**Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

**School Improvement Programme 2021-22**

**Our ambition is for every Oxfordshire child to attend a school or setting that is at least good**

This programme applies to all maintained primary, special and secondary schools.

An additional guarantee is produced by the OCC Early Years Team who work with Early Years Foundation Stage leaders in maintained schools, academies, nursery schools, private, voluntary and independent settings and with childminders

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/childrens-services/delivering-services-children/improvement-guarantee>

**Universal support**

In addition to the Local Authority’s school improvement officers, OCC commissions skilled school improvement partners to provide support for maintained schools in Oxfordshire. These are either practising headteachers in good or outstanding schools who may have been designated as Local or National Leaders of Education (LLEs or NLEs), or they may be Ofsted inspectors or ex-headteachers within two years of having retired. Maintained schools will receive a minimum of a one-day visit.

**Support for Good and Outstanding maintained schools:**

Schools where no triggers for targeted support are identified will receive an annual one-day review visit as above. The focus will be to work with the headteacher and Chair of Governors to evaluate provision to establish whether the school continues to deliver a high standard of education for all pupils. The review will also identify any risk factors that would stop this from being realised, or strengths in provision which indicate that the school has the potential to be judged as outstanding.

**Support for targeted Good and Outstanding maintained schools:**

Schools will be prioritised for support using transparent triggers:

* Concerns around attainment and progress for all groups of pupils
* Concerns about attendance and/or exclusions
* Concerns or vulnerabilities around leadership and management, including the effectiveness of governance
* The risk of being judged less than good at the school’s next inspection

A maximum of three days support will be provided. These visits will be prioritised for the Autumn and Spring terms and by inspection due date if one is due. If Early Years within the school is deemed to be at risk of not being good, bespoke support will be brokered from the OCC Early Years Team.

**Additional bespoke work with targeted Good and Outstanding maintained schools:**

Schools will be prioritised where significant areas of concern have been identified using the triggers above plus:

* Concerns around safeguarding
* Patterns of low attainment over 2 years
* Patterns of progress below average over 2 years
* Patterns of low attendance/high exclusion over 2 years
* Section 8 inspection outcome identifies risk of being judged by Ofsted as less than Good at the next inspection

OCC will commission increased bespoke support linked to the school’s specific areas for improvement. The Local Authority may fund support if there is no funding from other sources (including, for example, the school’s own budget, national funding sources or, where appropriate, the Diocese). The expectation is that, where schools have a surplus budget, leaders will be prioritising resources to the identified areas for improvement. A bespoke Local Authority support plan will be written to express the elements of the support package which the local authority is funding or facilitating. This will include clear success criteria and impact measures.

Strategy meetings will be convened on at least a termly bias or more often if required. These meetings will be chaired by a senior Local Authority officer. These will be used to monitor that the school is on track to provide a good quality of education for all children and retain its Good/Outstanding judgement at the next inspection. It will also ensure that the support for the school is timely, reflects the changing needs of the school and is having a positive impact on pupil outcomes. The strategy group will consist of:

* Headteacher
* Chair of Governors
* Senior Local Authority officers
* Diocese link advisor (as appropriate)
* School improvement professionals who are providing the targeted support

**Bespoke work with ‘Requires Improvement’ maintained schools:**

The LA will identify a bespoke package to support school improvement so that the school is judged Good at the next inspection. This will include, where appropriate, Early Years Support from the OCC Early Years Team. The Local Authority’s expectation is that, following an RI judgement, a school will meet the criteria for a ‘Good’ within four terms.

OCC will commission bespoke support in response to the school’s specific areas for improvement. The LA may fund necessary support if there is no funding from other sources (including, for example, the school’s own budget, national funding sources or, where appropriate). A bespoke LA support plan will be written to express the elements of the support package which the local authority is funding or facilitating. This will include clear success criteria and impact measures.

Strategy meetings will be convened as above.

**Inadequate maintained schools:**

Following a judgement of ‘Inadequate’, the school will be subject to an academy order (made under section 4(A1) or (1)(b) of the Academies Act 2010), During the interim period between a maintained school receiving an academy order and the school re-opening as an academy, the local authority retains the responsibility for the school’s performance, including provision for school improvement. This will include, where appropriate, Early Years Support from the OCC Early Years Team.

LA senior officers will write a Local Authority Statement of Action (SofA), as per the DfE Schools Causing Concern guidance (Feb2018). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-causing-concern--2>

This will identify the support which the LA will facilitate or fund (as above), targeted specifically to areas of weakness identified during the inspection. The SofA will also set out the LA mechanism to support the school with academisation.

The SofA will include clear success criteria and impact measures which will be monitored at half-termly strategy meetings chaired by a senior LA officer. These meetings will be used to ensure that the quality of education provided by the school is improving rapidly. Meetings will also review LA support to ensure that it is timely, reflects the changing needs of the school and is having a positive impact on pupil outcomes. The strategy group will consist of members as above and, once agreed, the receiving Academy Trust.

**New headteachers in maintained schools:**

All new headteachers, including interim headteachers, will receive a visit from a local authority lead officer in the first half term of their appointment. The LA will also establish network and development meetings for new headteachers.

Early Years training aimed at new head teachers will be offered through Step into Training.

**Academies:**

In the context of the continuing relationship between OCC and leaders of Academies/Multi-Academy trusts (MATs) in the county, an annual structured conversation will take place with the relevant leaders in MATs (or academies) where there are schools causing concern, schools who have been judged RI or inadequate and schools at risk of being judged less than good by Ofsted.

In addition to the School Improvement Programme, the LA can provide traded support to maintained schools and academies. Please contact Jane Ratcliffe, Lead Officer for Primary School Improvement, for further information.

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