

APPENDIX 2

Keeping the Child at the Centre

The Hertfordshire Learning Partnership

June 2004



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1 Introduction

The Hertfordshire Learning Partnership is for all maintained schools in Hertfordshire. It is intended to set out the key principles for working together to raise standards and promote children's well-being.

This draft has been prepared following earlier consultation with schools and other stakeholders. We want the Hertfordshire Partnership to command the widest possible support.

Coherent and collaborative relationships with schools and their partners within and outside the local authority are fundamental to an LEA's progress.
David Bell
HMCI Report 2004

2 The Hertfordshire Learning Partnership

2.1 National Context

Reform of children's services, and the duty for all to co-operate to promote children's well-being, means that schools share this important responsibility. They also take the lead role in delivering the key outcome of 'enjoyment and achievement', helping every child to fulfil their potential and overcome the odds.

Local Education Authorities (LEAs), in Hertfordshire's case CSF, are responsible for providing the infrastructure for a universal school system and have a key role to play in promoting high educational standards. Schools, CSF, the DfES and other organisations will operate within a new dynamic framework to raise standards. Our partnership will look to anticipate and respond flexibly to the changes that will be required by the implementation of the Children Bill.

2.2 The Hertfordshire Context

Hertfordshire is a large shire county. It has a diverse population in a range of contexts from large urban communities to sparsely populated rural areas. School performance is generally high but there are, nonetheless, significant areas of under performance.

The vision we have is a shared one - every child having the opportunity to fulfil their potential, and no child slipping through the net.

Margaret Hodge
Every Child Matters: Next Steps 2004

In 2001 the Children, Schools and Families (CSF) service was created. The central purpose of CSF is to help all children, schools and families reach their full potential, making the life chances of all Hertfordshire children better. CSF has the unique capacity to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to achieve change and improvement. This is especially crucial for vulnerable children where the work across agencies needs to maximise access, participation, engagement and achievement of young people.

2.3 The Hertfordshire Learning Partnership: Making a Difference

The Hertfordshire Learning Partnership is based on an agreed statement of expectations as the basis for schools and other stakeholders to work together to raise educational achievement and promote participation and engagement for all. It sets out the roles of schools, the rest of CSF and other stakeholders in raising educational standards.

CSF aims to combine the local authority leadership role with modernised methods found in leading edge practice:

- leadership and advocacy for children's services working in partnership with schools and other stakeholders;
- linking strategies to raise educational achievements and provide inclusion as part of wider community development strategies;
- establishing networks of schools and learning communities to add value and provide best practice;
- providing advice, support, procurement and brokering.

These aims will be achieved in a transparent way with good communication at all levels.

2.4 Principles of the Partnership

Schools and CSF are committed to a strong working partnership that will enhance the life chances of all Hertfordshire's young people. The intention is to have a strategic core of services and services delivered locally through the quadrants.

The principles informing The Hertfordshire Learning Partnership are that schools and CSF:

- have shared responsibility for the progress and well-being of all learners;
- believe in participation and engagement for all, and the promotion of life long learning;
- believe that collaboration adds value to schools and their communities;
- are committed to collaborating to overcome barriers to educational achievement;
- are committed to working in partnership with other agencies, employers, parents, voluntary sector organisations, local communities and community groups;
- believe that schools are primarily responsible for their own performance;
- agree that CSF support should relate to the needs of schools in improving educational standards and meeting the needs of individual children;
- focus on improving our previous best;
- believe in celebrating and sharing successful practice and recognising achievement in all its forms;
- will develop leadership in schools at all levels;
- are committed to providing high quality provision and good value for money;
- believe our relationships are based on mutual trust and transparency.

..... the engagement of the community, be it adults, children or families in learning, is the key to a brighter, more dynamic future, where its citizens will be proactive and confident individuals Learning for life is not just a slogan - it is about day-to-day action, which will enable people to make choices about the lives they wish to lead.

Delivering Skills for Life
DfES/LSC 2004

2.5 Communication, Information Sharing and Consultation

Good communication, consultation and information sharing are based on four primary principles; these form the basis for open and effective consultation between schools, CSF and other stakeholders.

Information is fit for purpose, meaning that it:

- is relevant and meaningful to the intended audience;
- meets agreed standards;
- does not duplicate other information e.g. that from national bodies;
- supports our partnership;
- supports the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

Information is timely and relevant, meaning that there:

- is a planned and agreed timetable for exchange of key information and data to support school improvement cycles and CSF requirements;
- are agreed performance standards for accuracy and response times.

Communication is open and honest, meaning that:

- the sensitivity of information is recognised where appropriate;
- processes are transparent and accountability is shared;
- there are agreed protocols for the exchange of information within and between schools, CSF and other partners.

Access is made easy, meaning that:

- effective e-communication is developed in all areas.

The development by the DfES of the concept of informed professionalism is supported by the use of performance data for planning and review activities by LEAs, schools and teachers.
School Improvement: making data work
TEN/Confed/DfES 2004

Schools are critical to ensuring every child has the opportunity to fulfil their potentialThis vision requires new ways of working and collaboration between schools, and closer working between schools, communities and specialist services. Our understanding that high standards and social inclusion are interlinked ambitions is at the heart of our desire nationally and locally to integrate closely education, social care and health services.

Every Child Matters: Next Steps - Working in Partnership 2004.

2.6 Collaboration

We will actively promote collaboration between schools and other partners to support:

- strong communities of schools that share responsibility for all their learners;
- curriculum enrichment opportunities for young people;
- increased participation post-14 and access to a breadth of learning opportunities;
- networking to demonstrate and share good practice and promote school effectiveness;
- the efficient use of resources;
- leadership development at all levels;
- strong school self-evaluation.

Appendix 1

The Code of Practice for School – CSF Relations

1 Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 **Schools** and, increasingly networks and communities of schools, are responsible for their own performance and the achievements of their pupils. They must plan for continuous improvement and need the maximum autonomy to make decisions and manage resources. Schools have delegated funding through the Fair Funding Scheme and also receive specific or formula grants either through the County Council, from the LSC, or direct from central government. Each school is responsible for deploying the resources available to it to meet the educational needs of all children and young people in the school at that time. The most effective schools are those that are reflective, open in sharing their own good practice, and actively looking to learn from best practice elsewhere.
- 1.2 **The governing body** sets the broad strategy for the school's development through the cycle of school self-evaluation, target setting, action planning, and review. In its role as critical friend, it provides challenge as part of each process and is responsible for setting the school's budget. For voluntary-aided and foundation schools it undertakes many of the duties of the employer. In general, the governing body looks to the headteacher to provide professional advice and to lead and manage the school within the broad strategy so as to achieve improved performance.
- 1.3 Hertfordshire has a wide diversity of schools. The majority are community but there is a significant number of schools supported by a range of foundations, faiths and dioceses.
- 1.4 **CSF** undertakes the LEA function and has an explicit duty to promote high standards of education for all children. As part of this function, CSF provides support to schools through appropriate monitoring, challenge, support and intervention to ensure progress and high standards are achieved.

2 Supporting School Self -Improvement

- 2.1 CSF is committed to ensuring that standards in all schools are improving. The long-term strategy is to raise educational achievement and promote inclusion, which is set out in the Strategy for School Effectiveness. The CSF Strategic Plan contains a range of activities and actions to support the implementation of the strategy.
- 2.2 Central to CSF's Strategy for School Effectiveness is the belief that schools will improve most effectively where there is a will and drive from within and where there are secure procedures for self evaluation that involve a wide range of stakeholders. CSF monitors aspects of school performance to provide a clear basis for distinguishing between those schools that are making good progress and those that would benefit from additional support. This enables CSF to:
- assess the strengths and areas for development of individual schools;
 - target resources to schools with the greatest need, providing and commissioning the required support so that they are able to improve;
 - ensure that schools have the necessary information to set and meet demanding performance targets for all pupils;
 - challenge, where necessary, the targets set by the governing body as well as any aspects of the school where there is evidence of under performance;

- bring together within the CSF strategic plan schools' targets and CSF's contribution to achieving them through its school effectiveness programme;
- identify and share good practice;
- celebrate success and support the process of improvement.

3 The Framework for Monitoring, Challenge, Support and Intervention (MCSI)

- 3.1 The framework for MCSI is based upon the Hertfordshire Self-Evaluation Framework and is intended to encourage self improving schools. CSF carries out its responsibilities for monitoring and supporting schools through a programme of **joint annual review visits** in partnership with schools, based upon their own evaluation of their effectiveness.
- 3.2 Through this programme, schools moderate and agree their own self-evaluation judgements against the criteria in the Hertfordshire Self-Evaluation Framework, based on robust evidence using quantitative and qualitative indicators. This leads to agreement of the school's strengths and areas for development and its overall category of school effectiveness.
- 3.3 The identification of schools within categories of school effectiveness enables headteachers and governors to have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their school and enables CSF to differentiate its support to schools. The MCSI framework is set out on the next page.

4 Monitoring

- 4.1 CSF's monitoring of schools is based on a relationship of trust and is undertaken mainly through an audit of performance of all schools at the joint annual review visit. This visit is usually in the autumn term and lasts one day. It includes a meeting with the headteacher and other senior staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and the School Effectiveness Adviser (SEA) in order to evaluate the school's overall performance using its own self-evaluation evidence, including performance data, and other evidence supplied by the full range of CSF services. It will include discussion and agreement of the school's statutory targets.
- 4.2 In preparation for the visit, the school will need to update its self-evaluation report using **Ofsted form S4**, drawing on the criteria in the Hertfordshire Framework for School Self-Evaluation, and complete the **School Self-Evaluation Summary Profile** (see appendix 3). The school will also need to prepare draft statutory targets for discussion and agreement. These documents will need to be sent to the SEA at least one week in advance of the visit.
- 4.3 As a result of the joint annual review visit, and based on the overall achievement and progress of the pupils and the school's self-evaluation profile, the school will be placed in a category on the MCSI framework. This category is confirmed in writing as part of the visit report completed by the SEA. In the case of a difference of opinion between the school and the SEA about the school's category, the CSF judgement will stand but the school's view will be recorded, along with the evidence to support it.
- 4.4 The category of school effectiveness will largely determine any further visits, additional support and intervention from across the CSF Service. Where needed, such additional support will be agreed in outline at the joint annual review visit.

The Categories for School Effectiveness

	Achievement and progress	School Self-Evaluation Summary Profile
1	Excellent schools where pupils consistently work at or near their capacity and make and sustain comprehensive gains in their learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 1 or 2 in almost all aspects Includes the features in (2) below and has many examples of outstanding practice
2	Almost all pupils achieve highly and progress at a good rate in relation to their capabilities and their earlier attainment, as reflected in value-added measures and when compared with results in similar schools. Work is very demanding and all groups and individuals achieve well – and many very well – in most subjects and courses, and across the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly grade 2, some grade 3 Attendance, unauthorised absence and exclusions well above average Quality of teaching well above national picture: almost all teaching (95%+) good, very good or excellent School self-evaluation is embedded in the school's practice and is open, frank and accurate.
3	The progress of the great majority of pupils is good throughout the curriculum: in the Foundation Stage, in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development; in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 especially in the core subjects; and in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form, across all areas of the curriculum. Value-added indicators show that almost all achieve well compared with their prior attainment and ability and compared with pupils in similar schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly grade 3, some grades 2 or 4 Attendance, unauthorised absence and exclusions above average Quality of teaching better than national picture: no unsatisfactory teaching, and at least 70% teaching good, very good or excellent School self-evaluation is thorough and systematic: any weaknesses are quickly identified and acted upon
4	Schools where pupils generally achieve at least as well as those in similar schools, and make satisfactory progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly grade 4 including standards, teaching and leadership. Some grades 2 or 3; probably no 5s Attendance, unauthorised absence and exclusions average Quality of teaching in line with national picture: unsatisfactory teaching no greater than 5%; at least 70% teaching good, very good or excellent Sound procedures for school-self evaluation are in place, which ensure that weaknesses are identified and tackled
5	Progress is patchy; particular year groups of pupils are not sufficiently challenged. There are signs of underachievement among groups of pupils in parts of the core and foundation subjects, courses or areas of learning. In the core subjects, pupils achieve less well than those in similar schools and their English literacy and language skills, mathematics and ICT are weak. Value-added indicators are negative. Includes schools in the Ofsted 'under-achieving' category.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards or teaching or leadership and management will be grade 5, or (if these are grade 4 or better) a significant number of other aspects will be grade 5. Some grade 3s and 4s. Attendance, unauthorised absence and exclusions below average Quality of teaching worse than national picture, with unsatisfactory teaching approaching 10% and/or insufficient good teaching School self-evaluation procedures, whilst in place, are not sufficiently rigorous and lack impact
6	Most pupils make inadequate progress. Underachievement is widespread among particular groups of pupils such as boys, girls, gifted and talented pupils, minority ethnic pupils, those with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. Achievement is low compared with similar schools. These are schools with complex difficulties resulting in wide-spread under-achievement and at risk of failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst some aspects may be grade 4, standards, teaching and leadership and management will be grade 5 (or lower) as will most other aspects. Attendance, unauthorised absence and exclusions well below average Quality of teaching well below national picture, with more than 10% unsatisfactory School self-evaluation procedures are inadequate and ineffective.
7	Schools in the Ofsted categories 'Serious Weaknesses and Special Measures'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ofsted reports will detail aspects with significant weaknesses

Visits: **all schools** 1 day **Additional Support: category 4** 1-5 days: **category 5** 3-10 days: **category 6** 10-20 days: **category 7** -20 days.

- 4.5 Information from the joint annual review process along with other data, for example from the SPEARs* database, will give early indications of schools causing concern. Where there is significant underachievement, schools will usually be placed in category 5 and receive additional support. Schools with complex weakness (category 6) or schools with serious weaknesses or in special measures (category 7) will be placed on the register of schools causing concern. This triggers a series of actions to support and, where necessary, intervene so that the issues causing concern can be remedied in the shortest possible time. (* School profile and early alerts recording system)
- 4.6 The use of Ofsted form S4 and the school self-evaluation profile to inform the joint annual review visit will enable headteachers, governors and advisers to identify trends, be clear whether the school is improving or declining and plan accordingly.
- 4.7 Additional support is also available for schools which have recently been in an Ofsted category, new headteachers, and other special circumstances.

5 Challenge

- 5.1 We recognise that many self-improving schools welcome challenge in order to ensure continuous improvement. This challenge may be provided by governors, acting as critical friends, by CSF or by other external agents. The governing body has a unique role in providing challenge through a supportive and trusting relationship with the school.
- 5.2 The main challenge from CSF to schools is provided at the joint annual review visit when considering:
- statutory targets for the improvement of pupil performance;
 - the school's self-evaluation judgements against each aspect of the Hertfordshire self-evaluation framework, based on evidence;
 - any aspects of a school's performance (for example SEN provision, under-achievement of particular groups of pupils) where there are concerns.
- 5.3 'Challenge' includes drawing the attention of the headteacher and the governing body to any issues needing improvement, discussing the evidence and offering advice and support so that a school can deliver its own action plan for improvement. The challenge process may lead to the inclusion of the school in activities in the CSF Strategic Plan or to the identification of the school as causing concern.
- 5.4 It needs to be recognised that challenge may also be used to support and extend success and may be provided in the form of peer challenge as with the 'Triad' groups (where the heads carry out evaluative visits to each others schools).

6 Support

- 6.1 Support is defined as those activities provided by CSF to assist schools in delivering their own improvement. The range of support available to schools includes:
- school-based training provided by advisers and consultants on the school's own agenda;
 - central training, for example, at the Wheathampstead Development Centre;
 - training and coaching provided by national strategy consultants;
 - for primary schools, leadership support provided by Primary Strategy Consultant Leaders;

- advice and training for new headteachers provided from both the SEA and through the Eastern Leadership Centre
 - coaching for headteachers and senior leaders through SEAs and the 'Executive Creative Coaching' scheme;
 - financial advice and support through Financial Services for Schools.
 - advice and training for governors provided by the School Governance Service;
 - a range of local services for schools and individual pupils provided through the quadrant teams.
- 6.2 Support may also be provided from other schools, from within a network of schools or through other collaborative arrangements. Support programmes are identified in the CSF Strategic Plan and are targeted on the schools with the greatest need, based on an audit of all schools. Schools can also purchase support and training from CSF's traded services and other providers.

7 Intervention

- 7.1 CSF can exercise statutory powers of intervention where it has acute concerns about a school's performance and it is evident that the school cannot make the necessary improvements through its own efforts (see Appendix 2). In reality, intervention needs to happen long before there are acute concerns if schools are to remain healthy and avoid decline.

8 The work of the School Effectiveness Adviser (SEA)

- 8.1 The SEA role provides a key link between CSF and schools, working within the MCSI framework. The work of the SEA is set within the broader context of the work of CSF's school improvement strategy. The core functions of the SEA are to:
- establish partnerships with schools;
 - provide leadership and management advice to schools;
 - monitor, challenge support and where appropriate intervene in the work of the school;
 - maintain up to date information about schools;
 - liaise with CSF officers to ensure that CSF has a comprehensive view of the effectiveness of schools;
 - facilitate networks and collaboration between schools and CSF to enable the sharing of good practice, particularly across the quadrants;
 - commission and co-ordinate support across CSF for schools, where necessary;
 - encourage collaboration between key stages e.g. Key Stage 2 to 3;
 - ensure that actions taken are the correct ones for the school;
 - share a responsibility with schools to feedback to CSF about issues raised and actions agreed.
- 8.2 There are high expectations of the work of SEAs which are defined in clear standards, and are underpinned by the National Standards for School Improvement Professionals (NSIPPs). In Hertfordshire SEAs will:
- have secure knowledge of their linked schools which will in the main be in the same quadrant;
 - make a joint annual review visit to each of their schools and additional visits as appropriate to category;
 - have up to date professional knowledge appropriate to phase;
 - possess good communication skills;
 - have the ability to build strong professional relationships.

- 8.3 The purpose of school visits is to support school improvement through:
- informing and supporting the school's self-evaluation and review procedures;
 - providing an evaluation of the impact of the school's priorities and actions;
 - contributing to the school's future planning and target setting;
 - collecting information for CSF to inform its overall progress for self-improvement.
- 8.4 The following principles will be reflected in routine visits made by SEAs:
- visits will complement not duplicate Ofsted visits;
 - the focus will be on challenging and supporting schools to raise standards;
 - advisers will use visits to identify, disseminate and celebrate good practice and also to encourage the professional development of staff;
 - the outcome of the joint annual review visit will determine the future visits during that year;
 - the practice between advisers should be consistent so that schools receive appropriately balanced quality support.
- 8.5 In preparation for visits the adviser will:
- arrange a date and focus with the headteacher, giving four weeks notice;
 - agree the agenda with headteacher;
 - collect and review data and paperwork relevant to the focus of the visit.

and the head will:

- provide relevant data and/or paperwork;
- agree with the SEA the focus for the visit;
- arrange the involvement of other staff and governors.

During the visit the SEA and head will:

- consider evidence relevant to the focus of the visit (e.g. classroom observation, performance data) and identify issues arising;
- agree actions which need to be taken by the school, the SEA, or by other CSF officers.

- 8.6 After the visit the SEA will produce a report which they will check with the head via email before it is finalised. The report will set out the judgements made, praise what the school does well and identify areas for improvement. It will not refer to the performance of individuals and it will remain confidential to the school and its governors, CSF, and Ofsted (when it is requested).

Ofsted evidence shows that the sharing of monitoring reports with governors is often at the discretion of the headteacher.

School improvement: Making data work
TEN 2004

In our most effective schools, reports are distributed to all governors and discussed at governors' meetings. This means that the governors are able to celebrate the school's strengths and contribute effectively to improvement planning.

9 Responsibility for the individual child

9.1 We will work together to keep the child at the centre ensuring that individual needs are met through:

- an appropriate curriculum and learning support;
- joint working between all professional agencies to ensure children are supported within their schools;
- working with the wider community of schools to ensure that all children are safe, have access to appropriate learning and remain in Hertfordshire schools.

All children have the right to a good education and the opportunity to fulfil their potential all schools should play their part in educating children from their local community, whatever their background or ability.

Removing Barriers to Achievement

DfES 2004

9.2 CSF has an advocacy role for children, young people and their families within the County Council as a whole. In addition, it has a range of specific duties and responsibilities to the individual child which include ensuring that:

- children of statutory school age are admitted to and attend school;
- children's special needs are met;
- exclusions are minimised and that excluded pupils receive full time education;
- children in care receive high quality education;
- children are protected from harm and neglect.

9.3 CSF is the Admissions Authority for Community Schools, whilst Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools are their own Admissions Authorities. CSF is responsible for the operation of an Admissions Forum to promote agreement on admissions issues and to ensure compliance with the statutory Code of Practice. Parents have the opportunity to identify the 3 schools they would most like their child to attend and CSF is responsible for co-ordinating arrangements across all the Admissions Authorities in Hertfordshire so that each parent receives a single offer of a school place on a set day.

9.4 School governors are responsible for using their best endeavours to ensure that the special educational needs of all children on roll are met. CSF provides a range of resources and specialist services to support this process and to meet its own duty to ensure that the needs of all learners are met in compliance with the SEN Code of Practice. Funding is delegated to mainstream schools through their annual budget shares to enable appropriate learning support arrangements to be put in place.

9.5 Individual arrangements apply for children with the most significant and complex needs. These include:-

- training, advice or direct support from a specialist peripatetic service eg. educational psychology, emotional/behaviour difficulty;
- earmarked pupil funding for those with high levels of need but which fall below the threshold for a statement;
- additional classroom support through a statement;
- attendance at a specialist unit attached to a mainstream school;
- attendance at a special school.

As part of the development of an overall strategy for inclusion, work is currently underway to identify ways of promoting good practice and delegating some of these more specialist resources to individual schools or groups of schools. This would offer more flexible use of funding and support longer term planning within both schools and CSF.

10 Resources

We are committed to making the optimum use of available resources, and to maximising delegation of funding to schools. We will work together to ensure a transparent system for the equitable distribution of resources, matching funding to priorities and develop a long-term plan for the maintenance and development of CSF's building stock. CSF will support schools through the provision of good quality and timely information and advice in relation to management information, asset management and financial planning and will work in partnership with schools to deliver Best Value and promote efficient use of resources.

11 Appointment of headteachers and deputy headteachers

- 11.1 The appointment of headteachers and deputy headteachers to schools is critical to the improvement of pupils' achievements. The Director of CSF or his representative has the right to be present at each stage of the appointment of a headteacher or deputy headteacher. Where the SEA is nominated as the Director's representative he/she will usually be present at each stage of the process for headteacher appointments. Governing bodies should ensure that dates for the appointment are agreed in advance with the Director or his nominee.
- 11.2 In the case of the appointment of a deputy headteacher, the governing body should ensure that the Director, or his nominee, are in agreement with the candidates that have been shortlisted. The Director or his nominee will only be present for the whole process where the school chooses to buy this service or where the school is experiencing difficulties.
- 11.3 Where the school is the employer the Director has the right to be present at the appropriate key stages of appointments of headteachers and deputy headteachers.

12 Quality Assurance

- 12.1 CSF is committed to working with schools and other stakeholders to ensure high quality, effective services, based on ease of access and regularity and consistency of delivery. The CSF "Performance Management and Development" and "Quality Management" frameworks enable monitoring of progress against key objectives and performance indicators in the CSF Strategic Plan. It also supports the development of staff and their range of skills required for the above.
- 12.2 In addition CSF is developing a model of self-evaluation in which we would want to involve schools and other stakeholders in validating evaluations and using this process to inform shared, future priorities and the development of services.
- 12.3 If a school or governing body considers that CSF has disregarded the Code, complaints should be addressed to the deputy director, learning and school effectiveness.
- 12.4 CSF is fully committed to working in partnership with schools and anticipates that difficulties will normally be resolved through collaboration and co-operation rather than complaint.

Appendix 2

1. Support for Schools Causing Concern

- 1.1 Procedures for the identification of, and support for, schools causing concern have been updated following consultation with headteachers and governors as part of the review of partnership working with schools. The new procedures focus on better systems for identifying schools 'at risk', reducing the number of schools in OfSTED categories, and improving the effectiveness of the support for schools designated as causing concern either by CSF, Ofsted or the schools themselves.
- 1.2 The co-ordination and monitoring of support programmes for schools causing concern has been strengthened with establishment of Action Groups for each of the schools in categories 6 and 7 of the new MCSI Framework. The Action Group is led by the linked School Effectiveness Adviser (SEA) and includes the headteacher and chair of governors.

The purpose of the Action Group is to:

- focus the school's efforts to improve pupils' standard of achievement;
 - support and challenge the school to address the key issues which are barriers to its improvement;
 - provide a forum where the actions required to address these key issues are planned and support needs identified;
 - provide a simple route for contact between CSF and the school;
 - monitor the progress of the school and the effectiveness of the support provided;
 - ensure that support programmes are well co-ordinated;
 - ensure that the professionals required to support the school from across CSF are taking the appropriate steps;
 - report to the Quadrant School Effectiveness Board (SEB) and the Head of Standards and School Effectiveness on the progress made and further support and challenge required.
- 1.3 The Action Group provides the forum for the three key players central to the improvement of the school to communicate, keep each other informed of progress, and make things happen. This group may be joined by key officers, for example a school finance officer, on occasions where relevant issues are being addressed. The Action Group does not replace the function of the governing body to implement, monitor and evaluate the schools' action plan. Neither does it replace CSF's responsibility to monitor and evaluate the progress of the school.

2. School Effectiveness Boards

- 2.1 Part of the responsibilities of the new quadrant SEBs is to assess the progress of all schools causing concern in their area. The boards meet six times a year with the following included in their remit:
- to identify early any schools which may be at risk and what action should be taken;
 - to maintain an overview of progress of schools causing concern (category 6 and 7) and those which are underachieving (category 5), this will include maintaining and evaluating the impact of support provided by or secured through CSF;
 - to recommend action required where the current programme of action taken by the school and/or CSF is not having the impact required;
 - to provide summative progress reports, as necessary, to the County Standards and School Effectiveness Board on a termly basis

The core membership of the group includes:

- Headteacher representatives
- Quadrant Manager
- Senior Officer from Standards and School Effectiveness
- Pupil Services Manager
- Educational Psychologist
- Assessment Group Manager
- Personnel Officer
- Area SEN Adviser
- Student Services Manager
- MECSS Officer
- Finance Officer
- Planning Officer
- Area School Effectiveness Advisers

2.2 Where it is evident that a school cannot be supported to improve through its own efforts, CSF will use its intervention powers. These are a last resort and will only be used in limited circumstances as defined in section 15 of the School Standards and Framework Act. (SSFA) (See sections 2 and 3). The powers are:

- issuing a formal warning notice to the governing body;
- appointment of additional governors;
- suspension of the delegated budget;
- proposing to the Secretary of State the appointment of an Interim Executive Board to replace the governing body.

3. The identification of Schools Causing Concern

3.1 When a school is identified as causing concern, through its categorisation on the MCSI framework, the SPEARS database or other concerns, this is discussed by the SEA, headteacher and chair of governors. The school's placement on the schools causing concern register will then be agreed and confirmed in writing.

3.2 Where the identification is through the school or CSF, rather than Ofsted, a review is undertaken by advisers or external consultants not connected to the school. This results in a report to the governing body. The governing body then needs to draw up an action plan to address rapidly the key issues identified. This plan is supported by CSF staff and may be accompanied by additional funding where the school's own resources cannot finance the required action. The SEA commissions the required support.

3.3 The Action Group and the Quadrant SEB oversee, monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken and assess whether the appropriate progress is being made.

3.4 When the required improvements have been made and the school is no longer at risk it is removed from the register. The linked SEA discusses this with the head and Chair of Governors and if it is agreed, confirms the school's removal in writing.

4. Powers of Intervention

4.1 Formal Warnings

4.1.1 Section 15 (2) of the SSFA gives LEAs the power to issue a formal warning notice to a governing body.

- 4.1.2 CSF will consider issuing a formal warning notice if:
- standards of performance of pupils at the school is unacceptably low and likely to remain so without intervention;
 - there has been a serious breakdown in the way in which the school is managed or governed;

CSF will exercise this power only in exceptional circumstances, for example, where:

- the safety of the pupils or staff of the school is at risk;
- the school is in category 6 or 7 of the MSCI framework;
- concerns are grounded in evidence which has been investigated and discussed with the school;
- the governors have not remedied these matters within a reasonable period.

A formal warning will include the actions the governing body is asked to take and the deadlines for meeting these.

- 4.1.3 If the governing body does not comply with a formal warning notice, CSF may use its other powers of intervention.
- 4.1.4 If the governing body feels that CSF is acting unreasonably in issuing a formal warning notice, or in the terms of that notice, it can make a complaint to the Secretary of State.

4.2 Appointment of Additional Governors

4.2.1 CSF may appoint additional governors to any school judged by Ofsted to require special measures or have serious weaknesses (category 7) or where CSF has serious concerns (category 6).

4.2.2 Additional governors are identified for their skills and experience. They are mainly selected from existing governing bodies, CSF staff and other community workers. A register of additional governors is maintained by the School Governance Team and they are matched carefully to schools when needed.

4.2.3 The role of the additional governor is:

- to be exemplar governors;
- to participate fully in all governing body activities;
- to ensure that the governing body takes the necessary actions to make the school successful;
- to participate in committees set up by the governing body where specialised skills are needed;
- to agree all monitoring and reporting with the chair of governors and headteacher;
- to assist the governing body to work effectively, identify any areas of weakness and to receive any training needed;
- to be positive and encouraging but not afraid to challenge.

4.3 Suspension of Delegated Powers

4.3.1 CSF has the power to suspend the governing body's right to spend the school budget. If CSF decides to take this course of action the related staffing powers are also restricted.

This power of intervention may be used in circumstances where:

- the school has received a formal warning notice, but the matter has not been remedied;
- the school has been found by Ofsted to require special measures, to have serious weaknesses, to be underachieving or is designated as category 6 by CSF;
- the governors have failed to comply with any requirements under CSF's scheme for financing its schools, or are not managing the delegated budget satisfactorily.

4.3.2 Suspension of delegation is a temporary and transitional measure and not a permanent state. CSF will work with the school during the period of suspension to ensure that the school's capacity to take decisions is strengthened.

4.3.3 Before suspending a school's budget, normally on the advice of the SEB, the Director for Children, Schools and Families will consult with the Executive Members. The director will give the governing body at least one month's notice in writing of any suspension, except in the cases of gross incompetence, mismanagement or other emergency. The notice will specify the grounds on which CSF proposes to suspend delegation.

4.3.4 CSF will be selective and will leave with to the governing body such decision-making powers as it considers appropriate.

4.3.5 If the budget is to be suspended because the school has not taken the required actions following a formal notice, there will be a two-month period before suspension.

4.3.6 The school has no right of appeal unless CSF is in contravention of the Code of Practice.

4.4 Interim Executive Boards

4.4.1 The *Education Act 2002*, provides LEAs with an additional power to appoint a specially constituted governing body or Interim Executive Board (IEB) to replace a governing body for a temporary period. This power is available when a school:

- is in special measures;
- has been judged to have serious weaknesses; or
- has failed to comply with a formal warning from its LEA.

4.4.2 The governing body should also be judged to be incapable, with support, of turning the school around. The power is intended to be used only in these exceptional circumstances where it is clear that other intervention powers (to appoint additional governors or withdraw delegated budget) have failed or would fail to bring about the necessary improvement, and may be used only with the consent of the Secretary of State.

4.4.3 Before using this power, CSF must consult the school governing body and, in the case of a foundation or voluntary school, the Diocese or other appropriate appointing authority. The governing body must also be given written notice that CSF proposes to establish an IEB.

For further information:

Schools Causing Concern Guidance - DfES October 2002

School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Amended Section 19 by Section 58 Education Act 2002)

Appendix 3

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION SUMMARY PROFILE								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1	The school's results and pupils' achievements?							
	Key Stage							
	Key Stage							
	Key Stage							
	Achievement across all groups of pupils?							
	How well do pupils achieve overall?							
3.2	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development							
	How good is pupils' attendance?							
	How good are the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils?							
	How good is pupils' personal development (SMSC)?							
	Pupils attitudes, values and personal qualities overall?							
4	Teaching and learning							
4(a)	How good are the teaching and learning? Key Stage							
	Key Stage							
	Key Stage							
	How good are the teaching and learning overall?							
4(b)	How good is assessment of pupils' work and progress?							
5	The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils needs							
5(a)	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?							
	How good is the school's extra-curricular provision?							
	How well does the curriculum meet pupil needs overall?							
5(b)	Accommodation and resources?							
6	The school's care, support and guidance for pupils							
	Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety?							
	Support, advice and guidance for pupils?							
	Pupils care, guidance and support overall?							
7	The school's work in partnership ...							
	The school's work in partnership with parents?							
	The school's links with community?							
	The effectiveness of educational and support programmes?							
	The effectiveness of links with schools and colleges?							
	How well does the school work in partnership overall?							
8	Leadership and management							
8(a)	How good is the governance of the school?							
	How good is the leadership of the school?							
	How effective is the leadership of the school overall?							
8(b)	How effective is the management of the school?							

Appendix 3

THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1(d)	How well is the school regarded by its pupils and parents?							
1(c)	Improvement since the last inspection?							
1(a)	Overall effectiveness							
	Key strengths							
	Areas for development							
	Support/intervention							