

APPENDIX A

Strategy for Change
Raising Achievement

**Improving Outcomes Programme
Protocol**
And Schools Causing Concern Policy



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Protocol Content

1. Parties

The protocol is for the use of:

- The Quality Assurance Team
- Senior Managers in the Children & Families Service
- Human Resources Team
- Finance Team
- Schools
- Governing Bodies
- Dioceses

2. Aims and Scope of the Protocol

- 2.1 Local Authorities (LA) have a statutory requirement to have a Schools Causing Concern (SCC) policy and programme. The DfE guidance states how the LA uses its statutory functions to support, challenge and intervene in schools where significant concerns are identified. This protocol makes clear the Local Authority's policy and practice for schools identified as requiring Intensive Support.
- 2.2 Cheshire East's Children and Families Service vision is to establish an intervention programme which can be applied across a range of services and settings and which contributes to a quality assurance framework which monitors the wider outcomes for all children and young people
- 2.3 The protocol applies to schools and settings. It meets the national statutory SCC guidance for LAs Section 72 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 (updated 27.07 .2011)
- 2.4 The decision to include a school or setting in this programme will be determined by the categorisation process which identifies the level of support and intervention (LOSI) for each school or setting. The process will use school's self evaluation judgements, school performance data and OfSTED outcomes. There are three LOSI – Universal, Targeted and Intensive and judgements are based on criteria which are open and transparent. (Appendix 1)

3. Relevant Documents

- LA SCC policy
- DfE Schools Causing Concern-guidance for local authorities – updated 27th July 2011
- LA levels of support and intervention criteria for schools and settings
- Exit Strategy

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Quality Assurance Manager is responsible for the overall management of the programme, works with the Monitoring and Intervention (M&I) Team to determine entry to the programme through the use of the Level of Support and Intervention criteria
- 4.2 The Monitoring and Intervention Manager is responsible for the day to day management of the programme, including the deployment of resources and funding
The Monitoring & Interventions Manager will report key decisions to the Quality Assurance Manager
- 4.3 The Monitoring and Intervention Manager will identify a key member of the M&I team to co-ordinate the support and intervention programme with the school and other LA colleagues
- 4.4 The Monitoring and Intervention Manager liaises with other service teams for example, Governance, Human Resources and Finance if specialist support is required
- 4.5 The school is responsible for working with the Monitoring Intervention Manager to ensure the Strategic School Development Plan (SSDP) or Raising Achievement Plan (RAP) is robust and addresses the issues or revising existing plans if appropriate
- 4.6 The school is responsible for putting in place a School Management Group which is made up of Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team members, a Governor, leads for English & Maths and other relevant leaders in school e.g. the Special Needs Coordinator
- 4.7 The Governing Body exercises their role as critical friend and holds the school to account for evidence of improvement
- 4.8 Where appropriate the Diocese is responsible for working with the Monitoring and Intervention Manager to secure an improvement

5. Protocol Details

- 5.1 The protocol complies with existing legislation. If the legislation changes as a result of government policy the LA will revise the protocol to reflect any changes to the LA's statutory responsibilities

5.2 The 'Improving Outcomes Programme' is a two tier programme. Schools will fall into one of two tiers as a result of:

- 'Standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so
- Serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing the standards of performance.
- The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened'

Schools identified as requiring targeted support and intervention and increased monitoring arrangements

This group of schools will receive targeted levels of support from a variety of identified providers which will be tailored to the needs of the school. The school, within an agreed time period, will be expected to evidence an improvement in outcomes. If this is the case the school will be removed from the programme. The Monitoring & Interventions Team, supported by SIPs, will continue to monitor the school to ensure that rates of improvement are sustained

Schools which are identified as being of significant concern and requiring Intensive Support or those who have not made sufficient progress in the first tier

This group of schools will participate in a more tightly structured and formalised Improving Outcomes Programme. This programme will address the outcomes of the school's own self evaluation process and or an external review of school provision. The school will receive additional support and intervention from a range of appropriate providers. Sufficient resources and support should be given to schools in the first tier to avoid them moving into the second tier. However, where it is evident that a school cannot be supported to improve quickly through its own efforts and through the use of appropriate support, Cheshire East will use its intervention powers. These are a last resort and will only be used in circumstances as defined in part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The powers are:

- A formal warning notice to the Governing Body
- The appointment of additional governors
- The suspension of the delegated budget
- Proposing to the Secretary of State the appointment of an Interim Executive Board (IEB) to replace the Governing Body
- The requirement for schools to collaborate with another school or FE college or to federate (see section 63 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006)

5.3 Process

- Schools requiring Intensive Support will be identified through the categorisation process (see appendix 1) and agreed by the Children & Families Senior Management Team (SMT)
- The school must have an accurate baseline assessment on which to base the improvement plan and timescale for improvement. Assessment could be based on a very recent Ofsted inspection or an externally commissioned review. The assessment will enable the school, and the LA, to establish an agreed list of strengths and areas which require further improvement
- The school's Senior Leadership Team must inform Governors and staff that the school has entered the programme. There must be transparency about the programme's requirements so that all stakeholders are fully aware of the programme and its expectations. Communication with parents, and the wider community must also be considered and agreed with Governors and the LA
- All relevant teams within the Children & Families Service will be informed of the schools in the programme and have an agreed understanding of their role in the school to support improvement. This will include sharing agreed improvement plans to ensure clarity and purpose of work undertaken and the timescales the school and LA are working to effect an improvement
- Entry into the programme will not necessarily require the creation of a separate improvement plan. This will depend on the existence of a robust and effective Strategic School Development Plan (SSDP) or Raising Achievement Plan (RAP). A rigorous self evaluation process will be established to enable the school to track progress and improvement. The LA's role is to quality assure the improvement process. The aim of the programme is to encourage school led improvement; it is not intended to develop a dependency on the M&I Team to lead the improvement process. If progress is inappropriate or ineffective the LA will exercise the power of intervention which will result in issuing a warning notice
- Entry into the programme will require the school to establish a management group which will meet monthly to review progress. The management group will meet prior to IOP meetings and will be expected to provide a report on progress. The progress report should not be solely the Head teacher's perceptions of improvement but it should reflect the school's assessment of progress supported by measurable evidence of improvement including where relevant a summary of partnership working
- The LA reserves the right to set up a professionals' meeting following an IOP meeting so that the relevant service teams are consulted in order to revise support and agree actions and next steps. This meeting will also allow the LA to collect or share relevant data or information which may have been requested at the IOP meeting.
- Some schools will come into the programme for short lengths of time where there are very specific issues to address. However, after three terms if there

is substantial evidence that insufficient progress has been made, the LA may issue a formal warning notice; this must be approved by the Children & Families SMT

- When a school is judged ready to leave the programme an exit strategy will be agreed with the school (appendix 2). The exit strategy will be formally agreed by the Children & Families' SMT and the school will continue to receive termly monitoring for at least two terms. This will be carried out by the SIP or M&I Manager

5.4 Funding

- A specific budget for the IOP programme will be agreed with the school. This will require careful management and the school will be expected to target funds to the most appropriate and effective areas which will directly improve outcomes for children and young people
- Funding for specific areas of support should be agreed between the school and the LA. Schools will also be expected to access funding available from their own budgets to effect improvement
- IOP funding will be used to support the implementation of actions in the SSDP or RAP which will be agreed at IOP meetings

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 A screening for Equality Impact Assessment was completed - 10th August 2011. The screening indicated that there was no negative impact on the different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act. (Appendix 3)

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 7.1 Ongoing monitoring will be undertaken on a monthly basis by the school management group. This group needs to carry out a strategic role and must be outcome focused. The LA Monitoring & Interventions Manager or Officer may attend this group as part of the QA process
- 7.2 The SIP must agree with the progress and school's self evaluation judgements. Where possible the SIP should link school visits with when the management group meeting takes place. Evidence from the meetings should be recorded and reported in the SIP Record of Visit
- 7.3 IOP meetings will take place every two months to review progress against the key outcomes in the action plan. Revised actions and targets should be

agreed as required. Wherever possible, all meetings should take place at the school. The publication of dates of formal meetings will be circulated as early as possible so that all staff can ensure their attendance. Agendas will be sent out at least a week in advance and minutes circulated within one week of the meeting taking place. Meetings should be seen as high priority and attendance is essential from all relevant parties. Substitutions should be provided in exceptional circumstances. A core group of LA officers will attend the majority of meetings including personnel/HR and finance officers

- 7.4 The involvement of external agencies should be agreed as required. These may include the Diocese, Integrated Delivery Managers, Police etc.
- 7.5 A requirement of the IOP programme is that schools report the outcomes of meetings to the full governing body. Feedback will then be reported at the IOP meeting
- 7.6 Quarterly reporting of the progress of IOP schools to the LA SMT will be provided by the QA Manager

8. Arrangements for Reviewing the Policy

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the M&I Team in consultation with Cheshire East Head teachers, School Improvements Partners and LA Officers

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Version:	2
Consultees:	Cheshire East Association of Primary Headteachers (CEAPH), Cheshire East Association of Secondary Headteachers (CEASH), Cheshire East Association of Special School Headteachers (CEASSH), Cheshire East Association of Governing Bodies (CEAGB) and the Dioceses
Status:	Reviewed
Date:	Date approved

Stored at: Internet/int