



BARNSELY SCHOOLS' ALLIANCE

EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

2022 - 2025

APPENDIX 3: SCHOOLS ESCALATION PROCESS SEPTEMBER 2021

SUPPORT

To collaborate and network to
drive excellence

CHALLENGE

To provoke educational enquiry to
deliver excellence

INSPIRE

Raising standards and expectations
through excellence

Revised Local Authority Escalation Process (September 2021)

REASONS FOR ESCALATION

Concerns about leadership and/or governance that is affecting one or more of the following:

- The quality of education offered to pupils
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes, including their attendance at school
- Pupils' personal development
- The safety, well-being and/or personal development of pupils
- The safety, well-being and/or professional development of staff.

Evidence of these concerns must be clearly documented by the SEO and/or allocated system leader and shared with the Head of the Barnsley Schools' Alliance, in the first instance.

STAGE 1: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY GROUP (SISG)

In primary schools, a SISG will be established in schools categorised as:

- Requiring 'targeted support' where there is not an IEB in place
- Schools categorised as 'getting to good'.

These meetings will take place monthly in the first instance, and half termly thereafter, as determined by the SEO in consultation with the HT and CoG. Members of the SISG should evaluate the impact of school improvement activity on improving the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, leadership and management and early years (in line with school improvement priorities). Colleagues should pay particular attention to:

- The school's response to the issues requiring improvement
- The pace of progress against the agreed improvement plan
- How effectively leaders are deploying the school's resources to meet identified needs
- The impact of improvement strategies on pupils' outcomes
- The effectiveness of leadership at all levels
- The quality of learning and teaching across the school
- The exit strategy, reducing support as the school increases its capacity to sustain improvement.

The SEO will update the Head of Education and Partnerships and the Quality of Education group as to whether the school is making reasonable progress given the evidence provided. If not, why not and what needs to be done about it?

The SISG will be made up of the HT; chair of governors; two or more other governors (carefully considered by SEO, HT and CoG); SEO; system leader and diocesan representative in aided schools.

SISG minutes will be confidential, but the chair of governors will share summary information with the full governing body.

Based on the evidence provided, the SEO and Head of Education and Partnerships will agree when it is appropriate to escalate to stage 2 and inform the Service Director Education Early Start and Prevention and Quality of Education Group.

STAGE 2: SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

These meetings will be held at the school. It will be called and chaired by the Head of Education and Partnerships on a monthly or half termly basis, as appropriate. Schools will receive a 'notice to improve' outlining the local authority's key concerns and expectations.

Required to attend:

- Headteacher
- Chair of Governors
- Representative from the appropriate diocesan authority, where appropriate
- Head of Education and Partnerships
- Primary or secondary chair of the BSA
- School Evaluation Officer
- Allocated system leader
- Clerk

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Hold the HT and governing body to account for securing the required improvements;
- To monitor and evaluate the extent to which funding from the BSA (and school budget) is being used to good effect
- To evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and establish the capacity to sustain improvement.

Agenda

- Present
- Matters arising from previous meeting
- External reports – SEO/System leader to provide evaluative overview of available documented evidence; evidence of impact of funded support etc.
- Internal reports – Headteacher to provide evidence of progress against school improvement priorities.
- Further support needs.
- Agreed actions and summary statement from Head of Education and Partnerships
- Date/time of next meeting.

Depending on the outcome of the summary statement, the Head of BSA and the Service Director Education, Early Start and Prevention will make a decision as to whether the escalation of concern will move to stage 3 of the process. Schools can expect to remain at stage 2 for approximately 2 terms. If the school is improving at the required pace, the process would revert back to stage 1. If the school is not improving at the required pace, the process may escalate to stage 3.

Consideration will be given to supportive measures that will strengthen governance. This may include the revision of governance arrangements, such as employing a paid professional chair for the governing board or review of committee structure and voting rights.

At stage 2, consideration will also be given to alternative long term systemic solutions, where appropriate.

STAGE 3: SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN – FORMAL WARNING NOTICE

When a school fails to improve at the required pace, we use our powers of intervention to secure improvement in maintained schools as outlined in the [Schools Causing Concern](#) guidance. Warning notices are issued to hold schools to account and the Head of Education Early Start and Partnerships following communicate with the RSC.

Warning notices may be issued when:

- 1) The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so;
- 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)
- 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 to a teacher at the school; or have failed to secure that the head teacher of the school complies with such a provision.

The LA provides effective challenge and support, encouraging schools to secure a strong academy sponsorship solution, when appropriate.

Although we have no direct intervention powers in academies, where concerns are raised, discussion takes place with school leaders to ensure that appropriate improvement plans are in place. If an academy did not appear to be addressing its poor performance adequately, this would be discussed with the RSC.

Regular discussions are held with our link HMI to ensure that schools causing concern are clearly identified and subsequently improve at the required pace.



BARNSLEY SCHOOLS' ALLIANCE

STRONGER TOGETHER TO IMPROVE EDUCATION

Support • Challenge • Inspire

