

School Improvement Policy

PURPOSE

This policy sets out South Cumbria Multi-Academy Trust's (SCMAT) approach to bringing about improvements within its member schools in order that they achieve their core purpose whilst maintaining the educational character and ethos of the School as determined by the Local Governing Body (LGB) and approved by the Board of Trustees. The aim is to improve practice and school leadership in order to support the teaching and learning process. This is achieved through effective use of School Improvement Plans.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MODEL

The SCMAT School Improvement Model is in place to ensure that all SCMAT schools are working together to improve outcomes for pupils. Central to the model is ensuring appropriate levels of:

- monitoring and challenge;
- support / system leadership;
- intervention (where needed).

The model relies on a strong evidence base built through regular analysis and observation. The model contains both proactive and reactive elements effectively to support the needs of the individual schools.

As reflected in the Scheme of Delegation, the Trust remains committed to the principle of earned autonomy; for schools which are successfully delivering positive outcomes for pupils such that overall performance would be judged 'good' or 'outstanding' in Ofsted terms, the Trust will adopt a light-touch approach.

Those successful schools, however, retain the right within this model to request support in specific areas in order to improve. Whilst there will be a minimum of mandatory meetings and data submissions, requests from the school could lead to a number of additional visits throughout the year to develop further and fine tune their practice.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

School Improvement Plans cover three key issues: how well a school is performing; what the School's key strengths and areas for development are; how the school can achieve its strategic objectives through 'SMART' action planning.

Successful schools make a clear link between the priorities of the:

- School improvement plan;
- Strategic direction of the School;
- Learning objectives articulated in the School's vision, values and strategic objectives.

Plans must demonstrate that schools recognise that standards can only be raised by changes in teaching and learning. They must also link school improvement objectives to performance management and the professional development programme.

CATEGORIES OF SCHOOLS

The grading of each school will not be based solely on the School's last Ofsted inspection outcomes which, in some cases, could be a number of years ago. At the end of each academic year, a grading will be decided by the CEO in discussion with the Head Teacher and subject to confirmation by the Board which will then determine the level of support to be applied in the new academic year. This principle of the Board having the right to grade a school differently to its last Ofsted inspection has been established as follows:

Category 1 = Good/outstanding

Category 2 = Requires improvement

Category 3 = Inadequate/sponsored

These may be changed for individual schools by the MAT Board. Category 3 schools' LGB may have no or minimal local representation

Tailored School Improvement

In order to consider all elements of school improvement, the Trusts maintains that the following areas are of critical importance. In the most successful (category 1) schools, leaders have the capacity to address these areas with minimal external support or intervention; in category 2 or 3 schools, external input will be required to ensure that these areas are being considered and addressed.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Within individual School Improvement Plans, schools, under the direction of the CEO and the Trust Board, outlines both the extent and the nature of support required from SCMAT which will be individual to each school in order that it delivers the best possible outcomes for pupils. This will also include any additional support requested by the school.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance (QA) visits are primarily to observe, collect and discuss emerging data, holding schools to account for pupil outcomes. The purpose of school Improvement (SI) visits is to work with school staff to develop and improve practice, for example in strategic planning, team teaching, demonstration lessons and behaviour management. QA visits will usually be conducted by the CEO. SI support will be provided by:

- CEO
- SCMAT team of subject or phase specialists
- Head Teachers of SCMAT schools
- Other SCMAT staff as appropriate
- External consultants if necessary

In addition to the above, the CEO will provide Head Teacher performance management support to Local Governing Bodies, working with Head Teachers and Governors to discuss and draft objectives to bring about a significant and direct impact on school improvement.

Whilst SI visits will be necessarily tailored in response to each school's outcomes and performance, QA visits will follow the same basic pattern for each school in order to ensure a consistent and clear overview of performance. For category 2 and 3 schools, the visits will be more frequent and therefore enable greater scrutiny and exploration of ways to increase impact and help shape the most appropriate SI programme.

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Equality Impact Assessment		
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