

Luton Council Education Service

Protocols for Monitoring Schools, including Schools Causing Concern

Background

Section 13A of the Education Act 1996 places the duty on Local Authorities to promote high standards in primary and secondary schools and this includes support and intervention for schools causing concern. The LA no longer has sufficient resource to provide a School Improvement Adviser for every school. In addition, academies are not accountable to the LA for their standards of education, but are held to account by the Department for Education.

This paper describes how the LA fulfils its statutory function to monitor schools in Luton and responses to schools causing concern.

All Schools

The Local Authority categorises all schools including academies from A to D. Schools causing concern are in Category C or D. 'Lighter touch' schools are in Category A or B. See Appendix A for details.

Schools and academies are discussed at termly school monitoring panels – one panel for Category A and B schools and academies, and one for Category C and D schools and academies.

Particular concerns may result in a professionals' meeting and further action as described in the school monitoring panel process map. See Appendix B for details.

Schools Causing Concern

Requires Improvement (RI) protocol

Following an Ofsted inspection that judges a maintained school to Require Improvement (RI) the LA School Improvement Adviser will meet with the school's Headteacher and Chair of Governors to plan the support required to address the areas for improvement identified by the inspection report. This action plan will be a Requires Improvement Action Plan (RIAP) or the school's own School Development Plan (SDP) if appropriate.

Local Authority response

The LA response to a maintained school being judged as Requires Improvement is personalised to the school – there is not a one size fits all approach. However, whilst acknowledging that the RI Ofsted judgement for overall school effectiveness is not an Ofsted category the LA will intensify the level of support and challenge for an RI school.

Basic entitlement for all RI maintained schools:

1. The Education Service allocates a School Improvement Adviser to all RI maintained schools.
2. For all RI maintained schools the School Improvement Adviser will meet with the Headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the most recent Ofsted judgement.
3. The LA will broker school to school support with an appropriate successful school drawing on, but not limited to, Local Support Schools, National Leaders of Education (NLEs), Local Leaders of Education, Multi Academy Trusts etc.
4. The LA will signpost and broker support from relevant curriculum hubs such as Enigma Maths Hub, English phonics hub, Sandringham Computing Hub etc.
5. The LA will provide priority access to local professional development and school improvement initiatives
6. The LA will establish a school improvement group or review the constitution of an existing one. Membership will include: Headteacher, Chair of Governing Body, LA School Improvement Adviser, other senior school leaders and other professionals with core responsibilities in the action plan (e.g. LA Human Resources, LA Finance, National Leader of Governance). This group will meet to monitor the school's progress to 'good' through the Requires Improvement Action Plan (RIAP) or School Improvement Plan.
7. The LA will ensure that the Requires Improvement Action Plan or School Improvement Plan is specific, detailed with clear milestones and increased monitoring arrangements to clearly demonstrate how the school will become good within two years.
8. Within 12 months of the start of the Improvement Plan the LA will arrange for a school review in order to evaluate progress towards objectives set out in the Plan.
9. The school must submit their Section 175 safeguarding audit to the Local Authority. The LA will triangulate this or undertake a further safeguarding audit.

Additional actions may include one or more of the following:

1. Consideration of structural solutions such as changes to leadership (eg. executive / consultant head, additional middle leadership); formal partnerships; strengthening the Governing Body, or the school becoming an academy with a MAT.

2. The LA will consider the issuance of a Warning Notice or make use of a 'Pre Warning Notice' in order to communicate the LA's serious concerns about the insufficient progress in school improvement.
3. External input and/or intervention to write an action plan which:
 - a. directly address the areas for improvement identified in the most recent Ofsted inspection report.
 - b. includes dated monitoring meetings.
 - c. is monitored by the LA School Improvement Adviser on a regular basis.
 - d. is flexible so that additional brokered support and intervention can be actioned in the light of continuous self-evaluation.
4. Commissioning an external review of governance.
5. Commissioning an external review of SEND provision.
6. Undertake an attendance register audit.
7. Identify the school for moderation for statutory assessments

The action plan will be in place until Ofsted have carried out a Section 5 inspection and judged the school to be good or better.

Academies

In the case of an academy being judged as RI, the LA will request an action plan from the multi academy trust and meet with the CEO on a regular basis to gain assurance of the Trust's school improvement strategy. The academy will be expected to submit their Section 175 safeguarding audit to the Local Authority. The LA will triangulate this or undertake a further safeguarding audit. The LA may liaise with the DfE in relation to academies causing concern.

Inadequate Schools

In addition to the support and intervention described above, maintained schools judged to be inadequate by Ofsted are eligible for intervention as described below. The School Improvement Adviser is responsible for writing the LA Statement of Action. The School Improvement Group is chaired by the Service Director for Education.

Powers of Intervention

Local authorities may issue warning notices to their maintained schools under the following circumstances:

1. The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so; or

2. There has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, such standards of performance; or
3. The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise); or
4. The governing body have failed to comply with a provision of an order under section 122 of the Education Act 2002 (teachers' pay and conditions) that applies.

The Local Authority is committed to using its powers of intervention as detailed in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections 2006 Act when it is in the best interests of the school. The intervention powers in respect of local authorities are set out in sections 63-66 of the 2006 Act:

Section 63 – power to require the governing body to enter into arrangements;

Section 64 – power to appoint additional governors;

Section 65 – power to appoint an interim executive board (IEB);

Section 66 – power to suspend the delegated budget

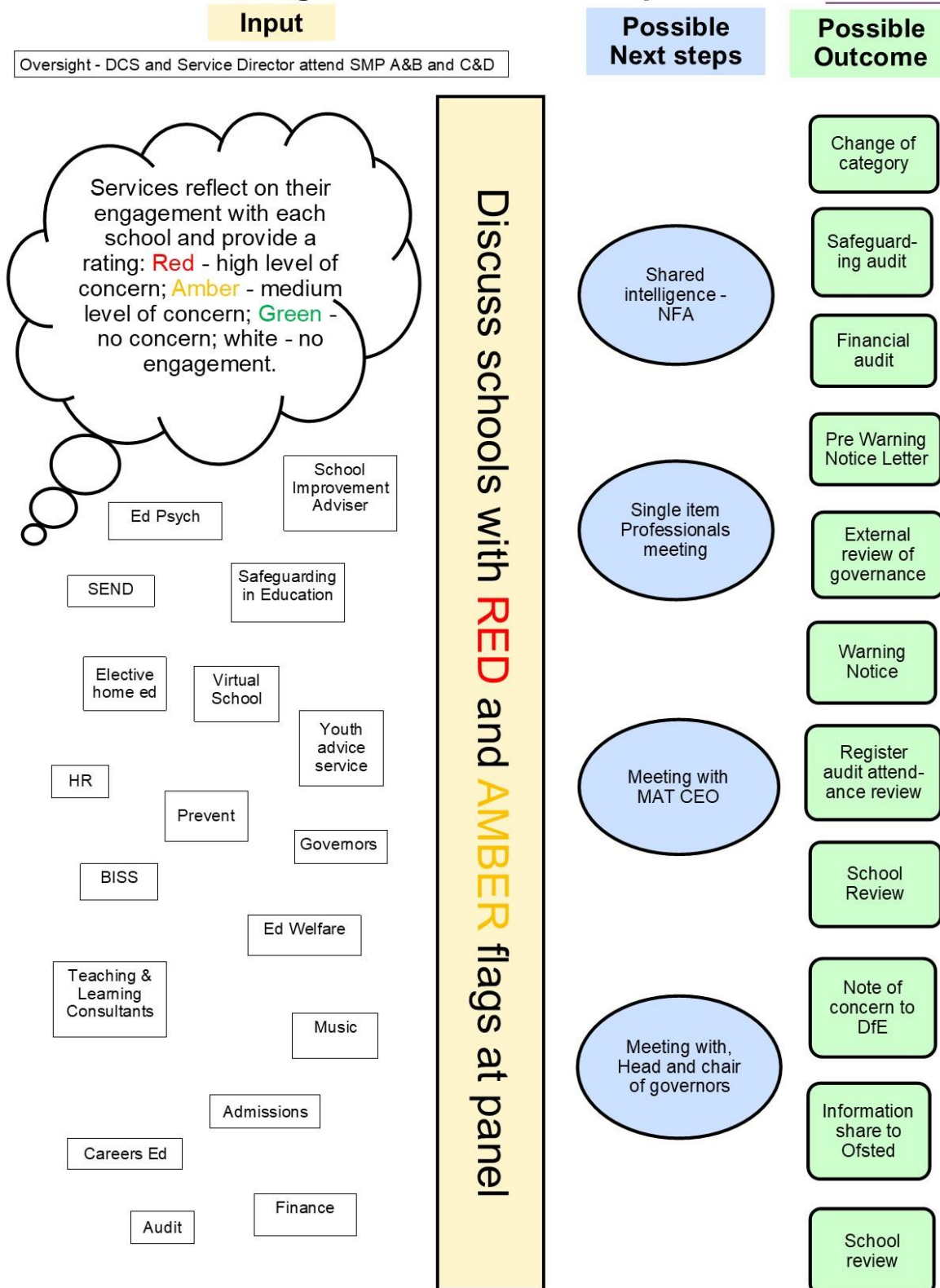
Appendix A

Luton Borough Council Support Level Criteria - all phases

Category	Criteria
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's results are stable or improving and above national in most measures Leadership and management are strong with some very good or outstanding features The profile of teaching and learning is strong The school has been judged to be at least good in its most recent Ofsted inspection with some outstanding judgements The school is a Local Support School
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's results are broadly in line with national averages Leadership and management are strong The profile of teaching and learning is sound and improving The school has been judged to be at least good in its most recent Ofsted inspection The school provides some support to other schools
C One or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has results below national standards The school has low attainment which has been static or falling over three years in all or specific core subjects There has been a marked drop in performance against one or more of the key indicators in one year Gaps in performance for significant groups are wider than national and not improving The LA judges that there are weaknesses in leadership and management and/or teaching and learning and/or standards that are sufficient to be a cause for concern. <i>For a secondary school this may be specific to the English, mathematics or science department.</i> The school has been judged as Requires Improvement in its most recent Ofsted inspection, or is considered to be at risk of being judged as Requires Improvement. The school is in the first year after exit from Category D
D One or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has results below national standards for more than one year. Ofsted has judged the school to require special measures or have serious weaknesses Ofsted has judged the school as Requires Improvement in two consecutive inspections The Local Authority judges that there are weaknesses in leadership and management and/or teaching and learning and/or standards sufficient to put the school at serious risk of requiring special measures or having serious weaknesses. The Local Authority has issued a 2006 Act statutory 'Warning Notice' or a 'Local Authority Pre-warning Notice'. There is a serious breakdown in management or governance The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened

School Monitoring Panels - Process Map

Luton



School Monitoring Panels cover A&B schools, C&D schools and independent schools