

## **Strategy for Support and Intervention for Schools in Halton**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Halton Local Authority has a commitment to excellence in Education and believes that all children and young people deserve to be educated in successful schools. Our overall aim is that no school should fall into a category of concern. By supporting and enabling strong school leadership and management and early intervention when necessary, we aim to work in partnership with schools to bring about the best possible education for our children and young people.

The Local Authority (LA) policy is in line with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Revised Statutory Guidance for Schools Causing Concern. It takes account of the guidance in relation to those schools that are failing to provide an acceptable level of education to pupils and are a cause of concern. The LA will work within the New Relationship with Schools (NRwS) and collaboratively with National Strategies, DCSF and Ofsted, making use of School Improvement Partners (SIPs).

This policy will:

- Explain what a school can expect from the Local Authority in terms of procedures in relation to schools causing concern.
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#### **1.1 The aims are:**

- to show a relentless commitment to raising standards through high quality learning, teaching and leadership based on self-evaluation and self-improvement;
- to identify and disseminate best practice and challenge all schools to build upon this exemplification through collaboration
- where appropriate, support schools to federate
- to intervene early and establish constructive dialogue seeking self-remediation with advice but to use powers to warn schools where improvement is not sufficient;
- to use clear criteria where identifying schools causing concern, with particular emphasis on schools that are under-performing in relation to their pupil intake and general context;
- to provide a co-ordinated support from appropriate sections of Children and Young People's Directorate (CYPD), targeted at those issues which bring about speedy improvement;
- to build the capacity of school leadership and management so that it is secure enough to generate self-improvement;
- to work in constructive partnership with Diocesan Authorities and other appropriate partners;
- to ensure that, where a school is causing concern, account is taken of the School Organisation data to arrive at a judgement regarding continued viability;
- to enable failing schools to be quickly removed from Special Measures and those with a Notice to Improve to address issues promptly;
- to be decisive in using the full range of intervention powers if schools are not making adequate progress.

## 2.0 Education and Inspections Act 2006

'Schools causing concern must make rapid improvements, so that the negative impact the school's poor performance may have on a pupils' outcomes is minimised. Local Authorities should therefore continue to take fast, decisive action to secure improvements at schools which Ofsted judges to require Special Measures or Significant Improvement' (DfES 2007 [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/si/SCC/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/si/SCC/)).

The *Education and Inspections Act of 2006* outlines in Part 4 new legislation on LA powers of intervention covering action and support on schools causing concern. This builds on existing statutory powers and good practice to ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities that they deserve.

The Act includes provision to ensure earlier action to address underperformance in schools through more prompt and timely use by Local Authorities of the powers set out in the Act to challenge, and where necessary intervene, where a school is not able to address underperformance itself. Local Authorities are expected to take robust action to tackle failure, and to challenge and support schools. Where schools have been deemed by Ofsted to be in a category, the Act sets out the expectation that action to address weaknesses will lead to faster improvement than has been the case in the past.

Namely:

- authorities have a new power to force a weak school to federate or take another partner for school improvement;
- the ability of authorities to warn under performing schools and to intervene in them when necessary will be strengthened;
- authorities have a duty to consider taking action immediately whenever a maintained school fails an inspection, and must reconsider action if progress is deemed unsatisfactory.

This policy, therefore, sets out to explain what intervention Halton LA can provide in schools that they see as being a cause for concern i.e. schools which the **LA itself** judges to be failing to provide an adequate standard of education, or to need significant improvements, or which are at risk of not meeting the Government's floor targets for attainment.

**Schools may not necessarily have been judged as requiring a category from Ofsted but the LA may feel it necessary to intervene in order to prevent future categorisation.**

### 3.0 Categories of support

There are four categories of support to schools:

**Core Support**, which covers most schools

**Vulnerable Schools** – support without which a school might become a cause for concern

**Schools Causing Concern (SCC)** – i.e. designated by Ofsted as requiring either Special Measures or a Notice to Improve or those where the LA feels such classification is appropriate

**Formal Intervention** in respect of SCC that do not improve enough

#### 3.1 Category A: Core support

Schools in this category are generally successful in sustaining improvement through self-evaluation and can be a source of good practice. SIPs will broker additional support from the LA or elsewhere. Support from the LA will be light touch.

#### 3.2 Category B and C: Vulnerable Schools and Schools Causing Concern

**Vulnerable Schools** are those **not** actually causing concern but requiring significant amount of support to help them improve. The aim is prevention – to stop the school becoming a concern. It is essential that schools are drawn into support at an early stage and that their own evidence of performance, and the context within which they operate, is taken account of, **Vulnerable schools will be expected to show at least satisfactory improvement within 6 – 12 months.**

As a result of reviews, or following support work in a vulnerable school, the LA reserves the right to issue a warning notice to the school, which acts as a Notice to Improve; the issue of a Notice to Improve is most likely where the response to support is showing that issues for improvement are inadequately addressed.

**A Notice to Improve will directly put a school into the next category and it will be designated as a School Causing Concern (SCC).**

**3.3 Schools Causing Concern are of two types: those with a Notice to Improve and those which are failing their pupils and equivalent to an Ofsted inspection designation of Special Measures. A school with a Notice to Improve will be expected to remedy the weaknesses within 12 – 14 months. Failure to do so will usually result in the school being classed as being equivalent to Special Measures. For Schools in Special Measures, it is expected that significant improvement will take place in one year and that the designation will be removed in no more that two years.**

The defining characteristic between the two types of SCC is the capacity for improvement. Where a school has Notice to Improve, then it is judged to have the internal capacity to improve with support, despite the serious weaknesses. Where a school is equivalent to Special Measures, it is judged that it does not have the capacity to improve. The LA can designate a school as failing its pupils and a cause

for concern equivalent to Special Measures without waiting for an Ofsted inspection where LA monitoring shows this to be warranted. It is the responsibility of the Operational Director for Universal and Learning Services, acting on information and advice provided by SIPs, advisers and officers, to place a school in any school causing concern category or to remove it from that category. Evidence that removal is justified is likely to be based on clear improvement against the criteria listed in the improvement plan and judgements will take into account the school's capacity to improve.

For schools that are either vulnerable or a cause for concern, the quality of information available is an important element in determining categorisation and the type of support required. In addition, a clear process is needed to enable support to have impact. The aim will be to share the evidence with Headteacher, governors and, as appropriate, others in the school community. Problems can arise in schools gradually or very rapidly when a number of complex problems occur simultaneously.

### **3.4 Information that will define vulnerability or trigger a cause for concern**

#### **Achievement data**

- Pupil data showing contextual value added, performance over time and relation to targets. Critically, it will be used to check if the school is in the bottom percentile on one or more key performance indicators. It will be scrutinised to see if the school is in a declining trend for the second or subsequent years on a number of indicators. Significant underachievement by a large proportion of pupils or particular groups of pupils will be taken into account, especially in the core subjects and in relation to contextual value added.

#### **Inclusion evidence and information on pupil engagement, behaviour and wellbeing**

- Poor attendance and behaviour not dealt with adequately by the school
- Significant shortcomings in provision for pupils with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)
- Concerns regarding the safeguarding of pupils
- Matters of health and safety which place individuals at serious risk of harm
- Significant concerns regarding inclusive practice.

#### **Leadership and Management Information**

- The effectiveness of leadership and management as judged against Ofsted criteria and taking account of the capacity to improve
- The quality of school self-evaluation (including the self-evaluation form) and improvement planning
- The quality of performance management and continuous professional development
- The quality of internal relationships which might be poor where there is a breakdown in communications, morale or a sense of coherent direction
- Financial information including evidence of financial misconduct or neglect
- Levels of sickness absence and staff turnover
- Consistent failure to discharge statutory duties.

### **Evidence in relation to learning and teaching quality**

- The quality of teaching particularly where there are significant amounts of inadequate teaching – normally 10% or more
- How well learners acquire new knowledge and skills and make progress in lessons and over time
- The quality of assessment including the effective use of information to track pupil progress, set targets and improve learning
- The quality of the curriculum including its relevance, breadth and balance, taking account of the aptitude and abilities of the pupils
- The equality of opportunity provided for all pupils to learn and make progress in relation to their capabilities.

### **Other Evidence**

- Significant levels of harassment or racial tension
- Gross misconduct resulting in quantifiable incapacity to effectively deliver the curriculum which prejudices the future viability of the school
- A less than satisfactory response to previous support and insufficient progress in addressing areas for which this support was given
- A high level of concern / complaints raised by parents / carers in the local community

3.5 Schools will be classed as a cause for concern when there are significant weaknesses in a combination of the above key factors. Information is drawn from a number of sources including:

- SIP and LA Adviser / officer notes of visit, particularly in relation to the schools capacity to improve, leadership and management, and the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum
- Information from the school self-evaluation and resultant action plans
- Joint LA / School review including direct observation

**3.6 The nature of a review will vary according to the issues at the school. Not all reviews will include observation of teaching and learning as the evidence on this might be clear and this might not be the area that requires improvement. Overall the process is:**

### **Audit and review to gather evidence and establish priorities for support**

This will comprise of a Joint LA / School review where a team of advisers and other officers where appropriate, establish with the school an evidence base of the key issues faced and, consequently the support required. This will comprise:

- Pre-review commentary shared with the school that sets out the evidence and key questions
- A review in the school to gather firsthand evidence
- A post-review report to the Headteacher and governors

This review will draw on: the schools use of self-review tools, SEF, Ofsted and other appropriate documentation. Evaluations will be shared with the school and school self-review information will form an important part of this process as it indicates the school's capacity to improve, Review will be co-ordinated by a LA adviser and in consultation with the SIP and school leadership.

### **Planned improvement support**

A Raising Achievement Plan (RAP) will be agreed between the school and the LA. This should compliment the School Development Plan (SDP). It will set out the key objectives to be achieved, actions to be undertaken, success measures, professional development needs, timescales and resources to be allocated. The Senior School Effectiveness Officers and Strategy Managers will ensure that any support provided following the review is coherent and co-ordinated.

**Monitoring and evaluation of agreed success against the RAP** with progress reported to governors at least once each term. The School Adviser will monitor and assess the impact of any support, taking into account the RAP and the success criteria within it.

3.7 The likely areas to be **reviewed** and **supported** are set out below but reviews will vary according to school needs and circumstances and will depend on progress against action plan objectives:

### **Standards of achievement**

Account will be taken of performance over time, in relation to targets and contextual value added indicators. Particular consideration will be given to pupils at risk of underachieving, vulnerable pupils (including Children in Care) and those with LDD. Attendance will be taken as a key indicator.

### **Leadership and Management**

The evidence to evaluate leadership and management will come from School Improvement Partner notes of visit, the school self-review, Ofsted reports or from Joint LA / School review. Where a Joint LA / School review evaluates leadership, it will be based on Ofsted criteria. The criteria for leadership apply to all of those with leadership responsibilities: Headteacher, Governing Body, Senior Management and others as appropriate. A key task will be to support the capacity-building for improvement. This will be especially important where there has been significant change in leadership or where there is a long-term absence of key staff or workforce pressures such as recruitment and retention.

### **Learning and Teaching**

The aim of this support will be to improve the quality of learning and teaching, throughout a school, at a Key Stage or in particular subjects or year groups. Evidence to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching will come from school self-review, SIP, Adviser and LA Consultant notes of visit, Ofsted reports and Joint LA / School review. In judging the quality of learning and teaching, Joint LA / School review will take account of Ofsted criteria. Teaching will be evaluated in terms of the impact it has on learning.

### **Attendance and behaviour**

Evidence that might generate support would come from analysis of attendance and exclusion data. The support will be provided by EWS, Access Service and Behaviour and Attendance Consultants.

### **Pupils' wellbeing, care, guidance and support**

Evidence generated from SIP and Adviser notes of visit, school self-review and information in Ofsted reports would be used to judge if there was vulnerability in this area.

### **3.8 The LA Cross-Service Monitoring Group (CSMG) checks the progress of all vulnerable schools and SCC to enable decisions to be made which schools move in and out of these categories, taking account of the triggers and information listed above.**

- The CSMG meets each term; it consists of senior officers and advisers
- The CSMG will give particular consideration to Vulnerable Schools and SCC but will also review provision of other schools at the recommendation of the Operational Director (Universal and Learning Service)
- Schools under discussion will normally be notified
- Prior to CSMG meetings, the LA will gather evidence of the type set out above and this will form the basis of information taken to the CSMG
- Following meetings of the CSMG, schools will be informed of categorisation changes by the Operational Director (Universal and Learning)
- The progress of SCC will be discussed on a regular basis at CYPD SMT meetings
- Progress of SCC will be reported to the Members Policy and Performance Board
- It is anticipated that open exchanges of information and ongoing dialogue should ensure that situations rarely occur where the school does not agree with the category of concern in which it is placed. However, where the Headteacher and / or the Governing Body do not agree that there are concerns at the level indicated, the Operational Director (Universal and Learning Services) will visit the school and clarify the nature and degree of concern.
- The aim will always be to seek early and constructive dialogue with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and, as appropriate, the full Governing Body or Sub-Committee.

**Where a school is a cause for concern**, it will receive a commensurate amount of support, challenge and monitoring, including Joint LA / School review as appropriate, which will be reported to the Governing Body.

In addition to the above, for all vulnerable schools and SCC, a Partnership Improvement Board (PIB) will review progress. At these meetings the school will also be represented and as improvement increases the school will be expected to take the initiative. This is to avoid undue reliance on the LA.

## 4. Formal Warning Notice / Intervention Category D

The move to formal warning / intervention will apply in rare circumstances. It is relevant only to those schools with significant concerns that fail to address their responsibilities, despite extensive support having been provided by the LA. The decision to move to this level will be taken after full consultation with the school and other appropriate authorities. In making the decision, the LA will seek to establish whether the situation at the school is at least comparable in seriousness to a finding by Ofsted of Special Measures.

The LA is committed to working with schools to secure improvement, but will comply with its duty to undertake formal intervention, including, where appropriate, the appointment of additional governors, suspension of the delegated budget, federation and closure.

A school becomes '*eligible for intervention*' – the term used in the Education and Inspection Act 2006 to denote schools subject to the spectrum of intervention powers – if the governing body has received a formal warning and has failed to comply with it to the Local Authority's satisfaction.

The Local Authority must have provided reasonable written notice to the governing body that intervention is being contemplated. When a notice is issued, it must inform them of their right to appeal to Ofsted within the initial period of 15 working days. The school can avoid intervention if Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) decides not to confirm the warning notice following representations from the governing body. The governing body has a further period of 15 working days to respond appropriately to the warning notice starting immediately after the initial period or when HMCI confirms the notice if an appeal has been made.

### 4.1 Warning Notices

(from DfES Guidance relating to Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006: provisions relating to schools causing concern)

#### Establishing the grounds for a warning notice

A warning notice can be triggered by any of the following circumstances:

1. The standards of performance at the school are unacceptably low, and are likely to remain so unless the local authority exercises its statutory intervention powers
2. There has been a serious breakdown in management or governance which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, standards of performance
3. The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown in discipline or otherwise)

Warning notices should only be used where there is evidence to justify both the LA's concerns and the school's reluctance to address these concerns through a professional dialogue with the Local Authority via the SIP within a reasonable timeframe.

Local Authorities must draw on suitable qualitative data in addition to any quantitative information before deciding to issue a warning notice.



## 4.2 Evidence of unacceptably low standards

The definition of when standards are 'unacceptably low' is extended from the previous provision. The 2006 Act states that a warning notice can be issued if pupil performance is persistently below levels expected when pupils' prior achievement and the school's context is taken into account, even if the absolute level of attainment is apparently satisfactory.

Quantitative evidence may take one of the following forms; usually a combination of several of these indicators will apply:

- a. The school's data set, as agreed by the school, the Local Authority and the SIP, indicates there are problems in relation to pupil progress
- b. The school is in the bottom quartile nationally in one or more key performance indicators. These will focus on Context Value Added (CVA) data, but could also include, for example, low attainment rates, aggregate point scores, or exclusion and truancy data
- c. There is specific evidence, from close examination of contextual data or other sources that the school is significantly letting down groups of pupils (usually 5% or more of the school population), or is very weak in core subjects.

Some educational settings, especially Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units, may have little standardised data. In these cases, SIPs and Local Authorities will have to rely on other records, such as how well learners have met their individual targets.

## 4.3 Evidence of a breakdown in leadership or management

Key sources of information to justify a warning notice under criterion (b) are likely to be the SIPs report, particularly the commentary on the quality of the school's self-evaluation and target-setting, and Ofsted reports.

In addition, some data trends may indicate a breakdown in leadership and management, for example:

- Declining school popularity, usually revealed through falling rolls
- High or increasing absence or truancy rates
- High rates of staff turnover, or numbers of staff grievances
- Significant or increasing numbers of parental complaints.

Such data should be treated with caution, as they may also arise for reasons other than poor school leadership. Local Authorities should therefore ensure that such indicators are confirmed by strong intelligence from sources such as SIPs or Ofsted reports before considering a warning notice. Where such reports are unavailable, data trends should be considered only as the first signs of concern which should prompt the local authority to investigate further, perhaps through an audit of the school's leadership.

Poor management of the school workforce, or a failure to implement the school workforce agreement, may contribute to a school's poor performance, and may therefore be used as the grounds for issuing a warning notice.

#### 4.4 Exceptions to (a) and (b) above

Even where the evidence referred to in parts (a) or (b) above exists, a warning notice is unlikely to be needed when the school is already working positively to address poor performance, and there is evidence of progress. Circumstances in which a Local Authority might refrain from issuing a warning notice include when:

- The Local Authority have notified Ofsted that the inspection of the school should be brought forward
- The school acknowledges the problem and is working effectively with the SIP, or other support commissioned by the local authority, to rectify the problem
- The school has taken positive steps, and is monitoring these effectively, to rectify areas identified for improvement after an Ofsted Grade 3 (satisfactory) judgement.

#### 4.5 Issuing a warning notice

Once the grounds for issuing a warning notice have been established, the Local Authority will set out their concerns in writing to the governing body. This written notice must include:

- a. The reasons for issuing the warning notice, including references to the quantitative and qualitative evidence the authority has used in deciding to issue the notice
- b. The action the Governing Body needs to take in order to address the concerns raised
- c. The action the Local Authority is considering if the Governing Body do not comply satisfactorily with the warning
- d. The date when the 15 working-day compliance period will come to an end
- e. A reminder to the Governing Body that they may appeal to Ofsted within 15 working days if they feel that the grounds for issuing the warning notice are not valid or that the action proposed if the school fails to comply is disproportionate

The Local Authority must send the warning notice to the Governing Body of the school and copy the notice to the Headteacher, HMCI at Ofsted, and the appropriate appointing authority for church, foundation or voluntary schools. The local authority is also expected to **send the notice to the SIP**.

#### 4.6 Appealing against the warning notice

The Governing Body of a school that has received a warning notice can appeal to Ofsted under section 60(7) of the Act, if it believes that the Local Authority has:

- issued the warning notice without sufficient objective evidence, or:
- proposed action that is disproportionate to the scale of the issues facing the school.

The appeal must be made in writing within 15 working days of receipt of the warning notice. It should be sent to the Regional Divisional Manager at Ofsted, and copied to the LA.

The written appeal may contain, as appropriate:

- why the governors disagree with the grounds for the warning notice; or

- why the governors consider the action proposed by the authority is disproportionate to the scale of the issues facing the school; or
- a combination of both the above

#### **4.7 Role of Ofsted**

Ofsted will send an e-mail to the school, copied to the Local Authority, acknowledging receipt of the appeal.

Ofsted may request additional documentary evidence; if such evidence is requested, it should be supplied within 5 working days.

Ofsted will scrutinise the evidence provided, and may also examine other relevant documents (e.g. the school's Ofsted report, RAISE online data, and the Local Authority's Joint Area Review report).

Ofsted may make its judgement based on written evidence alone, if the documentation is sufficiently comprehensive. In some circumstances, for example if there is insufficient written evidence to reach a decision, Ofsted may inspect the school.

Ofsted will decide either to uphold or reject the appeal, and will communicate this decision in writing to the school and the LA.

If the appeal is upheld, the warning notice will be rescinded.

If the appeal is rejected, the warning notice will be reissued to the school. The school must take appropriate action to respond within 15 working days of receiving the reissued warning notice.

Ultimately, irrespective of Ofsted's ratification of a warning notice, a school may appeal to the DfES under section 496 of the Education Act 1996, which allows the Secretary of State to consider whether a Local Authority has acted unreasonably in exercising its functions.

#### **4.8 Expectation of the school responding to the warning notice**

If the school does not appeal to Ofsted, or the appeal has been rejected, the school has 15 working days to comply with the warning notice to the local authority's satisfaction.

Such compliance may not involve full rectification of the problem, since it will not always be practical to do so, but it will involve positive steps towards the solution. For example, if the warning notice has been issued on the grounds of the relative underperformance of a particular group of pupils, the minimum expectation would be that the school amends its improvement plan to identify what support this group of pupils requires, how this additional support will be delivered, and how the effect of this additional support will be measured.

The development of the school's improvement plan as a result of the warning notice should be discussed with the local authority or the SIP to ensure plans are sufficient. If the authority is content with the action proposed or taken, the warning notice should be rescinded and the intervention powers may not be used.

#### **4.9 Use of intervention powers**

A Local Authority's intervention powers are available if the school has not complied satisfactorily with the warning notice within the 15 day period following its issue (or re-issue following an appeal).

Where a Local Authority has clearly stated in the warning notice which intervention powers it intends to use should the school fail to comply, and it still intends to exercise these powers, the Local Authority may intervene after a reasonable notice period. If urgent intervention is required, this period could be as little as one working day after the end of the compliance period.

In all cases, the Local Authority is required to use its intervention powers within 2 months of the end of the 15-day compliance period. If it fails to intervene within this time, a new valid warning notice must be issued. If the school is in special measures or requires significant improvement, the power is available as long as the school remains in one of those categories.

#### **4.10 Power of local authority to require governing body to enter into arrangements.**

Local Authorities are given a new power of intervention allowing them to direct the governing body of a maintained school to take certain steps if the school is eligible for intervention.

- Section 63(1) of the Act sets out what sort of arrangements a governing body might be instructed to enter into:
- contracting with another party for the provision of advisory services to the governing body;
- collaborating with the governing body of another school;
- collaborating with a further education college or creating or joining a federation.

Before using this power, the Local Authority must consult the governing body of the school. In the case of a church school (foundation or voluntary), it must consult the appropriate diocesan authority.

Halton LA will use their powers to appoint additional governors at maintained schools subject to special measures, in need of significant improvement, or at which the governing body have not complied with a formal warning. The Local Authority is no longer required to have received a notice of receipt of the inspection report from the Secretary of State, or for a 10 day period to have elapsed once that notice has been received, before the local authority can appoint additional governors.

Halton LA may appoint a specially constituted governing body in place of the existing governors at a school that is eligible for intervention. This body remains as 'Interim Executive Board'. The power may only be exercised with the consent of the Secretary of State and the governing body must be given written notice of the exercise of the power. The Local Authority is no longer required to receive a notice of receipt of the inspection report from the Secretary of State, or to wait 10 days, before appointing interim executive board members.

#### **4.11 Power of local authority to suspend right to delegated budget**

Local Authorities' have powers to suspend a school's right to a delegated budget if a school is eligible for intervention. This power will be used by Halton LA if appropriate.

#### **4.12 Guidance relating to schools requiring special measures and significant improvement (schools in Ofsted categories)**

There is a set of 'overarching principles' which Halton adheres to:

- minimising the time a school spends in special measures or requiring significant improvement;
- building the capacity of the school's leadership and management;
- taking action to secure improvements immediately after a school is judged to be failing;
- using opportunities for collaboration or federation with other schools, trusts, colleges or other organisations;
- giving consideration to a school opting to become a trust school or an academy;
- involving parents and carers in the preparation of a statement of action, which should consider all the options available for securing improved pupil outcomes, and sets out clearly what action is to be taken, by whom and by when;
- keeping action under review so that good progress is made within the first 12 months.

For schools in special measures, schools will normally receive 2 monitoring visits from Ofsted within a year to check on progress. When insufficient progress has been made, the Secretary of State will give notice to the Local Authority that the case has become urgent. The authority will be required to review action taken so far and produce a new statement of action.

#### **4.13 Status of Strategy**

This Strategy operates as a detailed but responsive framework within which the Council's support and intervention role can be exercised. It is not intended to restrict the operation of the Council's powers under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. In the event of any conflict between the Act and the Strategy the Act shall prevail. Decisions will always be taken in the light of particular circumstances.

## 5. Categories of Support and Intervention

Category	Defined by	Features
<p><b>Core Support</b> The overwhelming majority of schools</p>	Self-sustainable improvement to raise and maintain standards	<p>LA support differentiated according to need Dissemination of good practice</p>
<p><b>Vulnerable schools</b> These schools have the capacity to improve with a greater level of support</p>	Schools facing significant challenge, which without further support, will become a concern	<p>Evidence of performance shows weaknesses which need external support to address</p> <p>Joint LA / School review to agree support and a raising achievement plan</p> <p>At least satisfactory progress within 6-12 months</p>
<p><b>Schools Causing Concern</b> 1. Notice to improve – these schools have serious weaknesses but the capacity to improve.  2. Schools which are failing their pupils and have an Ofsted inspection designation of Special Measures or the equivalent LA categorisation. These schools lack the capacity to improve</p>	Ofsted Special Measures and Notice to Improve or clear LA evidence that indicates weaknesses in standards, leadership, learning, teaching and inclusion	<p>Clear evidence of significant weakness equivalent to Ofsted designation of SCC</p> <p>Monitoring and review – with reports to governors each term</p> <p>Support from a cross service team working to an agreed RAP each term</p> <p>Measures or equivalent LA designation – significant improvement in 12 months and removal within 2 years</p> <p>Notice – improvement to justify removal within 12 – 14 months and at least satisfactory progress at review</p>
<p><b>Formal Intervention</b> If none of the previous support is effective</p>	Schools where the situation is at least comparable in seriousness to a finding of Special Measures. Serious breakdown of leadership, discipline and / or order	<p>Formal warning followed by for example: Appointment of additional governors, suspension of delegated budget, closure, federation, amalgamation</p>