



# School Improvement Guidance

2021 - 2024

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## School Improvement planning

A school improvement plan, or SIP, has requirements that vary from setting to setting across the Trust, but their unifying purpose is to document goals, strategies, and action steps that aim to improve the quality of education pupils receive. School improvement plan goals are generally aligned to outcome measures on national assessments or compared to similar school settings in the case of specialist school settings.

The Trust Improvement model is organised into six inter-connected themes:

1. Differentiated teaching and learning
2. Systematic curriculum delivery
3. Effective pedagogical practices
4. Data analysis and discussion
5. Financial and operational efficiency
6. A value driven culture that promotes learning

As each leadership team develop the objectives for the year with their local governing body hub, it is vital that each improvement area is mapped against six critical strategies to support your goals:

1. **Distributed responsibilities**
2. **Weekly metrics**
3. **Sustainable systems with documented processes**
4. **Classroom walks & feedback**
5. **Continuous improvement meetings**
6. **MAT assurance framework**

## Distribute responsibilities to other individuals rather than being a hero leader

Distributed system maturity begins with shifting from a “hero leader” to empowering your team to take some of the ownership for school improvement goals.

Hero leadership means a principal takes on the burden of responsibilities by himself or herself. It is *not* a system for true school improvement, because it is heavily reliant on one individual.

### So how do you start with distributed leadership?

At a minimum, school improvement plan goals must include the individuals responsible for each action step of each goal, and you must leave the task management associated with these action steps to the individuals responsible. The planning process should begin months before the new school year starts.

## Use metrics that you can monitor on a weekly basis rather than on a bi-annual basis

What would each objective look like if you then added a goal for improvement that is tied to a metric for progress monitoring?

You might be thinking: Don't we already have our goal for improvement? Isn't it the 65% learning gains in XXX?

For most schools currently in turnaround status (or a similar situation), progress monitoring data is limited to three times per year, which will likely be used to make a school end of year projection. It does not work, in isolation and it places immense amounts of stress on teachers and leaders. Objective planning also needs to consider the steps towards that end goal, i.e. what does 65% look like in a mid-year review point? Adopting an incremental ladder approach will support teachers to see the value of their efforts towards an overall goal.

## Build sustainable systems with documented processes rather than relying on talented individuals

Distribution is not simply a case of off-loading tasks and responsibilities to a named individual and think everything is going to be okay. If true, sustainable school improvement is the collective aim, you must develop mature systems – systems that can succeed regardless of the individual.

Avoiding overdependence on talented individuals is one of the aims of the distributed system maturity model. The system exists to ensure teachers and other stakeholders have the support, resources, and trust to continue the hard work of school improvement regardless of the circumstances.

**A documented process is critical:** a process that can be picked up, utilised, refined, and passed on to ensure success continues. For example, a documented process for a writing improvement would include:

- Weekly coaching 1:1s
- SLT and local governor agendas
- Sample pupil work reviews
- Instructions related to classroom walkthroughs
- Suggested ways to share the data
- How to use the data collected to inform next steps in the next improvement cycle

When teams create a documented process, it results in high ownership and reduces the risk of failure to attain system goals because it isn't dependent on a single person. The power is in the process.

## Review classrooms regularly and provide feedback on progress toward the goal

In a distributed system maturity model, the principal's most critical function is regular leadership reviews and feedback on progress toward the goal.

When these two responsibilities become the principal's focus, we experience the highest levels of ownership, most reliable results, and lowest risk of failure to attain system performance goals.

Each goal can then be displayed on the school's action board in the principal's office. An action board is a visible tool that provides urgency and focus, guiding the school leadership team (SLT) in implementing and monitoring the systems that lead to the vision of transformed pupil achievement.

The action board provides a clear focus on how the SLT members should spend their time. Action boards allow us to take our goals and break them down into one-week "sprints," where action steps move through columns titled "To Do," "Doing," and "Done."

### **Action board**

The action steps on an action board are not a "to do" list in the traditional sense. They are connected to specific actions that individual members of the SLT own, which are all connected to the school improvement plan goals. Any miscellaneous or operational items that members of the SLT need to get done (for example, creating a fire drill plan) do NOT go on the action board.

An action step is considered "done" when it meets specific criteria connected to the metrics. If the action step does not meet the criteria, it cannot be considered "done."

## Lead your team towards continuous improvement with weekly stand-ups

The final strategy that brings the distributed system maturity model together is the regular feedback on the team's progress and efficacy at meeting the school improvement plan goals.

Like leadership reviews of the action steps, the principal owns this critical process.

At the heart of the continuous improvement process is the weekly stand-up. A weekly stand-up is when members of the SLT gather around the action board as the principal leads 5 to 15 minutes of discussion. The weekly stand-up happens at the same time each day and in the same location. This time is sacred.

During the weekly stand-up, the principal asks each member of the SLT what he or she observed the previous week that is moving us toward meeting our definitions of done.

It is not a rundown of what each member did or did not do; the focus is on specific actions and outcomes from the classroom that will lead to meeting the definition of done by the end of the week. It is also the time to identify any impediments to meeting the goal for the week.

Data is central to all discussions.



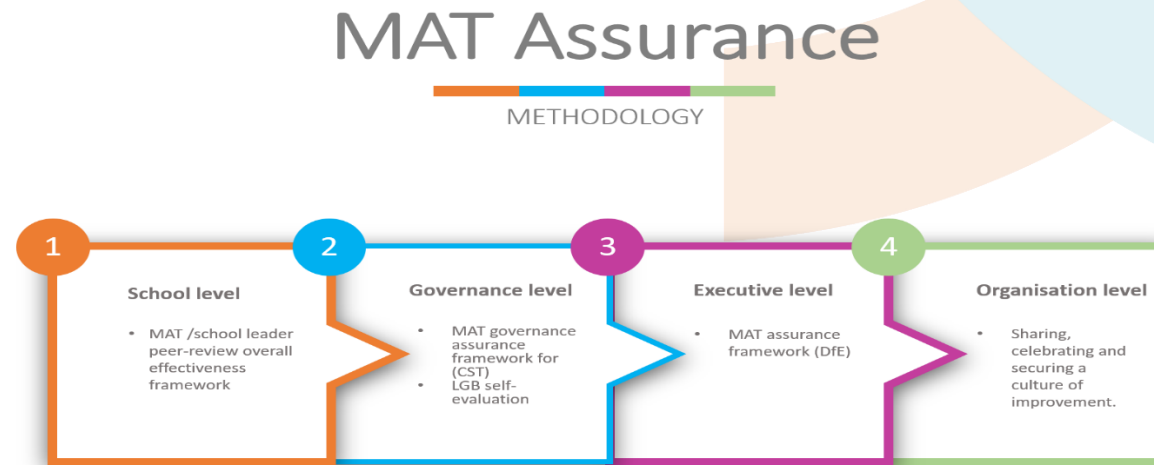
## MAT assurance framework

The MAT composition is diverse and does not assume that there is one best way to support or drive school improvement as a MAT. It is vital that the Board and MAT executive team understand school and organisational self-evaluation to ensure additional resources and support are directed in an evidence-based way. In addition to brokered support, the Board will understand the current capacity to support and drive school improvement. In doing so, the executive team can build and strengthen its ability and potential to grow capacity to support more schools.

### Developing the framework

Three essential system tools influence the construction of this framework for improvement:

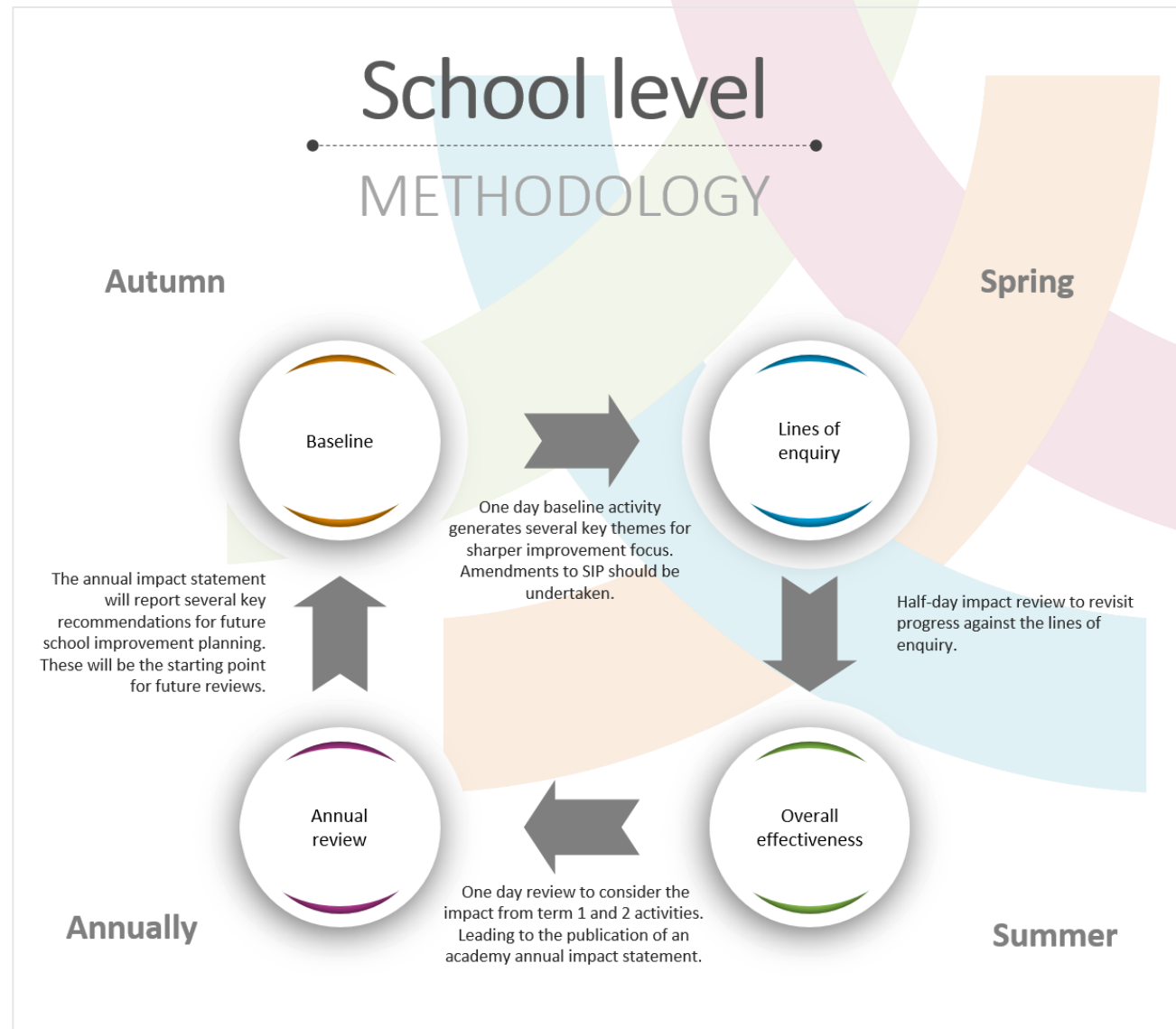
- 2021 Ofsted Inspection Handbook
- DfE MAT Assurance Framework
- Assurance Framework Trust Governance



By designing the framework to incorporate the themes within these tools, the MAT Board will be in a solid position to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the organisation and its work to drive sustained improvements. To support this activity, trustees need assurance about the MAT Development Plan's strategic ambition for education, including partnership arrangements, strategic work concerning the recruitment, training and continual professional development of academy staff at all levels.

**School level:** the MAT is on a journey. As we continue to evolve, we must evaluate school improvement activities and investments to assist trustees in determining the impact of the MAT's work. This development must include strengthened arrangements for monitoring, challenging, intervening and supporting MAT academies.

See MAT assurance guidance for detailed information.



## School Improvement Model

Driving continual improvement to make the biggest difference to the life chances of pupils in our schools.

This model aims to clarify what makes the difference and act as a benchmark to measure progress.

Trust schools that improve have a vision that has the support from local governors, school staff, pupils, parents/carers and the wider community.

A strong vision is underpinned by the importance of focused leadership, and a strong ethos and value base.



## The relationship between the Model and key metrics

School Improvement Model	Education Inspection Framework (EIF)	Areas for explicit improvement planning	Education and skills funding agency (ESFA)	Trust Board KPI	Sponsor mandated approaches (support)
A value driven culture that promotes learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership and management</li> <li>Behaviour and attitudes</li> <li>Personal Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision and ethos</li> <li>Pupil experience</li> <li>Governance and oversight</li> <li>Safeguarding</li> <li>Staff workload and well-being</li> <li>Attendance and punctuality</li> <li>Respect</li> <li>Employability</li> <li>Enrichment</li> <li>FBV/SMSC</li> <li>Careers guidance</li> <li>Health and well-being</li> <li>Citizenship</li> <li>Equality and Diversity</li> <li>Preparation for next steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil numbers/attendance and exclusions</li> <li>Safeguarding and well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil numbers</li> <li>Pupil absence levels (including persistent absence)</li> <li>Pupil moves (including exclusion levels)</li> <li>Safeguarding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust values assessment framework (0)</li> <li>Character Education Programme</li> <li>Community Grow Programme (1)</li> <li>EDI strategic objectives</li> <li>Trauma-informed accreditation (2)</li> <li>Disability confident employer (2)</li> <li>Inclusion Quality Mark Award (2)</li> <li>National SMSC Quality Mark (2)</li> </ul>
Financial and operational efficiency			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil premium funding</li> <li>Curriculum planning – staff and class size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil premium grant</li> <li>COVID catch-up</li> <li>Curriculum planning (integrated with financial planning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centralised finance procurement model</li> <li>Centralised human resource model (3)</li> <li>Centralised estate approach (3)</li> <li>Staffing as a % of income 80% or &lt;</li> </ul>
Data analysis and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of Education</li> <li>Behaviour and attitudes</li> <li>Personal Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attainment (qualifications and assessments)</li> <li>Progress</li> <li>Knowledge and skill development</li> <li>Destinations</li> <li>Attendance and punctuality</li> <li>Exclusions</li> <li>Behaviour analysis</li> <li>Bullying and equality analysis</li> <li>Transition points and NEET</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arbor assessment and reporting system</li> <li>3 x termly collection, analysis and reporting</li> <li>Action Boards</li> <li>Weekly SLT 'stand-ups'</li> <li>Trust values assessment framework</li> <li>MAT assurance framework</li> </ul>

School Improvement Model	Education Inspection Framework (EIF)	Areas for explicit improvement planning	Education and skills funding agency (ESFA)	Trust Board KPI	Sponsor mandated approaches (support)
Systematic curriculum delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum design, coverage and appropriateness</li> <li>Curriculum delivery</li> <li>Knowledge and skill development</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear long-term curriculum plans that relate to medium term planning documents, published on the school website.</li> <li>Medium-term plans set out knowledge and skills clearly underpinned by individual subject intent.</li> </ul>
Effective pedagogical practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of Education</li> <li>Leadership and management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching (pedagogy)</li> <li>Assessment (formative and summative)</li> <li>Staff development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality assurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ofsted</li> <li>Internal processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom non-negotiables (4)</li> <li>Clear pupil achievement expectations related to TA level</li> <li>TeamTeach approach</li> <li>Trust Improvement Networks</li> <li>Harnessing new technology investments</li> <li>Trust Phonics Strategy</li> </ul>
Differentiated teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of Education</li> <li>Behaviour and attitudes</li> <li>Personal development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress</li> <li>Attainment (qualifications and assessments)</li> <li>Attitudes to learning</li> <li>Behaviour</li> <li>Pupil experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attainment and progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil education outcomes</li> <li>Additional support for pupils with SEND</li> </ul>	

#### Notes

0. The programme will come on line following the rebrand launch and will include separate guidance.
1. Two-year rollout programme - this strategy should only be reflected in your planning if your school is in the year-one cohort
2. Additional funding support available. All school judged 'good' against the new framework are expected to be working towards these standards. Schools not yet good, should consider the appropriateness of these initiatives at this time.
3. Coming online in 2021-22 – objectives will be set out in the Trust central improvement plan
4. Trust schools are diverse, therefore the Trust will not prescribe a minimum expectation. However, the Trust does requires each school to establish this in their teaching and learning policy.

## Template improvement plan

All coloured boxes must be completed

Appendix 1: top level summary

<b>Academy:</b>		<b>Ofsted rating:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
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### Self –evaluation summary

EIF	Section
Overall effectiveness	
Quality of Education	
Behaviour and Attitudes	
Personal Development	
Leadership and Management	

### EIF improvement recommendations (if applicable)

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**MAT assurance review recommendations** (if applicable)

[Redacted area]

**Governance and Leadership oversight approval**

The following named individuals are required to sign their approval to this plan prior to publication.

<b>Key decision maker</b>	<b>Signature (electronic approval is acceptable)</b>	<b>Date</b>
Linked Board Trustee		
LGB Chairperson		
Director of Education		

## Appendix 2: big picture improvement outcome summary

Refer to the Model/Matric relationship table above to complete concise outcomes for the end of the year. You should aim for a maximum of 3 per section that set out your major priorities for the year.





Appendix 3: action planning template – a value driven culture that promotes learning

School improvement area 1: <b>a value driven culture that promotes learning</b> <b>PRIORITY ONE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 1: <b>a value driven culture that promotes learning</b> <b>PRIORITY TWO</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 1: <b>a value driven culture that promotes learning</b> <b>PRIORITY THREE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?

#### Appendix 4: detailed planning

The final three columns in the template should be updated with a RAG judgement following the school termly statistical analysis, using the following criteria, and submitted with your Headteacher report:

RAG colour	Description	Judgement
BLUE	Evidence demonstrates the school is exceeding this target against the expectation for this period	Outstanding progress
GREEN	Evidence demonstrates the school is achieving this target against the expectation for this period	Good progress
AMBER	Evidence demonstrates the school is likely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Requires improvement
RED	Evidence demonstrates the school is unlikely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Significant concern

Priority	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/material/staff development incl. costs	Distributed responsibilities	Intended outcome	T1 indicator	T2 indicator
ONE						
TWO						
THREE						

Appendix 5: plan assessment

Which priority are you assessing?

Why are responsibilities distributed in the way you have set out?

What are the weekly metric that will support leaders monitoring progress (stand-up at the action board)?

What sustainable systems and documented processes have you put in place to support monitoring?

What will be the key features for learning walks and scrutiny exercises to support professional feedback in line with the priority?

How will you organise continuous improvement meetings, who will be in attendance and what will their contribution be?

Appendix 6: action planning template – financial and operational efficiency

School improvement area 2: School improvement area 2: <b>Financial and operational efficiency</b> <b>PRIORITY ONE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 2: School improvement area 2: <b>Financial and operational efficiency</b> <b>PRIORITY TWO</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 2: School improvement area 2: <b>Financial and operational efficiency</b> <b>PRIORITY THREE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?

## Appendix 7: detailed planning

The final three columns in the template should be updated with a RAG judgement following the school termly statistical analysis, using the following criteria, and submitted with your Headteacher report:

RAG colour	Description	Judgement
BLUE	Evidence demonstrates the school is exceeding this target against the expectation for this period	Outstanding progress
GREEN	Evidence demonstrates the school is achieving this target against the expectation for this period	Good progress
AMBER	Evidence demonstrates the school is likely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Requires improvement
RED	Evidence demonstrates the school is unlikely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Significant concern

Priority	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/material/staff development incl. costs	Distributed responsibilities	Intended outcome	T1 indicator	T2 indicator
ONE						
TWO						
THREE						

Appendix 8: plan assessment

Which priority are you assessing?

Why are responsibilities distributed in the way you have set out?

What are the weekly metric that will support leaders monitoring progress (stand-up at the action board)?

What sustainable systems and documented processes have you put in place to support monitoring?

What will be the key features for learning walks and scrutiny exercises to support professional feedback in line with the priority?

How will you organise continuous improvement meetings, who will be in attendance and what will their contribution be?



Appendix 9: action planning template – data analysis and discussion

School improvement area 3: <b>data analysis and discussion</b> <b>PRIORITY ONE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 3: <b>data analysis and discussion</b> <b>PRIORITY TWO</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 3: <b>data analysis and discussion</b> <b>PRIORITY THREE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?

## Appendix 10: detailed planning

The final three columns in the template should be updated with a RAG judgement following the school termly statistical analysis, using the following criteria, and submitted with your Headteacher report:

RAG colour	Description	Judgement
BLUE	Evidence demonstrates the school is exceeding this target against the expectation for this period	Outstanding progress
GREEN	Evidence demonstrates the school is achieving this target against the expectation for this period	Good progress
AMBER	Evidence demonstrates the school is likely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Requires improvement
RED	Evidence demonstrates the school is unlikely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Significant concern

Priority	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/material/staff development incl. costs	Distributed responsibilities	Intended outcome	T1 indicator	T2 indicator
ONE						
TWO						
THREE						

Appendix 11: plan assessment

Which priority are you assessing?

[Empty blue response box]

Why are responsibilities distributed in the way you have set out?

[Empty blue response box]

What are the weekly metric that will support leaders monitoring progress (stand-up at the action board)?

[Empty blue response box]

What sustainable systems and documented processes have you put in place to support monitoring?

[Empty blue response box]

What will be the key features for learning walks and scrutiny exercises to support professional feedback in line with the priority?

Empty response area for the first question.

How will you organise continuous improvement meetings, who will be in attendance and what will their contribution be?

Empty response area for the second question.

## Appendix 12: action planning template – systematic curriculum delivery

School improvement area 4: <b>Systematic curriculum delivery</b> <b>PRIORITY ONE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 4: <b>Systematic curriculum delivery</b> <b>PRIORITY TWO</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 4: <b>Systematic curriculum delivery</b> <b>PRIORITY THREE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?

### Appendix 13: detailed planning

The final three columns in the template should be updated with a RAG judgement following the school termly statistical analysis, using the following criteria, and submitted with your Headteacher report:

RAG colour	Description	Judgement
BLUE	Evidence demonstrates the school is exceeding this target against the expectation for this period	Outstanding progress
GREEN	Evidence demonstrates the school is achieving this target against the expectation for this period	Good progress
AMBER	Evidence demonstrates the school is likely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Requires improvement
RED	Evidence demonstrates the school is unlikely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Significant concern

Priority	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/material/staff development incl. costs	Distributed responsibilities	Intended outcome	T1 indicator	T2 indicator
ONE						
TWO						
THREE						

Appendix 14: plan assessment

Which priority are you assessing?

Why are responsibilities distributed in the way you have set out?

What are the weekly metric that will support leaders monitoring progress (stand-up at the action board)?

What sustainable systems and documented processes have you put in place to support monitoring?

What will be the key features for learning walks and scrutiny exercises to support professional feedback in line with the priority?

How will you organise continuous improvement meetings, who will be in attendance and what will their contribution be?



Appendix 15: action planning template – effective pedagogical practices

School improvement area 5: <b>effective pedagogical practices</b> <b>PRIORITY ONE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 5: <b>effective pedagogical practices</b> <b>PRIORITY TWO</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 5: <b>effective pedagogical practices</b> <b>PRIORITY THREE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?

## Appendix 16: detailed planning

The final three columns in the template should be updated with a RAG judgement following the school termly statistical analysis, using the following criteria, and submitted with your Headteacher report:

RAG colour	Description	Judgement
BLUE	Evidence demonstrates the school is exceeding this target against the expectation for this period	Outstanding progress
GREEN	Evidence demonstrates the school is achieving this target against the expectation for this period	Good progress
AMBER	Evidence demonstrates the school is likely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Requires improvement
RED	Evidence demonstrates the school is unlikely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Significant concern

Priority	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/material/staff development incl. costs	Distributed responsibilities	Intended outcome	T1 indicator	T2 indicator
ONE						
TWO						
THREE						

Appendix 17: plan assessment

Which priority are you assessing?

Why are responsibilities distributed in the way you have set out?

What are the weekly metric that will support leaders monitoring progress (stand-up at the action board)?

What sustainable systems and documented processes have you put in place to support monitoring?

What will be the key features for learning walks and scrutiny exercises to support professional feedback in line with the priority?

How will you organise continuous improvement meetings, who will be in attendance and what will their contribution be?

Appendix 18: action planning template – differentiated teaching and learning

School improvement area 6: <b>differentiated teaching and learning</b> <b>PRIORITY ONE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 6: <b>differentiated teaching and learning</b> <b>PRIORITY TWO</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?
School improvement area 6: <b>differentiated teaching and learning</b> <b>PRIORITY THREE</b>
Why is this a priority and where are you now?

## Appendix 19: detailed planning

The final three columns in the template should be updated with a RAG judgement following the school termly statistical analysis, using the following criteria, and submitted with your Headteacher report:

RAG colour	Description	Judgement
BLUE	Evidence demonstrates the school is exceeding this target against the expectation for this period	Outstanding progress
GREEN	Evidence demonstrates the school is achieving this target against the expectation for this period	Good progress
AMBER	Evidence demonstrates the school is likely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Requires improvement
RED	Evidence demonstrates the school is unlikely to achieve this target against the expectation for this period	Significant concern

Priority	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/material/staff development incl. costs	Distributed responsibilities	Intended outcome	T1 indicator	T2 indicator
ONE						
TWO						
THREE						

Appendix 20: plan assessment

Which priority are you assessing?

Why are responsibilities distributed in the way you have set out?

What are the weekly metric that will support leaders monitoring progress (stand-up at the action board)?

What sustainable systems and documented processes have you put in place to support monitoring?

What will be the key features for learning walks and scrutiny exercises to support professional feedback in line with the priority?

How will you organise continuous improvement meetings, who will be in attendance and what will their contribution be?



## Appendix 21: new school improvement timeline

