

Summary of Schoolsworks' School Improvement Model

Schoolsworks Academy Trust (the Trust) is committed to ensuring that every child receives a high quality education, enabling them to secure maximum progress whatever their starting point. The Trust is committed to ensuring that every child is taught by an excellent teacher who is passionate about both their learning and their well-being. We aim to deliver on this commitment through our School Improvement Model. School improvement for us is not only (or usually) a means of addressing failure, but is about ensuring that Trust leaders commission and deliver appropriate and effective interventions to secure the best possible outcomes.

Our School Improvement Model is based on a four-step cycle:

Step 1. Monitoring and Diagnosis of School Improvement Needs

Our cycle starts with thorough monitoring of school performance and school improvement needs at all our schools. These needs are identified through:

- Half-termly analysis of predictive year-end attainment data carried out by the DTL and CEO
- Trust Inspections of all our schools (annual for Ofsted 'Good' or 'Outstanding' schools and bi-annual for schools designated as 'Requiring Improvement')
- Other regular school visits by DTL to support in-school monitoring, through taking part in WILOs – 'a Week in the Life Of' – in a year group), learning walks and informal lesson observations, work scrutiny, reviews of school improvement plans, etc.
- Termly reviews of all-round school performance with each Headteacher by DTL and/or CEO to update the Trust's Dashboard
- Whole day end of year review meetings where CEO and DTL meet with Headteachers to look at the whole year's attainment data including test results and to plan future priorities
- Formal conversations with school leaders

Step 2. Commissioning Appropriate Interventions

Having accurately identified an area of need, the next step in the cycle is for the Trust's leaders, after consultation with the school, to decide upon and

commission the most appropriate intervention to bring about rapid improvement. Currently, our first port of call for improving practice is through school-to-school support. As a small trust we have a clear knowledge of where our areas of weakness are and we are also aware of areas of outstanding practice and expertise.

The second tier of intervention is through the deployment of specialist lead teachers employed by the Trust or school leaders to directly address any areas of concern. Their interventions will be designed with the DTL and will be time-limited and reviewed regularly with the CEO.

The following describes other examples of how school-to-school support works through the Trust, facilitating the effective sharing of our expertise and generating capacity for interventions:

- Strong lead practitioners act as coaches and mentors to less experienced or under-performing colleagues across schools to tackle specific performance issues
- Trust-wide Literacy and Mathematics Teams have been established, where every school's lead practitioner on these subjects meets under the direction of the DTL to identify and share best practice and 'quick wins' on improvement strategies. These are now supported by lead teachers working directly to the Trust leadership
- Members of these Literacy and Mathematics Teams run staff training (on a one-to-one, small group or whole school basis) to develop subject knowledge
- Members of the Literacy and Mathematics Teams support the DTL and CEO with school-wide audits and subject monitoring
- DTL, CEO or one of the Trust's strategic headteachers make strategic leadership interventions, for example, to support the writing and monitoring of school improvement plans, address staffing problems, etc.

If the most effective intervention is not available from within the Trust, then the Trust will commission and fund external advice and support.

Step 3. Effective Delivery of Interventions

All school improvement interventions have clear targets, are time limited and have agreed success criteria.

Interventions are delivered through either:

- In-school intervention – where there is capacity and expertise within the school. The Trust will work with the school to draw up an agreed intervention plan.
- School-to-school intervention – where there is not sufficient capacity or expertise within the school but that capacity exists with another of the Trust’s schools. In this case the Trust will work with both schools to broker support and to draw up an agreed intervention plan.
- Direct Trust intervention – where direct intervention is needed by the Trust’s DTL or by one of the Trust’s Strategic Headteachers. From September 2017, this team will also include lead teachers.
- External intervention – where the Trust has identified a need that we do not yet have sufficient capacity to meet or considers that external intervention will bring about more rapid improvement. The Trust has developed positive working relationships with other MATS, local schools and external training providers. The Trust would work with the school to broker the intervention and to draw up and monitor the intervention plan.

Step 4. Accountability

The final stage of the cycle is accountability, which begins with reviewing all interventions for successful impact. Impact will be measured by improvements in practice, improvements in systems, improvements in organisation but ultimately impact must be seen in improved outcomes for pupils. The accountability stage naturally dovetails and feeds into all the meetings and conversations described above in the monitoring and diagnosis stage. It is also involves the following:

- Summaries of school intervention plans are submitted to Trust’s Board at least annually or more frequently if required
- Headteachers appear in person before the Trust’s Board bi-annually, to report on pupil attainment, progress and on the implementation of their school improvement plans.
- DTL and CEO meet to review performance against targets every six weeks and DTL reports to the Board every half term
- CEO meets monthly with the Chairman of the Board in a ‘Chairman’s Challenge’ meeting where data and all other aspects of performance are discussed

- From Spring Term 2017, a Trust Performance Dashboard has been developed and is shared with the Board every half term. Likewise, all Headteachers discuss the Trust's data at every half-termly Head's Forum meeting

Accountability applies to all staff and the Trust has created peer-level opportunities for this to be expressed. Even good and outstanding school teachers and school leaders can benefit from peer support, external intervention and challenge. In the Trust this is facilitated by:

- Providing opportunities for colleagues to observe each other's teaching, sharing of excellent practice
- Providing opportunities for teachers to collaborate on shared projects e.g. the lead teachers for writing from across the Trust working together to co-construct writing exemplars
- Providing high quality external sourced training e.g. NPQSL training for Trust senior and middle leaders
- Providing systems to facilitate networking
- Convening regular meetings of Headteachers to provide CPD around a given focus
- Clarifying the expectations and ensuring consistency across the Trust of the role and performance of teachers on UPR
- Supporting the collaboration of different groups within the Trust e.g. SEND leaders, EYFS practitioners, Assessment managers, School Business Managers, Deputy Headteachers, etc.

Chris Seaton
Chief Executive Officer

Cathy Williams
Director of Teaching & Learning

18th May 2017