



Securing School Improvement Policy

WEST SOMERSET ACADEMIES TRUST

Review May 2021

Detailing the monitoring, challenge and intervention for school improvement for all our schools and nurseries.



Introduction

The West Somerset Academies Trust is committed to ensuring that every child receives the best all round education we can offer.

This policy outlines the strategies used by the Trust to ensure that all schools and nurseries are monitored effectively, that early identification of emerging issues is noted and acted upon, and intervention, where needed, is timely, proportionate and well planned. Safeguarding is so important to us that it is covered by a separate review process.

We are a relatively small Trust, but work closely with a range of partners, detailed below, to ensure that we have a close understanding of all of our schools.

- 🦌 Bath & Wells Diocese
- 🦌 The Regional Schools Commissioner
- 🦌 Bridgwater College Academy Trust
- 🦌 Extended Learning Academies Trust
- 🦌 The Beach Teaching school



West Somerset Academies vision for School Improvement

We seek to work in partnership with all our stake holders - schools (both in and out of the Trust), nurseries, children, parents and carers, and Trustees to create first class education provision across West Somerset. We want all of our children and young people develop the skills, knowledge and attributes to be confident and successful adults. We will support schools and nurseries to focus on pupil achievement in its broadest sense and transform educational experiences for children and young people so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education with a view to their employment later on. During the current pandemic, access to normal monitoring activities is limited. However, we are using the current review instruments to establish how well our schools are performing:

- Learning book review
- Planning reviews
- Online discussion with children
- Out of hours reviews of the classroom environment
- Reviews of school monitoring documents

Key principles

The Trust will:

1. Act with openness, transparency and confidentiality in assessing schools to identify:
 - a. Those in which children are performing well and who have the capacity to continue successfully to secure their own improvement and share effective practice with others.
 - b. Those which are at risk of failing to provide a high quality of education or failing to ensure the safety and welfare of all children.
2. Work with a range of School Improvement providers, including Teaching Schools, other Trusts, local schools, and the LA to secure school improvement and in the best interest of the pupils.
3. Act swiftly, in appropriate timescales where there is a concern.
4. Hold leaders of all schools to account for improving professional practice within appropriate timescales.

Support for all Schools

We aim to support schools in a collegial manner and are able to draw on the following resources:

- 🦉 TRUST SIP (currently Penny Boardman from ELAN)



- 🦌 Teaching school SLEs
- 🦌 NLEs
- 🦌 Colleagues from across the Trust

Monitoring

The Trust will undertake a termly risk assessment of all schools and nurseries based on the regular and systematic collection and analysis of a wide range of performance data both qualitative and quantitative information. Much of the data for this will come from the Head's report to the CEO and governors. The Trust may review the level at which a school is categorised at any point where there is sufficient evidence to do so or where a school or nursery indicates that circumstances have changed.

Challenging

The Trust will use the data collected to identify schools where improvement is needed. Each school will be categorised to determine the level of intervention and support required. These levels of support and challenge are outlined in Section 4 below.

Intervening

The Trust will intervene in schools, in proportion to need as identified through the categorisation process to ensure that the school's performance improves.

The Trust will use its powers of intervention where necessary but will communicate intentions to the Governors through the Chair.

This will include notifying the DfE and Regional Schools Commissioner of the concerns where appropriate.

The Trust may need exercise its responsibility by:

- 🦌 appointing additional governors;
- 🦌 establishment of an Interim Advisory Board (IAB).

These schools will receive additional visits, challenge, advice, and intervention which will be recorded and shared with the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors, and the CEO of the Trust.

The Trust will undertake a full assessment of the provision for all settings at the beginning of the academic year using all available data, and this will inform the annual categorisation for the setting. The evaluation is subject to review throughout the academic year based on any changes in circumstance. All schools will be notified of their categorisation level during the Autumn term. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors of schools categorised at Level 3 or Level 4 will be invited to a meeting with the CEO to discuss the level awarded and the support and intervention the school will receive and the expected impact.



Criteria for the classification of schools

The Trust will use the current Ofsted criteria to judge its schools.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework>

Recording and Reporting

It is expected that the adviser will complete a Note of Visit following each visit to the setting. The note is recorded on the agreed form (below). The Note of Visit should clearly indicate:

- 🦋 An evaluation of the school based on the headings above, and the particular aspect being looked at for that visit;
- 🦋 Evidence used for that evaluation;
- 🦋 Summary of what going well in the school;
- 🦋 Clear expectations of next steps for the school to improve further in each aspect.

Notes of Visit should be written for the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Whilst a clear evaluation should be included, it is important to highlight next steps to help the school to develop further.

Classification of schools

The Trust will use four classification levels to identify the degree of challenge and support that the school will receive. The level will depend on the seriousness of the indicators and the capacity of the school to make rapid and sustained improvements. Level 1 schools are those deemed to be 'self-improving' and having potential to share effective practice with others. Level 2 schools where there are one or two concerns but where leadership and management can demonstrate the capacity to bring about improvements quickly, will be given a 'light touch' approach to monitoring to ensure that improvements are being secured. Those schools who are considered to need additional support to ensure they are good at the next inspection will be graded level 3 and will receive 3 visits each term in order to ensure they have the support needed to secure rapid improvement. Level 4 schools are where there are serious concerns about the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils. These schools will receive enhanced monitoring and support and may be the subject of more formal intervention.

Level 1

Definition	Those schools which have no significant issues raised from the identification criteria and are deemed by the Trust to have practice worthy of sharing with other schools. Standards will be sustained above the National Average.
Level of Support & Intervention	Termly desktop monitoring of indicators



What the School does	Shares good practice with schools across West Somerset. As a self-improving school alerts the Trust of any concerns or significant changes which might impact performance.
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Level 2

Definition	Those schools where standards are near the National Average and progress from starting points is good. The leadership is able to demonstrate that it is making a difference to standards of provision and outcomes. In the view of the Trust, they would be rated good in an Ofsted Inspection.
Level of Support & Intervention	3 visits; one in each of the Autumn and Summer Term in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 💡 Evaluate Improvement Plan (Autumn). 💡 Evaluate the impact of Improvement Plan (Summer). 💡 Undertake 3 learning walks
What the School does	Produce a relevant Improvement Plan including accurate and evaluative impact measures. Provide a summary of impact in improving teaching and learning and pupil outcomes if requested by the Trust.

Level 3

Definition	Those schools where there are a number of issues identified from the criteria in Section 4 and where the Trust identifies that leadership needs support; to ensure rapid and sustained improvement and a good outcome at the next inspection. Standards are likely to be below national average; progress is not fast enough to allow all groups of children to catch up. Were the school to be inspected, the Trust feels that it will be graded RI.
Level of Support & Intervention	<i>2 visits per term</i> , consisting of: Half termly monitoring and Intervention meetings chaired by the CEO to support Improvement Planning and review progress. An interim visit each term to review impact and progress alongside Senior Leaders.
What the School does	Produce a relevant Raising Attainment Plan including accurate and evaluative impact measures. Follow a robust monitoring cycle Produce expected reports for Monitoring and Intervention meetings as requested by the Trust seven days prior to the meeting Work with NLE, SLE or other local schools where appropriate To enable the attendance of HT, SLT or other leaders where requested and the Chair or other appropriate GB member at Monitoring and Intervention meetings.



Level 4

<p>Definition</p>	<p>Those schools who are vulnerable or for which there has been a more serious cause for concern identified by either the Trust, the Regional Schools’ Commissioner, or Ofsted. In these schools the Trust may judge that the school has failed to make rapid and sustained progress to secure good or better outcomes despite Trust intervention. Outcomes will be below the National Average and not making sustained improvement for all groups of children. These schools could be subject to a formal warning notice issued by the Regional Schools’ Commissioner or be judged by Ofsted as Requiring Improvement or Special Measures. Change is urgent to secure good provision.</p>
<p>Level of Support & Intervention</p>	<p><i>4 or more visits per term, consisting of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🦋 Half termly Monitoring and Intervention meetings chaired by the CEO to support and review progress; 🦋 At least 2 interim visits per term to support school self-evaluation and improvement between the Monitoring and Intervention meetings. These visits might include learning walks, book looks, data reviews conducted alongside Senior Leaders
<p>What the School does</p>	<p>Produce a relevant Raising Attainment plan including accurate and evaluative impact measures. Prepare regular analysis of data of progress for all children including groups Follow a robust monitoring cycle that is adhered to Produce expected reports for Monitoring and Intervention meetings as requested by the Trust seven days prior to the meeting Work with NLE, SLE or other local schools where appropriate To enable the attendance of HT, SLT or other leaders where requested and the Chair or other appropriate GB member at Monitoring and Intervention meetings.</p>

Monitoring and Intervention meetings

Following the discussion with school leaders about the categorisation level a programme for review and support will be agreed. Meeting dates for the year will be scheduled in order to ensure that all relevant parties can attend, and that regular support and evaluation takes place. Where the school has been categorised at Level 3 or 4, the CEO will chair termly meetings that will focus upon the quality of:

- 🦋 Leadership and Management;



- 🦋 Teaching and Learning;
- 🦋 Progress and achievements of all pupils including vulnerable groups;
- 🦋 Behaviour and attendance of pupils.

The following people should be in attendance for the relevant part of the meeting:

- 🦋 Headteacher and member of the Senior Leadership team;
- 🦋 Middle leaders as appropriate, including SENDCo;
- 🦋 Chair of Governors or an appropriate representative of the Governing Board;
- 🦋 Services such as HR, Finance etc, may be included as appropriate.

The Trust will issue the agenda for the meeting two weeks prior to the meeting date and the requested paperwork should be sent to the CEO 7 days prior to the meeting taking place.

The minutes from the meeting will be distributed within a maximum of 10 days by the Trust for the Headteacher to proofread and agree the content.

This policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with the Headteachers, governors and Trustees.