

Children's Services Directorate
School Improvement Service

Schools Causing Concern Guidance

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Introduction

This document relates to Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006: the provisions relating to schools causing concern in England (sections 59 – 73 and schedule 7). These commenced in law on 1st April 2007. Part 4 of the Act builds on existing statutory powers and good practice to ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities they deserve. It does this by:

- promoting earlier action to tackle school underperformance so that it does not become entrenched and lead to formal school failure;
- ensuring that effective support and challenge is provided immediately when unacceptable standards are identified, so that improvements can be made quickly; and
- securing decisive action if a school in Special Measures fails to make sufficient improvements, so that the education and life chances of pupils are safeguarded

This document helps local authorities and schools to interpret and make full use of the powers provided by the Act. It explains the statutory powers and responsibilities which are enacted in legislation, and provides advice on how Salford Children and Young People's Services (Salford CYPS) and schools might work together to prevent and address failure. Part 4 of the Act provides the legislative structure within which a range of partners involved in school improvement will operate. These partners must work together to establish an enabling environment which balances the autonomy schools need to innovate and succeed, with robust challenge and early support when schools are not doing well enough.

Schools themselves are the core of the system. In addition to having the central role in delivering education, they have responsibility for their own improvement, and for making the best use of the challenge and support available to them.

Under the New Relationship with Schools, School Improvement Partners (SIPs), and in Salford, School Improvement Officers are the first elements in a framework of challenge and support for schools. They will continue to support

and challenge the school's process of self-evaluation in order to help the school arrive at an accurate judgement of how well it is serving its pupils and what it needs to do to improve. This judgement will be validated by Ofsted, as part of a new inspection system which will provide more timely and more focussed information on a school's capacity to improve.

Salford CYPS is responsible for enabling schools to respond to the challenge provided by SIPs, SIOs and Ofsted. The vision for children's services is based on a clear understanding of service users' and stakeholders' needs, and identifies the top priorities and targets that need to be achieved in order to fulfil this vision. Where challenge from SIPs/SIOs or Ofsted indicates that schools will need additional support in order to deliver against these priorities and targets, it is Salford's role to design, commission and broker a suitable package of support, and monitor its success. Salford CYPS has its own policies and systems for working with schools which need additional support (see Intervention details for Primary and Secondary in Salford SCC summary

Section 1

A summary of the law

Many of the provisions in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 are re-enactments of existing legislation, but there are some significant new measures to ensure that fewer schools become a cause for concern, and that those which do get in difficulty are supported to recover more quickly.

Maintained schools are eligible for intervention by local authorities:

- (i) when the school has not complied with a valid warning notice;
- (ii) when the school requires Significant Improvement;
- (iii) when the school is in Special Measures.

The definition of poor school performance now includes schools that are badly underperforming in relation to the nature of their pupil intake or the school's general context, in addition to schools at which absolute standards (attainment rates) are unacceptably low. When issuing a warning notice, Salford CYPS will indicate the action it is contemplating if the school does not respond satisfactorily. It must also tell the school that it has the right to appeal to Ofsted. The school must respond to the warning notice, or appeal to Ofsted, within 15 working days.

Salford's intervention powers in relation to those schools eligible for intervention:

- (i) Power to require such a school to work with another school, college, or other named partner for the purpose of school improvement
- (ii) Salford CYPS to appoint additional governors;
- (iii) Salford CYPS can apply to the Secretary of State to replace the entire governing body with an Interim Executive Board (IEB);
- (iv) Salford CYPS to take back the school's delegated budget.

Each of these powers is explained in more detail in Chapter 5.

The Secretary of State's existing powers of intervention:

- (i) The Secretary of State may appoint additional governors;
- (ii) The Secretary of State may put an IEB in place;
- (iii) The Secretary of State may close a school in Special Measures.

Existing technical provisions about IEBs are re-enacted, creating the rules for governance under an IEB and providing a regulation-making power.

Amendments to existing legislation on schools causing concern:

(i) require Salford CYPs to consider what action to take immediately after a school is judged to require Special Measures or Significant Improvement, including how to involve parents

(ii) empower the Secretary of State to require a local authority to re-consider radical action (when the "case becomes urgent")

(iii) extend the existing duty on proprietors of non-maintained schools to consider and prepare statements of action if their school is judged to require Special Measures or Significant Improvement.

All local authorities must have regard to guidance from the Secretary of State when exercising powers in relation to schools causing concern.

Early intervention and warning notices

Making intelligent use of a range of information including data in order to understand each school's needs, and taking a proactive role in early intervention are central components of local authorities' strategic role. Identifying and solving issues early will be less detrimental to pupils' outcomes and more cost-effective than allowing a school to fall into deep-rooted failure.

The first part of this section sets out the roles of Salford Local Authority, School Improvement Officers and School Improvement Partners in early intervention, and describes the relationship which should be established with schools in order to provide early support and challenge. However, there will be cases where a warning notice is needed because a school refuses to acknowledge its problems or accept external support. The revised system for issuing a warning notice is set out in the second part of this section, together a discussion of the evidence which can be used to justify a notice, and advice on circumstances in which a warning notice may not be appropriate.

2.1 Early intervention

Context

Under the New Relationship with Schools (NRwS), there is an increased emphasis on self-evaluation as the basis of school planning; schools should self-evaluate regularly and use this process to drive improvement and build capacity to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.

School Improvement Officers (SIOs) and School Improvement Partners (SIPs) are already deployed to challenge and support the school's self-evaluation

and planning, in order to build the school's capacity to improve the attainment of pupils. SIOs/SIPs act as a critical professional friend to a school, helping its leaders to evaluate the school's performance, identify priorities for improvement, plan effective change and discuss with the school any additional support it may need. SIPs work to national standards and are accountable to local authorities.

The feedback from SIOs/SIPs is a key component of Salford CYPS intelligence about a school. In addition to obtaining SIOs'/SIPs' feedback, Salford Local Authority is expected to draw on a range of information, including that used to compile the Children and Young People's Plan, to ensure that we know our schools well

Salford CYPS will continue to develop strategies, structures and systems which make best use of the information available, in order to identify and commission the support schools require at an early stage. As is common good practice, we will continue to publish our strategies, structures and systems for school intervention, following consultation with all schools. The criteria for and processes of intervention will be set out, demonstrating a differentiated approach under which the level and depth of intervention is in inverse proportion to a school's success and capacity to improve

The role of the SIO/SIP

As set out above, SIOs/SIPs contribute significantly to a Salford's intelligence about all schools. We will continue to share intelligence from other sources with SIPs, communicating any concerns about a school at an early stage. Each local authority has its own reporting arrangements for its SIPs. SIO/SIP reports and notes are provided to the local authority Principal School Improvement Officer and SIP Manager and to the school to which it relates. Over the course of a year, these reports could include comment on: the quality of the school's self-evaluation, Achievements and Standards, Personal Development and Well-Being, Provision, Leadership and Management; the suitability of priorities and targets in the school development plan, and progress towards these; and the school's need for external support.

SIPs/SIOs should discuss any concerns they have with the school's Headteacher in the first instance. In most cases, the SIP's and the Headteacher's judgements will be similar. Following from the SIP's report, the SIPSIO and the school can agree with the local authority how any necessary support will be secured, deployed and monitored.

However, there may be circumstances in which the SIP/SIO has concerns about the school and cannot secure agreement on action through professional dialogue with the Headteacher and governors. It is in such cases that the connection between NRwS and the arrangements for schools causing concern becomes evident. SIPs will alert the local authority SIP Manager to their concerns and their view of the support required by the school, so that early action can be taken. If the SIP's concerns relate to a school sixth form, the local authority should inform the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

Schools should make their SIPs'/SIOs' reports available to Ofsted inspection teams on request. SIPs/SIOs may also attend the oral feedback at the end of an inspection, at the request of the local authority, and they may advise the local authority to request that Ofsted bring forward an early inspection of a school. However, SIPs will not usually have any direct contact with Ofsted.

2.2 Warning notices

As set out above, Salford CYPS will engage schools effectively through a professional dialogue to address any issues causing the local authority concern. This would be conducted by the SIO and/or the SIP in the first instance.

If a school is refusing to engage constructively with the challenge provided by the School Improvement Service, or the support commissioned by Salford, the local authority should consider issuing a warning notice in order to bring the necessary support to bear before the issues of concern result in school failure.

In keeping with the principles of early intervention set out here, the new Act updates the warning notice system in order to:

- provide local authorities with a lever to bring in support at an earlier stage, and more quickly, to a school that is not engaging constructively with the authority under the New Relationship with Schools
- enable local authorities to address persistent and severe underperformance
- ensure that schools which fail to comply with a valid notice become eligible for local authority interventions.

Establishing the grounds for a warning notice

A warning notice can be triggered by any of the following circumstances:

- (a) the standards of performance at the school are unacceptably low, and are likely to remain so unless the local authority exercises its statutory intervention powers;
- (b) there has been a serious breakdown in management or governance which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, standards of performance;
- (c) the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown in discipline or otherwise).

Warning notices should only be used where there is evidence to justify both the local authority's concerns and the school's reluctance to address these concerns through a professional dialogue with the local authority via the School Improvement Service within a reasonable timeframe.

There may be rare circumstances, for example when the school's difficulties are believed to be deep-seated or severe, in which Salford may, instead of issuing a warning notice, make a request to Ofsted, via the Local Managing Inspector, to bring the school's inspection forward.

Salford CYPS will draw on a suitable range of quantitative and qualitative

information to form a complete picture of the school's performance before deciding to issue a warning notice; appropriate forms of evidence are discussed in more detail below.

(a) Evidence of unacceptably low standards

The definition of when standards are 'unacceptably low' is extended from the previous provision. The 2006 Act indicates that a **warning notice can be issued if pupil performance is below levels expected when pupils' prior attainment or previous rate of progress and the school's context is taken into account, even if the absolute level of attainment is apparently satisfactory.**

Quantitative evidence of 'unacceptably low standards' may take one of the following forms; usually a combination of several of these indicators will apply:

- The school is in the bottom quartile nationally in one or more key performance indicators, such as Context Value Added (CVA) data, attainment rates, or aggregate point scores.
- The school's data set indicates there are problems in relation to pupil progress
- There is specific evidence, from close examination of contextual data or other sources that there are groups of pupils performing significantly below expectations. As a guide, this will normally be 5% or more of the school population
- Attainment data shows that the school is very weak in core subjects.

Qualitative evidence to confirm concerns about the school's standards indicated by the quantitative data may be available from sources such as Ofsted reports, local authority subject inspections, feedback from parents, or analyses of pupils' work.

Information from a single academic year is unlikely to be sufficient to justify a warning notice, unless the problems it indicates are severe, or they appear in

conjunction with weaknesses in leadership and management. In the majority of cases, local authorities should look at more than one year's data to establish whether standards are improving, declining or fluctuating.

Some educational settings, especially Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units, may have little standardised data about their pupil's learning (e.g. end of Key Stage results). In these cases, Salford CYPS will have to rely on the school's other records, such as how well learners have met their individual targets. It is vital that these schools are challenged to provide a good education for their pupils.

It is important to recognise that school-level data can mask within-school variations between subject areas or pupil groups. Schools with high attainment overall must still be encouraged to target those groups of pupils within the school which are not achieving as well as they might be expected to. Where they are unwilling to do so, it may be appropriate for the local authority (Salford) to issue a warning notice.

It should be noted that such data may be less reliable for smaller cohorts of pupils, and susceptible to fluctuations caused by absence, pupil mobility, or year-on-year variation.

Local authorities(Salford) will draw on a range of evidence in reaching a judgement about the school's performance, in addition to looking at raw attainment data. Where a range of analyses or data sources identify a common issue, it is likely that this should be the basis for action. Where analyses differ, it is necessary to check their accuracy, undertake further data-gathering, or re-assess underlying assumptions.

(b) Evidence of a breakdown in leadership or management

Key sources of information to justify a warning notice under criterion (b) are likely to be the SIO's/SIP's reports, particularly the commentaries on the quality of the school's self-evaluation, target-setting, value for money, and capacity to improve; and Ofsted reports.

In addition, some data trends may indicate a breakdown in leadership and management. Such data should be treated with caution, as they may also arise for reasons other than poor school leadership. Such indicators will be confirmed by strong intelligence about the quality of leadership and management from sources such as SIO's/SIPs' or Ofsted reports before considering a warning notice. Where such reports are unavailable, data trends should be considered only as the first signs of concern which should prompt the local authority to investigate further, perhaps through an audit of the school's leadership.

Data trends which might, in some circumstances, prompt local authorities to investigate a school's leadership and management further include:

- declining school popularity, possibly revealed through school rolls falling more rapidly than might reasonably be expected from demographic changes;
- high or increasing absence or truancy rates;
- high rates of staff turnover, or numbers of staff grievances
- feedback from parents, or significant or increasing numbers of parental complaints.

There may also be grounds for issuing a warning notice where there are considerable concerns about the management and leadership of the school workforce and evidence that that the National Agreement on workforce reform is not being fully implemented, provided these concerns are reinforced by other evidence, particularly from the SIO/SIP.

Exceptions to (a) and (b) above

Even where the evidence referred to in parts (a) or (b) above exists, a warning notice is unlikely to be needed when the school is already working positively to address poor performance, and there is evidence of progress.

Circumstances in which a local authority might refrain from issuing a warning notice include when:

- the school acknowledges the problem and is working effectively with the School Improvement Service, or other support commissioned by the local authority, to rectify the problem
- the authority have requested that Ofsted bring forward the inspection of the school
- the school has recently been judged “satisfactory” (Grade 3) by Ofsted, and is taking positive steps to rectify the areas identified for improvement.

Issuing a warning notice

Once the grounds for issuing a warning notice have been established, the local authority must set out their concerns in writing to the governing body.

This written notice must include:

(a) the reasons for issuing the warning notice, including references to the quantitative and qualitative evidence the authority has used in deciding to issue the notice;

(b) the action the governing body need to take in order to address the concerns raised;

(c) the action the local authority is considering if the governing body do not comply satisfactorily with the warning notice, including, if appropriate, which intervention power(s) it is considering using. Such action should be proportionate to the issues faced by the school;

(d) the date when the 15 working-day compliance period will come to an end; and

(e) a reminder to the governing body that they may appeal to Ofsted within 15 working days if they feel that the grounds for issuing the warning notice are not valid, or that the action proposed if the school fails to comply is disproportionate.

The local authority must send the warning notice to the governing body of the school and copy the notice to the Headteacher, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) at Ofsted, and the appropriate appointing authority for church, foundation or voluntary schools.

Appealing against the warning notice

The governing body of a school that has received a warning notice can appeal to Ofsted under section 60(7) of the Act, if it believes that the local authority has:

- (a) issued the warning notice without sufficient objective evidence; or
- (b) proposed action that is disproportionate to the scale of the issues facing the school.

The appeal must be made in writing within 15 working days of receipt of the warning notice. It should be sent to the Regional Divisional Manager at Ofsted, and copied to the local authority.

The written appeal may contain, as appropriate:

- (a) why the governors disagree with the grounds for the warning notice; or
- (b) why the governors consider the action proposed by the authority is disproportionate to the scale of the issues facing the school; or
- (c) a combination of both the above.

Role of Ofsted

- Ofsted will send an email to the school, copied to the local authority(Salford), acknowledging receipt of the appeal.
- Ofsted may request additional documentary evidence; if such evidence is requested, it should be supplied within 5 working days.
- Ofsted will scrutinise the evidence provided, and may also examine other relevant documents (e.g. SIO/SIP reports, the school's Ofsted report, RAISEonline data, the local authority's Joint Area Review report).
- Ofsted may make its judgement based on written evidence alone, if the documentation is sufficiently comprehensive. In some circumstances, for example if there is insufficient written evidence to reach a decision, Ofsted may inspect the school.
- Ofsted will decide either to uphold or reject the appeal, and will communicate this decision in writing to the school and the local authority.
- If the appeal is upheld, the warning notice will be rescinded.
- If the appeal is rejected, the warning notice will be reissued to the school. The school must take appropriate action to respond within 15 working days of receiving the reissued warning notice.
- Ultimately, irrespective of Ofsted's ratification of a warning notice, a school may appeal to the DfES under section 496 of the Education Act 1996, which allows the Secretary of State to consider whether a local authority has acted unreasonably in exercising its functions.

Expectation of the school responding to the warning notice

If the school does not appeal to Ofsted, or the appeal has been rejected, the school has 15 working days to comply with the warning notice to the local

authority's satisfaction.

Such compliance may not involve full rectification of the problem, since it will not always be practical to do so, but it will involve positive steps towards the solution. For example, if the warning notice has been issued on the grounds of the relative underperformance of a particular group of pupils, the minimum expectation would be that the school amends its improvement plan to identify what support this group of pupils requires, how this additional support will be delivered, and how the effect of this additional support will be measured.

The development of the school's improvement plan as a result of the warning notice should be discussed with the School Improvement Service to ensure plans are sufficient. If the authority is content with the action proposed or taken, the warning notice should be rescinded and the intervention powers may not be used.

Use of intervention powers

A local authority's intervention powers are available if the school has not complied satisfactorily with the warning notice within the 15 day period following its issue (or re-issue following an appeal).

Where a local authority(Salford) has clearly stated in the warning notice which intervention powers it intends to use should the school fail to comply, and it still intends to exercise these powers, the local authority may intervene after a reasonable notice period. If urgent intervention is required, this period could be as little as one working day after the end of the compliance period.

In all cases, Salford CYPS is required to use its intervention powers within 2 months of the end of the 15-day compliance period. If it fails to intervene within this time, a new valid warning notice must be issued.

Schools in Ofsted categories

Schools causing concern must make rapid improvements, so that the negative impact the school's poor performance may have on pupils' outcomes is minimised. Local authorities should therefore continue to take fast, decisive action to secure improvements at schools which Ofsted judges to require Special Measures or Significant Improvement.

This chapter outlines the process when a school enters an Ofsted category of concern and what action the local authority is required to take . It also details the monitoring inspections that will occur, and how the Secretary of State may intervene if the case becomes urgent .

3.1 Entering a category of concern

If, following a Section 5 inspection, Ofsted considers a school to be inadequate (Grade 4), it will give a judgement that the school requires either 'Significant Improvement' or 'Special Measures'.

A school requires Significant Improvement if it is (a) failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, but demonstrating the capacity to improve, or (b) not failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, but performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform. Schools requiring Significant Improvement are said to be issued with a "notice to improve".

A school requires Special Measures if it is failing to give learners an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to

secure the necessary improvement.

If an inspection team judges that a school requires Significant Improvement or Special Measures, it will state this during oral feedback to the Headteacher and governing body at the end of the inspection. If the School Improvement Service suspects that a school may require Special Measures or Significant Improvement, it should be represented at the feedback meeting by the Principal School Improvement Officer/SIP Manager.

The judgement that the school requires Significant Improvement will be moderated by a senior HMI. The outcome will be communicated in writing to the governing body; the Headteacher; the local authority (or the proprietor if a non-maintained school); the Secretary of State; the diocesan or other appointing authority, if the school is a foundation or voluntary school; and the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC), if the school has a sixth form

If a school is judged to require Special Measures, Ofsted will state this in a draft report sent to the governors of a maintained school, or the proprietor of a non-maintained school. The recipient will be asked to offer comments on the report within 5 working days.

The judgement that the school requires Special Measures will then be moderated by a senior HMI. HMCI will decide whether (s)he agrees with the judgement. HMCI's decision will be communicated in writing to the governing body; the Headteacher; the local authority (or the proprietor if a non-maintained school); the Secretary of State; the diocesan or other appointing authority, if the school is a foundation or voluntary school; and the local LSC, if the school has a sixth form.

If a school requires Significant Improvement or Special Measures, the moderated judgement and inspection report will be published and available to the public a minimum of five working days after these are received by the school and Salford CYPS.

3.2 Action required

Maintained Schools

(i) Schools

The governing body, in consultation with Salford CYPS, should start to consider what action to take immediately after the oral feedback that Significant Improvement or Special Measures are required.

Under the NRwS, all schools should have a single, integrated development plan. There is, therefore, no longer any statutory requirement for the school to produce a specific action plan to respond to the judgement of Significant Improvement or Special Measures. The school should instead develop its existing school development or improvement plan to clearly set out the actions that will be taken to address the specific issues highlighted by the inspection, and how these will be monitored. Where these issues relate to sixth form provision, the local LSC should also be consulted.

(ii) Local authorities

Under Section 15 of the Education Act 2005, as amended by Schedule 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, it is the local authority's responsibility to prepare a statement of action within 10 working days of receiving the final inspection report.

Salford CYPS should begin preparing the statement of action immediately after the oral feedback to indicate that Significant Improvement or Special Measures are required. The local authority should work closely with the Headteacher and governing body of the school; the SIP; the diocesan or other appointing authority, if the school is a foundation or voluntary school; and the local LSC, if the school has a sixth form.

The statement of action must provide a detailed explanation of the options for the future of the school. In considering possible action, Salford CYPS should balance the school's need for long-term, sustainable improvements with actions which will have an immediate impact on the quality of education

received by pupils. Specifically, the statement of action should set out:

- the action Salford CYPS has taken so far;
- the additional support the local authority will commission to help the school address the areas of weakness identified by Ofsted;
- what arrangements the local authority has made to inform parents and carers about the actions planned for the school, and how it will gather and take into account their views;
- what specific steps are needed to build the leadership and management capacity of the school, including at middle management level;
- whether there is scope for partner organisations to be brought in to support the school (including other schools, trusts, colleges, or non-educational organisations), and how this collaboration will be facilitated;
- the scope for the school to be closed or federated, taking into account the number of surplus places in better-performing local schools, and – if such a course of action is appropriate – when this might happen;
- the scope for the school to become a Trust school or an Academy;
- whether the authority intends to use its intervention powers to appoint additional governors, require the school to enter into arrangements, withdraw delegation of the budget, or replace the governing body with an Interim Executive Board (IEB);
- if the school is not to be closed or federated, or the authority's intervention powers will not be used, why none of these actions is considered appropriate; and
- a plan of future action, including resource implications, quantified targets to evaluate the effectiveness of external support, target dates

for key actions, and progress review points.

Salford CYPS should copy the statement of action to the Regional Divisional Manager at Ofsted, the school's governing body; the SIP; the diocesan or other appointing authority, if the school is a foundation or voluntary school; and the local LSC, if the school has a sixth form.

HMI from Ofsted will evaluate the local authority's statement of action. A letter will be sent to the local authority explaining whether the statement is fit for purpose, or how it might be improved. Amended statements should not be re-submitted to Ofsted but should be made available to the inspection team at the first monitoring visit, during which the effectiveness of the local authority support to the school will be judged.

Non-maintained schools

3.3 Interim Inspections

A school requiring Significant Improvement will be visited, usually for one day by one inspector, 6-8 months after the section 5 inspection. A school requiring Special Measures will be visited for up to two days by an inspection team 4-6 months after the section 5 inspection. These visits are section 8 interim inspections, usually referred to as 'monitoring visits', and have the purpose of monitoring the school's progress against issues identified in the section 5 inspection.

The school will normally receive two days' notice of each monitoring visit. At the beginning of a monitoring visit, the school will be encouraged to provide any recent self-evaluation of its progress, or updating of its self-evaluation form, to the lead inspector.

At the end of the visit, the school will receive oral feedback on its progress since the section 5 inspection, or the last monitoring visit. The inspector(s) will come to an overall judgement as to whether the school's progress is 'inadequate', 'satisfactory', 'good', or 'outstanding' and, if the school is in Special Measures, whether it should remain in the category. These findings

will also be set out in a letter addressed to the school's Headteacher, and copied to: the Secretary of State, Salford CYPS, the governing body of the school; the SIP; the diocesan or other appointing authority, if the school is a foundation or voluntary school; and the local LSC, if the school has a sixth form. The letter will also be published on the Ofsted website.

A judgement of 'inadequate' progress after a monitoring visit is a clear indication that the school needs to take urgent steps to secure improvements, and this should prompt Salford CYPS to review the action being taken.

A school requiring Significant Improvement will be subject to a re-inspection under section 5 approximately 12 months after the original section 5 inspection. If the school's progress remains inadequate, it may be made subject to Special Measures.

A school in Special Measures will continue to receive monitoring visits as long as it remains in the category. The timing of the second and subsequent monitoring visits is at the discretion of the lead inspector. Typically, schools will receive two monitoring visits within the first 11-13 months of being judged to require Special Measures. When the school has improved sufficiently, Special Measures will be removed.

If a school remains subject to Special Measures following any monitoring visit, Salford CYPS, Headteacher, governing body, diocesan or other appointing authority, and local LSC are expected to discuss and agree the next steps needed to enable an acceptable rate of progress to be achieved or maintained before the next monitoring visit.

3.4 "The case has become urgent"

Schools should not be allowed to remain in Special Measures for an extended period of time if little or no progress is being made towards securing sustainable improvements. The Act therefore includes new legislation to enable the Secretary of State to inform a local authority that the case of a

school is Special Measures has become urgent.

The Secretary of State will make the judgement that the case has become urgent based on the findings of the Ofsted monitoring visits. The usual trigger point would be a finding of inadequate progress at the second monitoring visit.

However, this power is discretionary and the Secretary of State will consider each case on its merits. There may be some exceptions to the expectation that inadequate progress at the second monitoring visit will cause the Secretary of State to consider the case urgent. For example:

- the Secretary of State may consider that the case has become urgent if Ofsted provides evidence of major difficulties at any visit, including the first;
- if the local authority's actions have included changes to leadership but these have legitimately yet to take effect, the Secretary of State may decide not to consider the case urgent; or
- if a school remains in Special Measures for an extended period, the Secretary of State may consider that the case has become urgent.

Duty on local authorities if the case has become urgent

If the Secretary of State informs a local authority that the case has become urgent, the local authority is required to produce a revised action plan within 10 working days of receipt of the notice.

This statement should set out a range of considerations for the statement of action after a judgement of Significant Improvement or Special Measures, but with additional specific references to the evidence from the latest monitoring report. The statement should contain a reconsideration of the actions taken, in order to determine why the school has not succeeded in making progress.

By this point, Salford CYPS should have already used a range of statutory and non-statutory interventions. Therefore, the presumption at this point will be that the school should be closed and – if necessary – replaced, unless the

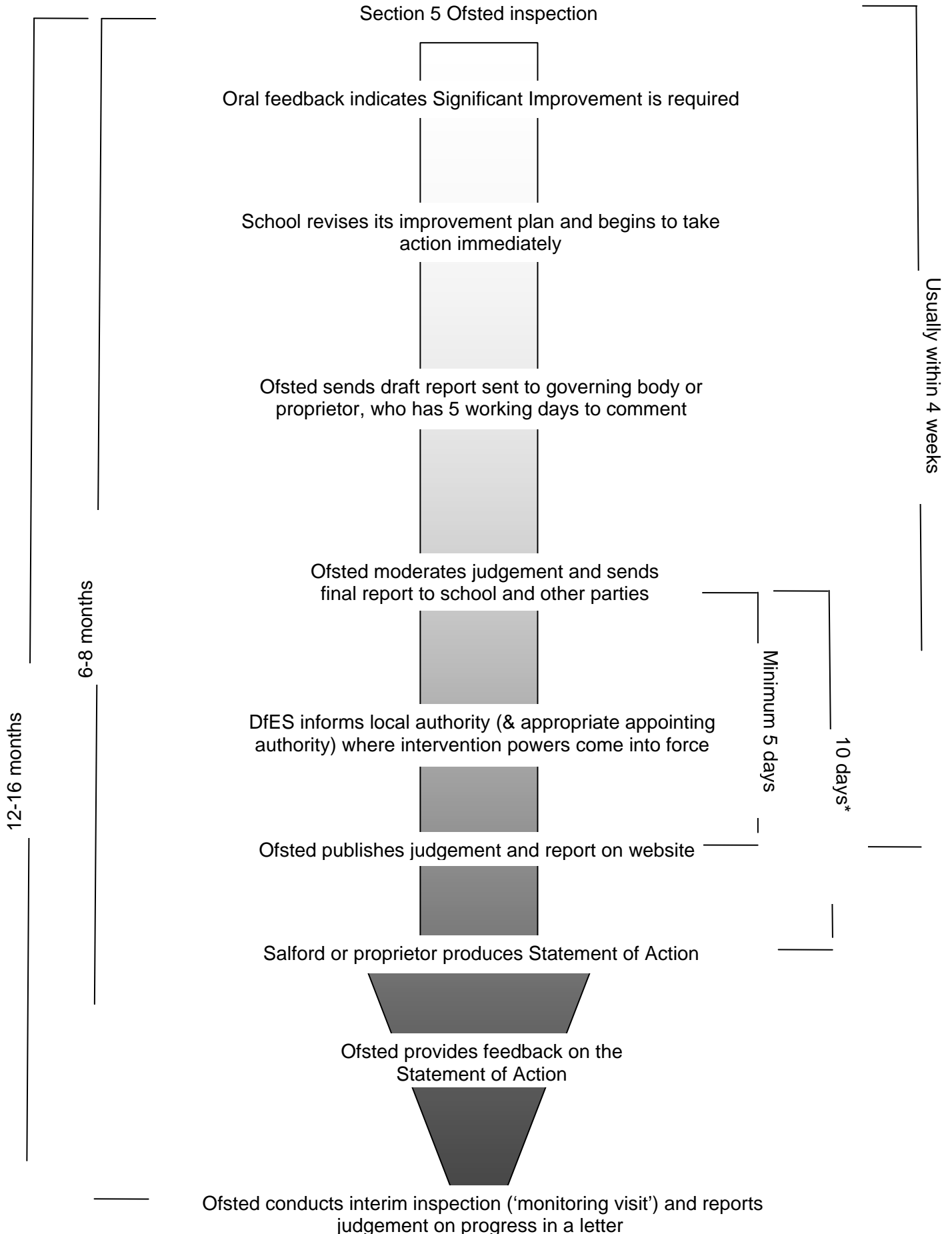
local authority is able to make a convincing case that a solution which has not yet been implemented would result in better outcomes for pupils. The Secretary of State will consider the quality of the local authority's support in considering the case. If the local authority has been unsupportive, indecisive, or dilatory in exercising their duties, then the presumption of closure will be even stronger.

If it is decided that a school should be replaced, the local authority will have a range of options for securing better provision for the pupils.

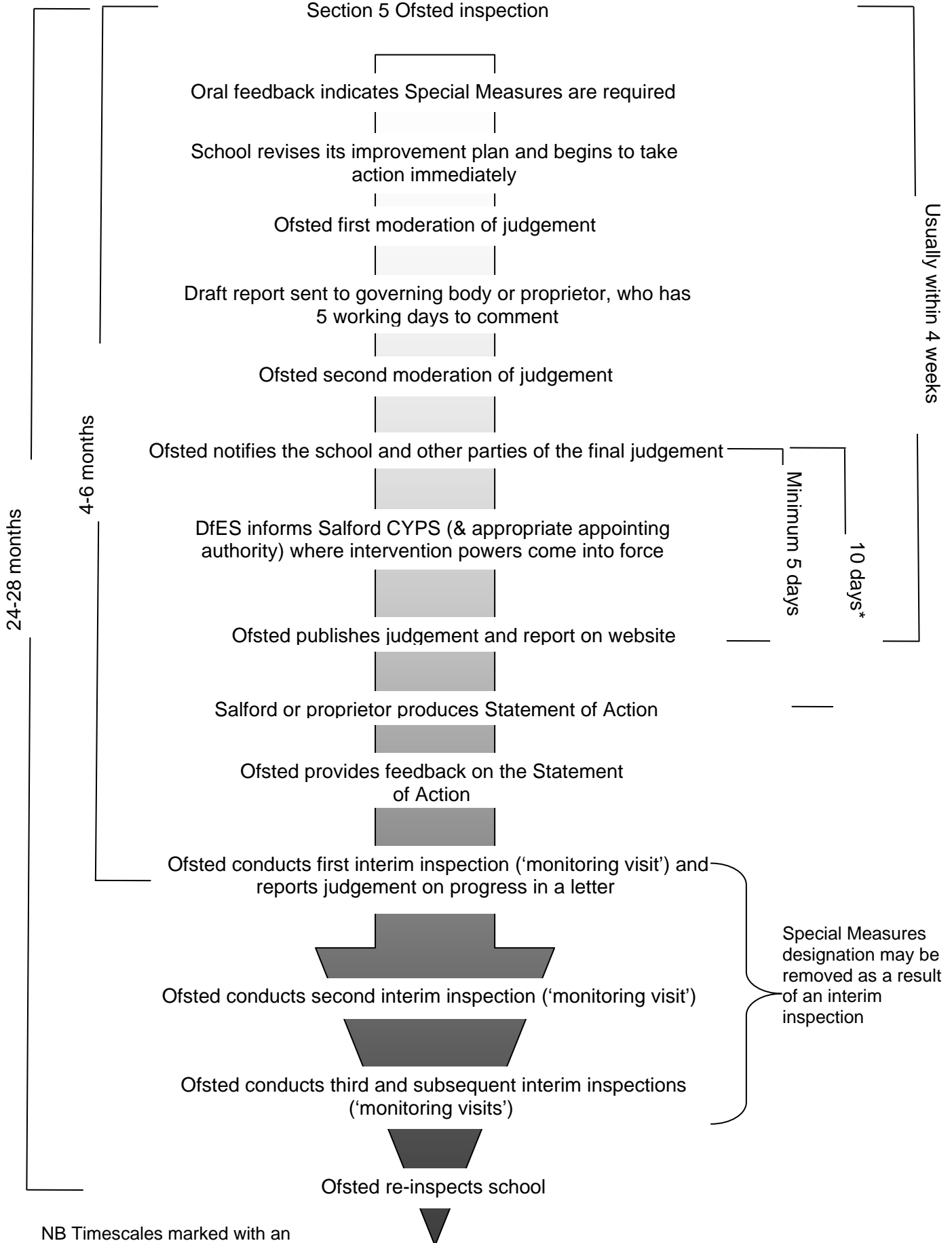
It is essential that institutions providing specialist places for highly-vulnerable children improve quickly when they require Special Measures. The Secretary of State may inform a local authority that the case of a special school or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) has become urgent. Salford CYPS should, as with mainstream institutions, respond with a revised statement of action in which radical action is reconsidered – this may include considering replacement with better provision. However, there will be no automatic presumption of closure for these types of institution. The Secretary of State will not encourage local authorities to reduce the extent of specialist provision, and local authorities should not take action to close PRUs or special schools, especially those catering for pupils with Behavioural, Emotional or Social Difficulties (BESD), without securing alternative arrangements which safeguard the needs of the children concerned.

Salford CYPS would send a copy of the new statement of action to the Regional Divisional Manager at Ofsted; the school's governing body; the diocesan or other appointing authority, if the school is a foundation or voluntary school; and the local LSC, if the school has a sixth form.

SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT TIMELINE



SPECIAL MEASURES TIMELINE



NB Timescales marked with an asterisk are statutory requirements. Others are indicative only.

Chapter 4

Involvement of Parents

Strong parental engagement can have a positive impact on the morale of the school and its community, the school's overall performance, and the attendance and educational achievements of individual pupils.

The Education and Inspections Act strengthens the duty on local authorities and school proprietors to ensure that parents are properly informed and engaged when their child's school is causing concern. This chapter explains what local authorities are required to do. It also proposes some ways in which these duties can be fulfilled, including through the appointment of a Parent Champion.

4.1 Legislative requirements

Section 15 of the 2005 Education Act, as amended by Schedule 7 of the 2006 Act, requires the local authority or proprietor to set out, in its statement of action for a school requiring Special Measures or Significant Improvement, how it will communicate with and ascertain the views of parents at the school. It also requires that the local authority or proprietor must consider appointing a specified person to discharge these functions.

This means that Salford CYPS or proprietor must set out in its statement of action for a school requiring Special Measures or Significant Improvement:

- How it will inform parents and carers about the actions planned for the school
- How it will gather parents' and carers' views on these actions, and how it will take these views into account

1. The local authority or proprietor must also consider appointing a specified person to discharge these functions. One of the ways in which they could do this is by appointing a Parent Champion.

Securing Improvement in Schools Causing Concern

When a school is causing concern, local authorities should consider how to secure immediate and sustainable improvements, and act quickly. Such decisive action will ensure that children's life chances are not jeopardised by attending a poorly-performing school for an extended period of time.

This chapter begins with a discussion of good practice principles for planning school improvement). It then outlines ways in which a local authority can support a school's teachers, leaders and managers to deliver improvement. The final section details the statutory intervention powers which local authorities have at their disposal in relation to maintained schools: appointing additional governors, de-delegation of the school budget, requiring the school to enter a partnership arrangement, the replacement of the governing body with an Interim Executive Board, or school closure.

5.1 Planning school improvement

There is strong evidence that successful and sustainable approaches to school improvement focus on open and robust school self-evaluation, strengthening school leadership, improving teaching, and working in collaboration with other schools. Intervention powers detailed earlier may be needed in order to secure improvements in these areas. However, similar results can often be achieved without using these powers; Salford CYPS would attempt to secure schools' voluntary co-operation before resorting to statutory interventions.

Each school will have different strengths and weaknesses; Salford CYPS

would therefore commission appropriate, bespoke packages of support.

When planning improvement, it is important to focus on an achievable number of key priorities, and link these to the school's longer-term strategic aims. It is essential that the planned actions are coherent and coordinated, to avoid overwhelming the school and its staff, and that the local authority works with Headteachers, governors and staff in a climate of transparency.

Salford CYPS would ensure that school improvement plans include arrangements to monitor the progress and success of actions.

5.2 Developing teaching and learning

Salford CYPS may need to commission support to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the school. Such support may come from the School Improvement Officers, Primary and Secondary National Strategies, or other suitably trained and qualified staff or consultants, or from other schools.

It may be helpful to consider bringing in a senior member of staff, such as an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST), from another school to help develop teaching practice. Such action should be planned sensitively and with the involvement of current staff. Such external support should be planned with the ultimate aim of making the external partner redundant, as the school develops the internal capacity to make the necessary improvements.

Appropriate support, good management and the setting of clear expectations will minimise the need to manage poor performance through formal procedures. However, where necessary, Salford CYPS would be prepared to make use of the competency procedures – including fast track procedures in serious cases where the education of children is in jeopardy. Each local authority publishes its own competency procedures. Staff terms and conditions and rights to appeal and representation should be respected, and good relations with recognised workforce unions maintained. Further guidance can be found in the DfES publication *Best Practice in Undertaking Teacher Capability Procedures* (www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/RRP/u012908/index.shtml).

5.3 Developing leadership and management

The school leadership's capacity to improve now forms a significant part of Ofsted's judgements. To demonstrate this capacity, the school's leaders, managers and governors need to show evidence of: thorough self-evaluation, including rigorous analysis of performance data; effective strategic planning; rigorous and robust monitoring of standards and quality of education; and action that has had a demonstrably beneficial impact.

In addition to responding promptly to any concerns which Ofsted may identify about a school's leadership, local authorities should consider the development of a school's leaders and managers as part of their early strategies to prevent school failure and increase the school's own capacity to improve.

The leadership provided by the Headteacher and senior management team of a school is crucial to the speed and success of its improvement.

Headteachers of schools causing concern must have a clear vision of what their school needs to achieve, and be able to communicate this well to staff and pupils.

Salford CYPS would consider a wide spectrum of options through which leadership teams of schools causing concern can be supported and challenged, whilst recognising that ultimately it may be necessary to remove the Headteacher or other staff if they are incapable of making the changes the school needs. Throughout any such discussions, Headteachers' pay and conditions should be respected, and good relations with recognised workforce unions maintained.

Before coming to such a decision, Salford CYPS would always consider whether the person has had sufficient time in post to make improvements and should recognise that otherwise competent leaders may sometimes be overwhelmed by circumstances beyond their control. It may therefore be beneficial for Salford to commission an audit of the school's leadership and management capacity, including at middle management levels.

Where a Headteacher remains in post at a school causing concern, (s)he may

benefit from new appointments at Deputy Headteacher or senior teacher level, especially where appointees bring skills which correspond to the school's priorities for improvement. It may also be beneficial to consider ways in which the governing body could be strengthened, or an external partner could become involved to provide additional support for the school's leadership, for example by providing a consultant or mentor Headteacher. Arrangements made with mentor and executive Headteachers should be made in writing, and with the agreement of the governing bodies, Headteachers and local authorities involved.

3.3 Statutory intervention powers

Menu of intervention powers available to local authorities

	Entering into arrangements	Appointing additional governors	Interim executive members	Suspension of delegated budget	Closure
Consultation required?	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Further information	p.39	p.42	p.43	p.45	p.46

The statutory interventions detailed in the remainder of this section may be exercised by local authorities in maintained schools which are eligible for intervention. A school is eligible for intervention if it requires Significant Improvement or Special Measures, or if it has failed to comply with a valid warning notice.

The Secretary of State is also able to exercise some of these powers of intervention (see Annex 1). However, Salford CYPS is expected to intervene initially; the Secretary of State's powers are reserve powers for exceptional

circumstances.

The interventions described here are not applicable to non-maintained schools; further information about non-maintained schools is given at Annex 2.

Power to require a school to enter into partnership arrangements

Legislative provision: Section 63, Education and Inspections Act 2006 (new power)

Purpose of intervention: To require a school to enter into collaborative arrangements to secure improvements

Best used: Where a school, or key figures within it, refuses to collaborate with an appropriate partner

Can be used with the following powers:

	Appointing additional governors	Interim executive members	Suspension of delegated budget
	✓	✓	✓

Requirements before using power:

- Salford CYPS must consult the governing body of the school, plus –if a foundation or voluntary school – the diocesan or other appointing authority
- Salford CYPS must find a willing school, college, other organisation, or individual to act as a partner

Collaboration is not an automatic panacea, but it can be a powerful lever for school improvement. Collaborative arrangements should therefore be used wherever appropriate as part of packages of support for schools causing concern.

The potential benefits of a firmly-established collaboration in securing school recovery are well known. Collaborative working can offer schools causing concern access to new perspectives, support and expertise. As a result, some schools are turned around more rapidly than expected, with sustained capacity for future improvements, after working alongside a partner institution.

Cementing partnerships into hard federations or Trusts can ensure that the arrangements withstand staffing and leadership changes.

In addition, many strong schools have discovered that collaborative working with a school causing concern has led to substantial gains in staff development opportunities, morale, expertise and professional pride. It is also common for pupils' results at the stronger school to show significant improvement.

Each partnership arrangement will offer further specific advantages in addition to these generic benefits of collaborative working. For example:

- Working with a specified person (e.g. a consultant, or a mentor from another school) with relevant expertise may help the school address specific priorities for improvement
- Entering a 'hard' support federation with another school can create a strong, sustainable joint governance structure to oversee and monitor the school's improvement, and offer the possibility of flexible deployment of staff across the schools involved
- Working within a partnership involving higher or further education establishments would give the school access to additional expertise, for example in developing the 14 -19 curriculum or vocational provision. It may also help the school prepare pupils for further study, provide progression routes, and raise young people's aspirations
- Working in partnership with other agencies may help a school address priorities for improvement relating to attendance and behaviour, or health and well-being
- Working with schools in similar circumstances or with relevant experience in another local authority may give a school access to a wider pool of expertise than is available from its immediate neighbours.

2. Authorities will often be able to negotiate collaborative arrangements without invoking this power, and should discuss voluntary partnerships with

the school as a first course of action. However, a local authority has the option of requiring a school to enter collaborative arrangements if it is resistant to outside support. This option should be used differentially by authorities to develop an arrangement appropriate for the areas needing development at the school causing concern and the preferences of the proposed partner organisation.

In making arrangements for collaborative working between schools, especially if this will necessitate the re-structuring of staff, Salford CYPS will bear in mind the need to consult with the staff involved, and enter into necessary discussions with recognised school workforce unions.

Case study

Endeavour High School was placed in Special Measures in March 2004 after a troubled history. Only 9% of pupils gained 5 or more good GCSEs in 2004.

A management team was brought in under the direction of the Headteacher of Kingswood School, who became the Executive Head of Endeavour. The governing bodies of the two schools worked together to support and challenge the schools.

The school was removed from Special Measures in December 2005, and results had improved to see 25% of pupils gaining 5 or more good GCSEs. Ofsted found that teaching and pupil attitudes had also improved, and that the school had secure capacity for further improvement.

Power to suspend the school's right to a delegated budget

Legislative provision: Clause 66, Education and Inspections Bill 2006 (re-enactment of S17 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998)

Purpose of intervention: To secure control over staffing and spending decisions in order to secure improvements

Best used: Where the governing body is providing insufficient challenge to the Headteacher or senior management team of the school, or where management of the budget is providing a distraction from improvement priorities for governors

Can be used with the following powers:

	Entering into arrangements	Additional governors	Interim Executive Members
	✓	✓	✗

Requirements before using power: None

The local authority may suspend a governing body's right to a delegated budget in order to secure control of spending decisions. This allows the local authority to remove poorly-performing teachers or Headteachers if necessary, or to take control of budget deficits. Further information on competency procedures is given in paragraph 117. Suspending the right to a delegated budget also allows governors to focus their time and attention on other priorities for improvement.

If Salford CYPS has appointed an Interim Executive Board (IEB), it cannot suspend the school's right to a delegated budget. If the local authority removed the right to a delegated budget before appointing an IEB, it must reinstate the delegated budget when the IEB comes into effect.

Power to appoint additional governors

Legislative provision: Section 64, Education and Inspections Act 2006 (re-enactment with amendments of S16 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998)

Purpose of intervention: To strengthen the local authority's voice on the governing body and/or to provide additional expertise to the governors in key areas to support a school's improvement

Best used: Where the governing body needs additional expertise, or the Headteacher and senior management team need further challenge and support

Can be used with the following powers:

	Entering into arrangements	Interim executive members	Suspension of delegated budget
	✓	✗	✓

Requirements before using power: None, although it is good practice for the local authority to inform the diocesan or other appointing authority for foundation governors, who are also entitled to appoint additional governors

Local authorities may appoint additional governors at any time if a maintained school is eligible for intervention.

In the case of voluntary aided schools, Salford CYPS would keep the diocese or other appointing authority informed so that they can also appoint additional governors if they wish. Diocesan and other appointing authorities' powers are detailed at Annex 1.

It is good practice for the local authority to provide the governing body with information about the appointees before the appointment is confirmed. It is important to give the governing body such an opportunity to raise any concerns about the appointment of a particular individual, or about the terms of an appointment.

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

Legislative provision: Part 65, Education and Inspections Act 2006 (re-enactment of S16A of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998)

Purpose of intervention: To secure a step-change in the leadership and management of a school through the use of a specially-appointed governing body for a temporary period (an “Interim Executive Board”)

Best used: Where the governing body is providing insufficient challenge to the Headteacher or senior management team of the school, is providing an obstacle to progress, or there has been a breakdown in working relationships that is having an impact on standards.

Can be used with the following powers:

	Entering into arrangements	Additional governors	Suspension of delegated budget
	✓	✗	✗

There is increasing evidence, supported by Ofsted findings, that in a failing school where the governing body has been unable to provide sufficient challenge and support to the school’s senior management team, the appointment of an IEB can add considerable momentum and be a first step towards securing new expertise in the school’s drive for improvement. Where the governing body of a school in special measures is clearly weak, local authorities are encouraged to consider applying to the Secretary of State for the appointment of an IEB, immediately the school goes into special measures, in order to minimise uncertainty and address weakness of governance. Full guidance is provided at annex 3.

When considering appointing an IEB, Salford CYPS must determine that the existing governing body is unable to provide the necessary leadership to turn around the school as quickly as possible. The governing body may not agree with the local authority’s judgement, which is why the power may only be used

with the consent of the Secretary of State. Full guidance on applying to establish an IEB, together with an application form, is provided at Annex 3.

Approximately 39 IEBs have been established to date, some of which are still in place. They have proved successful in virtually every case, enabling a restructuring of the school's leadership and management function and providing a catalyst for improvement. Some IEBs have also been used to support the school's longer-term transition to a new status, such as an Academy, Trust or a Fresh Start.

IEBs are governed by the provisions set out in Schedule 6 of the Education and Inspections Act, and regulations have been made under the Education Act 2002. Full guidance is provided at Annex 3 on the role, duties and membership of IEBs, and the arrangements for transition back to normal governance.

Case study

St Aloysius in Islington was placed in special measures in January 2003. The governing body was ineffective in holding the school's managers to account, and in challenging the school's very low academic standards.

The power to apply to the Secretary of State to replace a governing body with an interim executive board (IEB) was used. The IEB established a successful action plan for recovery and drew on the expertise of its members, including experienced head teachers from other schools.

The school was removed from special measures in October 2004. In two years, the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more good GCSEs rose from 30% to 57%. A shadow governing body helped a smooth transition back to normal governance from the IEB.

Decision to close a school

When a school is found to need Special Measures, it will receive substantial support from the local authority, and may be subject to the formal interventions described earlier in this section. Despite this support, there will be some instances when the second or subsequent Ofsted monitoring report shows that the school has failed to make satisfactory progress.

In such cases the Secretary of State can require the local authority to formally reconsider its plans for the school by informing it that the “case has become urgent”, with a presumption that closure of the school should be seriously considered.

Regardless of whether the Secretary of State has issued this notice, a local authority may use school organisation powers to publish proposals to close the school in line with local policies. The Secretary of State may also direct the closure of a school in Special Measures (see also Annex 1).

The decision to close a school will often mean that replacement provision is needed, although consideration should be given to options which involve expansion of good schools in the area, or other alternatives to a new school.

If closure of a school is deemed appropriate, local authorities should work to minimise the disruption caused to pupils, making suitable transition plans. It may, for example, be possible to transfer most pupils to one or more other schools in the adjacent area, with or without the schools’ expansion, while making suitable transitional arrangements, perhaps on the original site, for pupils at a sensitive stage of their schooling (e.g. year 6 or year 11 pupils).

In some circumstances it may be possible to close the school but retain some or all of the provision on the original site under the management of a stronger school, making use of executive headship models.

The rationalisation of provision in this way may come about during a strategic review of the school buildings within an authority, particularly in areas which are currently active within the Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

programme.

Full guidance on school closure is provided in the *Handbook on Closing a Maintained School* (www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolorg/printable-guidance.cfm)

In circumstances where a replacement secondary school is essential, the options are:

- (a) a competition under Section 66 of the Education Act 2005 to create a new foundation, voluntary, Trust or community school, or an Academy, including where the new school would be opened as a Fresh Start or Collaborative Restart school.
- (b) An application to the Secretary of State for any of the above types of school to be established without a competition

Further information on secondary school competitions is available from <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolorg/guidance-view.cfm?Id=60>.

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, competitions are also required for new primary and special schools.

Proposals for re-organisation of post-16 education and training

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) may put forward proposals for the reorganisation of 16-19 provision in an area as a result of an area-wide inspection of post-16 provision. The LSC can also make proposals relating to school sixth forms, where the proposals are made with a view to promoting one of the following objectives:

- an improvement in the achievement of 16 to 19 year-olds
- an increase in participation amongst 16 to 19 year-olds
- an expansion of the learning opportunities open to 16 to 19 year-olds

3. In all cases, it is important that the LSC considers all options that include alternatives to reorganisation, for example, encouraging more

collaborative working between sixth forms and the FE sector. However, where the LSC proposes reorganisation, proposals may involve the closure of one or more sixth forms, the opening of new sixth forms, or alterations such as a change in the age range or enlargement of premises. The LSC may also propose the establishment of 16-19 institutions under schools regulations or as FE institutions. Regulations and associated guidance on the procedures which the LSC must follow when bringing forward proposals can be found at www.lsc.gov.uk.

Annex 1

Statutory intervention powers of other bodies in maintained schools

This Annex sets out the intervention powers which are available to:

- the Secretary of State
- a Diocesan body or other appointing authority
- the Learning and Skills Council

Secretary of State's powers

Sections 67 – 69 of the Act set out the statutory powers of intervention available to the Secretary of State. However, local authorities are expected to make decisive and effective use of its own intervention powers; the Secretary of State's powers are reserve powers for exceptional circumstances.

Appointment of additional governors

Section 67 of the Education and Inspections Act allows the Secretary of State to appoint additional governors at any time to a maintained school which requires Significant Improvement or Special Measures.

An additional governor appointed in this way may be nominated to be the Chair of Governors in place of any person previously elected as Chair.

Before using this power, the Secretary of State must consult with the local authority, the governing body, and – in the case of a voluntary or foundation school – the appropriate diocesan or other appointing authority.

The local authority may not suspend the governing body's right to a delegated

budget if the Secretary of State has appointed additional governors. If the local authority has already suspended the governing body's right to a delegated budget, the Secretary of State must reinstate the budget if requested to do so by the governing body.

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

Section 69 allows the Secretary of State to appoint an Interim Executive Board at any time if a school requires Significant Improvement or Special Measures.

The Secretary of State will normally only use this power if the local authority is unable or unwilling to make such arrangements itself, and the action is judged to be absolutely necessary to secure rapid improvements at the school.

Before using this power, the Secretary of State must consult with the local authority, the governing body that is to be replaced, and – in the case of a voluntary or foundation school – the appropriate diocesan authority or other appointing authority, unless such consultation has already been carried out by the local authority in connection with a proposal of its own to appoint interim executive members.

Power to direct closure of a school

Section 68 allows the Secretary of State to direct the closure of a school in Special Measures. This will usually be done where there is no prospect of the school making sufficient improvements.

Prior to making the direction, the Secretary of State must consult with the local authority, the governing body that is to be replaced, and – in the case of a voluntary or foundation school – the diocesan or other appointing authority, and the Learning and Skills Council (if the school has a sixth form).

If the direction to close a school has been given, the local authority will be expected to meet any costs of terminating staff contracts, and make

appropriate arrangements for the pupils' continuing education, whether in a replacement school or through transition to an alternative school (see also chapter 5).

Diocesan or appointing authority powers

Schools which have not complied with a Warning Notice

If a voluntary-aided school has failed to comply with a warning notice, and the local authority has appointed additional governors, the diocesan or other appointing authority may appoint additional foundation governors.

The number of additional foundation governors may match, but not exceed, the number of additional governors appointed by the local authority. This ensures that the foundation governors can continue to hold the majority of places on the governing body.

The additional foundation governors are subject to the same term of office as the additional governors appointed by the local authority (i.e. the same period of appointment applies, and they are only eligible for re-appointment if the local authority's additional governors are re-appointed).

It is good practice for the diocesan or other appointing authority to provide the governing body with information about the appointees before the appointment is confirmed, and for it to work with the local authority to ensure that all additional governors share the same objectives.

Schools in Special Measures or requiring Significant Improvement

If a voluntary-aided school requires Significant Improvement or is in Special Measures, the diocesan or other appointing authority may appoint an unlimited number of additional foundation governors, regardless of whether the local authority has appointed additional governors. However, it may not appoint additional governors if the Secretary of State has exercised his powers under section 67 to appoint additional governors or section 68 to direct closure of the school.

If more than one person or body is responsible for appointing additional governors and they are unable to agree on additional appointments, the Secretary of State may, after consulting those within the appropriate authorities, decide on which individual(s) to appoint as additional governors.

It is good practice for the diocesan or other appointing authority to provide the governing body with information about the appointees before the appointment is confirmed. It is also good practice for the appointing body to work with the LA to ensure that all additional governors share the same objectives.

Learning and Skills Council powers

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will work with local authorities to support the improvement of sixth-form provision. The LSC's powers of intervention, set out below, are enacted in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and the Education Act 2002.

Proposals for closure of school sixth forms

Where a school sixth form has been judged to require Significant Improvement in two consecutive Ofsted inspections, or where a maintained school for 16-19 year olds has been judged to require Special Measures in two consecutive Ofsted inspections, the LSC may propose closure.

Annex 2

Guidance for proprietors of non-maintained schools

Academies, City Technology Colleges and Non-Maintained Special Schools are independent of the local authority and therefore legislation relating to local authorities' and other bodies' intervention powers at maintained schools are not valid for these types of school. However, expectations of them and methods of accountability are the same as those for maintained schools. They are expected to collaborate with other schools, professionals, organisations and local authorities to deliver national priorities such as Every Child Matters and the 14-19 agenda. If they are found to be causing concern, it is important that appropriate actions are taken immediately in order to provide a better education for their pupils.

This Annex outlines the provisions applicable to non-maintained schools that are judged to require Significant Improvement or Special Measures.

Introduction

4. The proprietor of an Academy is the Academy Trust; for a City Technology College (CTC), the CTC Trust; for a Non-Maintained Special School (NMSS), the controlling charity or charitable trust.
5. There is no provision similar to the warning notice system that is applicable to non-maintained schools. If local authorities have concerns about a non-maintained school, they should raise these with DfES.
6. Paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 7 of the Act (which will have the effect of inserting a new subsection paragraph (4) to Section 17 of the Education Act

2005) requires the proprietor of a non-maintained school to have regard to guidance in performing his functions as set out in that Schedule. Such guidance includes this document, but also includes any further guidance provided by the Secretary of State on particular situations at individual schools through a nominated DfES Education Advisor. In the case of Academies, this guidance may arise from judgements made by the Academy's School Improvement Partner (SIP).

Responsibilities on the proprietor following an adverse report on a non-maintained school

7. The proprietor of the school should start to take action to address weaknesses identified during the inspection immediately after the oral feedback that Special Measures or Significant Improvement is required.
8. When written confirmation is received that the school requires Significant Improvement or Special Measures, the proprietor is required to prepare a statement of action and send this to Ofsted under provision detailed in section 17 of the 2005 Act, as amended by paragraph 2 of Schedule 7 of this Act.
9. The statement of action should detail:
 - the action the proprietor has taken so far;
 - the additional support the proprietor will commission to help the school address the areas of weakness identified by Ofsted;
 - what specific steps are needed to build the leadership and management capacity of the school, including the capacity of middle managers;
 - what arrangements the proprietor has made to inform parents and carers about the actions planned for the school, and how it will gather and take into account their views (see Chapter 4);
 - whether there is scope for partner organisations to be brought in to

support the school (including other schools, trusts, colleges, or non-educational organisations), and how this collaboration will be facilitated;

- the scope for the school to be closed or federated. In the case of a proposed federation, the DfES would work with the Academy and its proposed partner to ensure that an appropriate legal mechanism underpinned the arrangement; and
- a plan of future action, including resource implications, quantified targets to evaluate the effectiveness of external support, target dates for key actions, and progress review points.

Notice that the case has become urgent

10. For non-maintained schools requiring Special Measures, there is also provision in Schedule 7 of the 2006 Act for the Secretary of State to give notice that the “case has become urgent”. This notice requires the proprietor to re-consider the action being taken.

11. The Secretary of State will give notice that a case has become urgent based on the findings of the Ofsted monitoring visits. The usual trigger point would be a judgement of inadequate progress at the second monitoring visit. However, this power is discretionary and the Secretary of State will consider each case on its merits. There may be some exceptions about when a notice is triggered . For example:

- if Ofsted provides compelling evidence of major difficulties at any monitoring visit, the Secretary of State reserves the right to issue a notice. This includes an exceptionally severe series of findings at the first monitoring visit;
- if recent changes to leadership and management have yet to take effect, the Secretary of State may decide not to issue a notice, even if Ofsted reports inadequate progress at the second monitoring visit;
- If a school remains in Special Measures for an extended period, and is

demonstrating no more than satisfactory progress at the fourth or fifth monitoring visit, the Secretary of State may issue a notice.

Duty on proprietor if the case has become urgent

12. If the Secretary of State has given the proprietor a notice that the case has become urgent, the proprietor should prepare a new statement of action as set out previously, but with additional specific reference to the evidence from the latest monitoring report from Ofsted. The statement should contain a reconsideration of the actions already taken, in order to determine why the school has not made progress.

Interventions to secure school improvement

13. There are no statutory powers to intervene in non-maintained schools. However, the following non-statutory provisions apply.

Academies

14. There are three non-statutory interventions at the Secretary of State's disposal in relation to Academies by virtue of an Academy Trust's articles of association and funding agreement. The Secretary of State is enabled to:

- appoint additional governors;
- stop funding the Academy;
- close the Academy.

This closely tracks the statutory intervention powers which LAs have in relation to maintained schools.

City Technology Colleges

15. If a CTC no longer has the characteristics of a CTC or the conditions and requirements set out in the funding agreement (the contract between the Secretary of State and the individual CTC trust) are not being met, a CTC could be deemed to be in breach of its funding agreement. In such

circumstances the Secretary of State could give notice to terminate the agreement.

Non-maintained Special Schools

16. Placing local authorities retain responsibility for ensuring the provision specified in the child's statement is provided and for paying fees charged by the schools.

17. NMSS are approved by the Secretary of State under section 342 of the Education Act 1996 and have to maintain the standards as set out in supporting regulations. Should a school fail to maintain the standards, including educational standards, then the Secretary of State has the power to remove its approved status, which would in effect close the school. However, unless the grounds for closure were those of health, safety and welfare of pupils the Secretary of State would not remove approval status without consulting the governing body and affording the school a period of time within which to comply with any requirements of the regulations. Should it be necessary to remove approval status and thereby close the school, it would be the responsibility of the placing LAs to find suitable alternative provision for the children they have placed there.

Annex 3

Interim Executive Boards

18. A local authority may apply to the Secretary of State for permission to replace the governing body of a school which is eligible for intervention (see paragraph 19) with an Interim Executive Board (IEB).

Process of establishing an IEB

19. When a local authority wishes to replace a governing body with an IEB, it should:

1. Firstly, consult the existing governing body and, in the case of a foundation or voluntary school, the diocesan or other appointing authority. A minimum of 14 days should be allowed for these parties to respond.
2. Secondly, complete and send a copy of the proforma provided below to the Department for Education and Skills.
3. After obtaining approval in writing from the Secretary of State, the local authority must write to the governing body to give them notice that the IEB will be established (a “notice of establishment”). This letter should state when the IEB will commence, and will usually also indicate when the IEB will cease to function, where this can be estimated. In the case of foundation or voluntary schools, this letter should be copied to the diocesan or other appropriate appointing authority.

The role and duties of the IEB

20. The IEB should be considered to be the governing body of the school for the time it is in office. It will take on all the responsibilities of a governing body, including the management of the budget, the curriculum, staffing, pay

and performance management, and the appointment of the Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher.

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

22. The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2003, the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, and the Education (Governors' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 do not apply in relation to IEBS. Furthermore, the instrument of government of the school does not have effect in relation to the IEB.

Membership of the IEB

23. An IEB should be a small, focused group with a minimum of two members appointed for the full period which it is expected to take to turn the school around. The Secretary of State sees merit in having, typically, between three and six members.

24. Members of an IEB should be chosen on a case by case basis depending on the school's needs. Existing governors may be appointed to the IEB.

25. Once the IEB has been established, further interim executive members can be appointed at any time.

26. Interim executive members may be removed for incapacity or misbehaviour by the local authority (or by the Secretary of State if appointed by him).

27. The local authority should produce a notice of appointment for each member of the IEB. Copies of this notice should be sent to all other members of the IEB, the school's governing body, the Secretary of State, and – in the case of foundation or voluntary schools – the diocesan or other appropriate appointing authority.

28. Local authorities or the Secretary of State may choose to pay interim executive members whatever amount they decide. They may also nominate a member to be chair of the IEB.

Delegated budget

29. An IEB has a right to a delegated budget. If the school's budget has previously been withdrawn from the governing body, then the local authority must restore the budget from the date when the IEB commences its work.

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

School closure

31. An IEB may recommend to a local authority, or recommend that the Secretary of State give a direction to a local authority, that a school should be closed. However, the IEB cannot itself publish proposals for closure. If, following the statutory consultation and other procedures, it is agreed that the school will be closed, the IEB should continue to hold office until the implementation date of the proposal.

Voluntary schools

32. Where a local authority seeks to appoint an IEB at a voluntary school, it must consult the diocesan or other appointing authority before applying to the Secretary of State for permission. The Secretary of State will expect to see evidence of the Diocese's or appointing authority's full involvement in any decision to establish an IEB.

33. The local authority will generally welcome nominations of good quality governors from the diocesan or other appointing authority.

34. Interim executive members will be required to ensure that the school's trust deed is preserved and developed, and that the character of the school is

maintained.

Transition back to a permanently constituted governing body: shadow governing bodies

35. The transition from an IEB to post-IEB governance will be crucial to sustaining the school's recovery, and must be carefully planned. The new permanent governance arrangements will not normally involve the previous governing body, and there may also be a substantial reduction in size (see paragraph 25). The process begins with a period when a "shadow" governing body will work alongside the IEB. The shadow governing body later acts alone as the governing body of the school, before being replaced by a permanently constituted governing body.

36. If the date when the IEB will cease work was not given in the notice of establishment, the local authority must send a second notice to the governing body specifying the date when the IEB will be discontinued. This notice should be copied to all members of the IEB, the Secretary of State and – in the case of foundation or voluntary schools – the diocesan or other appropriate appointing authority.

37. The IEB may have ended at a particular milestone – for example soon after a school has been removed from special measures. In such circumstances, perhaps when the school's recovery is well-established but fragile, the executive function of the shadow governing body is particularly important. There will often be merit in continuity of membership between the IEB and the shadow body (see also paragraphs 212-15 below).

38. A "shadow" governing body should work alongside the IEB for a minimum of six months before taking over full responsibility as the governing body of the school. In some cases, it may be necessary for a shadow governing body to work alongside an IEB for longer than six months; for example, a full academic year would allow the shadow governing body to experience a full year's cycle in the school and see what has influenced

decisions and planning.

39. Members of the shadow governing body should be allowed to attend IEB meetings as observers to help smooth the school's return to normal governance arrangements.

40. Although the IEB may delegate specific functions to the shadow governing body during the interim period, the main purpose of this parallel running is to allow IEB members to coach the shadow governing body.

41. The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2003 and the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, do not apply in relation to shadow governing bodies. Furthermore, the instrument of government of the school does not have effect in relation to the shadow governing body.

42. Shadow governing bodies comprise members made up of parent, staff, local authority and community governors and shadow foundation governors for foundation and voluntary schools. The Secretary of State sees merit in local authorities taking advantage of statutory provisions¹ to constitute post-IEB governing bodies on a much smaller basis – of between 9-11 members – than is typical for existing governing bodies.

43. All shadow governors are appointed by the local authority in all categories of school. In appointing shadow foundation governors, the local authority must consult those people who would be entitled to make such appointments if the governing body were a normally constituted governing body.

44. The number or proportion of each category of governor on the shadow governing body must be as follows, under the School Governance (Transition from an Interim Executive Board) (England) Regulations 2004:

¹ School Governance (Transition from an Interim Executive Board) (England) Regulations 2004

	Community schools, community special schools and maintained nursery schools	Foundation schools and foundation special schools	Voluntary Controlled schools	Voluntary Aided schools
Shadow parent governors*	one third or more	one third or more	one third or more	At least one
Shadow staff governors**	at least two but no more than one third	at least two but no more than one third	at least two but no more than one third	at least two but no more than one third
Shadow local authority governors	one fifth	at least one but no more than one fifth	at least one but no more than one fifth	at least one but no more than one tenth
Shadow community governors	one fifth or more	one tenth or more	one tenth or more	Not applicable
Shadow foundation governors	Not applicable	at least two but no more than one quarter	at least two but no more than one quarter	such number as will lead to their outnumbering all the shadow governors above by two

*Shadow parent governors must be parents of a child under or of compulsory school age; the child need not attend that particular school but the parent of a child attending the school would be preferable if at all possible.

** Shadow staff governors must be paid to work at a maintained school. Wherever possible, local authorities should appoint a person paid to work at the school in question as a shadow staff governor of that school.

45. The 2004 regulations also specify the procedures to be followed in relation to the election of the chair and vice-chair, the appointment of and functions of the clerk, and the proceedings and meeting papers of the shadow governing body.

46. In all other respects, the shadow governing body should establish their own procedures. The IEB may determine its own procedure to carry out the duties of a governing body and make such arrangements as it wishes for its functions to be carried out by any other person.

47. The shadow governing body will be expected to act alone as the governing body of the school for up to thirteen months after the IEB has been disbanded.

Permanently constituted governing body

48. From the date specified in the notice of establishment (or subsequent notice), the IEB will cease to exist and the shadow governing body will become the governing body of the school as if it were a permanently constituted governing body.

49. The local authority must set a further date on which the shadow governors will vacate office and the governing body will be constituted as a permanently constituted governing body (“the constitution date”). This date must be no later than 13 months after the IEB ceased to exist.

50. The local authority must inform the Head teacher, the shadow governing body, diocesan or other appointing authority of the constitution date a minimum of one term in advance.

51. The local authority will need to ensure that they secure the appointments or elections of governors as required by the instrument of government.

52. Local authorities should be aware that any amendments that need to be made to the school’s instrument of government must be made at an appropriate stage to enable the normally constituted governing body to be constituted as intended. The procedure for amending an instrument of government is set out in the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2003.

IEB APPLICATION FORM

(Guidance on completing this proforma is provided on p. x)

Part 1 For the local authority to complete

LA:

School:

1. Brief description of school, including status (community, foundation, aided), location, number on roll:

2. Date of notification of Warning Notice / Special Measures / Significant Improvement (please delete as appropriate):

3. Background and reasons for application, to include process/steps/consultation taken prior to application for IEB (or attach separately):

4. Date Governing Body first informed of application for IEB, and dates of appropriate consultation meetings:

5. Governing Body's reaction to IEB proposal (or attach separately):

6. Planned start (establishment) date:

7. List of proposed members of the IEB, with brief outline of their suitability, skills & experience (or attach separately):

8. Planned life of IEB and plans for the exit strategy (or attach separately):

Signed:

Date:

Part 2 For the Chair of Governors to complete

9. Do you support the application for an IEB:

Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)

10. If 'No', please state reasons below (or attach separately):

Signed:

Date:

Part 3: For a representative of the appointing authority to complete (where applicable)

Name:

Position:

11. Do you support the application for an IEB:

Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)

12. If 'No', please state reasons below (or attach separately):

Signed:

Date:

This form, with any supporting paperwork, should now be sent to the DfES, School Improvement and Targets Unit, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

Guidance for the completion of an IEB application form

Question 3

The background and reasons for the application should outline:

The brief history of the improvement issues facing the school and the key steps taken by local authorities over last 3 years to tackle them

The local authorities' view of the governing body's commitment and capacity to tackle issues and take advice, for example, identifying whether it is a block to school improvement (and if this is intentional), and why the LA feels it should be replaced

Questions 4 & 5

In answering these questions, the local authority should set out what steps it has taken to inform governing body of its intention to replace it with an IEB.

It should record the reaction of GB to the IEB proposal, including the nature and extent of formal consultation (this should include evidence that the LA has informed each member of the GB of their intention to establish an IEB and allowed at least 14 days for the GB to respond)

If there is no formal response from the governing body, the local authority must endeavour to include a letter from the Chair of Governors to the effect that consultation has occurred. If the Chair of Governors does not respond to this request, the local authority must state explicitly why they are not able to provide evidence of consultation, for example, that the GB are refusing to discuss the issue.

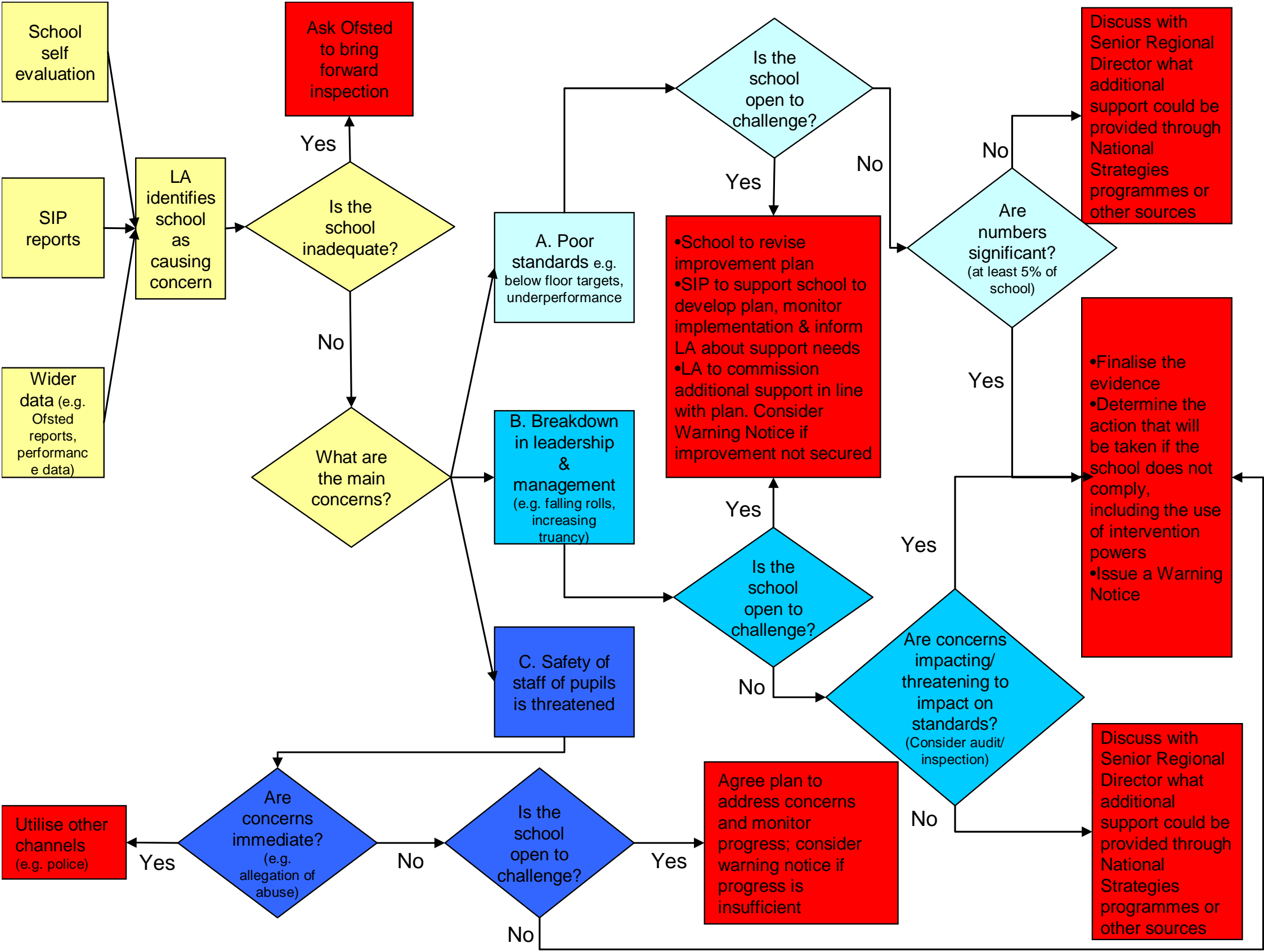
Question 7

The answer to this question should give the reasons why the proposed membership has sufficient capacity to allow Ministers to feel confident that the school will make the necessary progress in a timely manner. The proposed membership should reflect a range of expertise and represent different stakeholders' interests. The LA should give reasons for the choice of the IEB Chair; ideally this should be someone independent from the school and LA.

Further advice

LAs should note that an application is unlikely to be successful if the following conditions have not been met:

- 1 Applications are succinct, based on the completed IEB Application Form and with specific evidence presented as referenced annexes.
- 2 The LA can demonstrate:
 - that recovery / improvement is more likely as a result of the IEB being established
 - proper and timely steps have been taken to support the school to address its improvement needs
 - proper and timely consultation has occurred with the Governing Body and other relevant authorities e.g. the Diocese.
- 3 Where the LA sees the establishment of an IEB as a means of successfully establishing a collaborative arrangement to improve the school, it will be expected that the LA has fully outlined the advantages of the collaborative arrangement to the Governing Body, and it is clear that governors are not prepared to take the steps necessary to implement this solution.



Annex 5

Parental Engagement

Models of practice

53. References to ‘the local authority’ throughout this Annex should be read as referring also to proprietors of non-maintained schools.

54. Many local authorities already have experience of good practice in the engagement of parents and carers when a school goes into an Ofsted category, for example:

- holding a meeting for parents to explain the inspection findings and outlining the plans for improvement
- producing a regular newsletter to update parents on the progress the school is making
- establishing a regular parents’ forum, where parents can talk to one another and to a senior member of staff or a governor about making things better at the school
- organising groups to involve parents on particular issues which the school needs to address; for example, a group of parents, staff, governors and an education welfare officer meeting together to work on improving pupil attendance
- appointing a Parent Champion

Parent Champions

55. A Parent Champion is a person appointed to ensure good communication with parents and carers, and ensure that they are able to influence decisions about the future of the school.

Planning the appointment of a Parent Champion

56. The appointment of a Parent Champion may be particularly appropriate where a radical change to the school is being considered. The Parent Champion should be appointed as early as is practicable so that plans can take account of parents' views.

57. In the case of a school which enters an Ofsted category of concern, the local authority should appoint the Parent Champion promptly after the oral feedback indicates that Significant Improvement or Special Measures is required. The local authority should liaise with him/her over its statement of action for the school.

58. Furthermore, local authorities may wish to consider the appointment of a Parent Champion before a school is judged to require Significant Improvement or Special Measures. Such an appointment might be made, for example, when an authority is contemplating issuing a warning notice to a school.

59. The Parent Champion is a demanding role and authorities should appoint able people with appropriate skills and experience. The local authority should provide training if it considers this necessary. In particular, a Parent Champion is likely to need:

- Good communication skills, appropriate to the needs of the parents and carers in the local community
- An interest in and understanding of the education system, including:
 - a commitment to improved standards and aspirations
 - the necessary skills to access, understand and interpret information relating to the school's improvement, and present this information back to parents in a suitable format
- The skills and confidence to collate parents' and carers' views and present them back to the local authority or school leadership

60. Parent Champions may come from any background, but the following people may have particularly relevant skills and knowledge:

- Former senior teachers or others with significant experience of dealing with parents, school leadership, or local authorities

- Individuals from any other background who have the skills and capacities listed in paragraph 110. This may include, but is not limited to, community leaders or ex-local authority employees, trained family workers or Parent Support Advisors
- Experienced parent governors from other schools

61. So that they can make a rapid appointment, local authorities may wish to publicise the role locally and maintain a list of suitable people on whom they could call. The local authority may make its list available to the proprietor of a non-maintained school in its area on request.

62. When making the appointment, the local authority should:

- Ensure that the individual has the necessary skills to perform the role effectively
- Not attempt to mandate the appointee to take any particular line of argument in his/her engagement with parents
- Avoid any potential conflict of interest. The appointee should be able to represent parents' interests impartially and objectively. This will mean that the Parent Champion should not normally be a current employee of the school or a local authority. There may also be circumstances in which it is inappropriate to appoint a current governor at the school, who has been party to corporate decisions made about the school, or the parent of a current pupil at the school.

63. In the case of foundation or voluntary schools, it is good practice for the local authority to provide the diocesan or other appointing authority with information about the proposed Parent Champion before the appointment is confirmed. This will give the appointing authority an opportunity to raise any concerns about the appointment of a particular individual.

64. The local authority is responsible for setting the Parent Champion's terms and conditions, and for performance management arrangements. The local authority may cover expenses or offer small honorarium payments to the

Parent Champion.

65. When planning how the Parent Champion will work, the local authority and the school should consider whether (s)he may need to use any of the school's facilities (e.g. a room in which to meet with parents, computers, the photocopier), and ensure that these requirements will be met.

66. Following the Parent Champion's appointment, the local authority should ensure the details of the appointee, together with a description of their role, are shared with the school (as a minimum, with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors or Chair of the Interim Executive Board) at the earliest opportunity. The recipients should cascade this information to staff and governors to ensure they are also aware of the appointment. The school or local authority may wish to send a letter home to introduce the Parent Champion to parents and carers.

How the Parent Champion may operate

67. The ways in which the appointed Parent Champion will carry out their role will depend on the individual circumstances of the school, and should be agreed in an early discussion between the appointee, the local authority or proprietor, the governing body or Interim Executive Board, and the school. The paragraphs below provide some general guidelines on the types of activity it may be appropriate for the Parent Champion to undertake.

68. The amount of time the appointee needs to spend in school or otherwise working in their capacity as Parent Champion will vary according to the circumstances of each school. Some early feedback has suggested that up to one day a week is needed when the school is to undergo a radical change; other models suggest an intense period of initial involvement followed by less frequent visits. It is likely to be helpful if the Parent Champion can be available to parents in school on a regular basis.

69. The Parent Champion should be included in governing body or Interim Executive Board meetings and any meetings of the local authority steering group, or should receive reports and minutes from these meetings. All parties

should ensure there is clarity about what information from these meetings can be shared with parents. It may also be helpful for the Parent Champion to attend some staff meetings, or receive reports on any issues arising which may affect parents.

70. The Parent Champion should feed back relevant information from these meetings to parents, perhaps in the form of a 'parents' version' of the minutes, a short report within a newsletter, or a letter home.

71. The Parent Champion may facilitate meetings with parents, with or without attendees from the school or local authority, in order to give information to parents or seek their views.

72. Some Parent Champions have found it helpful to have a dedicated space on a school noticeboard, where their photograph and contact details can be displayed alongside information about current developments at the school. Others have set up a 'comments box' for parents, or parent-school councils.

73. The Parent Champion should remain in post while the future of the school is being considered or whilst action is being pursued, but not necessarily until the school is removed from the Ofsted category. The local authority or proprietor will need to determine the appropriate point at which the appointment should be terminated.

Further information on the role of the Parent Champion, including an example job description, case studies and supporting resources, can be found at [insert website].

Annex 6

Glossary

Appointing Authority	The body that appoints the foundation governors at a foundation or voluntary school.
Federation	Federations are pairs or groups of schools which share governance arrangements. In a ‘hard’ federation, all the schools share a single governing body. In a ‘soft’ federation, schools retain their separate governing bodies but delegate some powers to a joint governing committee. See www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/federations/ .
Formal Warning	See ‘Warning Notice’.
Fresh Start	A new school which is opened to replace a school causing concern as part of the DfES Fresh Start programme.
Eligible for intervention	A maintained school is eligible for intervention if it (a) is judged to require Special Measures, (b) is judged to require Significant Improvement, or (c) has failed to comply with a warning notice. Non-maintained schools are not eligible for intervention by local authorities.
Lead inspector	One of Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) or and Additional Inspector, who leads an inspection team.
Low attainment	Attainment refers to the absolute standards achieved by pupils, usually measured by their performance in external examinations and achievement of qualifications. Attainment is low if these standards are below national averages or targets.
Maintained school	A school that is maintained by the local authority. Maintained schools inspected by Ofsted are: community, foundation, Trust and voluntary schools; community and foundation special schools; and maintained nursery schools.
National Strategies	The National Strategies offer a range of programmes to raise standards of achievement,

with a specific focus on the quality of teaching and learning and on the effectiveness of leadership and management. They are also able to develop tailored support for individual schools causing concern. The National Strategies work in regional teams, the contact details of which are available from [insert].

Non-maintained school	A school that is not maintained by the local authority. Non-maintained schools inspected by Ofsted are: Academies; city technology colleges; city colleges for the technology of the arts; and special schools which are not community or foundation special schools, but which are currently approved by the Secretary of State.
Notice to Improve	See 'Significant Improvement'
Significant Improvement	The term applied by Ofsted when a school is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform. A school requiring Significant Improvement is said to have received a 'Notice to Improve'. NB The Ofsted judgements of 'Serious Weakness', 'Under-achieving' and 'Inadequate sixth form' are no longer in use.
Special Measures	The term applied by Ofsted when a school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement at the school.
Trust schools	Trust schools are a maintained foundation schools supported by a charitable Trust, which provides governors to the school(s). See http://findoutmore.dfes.gov.uk/2006/09/trust_schools.html
Under-performance	Under-performance refers to poor levels of pupil progress, relative to their prior attainment and potential. An under-performing school may appear to have reasonable standards of attainment, but closer examination shows that pupils are not achieving as well as they could, or the school is achieving less well than similar schools.
Warning Notice	A notice by which a local authority may notify the governing body of a school of its of concerns

relating to the school's performance, a breakdown in leadership or management, or pupil or staff safety. This is also sometimes referred to as a 'formal warning'. (See Chapter 5).

Working day

Any day which is not a Saturday or Sunday, a bank holiday, or part of a holiday longer than a week taken by the school in question.