

# School Improvement Framework

*'Creating a culture of personal accountability and holding others to account in a consistent and transparent way is one of the most significant elements in securing and sustaining outstanding performance'*

**John West-Burnham - 'The Reality of Autonomy' 2011**

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Many of Oxfordshire's children perform well when compared with their peers however we know that we need to improve the number of good and outstanding schools and the rate of progress by which our children learn compared with national trends. 2013 data indicates that 76% of our schools are judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' – our target for 2015 is 85%

In Oxfordshire we believe that school improvement is everyone's business. Whatever type of school or setting you are in we all have a collective moral and professional responsibility to ensure Oxfordshire's learners are supported to fulfil their potential. This view is endorsed by current government policy and practice which recognises the autonomy of schools whilst exhorting them to work as part of a locality and connected system. Where we have targeted our support in the past it has been successful in helping schools to improve and the County has received positive feedback from HMI monitoring visits to schools causing concern. However we recognise that we need to work more preventatively to stop schools becoming a cause of concern

This School Improvement Strategy for the Council has been developed with our partners in educational provision and draws upon our statutory accountabilities, historical processes, and emerging practice in response to the rapidly changing agenda. At the heart of all that we do together are the needs of learners and the Council's intent to fulfil its pupil advocacy role consistently.

As befits the complex nature of improving schools within a diverse system with a multitude of providers our strategy is comprised of a number of different elements. No one element alone can enable schools to fulfil their potential for excellence but by working in synergy and deploying the appropriate element for the specific development/improvement needs of the school or group of schools we hope to break down barriers to progress and create the optimal conditions for success. This Framework outlines our strategies for:

1. Maintaining the **overview of school quality and impact** across Oxfordshire (in Academies, Maintained and Foundation Schools).
2. **Identifying categories of schools** in order to focus resources and improvement
3. Developing excellence and enabling **school to school system support**
4. Supporting Maintained **Schools that find themselves unable to maximise their potential** at any point in time.

Oxfordshire is striving to be a responsive commissioning local authority working in partnership with schools (whatever their status) and a range of providers to grow a proactive self-improving system and a quality programme of support, challenge and intervention that will impact positively on all learners and meet the dynamic of 21<sup>st</sup> century requirements.

We want to achieve this through finding locally led solutions driven by those who understand school systems the best rather than adopting off the shelf external packages. Our aim is to enable sustainable schools of the future as well as effective schools of the present.

## Section B Guiding Principles & Working Assumptions

***'For Oxfordshire to be a dynamic and forward looking place for education and learning, providing the best quality experiences for children to grow up, learn, develop and achieve'***

### **A Strategy for Change - Improving Educational Outcomes in In Oxfordshire 2012**

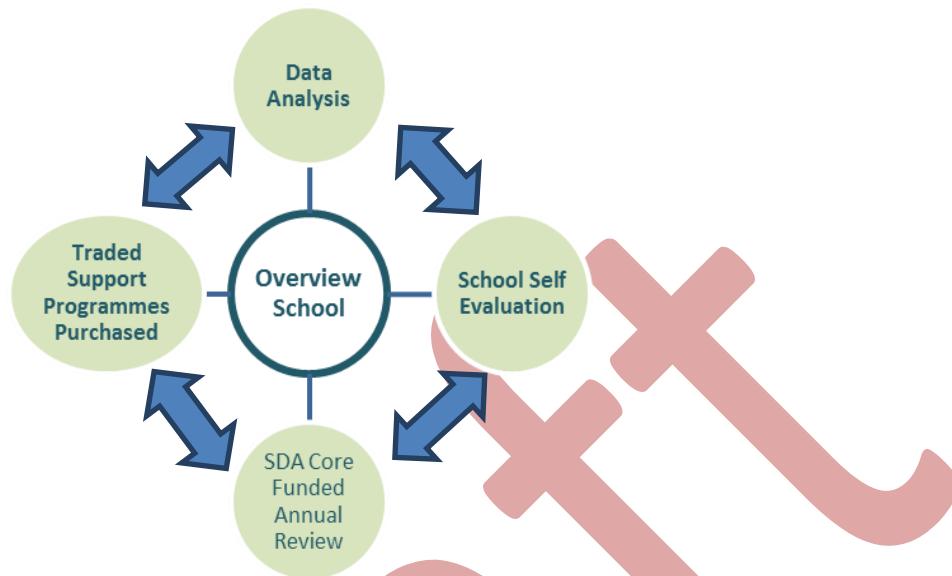
As educational partners we strive to provide the best possible deal for our learners and are connected and driven by the following shared principles:

1. Children are always at the heart of our decision making and school improvement interventions which are designed to build capacity across the education system.
2. Schools are ultimately responsible for their own performance however school improvement is everyone's responsibility and we share a collective moral, social and professional accountability for the maximum progress of all learners – wherever they are educated.
3. Over a period of time we recognise that schools will be relatively more or less successful depending on a variety of factors and nationally changing thresholds and that this requires differential support.
4. Our intervention and support processes will use risk based inverse proportionality to ensure that the schools that need more get the support they need to make a difference to children's outcomes and that successful schools are free to make the best use of their autonomy.
5. Current school systems are diverse – what matters is impact, outcomes and benefits for learners.
6. Developing comprehensive self-aware learning and quality assurance cultures with all stakeholders using evidence based interventions.
7. Valuing cultural diversity across Oxfordshire - ensuring support is geared towards achieving inclusivity for all learners and enabling our most vulnerable groups to succeed in line with their peers.
8. Successful school development requires effective and integrated multi-agency working with expertise drawn from a range of services and partners effectively knitted together at the school level.
9. There is rarely a single 'one size fits all' solution - although learning from effective practice is valuable - context matters and bespoke solutions from a menu of interventions are preferable.
10. A range of data will be used to make decisions about schools quality and impact including quantitative and qualitative data (audit reports, comparative performance outcomes, local knowledge, school visits, first preferences, attendance and exclusions returns, parental complaints, Ofsted inspections, budget management).

The LA commissions a range of providers to support its schools and secure its statutory and strategic intentions with respect to school improvement. Annually it internally commissions its 2013 reconfigured Schools and Learning Service (SLS) against a range of specified projects. In addition it brokers support for specific schools using its School Improvement Associates Provider Database (SIAPD) and commissions a range of related school support functions from its Teaching School Alliance. In addition an increasing range of bespoke traded programme support is available for schools to purchase from their delegated budgets.

## Section C Procedures: identification and categorization of schools

### 1. All Schools



Our desktop monitoring and evaluation of each maintained school's effectiveness and improvement is on-going and draws on all available data, including school self-review. The Schools and Learning Manager and Improvement and Development Managers work closely with the County Council's Performance and Information Manager to interpret the data and identify the key focus areas to inform future actions.

Where information is available, outcomes and indicators for academies in our desk top analysis will be included and steps will be taken to alert the relevant authority where concerns are indicated.

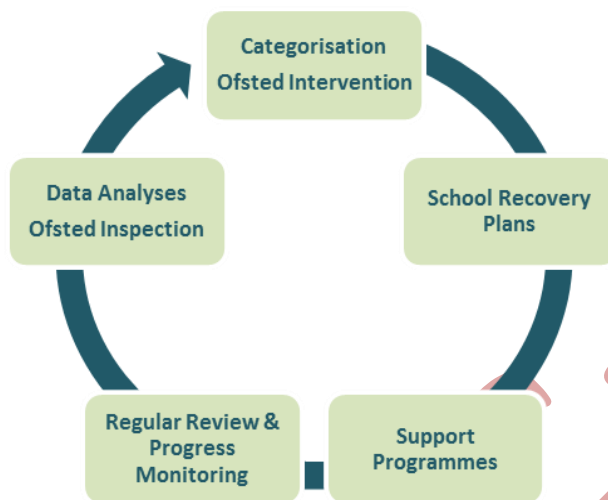
#### For each school, we will:

- analyse Ofsted reports
- analyse recent test and examination data and all other relevant data and consider value-added evidence
- make comparisons with other schools against national benchmark criteria
- categorise each school in terms of its quality and level of intervention and support needed
- encourage and support the process of school self-review

The outcomes of this monitoring will lead to challenge and the option of brokered/traded support, appropriate to need and in line with the identified category. Support will always be time-limited and targeted.

The expectation is that schools will use their delegated budgets to fund school improvement and where necessary, recovery. The centrally held commissioning fund for school improvement is allocated for the purposes of strategic oversight of schools, data analysis, quality assurance, research and development, monitoring and reviews. In exceptional cases, where budget deficit is a contributory feature to the failure of a school, the council take steps to remove delegated budgets but may also allocate additional funding or other capacity resources to support the school's recovery action plan in the intervening time.

## 2. Schools causing Concern



A School Causing Concern may be defined as any school that is temporarily or persistently experiencing under performance in any of the key Ofsted judgement areas: Achievement of pupils; Quality of teaching; behaviour and safety of pupils; Quality of leadership and management.

The school may have the capacity to secure its own improvement in a timely manner in which case the role of the county council will be light touch. Where additional intervention, challenge and support are needed to ensure pupil outcomes are secured the county council will exercise its full statutory rights and intervention powers (see annex 1).

All schools should be reviewing their own performance as part of their ongoing self-evaluation. As part of that process they are able to self-nominate to be placed on the Schools Causing Concern Register as a route to securing the step change they need. This process would be triggered by a discussion with the Improvement and Development manager for schools and should secure the commitment of the governing body.

The following criteria will be used to support identification of Schools Causing Concern.

### A. Standards

- Pupil performance is persistently below levels expected when pupils' prior attainment and the school's context is taken into account, even if the absolute level of attainment is apparently satisfactory.
- Quantitative evidence of 'unacceptably low standards' may take one of the following forms and usually a combination of several of these indicators will apply:
  - the school is in the bottom quartile nationally in one or more of the key performance indicators as evidenced in the Data Dashboard
  - the school's data indicates that pupils are not making sufficient progress
  - the school's data indicates that particular groups of pupils are not making sufficient progress
  - attainment data shows that the school is very weak in one or more of the core subjects
  - attainment levels are low, not improving or decreasing over time
  - the school is below floor standards

## **B. Behaviour and safety**

The concerns are based on reported and observed practice in and around the school and may include:

- safeguarding concerns
- high levels of reporting on bullying practice
- high or increasing absence or truancy rates
- high number of referrals for exclusions or managed moves

## **C. Concerns about leadership and management**

These concerns will be based on the expectations set out in the Ofsted framework. School intervention leaders, support services, governing bodies and other professionals involved with the school or setting will report inaccuracy on the quality of the school's self-evaluation, target-setting, value for money and capacity to improve. These may include data trends such as:

- declining school popularity, possibly revealed through school rolls falling more rapidly than might reasonably be expected from demographic changes
- on-going absence of key leaders within the school
- high rates of staff turnover, or numbers of staff grievances
- feedback from parents or significant or increasing numbers of parental complaints
- failure to manage and operate the school within its delegated budget, to provide value for money or having a large surplus budget

Where potential causes for concern are identified, the Development and Improvement Manager or their representative will discuss these with the headteacher or a school representative and the chair of governors.

This will clarify the school's context and actions and identify the degree of support or intervention required to effect improvement. This information will be used to revise the level of intervention and challenge offered to the schools and the category of support.

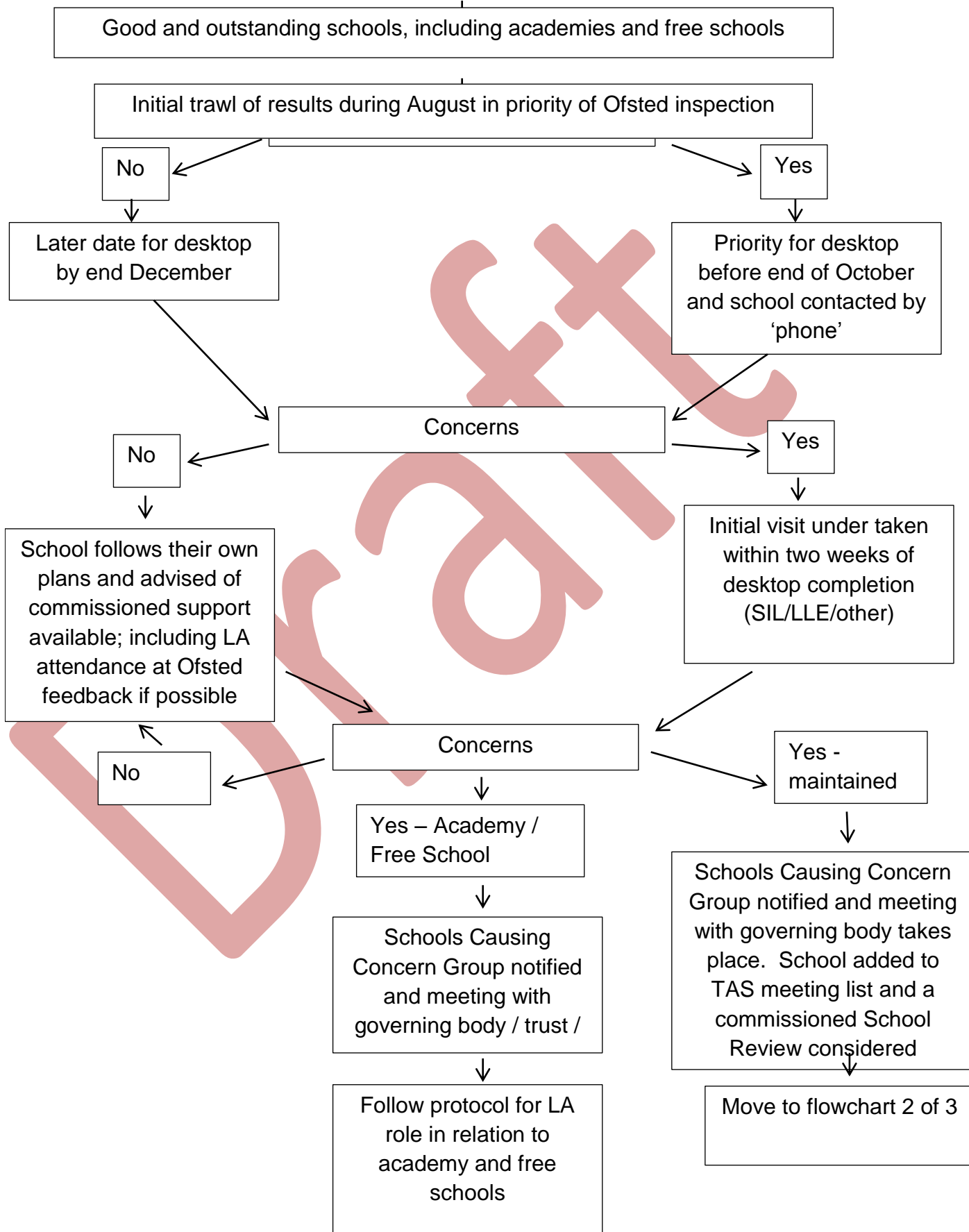
Section D

Narrative and flowcharts to show escalation of interventions

Description of school	Support / intervention	Monitoring	Links to documentation
<p><b>Light touch support – see School Support Flowchart 1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highly effective schools with high achievement and/or attainment.</li> <li>- Likely to be graded 1 or 2 for their overall effectiveness, leadership and management and have many outstanding/good features.</li> <li>- Know their strengths and weaknesses well and are proactive and successful in dealing with any concerns.</li> <li>- Successful in securing, maintaining and approving appropriate standards.</li> <li>- Have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to bring about further improvement and they carry this out effectively.</li> <li>- Examples of good practice exist within these schools which would be beneficially disseminated.</li> <li>- Have the capacity to effect necessary improvements within their own resources, and may be in a position to support developments in other schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual data analysis following statutory tasks and tests. All schools receive an early data package in July from the Data team which supports data analysis of all groups of pupils, particularly vulnerable learners.</li> <li>- Annual Risk Analysis (RA) for schools graded 1 or 2 by Ofsted. These are prioritised in relation to concerns about achievement over time and next Ofsted visit. Any concerns highlighted are followed up by an initial visit by a School Intervention Leader (SIL) or an LLE/NLE.</li> <li>- All schools have access to LA progress guidance</li> <li>- Successful schools will continue to identify, broker and purchase the support they need, to maintain standards and to develop further.</li> <li>-The county council offers a package of training and support to all schools in the form of Oxfordshire Partners in Learning (OPL)</li> <li>- Schools will be expected to deploy their budgets to support improvement.</li> <li>- Current Ofsted updates and materials are available via the Intranet. All schools receive a phone call from a SIL when inspection is announced and the SIL will speak to the Lead Inspector (LI). Attendance at feedback is optional for schools graded outstanding or good. The SIL for Inspections reports outcomes weekly to the county council’s DLT.</li> <li>- Headteachers and Chairs of governors will have access to regular newsletters and briefings.</li> <li>- Additional support available from Oxfordshire Teaching School Alliance.</li> </ul>	<p>These schools will be light touch monitored through an analysis of all available data held centrally and accessible to them.</p>	<p>Example of NEXUS data</p> <p>INSERT HYPERLINK TO JACKIE HIBBERTS ALERT SHEET</p> <p><a href="#">..\Risk Analysis for good and outstanding schools.docx</a></p> <p><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Progress and target setting (September 2013) b.docx</a></p> <p><a href="#">..\OPL\School Improvement OPL Brochure Sep 13- Apr 14.pdf</a></p> <p>INSERT HYPERLINK TO OFSTED PAGES ON INTRANET</p> <p>Example of governors newsletter.</p> <p>OTSA website link</p>



### SCHOOL SUPPORT FLOWCHART 1



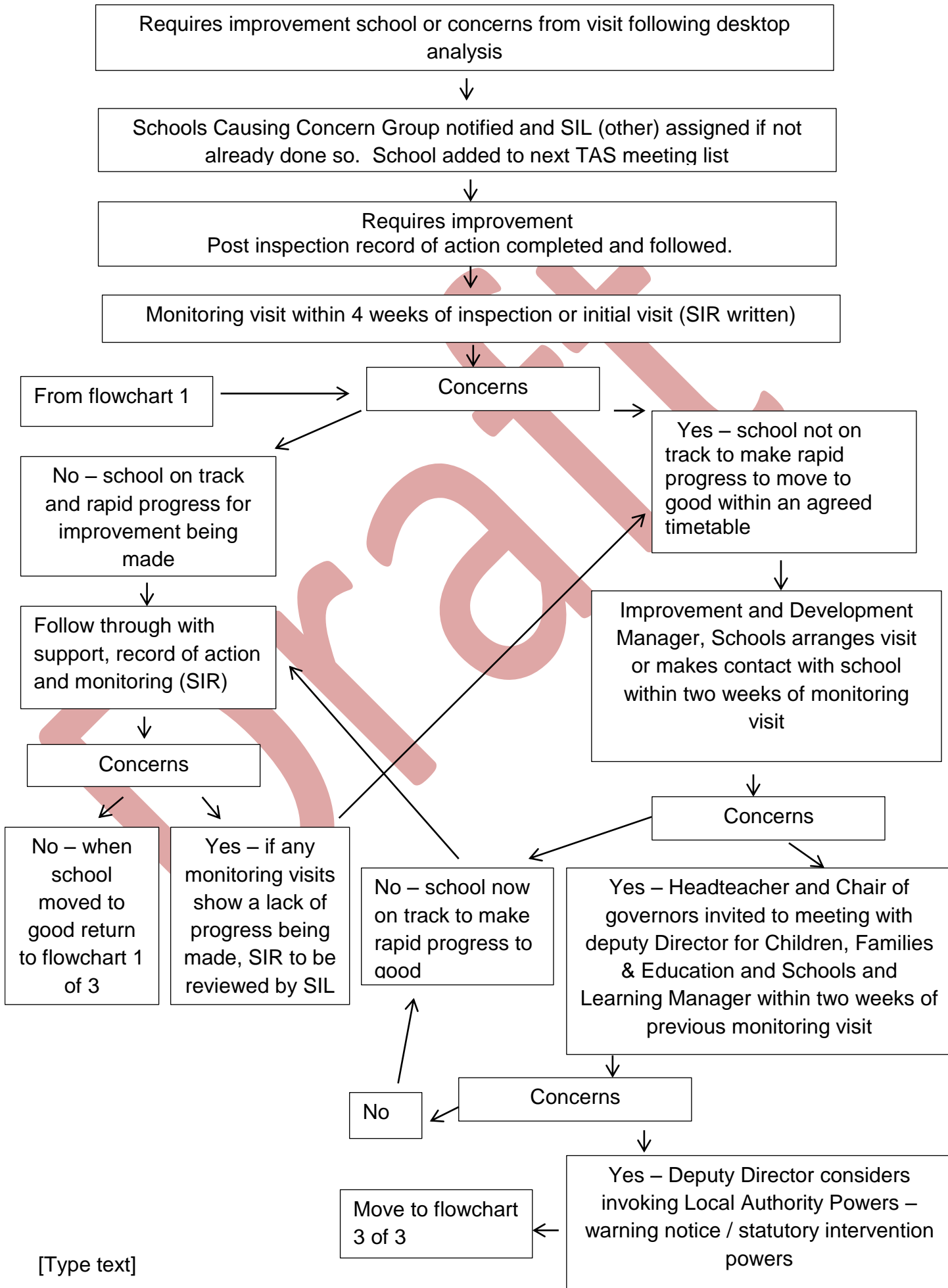
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<p><b>Additional support schools – see School Support Flowchart 2.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Likely to be graded as requiring improvement (3), but may sometimes be graded as good (2).</li> <li>- In need of support to build their own capacity to sustain improvement.</li> <li>- Have no inadequate features and many have some features that are good or better.</li> <li>- School Intervention Leaders will have judged the capacity of leadership and the Governing Body to secure the necessary improvement as good or better.</li> <li>- Generally recognise that there are specific improvements that they need to make.</li> <li>- Require extra support to enable them to build capacity and increase the rate of progress and improvement against their plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual data analysis following statutory tasks and tests. All schools receive an early data package in July from the Data team which supports data analysis of all groups of pupils, particularly vulnerable learners.</li> <li>- Additional support will be from either a School Intervention Leader (SIL) or brokered targeted support. These schools will receive a centrally commissioned allocation of SIL support time (between 1 and 3 days annually) comprising both off-site preparation/reporting and on-site activity.</li> <li>- Current Ofsted updates and guidance available via the Intranet. All schools receive a phone call from a SIL when inspection is announced and the SIL will speak to the Lead Inspector (LI). LA Attendance at feedback is mandatory.</li> <li>- Schools receiving an RI judgement are visited within 2 weeks of the inspection and a Post Inspection record of Action (PIR) is completed and followed. At this point, discussions will be held between the school, the SIL and the Improvement and Development Manager (IDM) to clarify next steps.</li> <li>- The school will, where necessary, revise its School Improvement Plan (SIP) and SEF summary in line with the outcomes of these discussions.</li> <li>- A planned programme of specific support and/or intervention will also be negotiated. The LA will make use of its Approved Providers List (APL) when commissioning support.</li> <li>- Monitoring visit within 4 weeks of inspection (SIR written)</li> <li>- Six weekly Team Around the School (TAS) meetings are held involving colleagues across the service who work with individual schools to secure relevant support.</li> </ul>	<p>The school's progress including the impact of support will be monitored on a termly basis by the SIL.</p> <p>An on-going record of action plan progress is kept in the School Intervention record (SIR). This is monitored by the IDM. Schools that fail to make adequate improvement within an appropriate timescale will be contacted by the IDM and may be re-allocated to Maximum Support. If necessary this could trigger a Warning Notice under the Education &amp; Inspections Act 2006.</p> <p>Independent reviews will be commissioned to confirm judgements, school progress rates and the impact of county council interventions and support as required</p> <p>The Deputy Director for Children will meet with identified headteachers and chairs of governors to provide additional challenge where progress is slow.</p>	<p><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Planned Support for Schools 2013-14.xlsx</a></p> <p><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Ofsted Outcome Form1314 template.docx</a></p> <p><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Post Inspection Record of Actions V4.docx</a></p> <p><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\SEF and RAP 2013 - 2014.docx</a></p> <p><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\School Improvmt Record Primary 2013 2014.doc</a></p> <p>Example of a letter inviting school to</p>
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**SCHOOL SUPPORT FLOWCHART 2**

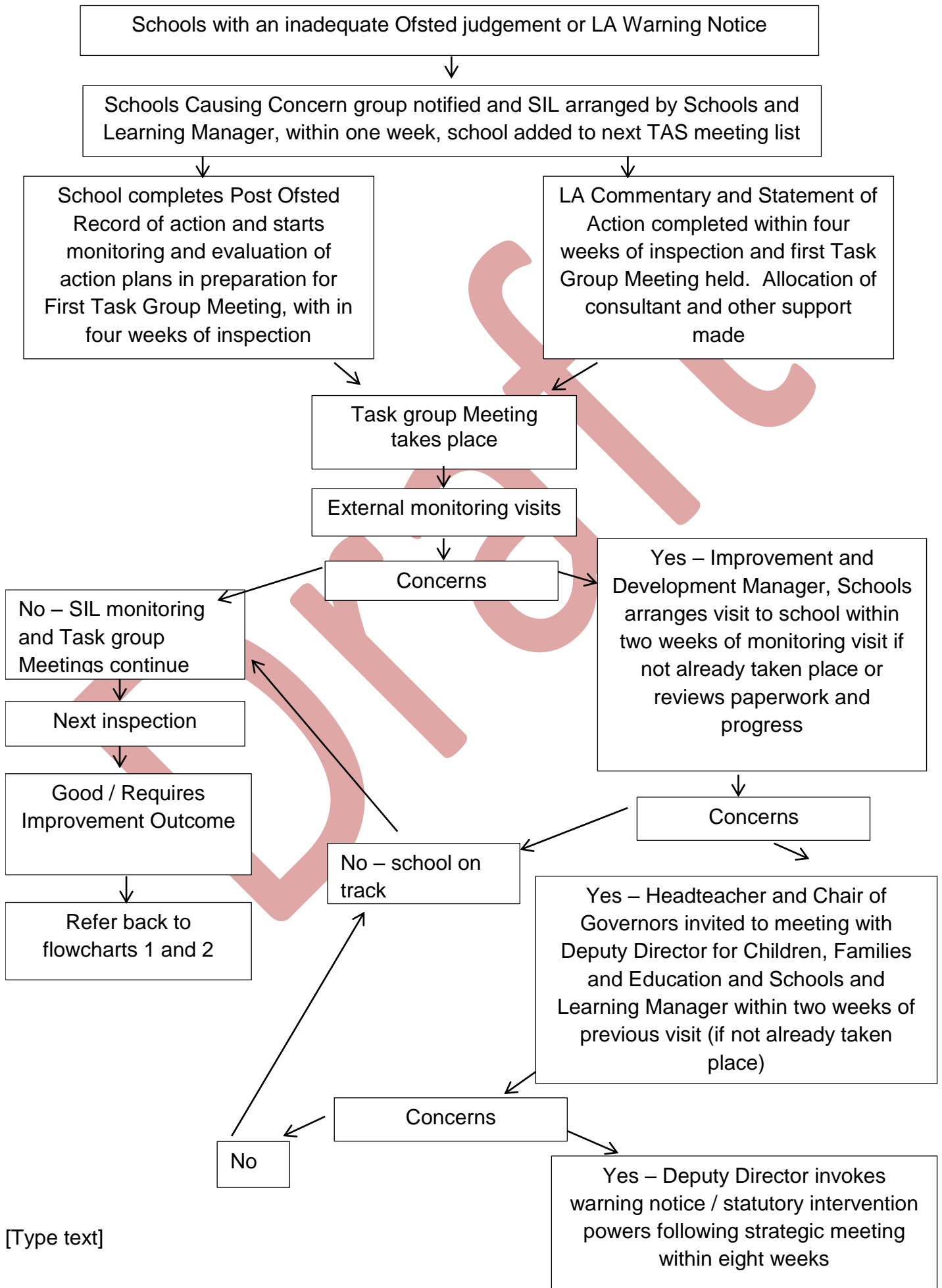


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<p><b>High Level Support Schools – see School Support Flowchart 3.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This phase includes Ofsted category schools of Special Measures and Significant Improvement or serious concerns that they may fall into an Ofsted category of concern.</li> <li>- The following features are likely : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• below or close to floor standards</li> <li>• little or no sustained improvement over time.</li> <li>• a record of more than two successive satisfactory/requires improvement Ofsted judgements</li> <li>• significantly low attainment Value Added and/or rates of conversion</li> <li>• weak/ineffective leadership and management</li> <li>• inadequate learning and teaching</li> <li>• lack of compliance with statutory obligations</li> <li>• difficulty in recruitment and retention of staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• persistent poor behaviour and attendance</li> <li>• significant under performance of particular individuals and groups</li> <li>• concerns over safeguarding</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual data analysis following statutory tasks and tests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LA Commentary and Statement of Action submitted within 10 days of the publication of the Ofsted report.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The SIL will advise the school and governors on the effectiveness of the SIP in identifying priorities to raise standards.</li> <li>-The SIL will be the external adviser to the governors for the headteacher’s Appraisal.</li> <li>- Tailored support available to secure swift and significant improvement. This may include the support of other schools, headteachers, NLEs/LLEs etc.</li> <li>- A commissioned allocation of SIL/OCC colleagues support time between 10 and 30 days annually comprising both off-site preparation/reporting and on-site activity. More support can be purchased by school..</li> <li>- Consideration of replacing the GB with and IEB</li> <li>- A Task Group established, chaired by IDM and senior SILs to monitor improvement, co-ordinate support and ensure everyone remains focused on areas requiring improvement.</li> <li>- Six weekly Team Around the School (TAS) meetings are held to secure appropriate support from all teams.</li> <li>- Ofsted updates and briefing available via the intranet. All schools receive a phone call from a SIL when inspection is announced and the SIL will speak to the Lead Inspector (LI). Attendance at feedback is mandatory.</li> </ul>	<p>The SIL will monitor the impact of the school’s implementation of its SIP at least every 6 weeks and update the SIR for the school as required, reporting to the IDM.</p> <p>School data analysis and HMI monitoring visit reports will feed into the overall monitoring schedule and will regularly be reported to the Director for Children’s Services and elected members.</p> <p>Independent reviews will be commissioned to confirm judgements, school progress rates and the impact of county council interventions and support as required.</p> <p>The Deputy Director for Children and Schools and Learning Manager will meet with identified headteachers and chairs of governors to provide additional challenge where progress is slow.</p> <p>If appropriate the Deputy Director invokes a Warning Notice under the Education &amp; Inspections Act 2006.</p> <p>Potential use of sponsor explored to secure improvement</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SIR</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">..\For Sept13onwards\SIL Paperwork 13-14\Primary SIL's HT Appraisal (A &amp; B ) 2013-2014.doc</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>HYPERLINKS TO ALL OF THESE PLUS LIF</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Statutory guidance on schools causing concern.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IEB application forms.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evidence forms for issuing a performance, standards and safety warning notice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Secretary of State’s powers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ofsted inspection guidance on schools in a category.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Significant improvement timeline.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Special measures timeline.</p>
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### SCHOOL SUPPORT FLOWCHART 3



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## **Section E Use of data and strategic intelligence to measure impact of interventions**

### **1. Generic overview of all schools**

A monthly school data meeting takes place between the Schools and Learning manager and the Performance and Information manager to secure a clear county wide picture in relation to the current Ofsted outcomes. The data set produced secures a clear picture to include:

- The proportion of schools that have been judged good or outstanding
- The number of pupils taught in good or outstanding schools
- The proportion of schools in an adverse Ofsted category
- The number of schools in an adverse category that are not making progress

The data set enables the county to evidence the impact of any support and intervention which may have contributed to the outcomes. Termly tables showing the movement of schools which have been inspected are produced enabling the Improvement and Development manager to work with School Intervention Leaders to reprioritise interventions for static schools or those who have received a worse judgement than previous inspection.

Statistical First Release data, validated information regarding Key Stage results and government announcements re school monitoring will also be reviewed at this stage to determine whether a reprioritisation of school support is required and to reflect on the generic interventions which may have impacted on identified groups such as looked After Children..

### **2. Schools causing concern**

#### **Termly Team Around the School (TAS) meetings**

These meetings are coordinated by the Improvement and Development manager for schools and involve all service providers working with a group of schools identified for discussion. The interventions being delivered in each school are evaluated and further actions identified. Actions include:

- Task Group to monitor progress in underperforming schools
- Governance review
- Local Leader of Education (LLE) deployment
- Specific themed schools reviews EG, SEND, behaviour
- Identified support from specialised programmes from Primary consultants to address underperformance in maths and English

#### **Monthly Schools Causing Concern meeting**

The focus of these meetings is to review the actions taken each month and to reflect upon any HMI visits, Ofsted updates and Notes of Visits from School Intervention Leaders and related support services. Decisions can be made about allocation of funding, deployment of officers and the identification of best practice schools that could offer school to school support for identified schools. We are very keen to examine the impact of each intervention to ensure we get best value for money and accelerate the rates of progress.

We have recently begun working with the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance (OTSA) to develop school intelligence based in the 9 Oxfordshire localities. The Local Authority intelligence on school leadership can inform the way schools staff can examine local solutions to school improvement and build upon the capacity of the LA support offer.

There are termly feedback sessions on schools causing concern to the Deputy Director for Education effectiveness and Early Intervention and to the elected member responsible for education.

**Glossary**

<b>EY</b>	<b>Early Years</b>
<b>HMI</b>	<b>Her Majesty’s Inspectorate</b>
<b>IDM</b>	<b>Improvement and Development Manager</b>
<b>KPI</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>
<b>LA</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>
<b>LIF</b>	<b>Leadership Intervention Framework</b>
<b>LIPS</b>	<b>Leadership of Initiatives &amp; Partnerships in Schools</b>
<b>LLEs</b>	<b>Local Leaders of Education</b>
<b>NLEs</b>	<b>National Leaders of Education</b>
<b>NLGs</b>	<b>National Leaders of Governance</b>
<b>OCC</b>	<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>
<b>OfSTED</b>	<b>Office for Standards in Education</b>
<b>PIR</b>	<b>Post Inspection Report</b>
<b>SIL</b>	<b>School Intervention Leaders</b>
<b>SIR</b>	<b>School Improvement Record</b>
<b>SIP</b>	<b>School Improvement Plan</b>
<b>S&amp;LS</b>	<b>Schools &amp; Learning Service</b>
<b>SCC</b>	<b>Schools Causing Concern</b>
<b>SDA</b>	<b>Service Delivery Agreement</b>
<b>SDACS</b>	<b>Service Delivery Agreement – Commissioned Specification</b>
<b>SEN</b>	<b>Special Educational Need</b>
<b>SIAPD</b>	<b>Service Level Agreements</b>
<b>SLE</b>	<b>Specialist Leaders of Education</b>
<b>TAS</b>	<b>Team Around the School</b>
<b>TSA</b>	<b>Teaching School Alliance</b>

**Appendices**