



Framework for Learning and Achievement

A Framework for improving
outcomes for the children and
young people of the Isle of
Wight

2

Unified Improvement Cycle

Directorate for Children & Young
People
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Framework for Learning and Achievement in the Isle of Wight

2: The Unified Improvement Cycle

1. Rationale: Bringing together Self Evaluation, Improvement Planning, Target Setting and LA Monitoring, Support and Intervention

In following the Values and Core Principles stated in the Framework for Learning and Achievement, the *Unified Improvement Cycle* will inform all that we do collectively and individually in schools. As a learning community of LA and schools, our ambition is that every Island school will be an outstanding school. Through partnership, the process will ensure that appropriate support is provided for all schools.

Consistent with the shared commitment to the centrality of the child, the basis of the cycle is the experience and performance of children and young people. The reference point of the cycle is therefore the schools' self evaluation which derives from its pupils' outcomes and the actions taken to improve them.

The School's self evaluation informs its Improvement Plan, and both are subject to discussion between headteachers and SIPs. SIPs are also informed by data and intelligence from their LA colleagues; they use all these to arrive at agreed school targets and proposed school classification, in discussion with Headteachers.

Targets and classifications are subject to LA ratification, and exceptionally a progress check process where there is disagreement. Targets are aggregated at LA level and in turn subject to National Strategies, Government Office for the South-East, DCSF and ultimately Ministerial ratification. Classification is used to ensure effective resource allocation through LA support, intervention and review.

The Unified Improvement Cycle, thus based on Self Evaluation, ensures:

- Consistent and rigorous monitoring by schools that enables officers of the LA to know the schools through the School Improvement Partner (SIP).
- Transparent use of an agreed set of warning signs that will trigger additional support for a school.
- Clear classification of all schools with a well-defined accompanying entitlement to services.
- Well co-ordinated and efficient actions, including deployment of LA resources, to prevent schools from falling into a position where their standards would be judged as inadequate
- Support for schools through the implementation of the revised statutory actions should a school find itself unable to respond to an improvement programme.

2. The Unified Improvement Cycle in Real Time

The aspiration of the New Relationship with Schools was that SIPs would deliver a “single conversation” with schools. The Unified Improvement Cycle aims to give practical shape to that aspiration. The school year and timing of the availability of pupil outcome data provides an annual cycle which is the basis for this. Therefore the cycle is set out in school terms, of which the busiest is the Autumn. Table 1 (to be expanded) gives an illustration of the cycle:

Table1: School, SIP and LA roles in the Unified Improvement Cycle

	School	SIP	LA
Autumn	Collation and analysis of results, reviewed against FFT/School targets; Consider SEF amendments. Target setting prep/meeting with SIP/Governors	Preparation for Initial/review visits, Discussion with school on outcomes, SEF/STIIP, targets, Review of classification. Discussion on support foci NoV and report back to LA Performance Management	Collation and analysis of LA-wide results. Preliminary check on existing school classifications. Briefing & debriefing SIPs. Confirmation of school classifications Ratification of targets, collation and submission to NS/discussion with NS/GOSE
Spring	Review of agreed aspects of activity with SIP Evaluation of interventions	Focus on confirming the evidence base on Teaching and Learning, Quality of Provision, and impact of Leadership and Management – key foci to reflect SEF/SDP ECM/partnerships	Continued preparation and launch of planning & performance documents for new financial year Review of end of financial year performance measures
Summer	Contribution to SIP discussions on SEF; Annual report to governors	Follow-up of work on evidence base as for Spring Term; Moderation of SEF; Report to governors reflecting key features across the year.	Review of annual reports and effectiveness of interventions

3. Self Evaluation

The SIP will judge the school's accuracy of, and response to, its self-assessment processes and validate the evidence offered (Appendix 1 provides a schedule of quality standards and a suggested professional process for addressing this). In the vast majority of cases both the school and the SIP will be in agreement and the school will receive the appropriate level of support. Following discussion each school will receive a letter detailing the type and amount of support. This will be embedded within an improvement plan agreed with the school. The

improvement plan will be the mechanism by which the impact of support and school actions will be measured.

Evidence to Support Self Review

Suggested sources of evidence may be:

- Analysis of data and trends over time;
- Analysis of progress in school development plans;
- Attendance data and analysis;
- Behaviour policy into practice;
- Benchmark group comparison;
- Budgetary outturn;
- Entry profiles and baseline assessment;
- Extended school and enrichment provision;
- FSP outcomes, SAT, GCSE and A level results;
- Governor meetings and minutes;
- Monitoring and evaluation records, etc.
- Observation of lessons;
- Ofsted;
- Parent voice;
- Planning documents;
- Progress in school targets;
- Provision for gifted and talented pupils;
- Provision for vulnerable pupils;
- Pupil voice;
- Pupils at work;
- Pupils' work;
- Raiseonline;
- Schemes of work;
- School internal assessment and testing;
- Value-added interpretations;

In the rare event that there is a difference of view between the school and the SIP, the LA will be called upon to carry out a review through the progress check process (see below).

4. School Classification

Process

The classification will thus operate in 3 stages:

Stage 1	Schools' own self review processes.
Stage 2	SIP validation of school's judgements and agreement on classification.
Stage 3	LA ratification of the classification, using all the available information

The aim is to inform the re-allocation of support, as noted above, so stage 3 is followed by confirmation of support and associated project targets. Details of how classification decisions are confirmed and what entitlements ensue are below.

All maintained schools in the local authority will be assigned one of 5 categories. The categories relate directly to the range of judgements defined within the “Framework for Inspection of Schools”. These being:

- Entitlement support
- Additional support
- Focussed support
- High support
- Supportive Intervention

Criteria and entitlements

Entitlement support: criteria

The school in this classification is successful, self managing and autonomous with standards at the end of each key stage in line with or exceeding national expectations. Schools will display many of the following features:

- leadership and management of the school demonstrates effective strategic planning and capacity for raising standards and improving the quality of education whilst articulating high expectations
- a robust and explicit focus on improving teaching and learning with teaching at least adequate in 100% of lessons and good or better in at least 75%;
- performance management systems that identify and remedy weak performance
- additional resources used in ways that bring about improvement that results in good value for money
- assignment of clear roles to senior leaders in raising standards and establishing appropriate lines of accountability
- use of data analysis by senior leaders to monitor value added within subject areas and identify areas that require significant improvement
- effective collaborations with others that lead to measurable improvements in those areas in greatest need of improvement
- senior leaders make effective use of the support that is available to them and evaluate its impact
- effective and confident Governors who challenge the Senior Team through processes that are robust, effective and which lead to raised aspirations
- attainment exceeds similar schools nationally
- there is no significant difference between the attainment of different groups of pupils within each year group
- effective transition practice focused on ensuring curriculum continuity and pupil progression
- teacher expectations are high and pupils report that they are challenged
- teachers and their managers understand and promote personalised learning
- the school provides a range of activities that enable C&YP to make healthy choices
- the school has effective strategies to promote and achieve safeguarding

- the school actively enables C&YP to be heard and to contribute to decision making
- the school ensures that the curriculum encourages learning that develops the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for economic well-being

Entitlement Support: partnership

Schools in this classification are expected to contribute to school improvement activities within the authority. The authority will negotiate with the school's Headteacher and Chair of Governing Body the form of support required from the school to support an aspect of school improvement work within the authority or within a designated school of the authority.

Entitlement Support: resource entitlement.

- Support through the LA National Strategies programme of support to schools
- 5 days of support from the School Improvement Partner
- Training determined by the Head of Learning and Achievement as mandatory for schools will be provided free of charge.
- The school can use its delegated funding to purchase support from teams within the Directorate for Children and Young People or other providers to meet their needs

Additional Support: criteria

This support will be assigned to a school where it is felt that specific temporary circumstances might hamper progress, or threaten the ability of the school to maintain standards that are otherwise secure. In such events even a high performing school can be vulnerable to rapid decline in standards whilst establishment of new systems and relationships, emergency or remedial actions divert human and financial resources away from the core business of teaching and learning.

The schools in this classification may be experiencing one or more of the circumstances listed below:

- the school has a new headteacher or an acting headteacher
- the school has a significant number of newly qualified teachers
- there has been a significant change in the governing body
- the school is undergoing a major building programme
- Supporting a newly appointed key member of senior staff
- Fire, flood or other emergency
- A one-off decline in standards of pupil performance
- Long term (in excess of 2 months) absence of key staff
- Adverse publicity for any reason
- Schools undergoing change of status

In such circumstances, a meeting of key officers and the school will ascertain the best possible support programme which will have very clear and short term deadlines. The school or LA officers may at any time bring such an event to the notice of the LA.

Additional Support: resource entitlement

- Support through the LA National Strategies programme of support to schools
- 5 days of support from the School Improvement Partner
- The Head of Learning and Achievement will assign to the school as well as the 5 days of SIP, a maximum of 3 further days of Officer time to support the additional need identified.
- Training determined by the Head of Learning and Achievement as mandatory for schools will be provided free of charge.
- The school can use its delegated funding to purchase support from teams within the Children's Services Directorate or other providers as appropriate

Focussed Support

The school in this classification displays some or all of these minimum expectations and are in need of support for key, focussed improvement:

- leadership and management of the school does not set high expectations
- national expectations of progress are not achieved
- targets are below national and local expectations
- performance between different groups in the same year is significant
- teaching is adequate in 90% of lessons and good in less than 60%
- the schools use of funding does not consistently demonstrate good value for money
- schools processes for self evaluation are not systematically defined and lack rigour
- the schools improvement plan does not adequately reflect the schools developmental needs
- the school provides some limited activities for C&YP to make healthy choices;
- the school has some procedures for safeguarding;
- the school allows C&YP to be heard ;
- the school plans some learning to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for economic well-being;
- ineffective or unwilling to collaborate with others appropriately to raise standards or secure pupil well-being.

Focussed Support: resource entitlement

- Support through the LA National Strategies programme of support to schools
- 5 days of support from the School Improvement Partner
- The Head of Learning and Achievement will assign to the school as well as the 5 days of SIP, a maximum of 10 further days of Officer time to support the focussed needs identified.
- The priority activities will be expressed in the form of a focussed support plan. The plan will be reviewed at termly meetings between the Commissioner for School Standards and the school's headteacher and chair of Governing Body.
- Training determined by the Head of Learning and Achievement as mandatory for schools will be provided free of charge.
- The school can use its delegated funding to purchase support from teams within the Children's Services Directorate

High Support: criteria

The school classified as requiring higher levels of support displays significance in several or all of the following features:

- judged by the Authority as likely to fall into an OFSTED category if inspected under Section 5;
- leadership and management of the school fails to set high expectations;
- progress rates are below national rates of progress;
- CVA is significantly low;
- targets are below LA expectations;
- attainment is below national floor targets in one or more areas;
- there is significant differential attainment between groups of pupils;
- teaching is inadequate in 10% or more of lessons;
- fixed or permanent exclusions are rising;
- attendance is below national expectations;
- significant levels of staff absence or vacancies;
- significant levels of complaints and /or grievances;
- the schools use of funding does not consistently demonstrate good value for money;
- schools processes for self evaluation are not systematically defined and lack rigour;
- the schools improvement plan does not adequately reflect the schools developmental needs;
- the school has limited activities for C&YP to make healthy choices;
- the schools procedure for safeguarding is under developed;
- there are limited opportunities for C&YP to be heard ;
- there is little evidence of learning to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for economic well-being;
- ineffective or unwilling to collaborate with others appropriately to raise standards or secure pupil well-being.

Schools in this category will receive further guidance through regular Challenge and Review meetings at least termly. Challenge and Review meetings will be carried out under the direction of the LA.

High Support: resource entitlement

- 5 days of support from the School Improvement Partner
- The Head of Learning and Achievement will assign to the school as well as the 5 days of SIP, a maximum of 20 further days of Officer time to support the intervention requirements of the Authority.
- The priority activities will be expressed in the form of a strategic intervention and improvement plan (STIIP). The STIIP will be reviewed at Challenge and Review meetings with the Head of Learning and Achievement.
- Training determined by the Head of Learning and Achievement as mandatory for schools will be provided free of charge.
- The school can use its delegated funding to purchase further support from teams within the Children's Services Directorate

Supportive Intervention: criteria

- the school has been identified through external inspection with a notice to improve or requiring special measures;

- judged by the Authority as likely to fall into an OFSTED category if inspected under Section 5;
- the SIP has concerns about the school and cannot secure agreement on action through professional dialogue with the head teacher and governors;
- the governing body has concerns about the school and cannot secure agreement on action through professional dialogue with the head teacher;
- there has been a serious breakdown in governance which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, standards of performance
- the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown in discipline or otherwise)

Schools in this category will receive further guidance through regular Challenge and Review meetings at least termly. Challenge and Review meetings will be carried out under the direction of the LA.

Supportive Intervention: resource entitlement

- up to a further 4 days of support from the School Improvement Partner
- The Head of Learning and Achievement will assign to the school as well as the 9 days of SIP, a maximum of 20 further days of Officer time to support the intervention requirements of the Authority.
- The priority activities will be expressed in the form of a strategic intervention and improvement plan (STIIP). The STIIP will be reviewed at termly Challenge and Review meetings with the Head of Learning and Achievement.
- Training determined by the Head of Learning and Achievement as mandatory for schools will be provided free of charge.
- The school will be required to use its delegated funding to purchase some of the support identified in the STIIP, including the additional 4 days from the SIP.

OfSTED gradings

From time to time OFSTED also rates the overall effectiveness of the school as outstanding (1), good (2), satisfactory (3) or inadequate (4), by investigating the following 5 aspects of the school:

1. How well do learners achieve?
2. How effective are the teaching, training and learning?
3. How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interest of learners?
4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?
5. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

All schools will be striving to attain an outstanding grading in all aspects of their work, and at the very least should be planning to move to the next level in each aspect (or sustain an “outstanding” level).

- Any school rated as overall Grade 4 in any of the aspects 1, 2 or 5 will automatically be classified *supportive intervention*.

- Any school with more than one Grade 4 on the standards and progress section, or more than one Grade 4 on the teaching and learning section would automatically be classified as *supportive intervention*.
- Any other Grade 4 ratings will be fully discussed with the school and SIP and either may then request *focussed support* classification.

5. Sharing good practice

It is essential to learn from and disseminate the expertise that develops in IOW schools. It will always, therefore, be part of the LA processes to identify and share good practice from these schools with others.

- senior managers in schools which have successfully been removed from supportive intervention will, when appropriate, be asked to share their expertise with other schools and/or mentor colleagues;
- teachers and other staff from all schools who exhibit quality practice may be asked to demonstrate their expertise to colleagues;
- SIPs will identify quality practice through the Validation process and agree with schools the ways in which this may be shared with colleagues.
- LA officers will also contribute their ongoing knowledge of good practice in schools and disseminate these through a variety of CPD opportunities.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Support

Each school leaving a classification other than “Entitlement” will be asked to complete an evaluation of the support received and its impact on the development needs identified. These, together with other data, will be used to evaluate activities identified in the Children and Young Peoples Plan and the Directorate’s Service Plan, and will inform future practice.

7. Leadership and Management and School Improvement Progress Checks

The Progress Check is an in-depth, audit across all aspects of the school focussing on school effectiveness and impact. It can be commissioned by the LA, or purchased by the school.

“A school or the Local Authority may seek a validated quality report e.g. prior to a Challenge and Review meeting. Or if a school knows that it will soon be inspected the headteacher and Governors may seek a robust external view of their effectiveness in time to address issues before the inspection proper.”

Progress Checks will be informed by the school’s own self-evaluation document. When commissioned by the LA, the progress check will be undertaken by local authority officers and their representatives in partnership with the school. The team will carry out a check using the SEF as a starting point. A report including recommendations for action will be produced for the headteacher and chair of governors of the school, the draft to be seen by the headteacher beforehand.

An unsatisfactory outcome to the review in a school in supportive intervention may precipitate actions as set out in the “Schools Causing Concern” guidance from the DfES, up to and including the current LA statutory duties under the Code of Practice (see annexe).

8. Local Authority Statutory Intervention

The Education and Inspection Act defines three situations where the LA would be expected to make a statutory intervention. It must firstly issue a Formal Warning Notice (FWN), in circumstances where:

1. the standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low, and likely to remain so unless the 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 of the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).

Any of the triggers could cause discussion about issue of a FWN. A school judged to be in decline or not responding to challenge may be issued with such a notice. However, the guidance is clear that where there are agreed (by LA and SIP) signs of positive work towards addressing the weakness and progress is being made a FWN will not be required.

A FWN will not be issued where:

- the LA has called for an early inspection;
- only one year’s data indicates a small decline;
- the school acknowledges the problem and is working with a SIP, mentor Headteacher or with appropriate training and support programmes;
- there have been recent (2 -3 terms) changes in school leadership; and
- the school has taken its own positive steps and is showing signs of effective monitoring and subsequent recovery.

The process of statutory intervention will be governed by the requirements of the Local Authority Code of Practice.