The National Strategies Primary

Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching





Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching

First published in 2009 Ref: 00614-2009BKT-EN

Disclaimer

The Department for Children, Schools and Families wishes to make it clear that the Department and its agents accept no responsibility for the actual content of any materials suggested as information sources in this publication, whether these are in the form of printed publications or on a website.

In these materials, icons, logos, software products and websites are used for contextual and practical reasons. Their use should not be interpreted as an endorsement of particular companies or their products.

The websites referred to in these materials existed at the time of going to print.

Please check all website references carefully to see if they have changed and substitute other references where appropriate.

Contents

Introduction: Effective use of the National Strategies' core offer	2
Section 1: What are the principles that guide the National Strategies' core offer?	4
Section 2: Developing Stronger Management Systems (SMS): Supporting and challenging the school self-evaluation processes to improve learning and teaching	6
Section 3: Supporting and challenging the school's engagement with the National Strategies' core offer	8
Section 4: Example school improvement priorities linked to the National Strategies' core offer	9

Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching

Introduction: Effective use of the National Strategies' core offer

This guidance provides a framework for supporting School Improvement Partners (SIPs) in their work with headteachers and senior school leaders to improve individual pupils' progress and attainment through the leadership of learning and teaching. The guidance introduces SIPs to the principles that underpin the National Strategies' core offer and how this sits within an effective school improvement cycle of audit, target-setting, pupil tracking, planning, action and review. These core elements of school improvement, including an explicit focus on improving learning and teaching, support the school to enable all children to make expected or accelerated progress so that as many children as possible are working at age-related expectations or above.

The materials are intended to support SIPs as they plan their work with headteachers, focusing sharply on establishing whether the school:

- has an effective system for the termly tracking of individual children's progress in the core subjects, taking account of prior attainment and national expectations for attainment and progress
- uses assessment data and pupil-tracking information to map provision and plan appropriate support and intervention that impacts on progress and attainment and closes the gap between identified underachieving groups and their peers
- periodically assesses all pupils' progress within National Curriculum levels, making use of assessing pupils' progress (APP) processes and materials available through the Primary Framework
- makes effective use of curriculum guidance and the Primary Framework to inform class teachers' quality-first planning, teaching and Assessment for Learning (AfL) practices across the core subjects, within a broad and rich primary curriculum that meets the needs and interest of all learners
- has a focused whole-school programme of continuing professional development (CPD) that includes collaborative, classroom-based learning models
- has effective and efficient whole-school monitoring and evaluation systems in place to ensure that any improvements in the quality of learning and teaching impact positively on progress and attainment.



The materials are placed in the context of the core role of the SIP to challenge and support the school's leadership on its self-evaluation, the setting of key priorities, action-planning for improvement, brokering of tailored support and effective monitoring and evaluation of the impact of focused actions on progress and attainment.

General questions to secure school accountability can often generate general assurances. This document aims to provide an approach to test what is happening in relation to teaching, learning, progress and attainment as it affects named, individual children.

The guidance prompts should not be used as a tick list but should open lines of enquiry, dialogue and debate as SIPs support and challenge headteachers in their work to refine school improvement processes that build the school's capacity for further sustained improvement. The materials aim to help SIPs develop their understanding of the National Strategies' core offer to enable more effective brokering of tailored support and relevant materials to meet the school's improvement priorities.

The document includes a simple tool to support SIPs and headteachers to review the school's current stage of development and engagement with the National Strategies' core offer, to enable progress to the next stage in their journey to improve outcomes for all children.



3

Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching

Section 1: What are the principles that guide the National Strategies' core offer?

Schools are successful when they have effective headteachers who lead learning and ensure the whole school understands it is responsible for its own improvement. Within this context, the National Strategies support SIPs, headteachers, senior leaders and class teachers to raise standards and improve rates of progress for all children as a central part of the school improvement process.

The National Strategies' core offer is based on a wealth of international evidence which has been proven to secure school improvement and raise standards. The offer is underpinned by a philosophy for leadership and learning for whole school communities which, when put into practical and systematic action, secures sustained school improvement.

The National Strategies' core offer places headteachers, first and foremost, as leaders of learning and sets the highest expectations for the way in which the headteacher's passion and commitment for learning influence all aspects of school life. The core offer is grounded in three key principles. The headteacher, using the Primary Framework as a vehicle for school improvement, takes these principles and turns them into practical focused actions which make a difference for teachers and children in the classroom. Each of the principles has related materials to support the headteacher and leadership team in their work. This guidance aims to help SIPs understand both the principles and the support and guidance materials available that make up the National Strategies' core offer and their potential for supporting school improvement as we work to secure a national world-class education system.

What are the principles and do they stand alone?

- 1. Teaching is improved when teachers use their understanding of progression to make accurate, informed assessments of children's achievements.
- 2. Well-evidenced teaching approaches are matched to specific learning needs to move learning forward.
- 3. High-impact, collaborative, classroom-based professional learning is essential to build the school's capacity for sustained improvement.

These three principles, expressed in the equation diagram below, combined with effective leadership and strong management systems, ensure better teaching and better learning and support good progress for all children.



The National Strategies provides a range of materials to support headteachers with each of these principles which, when harnessed together with effective leadership and strong management systems, enables sustained school improvement. The National Strategies' equation diagram below illustrates how the core offer is organised. To be effective within the school, all of the elements of the equation need to be in place and need to work together.

The National Strategies' core offer 'equation' – connecting leadership and learning



Developing Stronger Management Systems (SMS) through the appropriate use of the Improving Schools Processes (ISP)

5

Section 2: Developing Stronger Management Systems (SMS): Supporting and challenging the school self-evaluation processes to improve learning and teaching

The questions are not intended as a tick list but to open lines of enquiry, dialogue and debate as SIPs support and challenge headteachers in their work to refine school improvement processes, building the school's capacity for further sustained improvement. The questions will help the SIP explore with the headteacher their focus on improving teaching, learning and pupil progress, using the Primary Framework as a vehicle for school improvement. The questions will support SIPs in their complex role of supporting headteachers as they reflect on their role in securing: Informed teacher assessment + Well-evidenced teaching strategies + Collaborative classroom-based CPD which makes a difference for teachers and children in the classroom

SIPs will find that the question 'How is the school making use of the Primary Framework and National Strategies' offer to support their improvement priorities?' is supported by section 4 of the guidance, which links the questions to National Strategy materials.

Monitoring, evaluation and review of impact on pupil progress

- How does the school ensure outcomes from pupil progress discussions lead to explicit actions in classrooms?
- How does the school monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning? Does this take account of the impact on pupil progress and attainment?
- How does the school ensure professional accountability for progress and attainment through performance management systems?
- How does the school evaluate the impact of intervention on pupil progress and attainment? What happens as a result of this?

Review of attainment and progress: Tracking and intervention to prevent underperformance

- How accurate are the judgements that inform the school's tracking of pupil progress? How does the school know they are accurate?
- Are all teachers engaging with the APP processes and materials and does this inform the school's pupil tracking system?
- How does the school use pupil tracking to identify children that are making insufficient progress?
- How does the school use pupil tracking to plan and map appropriate interventions for underachieving groups? Which children are making insufficient progress? Are there any underachieving groups, e.g. by year group, gender, FSM, minority ethnic group?
- Does pupil tracking lead to explicit actions in classrooms that improve teaching and learning? What is the impact of this action on pupil progress and attainment? How does the school know?

Which National Strategy interventions would best support the progress of underachieving groups or individuals?



Whole-school systematic continuing professional development (CPD)

- How is the headteacher systematically developing the learning of the whole staff team?
- How does whole-school CPD explicitly link to the school's priorities for literacy and mathematics?
- How does whole-school CPD take account of all three key principles that lead to better teaching, learning and progress, e.g. Informed teacher assessment + Well-evidenced teaching strategies + Collaborative classroom-based CPD?
- What is the intended impact of whole-school CPD on children's progress and attainment, particularly the accelerated progress of children making insufficient progress?
- How are the outcomes of CPD evaluated? What evidence does the school have of CPD making a difference for children's progress and attainment?

Explicit focus on improving learning and teaching: **Pedagogy for personalisation**

- What is the percentage of 'good' or better literacy and mathematics teaching in school? How do they know and what is the ambition for improvement?
- How do judgements about the quality of teaching and learning take account of pupil progress and attainment, e.g. analysis of pupil outcomes, focused pupil interviews, learning walks and work trawls as well as observations of learning?
- How are teachers using the Primary Framework to match teaching approaches to specific learning needs - particularly for those at risk of not achieving the expectations set?
- How do teachers use guality-first teaching to provide effective intervention for children making insufficient progress? What is the evidence of impact?

How can the National Strategies' core offer support improvements in quality-first teaching?

The National Strategies | Primary

- How are the school's priorities identified?
- Are these clear in the single plan?
- Are the role and responsibility of the headteacher and
 - governors in leading improvement in learning clear and
 - How is the plan explicitly focused on improving learning and teaching and removing barriers to learning? How is the headteacher setting whole-school
 - improvement priorities for reading, writing and
- Are outcomes related to combined attainment, progress and closing the gap for underachieving groups, e.g. by *gender, FSM, minority ethnic group?*
- How are monitoring and evaluation planned to review the impact of school improvement activity on pupil progress
- How does the school plan to use the Primary Framework as a

8 The National Strategies | Primary

Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching

Section 3: Supporting and challenging the school's engagement with the National Strategies' core offer

Effective school self-evaluation processes and strong systems lead to clear identification of school priorities

Questions for SIPs and headteachers to consider:

How well established and effective are school improvement processes in school? What needs further refinement, e.g. use of pupil tracking, provision mapping of support and intervention, monitoring and evaluation of impact?

Where is the school currently in terms of the following development stages?

How could the headteacher seminars and Primary Framework CPD be used effectively by the school leadership to secure further improvements that impact on pupil progress and attainment?

What elements of the National Strategies core offer are most appropriate for the school to support their development onto the next stage?

Stage 1

- There has been a review of the whole-school CPD provision
 Primary Framework is used to inform school improvement
- planning
- Leadership team is encouraging and supporting staff in their use of the Primary Framework and the

Stage 2

- All teachers are using the Primary Framework to plan their quality-first teaching in literacy and mathematics
 - APP processes are being introduced into school and whole-school CPD supports teachers to manage the processes and inform the tracking of pupil progress
- Collaborative classroom-based CPD continues to be introduced in school
- Teachers are using lesson study to review the impact of their planning and teaching on groups' and individual pupils' learning

Stage 3

- The Primary Framework is recognised and used as a school improvement tool to review learning expectations in all year groups
- Leadership team is using Framework resources to assess the quality of the provision in classrooms and its impact on progress and attainment
- Headteacher and leadership team are using the progression-ready audit to determine the extent to which the school is already addressing the progression and personalised learning agenda
- Support for collaborative classroom–based CPD, through lesson study, is being sustained and the benefits and impact on children's progress and attainment are being shared across the whole school

Stage 4

- In response to the progression and personalisation agenda, the headteacher is reviewing the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching approaches used to teach mathematics and literacy in the school
- There is an increasing use of well-focused, timely, guided group work in the classroom, informed by the collaborative professional learning activities. This in turn supports and develops AfL practices that impact on pupil progress and attainment
- The use of APP has led to sharper teacher assessment judgements that inform more accurate termly tracking of pupil progress and attainment
- Identified underachieving groups of pupils receive well-focused, timely intervention support that helps them to 'keep up and catch up' and to make the progress expected of them

Low impact

What is the impact on pupil progress and attainment?

How does the school know and how does this inform further development?

High impact

Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching

Section 4: Example school improvement priorities linked to the National Strategies' core offer

Sample of materials and resources available from the National Strategies area of the Standards site: www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies (search using the DCSF reference numbers given below)

Developing Stronger Management Systems (SMS)

'To improve school improvement processes including the cycle of: audit, target-setting, pupil tracking, planning, action and review'

Example school improvement priorities...

To improve children s early language skills in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1' Improving Schools Programme (ISP) Handbook ref: 00314-2009

Improving Schools Programme (ISP) Strengthening governance: knowing your school ref: 00353-2009 Primary Framework: headteacher seminars and class teacher/ practitioner CPD, including the use of APP See guided e-learning modules: Pupil progress meetings and The Improving Schools Programme: Improving attendance and raising attainment

See also e-learning modules and resources available from the National Strategies area of the Standards site

Primary Framework including links to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Communication, Language and Literacy Development (CLLD) ref: 00576-2008 Letters and Sounds ref: 00281-2007 Every Child a Talker (ECaT) ref: 00854-2008 Early Literacy Support (ELS) ref: 00767-2007 Talk for Writing ref: 00607-2008 Every Child a Reader (ECaR) ref: 00034-2008

To improve rates of progress through Key Stage 2 in mathematics, particularly for girls

Primary Framework: headteacher seminars and class teacher/ practitioner CPD, including the use of APP

Overcoming barriers in mathematics: level 1 to level 2 ref: 00021-2009 Overcoming barriers in mathematics: level 2 to level 3 ref: 00149-2008 Overcoming barriers in mathematics: level 3 to level 4 ref: 00695-2007 Securing level 4 in mathematics ref: 00065-2009 Securing level 3 in mathematics ref: 00388-2009

Supporting children with gaps in their mathematical understanding ref: 1168-2005

Children who attain level 4 in English but not mathematics at KS2 ref: 00317-2009

What works for children with mathematical difficulties? ref: 00086-2009

10 The National Strategies | Primary

Guidance for SIPs: Supporting and challenging improvement in learning and teaching

To improve rates of progress through Key Stage 2 in writing, particularly for boys Primary Framework: headteacher seminars and class teacher/ practitioner CPD, including the use of APP and Support for Writing Talk for Writing ref: 00607-2008

Helping children to achieve age-related expectations ref: 00014-2007 Year 3 Literacy Support ref: 00042-2007 Year 5 Further Literacy Support (FLS) ref: 0584-2002 What works for pupils with literacy difficulties? ref: 00688-2007 Support for Spelling ref: 00171-2009 See also Every Child a Writer (ECaW)

To improve the social and emotional skills of children to impact on childrens progress and attainment, engaging children, families and the wider community

Primary Framework including links to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Social and emotional aspects of learning: Improving behaviour, improving learning (primary) ref: 0110-2005 Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning ref: 1378-2005

Social and emotional aspects of development (EYFS) ref: 00707-2008

Promoting and supporting positive behaviour in primary schools ref: 00153-2009

See also: Behaviour and Attendance (BandA) Inclusion Development Programme (IDP)

To close the gap in achievement between identified underperforming group and their peers, e.g. by gender, free school meals, minority ethnic group, EAL, social class and/or specific learning difficulty

Primary Framework: headteacher seminars and class teacher/practitioner CPD, including the use of APP Every Child a Reader (ECaR) ref: 00034-2008 See also Every Child Counts pilot (ECC) Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years ref: 0013-2006 New Arrivals Excellence programme (NAEP) ref: 00650-2007 Learning and teaching for Black children in the primary years ref: 00058-2008 Raising the attainment of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish heritage pupils ref: 00043-2008 Baising the achievement of Gwnsy, Roma and Traveller pupils ref: 00102-2008

Raising the achievement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils ref: 00102-2008 Gifted and Talented education: Guidance on addressing underachievement ref: 00378-2009

See also ethnicity, social class and gender achievement See also Inclusion Development Programme (IDP): Dyslexia and speech, language and communication needs

ref: 00070-2008 Supporting children on the autism spectrum ref: 00041-2009 Audience: School improvement partners (SIPs), LA advisers and consultants, headteachers and senior leaders Date of issue: 06-2009 Ref: **00614-2009BKT-EN**

Copies of this publication may be available from: **www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications**

You can download this publication and obtain further information at: **www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk**

Copies of this publication may be available from: DCSF Publications PO Box 5050 Sherwood Park Annesley Nottingham NG15 ODJ Tel 0845 60 222 60 Fax 0845 60 333 60 Textphone 0845 60 555 60 email: dcsf@prolog.uk.com

© Crown copyright 2009 Published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial research, education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged as Crown copyright, the publication title is specified, it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context.

The permission to reproduce Crown copyright protected material does not extend to any material in this publication which is identified as being the copyright of a third party.

For any other use please contact licensing@opsi.gov.uk www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/index.htm





department for children, schools and families