



Model for School Improvement

The Pathway Academy Trust leading the way in the pursuit of excellence: in the spirit of collaboration and inspiration, through a creative, inclusive and child-centred education.

Rationale

TPAT expects its schools to work collaboratively to provide outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and staff. Learning is at the centre of our pedagogy. We firmly believe learning is a partnership and that through working collaboratively we will achieve the highest outcomes for all. We believe that every child is unique and ensure that learning experiences are tailored to meet the needs of individual children. We pride ourselves on providing the highest quality learning experiences; learning is fun, practical and engaging. Children are enthusiastic, motivated independent learners. They feel safe, valued and included and are aspirational about their futures.

As we are a small, local MAT and the school improvement professionals in our trust are the CEO, Director of Education, Head Teachers and school leadership teams in each of our schools. They are responsible for successful improvement within their own schools but also share the collective responsibility for school improvement across the Trust through school to school support, sharing best practice and a commitment to collaborative working. We also use an external school improvement partner to validate judgements and to bring insight and challenge from outside the organisation.

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible to the Trust Board for shaping the strategic direction and for the effective implementation of a school improvement strategy for all the schools in the Trust. Our strategic plan to support Trust growth and succession planning is to train and develop new executive leaders within and across our schools in order to develop a sustainable model of school improvement as the Trust grows.

Aspiration and High Expectations

The primary purpose of all leaders across the Trust is to ensure the best possible outcomes for every pupil through a sustained focus on school improvement. We understand school improvement in the four stages described by the National Schools Commissioner as Stabilise, Repair, Improve and Sustain. However, accurate evaluation of our schools and appropriate targeted support is essential, as we know that historic inspection judgements do not always reflect the current reality.

Each of our schools undergoes a regular and rigorous self-evaluation process based on:

- Analysis of attainment and progress data
- Findings from our joint learning walks and reviews
- Evaluation of leadership capacity
- Regular progress and impact meetings with leaders in each school

The outcomes of the evaluation process result in a judgement as follows:

School Category	A	B	C	D	E
NSC phase	Sustain	Improve	Improve	Repair	Stabilise
Pursuit of Excellence phase	Embedded excellence	Highly accomplished	Highly accomplished	Developing	Emerging
Ofsted Grade	Outstanding	Good to Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate

Category E Schools

The priority is to rapidly establish confident and competent leaders in the school and a school improvement team that will ensure significant and rapid improvement.

The Trust will provide intensive executive leadership support until a substantive Head Teacher is appointed. We will then support the new leadership to establish an effective leadership team to improve the school quickly. The Trust Board will review local governance and establish an effective Local Governing Body and Chair with a clear accountability to the Trust Board.

Intensive support will be provided from the existing expertise within the Trust through the Executive Leadership Team, as well as appropriate effective external support including local Teaching School Alliances. This will focus on progress and impact meetings, regular joint learning walks with leaders from across the Trust, collaborative support from subject specialists across the Trust, focussed CPD and recommendations from an external improvement advisor.

We will also establish systems to improve the quality of teaching, curriculum, data analysis, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, financial management and governance. The Head Teacher and leadership team will implement robust systems and procedures in line with the Trust's principles and will evaluate progress against a clear improvement plan, build an effective staff team and hold them to account.

Category D Schools

The priority for Category D schools is to develop and improve leadership capacity in order to accelerate progress through improved teaching and learning, effective accurate assessment, identifying underachievement, understanding gaps in learning and focussed planning for target groups.

This is achieved through brokered support from across the MAT using specific skilled leaders and teaching staff to raise standards of achievement rapidly through challenge, pedagogical reflection and coaching. This will be reinforced by progress and impact meetings, regular joint learning walks with leaders from across the Trust, collaborative support from subject specialists across the Trust and recommendations from an external improvement advisor.

This will also be supported through focussed CPD such as joint Trust training, specific school training, and individual support and coaching where it is needed to upskill staff and embed the principles of high expectations and reflective practice.

Category C, B and A Schools

The focus for Category C, B and A schools is to ensure that they continue to move towards and sustain embedded excellence, through high aspirations, succession planning, high quality teaching and robust leadership at all levels.

The Leadership Executive Team will work alongside the school leadership teams to develop and embed an ethos of reflective practice and research based pedagogy. As schools move from C to A, leaders and teachers will increasingly be expected to support other schools in their improvement through sharing best practice and working across schools. This will be reinforced with external networking beyond the Trust to support a broader understanding and gain insight from best practice.

School Improvement Strategy

The fundamental principles of our school improvement strategy are a culture of transparency and responsibility, genuine partnership working and school-to-school support. The sharing of resources, knowledge and expertise within the Trust, together with a proactive approach to a range of external expertise that is research-based and impacts positively on school improvement. The strategy has the following five key elements:

1. Annual School Review

Regular school review will inform the Executive Leadership Team and this will lead to the rag-rating process for each of the schools in the Trust at the beginning of each academic year. The level of support will then be dependent upon this process.

2. Risk Assessment

Reviews of each school's progress towards agreed targets takes place each term in order to assess the risk of the school either not sustaining an outstanding judgement or not improving its judgement in its next Ofsted inspection. The findings from these reviews are reported to the respective Local Governing Body of each school and received by the Trust Board.

3. Data summary and monitoring

A detailed analysis of end of year assessment results and termly updates on progress towards meeting expectations is presented to the LGBs and the Trust Board. This is supported by progress and impact meetings with the ELT and Head Teachers to review year group data and triangulated monitoring evidence.

4. School Improvement planning and review

On an annual basis, at the beginning of each academic year, the leadership team from each school will complete a school self-evaluation and improvement plan using the findings from external and internal reviews to accurately evaluate the school's strengths and identify the priorities for improvement. The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the progress of school improvement set against the plan.

5. Monitoring and Advisory Panel (MAP)

Where there are concerns about a school, the Trust may convene a MAP. The MAP has two core functions:

- to provide support and challenge to the leadership team to enable success;
- to ensure accountability

The MAP needs a diverse set of skills and experience to constitute a group of people who can assist with increasing the accountability function and support the Head Teacher through their monitoring and professional advice. Associate members may be called upon for their specific expertise to offer advice, support and information for example, finance etc. Terms of reference are agreed for the MAP in conjunction with the Head Teacher and panel.

Appraisal of senior leaders

Appraisal of senior leaders is outlined in the Trust's published Appraisal Policy. Performance is firmly linked to school improvement and outcomes for pupils. The appraisal of the ELT is undertaken by nominated Directors with an external adviser on behalf of the Trust Board as outlined in the policy. The appraisal of the Head Teacher of each school undertaken by the ELT, nominated members of the Local Governing Body and utilises advice from the Trust Improvement Adviser.