

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



23 October 2012

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor Cath Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's and Community Services will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

No items.

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items.

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 3.1 Admissions to Community Primary and Voluntary Controlled Schools – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
- 3.2 Adoption Agency Interim Report 2012 – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
- 3.3 Vulnerable Schools and Schools Causing Concern – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
- 3.4 River Tees Rediscovered: Successful HLF Landscape Partnership Bid – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

23 October 2012



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ADMISSIONS TO COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS 2014/15

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non key, for information

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To advise the Portfolio Holder that the determined School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, for the year 2014/15 are to remain the same as those set in 2013/14. As there is no change proposed, there is no requirement for the Authority to carry out public consultation.

2.2 The criteria to be used for admission to community and voluntary controlled schools will remain as set out previously (see below):

- 1) those children who are in the care of the local authority;
- 2) those children who have older brothers or sisters who will be attending the school in September 2014;
- 3) those children who live in school's admission zone;
- 4) those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school'
- 5) those children who live closest to the school as determined by the shortest suitable walking distance.

2.3 Admissions criteria for voluntary aided and foundation schools will be set by the school who are their own admissions authority.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Prior to the introduction of the new School Admission's Code which came in to force in February 2012, the Authority was required to carry out public consultation on the determined school admission arrangements each year.
- 3.2 The School Admission's Code now states that where no changes are proposed, they **must** be consulted on at least every 7 years. Therefore as the Admission Arrangements for Hartlepool Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are to remain the same as those set the previous year, there is no requirement for HBC to carry out public consultation this year.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Members to note this report.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 There are no background papers.

6. CONTACT OFFICER

- 6.1 Sue Beevers, Admissions, School Place Planning and Support Services Manager Sue.beevers@hartlepool.gov.uk

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

23 October 2012



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ADOPTION AGENCY INTERIM REPORT 2012

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To enable the executive side of the local authority to monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users.
- 2.2 To enable the executive side of the local authority to satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Hartlepool Adoption service seeks to recruit, train and assess prospective adopters to meet the needs of the children in the care of the authority requiring an adoptive placement. The service will find adoption families for children outside its own resources if required and also provides post adoption support to adopters and their children.
- 3.2 In order to comply with the Adoption National Minimum Standards (2011) the local authority is required to produce written activity and progress reports every 6 months for the executive side of the local authority.
- 3.3. The National Minimum standards are issued by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000.
- 3.4 The aim of the Adoption Service is to recruit, train and support adopters to provide high quality adoptive placements for the children of Hartlepool. This is achieved through the following objectives:

- To ensure that where children cannot remain in the care of their birth parent/s, they are placed with appropriate adoptive parent/s at the earliest opportunity;
- To provide robust assessment of and support to adoptive carers and children to meet identified needs;
- To provide advice and support to birth families;
- To manage and facilitate Post Box contact arrangements that support the exchange of information which meets the needs of the children, adoptive parent/s and birth parent/s;
- To fulfill statutory requirements in relation to the Adoption & Children Act 2004 for the adoption of a child by a step parent;
- To provide advice, support and guidance in relation to permanency planning and facilitate family finding for children;
- To ensure the Adoption Panel is facilitated and supported to provide robust consideration and recommendation relating to the approval of adopters and the matching of children and adoptive families.

3.5 Hartlepool Adoption Service is managed in accordance with the Adoption and Children Act 2004. The Adoption National Minimum Standards and the Regulations 2011 form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of adoption agencies and adoption support agencies.

4. ACTIVITY

- 4.1 The team continues to have the equivalent of 3.5 posts, plus the Family Placement Team Manager, and a part time team clerk.
- 4.2 The adoption social workers continue to support adopters post approval and post placement to access training provided in-house and through After Adoption.
- 4.3 The adoption social workers have also provided evening pre-approval training sessions covering competencies, talking to children about adoption and managing introductions to further extend the skills and knowledge base of potential adopters.
- 4.4 The adoption social workers also prepared training for foster carers covering the process of moving children onto an adoptive placement which was delivered during the period under review.

- 4.5 There continues to be a significant number of children requiring adoptive placements and the service is currently successfully recruiting adopters but as anticipated there has been a need to purchase external placements from another local authority. This was however anticipated within the budget projections and the budget for 2012/13 remains on target.

ADOPTION PANEL AND ADOPTION SERVICE ACTIVITIES

- 4.6 The service has convened 10 Panels from April 12 to the end of August 2012.
- 4.7 At the end of the previous year the Adoption service had 12 approved adopters comprising 9 couples and 3 single adopters. The Team has subsequently completed assessments for and taken 8 adopters (for 13 children) to the Adoption and Fostering Panel. As of 1 September 2012 we have 14 adopters approved. There is one single carer currently on hold due to family circumstances and 1 couple were approved as adopters within the 5 month period and subsequently had the Adoption Order granted for the child concerned.
- 4.8 At the beginning of this year we had 14 children with approved plans for adoption and over the course of the last five months we have had a further 8 plans for adoption approved at Panel. Not all of these children are yet the subject of Care Orders so they are at various stages of family finding and matching. Of the 3 children who had plans for adoption and were the subject of Placement Orders on 1 April 2012 awaiting an adoptive placement, 2 are now due to be matched at Panel and 1 child is still the subject of family finding due to his more complex needs.
- 4.9 With regards the process for approving children's plans for adoption the regulations now dictate that the plans are no longer presented to Panel and that approval is granted by the Agency Decision Maker. Our Agency Decision Maker is Assistant Director Sally Robinson. As the change commenced on 1 September 2012 we have devised a process for achieving approval for plans for adoption detailed in a flow chart which is now being implemented. It is anticipated that this will provide a thorough and robust mechanism similar to the panel process to ensure proper scrutiny and thus achieve the best outcomes for children in our care.
- 4.10 In the first five months of 2012/13, Panel has recommended the approval of 7 matches (involving 10 children) and these recommendations have been agreed by the Agency Decision Maker. One of these matches was with adopters from another local authority.
- 4.11 There have been five children who have had their plans converted from adoption to long term fostering. Four children had their plans changed through Panel and one child's plan changed within the court.

- 4.12 The team are currently assessing 13 prospective adopters comprising 12 couples and 1 single carer. Two of these sets of prospective adopters are foster carers seeking to adopt children already in their care.
- 4.13 Since the beginning of April 2012 there have been five Adoption Orders granted for children placed with the Council's approved adopters.
- 4.14 At the present time there are five children placed with Hartlepool adopters. These children include one child placed with prospective adopters under Connected Person arrangements (adopters having adopted an older sibling) and two children from other local authorities placed with Hartlepool approved adopters.
- 4.15 During the reporting period there have not been any adoption breakdowns but one prospective placement has broken down during the course of introductions. In response to this, a disruption meeting will be held to review the process and establish whether any lessons can be learned for the children and adopters going forward and in the wider service as a whole.
- 4.16 With regards our recruitment activity the service has received 12 initial enquiries in this five month period and provided 12 adoption information packs. Of these enquiries two did not return the registration of interest form, one chose to go to another agency and one couple decided to remain with the agency they were already approved with.
- 4.17 To date in 2012/13 one preparation group has been held in July 2012 and this was attended by seven couples including one couple who were prospective adopters with Stockton Borough Council. Five of the couples wishing to adopt with Hartlepool are proceeding with the assessment while one couple has made the decision not to do so at this point.
- 4.18 A second Preparation Group is to be delivered in December 2012 and to date four couples are planning to attend this group. Any further interested individuals or couples can join this group over the next two months.

SUFFICIENCY

- 4.19 To maintain the numbers of enquiries from adopters we have continued to advertise in the Primary Times. Hartlepool continues to reap positive benefits from the publicity generated by the publication of the adoption scorecard statistics in 2012 when Hartlepool was ranked within the top seven performing authorities for the timescales for the placement of children for adoption. Indeed one couple specifically referenced our performance in the league tables as their reason for approaching the authority.
- 4.19 The adoption social workers have continued their hard work in assessing and training potential adopters and successfully steering them through the approval process and although supply is yet to outweigh demand the number of children coming through with a plan for adoption has decreased in comparison to last year. This situation is however vulnerable to sudden and

significant change for instance if one large sibling group were to have need of an adoptive placement.

- 4.20 The electronic information that is available regarding adoption on the Hartlepool Borough Council website and the micro site provides a means for disseminating information regarding the service and also enables individuals to directly register an interest in becoming either a foster carer or adopter. The contact information is also available on the Family Information Services in Hartlepool (FISH) website. Approaches continue to be made via email and potential adopters making contact by this method are able to receive a swift and 'personal response' to their enquiries.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012

- 4.21 One of the main achievements within the adoption service over the past five months has been the continued hard work to increase the numbers of adopters and achieve successful family finding resulting in matches for our children with a plan for adoption.
- 4.22 The Family Placement Team has settled into the premises in Church Street and this has proved a positive advantage in terms of working more closely with Social Workers and having access to a range of support services that may be required by children and their adopters. The premises also provide a resource which can be used for activities and group work with children and space for adopter training and support groups. The Adoption and Fostering Panel is now held in the downstairs children and young persons' space which is unanimously agreed to be a brighter and airier alternative to the conference room.
- 4.23 The service now has a system in place which formalises family finding processes and permanency planning to ensure that they are robustly carried out in a timely manner and that recording of activity is consistent and accurate.
- 4.24 The service has commissioned the review and revision of the department's Adoption policies and procedures in order that they properly reflect the new National Minimum Standards and can provide accurate guidance to workers. This work is now complete and the revised version is due to be uploaded onto the Practice Manual for staff.
- 4.25 The service is still looking into how the Integrated Childrens System can support the post adoption support work in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness and benefit children, adopters and birth families.
- 4.26 The Adoption Inspection Action plan is being robustly implemented and the recommendations have been completed. We have updated and reviewed the Children's Guides and our revised feedback materials are being proactively utilised. We have researched good practice in other areas and

revisited our post adoption support assessments and plans and we are seeking to better evidence their effectiveness.

- 4.27 The team has also created and committed to an Adoption Action Plan to achieve improvements in the service over and above the Adoption Inspection Action Plan and are making significant progress in this.
- 4.28 The 'Adoption Performance Table' published earlier in 2012 indicate that Hartlepool has managed to sustain a high level of performance and is placed fifth in the country with reference to the average length of time between a child becoming looked after and moving into an adoptive placement.

PLANS FOR 2012/13

- 4.29 With regards the priorities for service development that have been identified for action in 2012/13 we have made progress as follows
- Developed a more robust system of gathering and recording adopters and children's views to ensure those views inform all the work of the service and drive current practice and service development. This has included creating forms for adopted children and routinely sending out feedback forms at the point of case closure.
 - Implemented a performance and quality assurance framework which provides rigorous and robust challenge to the service and the department as a whole.
 - Developed an Adopters' Charter in partnership with prospective and approved adopters.
 - We continue to review the recruitment strategy for adopters to ensure the service maintains positive momentum.
 - The preparation training has been revamped and assessment arrangements are routinely reviewed to ensure adopters are well prepared for the role of adoptive parents and have excellent support to fulfil the parenting task.
- 4.30 We still however have some 'work in progress' as any service needs to constantly strive for improvements.
- We have explored examples of good practice to improve the quality of post adoption assessments and support plans to ensure children are fully prepared for adoption, have their needs accurately assessed, are matched with appropriate adoptive families and a comprehensive plan of support is in place to meet the needs of the child and his/her adopters. This now needs to be translated into Hartlepool practice.
 - Plans for adoption are no longer presented to the Adoption and Fostering Panel and from 1 September 2012 are to be agreed by the Agency

Decision Maker. This has necessitated the consideration and compilation of a new process to ensure the same robust oversight of this critical decision making step.

- The government focus on adoption and its timescales is shaping new developments in the service and this will undoubtedly continue to compel and encourage changes in practice to benefit the children coming through the system requiring adoptive placements. We need to be ready to implement these changes and adapt the service as required.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the executive side of the local authority note the progress made by the adoption service within the period reviewed and support the commitment to deliver continuous improvement.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is important for Portfolio to have information on a regular basis about the activity and progress of such a critical part of the service provided to children looked after by Hartlepool Borough Council.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

Jacky Yeaman-Vass
Family Placement Team Manager

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

23 October 2012



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: VULNERABLE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS
CAUSING CONCERN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non key.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the strategy and procedures that the Local Authority will follow for:

- (a) identifying a school judged to be temporarily vulnerable or, over time, causing concern;
- (b) supporting and challenging the school to bring about improvement;
- (c) monitoring the school's self-evaluation of its improvement.

2.2 Furthermore, it will outline the classification system, linked to RAG ratings, which will be used in order to identify the level of support needed for any school that is judged to be vulnerable or causing concern.

2.3 The report will also provide a summary of the statutory powers that the local authority has for intervening in schools causing concern, where sustainable improvement is not taking place.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The provisions in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as updated by 2012 Advice to Local Authorities – see Appendix 1) relating to schools causing concern places a responsibility upon a Local Authority to identify any of its schools that are causing concern and to act accordingly to bring about improvement in order to "... ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities they deserve".

- 3.2 Hartlepool LA will differentiate between those schools judged to be **temporarily vulnerable** (such as those that have had an unexpected decline in pupil achievement in one year or are undergoing some, usually unanticipated, organisational challenge) and those who are, over time, **causing concern**.
- 3.3 A school causing concern is likely to one where, over time,
- (a) standards are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so
 - (b) there has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing standards of performance
 - (c) the safety of staff or pupils is threatened.
- 3.4 Ultimately, the local authority, under Section 60 of the 2006 Act, can issue a statutory warning notice to a school causing concern that relates to the school's performance, standards or safety. A performance, standards or safety warning notice is normally used where there is evidence to justify both the local authority's concerns and the school's reluctance or inability to address these concerns successfully within a reasonable time frame. Before deciding to give such a warning notice, however, the local authority will draw on a suitable range of quantitative and qualitative information to form a complete picture of the school's performance and offer appropriate support to the school to improve its performance.
- 3.5 To address these issues and to develop an improved understanding of the overall performance of all of its schools and to identify any specific school(s) causing concern, a revised school performance categorisation protocol, *The Hartlepool School Support and Challenge Strategy* (see Appendix 2), has been developed. This will ensure that schools and the Local Authority work together to address identified areas of concern promptly and effectively. The overriding priority is to support the school to provide the best possible environment to help children and young people maximize their potential and make the progress they deserve.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Local Authority will introduce of a revised school performance categorisation process based upon a comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative indicators that are individually and collectively RAG (red, amber, green) rated. The school's RAG rating will be shared with the school and the governing body through the School Leadership Partner's annual report to governors. A red rating would indicate that the Local Authority has serious concerns about the school, amber some concerns and green no concerns. These indicators will encompass the key national indicators that are used to underpin inspection and other external judgements along with a number that are locally determined. The indicators are broadly grouped under the OFSTED headings:

- (a) Pupil Achievement
 - (b) Leadership and Management
 - (c) Safeguarding'
- 4.2 A school rated as amber or red, through SLP visits, other Local Authority quality assurance arrangements or an OFSTED inspection, will be identified as either a vulnerable school or a school causing concern.
- 4.3 There will be a formal, annual process for notifying a school if the LA has identified a concern. The annual review would normally be completed, and the outcome shared with school and the Governing Body, in the Autumn term immediately following the review period (normally the preceding full academic year). However, where a school is identified during the academic year as being vulnerable, the Governing Body will be informed as soon as possible in order that improvement measures can be put in place immediately.
- 4.4 If a school is judged by the LA to be vulnerable or causing concern, the notification from the LA will identify the reasons for, and level of, the concern. The school will also be informed that it is that it has been categorised at one of the four levels of vulnerability or concern detailed in the Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge protocol. This will identify the next steps to be taken in working with the Local Authority to address the areas of concern.
- 4.5 The Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge Strategy protocol has a clear, specified, formal statement of interventions that are differentiated according to the degree of concern that the Local Authority has for any school identified as vulnerable or causing concern.
- 4.6 The four levels of the 'Support and Challenge' continuum are:

Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Descriptor	Short-term pupil achievement or organisational issues requiring School Improvement support, HR, Finance or Facilities support	Early identification of emerging issues and an action plan to support and address those issues	Intensive intervention programme to address persistent under-performance, including the establishing of a School Action Group	Final intervention and challenge including the potential issuing of a formal warning notice

- 4.7 Further operational details of the support provided at each of the four levels to bring about improvement and to move the school from being either vulnerable or causing concern are detailed in the Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge Protocol.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge Protocol is being developed to ensure that no school in the local authority, whatever its status, is at risk of:
- (a) being judged by OFSTED as Grade 4 Inadequate for its Overall Effectiveness (see Appendix 3) and so being placed in an OFSTED category of either '**serious weaknesses**' where the leadership and management of the school does have the capacity to improve, or '**special measures**', where there is no apparent capacity to bring about improvement.
 - (b) being issued with a warning notice by the Local Authority (see below).
- 5.2 The reputation of the council for providing high quality education in its schools and for ensuring that all pupils are '...provided with the education and opportunities they deserve' would be damaged if a number of schools were placed in OFSTED categories.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There should be no additional financial considerations for the Local Authority in implementing the Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge Protocol.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The legislation that the Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge Protocol is based upon is:
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
 - The Education and Inspections Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act")
 - The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act, 2009 (ASCL Act)
 - The School Governance (Transition from an Interim Executive Board) (England) Regulations 2010 (Transition Regulations)
 - The Academies Act 2010
 - The Education Act 2011
- 7.2 Where a formal warning notice is issued under Section 60 of the 2006 Education and Inspection Act, the Local Authority will follow the additional statutory guidance provided in April 2012. This guidance states that:
- A performance standards and safety warning notice should be used where there is evidence to justify both the local authority's concerns and the school's reluctance or inability to address these concerns successfully within a reasonable time frame.
 - The Secretary of State now has the power to direct a local authority to give a warning notice in specified terms where he has previously directed the local authority to consider doing so, but the local authority has decided not to.

- Once a warning notice has been given, the school has 15 working days to comply with this warning notice or make representations to OFSTED. The local authority must judge whether the school has complied with the terms of the warning notice. If the local authority concludes that the school has failed to comply, then the school becomes “eligible for intervention” as set out in Part 4 of, and Schedule 6, to the 2006 Act, and the intervention powers of the Secretary of State and the local authority may be exercised.
- ‘Intervention’ includes:
 - (a) the LA providing a ‘partner’ school for the school to work with
 - (b) appointing additional LA governors
 - (c) appointing an Interim Executive Body to replace the Governing Body
 - (d) suspend the delegated authority of the Governing Body.
- Furthermore, the Secretary of State can:
 - (a) direct the school to become an academy
 - (b) close the school.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 This report and its attachments are presented for comment with a view to implementing the Hartlepool LA Support and Challenge Protocol before 31 October 2012.

9. APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

Appendix 1 – Schools causing concern- guidance for local authorities
 Appendix 2 - Hartlepool LA support and challenge protocol (draft)
 Appendix 3 - Extract from OFSTED Handbook for Inspection

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS - none

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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Schools causing concern - guidance for local authorities

About this guidance

This is statutory guidance given by the Department for Education, on behalf of the Secretary of State, relating to schools causing concern.

Section 72 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all local authorities in England, in exercising their functions in respect to schools causing concern as set out in Part 4 of the 2006 Act, to have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State. Local authorities must have regard to this guidance.

What legislation does this guidance relate to?

- **School Standards and Framework Act 1998**
- **Education and Inspections Act 2006** (“the 2006 Act”)
- **Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act, 2009** (ASCL Act)
- **The School Governance (Transition from an Interim Executive Board)(England) Regulations 2010** (Transition Regulations)
- **Academies Act 2010**
- **Education Act 2011**

Who is this guidance for?

- Local authorities, who must have regard to it
- Other persons or bodies who may find it useful.

Key points

- This guidance provides information, on the legislative requirements for intervening in schools causing concern. All those using this guidance, particularly local authorities, who must have regard to it, should also be familiar with the actual wording of the legislation to which this guidance relates, in particular Part 4 of, and Schedule 6 to, the 2006 Act. This legislation has been amended by several, subsequent Acts, including recently changes made by the Education Act 2011.
- For the purposes of this guidance “schools causing concern” are not just those schools “eligible for intervention” within the meaning of Part 4 of the 2006 Act but are also those about which the local authority has other serious concerns, such as those consistently below the floor standards where the local authority may want to consider using their intervention powers and give those schools a warning notice.
- A school will be “eligible for intervention” if they have not complied with a warning notice or where they require significant improvement or require special measures.
- Where schools are eligible for intervention local authorities may exercise their powers to: require the governing body to enter into arrangements; to appoint additional governors; to suspend the delegated authority for the school’s budget; to appoint an Interim Executive Board
- Where schools are eligible for intervention the Secretary of State has the power to appoint additional governors; appoint an Interim Executive Board, make an Academy order or direct the local authority to close a school.

Section 1: Schools causing concern

Part 4 of, and Schedule 6 to, the 2006 Act set out that a school causing concern is one which is “eligible for intervention”. This is where a:

1. performance standards and safety warning notice has been given (section 60) and the school has failed to comply;
2. teachers' pay and conditions warning notice has been given (section 60A)¹ and the school has failed to comply;
3. a school requires significant improvement (section 61);
4. a school requires special measures (section 62).

Schools causing concern because they are eligible for intervention as a result of a performance standards and safety warning notice having been given.

Performance standards and safety warning notices should be used as an early form of intervention where standards are unacceptably low and other tools and strategies have not secured improvement.

A performance standards and safety warning notice may be given by a local authority in one of three circumstances. Where:

1. the standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so unless the authority exercise their powers under Part 4 of the 2006 Act; or
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).

The definition of what constitutes low standards of performance is set out in section 60 (3) of the 2006 Act. This is where they are low by reference to any one or more of the following:

1. the standards that the pupils might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to attain;
2. where relevant, the standards previously attained by them; or
3. the standards attained by pupils at comparable schools.

Cases where schools are performing below the floor standards would be covered by point 1 above. There is a clear expectation that in those cases, where the school has a history of performing below floor, conversion to an academy with a strong sponsor will be the normal route to secure improvement.

¹ This guidance is not concerned with warning notices given under section 60A of the 2006 only those given under section 60 of the 2006 Act.

Schools eligible for intervention as they have been judged as requiring significant improvement or special measures

If, following an inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005, Ofsted considers a school to be inadequate (Grade 4), it will give a judgement that the school requires either 'significant improvement' or 'special measures'. If the school has already been given a warning notice by a local authority, this judgment means the school is eligible for intervention whether or not the period of compliance in the warning notice has expired or the governing body has made representations or intend to make representations to Ofsted.

Section 2: Giving a warning notice

Section 60 of the 2006 Act sets out the provisions relating to performance, standards and safety warning notices. A performance standards and safety warning notice should be used where there is evidence to justify both the local authority's concerns and the school's reluctance or inability to address these concerns successfully within a reasonable time frame. Before deciding to give such a warning notice, local authorities must draw on a suitable range of quantitative and qualitative information to form a complete picture of a school's performance.

Giving a performance standards and safety warning notice

A performance, standards and safety warning notice must be given in writing to governing body of the school and must set out:

1. The matters on which the local authority's concerns are based. These should be set out in some detail and explain the facts that exist in that particular school and the circumstances which are giving the local authority cause for concern
2. the action which the governing body are required to take in order to address the concerns raised
3. the initial compliance period beginning with the day when the warning notice is given and ending 15 working days² following that day, during which time the governing body are to address the concerns set out in the warning notice, or make representations to Ofsted against the warning notice
4. the action which the local authority are minded to take (under one or more of sections 63 to 66 of the 2006 Act or otherwise) if the governing body does not take the required action.

In addition to giving the governing body the warning notice, the local authority must also give a copy to the head teacher; and in the case of a Church of England Church school or a Roman Catholic Church school, the appropriate diocesan authority, and in the case of a foundation or voluntary school, the person who appoints the foundation governors. All warning notices must be copied to Ofsted at the same time using the email address: warningnotices@ofsted.gov.uk.

Where a performance standards and safety warning notice has been given which has not been complied with to the satisfaction of the local authority within the compliance period, the school is eligible for intervention.

Making representations against the warning notice

The warning notice must state that the governing body of a school can make representations in writing to Ofsted. The 2006 Act does not specify the grounds for making representations, but it could be that the school believes that the local authority has:

1. Given the warning notice without sufficient objective evidence
2. proposed action that is disproportionate to the scale of the issues facing the school.

² The 2006 Act states that "working day" means a day other than a Saturday, a Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a day which is a bank holiday under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 (c.80) in England.

The representations must be made in writing within 15 working days of receipt of the warning notice. It should be sent to warningnotices@ofsted.gov.uk and copied to the local authority.

Ofsted must consider any representations and may confirm the warning notice or not. This will usually be within a period of 10 working days after receipt of the representations.

If Ofsted confirms the warning notice, the school is eligible for intervention after 15 working days beginning with the day on which Ofsted confirms the warning notice.

Irrespective of whether the governing body have made representations to Ofsted, the governing body may make a complaint to the Secretary of State under section 496 and/or 497 of the Education Act 1996. This enables the Secretary of State to make a direction, if expedient to do so, where he is satisfied that a local authority have acted, or are proposing to act unreasonably with respect to exercising of a power or performance of a duty under the 1996 Act, or certain other Acts which are read together with the 1996 Act (including the 2006 Act), or where the local authority have failed to discharge a duty.

Power of the Secretary of State to direct the local authority to consider giving and to give a warning notice

Following the coming into force of section 44 of the Education Act 2011, provisions in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 relating to schools causing concern have been amended.

The Secretary of State now has the power to direct a local authority to give a warning notice in specified terms where he has previously directed the local authority to consider doing so, but the local authority has decided not to. If after considering the reasons of the local authority, the Secretary of State still believes one is necessary he may direct the local authority to give such a warning notice in those terms.

A local authority may first be directed “to consider” giving a performance standards and safety warning notice in the terms specified in the direction, if the Secretary of State thinks there are reasonable grounds for the local authority to do so and:

1. the local authority have not given a warning notice to the governing body; or
2. the local authority have done so, but in inadequate terms; or
3. the local authority have given a warning notice to the governing body but Ofsted have failed or declined to confirm it; or
4. the school has become eligible for intervention, but the period of two months following the end of the compliance period has ended.

The local authority may then decide to give the warning notice to the governing body in the specified terms and must give the Secretary of State a written response to the direction confirming this within 10 working days beginning with the day on which the direction was given. They must then give a performance standards and safety warning notice to the governing body within 5 working days from the day on which a response is given to the Secretary of State and on the same day give the Secretary of State a copy of the notice.

If the local authority decides not to give a warning notice, then they must respond to the Secretary of State within 10 working days¹ beginning with the day on which the direction was given setting out the reasons for that decision. If having considered these reasons, the Secretary of State believes that a warning notice is still necessary then the local

authority will be directed to give a warning notice in those specified terms. The local authority must then give this performance standards and safety warning notice to the governing body within 5 working days beginning with the date when the direction is given.

Once this warning notice has been given, the school has 15 working days to comply with this warning notice or make representations to Ofsted as with any other warning notice given. The local authority must judge whether the school has complied with the terms of the warning notice. If the local authority concludes that the school has failed to comply, then the school becomes “eligible for intervention” as set out in Part 4 of, and Schedule 6, to the 2006 Act, and the intervention powers of the Secretary of State and the local authority may be exercised.

The Secretary of State may also request Ofsted to inspect and report on a school where there are serious concerns under provisions in the Education Act 2005.

Section 3: Powers and types of intervention – LAs

Where a school is eligible for intervention there are a number of powers the local authority or the Secretary of State may use to drive school improvement. These interventions are set out in sections 63-66 of the 2006 Act in respect of local authorities and sections 67 to 69 in respect of the Secretary of State. Local authorities must give reasonable notice in writing to the governing body that they propose to exercise their powers under any one or more of sections 63 to 66.

Local authority powers of intervention

1. To require the governing body to enter into arrangements.

Section 63 enables a local authority to require a school which is eligible for intervention³ to enter into arrangements with a view to improving the performance of the school. The local authority may give the governing body a notice requiring them:

1. to enter into a contract or other arrangement for specified services of an advisory nature with a specified person (who may be the governing body of another school)
2. to make arrangements to collaborate with the governing body of another school
3. to make arrangements to collaborate with a further education body or
4. to take specified steps for the purpose of creating or joining a federation.

Timeframe

Where the school is eligible for intervention as a result of being given a performance standards and safety warning notice, this power must be exercised *within a period of two months following the end of the compliance period*. If the local authority fails to exercise this power within this time, it can no longer be exercised and a new warning notice must be given in order to do so.

Consultation

Before the local authority can exercise this intervention power they must consult:

1. the governing body of the school
2. in the case of a Church of England school or a Roman Catholic Church school, the appropriate diocesan authority and
3. in the case of any other foundation or voluntary school, the person or persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed.

2. The appointment of additional governors

Section 64 enables a local authority to appoint additional governors where a school is eligible for intervention. The local authority is likely to appoint additional governors when they would like a school to be provided with additional expertise and may appoint as many additional governors as they think fit. In the case of a voluntary aided school where the local authority have exercised the power to appoint additional governors, the appropriate

³ Except where a maintained school is eligible for intervention under section 60A of the 2006 Act

appointing authority in relation to that school may appoint an equal number of governors to those appointed by the local authority.

Timeframe

Where the school is eligible for intervention as a result of being given a performance standards and safety warning notice, this power must be exercised *within a period of two months following the end of the compliance period*. If the local authority fails to exercise this power within this time, a new warning notice must be given in order to do so. Where the local authority appoints additional governors there is no requirement to consult.

3. The appointment of an Interim Executive Board (IEB)

Section 65 of the 2006 Act enables the local authority to apply to the Secretary of State for consent to constitute the governing body as an IEB in accordance with Schedule 6 to the 2006 Act. An IEB can be used to accelerate improvement in standards and attainment and provide challenge to the leadership of the school to secure rapid improvement or where there has been a serious breakdown of working relationships within the governing body of the school.

Timeframe

This power may be exercised at any time a school is eligible for intervention and is not subject to the time limitation set out above in respect of other intervention powers.

Consultation

Before the local authority can exercise this intervention power they must consult:

1. the governing body of the school
2. in the case of a Church of England school or a Roman Catholic Church school, the appropriate diocesan authority, and
3. in the case of any other foundation or voluntary school, the person or persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed.

A fair consultation must be undertaken when proposals are at a formative stage and include sufficient detail to allow those affected to give a considered response. A minimum of 14 days should be allowed for parties to respond, but each case may be different and the length of time for consultation may vary.

IEB applications should be made using the form on the DfE website and should follow the guidance for the completion of an IEB application form.

After obtaining consent in writing from the Secretary of State, the local authority must write to the governing body to give them notice that the IEB will be established (a “notice of establishment”). This notice should specify a date when the IEB will commence and will usually also give a date when the IEB will cease.

Delegated budget

An IEB has a right to a delegated budget. If the school’s budget has previously been withdrawn from the governing body, then the local authority must restore the budget from

the date when the IEB commences its work. If a notice has been given to the normally constituted governing body specifying a date when it is proposed to withdraw the right to a delegated budget, the notice will cease to be valid from the date of commencement of the IEB.

The role and duties of the IEB

The IEB's main functions are to secure a sound basis for future improvement in the school and to promote high standards of educational achievement.

The IEB should be considered as the governing body of the school and any reference in the Education Acts to a governor or foundation governor has effect as a reference to an interim executive member. During the interim period, when the governing body is constituted as an IEB, the requirements concerning the governing bodies constitution set out in the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 do not apply.

The IEB will take on the responsibilities of a normally constituted governing body, including the management of the budget, the curriculum, staffing, pay and performance management and the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. An IEB may recommend to a local authority, or recommend that the Secretary of State give a direction to a local authority, that a school should be closed. However, the IEB cannot itself publish proposals for closure. If, following the statutory consultation and other procedures, it is agreed that the school will be closed, the IEB should continue to hold office until the implementation date of the proposal. The IEB may also seek an Academy Order from the Secretary of State to convert the school to an Academy with a strong sponsor.

Membership of the IEB

As set out in Schedule 6 to the 2006 Act the number of interim executive members must not be less than two; once the IEB has been established, further interim executive members can be appointed at any time. An IEB should be a small, focused group appointed for the full period which it is expected to take to turn the school around. Members of an IEB should be chosen on a case by case basis, depending on the needs of the school and existing governors may be appointed to the IEB.

Interim executive members may be removed in limited circumstances. This can be for incapacity or misbehaviour or where their written notice of appointment provides for termination by the appropriate authority on notice. The appropriate authority may be the local authority or the Secretary of State depending on who made the appointment.

The local authority should produce a written notice of appointment for each member of the IEB. Copies of this notice should be sent to all other members of the IEB; the school's existing governing body; the Secretary of State; and, in the case of foundation or voluntary schools, the diocesan or other appropriate appointing authority. A local authority or the Secretary of State may choose to pay interim executive members such remuneration and allowances as is considered appropriate.

4. The suspension of delegated authority for the governing body to manage a school's budget.

Section 66 of the 2006 Act enables a local authority, by giving the governing body of the school notice in writing, to suspend the governing body's right to a delegated budget. This applies where a maintained school is eligible for intervention and the school has a delegated budget within the meaning of Part 2 of School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

A copy of the notice to suspend the right to a delegated budget must be given to the head teacher of the school and the governing body. If the local authority has appointed an Interim Executive Board (IEB), it cannot suspend the school's right to a delegated budget.

Timeframe

Where a school is eligible for intervention as a result of being given a performance standards and safety warning notice, this power must be exercised *within a period of two months following the end of the compliance period*. If the local authority fails to exercise this power within this time, a new warning notice must be given in order to do so. There is no requirement for the local authority to consult before exercising this power.

Section 4: Secretary of State's powers

1. Power to appoint additional Governors

Section 67 of the 2006 Act allows the Secretary of State to appoint additional governors at any time a maintained school is eligible for intervention; the Secretary of State may appoint any such number of additional governors as he sees fit.

Before making any appointment, the Secretary of State must consult:

1. the local authority
2. the governing body of the school
3. in the case of a Church of England school or a Roman Catholic Church school, the appropriate diocesan authority and
4. in the case of any other foundation or voluntary school, the person or persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed.

The Secretary of State may pay any governor appointed such remuneration and allowances as is considered appropriate. Where the Secretary of State has exercised this power, the local authority may not exercise their power to suspend the governing body's right to a delegated budget. In contrast to the local authority's power, the legislation provides that a voluntary aided school is not authorised to appoint foundation governors for the purpose of outnumbering the other governors appointed by the Secretary of State.

2. Power to direct the closure of a school

Following the commencement of provisions in the Education Act 2011 section 68 enables the Secretary of State to direct a local authority to cease to maintain a school where that school is eligible for intervention other than by virtue of section 60A of the 2006 Act.(non-compliance with teachers pay and conditions)

This will usually be done where there is no prospect of the school making sufficient improvements. Before this power can be exercised the Secretary of State must consult:

1. the local authority and the governing body of the school
2. in the case of a Church of England school or a Roman Catholic Church school the appropriate diocesan authority
3. in the case of any other foundation or voluntary school the person or persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed and
4. such other persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

If the direction to close a school has been given, the local authority will be expected to meet any costs of terminating staff contracts and make appropriate arrangements for the pupils continuing education, whether in a replacement school, or through transition to an alternative school.

3. Power to provide for the governing body to consist of interim executive members

Under Section 69 of the 2006 Act the Secretary of State may require the governing body of a school to be constituted as an IEB in accordance with Schedule 6 to the 2006 Act where the school is eligible for intervention.

Before this power can be exercised the Secretary of State must consult:

1. the local authority
2. the governing body of the school
3. in the case of a Church of England school or a Roman Catholic Church school, the appropriate diocesan authority; and
4. in the case of any other foundation or voluntary school the person or persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed.

This requirement to consult does not apply if the local authority has already done so or if an Academy order has effect in respect of the school.

4. Power to make an Academy order

Section 4 of the Academies Act 2010 permits the Secretary of State to make an Academy order in two circumstances: firstly, on the application of a school's governing body under section 3; or secondly, if the school is eligible for intervention within the meaning of Part 4 of the 2006 Act.

Before making an Academy order in respect of a foundation of voluntary school with a foundation that is eligible for intervention, the Secretary of State must consult:

- a) the trustees of the school;
- b) the person and persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed; and
- c) in the case of a school which has a religious character, the appropriate religious body.

If an Academy order is made in respect of a school, the Secretary of State must give a copy of the order to:

- a) the governing body of the school;
- b) the headteacher;
- c) the local authority; and
- d) in the case of a foundation or voluntary school that has a foundation:
 - I. the trustees of the school
 - II. the person and persons by whom the foundation governors are appointed and
 - III. in the case of a school which has a religious character, the appropriate religious body.

Before a maintained school can convert into an Academy, the governing body must consult on the question of whether the conversion should take place (or the IEB if applicable).

In the case of a school eligible for intervention under Part 4 of the 2006 Act, the consultation may be carried out by the governing body of the school or the person with whom the Secretary of State proposes to enter into Academy arrangements in respect of the school or an educational institution that replaces it.

HARTLEPOOL LA SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE PROTOCOL (DRAFT)

AUGUST 2012

Introduction

Hartlepool Local Authority has a duty to promote high standards of education in its schools, to monitor the performance of schools and to support and challenge them in their efforts to improve.

This document outlines the strategic approach that Hartlepool Local Authority will take to support school improvement, target setting and school self-evaluation. A key principle underpinning this document is to ensure that all schools and stakeholders are clear about the strategy and procedures that the Local Authority will follow for supporting and challenging school improvement and monitoring school self-evaluation.

Support and Challenge

Context

Hartlepool LA has a high proportion of outstanding schools with several appearing in the HMCI annual reports for good and outstanding schools. The majority of Hartlepool schools are judged by OFSTED to be good.

Partnership and collaboration are key factors in the authority's strategy for support and challenge. There is a good level of collaboration amongst both the primary and secondary headteachers with several successful initiatives, at both phases, resulting in strong partnerships among our schools.

Hartlepool LA seeks to support schools in becoming more autonomous and successful. To achieve this, and for the purposes of monitoring the performance of schools, great emphasis is placed upon the accuracy and effectiveness of schools' own self-evaluation processes, their school improvement planning and the impact this has upon learning.

The School Leadership Partner (SLP) is crucial to this process. On behalf of the LA, the SLP conducts the 'Single Conversation' with the school about statutory targets, the process and outcomes of self-evaluation, priorities for development and any support required from the LA. Schools determine the external support they need in order to achieve improvement priorities and targets. The local authority can offer / commission support for schools through:

- Service Level Agreements
- Assisted School Reviews
- Consultant / Advisory Teacher Support
- Leadership Development Programmes
- Specialist teams such as Educational Psychology or Early Years
- Specialist Leaders in Education
- Advanced Skills Teachers
- Local Leaders in Education

- National Leaders in Education
- National Support Schools
- Hartlepool Teaching School Alliance

Visits from the School Leadership Partner

In order to establish a shared understanding and consistency around what is expected of schools, the SLP will make use of the criteria provided by OFSTED to determine judgements about standards and achievement, leadership and management, the effectiveness of teaching and learning and any safeguarding issues that are apparent. These criteria, together with discussion with the headteacher, will be used to make judgements about the school's performance. In addition, the SLP will be reporting on the school's self-evaluation systems and its capacity to sustain improvement.

Supporting Schools to Set Challenging Targets

The role of the SLP is to support schools in setting ambitious targets by guiding the review of data, particularly *RAISE online* and *Fisher Family Trust* data, challenging where the target indicates low expectations of progress or outcomes and ensuring that additional support is available, if needed, to improve teaching and learning. The SLP will focus on pupil progress across the ability range, including the progress of identified vulnerable groups.

It will be important to ensure that the school is setting targets which represent the best ambition for each child, including pupils from minority ethnic groups, looked after children, gifted and talented pupils, pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities and, collectively, pupils that are supported through the pupil premium.

Advice to the Governing Body on the Headteacher's Objectives

The SLP will, at the Governing Body's request, advise the Governing Body on the Headteacher's performance management objectives in the Autumn Term. The SLP will participate in the review meeting and support the governors in setting new objectives for the Headteacher.

The process of Headteacher performance management is confidential to the Governing Body and outcomes are not conveyed to the LA.

CATEGORISATION OF SCHOOLS AND THE PROTOCOL FOR INTENSIVE SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE

The purpose of categorisation and this protocol is to help schools and the Local Authority work together to address identified areas of concern promptly and effectively. The overriding priority is to support the school to provide the best possible environment to help children and young people maximize their potential and make the progress they deserve.

The protocol is based upon the guidance contained in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006: the provisions relating to schools causing concern. The statutory guidance for Local Authorities on *Schools Causing Concern* (DfE 2012) gives the legal duties and contextual circumstances under which the provisions of the Act can be utilised. Part 4 of the Act builds on existing statutory powers and good practice that exist to “... ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities they deserve”. It does this by:

- **Promoting early action to tackle school underperformance** defined as:
 - *‘where standards are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so*
 - *where there has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing standards of performance*
 - *the safety of staff or pupils is threatened*
- **Ensuring that effective support and challenge is provided immediately** when an unacceptable standard of education is identified so that improvements can be made quickly;
- **Securing decisive action if a school requiring Significant Improvement or Special Measures (OFSTED Grade 4 Inadequate) fails to make sufficient improvements**, so that the education and life chances of pupils are safeguarded”

(DCSF - Statutory Guidance on Schools Causing Concern 2012)

All schools are annually RAG-rated by the Local Authority. A red rating would indicate that the Local Authority has serious concerns about the school, amber some concerns and green no concerns. Following the annual RAG-rating categorisation of all schools, any school judged to be amber or red/amber will be deemed as vulnerable and any school judged to be red will be a school causing concern. The categorisation process is based upon a comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative indicators that are individually and collectively RAG (red, amber, green) rated. These indicators encompass the key national indicators that are used to underpin OFSTED inspection and other external judgements, along with a number that are locally determined. The indicators are broadly grouped under:

- Pupil Achievement
- Leadership and Management
- Safeguarding

The school’s rating will be shared with the school and the governing body through the SLP’s annual report to governors.

VULNERABLE SCHOOLS / SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

A school may be identified as *vulnerable* (amber or red/amber) or *causing concern* (red) through SLP visits and other Local Authority quality assurance arrangements or an OfSTED inspection. The triggers that will be used by the LA to place a school in the *vulnerable* or *causing concern* category are:

Standards and Progress

- The school's data set indicates that pupil progress is significantly below expectations
- There is specific evidence that there are groups of pupils performing significantly below expectations
- Attainment data shows that the school is underperforming and significantly below national averages in the core subjects

Leadership and Management

- Concern related to the rigour of safeguarding in the school
- Significantly declining school reputation reinforced by leadership and management judgements and reflected in a range of indicators including falling school roll; high absence and/or truancy rates; high staff turnover; high grievance rates from staff and significant and increasing numbers of parental complaints
- Organisational instability including unanticipated and serious facility problems; staffing issues and financial concerns.

SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE: ANNUAL REVIEW

Notwithstanding any in-year events that may require the urgent application of the Harlepool LA Support and Challenge Protocol, there will be a formal, annual process for notifying a school if the LA has identified a concern. The annual review would normally be completed, and the outcome shared with schools, in the Autumn term immediately following the review period (normally the preceding full academic year to include end-of-year pupil assessments).

The notification will be based on the quantitative and qualitative performance information for the school, RAG-rated as previously described. If a school is judged by the LA to require the use of the support and challenge protocol, the notification from the LA will identify the reasons for, and level of, the concern. It will also identify the next steps to be taken in working with the local authority to address the areas of concern.

The Support and Challenge Continuum

Level	Level 1 (Green / Amber)	Level 2 (Amber)	Level3 (Red / Amber)	Level 4 (Red)
Descriptor	Short-term organisational issues requiring HR, Finance or Facilities support	Early identification of emerging issues and action plan to support and address those issues	Intensive intervention programme to address persistent under-performance	Final intervention and challenge including the potential issuing of a formal warning notice

(Each level has a detailed description later in this section)

If a school is identified as being temporarily vulnerable or, over time, causing concern, it will enter the support and challenge continuum. The programme has four levels. Normally, schools would enter at level 1 or level 2. However, in certain circumstances a school can be immediately categorised at Level 3. Those circumstances include:

- Any significant issues emerging in relation to safeguarding
- An OFSTED inspection resulting in the school being judged as having 'inadequate' (Grade 4) Overall Effectiveness and demonstrating serious weaknesses or requiring special measures.
- Failure by the school to engage with LA quality assurance processes

SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE LEVEL 1

Level 1 Support (RAG rating – green/amber)

It is envisaged that schools that trigger Level 1 support will be those that have had an unexpected decline in pupil achievement in one year or are undergoing some, usually unanticipated, organisational challenge. This may include, for example:

- An unexcited dip in end of Key Stage achievement data
- Changes in the leadership team
- Staff absence affecting key posts in the school
- Significant facilities issues
- Financial instability

Under these circumstances, additional support to address the issue and sustain improvements in pupil achievement or organisational stability will be provided. Support will be brokered through the Senior School Improvement Officer and monitored directly by LA School Improvement Officers.

SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE LEVEL 2

Level 2 Support (RAG rating – amber)

The Senior School Improvement Officer will meet with the Headteacher to inform him/her of the category the school has been placed in and discuss the LA Support and Challenge process. The Senior School Improvement Officer will also inform the Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement.

- A joint school/LA action plan will be created and agreed with clear, time limited priorities and specific success criteria
- Targeted support will be agreed by the Local Authority, via its own services or those it brokers, to address the identified priorities.

- The appropriateness and effectiveness of the support will be discussed with the Headteacher, via the Senior School Improvement Officer, every half-term.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Performance and Achievement Senior Leadership Team (SLT) weekly summary progress review
- Cabinet member via Children's Services briefing as appropriate
- Chair of Governors as appropriate and agreed
- Half-termly, formal monitoring of progress via written report to SLT.

Decision-making

After a period of two terms the LA will make a summative judgement on the progress the school is making:

- If the judgement is satisfactory the support will continue with the expectation that, following an improved set of results, the school will be re-categorised as *no concerns*.
- If the LA judges that the school has made insufficient progress as measured by the identified success criteria, the school will be moved to Level 3.

SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE LEVEL 3

Level 3 Intervention (RAG rating – amber/red)

The Senior School Improvement Officer, Assistant Director and SLP will meet with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to inform them of the serious concerns they have about the insufficient progress the school is making and inform them that they are now at Support and Challenge Level 3.

This will build on the understanding developed at Level 1/2. Where a school is placed directly into Level 3, any appropriate actions from the Level 2 range will be incorporated into the Level 3 intervention programme. In addition to those actions, the following will be undertaken:

- A revised action plan will be established to ensure a clear focus on safeguarding (if appropriate), standards and achievement and the articulation of specific, measurable, immediate and short-term actions to be taken
- A School Action Group will be established to add capacity to the improvement measures. The School Action Group will include representation from the school's SLT in addition to key LA officers and any commissioned consultants. The purpose of this group is to ensure that all support is deployed effectively in the school and to remove any barriers to this.
- The school governing body will be involved directly in the monitoring of progress towards agreed targets

Monitoring and evaluation

- The Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement will be consulted on the school action plan and will sign off the final plan at a formal meeting with the school Headteacher and Chair of Governors
- The Chair of Governors and governing body will monitor and oversee agreed elements of the school action plan
- Overall progress will be monitored on a weekly basis by the Senior School Improvement Officer
- The Children and Adults Directorate Management Team will be briefed on a weekly basis.
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services will be informed of the progress of the school on at least monthly intervals.
- Formal interim and final evaluative reports will be submitted to the Director of Children's Services and the school SLT at 6 and 12 weeks

Decision-making

A summative judgement on progress will be made at the end of each term. If the LA judges the school to have made satisfactory progress the school will remain at Level 3 whilst an exit strategy is negotiated. It is anticipated that this will take no longer than one further term. It will then be categorised at Level 2 and will return to Level 2 ongoing support. It will leave Level 2 on achievement of any agreed success criteria.

If the school has made insufficient progress, the Senior School Improvement Officer and Assistant Director will:

- Formally recommend that the school be moved to Support and Challenge Level 4
- Recommend that the Director of Children's Services consider issuing a formal warning notice to the school

SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE LEVEL 4

Level 4 Challenge (RAG rating – red)

The DCS will inform the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher of the intention to issue a formal Warning Notice unless the school is able to demonstrate rapid progress within one further term. Support will continue as at Level 3.

If either during this period or at its completion it is clear that the school is not going to make, or has not made, sufficient progress the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Learning will issue a warning notice

The issuing of the Warning Notice will be in line with the statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education (April 2012) in accordance with Section 72 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Extract from OFSTED Handbook for Inspection, September 2012***Overall effectiveness: the quality of education provided in the school***

1. When reporting on the quality of education, inspectors must evaluate evidence for each of the four key judgements and judge the extent to which the school meets the needs of the range of pupils on the school's roll. They must take into account the destination of pupils when they leave school and consider how well they have been prepared for their next steps.
2. Inspectors must also consider the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and the robustness of leadership in improving the quality of education or in maintaining already high standards. In addition, inspectors must evaluate the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (see paragraph 103).
3. In judging the school's overall effectiveness, inspectors consider whether:
 - the standard of education is 'good' (grade 2), or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as 'outstanding' (grade 1)
 - the school 'requires improvement' as it is not a 'good' school because one or more of the four key judgements 'requires improvement' (grade 3), and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
 - the school is 'inadequate' (grade 4) and, if so, whether it has serious weaknesses, or requires special measures.
 - A school with serious weaknesses is 'inadequate' (grade 4) in one or more of the key areas, and/or there are important weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, leaders, managers and governors are judged to be capable of securing improvement (this means that leadership and management are judged at grade 3 or above). Such a school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances be expected to perform.
 - A school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education: it is 'inadequate' in one or more of the key areas, and the leaders, managers or governors are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
4. Evidence of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development can be found, for example, where pupils:
 - are reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, using their imagination and creativity, and developing curiosity in their learning

- develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school
- take part in a range of activities requiring social skills
- develop awareness of and respect for diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation and disability
- gain a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training
- develop an appreciation of theatre, music, art and literature
- develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic modern Britain
- respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities
- understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.

Grade descriptors – overall effectiveness: the quality of education provided in the school

Outstanding (1)

- Teaching is outstanding and, together with a rich and relevant curriculum, contributes to outstanding learning and achievement. Exceptionally, achievement may be good and rapidly improving.
- Pupils, and particular groups of pupils, have excellent educational experiences at school and these ensure that they are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- There is excellent practice which ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age.
- The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.
- Other principal aspects of the school's work are good or outstanding.
- The school's thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

Good (2)

- Pupils benefit from teaching that is at least good and some that is outstanding. This promotes very positive attitudes to learning and ensures that pupils' achievement is at least good.
- Pupils and particular groups of pupils have highly positive educational experiences at school that ensure that they are well prepared for the

next stage in their education, training or employment.

- Pupils' progress is not held back by an inability to read accurately and fluently. Those pupils who have fallen behind are being helped to make rapid progress in their reading.
- The school takes effective action to enable most pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to reach their potential.
- Other principal aspects of the school's work are likely to be at least good.
- Deliberate and effective action is taken to create a cohesive learning community through the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a positive climate for learning.

Requires improvement (3)

- The school requires improvement because one or more of the four key judgements requires improvement (grade 3) and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Inadequate (4)

The school is likely to be inadequate if inspectors judge **any** of the following to be inadequate:

- the achievement of pupils
 - pupils' progress in literacy
 - the quality of teaching
 - the behaviour and safety of pupils
 - the quality of the leadership in, and management of, the school
- and/or
- there are serious weaknesses in the overall promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

23 October 2012



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: RIVER TEES REDISCOVERED: SUCCESSFUL HLF
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP BID

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non - Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To inform the portfolio holder of the success of the 'River Tees Rediscovered' Landscape Partnership Bid.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Heritage Lottery Fund 'Landscape Partnerships' programme is based on a range of local regional and national organisations joining together to bring a range of benefits to a distinct landscape area (between 20 – 200 sqkm). Competition for the funding is on a national scale with all parts of the country competing against each other.
- 3.2 The landscape partnership schemes have four main themes
- Conserving or restoring the built and natural features that create the historic landscape character.
 - Increasing community participation in local heritage.
 - Increasing access to and learning about the landscape area and its heritage.
 - Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills.
- 3.3 Tees Archaeology and Hartlepool Borough Council Parks and Countryside Section are part of a wide ranging partnership that has developed a scheme based on the River Tees and extending from the mouth of the River up to Piercebridge. The project is being led by Groundwork North East.

- 3.4 An initial report on the project was provided to Portfolio on 27th March 2012.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 In July 2012 the Heritage Lottery announced that the River Tees Rediscovered bid had been successful against national competition in acquiring a stage 1 pass. This will provide initial funds to allow the partnership to assemble a project team, develop information about the project area and to begin to work up specific projects for the area.
- 4.2 It is expected that a Stage 2 submission will be made after Christmas 2013. This will seek funding for the implementation of the projects that will engage local communities with the natural and historic environment of the area.
- 4.3 Following the development of specific projects it is expected that Tees Archaeology and Hartlepool Borough Council Parks and Countryside Section will be involved in their delivery.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The stage 1 pass provided for funding of £82,800 and in Stage 2 £1.9m will be bid for. Tees Archaeology and Hartlepool Borough Council Parks and Countryside officers will work alongside those of the partner organisations and local authorities to ensure the successful implementation of the partnership project.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That the portfolio holder welcomes the success of the River Tees Rediscovered Partnership in acquiring Stage 1 funding from the Heritage Lottery and wishes it success in its bid for stage 2 funding.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The River Tees Rediscovered Landscape Partnership Bid will deliver a number of the aims and objectives of the Parks and Countryside Section and Tees Archaeology. It will increase community engagement with the natural and historic environment and improve access to it.

8. APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

- 8.1 Not Applicable

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Portfolio Report River Tees Rediscovered: HLF Landscape Partnership Bid 27 March 2012.

10. CONTACT OFFICER

- 10.1 John Mennear, Assistant Director, Child and Adult Services