

## HEREFORDSHIRE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SELF EVALUATION AGAINST THE OFSTED FRAMEWORK – JULY 2015

Percentage of children taught in settings judged by Ofsted to be good or better (end June 2015)	School types/numbers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87.8 % in the primary phase (NA 83.4%)</li> <li>• 87.3% in the secondary phase (NA 77%)</li> <li>• 90% of early years' group settings</li> <li>• 89% of childminders inspected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of schools and academies: 99</li> <li>• LA maintained primary schools 60</li> <li>• Primaries (academies) 17</li> <li>• Primaries (free) 1</li> <li>• LA maintained secondary schools 5</li> <li>• Secondary schools (academies) 9</li> <li>• Secondary schools (free) 1</li> <li>• All through schools 1</li> <li>• LA maintained special schools 2</li> <li>• Special school (academies) 2</li> <li>• LA maintained PRU 1</li> <li>• Free schools: 2</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Below national attainment at KS1, KS2 over a period of time; low numbers attaining L3 at KS1 and L5+ at KS2</li> <li>• Although KS4 5A*-C EM was above average in 2014, EYFS was in line and KS5 results are consistently good, there are significant gaps between the attainment of key groups (FSM, EAL) and their peers at all key stages</li> <li>• LA plans to raise attainment do not currently address attainment at each key stage or for key groups</li> <li>• Underdeveloped strategy to improve governance</li> <li>• Lack of consistency in quality assurance of support and intervention for schools from the diverse market</li> <li>• Emerging use of data to monitor schools and settings</li> <li>• Peer challenge and review at an early stage of development</li> <li>• Poor quality learning environments across some of the school estate</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress against key issues (as of summer 2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSIP framework refreshed</li> <li>• Risk assessments issued to HTs/Chairs of governing bodies</li> <li>• Draft SEF completed; LA Raise circulated</li> <li>• HMI triads focusing on leadership completed</li> <li>• Launch of Capital Investment Strategy discussions</li> </ul>

**KEY PRIORITY: RAISING ATTAINMENT** (*Targets previously published for 2015*)

- 65% of 5 year olds will achieve a good level of development
- 90% will attain level 4 in reading and 88% level 4 in mathematics at 11 years old
- 59% will achieve 5 GCSEs at grades A\*-C, including English and mathematics
- The percentage of education settings judged good or outstanding by Ofsted will be in the top quartile of local authorities
- The percentage of NEET (not in education, employment or training) and not known will be in the lowest quartile of education authorities; not knowns will be less than 2% and NEET less than 5.5 per cent

**Key priorities will be achieved through:**

- Effective corporate leadership and strategic planning
- Monitoring, challenging intervention and support
- Support and challenge for leadership and management (including governance)
- Well managed use of resources

**Key document:** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/framework-for-the-inspection-of-local-authority-arrangements-for-supporting-school-improvement--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/framework-for-the-inspection-of-local-authority-arrangements-for-supporting-school-improvement--2)

**Effective Corporate leadership and strategic planning – Key priority: Outcomes reach top quartile performance in 2016/ 17**

Success criteria - RAG	Key questions	AFI
<p><i>elected members /senior officers have an ambitious vision for and are committed to school improvement; this is clearly demonstrated in public documents</i></p> <p><i>elected members articulate the local authority's strategic role and enhance schools' ability to self-manage; members' challenge of officers is well informed by high-quality information and data; members and senior officers exercise their duties in relation to securing sufficient suitable provision for all 16-19-year-olds and in respect of raising the participation age (RPA) requirements</i></p> <p><i>senior officers ensure that strategies for improvement are understood clearly by maintained schools, other providers and stakeholders with clear evidence that this is effective in enabling schools to improve and preventing schools from deteriorating</i></p> <p><i>accountability is transparent and efficiently monitored in a systematic way</i></p> <p><i>schools respect and trust credible senior officers, who listen and respond to their views and advice</i></p>	<p><b>How effective is corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate overview is fully in place through an accountability framework implemented by the chief executive and supported by a directorate improvement programme.</li> <li>The Children's Wellbeing directorate reports on educational attainment, school Ofsted judgements and other performance indicators to the director and the lead member. This forms part of the children's performance challenge. Regular reports on educational performance are received by Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny; members' briefings provide updates on performance and actions taken to drive improvement.</li> <li>Directorates are subject to peer scrutiny and challenge through corporate quarterly performance reviews.</li> </ul> <p><b>What is the local authority's vision for better education for all pupils?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our goal is that outcomes reach top quartile performance in 2016/17. Our particular focus is on the attainment of our most vulnerable students.</li> <li>Ofsted judgements on the number of good or outstanding settings in Herefordshire and improving attainment at KS4 suggest this work has had good impact in some key stages.</li> <li>Partnership working is key to our approach. We work with the regional schools commissioner for academies, HMI Ofsted and the Department for education to maintain a consistent challenge to schools and academies.</li> <li>Herefordshire is one of 13 pilot authorities working with DfE ISOS on the new arrangements for DSEN students.</li> <li>Local authority officers are credible because we have the input of existing practitioners and serving heads.</li> </ul> <p><b>How effective is decision-making?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships such as the Strategic Education Board and Herefordshire School Improvement Partnership (HSIP) have decision-making powers that have proved effective in driving through some real change e.g. risk assessment process for all schools. All stakeholders recognise the need to develop better quality learning environments.</li> <li>The council ensures that its risk assessments apply to all schools, and has provided useful information to the regional schools commissioner and the DfE for them to be assured of the steps the council is taking with individual schools to address performance and/or safeguarding issues. The council needs to use data more proactively in order to set appropriate targets for all groups of learners.</li> <li>Officers work with local providers to ensure up-to-date mapping of all 16 to 19 provision across the full range of study programmes and apprenticeships; this information is made available to students in Year 10/11 through advice and guidance offered in schools and has had good impact. For example the number of young people with destinations recorded as Not Known was 10.1% in 2012; provisional data for 2015 shows a reduction to just 4.2%, much lower than the West Midlands average of 12.2%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Do schools understand the priorities for school improvement?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2014 conference included HMI-facilitated workshops, alongside schools showcasing their best practice. An impact of these initiatives is evidenced in rising attainment at KS4 with commendation letters for some schools from David Laws MP.</li> <li>Communication and consultation with primary schools take place through area-based primary heads' briefings; the local authority attends meetings of the Herefordshire Association of Secondary Head teachers. Director's</li> </ul>	<p>ensure the capital investment strategy has the input of all stakeholders and links closely to school improvement</p> <p>ensure the Strategic Education Board and HSIP agree appropriate targets for all groups of learners and are held to account for their successful delivery</p>

	<p>governor briefings have been re-established with more than 50% of schools represented. Both primary and secondary leaders and school governors have been briefed on the council's emerging capital investment strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A HMI-led triad project involving 12 cross-phase schools was delivered in April 2015 with the aim of sharpening leaders' skills and understanding of Ofsted's criteria for judging schools.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Monitoring, challenge, intervention and support - Key priority:</b> All schools in Herefordshire judged 'good' or better by Ofsted</p>		
<p><b>Success criteria - RAG</b></p>	<p><b>Key questions</b></p>	<p><b>AFI</b></p>
<p><i>performance data and management information are used to review strategies for school improvement</i></p> <p><i>data is used systematically to identify underperformance; support is then directed to areas of greatest need leading to improved outcomes</i></p> <p><i>the LA provides or commissions and brokers a suitable range of performance data, including data about the local performance of different pupil groups, local benchmarking and post-16 destinations</i></p> <p><i>where appropriate, there is effective deployment of formal powers of intervention; weaknesses are typically identified early and tackled promptly</i></p> <p><i>schools causing concern to Ofsted and RI schools receive well-planned, coordinated support, differentiated according to their needs; systems leaders are engaged to support and challenge those in need and actively promote school-to-school improvement</i></p> <p><i>Schools and providers are monitored regularly to a planned programme. Reports to senior leaders are fit for purpose</i></p> <p><i>The progress of schools causing concern is kept under continuous review by senior officers and scrutinised by elected members frequently and regularly. Robust action is taken where progress is judged to be insufficient</i></p> <p><i>the LA reports concerns re standards/leadership of an academy</i></p>	<p><b>How effectively does the LA use pertinent data and management information to inform its monitoring and challenge to schools? How well does the LA know schools and other providers?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We work in a school-led system where schools are the main drivers of improvement and mutual support. There are various vehicles for delivering this strategy which include: the Education Strategic Board; HSIP; the two teaching schools (Wigmore and Marlbrook); Activate; the Wye Valley network. Input from these networks and other partners will be key to developing LA-wide raising attainment plans for each key stage and in key areas.</li> <li>• The LA uses data to identify underperformance through its risk assessment process which has recently been refreshed and reissued to schools. A particular area for development is developing the use of forward data in monitoring schools and academies.</li> </ul> <p><b>How swiftly, robustly and effectively has the LA intervened, particularly in schools causing concern? Has the LA used formal powers of intervention effectively?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We actively encourage good and outstanding schools to support other schools. For example, the appointment of the Headteacher of Whitchurch to executive Headteacher at Weston-under-Penyard (RI to good in 9 months)</li> <li>• Partnership working has supported the move away from detailed monitoring. The Strategic Education Board and HSIP receive and discuss 'live' reports on educational performance, leadership, parental preference analysis from EY to 16+</li> <li>• We have engaged formal powers of intervention to: put an IEB in place at St Thomas Cantilupe primary school; review governance at Ewyas Harold, St Martins and Kington primaries; support the appointment of executive headteachers at Ewyas Harold, Weston-under-Penyard and Longtown; appoint new governance at Leominster primary school. We have also reported, where necessary, academies and free schools which are a cause for concern directly to the DFE / regional schools commissioner.</li> </ul> <p><b>How effectively does the LA promote school-to-school improvement? Is support focused on areas of greatest need? What is the quality of the support that the LA has led, brokered and commissioned to enable schools to improve standards and outcomes? Have variations in school performance within the local authority area been tackled successfully?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All settings and schools with high risk factors (maintained schools) are visited and regularly monitored by a member of the learning and achievement team; they may also receive input from a NLE and, where appropriate, work is coordinated with the Diocese of Hereford, Archdiocese of Cardiff and with Ofsted. Lighter touch meetings are offered and usually accepted by academies assessed with high risk factors; the same is true for schools with a higher number of medium risk factors. Ofsted reports consistently reference the good impact of intervention by local authority officers. Validated data for KS2 show all but two schools (out of 7) that were below floor standard in 2013 were above the higher floor standard 2014.</li> <li>• One example of this school-led system in action is that schools county-wide have identified English/literacy and</li> </ul>	<p>ensure LA-wide raising attainment plans address attainment for each key stage and in key areas, particularly in closing gaps in attainment for FSM, EAL learners</p> <p>share monitoring, challenge and intervention activities with all settings as part of a planned programme</p> <p>ensure the role of Herefordshire council in quality assuring support and intervention from the diverse market is clear to all stakeholders</p> <p>use forward data in monitoring schools and academies to ensure they meet appropriate</p>

<p><i>to the DfE directly and promptly, through the relevant Regional Schools Commissioner</i></p>	<p>numeracy as areas requiring improvement. As a result, the Herefordshire Teaching Schools Alliance in partnership with the council organised two cross-phase leadership conferences. The role of Herefordshire council in quality assuring support and intervention from the teaching schools and the wider diverse market is at an early stage of development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall attainment and that of key groups (FSM, LAC) were addressed in a leadership conference in November 2013 and in following sessions with school leaders. Additional 'triad working' facilitated by HMI with schools focused on vulnerable groups; as a result, schools' awareness of their comparative position to national averages was enhanced and a number of individual schools have reduced their gaps considerably. A focused approach with schools ("Closing the Gap"), which highlighted particular cohorts within schools was then introduced to challenge schools to improve. This work was strengthened in September 2014 through the employment of an ex-Headteacher to work directly with schools. However, gaps in attainment remain significant; initiatives to address these gaps have therefore not had impact.</li> <li>• We closely monitor schools' local offer for DSEN students to ensure statutory requirements are met; schools' safeguarding procedures are also monitored by the council with intervention, where necessary.</li> <li>• Each school receives information on students' destinations and NEET cohort information is fed back to schools quarterly.</li> </ul>	<p>targets; produce more user-friendly data to inform school improvement at both LA and individual school level</p>
<p><b>Support and challenge for leadership and management (including governance) - Key priority:</b> Governing bodies provide robust challenge and support to headteachers and senior leaders</p>		
<p><b>Success criteria - RAG</b></p>	<p><b>Key Questions</b></p>	<p><b>AFI</b></p>
<p><i>the LA builds strong working relationships with education leaders in its area and encourages high-calibre school leaders to support and challenge others</i></p> <p><i>training for HTs, governors and middle managers, appropriately differentiated, is improving the capacity of maintained schools and other providers to develop accurate self-evaluation and secure continuous improvement</i></p> <p><i>The LA identifies accurately all maintained schools that need support or intervention for leadership, management and governance and brokers or commissions effective school-to-school or other support for leadership and management in weaker schools. Maintained schools are effectively signposted to where they can access high quality support</i></p> <p><i>the LA knows the governing bodies of maintained schools, including their strengths and weaknesses</i></p>	<p><b>How successful are strategies to support effective leadership and management (including senior and middle managers' training and recruitment and that of governors) in maintained schools and other providers from those graded outstanding to those in categories of concern? How effectively are LA arrangements promoting autonomy and using systems and school-to-school resources?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting school leadership (governors and senior managers) in the management of school resources (funding, human resources, buildings as well as the quality of teaching and learning) is viewed as a cross-directorate responsibility. The directorate has established a "round table" group of all services which impact on school improvement to monitor aspects of schools and identify and plan intervention, where appropriate.</li> <li>• There is recognition that Herefordshire is a low-funded authority and schools work with the council to implement staged and fair changes to funding arrangements where required; schools forum is an active group. Schools consistently feedback positively on the annual budget consultation. Despite low funding, only a small number of schools have deficit budgets. These schools are assisted in managing deficits; this may include advice on structural solutions. The in-year fair access panel has ensured creative solutions for hard to place young people.</li> </ul> <p><b>How effective is support and challenge for school governance? Is training improving governors' ability to support and challenge senior leadership teams?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing school governance is a challenge for the local authority. Herefordshire council does not provide traded governors' services but retains an administrative function around the governor database, appointment of local authority governors and information for clerks. In 2013 /2014 we engaged with a re-constituted Herefordshire Governors Association (HGA) who entered into a service level agreement with Gloucestershire Governor Services for training. Some schools bought into Worcestershire and Shropshire services. At this time we supported dialogue on federation e.g. Aylestone/Broadlands and Withington, Wellington/Clifford and</li> </ul>	<p>improve the standards of governance in maintained schools,</p> <p>support the development of the teaching school alliance and other schools keen to share good practice</p> <p>support the development of peer challenge and review in schools and settings</p>

<p><i>the LA has a successful strategy for recruitment and retention of high quality governors</i></p> <p><i>the LA has access to experienced governors who are prepared to be deployed to, or support, governing bodies of schools causing concern or those schools not yet good</i></p> <p><i>training programmes for governors and chairs are of good quality, well attended and highly valued, using a range of modes of delivery; training and LA communications are clear about the respective roles of governing bodies and school leadership</i></p>	<p>Fairfield/Longtown. Chairs of governing bodies also participated in area based discussion groups with us on sufficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over the past year HGA has ended the SLA with Gloucester. Since January 2015 we have reintroduced briefing sessions for Chairs of governors in different parts of the county and at different times so as to provide greater opportunity for attendance. This area remains one where we need to do further work. To support this, we have commissioned a consultant with the aim of developing a cadre of highly skilled governors who can assist other schools in their improvement and enable the council to take a more strategic approach.</li> </ul> <p><b>Is the LA applying statutory powers promptly, where appropriate?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interventions are shared with HSIP and are based on school-led support wherever possible, including support from National Leaders of Education, the appointment of executive head teachers and brokered school-to-school support. Programmes of support for senior and middle managers across maintained schools are differentiated and delivered by the Wigmore teaching school; leaders receive support to develop their self-evaluation from members of the learning and achievement team; joint projects with HMI Ofsted have also developed leaders' critical reflective skills. Leading headteachers have been instrumental in the HSCB, have been involved in the reworking of the Herefordshire levels of need document and have supported the appointment of an education officer within MASH. The Head of Brookfield, in particular, has helped to raise the profile of work against child sexual exploitation in the county.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Use of resources – Key priority:</b> All local authority functions work cohesively to support schools and ensure rising attainment at all key stages</p>		
<p><b>Success criteria – RAG</b></p>	<p><b>Key questions</b></p>	
<p><i>resourcing decisions are based on an accurate analysis of the needs of schools and funding is delegated to the front line so that as much as possible reaches pupils</i></p> <p><i>the local authority undertakes regular and thorough reviews of the cost-effectiveness of any resource allocation and acts decisively and effectively on its findings</i></p> <p><i>the local authority's budget-setting process is based on a thorough and detailed review of spending needs and is both timely and transparent</i></p> <p><i>consultation on the budget ensures that the deployment of local authority resources is well understood by schools</i></p>	<p><b>How well does the LA use available funding or resources (e.g. staffing, training courses) to effect improvement? Is it focused on areas of greatest need?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The learning and achievement team comprises one head of service; one school improvement adviser; four early years advisers (including one team leader); one officer responsible for governor services and one IT consultant (operating on a traded service basis). Learning and achievement has a budget of £40k to facilitate school improvement and school to school support, with £5k allocated for SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education). There is a significant number of staff that contributes to the school improvement agenda in other service areas across the directorate (e.g. 14-19, DSEN, EAL). Communication both within and beyond the directorate needs to improve.</li> </ul> <p><b>How are resourcing decisions made? How are resources delegated to maintain schools monitored and challenged, where appropriate?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of statutory duties are undertaken by Herefordshire council which include the moderation of teacher assessment in the early years foundation stage, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Local authority officers support the delivery of religious education through SACRE. Recent work of the learning and achievement team has reinforced the council's responsibility for the safeguarding of children. Local authority officers support the training and development needs of professionals in early years' settings, including childminders. Local authority officers have also helped primary schools develop their e-safety, the new computing curriculum and the roll-out of I-Pads.</li> <li>Herefordshire council also performs a research and development role. The local authority has an ongoing project examining outcomes for vulnerable groups, including pupils eligible for the pupil premium. We are also engaging with other local authorities in peer challenge and review activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>How well does the LA enable maintained schools to purchase from a diverse market of excellent providers?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Herefordshire council manage external funding such as the Youth Contract. The New Horizons project, aimed at</li> </ul>	<p>enhance communication both within and beyond the directorate to ensure schools and settings access more coordinated streamlined support systems</p>

	<p>Post 16 students with learning difficulties, links different funding streams (EFA and adult social care funding) to develop personalised programmes for young people who want to continue in education. Schools further receive support from HR on recruitment and staffing issues and restructures, financial analysis and developing budget plans to address projected deficits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The successful application by Marlbrook primary school to attain teaching schools status was supported by the council. Successful bids with the teaching schools to access National College funding, in addition to local authority funding, have been used to broker school-to-school support work in schools with high risk factors and to promote learning and innovation. A recent bid secured £45k to support the small number of schools identified as 'requiring improvement'. The teaching schools deliver a significant part of Herefordshire's school improvement offer; for example, Wigmore Teaching School delivers NQT induction and assessment for the county.</li><li>• We enable maintained schools to purchase from a diverse market and are currently compiling a database of good and outstanding provision which will be shared with schools. Budget setting and resourcing decisions are informed by HSIP and funding is delegated to the front line, wherever possible. We are beginning to quality assure the support provided to schools causing concern and to challenge this support where there is no evidence of impact on pupils' outcomes.</li></ul>	
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