



Strategy for School Improvement

Adopted: Autumn term 2018

Review: Autumn term 2019



Strategy for School Improvement

Introduction

Through our School Improvement Strategy and in line with our vision, aims and objectives, Equals Trust are committed to supporting schools in maintaining high standards, excellent practice and improving them. This strategy has the capacity and flexibility to develop and will grow with the addition of schools in different categories and with different needs. An SIA (School Improvement Advisor) will work with the existing Equals Trust schools to provide an external view of the schools performance (see appendix 1). The LG of Head Teachers are engaged in partnerships for school support, including the EMESS (LA) and SIA. Our school improvement is for our Trust schools and as a resource to provide support for other schools and collaborative work with other partners, including the LA. School Improvement is both preventative and corrective (see page 6 below).

The Leadership Group are responsible for the performance of their own schools and are the prime resource for supporting schools experiencing difficulties within the Trust and schools to be sponsored or in an Ofsted category to be brought into Equals Trust. The 4 E's of '*The EQT Principles for Learning*' outline the Trusts **Expectation, Entitlement, Enrichment and Engagement** for our schools (see 'EQT Principles for Learning' document).

This support can also come from our external sources eg: LA, SIA. We will also work with the LA on schools they identify and request support. The resources that each school will be asked to provide will only be within their capacity and if they are in agreement. This would be the Head Teacher's and LGB's decision. No school should be asked to support another school to the detriment of itself.

Principles for School Improvement:

- Overriding principle:
 - You're as strong as the weakest school in the Trust.
- School:
 - school's judged by ofsted to be good and outstanding to be members of the LG and follow the 'Preventative' (P. 6 below and appendix 1) process and self-evaluation.
 - school's at risk of entering an ofsted category or in an ofsted category to follow the 'Corrective' (P.6 below and appendix 1) process.
 - for the leadership of each school to be primarily responsible for its own school improvement.
 - to working proactively with the Trust/SIA to attain high standards and ensure that all pupils make good progress.
 - to share data and information with the Trust/SIA.
 - to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the Trust school improvement provision.
 - heads report the school's position to their LGB who in turn report the Trust board using the Governor Checklist, support documents and the Governor Meeting Planner.
- Trust:
 - for the Trust to support schools in sustaining a focus on pupil attainment, progress and well-being, and the many factors that influence it;
 - for the Trust to provide evidence based assessment of the school's performance and its strategies for improving teaching and learning;

- for the Trust's school improvement to support the school's cycle of evaluation, planning and action;
- for the Trusts school improvement to be complementary to other school improvement activity and organisation, for example shared Improvement Plan priorities identified on the EQT IP.

Roles and Responsibilities

For all EQT schools to have school improvement support in accordance with their category and capacity – either preventative or corrective.

EQT is responsible for:

- ensure fair access to all schools for every child.
- support vulnerable children including Children Looked After, others entitled to Pupil Premium, other disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom alternative provision best meets their needs.
- support schools to improve or maintain educational performance.
- recognise the role of head teachers as leaders of school improvement,
- develop and enhance partnership working with the LA, schools and other organisations.
- ensure the rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans that are based on robust self-evaluation.
- commissioning, deploying and contracting for school improvement provision;
- ensuring that there is effective intervention and follow up in schools where concerns have been identified by SIAs;
- regular monitoring by the CEO and Leadership Group through a standard agenda item for schools causing concern.

The School Improvement Adviser is responsible for:

- contributing to school evaluation and improvement on behalf of EQT
- providing professional challenge and support;
- reporting to the Trust, headteacher and LGB
- responding to requests to provide advice to the governing body on the headteacher's performance management objectives and the school's performance management systems.
- contribute to EQT self-evaluation.

The support from the School Improvement Adviser could encompass (see SIA section of the School Improvement Calendar Appendix 1):

- Review of the impact of intervention;
- Review of schools' self evaluation and improvement planning process;
- Review of leadership and governance;
- Target-setting and tracking arrangements, including pupil progress;
- Review of attendance, behaviour and safety;
- Review and discussion about pupil outcomes including standards and outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.
- Review of quality of provision including teaching and curriculum

The roles of the Head Teachers in the Leadership Group for School Improvement

In addition to their role as head teachers of their school the heads have an active role to play in the Trust as a member of the Leadership Group (LG). The role is focussed on teaching and learning and developing strategies for the Trust.

School Improvement	Lynda Noble (Associate Inspector)	Phil Palmer (NLE)	Michelle Robinson (Peer Review)	Jenny Cook (Peer Review)
Assessment and data analysis	Rob Gilbey			
IT technology strategy	Pete Cresswell	Andy Board		
Leadership	All heads	Pete Cresswell (EHT) Andy Board (EHT)		
Teaching and Learning	All heads			
Curriculum	All heads – refer to Good Practice Audit			
Pupil Premium	Rob Gilbey			
Send Inclusion	Louisa Hussey			
EAL	Lynda Noble			
EQT Sports	All heads			

Sir David Carter's Four-stage improvement model

Stage of school improvement journey	Key leadership qualities
Phase 1: Stabilise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School requires significant improvement • No clear underpinning for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm and reassuring leadership • Focusing on urgent priorities • Ensuring team members have the right jobs • High visibility
Phase 2: Repair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing more control • Reactive decision-making • Make the school feel more like a regular school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding early improvements • Building a medium term plan • Retaining visibility, but increasing focus on quality assurance
Phase 3: Improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More proactive leadership • Embedding strategies • Improving outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and tracking performance is key • Shifting from management to leadership • Increasing benefits from collaboration
Phase 4: Sustain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence in performance • Increase innovation in delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing excellence • Looking to lead collaboration • Increasing focus on 3-5 year planning

School Improvement Cycle for EQT: (see SI Calendar - Appendix 1)

There are 2 Strands of school improvement:

- **Preventative:** (School improvement for Trust schools remaining good/outstanding)
 - Internal (heads and staff) and external (Trust and SIA) teams undertake regular reviews of progress which inform and drive school improvement in accordance with the 'EQT Principles for Learning'
 - EQT senior leaders, subject leaders and curriculum experts network together to share expertise across the Trust.
- **Corrective:** (School Improvement for schools which are sponsored by the Trust or are currently at risk of entering an Ofsted category)
 - Provide school to school partnership support from within the Trust and from a range of brokered external partners.
 - Sponsoring schools into the Trust that are already in a category.
 - Implement Sir David Carter 4 step model: Stabilise – Repair – Improve - Sustain

Preventative : LG schools remaining good/outstanding	Corrective: School to school support
<p>Annual Cycle of standards reporting: see 'School Improvement Strategy' – SI Calendar Appendix 1.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data collection and analysis by CEO/Trust 2. CEO monitors for any issues/vulnerabilities 3. SIA - Each school has 3 days a year, 1 each term for standards and a menu for school improvement – see 'School Improvement Calendar' Appendix 1. 4. Every 3 years each school will receive an external QA review to evaluate how well the school is doing and identify any issues that may need improving. 5. Assessment lead – analyses Trust data 6. Schools own Improvement Planning and Monitoring cycle for Self Evaluation. 7. CEO provides overview for the BoD <p>If a school is consistently performing well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a school is consistently performing well, it will receive the 3 day standards and menu for SI from the SIA plus the support from the LG good practice eg: moderation, work scrutinies, and the EQT 'Principles for Learning' entitlement. ○ A school may request extra support for SI from the SIA or/and external review: <p>Menu of SI from EMED (LA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T and L review • L and M review • QA visit • Peer Review • bespoke • Pupil Premium Review 	<p>Sponsoring a school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Perform Due Diligence on each school. ○ Analysis of Ofsted or other reports that placed the school in a category. ○ Accredited EMed led reviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T and L review • L and M review • QA visit • Peer Review • bespoke • Pupil Premium Review ○ Planning for Improvement – LG/SIA/EMed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing of a SIP to address the issues • Resourced by the Leadership Group expertise 'EQT Engagement Principles' and 'Good Practice Toolkit'. • Monitoring and Evaluation <p>Schools Requiring Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When supporting the improvement of schools within the Trust and outside the Trust eg: for the LA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After due diligence and analysis of data/reports, EQT SI strategy will be to access the same process as for 'Sponsoring a school' above depending on the appropriate need. • Time/resource allocation to be calculated depending on level of need. • Once a school is judged as not being vulnerable they will revert to the Annual Cycle for Standards Reporting – as in 'Preventative School Improvement'.

If a school is thought to be vulnerable:

- The CEO will meet with the head teacher to explore issues and priorities.
- A support plan/SIP will be put in place resourced by the Leadership Group 'EQT Engagement Principles' and 'Good Practice Toolkit'.
- If needed external school evaluation/review can be sourced from EMed depending on need – see menu above and 'Corrective School Improvement' strategy.

Peer Review

- Each school has the option of a rigorous and developmental Peer Review undertaken mid Ofsted cycle and led by an external accreditation EMed lead review and LG heads.

School standards and interventions

All schools will have support for school improvement. The days of support available to each school will recognise the different category the school is in and according to the Preventative and Corrective needs of the schools in the table above. Therefore the table below is a guide:

Category	Ofsted Judgement	EQT Schools
Category 1 (Outstanding)	These schools will have received an outstanding judgement for overall effectiveness from Ofsted and/or the LA . The school provides a high standard of education with strong self-evaluation processes. These schools have the capacity to provide school-to-school support directly or via a commission e.g. National Leader of Education (NLE), Local Leader of Education (LLE), and are doing so with demonstrable impact.	Up to 3 days
Category 2a (Securely Good)	These schools have been judged to have a good Overall Effectiveness and provide a good standard of education. The leadership of the school is good and the school is able to manage its own improvement and may also be providing school-to school support. Achievement is close to or above national figures or where it is lower. It is improving rapidly and securely over time.	Up to 3 days
Category 2b (Good with weaknesses)	These schools have previously been judged to be 'good' but are in decline or judged to require improvement, but are believed to be close to being judged as 'Good'. These schools are aware of the specific issues which require improvement and have demonstrated some capacity in tackling their weaknesses from within their own resources.	Up to 5 days
Category 3 (Require Improvement)	These schools 'Require Improvement' and may be vulnerable to or on the cusp of being judged as Inadequate, or have recently improved from being 'Inadequate'. These schools have greater challenges to overcome and may require targeted support or intervention, possibly brokered from external sources. These schools are vulnerable to negative inspection outcomes.	Up to 7 days
Category 4 (Inadequate)	These schools are judged to be inadequate overall and are failing to provide an acceptable quality of education for their children. These schools are already in an Ofsted category or highly likely to enter an Ofsted category. These schools are subject to LA intervention and the Department for Education is likely to seek a sponsored academy solution or potentially a change of academy sponsor seeking a sponsored academy solution.	Up to 10 days

The role of the SIA (Please see appendix 4 for SIA protocols and methods)

- The core purpose of the SIA role is to hold a dialogue with the school about how well it is serving its pupils and how the school needs to improve through validating or questioning the schools' judgements.
- To inform and support the work of an SIA, there will be access to relevant, agreed data and information from both schools and externally.
- SIAs will alert the CEO directly where concerns have been identified.

Reporting Principles

The SIA will always base written commentary, judgments and recommendations upon evidence that has been discussed fully with the Head Teacher. The documentation will ensure that the Head Teacher, governors and the Trust are all aware of the school's progress and areas for development. These reports can be reported to the LGB as part of the head teachers reporting. For all schools there will be a single visit report for each visit.

Possible review of the impact of EQT school improvement could be:

1. Standards:
 - How well does MAT know strengths and weaknesses and performance of TRUST schools?
 - What measures are in place to support and challenge?
 - What is the impact of the MATs support?
 - How has MAT used the expertise of others (external)?
2. CEO:
 - How engage with schools?
 - How MAT keep track of attainment/progress?
 - How info. Moderated?
 - Does MAT know standards of team?
 - Attendance/exclusion/behaviour information
3. Schools;
 - How well schools challenged?
 - Support for governance?
 - Effective model of governance
 - How asses effectiveness of gov.
 - What is school improvement offer for needs of different schools – capacity.
4. School Improvement
 - How effective?

Summary

This is the school improvement strategy for Equals Trust schools. It has been developed by the CEO in consultation with the LG, SIA and members of the board. It addresses the issues of schools in different Ofsted categories and risks and stages of development. As EQT changes and evolves and DFE and Ofsted criteria develop, so will the strategy for school improvement. Alongside the 'EQT Principles for Learning' this is the basis for the Trust to move forward successfully and to provide the best opportunities for the staff and children in our care.

Other Relevant Documents and information

This document should be considered alongside other documents relevant to School Improvement within Equals Trust and the DFE which include:

EQT Principles for Learning

Equals Trust Local Governing Body Guidelines, timetable and checklists

EQT Strategic Plan

Policy Schedule

EQT Commitments

Check www.gov.uk for key documents:

- MAT toolkit
- Huntington school – research school – Kyra TSA

Professional Standards for CPD – DFE website

Equals Trust Local Governing Body Terms of Reference

Equals Trust Scheme of Delegation

Equals Trust Governance Structure

Individual Link Governor guideline documents

Annual Governor Checklist Timetable

Equals Trust School Policy Review Schedule

All the above documents are available within the Trust Governor Library.

Appendices (see annual cycle of distribution below)

1. School Improvement Calendar
2. Schools Monitoring Timetable – example
3. EQT School Commitments
4. SIA Protocols
5. SIA visit form
- 6a. SATs Initial Summary of key messages – for LGB and BoD
- 6b. End of Year Initial Summary of key messages whole school – for LGB and BoD
8. LGB Meeting Planner
9. Assessment Processes – Reflecting school category
10. School Performance Summary
- 10a. Standards and Attainment Report KS2 – Trust
- 10b. Standards and Attainment Report KS1 – Trust
- 10c. Standards and Attainment Report blank – for Individual Schools
- 11a. EQT data Trends – KS2
- 11b. EQT data Trends – KS1
- 11c. EQT data Trends – Overall
12. Mid Year Projections
13. Targets

	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Annual Cycle of Reporting – School Improvement Calendar - Appendix 1	Appendices: 13. Targets 9. School Performance Summary 10a. Standards and Attainment Report KS2 – Trust 10b. Standards and Attainment Report KS1 – Trust 10c. Standards and Attainment Report blank – for Individual Schools 11a. EQT data Trends – KS2 11b. EQT data Trends – KS1 11c. EQT data Trends – Overall	Appendices: 12. Mid Year Projections	Appendices: 6a. SATs initial summary of key messages – for LGB and BoD 6b. End of Year Initial Summary of key messages whole school – for LGB and BoD