tier School Support Model of Categorisation				
	Self-Improving	Watch Schools	Targeted	Intensive
Education Advisor	Support available over the phone/ remotely for individual queries or concerns	1 day per term	1 day per half-term	2 days per half term
CTG	x	x	Termly	Termly
Support & Scrutiny	x	x	Annually with Director of Education & HoEI&P	Annually with Director of Education HoEI&P to attend last CTG of each half term
Brokering Support	x	✓	✓	✓
Headteacher Recruitment	LA to shortlist and attend interviews	LA to shortlist and attend interviews	LA to shortlist and attend interviews	LA to shortlist and attend interviews
Pre-Ofsted Visits	1 day EA support	✓ Within allocated EA time		
Health Check	Health check every two years	Health check every two years	Health check every two years	Health check every two years
Ofsted Complaints	Investigations conducted by EAs	Investigations conducted by EAs	Investigations conducted by EAs	Investigations conducted by EAs
Finance Support	x	Termly budget monitoring meetings with HoEIP, EA & Finance Manager (this will be 0.5 days per term out of the day per term allocation)	x	x



The work of the Education Advisor - strengthening structures, processes and protocols

- Pre-inspection visits, Ofsted meetings and final feedback
- Health Checks
- Headteacher interviews/shortlisting
- Governor training
- Subject 'deep dives'
- Data analysis
- Challenge meetings
- Leadership development & support
- Follow up complaints, ongoing advice and general support



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Governor accountability

‘The governing body is accountable to all stakeholders in the school. This includes pupils, staff, parents and the local community. Others to whom the governing body is accountable include the LA, the DfE and, in the case of church schools, the Diocese. The governing body is responsible for spending public money and for providing education for the pupils.’



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What this might look like.....

- Considering, agreeing and monitoring the annual budget
- Directly manage the Headteacher's performance through setting objectives
- Building a professional relationship with the Headteacher and all staff
- Being innovative in establishing communication with stakeholders
- Valuing and respecting stakeholders' views and ideas
- Addressing complaints fairly, quickly and appropriately



Monitoring, challenging and evaluating performance - initial considerations:

- Link governors to improvement priorities rather than subjects
- Governors to visit in pairs (one experienced, one less experienced to increase capacity) when conducting monitoring/evaluation activities
- Review Committee activities to ensure meetings provide opportunities for governors to raise appropriate questions about school effectiveness
- Review the content/format of the HT's report (e.g. in line with the SEF) to ensure it provides you with all the information you need to fulfil your responsibilities as a 'critical friend'
- Agree how outcomes of visits will be recorded - good practice is to have an 'evidence file' set up for each section of the SEF to which you can contribute
- Agree to whom & when outcomes will be reported



Annual Governors Monitoring and Evaluation programme

It is good practice to establish a yearly programme of governor visits to the school, focused on gathering evidence to support school self-evaluation. The information gathered during these visits will enable you as governors to:

- shape the direction of the school in partnership with senior leaders
- have an enhanced understanding of areas of strength and weakness so that you can support and hold to account senior leaders effectively
- improve pupil outcomes
- secure statutory compliance



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A yearly programme should be set up via the following 3 steps:

- **STEP 1:** Agree purpose and protocols with staff
- **STEP 2:** Agree a template for the governor visit report form with senior leaders and issue this to all staff for their agreement
- **STEP 3:** Draw up an annual programme of governor visits and share this with staff



Examples of activities to schedule within your yearly programme:

- Statutory compliance audits
- Equalities/Inclusion audits
- Safeguarding audits
- Community Cohesion audits
- Engagement with stakeholder (parents/carers, pupils) questionnaires - distribution/analysis/next steps
- Focused discussions with children about their learning
- 'Learning walks' with an agreed focus



Examples of activities to schedule within your yearly programme:

- Directed observations of aspects of school life - e.g. behaviour,
- Regular data analysis - FFT, internal tracking (e.g. 3 x per year) so that interventions and resources can be strategically targeted
- Reports from/meetings with subject leaders (e.g. via committees)



Monitoring, challenging & evaluating performance -

Term	Focus of M & E visit	Date of Committee Meeting to agree activity format	Date/s of visit/s	Name/s of governor/s	Date of committee meeting to analyse outcomes	Date of FGB to share outcomes and agree next steps
Autumn 1	Statutory compliance					
	Safeguarding					
Autumn 2	Attainment and progress: School improvement priorities					
Spring 1	Views of learners, parents and carers					
	Safeguarding					
Spring 2	Attainment and progress: School improvement priorities					
Summer 1	Equalities/Inclusion					
	Community cohesion					
	Safeguarding					
Summer 2	Attainment and progress: School improvement priorities					



Things to note.....

- what is practical/achievable by who/when?
- what is most helpful towards improving the school? (i.e. make sure they relate to the identified priorities)
- activities should be centred on the committees
- how will outcomes be recorded and reported?
- scheduling just one or two activities per term which can be completed and done well is always better than attempting to do too much



Next steps....

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