

# **School Improvement Strategy**

## **2017-2018**

Including

Local Authority Policy and Procedures  
for

Risk Assessment and Schools Causing Concern

*“Today’s education, tomorrow’s future”*

# School Improvement Strategy 2017-2018: List of Contents

- Section 1:** Foreword
- Section 2:** Introduction
- Section 3:** Key Principles
- Section 4:** Key Council Officer Roles relating to School Improvement
- Section 5:** Delivery of Functions
- Section 6:** Slough Policy for Annual Risk Assessment of Schools and Academies and Procedures for Improving Schools Causing Concern
- Section 7:** Policy and Procedures for Schools Causing Concern
- Section 8:** Risk Assessment Categories and Descriptors
- Appendix 1:** Local Authority Action Plan Template
- Appendix 2:** Local Authority Timeline of Actions and Milestones Template
- Appendix 3:** Example of School of Concern Meeting Agenda
- Appendix 4:** Pathway of Action for School of Concern not in Ofsted Category (Local Authority Category 5 and 6 Schools)
- Appendix 5:** Pathway of Action for Academy of Concern

# Slough Education Service School Improvement Strategy

## 1. Foreword

We take pride in what has been achieved in Slough through partnership work with schools, early years' settings and academies, and a strong focus on providing high quality services to children, young people and their families. We are committed to working closely with the Slough Children's Services Trust (SCST) and partners to focus on further education and employment opportunities for young people at post-16. Our aim is to provide children and young people with the best possible start in life and we firmly believe that high quality education from the earliest stage is the most important route to ensuring that they receive this.

We recognise the great strengths, achievements and hard work of pupils, early years settings, schools and academies in Slough. However, we know we can achieve more in our desire to ensure sustained excellent outcomes for all. This strategy sets out the ways in which the Council's raising achievement services will be delivered, in partnership with SCST and the Slough Teaching Schools Alliance (STSA). We have a duty to ensure all children have their entitlement to an inclusive education and, we will work with all partners to have a positive impact on the effectiveness and quality of education in Slough. We aim to ensure that all our children and young people receive an education which is good or better in Ofsted terms, and that they should achieve their potential, no matter what barriers they may face.

We will build on what has been achieved through the work of the Children and Young People's Partnership: the many services across the Council that support our schools and through our close links with other agencies, businesses and the local voluntary sector. In partnership we can demonstrate our continued commitment to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families and ensure that children from all backgrounds, especially those that are disadvantaged, are able to prosper in the future. We also place the highest emphasis on the promotion of the safety and well-being of children and young people, which is so essential in supporting educational success.

The council has overseen the return of all educational services from its external partner (completed in December 2016) Cambridge Education. This has afforded a renewed opportunity to engage directly with all stakeholders in schools and to build and develop on strong partnerships that already exist. The SCST is a key partner in ensuring standards for our most disadvantaged pupils are kept high.

Our Children and Young People's Plan harnesses the energy of all our partners towards the core purpose which is:

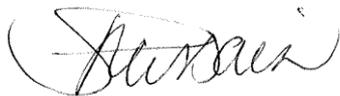
- Keeping children and young people safe, giving them the best start and creating positive opportunities for healthy, happy lives.

Some key priorities of the Plan are to:

- To provide outstanding services to the most vulnerable children and young people in the borough.
- To ensure children and young people are engaged and helped to access opportunities that will enable them to reach their full potential. .

Our premise is that every child and young person has the entitlement to an excellent

education. Children's Centres, Early Years' settings and schools contribute so much to ensuring that we can achieve our vision and strategic priorities and develop active, responsible and successful learners who are leaders of the future, with the opportunity to work in a thriving local economy. We will do all we can, working with them, to ensure that every educational setting in Slough is excellent.



Sabia Hussain

**Cabinet Member  
for Children's Services**



Jo Moxon

**Interim Director  
of Children, Learning & Skills**

## 2. Introduction

This Strategy is based on a strong partnership approach across the Slough education community. It is about working together to strengthen schools and raise standards, particularly related to the needs of vulnerable groups. The emphasis is on collaboration and taking pre-emptive action to avoid the escalation of difficulties. The intention is to have robust schools which can not only improve themselves but can also reach out to support others. The Local Authority will take a strategic overview, supporting and brokering early support for those in difficulty and championing a collaborative and positive approach which involves constructive challenge to drive along a path to all schools being good or outstanding. It will foster a close relationship with the Slough Teaching Schools Alliance in order to ensure there is strong support for schools as well as other key stakeholders.

Slough is an urban area, comprising densely populated and richly diverse communities. It has a strong business sector including the headquarters of several key multi-national companies and a 21st century profile of innovative and creative industries. There are, however, significant pockets of disadvantage and many vulnerable children, with high numbers of new migrants and asylum seekers from more than 70 different countries, unaccompanied minors and transient families. There are also large variations in terms of affluence and deprivation among neighborhoods across Slough.

Over 140 different languages are spoken across Slough and more than 50 different languages are spoken as a first language by children in Slough schools. Within Slough there are well-established ethnic communities. As well as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, one third of the population was born outside of the UK and one fifth from outside the European Union

Schools, early years settings and the Local Authority are working at a time of great change, as many schools move to academy status, and the role of the Local Authority (LA) is redefined. In Slough, this does not alter the joint commitment to the children and young people. The LA looks forward to a continuing thriving relationship with academies, schools, and other partners as it aims to deliver excellence and high standards for all pupils and their families. The Slough Teaching Schools Alliance, multi-academy trusts (MATs), school trusts, children's centre hubs and other school collaborations are significant and exciting innovations, and the LA anticipates working collaboratively with all partnerships as they develop. The LA welcomes any opportunity to work with private, voluntary and independent settings, maintained schools and academies to promote the best possible education for children and young people across the community. The LA will seek ways to link actions within this strategy to other work across Slough such as the development of apprenticeships and raising participation.

## 3. Key Principles

This work is underpinned by the following key principles:

- Educational achievement is the most effective way to improve outcomes and break cycles of deprivation and poverty. Improving life chances for all is therefore the key driver of this work and there is a crucial role for everyone in shifting the focus from

dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives, to early identification and intervention and safeguarding them in the first place.

- High quality early education is good for children, with positive short and longer term impacts on their learning and development. Early years education is also good for equality, with the most disadvantaged children reaping the greatest benefits.
- Partnerships have a key role to play because they provide a rich combination of high expectations, innovative thinking and a strong community within which all learners can thrive and achieve.
- While schools are self-managing and autonomous institutions, responsible for their own performance and improvement, the LA will support and challenge them and intervene where appropriate. The LA will aim to improve and sustain improvement, both in attainment and in the achievement and rate of progress of our children and young people.
- Learning must be personalised, and partners will work together to close the attainment gap for all pupils and particularly for our most vulnerable groups.
- All pupils, and in particular the most vulnerable, must have the support they need to overcome any barriers to their learning and well-being.
- The range of high quality opportunities for 14 – 19 year olds (and to 25 for those with SEND who remain in education or training) will continue to be a priority, in order to meet the interests, aspirations and needs of Slough's young people, and to respond to the raising of the participation agenda.
- The LA will continue to work with parents, families, communities and partners to manage delivery of its services through a common approach, resulting in improved outcomes for children and young people in Slough, particularly the most vulnerable.

#### **4. Key Council Officer Roles relating to School Improvement**

***Lead Member for Education – Sabia Hussain***

***Interim Director of Children, Learning & Skills – Jo Moxon***

***Head of Education standards and Inclusive learning – Johnny Kyriacou***

***Head of Access and Inclusion – Tony Browne***

***Head of Early Education and Development – Rachel Cartwright***

***Head of Partnerships – Rodney D'Costa***

***Education Safeguarding Officer – to be appointed***

***Primary Education Standards and Partnerships Office – TBA***

***Secondary and Post 16 Standards and Partnerships Office - TBA***

*Headteacher of the Virtual School CIC – Ann Bunce*

*Head of Service for SEND and Inclusion – Robert Hardy, SCST*

## **5. Delivery of Statutory Functions**

### **Partnership and Collaboration**

The Children, Learning and Skills service works closely with a range of partners within and beyond the council to improve schools. The provision of high quality early help is of key importance in our drive to ensure that all children, in particular the most vulnerable, have access to the support and guidance that they need to achieve their full potential. The developing focus on early help will include schools and a wider range of services to reduce exclusions, improve attendance and increase participation in education and training.

### **Challenging Underachievement**

Funded from the general Council fund and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), the function is to monitor the effectiveness of schools, identify risk and underperformance and intervene in those schools causing most concern. Information and intelligence from a range of sources will be used to perform the annual risks assessments.

Through the use of an Education Consultant Team, managed by the Council, the Local Authority will carry out a programme of visits to all maintained schools in order to secure an accurate risk assessment. (Academies and Free Schools can also opt in to this service). Together with the use of all other available data, these visits will also ensure all settings receive an appropriate level of support and challenge in order to achieve and maintain the improvements to the quality of education and outcomes that are required. All schools and academies will be invited to submit relevant attainment targets for Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 outcomes in the autumn term. Schools judged a school of concern will be required to submit termly assessment and tracking information in order to monitor progress towards agreed improvement. A termly programme of focused visits by consultants will be published ahead of schedule. In the Spring term there will be a focus on inclusion and the tracking of outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The summer term will have a focus on leadership and management to ensure school leaders are on track to inspire the best outcomes for all young people.

### **Challenging Attainment Gaps and provision on behalf of Vulnerable Children and Young People**

All educational institutions and stakeholders play a part in closing gaps in provision and attainment on behalf of vulnerable children and young people. The contribution of inclusivity to the risk assessment process includes an annual conversation around inclusion. We will also conduct an inclusion conversation with all academies which have not opted in to the Education Consultancy for the autumn term visit. Local Authority

teams working with children and families of vulnerable groups have a duty to monitor their inclusion and education provision and challenge on their behalf where provision is failing to meet their needs. Performance data related to children looked after will be collected on a termly basis by the Virtual Head and her team.

### **Promoting Excellence**

This includes responsibility for desk top monitoring and providing information and conversations with the Ofsted Lead Inspector at the point of school inspection.

The Children's Learning & Skills service in the Council works in close partnership with a range of providers, increasingly engaging with national leaders of education, local leaders of education, specialist leaders of education and local teaching schools to offer a wide range of training and support purchased by schools. Excellence in high achieving schools will be recognised and used to form supportive networks and partnerships with schools requiring improvement.

### **Challenging and Supporting Governance**

Ineffective governance will be challenged and supported via the School of Concern process, with the use of additional governors or the imposition of an Interim Executive Board (IEB) being possible courses of action. The LA will also provide a source of support for governors and facilitate training where needed.

### **Support for Headteacher Recruitment and Sustained High Quality Leadership**

Local Authority Senior Officers support the appointment of maintained school Headteachers and Academy Headteachers by invitation. In collaboration with the STSA the Local Authority provides an induction programme for newly-appointed Headteachers

### **Traded Services –**

Services to support school improvement traded by the Education Service include Education Psychologists and catering. More traded services will be developed by the council with regards school improvement in the future, including consultancy and more.

### **Education Safeguarding**

The LA works in close partnerships with SCST and SLSCB (Slough Local Safeguarding Children's Board) to prioritise safeguarding in education settings. The work of the newly designed role for education safeguarding will support schools compliance with necessary procedures to keep children and young people safe and satisfy the requirements of Ofsted inspections. Headteachers will be represented on the major boards relating to safeguarding practice including the SLSCB Education subgroup. The LA requires all education settings to submit a regular Section 11 self assessment. The returns are analysed and monitored by the safeguarding board and support and challenge given back to schools where shortcomings are noted. Regular training will be provided by the safeguarding board and designated teachers will be invited to regular meetings and training events.

## SACRE

The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education is supported and clerked by the Local Authority. This group fulfils all statutory functions related to the provision of religious education in maintained schools and is supported by a part-time Local Authority Religious Education Consultant.

The Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education is made available to all schools and academies via the Slough web-site.

## The Education of Children in Care

There is a Virtual Headteacher and a small support team within SCST. Their role is to monitor provision, ensure inclusion and provide challenge and additional support to raise educational attainment for all children in care as well as those for whom the Local Authority is the Corporate Parent. There is an expectation that all schools and academies share progress data on a termly basis to support this process.

## Summary of functions and access to Local Authority support

	Annual Risk Assessment and Categorisation by LA	Bespoke Consultancy offer	Annual conversation re vulnerable groups and inclusion	LA School of Concern work.	Successful school used as partners by invitation of LA/STSA	Access to LA Traded Services	Local RE Syllabus applies
Maintained Community School	✓	✓	Included in Termly Visit	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sponsored Academy	✓	By agreement with LA	✓	By agreement with LA	✓	✓	Academy Syllabus
Independent Academy or Free School	✓	By agreement with LA	✓	By agreement with LA	✓	✓	Academy Syllabus
Special School	✓	Depends on status	✓	✓	✓	✓	Depends on status
PRU	✓	Depends on status	✓	✓	✓	✓	Depends on status

## **6. Slough Policy for Annual Risk Assessment of Schools and Academies and Procedures for Improving Schools Causing Concern**

We acknowledge the increasingly diverse landscape of school designation, but SBC holds responsibility for the quality of education provision in all settings regardless of their funding source. We are also accountable for educational opportunities offered to the most vulnerable learners. For these reasons we need to establish and sustain effective working partnerships with our providers and will use the data and information available to us to make judgements on the quality of education in all settings.

From December 2016 the Autumn Term Visit function and follow up will be administered by the Education Consultant Team and information shared with the LA in order to inform Risk Assessment judgements. There will be an annual assessment of school standards and quality, following a detailed discussion between allocated consultants and senior leadership teams in all maintained schools. This meeting will take place in the Autumn Term and the judgement will be subject to moderation: following moderation, the risk assessment judgement will be formally communicated to individual schools. This judgement will form the basis of subsequent engagement with the local authority and partner schools and will be reviewed at follow-up meetings in the spring and summer term. Academies can access these visits also.

A desktop monitoring process will be used for all academies not accessing the ATV or Education Consultant Team. All available information and data will be used to determine a risk assessment categorisation and academies will have the opportunity to present more evidence if they feel that the Local Authority judgement should be reconsidered.

- **Ofsted Categories**

The Ofsted framework for the inspection of schools requires all schools to achieve a good or better judgement or be subject to close monitoring by HMI. Schools that are judged as 'requiring improvement' will normally be monitored and re-inspected within a period of two years; the timing of the re-inspection will reflect the individual school's circumstances and will be informed by what inspectors find at the monitoring visits.

If a school is judged as 'requiring improvement' at two consecutive inspections and is still not 'good' at a third inspection, it is likely to be deemed 'inadequate' and to require special measures.

The Local Authority will ensure that all schools judged as requiring improvement move swiftly to a well-evidenced and sustainable position that is good in regard to outcomes and the impact of improvement strategies. The approach of the Local Authority is to ensure that all requiring improvement schools have developed robust action plans and, where appropriate, are supported by high-achieving schools and/or system leaders. Action plans will be monitored and progress measured. Not all requiring improvement schools will be schools of concern to the Local Authority, but each will be judged on its performance and progress as part of the normal Risk Assessment process.

- **Gathering Information about Schools and Academies**

The Local Authority will use all available data and information to assess the effectiveness of schools prior to annual categorisation following risk assessment. Any emerging risk indicators are shared with schools/academies early in the autumn term. The Local Authority will provide support and challenge through the Education Consultant Team to enable more in-depth knowledge of school self-evaluation and trajectories to contribute to a more robust process for risk assessment and Local Authority categorisation. The Autumn conversation will include a focus on relevant risk indicators and provide valuable opportunities to contribute to risk assessment judgements and to identify opportunities to share best practice. Key outcomes from these conversations and those later in the year will be shared with the Teaching School Alliance in order to inform the planning of professional development opportunities.

For Academies not wishing to engage with a full conversation, a discussion will take place related to inclusion and the quality of provision and outcomes for vulnerable groups. In addition, those academies identified through an early autumn term desk-top risk analysis will also be given the opportunity to provide additional evidence ahead of the Local Authority categorisation. The Risk Assessment will be shared with the Regional Schools Commissioner if asked about the progress of an academy or school by the RSC office. It is therefore in the interest of all schools that the LA has positive intelligence to share with the RSC and any external organisations such as Ofsted that are looking to gather information on school performance.

## **Annual Review and Risk Assessment**

All schools and academies will receive a letter annually to inform them how the Local Authority intends to categorise the school or academy on the basis of the evidence available. Academies not participating in the ATV process may wish to provide additional evidence to contribute to the risk assessment judgement. The purpose of the risk assessment process is not only to seek early intervention to schools at risk of decline or failure but also to celebrate success and identify best practice with a view to sharing it. The six categories are as follows:

- Category 1: Sustaining Distinction
- Category 2: Aspiring to Distinction
- Category 3: Sustaining Quality
- Category 4: Aspiring to Quality
- Category 5: School of Concern
- Category 6: School of Extreme Concern

For additional detail on the criteria for each category see Section 8.

## 7. Policy and Procedures for Schools Causing Concern

The Local Authority policy is in line with the DfE statutory guidance for schools causing concern, the Education Act 2011 and DfE guidance on Local Authority's powers of intervention 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-causing-concern--2>

- In the case of Local Authority maintained schools, where necessary, Local Authority statutory powers, also held by the Regional Schools Commissioner, will be used to seek structural solutions to secure rapid improvement. Urgent action in cases of serious concern will include:
  - in extreme circumstances, closure
  - issuing warning notices
  - removal of governors and instigation of an Interim Executive Board
  - swift academisation
  - strengthening governing bodies
  - strengthening leadership – Interim Headteachers, Associate Headteachers and Executive Headteachers
  - school to school partnership and locality support
- **Identification of Schools Causing Concern to the Local Authority (including Academies)**

Schools causing concern are identified from data analyses and information from a range of sources including ATV reports, safeguarding concerns, parental concerns and Ofsted inspections. Triggers to judge schools as 'causing concern' include the following:

- Under-performance of schools, departments/subjects and groups, including vulnerable groups, based on data from a range of sources
- Failure to meet the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children particularly those in care
- Declining trends in standards and progression across school or within a key stage or subject – making a school vulnerable to falling below the published floor standard
- Low progress in one or both English and mathematics
- Under-performance and/ or inadequate provision in Early Years
- Poor progress in KS 4 measures including English and mathematics

- Significant variation in the performance between different groups in the school
  - Concerns where the leadership or governance fails to take urgent action to raise standards
  - A significant number of complaints identifies a lack of confidence in the school by parents and stakeholders
  - Weaknesses in leadership and management, including governance
  - Poor financial management, including prolonged deficit or significant surplus aligned with poor outcomes
  - Issues with regard to safeguarding pupils, including poor behaviour management
  - High levels of exclusion
  - Value added measures in a range of outcomes
  - Unusually high staff turnover
  - Poor attendance
  - High risk of categorisation at next inspection
  - A school deemed to be coasting by the current DfE definitions
- **Intervention Strategies – Local Authority Maintained Schools**

The local authority and school will draw up aligned action plans to address the identified area(s) of weakness (*appendix 1*). A timeline of action with associated milestones will also be drawn up against which progress will be measured (*appendix 2*). These plans should contain pupil outcomes and targets above the floor standard (as defined by the DfE). The school will fund areas of action, support, CPD and additional challenge, which may be brokered or commissioned by the Local Authority or from an external provider which may include a high performing school. This is likely to include the use of a National Leader of Education (NLE), Local Leader of Education (LLE) or Specialist Leader in Education (SLE). Local Authority commissioned support will also be documented in the SoC action plan following discussion with a Local Authority Senior Officer. The Headteacher should share the action plan with Governors, while an appointed sub-group should monitor improvements regularly; relevant feedback from this group will be shared with the wider governing body. This sub-group may be known as the School Improvement Committee (SIC). It is possible that external support and development will also include a review of governance.

Where appropriate, schools may engage in additional work with identified schools in order to provide bespoke support to achieve improvements identified in the relevant improvement plans. Such support could be brokered by the LA and the STSA based on a clear commitment from the school and the rigour and urgency related to agreed outcomes.

If the capability of the Headteacher is brought into question and procedures have to be

undertaken, this confidential matter will be withheld from all Governors except the Chair and Vice Chair and will not be part of the SoC action plan. Separate documentation will be prepared for confidential processes and will need to be supported by the appropriate human resources provider. If external services are purchased for HR, it is expected that they will work with the LA to follow the necessary procedures.

- **Monitoring**

Monitoring and evaluation of schools of concern may include reviews of leadership and management, teaching and learning, governance, and all SEN provision and outcomes. The assigned Local Authority Senior Officer will monitor the school's progress frequently. Each term, school leadership is required to attend a School of Concern meeting with the representatives of the Director of Children's Services in order to account for the improvements made. This meeting will lead to a formal judgment of progress and may lead to adjustments to the relevant action plans. All intervention will be recorded on visit reports and sent to the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.

Where significant or sustained insufficient progress is recorded, the Local Authority may issue a 'Warning Letter', indicating a clear expectation of improved progress in identified areas by the next school of concern meeting. A subsequent judgment of insufficient progress is then likely to lead to a formal warning notice being issued.

- **Progress and Removal from School of Concern**

When the school has made suitable progress and is considered no longer to be of concern to the Local Authority, the Headteacher and Chair will be notified in writing by the Director of Children's Services.

- **Further Intervention**

If a school makes insufficient progress over the identified timescales or is facing extreme circumstances, the Local Authority will move to the next stages of the DFE Code of Practice. The ultimate powers of the Local Authority include: requesting an early inspection; removing delegated powers; requiring collaboration with another school; promoting Academy status or replacing the Governing Body with an IEB following a Warning Notice. In this situation, the IEB will be made up of highly-skilled and experienced people and will be provided with a clear remit to oversee the required improvements within an agreed timescale. The exit strategy will include clear targets related to the quality of provision and the attainment of pupils, with the formation of a 'shadow governing body' before passing responsibility for governance to a newly constituted full governing body, usually as part of an Academy sponsorship. Any or all of these powers can be superseded by action from the RSC and can include forced movement to Academy status with a sponsor.

In certain circumstances, interventions by the Local Authority may include appointing an Executive Headteacher from a successful school. It may also be appropriate to seek a structural solution, to partner the school with a successful sponsor or with an existing Academy.

- **Intervention Strategies for Academies**

Where Academies are showing evidence of declining standards, lack of inclusive practice or a less than good Ofsted inspection outcomes, the Local Authority has a duty on behalf of children and young people and their parents/carers to enter into dialogue with the relevant partners.

In the case of an independent Academy a meeting will be offered with the Chair of Governors or equivalent and the Headteacher to seek assurances that suitable plans are in place to improve standards. The Local Authority will seek assurance that the school will become good within an identified time frame and will continue to monitor progress.

In the case of sponsored Academies, a meeting will be sought with appropriate representatives to discuss the strategies in place to secure rapid improvement. Where there is a sustained lack of progress in addressing identified concerns in either a sponsored or converter academy, the Local Authority will write to the RSC. This letter will also indicate the intention of the Local Authority to inform the Secretary of State if clearly evidenced improvements are not made. The Local Authority will also follow advice from HMI of concerns related to particular academies.

In both cases, the Local Authority will also offer the facility to broker or provide support in partnership with the Academy Chair or Sponsor Organisation. A failure to secure dialogue about the Local Authority's concerns about the projections for rapid improvement will form the basis of a conversation with the DfE and the EFA to seek advice about how the Local Authority might then best fulfil its duty.

The aim is to work together with all partners in a culture of professional respect in order to provide good education for all children and young people.

- **Local Authority Maintained Schools in Ofsted Categories**

When schools are judged by Ofsted to have serious weaknesses or are deemed to be in Special Measures, the DfE and Ofsted guidance will be followed. Procedures for intervention will include:

- Formal intervention in governance Headteacher capability procedures invoked via the governing body, administered by the LA.
- Move to Academy sponsorship
- Merger if the school is an infant or junior school and joint arrangements can be easily accessed.

It is also possible that the Secretary of State may choose to intervene and Academy solutions will be pursued via the DfE in dialogue with the school and the Local Authority.

**The Secretary of State's Powers** are delegated to the RSC and supersede those of the Local Authority. In line with the Education and Adoption Act (March 2016) the RSC has the power to:

- ***appoint additional Governors***
- ***direct the closure of a school***
- ***appoint an interim executive board***
- ***to issue an academy order***

## **HMI and DfE involvement**

HMI and DfE representatives hold regular meetings with the Local Authority. The Local Authority is frequently challenged by both organisations, relating to interventions in named schools identified from national data and information. The Local Authority has a duty to report honestly and fairly to the DfE and HMI on Local Authority support and intervention in our schools of concern.

### **• The Role of Governors**

The Chair of Governors and the Headteacher will be notified when a school is identified as a School of Concern and of the issues of concern. This should be shared with the whole Governing Body under Part B of the full Governors' meeting.

Governors are responsible for ensuring that the school is implementing the actions outlined in the SoC action plan to address the issues identified and has the mechanisms and capacity to improve.

The Governors are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress of both plans and should have systems in place to support this. It is expected that a minuted 'School Improvement Committee' of Governors will be set up to formally review progress on at least a half-termly basis. If a committee already exists such as a 'Teaching and Learning Committee' this group may assume the responsibility. The Governor Support Service can provide a clerk for these meetings, at an additional cost.

An assigned Local Authority Officer will support the Governors with this review. In addition to this review, Governors will need to establish a timetable of monitoring visits to check progress on the key issues for improvement. This may be incorporated in, or additional to, the SoC plan. Governors should also consider whether it is appropriate for key issues of concern to inform the Headteacher's Performance Management objectives.

The Chair of Governors will be invited with the Headteacher to attend the termly SoC meeting with the DCS or their representative. See appendix 3 for example of SoC meeting agenda.

### **• The monitoring role of the School Improvement Committee (SIC)**

The SIC will meet with the Headteacher and the assigned Local Authority officer at least once per term. Each priority of the Local Authority action plan will be examined and discussed and evidence of progress will be presented by the school and evaluated. Governors will have the opportunity to challenge this evidence and the view that has been taken of the rate of progress. Further actions and support needs may be identified. These meetings must be minuted as they will provide essential evidence for the meeting with the Assistant Director and subsequent monitoring inspections.

- **Schools judged to be Requiring Improvement by Ofsted**

The Local Authority acknowledges the need for rapid progress in schools judged to be 'Requiring Improvement' by Ofsted. Some of these schools may be categorised as of concern and others not. The range of outcomes in the requiring improvement category and the Local Authority's knowledge of the school's capacity for improvement will determine the level of intervention required. The Local Authority will monitor the progress of requiring improvement schools closely and revise the category, in-year, if it is needed.

- **The role and remit of the Slough Education Improvement Board**

It will be appropriate in the future to establish an accountability structure in the form of an education improvement board. The Board will meet termly and comprise representatives from all education organisations and partners who are responsible for education standards. The Board will receive information about education provision and outcomes. Members will challenge each other about provision and the pace of improvement in the organisations for which they are responsible.

## **8. Risk Assessment of Slough Schools 2016-2017 Categorisation**

### **Category 1: Sustaining Distinction**

#### ***Criteria:***

Judged outstanding at most recent inspection, the school has the capacity to drive its own development. Succession planning is secure, partnerships strong and there is good capacity to support improvement in partner schools, leading on professional development in a range of aspects. Leadership is strong and the Headteacher can actively demonstrate they are sharing excellence with other schools and settings.

### **Category 2: Aspiring to Distinction**

#### ***Criteria:***

Judged 'Good' at the most recent inspection but Local Authority Risk Assessment indicates secure evidence of outstanding improvement that can be sustained. There is secure evidence of improving outcomes for pupils and of significant progress against the Ofsted areas identified for improvement. Leadership is strong. The school is developing effective partnerships that add value to both its own development and that of other schools.

OR

Schools judged to be outstanding at the most recent inspection but Local Authority Risk Assessment indicates this may not be sustained by declining pupil outcomes or other significant factors that are impacting on the school's capacity to sustain distinction.

### **Category 3: Sustaining Quality**

#### ***Criteria:***

Judged 'Good' at the most recent inspection and there is evidence of sustained outcomes at this level for pupils in all areas. Leadership is solid and sustained. No significant concerns for this school are evidenced.

### **Category 4: Aspiring to Quality**

#### ***Criteria:***

Schools judged to be 'Requiring Improvement' at their most recent inspection. The school is aware of its priorities for improvement and is demonstrating the necessary capacity to drive improvement and requires only light touch support. It is likely that leadership and management are graded as good.

OR

Judged to be 'Good' at the most recent inspection but Local Authority Risk Assessment indicates a decline in pupil outcomes. However the school is aware of priorities for improvement and has good capacity to drive improvement. It works effectively with partners to secure professional development and to ensure the success of improvement strategies.

### ***Local Authority Intervention:***

In addition to a programme of bespoke support provided by the LA, an action plan will be required from the school to which the Local Authority may seek to add support. Schools will be expected to fund additional support and have an opportunity to apply for a deployment fund to provide financial aid for external support only in extreme circumstances. A brief overview of the development needs of the school will be generated and include any intervention and support brokered by the Local Authority. The school will have regular contact with the Local Authority and be required to submit pupil data on a termly basis. Outcomes will be reported to the DCS or their representative. Progress will be reviewed termly and failure to make effective progress against the key issues will result in the school being judged as a school of concern.

The attached Officer will communicate with HMI during any Ofsted monitoring or inspection activities.

### **Category 5: School of Concern to the Local Authority**

#### ***Criteria:***

Schools judged to be 'Requiring Improvement' at their most recent inspection. The school lacks the necessary capacity to drive improvement at the pace required and requires external support.

OR

Schools judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' at the most recent inspection but Local Authority Risk Assessment indicates increasing concerns about declining pupil outcomes or other significant factors that are impacting on the school's capacity to drive improvement within the required timescales. The school is deemed at risk of an Ofsted category and may require external support to accelerate progress at a rapid pace.

#### ***Local Authority Intervention:***

A Senior Officer will be assigned to monitor the school and intervention may include a Local Authority brokered review that produces a strategic improvement plan with clear targets and success criteria (appendix 1). Facilitation of appropriate partnership working will be brokered, e.g. with an LLE/NLE, Teaching School Alliance, partner school / academy or an allocated LA school improvement adviser. Progress will be monitored against the timeline of action and associated milestones (appendix 2). Termly School of Concern meetings for the Headteacher and Chair of Governors with the DCS or their representative will be arranged to review progress on implementing the Improvement Plan. At these meetings, a formal judgment on progress against the key issues will be made; failure to make effective progress may result in a Pre-Warning Letter and subsequently a Warning Notice being issued or may trigger accelerated Local Authority intervention in line with this policy. The attached Officer or the LA will communicate with HMI during any monitoring or inspection activities.

## **Category 6: Extreme Concern to the Local Authority, Ofsted Special Measures or Serious Weaknesses**

### ***Criteria:***

These schools are already in an Ofsted category or showing signs of persistently low standards (below floor), declining trends, poor behaviour or ineffective leadership.

### ***Local Authority Intervention:***

For maintained schools, a Senior Officer will be assigned and will write a detailed Local Authority statement, plan of action matched to the school's priority improvement needs and draw up a timeline with associated milestones to be adhered to. (See Appendix 1 and 2) For Academies, the Local Authority will converse with the sponsor or governing body to monitor provision and progress. The statement of action will detail commissioning of support and interventions, including structural solutions. A regular meeting for the Headteacher and Chair of Governors with the DCS or their representative will be arranged to review progress on implementing the Improvement Plan. A formal judgment on progress against the key issues will be made at the termly School of Concern review meetings and failure to make effective progress may result in a Pre-Warning Letter and subsequently a Warning Notice being issued or accelerated Local Authority intervention in line with this policy.

# Appendix 1

## Local Authority Action Plan Template Category 5 and 6

## **A PRIMARY SCHOOL**

# **LOCAL AUTHORITY CATEGORY 5/6 ACTION PLAN**

**Date:**

## **Local Authority Priorities**

1. To support the school in developing and implementing appropriate strategies to deliver their action plan in the planned timescale ensuring that by (date), the serious weaknesses identified in the inspection report of (date) no longer remain
2. To support the school in making rapid progress against the key issues and build a secure platform for sustainable development:

**Area for Improvement 1:**

**Area for Improvement 2:**

**Area for Improvement 3:**

3. To monitor the actions taken and to evaluate the impact against the identified success criteria

## Performance and Targets

<b>Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2years previous</b>	<b>2years previous national</b>	<b>School Target 1 year previous</b>	<b>Outcome 1year previous</b>	<b>1year previous national</b>	<b>Target for current year</b>
Good level of development						

<b>Baseline Assessment</b>						
TBC						
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>2years previous</b>	<b>2years previous national</b>	<b>School Target 1 year previous</b>	<b>Outcome 1year previous</b>	<b>1year previous national</b>	<b>Target for current year</b>
Phonic screening						
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>2years previous</b>	<b>2years previous national</b>	<b>School Target 1 year previous</b>	<b>Outcome 1year previous</b>	<b>1year previous national</b>	<b>Target for current year</b>
Phonics screening						

<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>2years previous</b>	<b>2years previous national</b>	<b>School Target 1 year previous</b>	<b>Outcome 1year previous</b>	<b>1year previous national</b>	<b>Target for current year</b>
TBC						

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>2years previous</b>	<b>2years previous national</b>	<b>School Target 1 year previous</b>	<b>Outcome 1year previous</b>	<b>1year previous national</b>	<b>Target for current year</b>
Attendance rates (primary)						
Persistent absence 15% (primary)						
<b>Quality of Teaching</b>	<b>Act (date)</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Target</b>
% of teaching judged RI or better						
% of teaching judged good or better						
% of teaching judged outstanding						

## 1. Area for Improvement 1

Targets:					
•					
Improvement Needed	Action	Resources	Timescales		Success Criteria
			Start	Finish	
1a	(i) (ii) (iii)				
1b	(i) (ii) (iii)				
1c					
1d					
Milestone 1 (Date)	Milestone 2 (Date)	Milestone 3 (Date)	Milestone 4 (Date)	Milestone 5 (Date)	
•	•	•	•	•	

## 2. Area for Improvement 2

Targets:					
•					
Improvement Needed	Action	Resources	Timescales		Success Criteria
			Start	Finish	
Milestone 1 (Date)	Milestone 2 (Date)	Milestone 3 (Date)	Milestone 4 (Date)	Milestone 5 (Date)	
•	•	•	•	•	

### 3. Area for Improvement 3

Targets:					
•					
Improvement Needed	Action	Resources	Timescales		Success Criteria
			Start	Finish	
Milestone 1 (Date)	Milestone 2 (Date)	Milestone 3 (Date)	Milestone 4 (Date)	Milestone 5 (Date)	
•	•	•	•	•	

Monitoring Strategies (Internal)			Evaluation Strategies (Internal)		
Who?	What?	When?	Who?	What?	When?
Monitoring Strategies (External)			Evaluation Strategies (External)		
Who?	What?	When?	Who?	What?	When?

## **Appendix 2**

### **Local Authority Timeline of Actions and Milestones Template**

#### **Category 5 and 6**

## **A PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **LOCAL AUTHORITY TIMELINE of ACTIONS and MILESTONES**

**AFI Sample**

		Month																	
<b>1a</b>																			
(i)																			
(ii)																			
(iii)																			
(iv)																			
(v)																			
<b>1b</b>																			
(i)																			
(ii)																			
(iii)																			
(iv)																			
(v)																			
<b>1c</b>																			
(i)																			
(ii)																			
(iii)																			
(iv)																			
(v)																			
<b>1d</b>																			
(i)																			
(ii)																			
(iii)																			
(iv)																			
(v)																			
<b>1e</b>																			
(i)																			
(ii)																			
(iii)																			
(iv)																			
(v)																			

Milestone 1 (Date)	Milestone 2 (Date)	Milestone 3 (Date)	Milestone 4 (Date)	Milestone 5 (Date)

# **Appendix 3**

## **Example of School of Concern Meeting Agenda**

**Name of School**  
**School of Concern Meeting**  
**Date, time, venue of meeting**

**AGENDA**

**Invited:** Director of Children's Services and/or Head of Service  
Headteacher, Lead Local Authority Officer, Chair of Governors

**Chair:** Director of Children's Services or Head of Service

**Introduction:** Chair

**1. Presentation of summary of issues of concern by Lead Local Authority Officer**

*Comments invited by Chair*

**2. Presentation of action planning/progress against key issues of concern by Head and Chair of Governors and scrutiny of school information and documentation.**

*Comments by officers and school representatives*

**3. Judgments on progress against each agreed impact measure/ area of concern**

**4. Quality of support provided**

**5. Future plans and interventions summarised**

**6. Review date**

**Notes:**

7 days prior to the meeting the school is required to give the LA access to:

- the School Development Plan
- Relevant Governing Body Minutes
- The Ofsted self evaluation document
- Relevant financial information

Local Authority admin officer to prepare documents, minute the meeting and upload a report within 7 days.

# **Appendix 4**

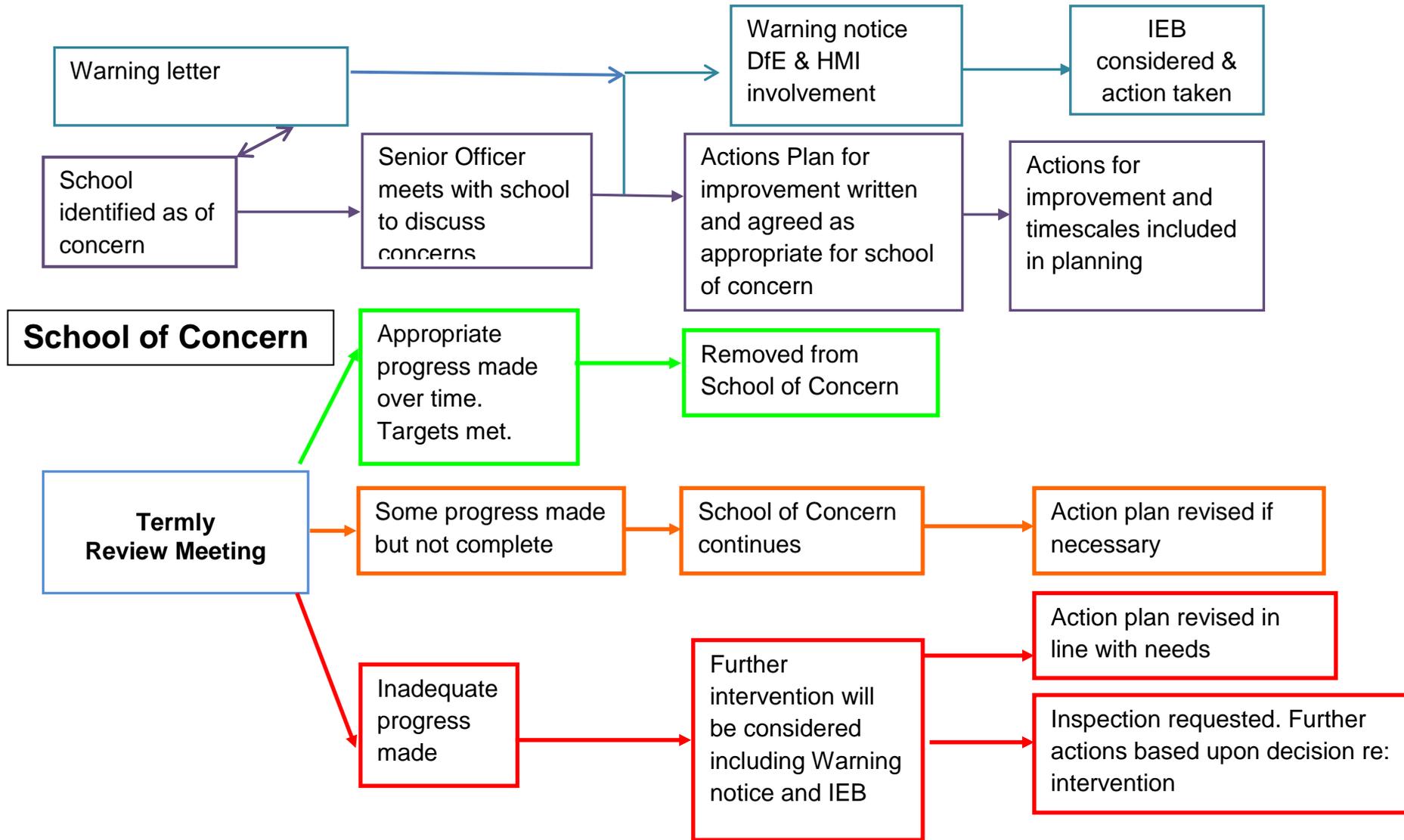
## **Pathway of Action**

**for**

## **School of Concern not in Ofsted Category**

**Local Authority Category 5 and 6 Schools**

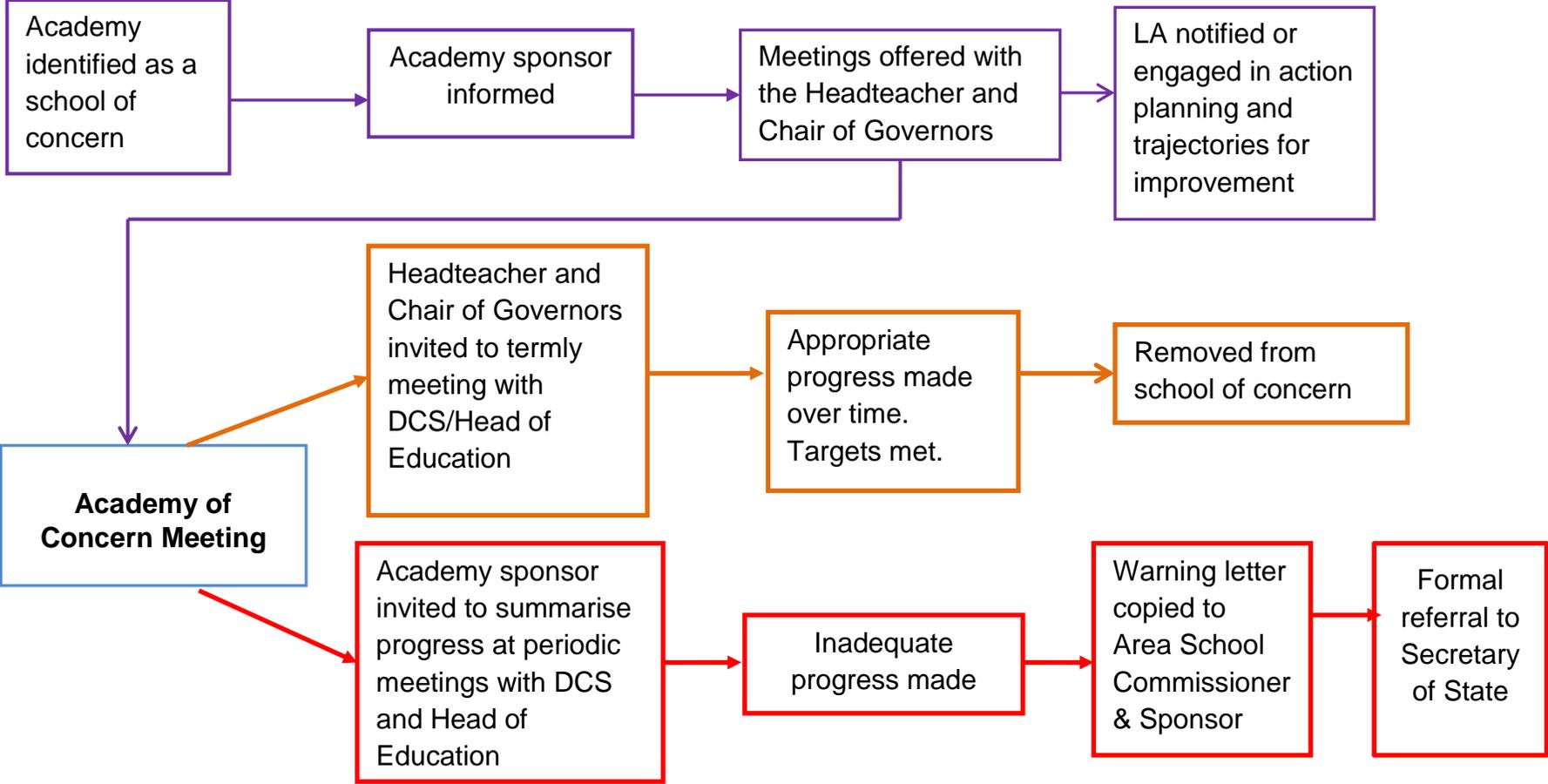
**Pathway of Action for School of Concern not in Ofsted Category**



# **Appendix 5**

## **Pathway of Action for Academy of Concern**

**Pathway of Action for Academy of Concern**



# Abbreviations

<b>DCS</b>	Director of Children's Services
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education
<b>EFA</b>	Education Funding Agency
<b>HMI</b>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
<b>IEB</b>	Interim Executive Board
<b>IAG</b>	Information, Advice and Guidance
<b>LLE</b>	Local Leader of Education
<b>NLE</b>	National Leader of Education
<b>PRU</b>	Pupil Referral Unit
<b>RPA</b>	Raising the Participation Age
<b>SACRE</b>	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
<b>SEN</b>	Special Education Needs
<b>SEND</b>	Specialist Education Needs and Disabilities
<b>SIC</b>	School Improvement Committee
<b>SLE</b>	Specialist Leader in Education
<b>SoC</b>	School of Concern

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK**