Quality standards and criteria for LA self-evaluation

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**department for
children, schools and families**

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Contents

Introduction

The National Strategies' core purpose is to raise standards of attainment and improve progress for all children and young people in England. It does this through the provision of high-quality resources for schools and local authorities (LAs) and support for their implementation in schools and settings. LAs are central in raising standards of attainment and improving progress through, among other things, their role of challenging and supporting providers. The National Strategies' role in turn is to work in partnership with LAs and within this to support and challenge them in their endeavours.

In order to support LAs and to provide a basis for their self-evaluation and this improvement dialogue, the National Strategies has developed a set of quality standards for LA self-evaluation. These are set out in this document. There are ten sets of quality standards each defining quality in an aspect of an LA's school improvement service (or quality improvement service for Early Years settings). Each set of quality standards is accompanied by a set of descriptors identifying the characteristics of practice across a range; from that which is outstanding to practice that requires significant improvement. The central feature of all of the quality standards is that practice must result in impact upon outcomes for children and young people in order to be regarded as good or outstanding. To help LAs arrive at this judgement the quality standards are accompanied by a set of data indicators covering the key outcome measure for standards and progress as well as for behaviour and attendance. While judgements against the quality standards are criterion referenced, those in the data indicators are necessarily norm referenced. In combination the quality standards and accompanying data indicators are intended to promote evidence-based dialogue and to provide a firm foundation upon which LAs can evaluate their current practice and identify areas for improvement.

Alongside the role set out above, the National Strategies also has the responsibility, on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), to report on the impact of its work and the progress of LAs. The reports provided to the DCSF are based upon the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating dashboard and the judgements reached through the improvement dialogue around the quality standards. *In general the evaluations of practice against the quality standards are agreed between the National Strategies and LAs, however the report to the DCSF must represent the National Strategies' view and so it may differ from that arrived at by the LA*. These evaluations are reported in the form of a dashboard that each LA can access through its National Strategies e-room. It is from this dashboard that decisions are made about the allocation of National Strategies regional resources to each LA.

In carrying out these evaluations, we adhere to the following principles of:

- **proportionality** – the focus of the process will be upon those aspects which will have maximum impact;

- **openness and honesty** – the evidence and data collected during the process will be shared and open to scrutiny except where it concerns the performance of individuals;

- **clarity** – when evidence is collected it will be clear for what purpose the information will be used;

- **partnership** – outcomes of the quality-management processes will be shared with stakeholders;

- **informed professionalism** – feedback from providers and the field force through self-evaluation is an essential component in measuring quality;

- **integration** – the process is an integral part of the National Strategies' relationship and engagement with LAs and is not an 'add-on';

- **usefulness** – the outcomes of the process will clearly be seen to inform change and indicate areas for improvement.

The dashboard

The main focus of the quality standards is impact rather than process, hence the themes of impact, risk management and intervention running through the detailed standards and descriptors that follow. The dashboards provide two overall key ratings, one for the impact of the LA on raising standards and improving progress, the other for risk management and intervention. Each consists of a number of sub-ratings as indicated below.

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1.   Impact of the LA on raising standards of attainment and progress

1.1.   Delivery of quality and school improvement programmes, including appropriate National Strategies programmes, in particular the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Primary and Secondary Frameworks, in partnership with headteachers, leaders, managers and providers.

1.2.   Impact of LA leadership and management on raising standards and improving progress for all children, and closing achievement gaps as part of a wider strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children.

1.3.   Impact of support, training and continuing professional development (CPD) for Early Years consultants (EYCs), school improvement partners (SIPs)/National Challenge Advisers (NCAs) and LA National Strategies consultants.

1.4.   Impact of brokering of support services to schools.

1.5.   Impact of target setting, tracking and intervention in schools and with providers.

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2.   Risk management and intervention in schools and settings

2.1.   Impact of targeted LA National Strategies resources.

2.2.   Impact of challenge and support to schools.

2.3.   Impact of management support for schools causing concern, including those in the National Challenge.

2.4.   Impact of gathering, analysing and making best use of intelligence from providers to drive improved standards as part of a strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children.

2.5.   Effective use of data to promote progress of all children and young people.
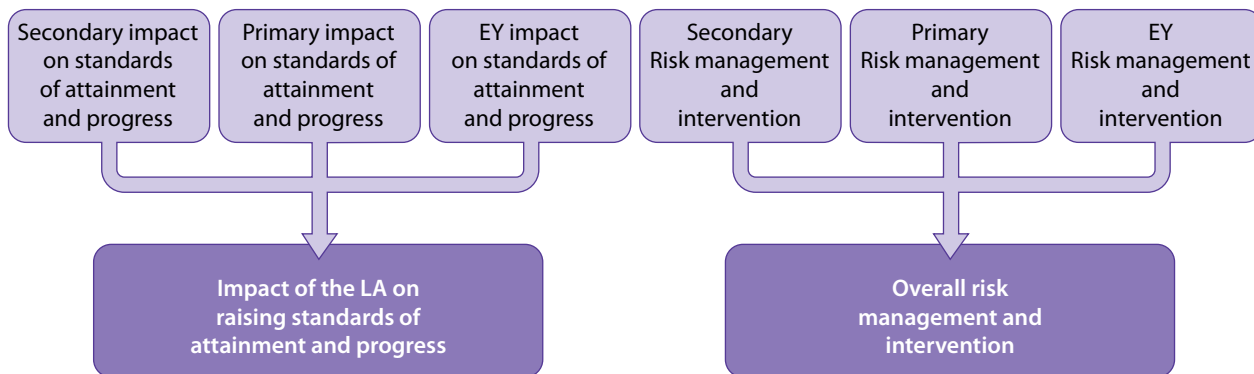

The standards also relate closely to the impact measures used to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Strategies' programmes to support the progress of LAs, schools and settings set out in the Annual Plan agreed with the DCSF.

Closing attainment gaps for at-risk groups and individual learners in the context of the development of school partnerships and promotion of extended services across the whole of Children's Services are a key priority for the DCSF. The quality standards should therefore be applied with particular focus on Narrowing the Gap data with an emphasis on the gap between the attainment of children entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) and others; this is reinforced by the highlighting of FSM data in the dashboards.

LA progress in securing good behaviour, improving attendance and reducing the need for exclusions in primary and secondary phases are crucial in underpinning the progress of at-risk groups, and indeed all learners, in accessing a quality teaching and learning experience – data for these aspects of LA performance has also been highlighted in the dashboards. This issue is now particularly heightened in importance since behaviour and attendance have been given such prominence in the new Ofsted framework implemented from 1 September 2009.

The overall progress of the National Strategies, LAs, schools and settings is measured against the Public Service Agreements (PSA) and a new addition to the dashboard, the estimate of each LA's progress towards the 2011 targets, will be included once 2009 data are available using information extracted from RAISEonline for attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, and attendance.

How the dashboard works

Secondary impact on standards of attainment and progress	Primary impact on standards of attainment and progress	EY impact on standards of attainment and progress	Secondary Risk management and intervention	Primary Risk management and intervention	EY Risk management and intervention

Impact of the LA on raising standards of attainment and progress	Overall risk management and intervention

The RAG dashboard will produce a readout as shown in the following example:

Local authority: Any Borough

	Impact of the LA on raising standards and improving progress					Risk management and intervention				
Phase	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5
Early Years	G	G	OS	N/A	NI	G	N/A	N/A	G	SI
Early Years overall	Good					Needs some improvement				
Primary	NI	NI	G	G	G	NI	G	G	G	G
Primary overall	Needs some improvement					Good				
Secondary	G	G	OS	G	G	NI	G	NI	G	G
Secondary overall	Good					Needs some improvement				
Overall	Good					Needs some improvement				

Key: ■ OS Outstanding ■ G Good ■ NI Needs improvement ■ SI Significant improvement needed

Using the criteria to self-evaluate LA practice

Self-evaluation judgements against the criteria should be based upon evidence of the extent to which practice is contributing towards meeting the PSA targets for raising achievement and closing the achievement gap by accelerating progress of underachieving groups and individuals. In addition there are some underpinning principles that should apply in all LAs, where there should be:

- a focus on the attainment, progress and achievement of children and young people across the ability range, and the many factors which influence it, including well-being, the impact of extended services, children's centres and parental involvement;

- respect for the autonomy of providers in planning their development, starting from self-evaluation and the needs of the children and young people, and of other members of the provider's community;

- professional challenge and support, so that practice and performance are improved;

- evidence-based assessment of the performance of providers and their strategies for improving, teaching and learning.

Critical criteria are highlighted in bold; these criteria are the key definitions for practice at that level. Where critical criteria are highlighted in the 'Good' or 'Outstanding' column, these are minimum requirements for an evaluation at that level, that is, they are necessary but not sufficient. Where critical criteria are highlighted in the 'Requires some improvement' (NI in previous chart) or 'Requires significant improvement' (SI in previous chart) columns then this shows the maximum rating that can be given for that aspect.

When reporting upon the framework in notes of visit or in national reports, the National Strategies team will use the following vocabulary to describe the standard of practice:

Column 1:   Outstanding, highly effective (evaluations of practice in this column must be accompanied by substantial evidence of impact).

Column 2:   Good, effective (evaluations of practice in this column must be accompanied by evidence of impact).

Column 3:   Requires some improvement, sound, satisfactory.

Column 4:   Requires substantial improvement, requires significant improvement, unsatisfactory, inadequate.

RAG 1 – Impact of the LA on raising standards and improving progress

1.1 Delivery of quality and school improvement programmes, including appropriate National Strategies programmes, in particular the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Primary and Secondary Frameworks, in partnership with headteachers, leaders, managers and providers

Quality standards

The LA:

- works effectively with parents and providers to achieve the PSA targets and the secondary and primary floor targets, bringing to bear the full range of quality and school improvement programmes (including National Strategies programmes) and resources to improve pedagogy and Assessment for Learning

- promotes the National Strategies universal offer effectively, in particular the EYFS, Primary and Secondary Frameworks

- offers targeted advice and support according to the needs of providers and achieves greater impact in these providers than in others as a result

- maintains an open dialogue with headteachers in seeking to ensure schools are best placed to self-evaluate and improve National Strategies programmes bringing about the desired improvements in schools.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
All criteria for a good service are met. The LA's: ● use of improvement programmes including those of the National Strategies is highly effective resulting in rapid improvements in providers ● deployment of EYCs and LA National Strategies consultants is well targeted and results in rapid improvements and significant and demonstrable gains in attainment and progress for children and young people.	The LA's promotion and support for implementation of the National Strategies Frameworks is effective, valued by most providers and results in improvements in relation to the PSA targets. The LA: ● effectively communicates national priorities to headteachers and how they relate to the National Strategies' offer ● accurately and transparently matches school and quality-improvement resources to identified needs in providers ● provides high-quality support for the effective implementation of National Strategies programmes and materials from its EYC and LA National Strategies consultants ● ensures that quality and school improvement programmes are monitored and evaluated, and adjusted in the light of this evaluation.	The LA's promotion and support for implementation of the National Strategies Frameworks is valued by most providers but there is little evidence that it is effective in securing improvements in relation to the PSA targets. The LA: ● communicates national priorities and how they relate to the National Strategies' offer, but responses from headteachers show a lack of understanding ● matches quality and school improvement resources to identified needs in providers but headteachers demonstrate a lack of clarity about how this is achieved ● provides some effective support for the implementation of National Strategies programmes and materials from its EYC and LA National Strategies consultants but impact is difficult to determine either because of weak practice or because systems are insufficiently robust to provide evidence of impact.	There is little or no evidence that the LA's promotion and support for implementation of the National Strategies Frameworks is valued by providers or is effective in securing improvements in relation to the PSA targets. There is little or no evidence that the LA: ● communicates national priorities to headteachers and how they relate to the National Strategies' offer ● makes effective use of its EYC and LA National Strategies consultants to raise standards.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

1.2 Impact of LA Leadership and Management on raising standards and improving progress for all children and closing achievement gaps as part of a wider strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children

Quality standards

- There is a clear vision for quality and school improvement that is inclusive and focused upon impact and is effectively shared with all stakeholders.

- This vision leads to the development of an effective quality and school improvement strategy that is based upon the clear recognition of the responsibility of providers for their improvement and the centrality of the EYC/SIP/NCA role.

- There is a clearly defined and effective cycle of monitoring and evaluation, which is used to inform future planning and next learning steps.

- Communication at all levels is effective and roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear.

- All professionals are fully briefed on quality and school improvement processes, procedures and services in relation to their LA work.

- Effective performance management (PM) develops a fit-for-purpose workforce and informs CPD arrangements.

- Effective communications exist at all levels to ensure a coherent and consistent implementation of the School Improvement (SI) strategy and of EYFS and quality improvement in Early Years (EY) settings.

- There is effective communication and partnership across all Children's Services to ensure that wider outcomes are delivered.

- Extended services are effective in narrowing gaps in attainment and progress for vulnerable learners.

- Overall, leadership and management of the LA contributes to improvement in standards and 'Enjoy and Achieve' outcomes for children, and underpins the work of settings, schools, the LA and partners in improving all wider outcomes for children.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
All criteria for a good service are met. The impact of leadership and management of the service results in: ● rapid improvement in attainment and progress for children and young people ● sustainable improvement in all or the large majority of providers ● narrowing of gaps in achievement between vulnerable groups of learners and all pupils ● schools demonstrably meeting wider outcomes for children and young people ● no schools in Ofsted categories and no settings identified as inadequate by Ofsted.	There is a compelling inclusive vision for quality and school improvement that is shared by all stakeholders and is determined through impact on children's attainment and progress. Quality and school improvement planning is informed by effective monitoring and evaluation that leads to improvement. Roles and accountabilities are clearly defined and are used to govern the deployment of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs and other LA staff. All professionals are knowledgeable about quality and school improvement processes, providers and services, and this leads to an increase in the impact and effectiveness of these staff. Effective PM is in place and maintains consistent impact from the workforce. Children and young people have access to a range of effective extended services that lead to improved attainment and progress of underperforming groups. Leadership and management of the LA EY/SI service leads to sustainable quality and school improvement and improved attainment and progress of children and young people. LA EY/SI services are effectively aligned with other targeted teams in Children's Services to ensure delivery of wider outcomes.	There is a vision for quality and school improvement but it is not well understood by all stakeholders and does not inform their practice. It may be unclear on the expected impact on the attainment and progress of children and young people. There is a monitoring and evaluation cycle but it is unclear whether it leads to improvement. Roles and accountabilities are insufficiently clear. All professionals are briefed on quality and school improvement processes, providers and services but evidence of impact and increased effectiveness of staff is weak. PM is in place but it is unclear how it leads to improvements in consistency and quality of the workforce. Children and young people have access to extended services but the offer in their locality is patchy and/or their impact is not clear. Stakeholders support the leadership and management of the LA EY/SI service but evidence of impact is unclear. LA EY/SI services and other targeted teams in wider Children's Services are inconsistent in their support to each other to deliver wider outcomes.	Significant numbers of stakeholders are unaware of the vision for quality and school improvement. The monitoring and evaluation cycle yields little useful information and does not lead to any identifiable improvement. Roles and accountabilities are not clear and the structure is not fit for purpose. Application of PM is patchy and sometimes overlooked. There is widespread variability in the quality of the workforce. The workforce is insufficiently high quality to bring about improvement. Children and young people have access to extended services but their range is limited or their impact is poor. Significant numbers of stakeholders do not support the leadership and management of the LA EY/SI service and there is little or no evidence of impact. There is limited or poor involvement of other teams from the wider Children's Services in contributing to school improvement and wider outcomes.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

1.3 Impact of support, training and continuous professional development (CPD) for Early Years consultants (EYCs), School Improvement Partners (SIPs)/ National Challenge Advisers (NCAs) and LA National Strategies consultants

Quality standards

- There is effective induction of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants.

- PM arrangements identify a CPD plan for each EYC/SIP/NCA/National Strategies consultant for the year, which is recorded and monitored by the LA and includes National Strategies programmes.

- EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants access a suitable range of blended learning CPD activities including National Strategies programmes in order to meet their identified needs.

- The skill level of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants increases.

- There is a consistent message delivered by EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants to settings and schools about effective leadership and management, quality and school improvement planning and self-evaluation resulting in an increasingly expert and highly skilled workforce.

- CPD for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants ensures they have the right knowledge, understanding and skill level to provide support and challenge to providers on national and local priorities, where appropriate to the provider's own priorities.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
All elements of good practice in ongoing training and development of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants are present. The CPD programme makes highly effective use of the full blend of CPD activities. There is evidence of impact from induction and CPD on the quality of provision in schools and settings and on the achievement and progress of children and young people	There is a rigorous induction and CPD programme for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants based on needs identified through the PM process together with local, regional and national priorities. LA Quality Assurance (QA) demonstrates the impact of induction and CPD for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants on the quality of challenge and support offered to providers. CPD is appropriately differentiated by phase. All EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants have an individual CPD plan relating to their individual needs as identified through PM identifying their CPD for a full year ahead.	There is an induction and CPD programme but it is not sufficiently targeted to the needs of individual EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants and national, regional and local priorities. There is monitoring of induction and CPD for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants but not on the impact on performance. CPD sessions are likely to be principally briefings though there is some structured development work. There is a CPD plan for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants but it is likely to be generic or show modest differentiation and shows little linkage to the PM process.	The CPD programme for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants takes little account of individual needs nor of the correct range of priorities. There is little monitoring of induction and CPD for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants or consideration of impact. CPD mostly focuses on 'meeting' structures and shows little evidence of being planned to meet the needs of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants. There is very little structured development activity. CPD plans are very weak or don't exist – PM procedures are not followed or do not result in identified CPD needs being met.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

1.4 Impact of brokering of support services to schools

Quality standards

- Schools make use of a range of support services available locally, regionally and nationally and in particular schools in the National Challenge have a well-tailored responsive support package brokered by their NCA (City Challenge Adviser for City Challenge areas).

- Deployment of support services matches the needs of schools identified as a result of the school improvement dialogue with the leadership of the school.

- The LA SIP/NCA team:

  – brokers and commissions support to schools that is timely, fit for purpose and avoids conflict of interest

  – supports and challenges schools to monitor and evaluate impact to inform further development of support

  – works strategically with regional and other support services

  – works with schools to commission services from and across schools through networks/partnerships, including leading practice primary schools.

- Support results in improvements in the outcomes for children.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
All elements of good brokering of support services are present.	**LA systems encourage schools to make use of a wide range of additional support from local, regional and national providers that is closely matched to the priorities of schools and ensure that SIPs/NCAs are given the key role for brokering support to schools.**	**The LA does not use the SIP/NCA as the key brokering agent for support to schools.**	School support is generally limited to the LA's own advisers and consultants.
The LA supports schools in accessing a wide range of fit-for-purpose quality-assured sources of support including independent consultants, other schools within and beyond the LA and a range of national providers.	Brokered and commissioned support is:	There is a dominance of school support from LA sources and insufficient expertise brought in to support schools from other sources. This may be exacerbated by preference being given to encouraging schools to use the LA traded services where these exist.	Support from other sources is provided in an ad hoc way; there may be some effective provision but this is not the result of the work of the LA.
Support services result in rapid progress in the schools' identified priorities, ultimately leading to improvement in the outcomes for children and young people.	● timely ● fit for purpose ● avoids any conflict of interest. SIP/NCAs challenge schools and assist them in monitoring and evaluating impact to inform further development of these services by LAs. The LA facilitates the SIP/NCA brokering role by working: ● strategically with regional and other support services ● with schools to commission services from and across schools through networks/partnerships. Support impacts upon the schools' priorities and leads to improvements in attainment and progress for children and young people.	There is little consistency in provision or facilitation of access to support services for schools; much is dependent upon the particular knowledge and contacts of specific members of the SI team. Evidence of progress towards the schools' identified priorities is difficult to discern.	

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

1.5 Impact of target setting, tracking and intervention in schools and with providers

Quality standards

- The LA and schools set targets which are ambitious and show a trend for improvement in line with DCSF guidance for all the children within the LA and for specific underachieving groups within that population.

- The LA's Early Years targets build on previous outcomes and focus on increasing the number of children achieving a good level of development and on narrowing the gap between the lowest 20% achieving children and the rest.

- The LA and school targets take account of and build upon prior attainment and previous best performance and:

  - focus on progression, with the expectation that:

    - from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 all children make at least two levels of progress

    - from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 that increasing numbers of children make expected levels of progress in English and Mathematics

    - the majority of low attaining pupils make progress in line with learners, with a similar age and prior attainment, working above the median and in many cases in the upper quartile, in relation to the Progression Guidance data

  - reflect an ambition to narrow the attainment gap between children and young people nationally and those eligible for FSM, pupils identified with special educational needs (SEN)/learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), black and minority ethnic (BME) and gifted and talented children and young people

  - represent improvement over current attainment and progress

  - represent a reduction in persistent absence for secondary-aged children and young people and an increase in schools judged as 'good'

  - for secondary schools that are part of the National Challenge ensure that they are above the floor target by 2011.

- Assessment tracking and monitoring of progress by providers and the LA is accurate, comprehensive, regular, systematic and timely.

- EYCs/SIPs/NCAs provide support and challenge for providers to ensure the effectiveness of their systems for assessment, tracking, planning, improving teaching and provision of effective interventions for pupils who fall behind.

- Regular evaluation of these systems identifies the extent to which they are effective in meeting the learning needs of all children and young people and informs regular systematic review of teaching programmes and intervention provision.

- Quality first teaching and effective intervention brings about the desired improvements in attainment and progress for children and young people.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
• **For Early Years the LA is on track to exceed both national EY targets.** • **At least 95% of schools set targets which are in line with DCSF guidance.** • The assessment, tracking and monitoring of progress by almost all schools, settings and the LA is accurate, comprehensive, regular, systematic and timely. • Tracking in almost all providers identifies individual learning needs and informs the review of teaching programmes provision mapping and intervention. • Self-evaluation shows how well target setting, tracking and intervention improve progress and attainment and narrow the attainment gap for children and young people in almost all providers. • Targets for pupils identified with SEN/LDD are personalised and demonstrably ambitious.	• **For Early Years the LA is on track to meet both national EY targets.** • **Between 80% and 95% of schools set targets which are in line with DCSF guidance.** • The assessment, tracking and monitoring of progress by over 80% of schools, settings and the LA is accurate, comprehensive, regular, systematic and timely. • Tracking in over 90% of providers identifies individual learning needs and informs the review of teaching programmes and use of intervention. • Self-evaluation shows how well target setting, tracking and intervention improve progress and attainment and narrow the attainment gap for children and young people in over 80% of schools. • Targets for pupils identified with SEN/LDD are personalised and demonstrably ambitious.	• **For Early Years the LA is on track to meet one of the national EY targets.** • **Between 50% and 80% of schools set targets which are in line with DCSF guidance.** • The assessment, tracking and monitoring of progress by schools, settings and the LA is not consistently accurate, comprehensive, regular, systematic and timely. • Tracking is inconsistent in identifying individual learning needs and informing the review of teaching programmes and use of intervention. • Target setting, tracking and intervention improve progress and attainment and narrow the attainment gap for children and young people in a minority of schools. • Few schools set additional targets for pupils with SEN/LDD that are personalised and represent ambition.	• **For Early Years the LA is unlikely to meet either of the national EY targets.** • **Less than 50% of schools set targets which are in line with DCSF guidance.** • The assessment, tracking and monitoring of pupil progress by schools, settings and the LA is not accurate, comprehensive, regular, systematic and timely. • Tracking does not adequately identify individual learning needs and inform the review of teaching programmes and use of intervention. • There is little evidence that target setting, tracking and intervention are having any impact in most schools. • Targets for pupils with SEN/LDD are not personalised and it is not possible to demonstrate ambition.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

RAG 2 – Risk management and intervention in schools and settings

2.1 Impact of targeted LA National Strategies resources

Quality standards

- All EY/SI staff are knowledgeable about the full range of available National Strategies resources/programmes and use them appropriately to support LA priorities.

- National Strategies consultant resources are deployed in line with school priorities that have been agreed with each school's SIP/NCA.

- EYCs are deployed in line with LA priorities.

- The LA:

  – matches National Strategies provision to the needs of providers

  – uses intelligence gathered on providers to differentiate the support available

  – supports providers in monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of resources/programmes.

- Implementation of targeted National Strategies programmes is effective in meeting milestones and demonstrating impact.

- Targeted resources bring about the desired improvements in schools.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
• **All elements of good targeting of LA National Strategies resources are present.** • **Almost all providers make highly effective use of National Strategies resources and programmes resulting in rapid improvement of the provider's priorities.** • The targeted use of resources and programmes leads to rapid and sustained improvements in achievement and progress for children and young people. • The work of the LA EY/SI service is used as a transferable model of good practice.	• **The LA strategically deploys the full range of National Strategies resources and programmes to have maximum impact on agreed LA, school/setting priorities.** • All in the EY/SI team have a thorough understanding of the range of National Strategies resources and support available. • Providers are supported in monitoring and evaluating the impact of support from National Strategies resources and programmes. • This results in improved attainment and progress for children and young people.	• The LA EY/SI service deploys the full range of resources and programmes but this is carried out with little regard to agreed LA and provider priorities. • Some EY/SI service staff have significant gaps in their knowledge of National Strategies programmes and resources. • There is little evidence of monitoring and evaluation of the impact of National Strategies resources and programmes. • There is some impact on provider processes but there is little impact on outcomes for children and young people from targeted National Strategies resources.	• **The LA EY/SI service does not employ the expected range of resources and programmes.** • Deployment of resources and programmes is not strategic. It is hard to see how deployment matches agreed provider priorities. • There are few LA personnel that know about National Strategies resources or how these can be used to support improvement. • There is no discernible impact on processes or outcomes from targeted National Strategies resources.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

2.2 Impact of challenge and support to schools

Quality standards

- Challenge and support are provided by the LA for schools by SIPs/NCAs for headteachers and their leadership teams. For secondary schools 75% of SIPs/NCAs have secondary headship experience or 75% of schools have SIPs/NCAs with headship experience allocated to them.

- SIPs/NCAs support and challenge headteachers across the range of school improvement, ensuring that all aspects of provision, its effectiveness and its impact on attainment, progress and other outcomes for children are considered. In particular they:

  - support improvement in the quality of schools' self-evaluation processes and in the record of the outcomes

  - provide a robust but sensitive challenge to schools that helps them to identify the priorities for improvement and high-impact strategies for tackling these priorities

  - conduct a dialogue that results in improved planning and better outcomes for children and young people

  - challenge and support the school on the effectiveness with which it uses extended services to support the attainment and progress of vulnerable learners

  - challenge and support financial planning and the extent to which spending meets schools' priorities

  - work with schools as part of a continuous process of improvement. Each meeting evaluates progress since the last and identifies further priorities, actions to be taken and the support required.

- Challenge and support results in gains in attainment and progress and accelerates the progress of vulnerable and underachieving groups.

- The LA ensures that all schools have SIPs/NCAs allocated to them as appropriate and that they advise the governors and management committees of Pupil Referral Units on the headteacher's PM in accordance with regulations and guidance.

Criteria for self-evaluation

Outstanding	Good	Requires some improvement	Requires significant improvement
All the features of good challenge and support are present and supported by appropriate evidence. Challenge and support for schools contributes to gains in attainment and progress across the LA that are in the top quartile of attainment and progress nationally.	Schools and LAs state that the challenge and support provided by SIPs/NCAs is bringing about improvements. There is evidence of impact upon: • **the attainment and progress of children and young people** • **accelerated progress of underachieving and vulnerable groups** • the quality of: – self-evaluation – school improvement planning – use of resources in schools where improvement is required • the effectiveness of extended services in improving the attainment and accelerating the progress of vulnerable learners • those areas of school activity targeted as national priorities. **The 75% quota for secondary schools SIPs/NCAs is met.**	Schools and/or LAs are satisfied with the challenge and support provided by SIPs/NCAs but there is little evidence of impact upon: • the attainment and progress of children and young people • accelerated progress of underachieving and vulnerable groups • the quality of: – self-evaluation – school improvement planning – use of resources in schools where improvement is required • the effectiveness of extended services in supporting the attainment and progress of vulnerable learners • those areas of school activity targeted as national priorities.	Schools and/or LAs are dissatisfied with the challenge and support provided by SIPs/NCAs and there is no evidence of impact upon: • the attainment and progress of children and young people • accelerated progress of underachieving and vulnerable groups • the quality of: – self-evaluation – school improvement planning – use of resources in schools where improvement is required • the effectiveness of extended services in supporting the attainment and progress of vulnerable learners. **SIPs are not providing advice to the governors of all schools and management committees of PRUs within the LA.**

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

2.3 Impact of management support for schools causing concern, including those in the National Challenge

Quality standards

- The LA has a clear, agreed and transparent policy on schools causing concern which complies with legislation and statutory guidance. It ensures schools take responsibility for their own improvement, with the SIP/NCA in the central role of challenge and support.

- There is an effective system for categorising schools against published criteria taking account of a range of evidence including schools' self-evaluation and SIP/NCA intelligence. This policy places appropriate emphasis upon National Challenge schools and primary schools below the floor target.

- Where the LA has National Challenge or hard-to-shift primary schools it has effective plans for supporting school improvement or, where appropriate, structural interventions that will bring them above the floor target by 2011.

- The LA:

  – makes appropriate use of the range of statutory powers available to it

  – makes appropriate use of radical approaches to improving governance where appropriate, including Academy and Trust developments and use of hard federations and/or school amalgamations or closure

  – ensures action plans/statements of action are evaluated by Ofsted as meeting requirements

  – identifies and commissions appropriate support that enables schools to make rapid progress including using outstanding schools, National Leaders of Education (NLEs), etc.

  – actions at school level help schools become self-sustaining once support is reduced or removed

  – effectively reviews progress and plans further actions.

- Early and decisive LA intervention in schools causing concern brings about rapid improvement and removal from the category of concern.

Criteria for self-evaluation

Outstanding	Good	Requires some improvement	Requires significant improvement
The LA works effectively to establish an enabling environment where school capacity is built and sustainable improvement results. **All the elements of good practice for management support of schools causing concern are present.** Practice is exceptional and should be shared with other LAs. There are no schools in Ofsted categories.	**Early intervention in schools causing concern brings about rapid improvement and removal from category of concern.** **All National Challenge schools are on trajectory to be sustainably above the floor target by 2011.** The LA has an agreed policy for schools causing concern that complies with legislation and DCSF guidance. Within the context of the policy, which takes account of the full range of stakeholders and agencies, including SIPs/NCAs, the LA: ● **has an effective system for identifying schools causing concern against published criteria** ● **draws up statements of action that are evaluated as meeting requirements** ● **identifies and commissions appropriate support** ● **reviews progress, plans further action and adapts approaches.** LA actions with schools causing concern result in self-sustaining improvement once support is reduced or removed. **The LA makes appropriate use of the range of statutory powers available to it, including structural interventions.**	**The number of schools in Ofsted categories is in the top quartile nationally.** Intervention is tardy, frequently using an Ofsted categorisation as the trigger for action rather than trying to prevent school failure in the first place. More than 80% of National Challenge schools are on trajectory to be sustainably above the floor target by 2011. The LA policy for schools causing concern is not fully aligned with legislation and has some weaknesses. Within the context of the policy, which takes account of the full range of stakeholders and agencies, including SIPs, the LA secures two or three of the four criteria for 'good'. Schools make satisfactory progress with key issues, but cannot sustain when support is removed. The LA makes some use of the range of statutory powers available.	**The number of schools in Ofsted categories is in the top decile nationally.** Intervention is rarely considered prior to school failure. Less than 80% of National Challenge schools are on trajectory to be sustainably above the floor target by 2011. The LA policy for schools causing concern has significant weaknesses and is not shared effectively with schools. Within the context of the policy, which takes account of the full range of stakeholders and agencies, including SIPs, the LA secures one or none of the four criteria for 'good'. Some schools in categories, when monitored, are found to have made inadequate progress. The LA is reluctant to use its statutory powers and rarely does so.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

2.4 Impact of gathering, analysing and making best use of intelligence from providers to drive improved standards as part of a wider strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children

Quality standards

- The LA's data systems are used strategically to form a view about the progress of children and of provider quality and:

  - informs the target-setting process for the Early Years Outcomes Duty (EYOD)

  - informs EYCs/SIPs/NCAs on areas of enquiry prior to each visit to a school.

- Reports from EYCs/SIPs/NCAs identify the needs of schools/settings and show what needs to be done to improve quality and provide evidence of challenge on the specific areas of concern and any others that have been identified.

- EYC/SIP/NCA reports are:

  - timely

  - accurate and precise, identifying the school's response to all the issues emerging from the data

  - informative

  - evaluative

  - concise.

- Reports from EYCs/SIPs/NCAs:

  - identify key strengths and priorities for further action

  - provide a judgement on the robustness of the self-evaluation including the strength of the evidence base

  - form an agenda for action for the provider, noting progress since the last meeting and agreed actions before the next

  - are direct yet sensitive, add value to the quality or school improvement processes and impact upon outcomes for children and young people

  - for primary and secondary schools, record the school's targets and progress towards achieving them.

- Based upon EYC/SIP/NCA reports and other intelligence, the LA undertakes a comprehensive and accurate risk analysis of all providers, resulting in effective deployment of resources which have the maximum impact on pupil attainment and progress.

Criteria for self-evaluation			
Outstanding	**Good**	**Requires some improvement**	**Requires significant improvement**
All the elements of good use of intelligence are present. The LA's intelligence management system/ risk management system results in rapid and decisive intervention with evidence of high impact and prevention of failure. Improvement of attainment and progress for children and young people is in the top quartile nationally for schools. Intelligence includes judgements about the attainment and progress of all learners. The LA's intelligence management/risk management system is used as a transferable model of best practice.	**The LA has effective and transparent management information systems for gathering relevant intelligence on providers and uses this to:** ● **form a robust picture of children's progress and provider quality** ● **predict and manage the risk of provider failure.** The risk register created is shared with senior officers within and beyond SI (and elected members) on a regular basis. The key document for gathering intelligence from schools is the SIP report. **These show the following seven features:** ● timeliness ● accuracy and supported by evidence ● identify the issues for action and a timescale ● provide evidence of the challenge provided ● provide a clear agenda for action ● have a clear agenda and format ● feed into the LA management information system and risk register. There is effective QA that ensures a good level of consistency across and within reports.	The LA risk management system gathers much information but fails to do so systematically, or fails to present it in a useful form that facilitates interrogation. It is likely that there will not be one risk register but many different locations for intelligence. This is not routinely shared at senior levels in the LA. The risk register is not systematically shared with and does not draw on the intelligence of teams within the wider Children's Services. Providers are unable to articulate the LA's processes for risk management. The key document for gathering intelligence from schools is the SIP report but **one or two of the seven features for good reports are missing.** LA QA arrangements lack rigour and fail to ensure reports are of good quality.	The LA has limited processes for undertaking risk analysis. Providers do not have access to the outcomes of risk analysis. SIP reports are one among a range of methods of gathering information from schools and **three or more of the seven features for good reports are missing.** There may be no LA QA arrangements or if there are they are weak and inconsistently applied.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

2.5 Effective use of data to promote progress of all children and young people

Quality standards

- The use of data in schools, settings and the LA contributes to improved attainment and progress of children and young people and accelerated progress of underachieving groups.

- The advice to providers about the use of data is effective.

- Data systems are inclusive of all learners and provide a means for judging if the progress of vulnerable and underachieving learners is good enough.

- The LA has a clear strategic vision for effective use of performance data and this vision contributes to improved attainment and progress.

- This vision results in provision of data that is timely, accurate, useful, accessible and uncluttered.

- The range of data provided and used by the LA includes all the relevant performance data, and also the range of contextual and socio-economic data.

- Each school's EYC/SIP/NCA is briefed on the analysed data and effectively challenges providers as a result.

- The LA demonstrably and effectively uses its data to inform its improvement strategy and resource deployment.

- The improvement strategy for schools is adjusted in the light of this cycle of data provision, use and feedback.

- The data provision supports effective target setting and intervention, and tracking of children and young people in providers.

Criteria for self-evaluation

Outstanding	Good	Requires some improvement	Requires significant improvement
All criteria for good are evident. The use of data contributes to the progress of all children and young people in the LA and results in the LA being in the top quartile. All or nearly all providers in the LA show well-embedded practice in use of data to promote progress.	The use of data contributes to the progress of children and young people in the LA and a rate of improvement in achievement above the median. Data includes performance and contextual information and is: ● **timely** ● **accurate** ● **useful** ● **accessible** ● **uncluttered.** Data systems are inclusive of all learners and provide a means for judging if the progress of vulnerable and underachieving learners is good enough. The majority of providers in the LA show well-embedded practice in use of data to promote progress. The LA demonstrably uses its data to effectively inform its improvement strategy and resource deployment for providers. LA briefing of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs results in effective challenge on relevant issues. The improvement strategy for providers is shaped by this data cycle.	Provision of data is satisfactory or better but evidence that its use contributes to progress and improvement is weak. Two of the critical criteria for good provision are missing. Less than half of providers in the LA show well-embedded practice in use of data to promote progress.	Provision of data has significant weaknesses and/or there is little or no evidence that the use of data contributes to the progress for children in the LA. Three of the critical criteria for good provision are missing. Few providers in the LA show well-embedded practice in use of data to promote progress.

Note that these standards should be applied in the context of the impact on wider outcomes for children and the priorities identified in the National Strategies Annual Plan.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Data indicators

In addition to RAG ratings against the criteria listed in the main part of this document there will also be a range of quantitative judgements derived from the data on standards and progress for the LA and the number of schools that are coasting or below the floor target. Derivation of the criteria for these judgements will be the subject of a separate exercise. The tables below show examples of the sort of data that we expect to use for these quantitative judgments.

Standards and progress		
Early Years	**Primary**	**Secondary**
1. Threshold 2006–09 2. Gap closing 2006–09	1. Key Stage 2 level 4 English and mathematics combined 2006–08 2. Key Stage 2 English, two levels of progress 3. Key Stage 2 mathematics, two levels of progress 4. Schools below floor target 2007, 2008 and 2009 5. Primary FSM gap, that is, the gap between the Key Stage 2 level 4 English and mathematics achievement of children on FSM in the LA compared to the national average of those not entitled to FSM (to avoid local deprivation profile as a factor in relative performance) 6. Key Stage 2 below level 3 7. SEN/non-SEN gap 8. Key Stage 2 level 4 English and mathematics for children in care	1. 5+ A*–C including English and mathematics 2006–08 2. Key Stage 4 English, three levels of progress 3. Key Stage 4 mathematics, three levels of progress 4. No passes at GCSE or equivalent 5. Schools below GCSE floor target 2007, 2008 and 2009 6. Secondary FSM gap, i.e. the gap between the 5+ A*–C English and mathematics for children on FSM and the national average of those not entitled to FSM 7. SEN/non-SEN gap 8. 5+ A*–C including English and mathematics for children in care 9. A*–C in English and mathematics 10. Number of schools with good/outstanding behaviour 11. Persistent absence

Appendix 2: the National Strategies regional team

The National Strategies regional structure is at the heart of the National Strategies' approach to providing tailored and coherent support to LAs. There is a range of personnel within each region who liaise with specific personnel within each LA.

At the head of each region is a Senior Regional Director (SRD) who leads and manages the National Strategies regional team and has responsibility for liaison with the Director of Children's Services (DCS) in each LA. Each SRD is supported by a regional management team comprising a primary and secondary Senior School Improvement Adviser (SSIA) and deputy SSIA and an Early Years Senior Regional Adviser (EYSRA). In turn these senior staff line-manage a team of early years, primary and secondary Regional Advisers (RAs).

The SRD has overall responsibility for the RAG rating process on behalf of the National Strategies within the region. The senior managers for each phase are responsible for advising the SRD on the ratings for each LA in each phase, which results from their detailed discussions with their key contacts within the LA. During these discussions senior phase managers will draw upon evidence from RA notes of visit and from visits to schools and meetings with headteachers that take place as part of the quality assurance of the SIP programme. Relationships between National Strategies activity and RAG ratings are in the table below.

RAG aspect	All ratings arrived at in discussion between National Strategies senior phase managers and LA key contacts
1.1 Delivery of school and setting improvement programmes, including appropriate National Strategies programmes, in particular the Early Years, Primary and Secondary Frameworks, in partnership with headteachers and providers **1.3** Impact of support, training and CPD for LA EYCs, SIPs and consultants **1.5** Impact of target setting, tracking and intervention in schools and LAs **2.1** Impact of targeted LA National Strategies resources **2.5** Effective use of data in providers to promote pupil progress	RA evidence would be a key input to the discussion around these RAG aspects. RA notes of visit will include contributory RAG ratings resulting from discussion with their contacts at the LA.
1.2 Impact of LA leadership and management on raising standards and improving progress in providers **1.4** Brokering of support services (primary and secondary only) **2.2** Impact of challenge and support (primary and secondary only) **2.3** Impact of management support for schools causing concern including those in the National Challenge (primary and secondary only) **2.4** Impact of gathering, analysing and making best use of intelligence from providers	These ratings would principally be derived from the discussions between National Strategies senior regional managers and their key contacts, typically SIP manager, strategy manager and head of school improvement/assistant director. Such discussions are supported by evidence gathered from triangulation with performance data and visits to schools.

Appendix 3: Agendas for discussion with LA contacts

The following represents a comprehensive agenda that would cover the entire set of quality standards. The intention is neither that the entire agenda would be covered in one meeting, nor that the agenda is necessarily covered stepwise as a series of questions. Rather it is intended to serve as an aide memoire for the areas that need to be covered during the course of the year.

1. Impact of the LA on raising standards and improving progress

1.1 Delivery of quality and school improvement programmes, including appropriate National Strategies programmes, in particular the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Primary and Secondary Frameworks, in partnership with headteachers, leaders, managers and providers

- Does the LA:
  - work effectively with providers to achieve the PSA targets?
  - promote the National Strategies universal offer effectively?
  - ensure that National Strategies' targeted advice and support results in greater impact?
  - maintain an open dialogue with headteachers/providers and SIPs/NCAs in seeking to ensure providers are best placed to self-evaluate and improve?
- Do National Strategies programmes bring about the desired improvements in providers?

1.2 Impact of LA leadership and management on raising standards and improving progress for all children, and closing achievement gaps as part of a wider strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children

- What is the vision for quality and school improvement?
- How effective is the school/setting improvement strategy? What are the roles of providers and EYCs/SIPs/NCAs within this?
- How does the cycle of monitoring and evaluation lead to clearly defined and effective planning?
- Is communication at all levels effective? Are roles, responsibilities and accountabilities clear?
- Is there effective alignment between the school improvement service and other targeted teams in wider Children's Services?
- Is performance management effective? How do you know? How does it link to CPD arrangements?
- What is the impact of extended services in the LA; how do they support narrowing the gaps?

1.3 Impact of support, training and continuous professional development (CPD) for Early Years consultants (EYCs), School Improvement Partners (SIPs)/National Challenge Advisers (NCAs) and LA National Strategies consultants

- What are the arrangements for induction of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants, what is the evidence of their effectiveness?
- How does CPD for EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants meet their identified needs?
- What is the evidence of the effectiveness of EYCs/SIPs/NCAs/LA National Strategies consultants? Do they have the right skills and knowledge to carry out their role effectively?

1.4   Impact of brokering of support services to schools

- What is the role of SIPs/NCAs in brokering of support services to schools?

- How does the LA ensure that schools have access to the right support and ensure that it is fit for purpose, has the desired impact and results in improved outcomes for children and young people?

1.5   Impact of target setting, tracking and intervention in schools and with providers

- Are LA and school-set targets ambitious and do they show a trend for improvement in line with DCSF guidance for all the children within the LA and for specific underachieving groups within that population?

- Do the LA's EY targets build on previous outcomes and focus on increasing the number of children achieving a good level of development and on narrowing the gap between the lowest 20% achieving children and the rest?

- How comprehensive and effective is tracking and monitoring of progress by providers and the LA? And do SIPs/NCAs support and challenge schools in their tracking and intervention?

- What evidence is there that tracking systems identify progress in meeting the learning needs of children and young people and inform the review of teaching programmes and the effective use of intervention strategies?

- How effectively does the LA support providers in narrowing gaps in achievement for children and young people in underachieving groups?

2. Risk management and intervention in schools and settings

2.1   Impact of targeted LA National Strategies resources

- What are the deployment arrangements for consultants; to what extent do they take into account school priorities that have been agreed with each school's SIP?

- What is the impact of resources/strategies brokered?

2.2   Impact of challenge and support to schools

- What is the impact of SIPs/NCAs on improvement in:

  - the quality of schools' self-evaluation processes and in the record of the outcomes?

  - identification of priorities for improvement and high-impact strategies for tackling these priorities?

  - financial planning and the extent to which spending meets schools' priorities?

  - the ongoing process of improvement?

  - the extent to which extended services support narrowing the gaps?

  - outcomes for children and young people?

2.3 Impact of management support for schools causing concern, including those in the National Challenge

- What is the impact of the LAs policy for schools causing concern?
- Does the LA:
  - make appropriate use of the range of statutory powers available to it and use radical approaches to improving governance where required?
  - ensure action plans/statements of action meet requirements?
  - identify and commission appropriate support that enables schools or settings to make rapid progress?
  - effectively review progress and plan further actions.
  - help schools be self-sustaining once support is reduced or removed?

2.4 Impact of gathering, analysing and making best use of intelligence from providers to drive improved standards as part of a wider strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children

- How are the LA's data systems used strategically to form a view about the progress of each school/setting and what use is made of this data and intelligence?
- Are EYCs'/SIPs'/NCAs'/National Strategies consultants' reports of high quality and what is their impact?
- Does the LA make effective use of SIPs/NCAs reports?

2.5 Effective use of data to promote progress of all children and young people

- How effective is the LA's data strategy in raising standards for children and young people?
- Are providers given data that is timely, accurate, useful, accessible and uncluttered, and does it include the range of contextual and socio-economic data as well as data for performance in national tests?
- How effective is the LA's use of data in informing its improvement strategy and resource deployment, and is this adjusted in the light of this cycle of data provision, use and feedback?

Appendix 4: Agendas for discussion with headteachers and other staff in schools

An essential element of National Strategies quality assurance of the SIP programme is discussions with headteachers and other staff in schools. In negotiation with LAs we will need to identify a sample of schools to visit and discuss with headteachers their experiences of working with the LA in general and their SIP in particular. The following agenda is not intended to be covered comprehensively on each visit to a school, rather it is expected that the relevant elements will be selected.

1. Impact of the LA on raising standards and improving progress

1.1   Delivery of quality and school improvement programmes, including appropriate National Strategies programmes, in particular the EYFS, Primary and Secondary Frameworks, in partnership with headteachers, leaders and managers and providers

- What is your understanding of your LA's role in supporting you in meeting your statutory targets?
- Is your EYC/SIP/NCA able to support you in the use of National Strategies and other school improvement resources?

1.3   Impact of support, training and CPD for EYCs, SIPs/NCAs and LA National Strategies consultants

- Is your EYC/SIP/NCA sufficiently knowledgeable about the issues that face your school and about how the national agenda can be used to support your school's improvement?
- Are consultants deployed to your school sufficiently skilled and up to date?
- Are you asked for formal feedback on your EYC/SIP/NCA or the consultants who work in your school?

1.4   Impact of brokering of support services to schools

- Does your SIP broker the support you need to improve your school?
- Does the LA ensure that schools have access to the right support and ensure that it is fit for purpose?

1.5   Impact of target setting, tracking and intervention in schools and with providers

- Has your SIP/NCA or your LA worked through the DCSF target-setting guidance?
- Do your targets:
  - build on prior attainment and previous best performance?
  - focus on progression, ensuring that no children fail to make progress?
  - represent improvement over current attainment for the school?
  - represent ambition for all learners?
- Do the targets identify and tackle underperformance of individuals and groups of children and young people?
- Can you explain your tracking systems? How does tracking work through to intervention? Has your SIP/NCA assisted or challenged you on your tracking and intervention systems?

2. Risk management and intervention in schools

2.1 Impact of targeted LA National Strategies resources

- What are the LA's arrangements for deploying consultants to your school/setting?
- Is it clear to you how this resource is contributing to the priorities you have agreed with your EYC/SIP/NCA?
- Can you give an example of successful support from National Strategies consultants where the impact has been improved outcomes for children/young people?

2.2 Impact of challenge and support to schools

- Has your SIP/NCA been able to assist you with your self-evaluation and Self Evaluation Form (SEF)?
- Does your SIP/NCA extend the challenge beyond the data and into your plans to tackle your priorities across the whole spectrum of school improvement including the way you work in partnership with other agencies and providers?
- Can you give an example of when your SIP/NCA has challenged you, where you have subsequently taken action and where there has been an improvement as a result?

2.3 Impact of management support for schools causing concern, including those in the National Challenge

- What is the LA's policy for schools causing concern and what is the SIP/NCA role within this?
- What category is your school in?

2.4 Impact of gathering, analysing and making best use of intelligence from providers to drive improved standards as part of a strategy to achieve wider outcomes for children

- Do your SIP/NCA reports provide a useful record and agenda for future action for you and your governors, noting progress since the last meeting and agreed action before the next?
- Are they:
  - timely so that actions are not delayed?
  - accurate and precise, identifying your response to all issues emerging from the data?
  - informative?
  - evaluative?
- Do they:
  - identify key strengths, priorities and strategies for improvement?
  - record the school's targets and the progress towards achieving them?
  - provide a useful agenda for action including timescales?

2.5 Effective use of data in schools to promote progress of children and young people

- Does the LA provide you with data that is timely, accurate, useful, accessible and uncluttered and does it include the range of contextual and socio-economic data as well as data for performance in national tests?

Appendix 5: Joint visits with SIPs/NCAs to primary, secondary and special schools

Purposes of joint visits

The primary purpose of joint visits is to contribute to the overall QA of the programme, thus securing maximum impact on the outcomes for children and young people in the LA.

In conjunction with other QA activities, joint visits will contribute to:

- the development of LA systems and procedures;

- ensuring high-quality challenge and support by SIPs/NCAs;

- an overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the LA's SIP programme;

- the LA's SIP/NCA performance management process;

- the national understanding of how the SIP programme works.

Protocols for joint visits

The SSIA or deputy SSIA will:

- identify schools in consultation with the LA who will notify the SIP/NCA;

- seek the permission of the headteacher;

- clarify the purpose and the timings of the visit with all parties, giving reasonable notice;

- provide brief oral feedback to the SIP/NCA, and a written summary of the visit to the headteacher and the LA focused on the purpose of the visit as part of the national QA procedures.

Paired SIP/NCA and NCA visits to primary, secondary and special schools

Name of SIP/NCA:

Local authority:

School for paired visit:

(d)SSIA:

Date:

Length of paired visit:

Programme for visit:

Under each heading are the required standards for SIPs and NCAs taken from the National Strategies' quality standards against which the performance is judged and graded. Evidence to support the grade for this paired visit will then be listed.

1. **The quality and effectiveness of challenge (2.2)**

   SIPs and NCAs:

   - are thoroughly prepared for the meeting and are clear about the issues the school is facing and the priorities that emerge from the data;

   - understand their assigned school's performance, its self-evaluation, the causes of any low attainment and its capacity for improvement;

   - discuss underperforming groups of children and highlight those on FSM, BME, SEN and children in care;

   - are knowledgeable about school self-evaluation and can give guidance on the quality of the school's processes and SEF that is likely to result in improvement in school self-evaluation over time;

   - extend the challenge beyond the data and into the school's priorities and plans to tackle them;

   - start meetings with a review of action since the last meeting and end with agreed actions for the next;

   - are able to engage in a fruitful dialogue with the school about its financial planning and the extent to which spending meets the priorities the school has set itself.

   In addition, NCAs:

   - challenge and strengthen the School Improvement Plan, assessing the strategy for improving teaching and learning and tackling barriers to learning including through the delivery of extended services and helping the school to focus on core priorities;

   - regularly evaluate and monitor the impact of improvement plans, through visits to the school and scrutiny of pupil tracking data;

   - support the school to develop a systematic approach to the data to identify particular groups of pupils who are underachieving.

Grade: 1 2 3 4

Evidence

2. The quality of target setting (1.5)

- Through professional dialogue with SIPs/NCAs, the school sets ambitious targets that:
  - accord with DCSF guidance;
  - build on prior attainment;
  - build on previous best performance;
  - focus on progression;
  - represent improvement over current attainment for the school;
  - identify and tackle underperformance of individual pupils and groups of pupils;
  - factor in the impact of support and resources available from the school, LA and DCSF.
- The SIP/NCA has the skills and experience, moderated and quality-assured by the LA, to distinguish between genuine additional context factors and low expectations.

Grade: 1 2 3 4

Evidence

3. Effectiveness in brokering support (1.4)

The SIP/NCA:

- identifies the support resources required to achieve the school's priorities;
- evaluates the impact of the actions taken and any external support;
- is clear about the LA's policy for schools causing concern, his/her role within this and how this applies to the school;
- is knowledgeable about the range of available National Strategies resources;
- is knowledgeable about the range of additional support available both locally, regionally and nationally;
- is able to broker support from other schools within and beyond the LA;
- is able to advise the LA on the deployment of wider Children's Services to the school;
- is able to broker support from other providers including national organisations, independent consultants and such initiatives as NLEs and Consultant Leaders.

- support the school to identify where it should engage with local partners through the Children's Trust, including health and social care services, the third sector, as well as parents to help it address barriers to learning such as SEN, mental health issues, bullying, wider family or community factors.

Grade: 1 2 3 4

Evidence

In addition NCAs should:

- ensure that schools are implementing successfully effective teaching practice in the core subjects of English and mathematics using the renewed Secondary Frameworks;

- support the school to achieve coherence in implementing major reforms to curriculum and qualifications, workforce or extended services which can be particularly demanding for schools with insecure leadership;

- support the school to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the 14–19 reforms, helping them to ensure that more students stay on in learning post-16.

Grade: 1 2 3 4

Evidence

Feedback from headteacher

Strengths

Areas for development

What is the impact of the SIP/NCA?

Quality of SIP/NCA report

- Reports from SIPs/NCAs identify the needs of schools/settings and show what needs to be done to improve quality and provide evidence of challenge on the specific areas of concern and any others that have been identified.

- SIP/NCA reports are: timely; accurate and precise, identifying the school's response to all the issues emerging from the data; informative; evaluative; concise.

- Reports from SIPs/NCAs:

  - identify key strengths and priorities for further action;

  - provide a judgement on the robustness of the self-evaluation including the strength of the evidence base;

  - form an agenda for action for the provider, noting progress since the last meeting and agreed actions before the next;

  - are direct yet sensitive, add value to the quality or school improvement processes and impact upon outcomes for children and young people;

  - record the school's targets and progress towards achieving them.

Grade: 1 2 3 4

Evidence

SIP's/NCA's strengths

SIP's/NCA's areas for development

4. The overall effectiveness of the SIP/NCA in their work with the school

Grade: 1 2 3 4

Evidence

Note: Grade scores

– Outstanding and practice worthy of sharing = 1

– Good practice that fulfils all requirements of a SIP/NCA = 2

– Satisfactory practice that has some areas for improvement = 3

– In need of significant improvement = 4

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