

# School Improvement Model



The strongest driver for Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust is that of moral compass - we care deeply about the education of children and in particular in creating a learning experience that nurtures and develops independent thinking. We want children to leave our schools with views and opinions of the world. We want them to leave with a level of resilience. We want them to leave with their own strong moral compass. We want them to be ready to create positive change in the world.

## The Trust's model for School Improvement

Our approach to School Improvement is grounded in a number of seminal pieces of research and thought leadership:

- [MAT Assurance Framework for School Improvement](#), South West RSC office, trust leaders, ISOS and Robert Hill Consulting
- Sir David Carter's - 4 Stage School Improvement Model
- [Sustainable improvement in multi-school groups](#), DfE research report by Professor Toby Greany (2018)
- [Knowledge building - School improvement at scale](#), Confederation of School Trusts (2021)

Our approach ensures that there is an accurate diagnosis of where each school sits on its improvement trajectory and that there is a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching through evidence-informed teacher development, supported by proper strategic oversight and accountability, to accelerate each school's improvement journey. Quality Assurance (QA) visits are primarily to observe, collect and discuss emerging data and holding academies to account for pupil outcomes. School Improvement (SI) visits are about working with academy staff and leaders to develop and improve practice.

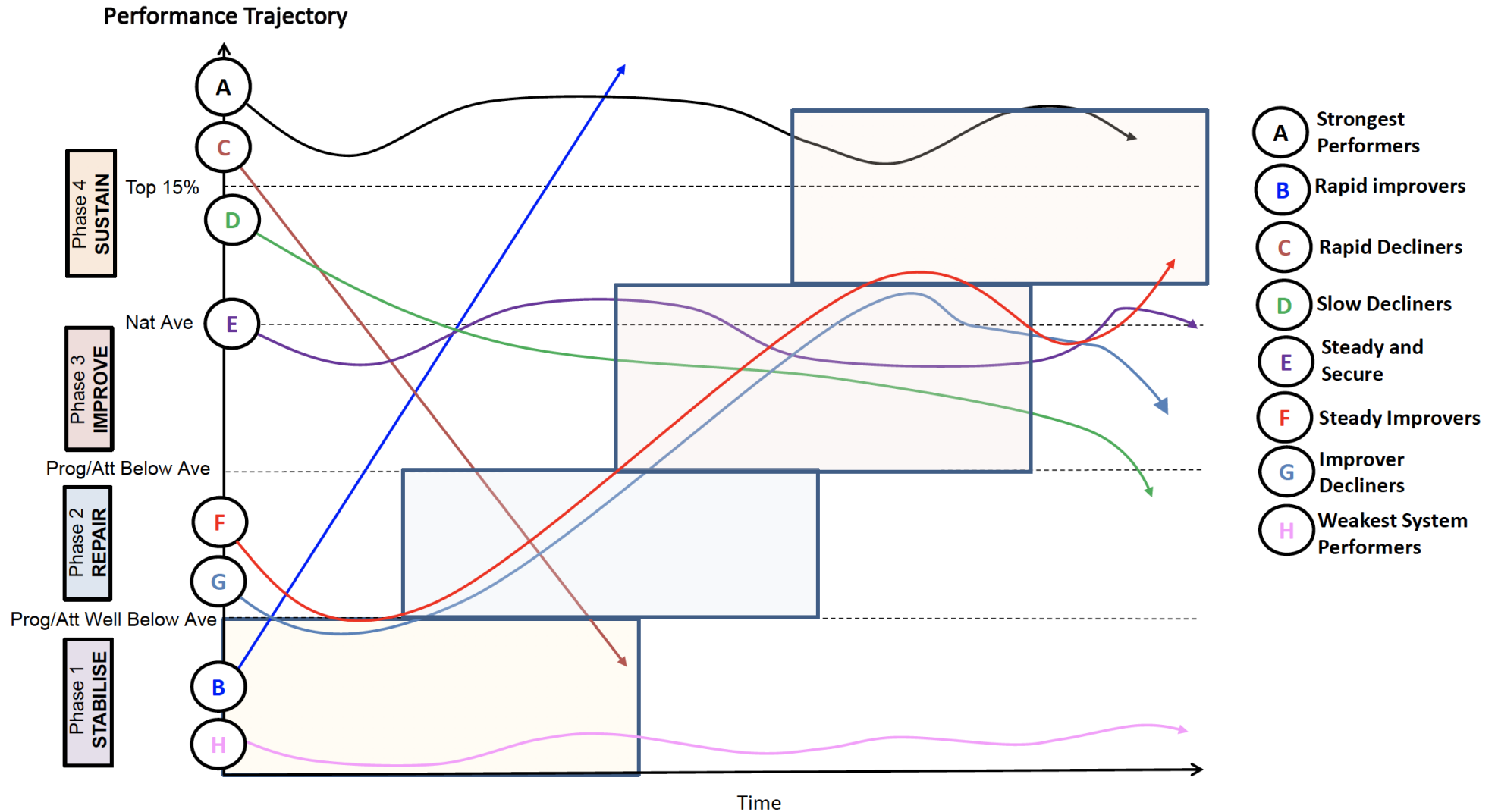
At the end of each academic year, academies within the Trust are designated using a four-point scale determined by using a range of sources:

- Most recent inspection outcome
- Analysis of internal and publicly available data
- Current School Improvement Trajectory
- Findings from QA review process (Effectiveness of: Teaching & Learning, Leadership & Management)
- Other relevant information shared by academy leaders

<b>A: Self-Sustaining</b>	<b>B: Self-Improving</b>	<b>C: Developing</b>	<b>D: Challenged and Vulnerable</b>
⇐(Sustain) Outstanding	⇐(Improve)⇒ Good		⇐(Repair) Requires Improvement/Inadequate ⇐(Stabilise)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 SIL QI visit per half term</li> <li>• 1 Maths/English lead contact point per half term</li> <li>• Weekly HT/MAT SLT briefing</li> <li>• 1 MAT QA reviews per year</li> <li>• Annual external QA Review</li> <li>• 2 SIP/SEF writing days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2/3 SIL QI visits per half term</li> <li>• 1 Maths/English lead visit + 1 contact point per half term</li> <li>• Weekly HT/MAT SLT briefing</li> <li>• 1 MAT QA reviews per year</li> <li>• Annual external QA Review</li> <li>• 2 SIP/SEF writing days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly SIL QI visits</li> <li>• 2 Maths/English lead visit per half term + biweekly contact</li> <li>• Weekly HT/MAT SLT briefing</li> <li>• 2 MAT QA reviews per year</li> <li>• Annual external QA Review</li> <li>• 2 SIP/SEF writing days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly SIL QI visits</li> <li>• 2 Maths/English lead visit per half term + biweekly contact</li> <li>• Weekly HT/MAT SLT briefing</li> <li>• 3 MAT QA review per year</li> <li>• Annual external QA Review</li> <li>• 2 SIP/SEF writing days</li> </ul>
CEO visit to each school once per half term			
An additional 6 days of bespoke support will be available from the Central School	An additional 6 days of bespoke support will be available from the Central School	An additional 12 days of bespoke support will be directed or requested	An additional 18 days of bespoke support will be directed or requested

Improvement Team at the school's request	Improvement Team at the school's request	from the Central School Improvement Team	from the Central School Improvement Team
<p>Inspection readiness: Schools that are identified as likely to be inspected within the next academic year will have an additional half-termly face-to-face meeting. This will focus on ensuring leaders are comprehensively prepared to meet the challenge of inspection. Further support will be given where necessary.</p>			

The four stages of our School Transformation Model and Performance Trajectories are shown below. This sets out the observable features, priorities for improvement, capacity giving and capacity receiving for each stage of the model.



<b>Phase 1 – Stabilise (1 – 2 terms)</b>	<b>School Improvement - Building the next stage of system led improvement</b>
<p><b>SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School requires significant improvement</li> <li>• No clear underpinning for the future</li> <li>• Ofsted grade 4</li> </ul> <p><b>MAT SUPPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Central MAT Improvement Team, directs all improvement activity around teaching, learning, behaviour and safety</li> <li>• Governance and PM review directed by MAT CEO and Trustees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school can only really improve in line with the time it takes to raise the quality of leadership and teaching</li> <li>• The four phases will overlap so there is no defined start and end date</li> <li>• Teams and year groups will progress through the stages at different rates.</li> <li>• Maths might be in the improve phase at the same time that Science is in repair and PE is in sustain</li> <li>• Big implications in a primary school if EY and Year 6 were to be in need of repair at the same time</li> <li>• Seeing cross subject and cross team trajectories as part of the whole enables the strategic focus and resources to be targeted at the right areas</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2 – Repair (12 – 18 months)</b>	<b>Using the framework as a performance improvement tool</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT establishes governance</li> <li>• Reactive decision-making is tackled</li> <li>• The Academy starts to adopt models of staffing, behaviour, leadership more akin to a ‘regular’ Academy</li> <li>• Leadership identification and development through support from MAT Central Improvement Team</li> <li>• MAT Central Improvement Team move into consultative role, still directive where necessary but also transferring responsibility where progress is evident</li> <li>• MAT Trustees can devolve financial control if appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>The Intention is to use this document in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a point of discussion for leaders across the Trust</li> <li>• As a self assessment tool to help diagnose how schools are performing across the system and teams within the schools</li> <li>• As a self assessment tool to determine how best to support schools that are on different journeys</li> <li>• As a strategic focus to contribute to future policy thinking as to the best way to improve our education system</li> <li>• To consider the relationship between capacity givers and capacity takers and when a school moves from one to the other</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3 – Improve</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive (rather than reactive) leadership</li> <li>• Embedding strategies</li> <li>• Improving outcomes</li> <li>• Financial management becomes the responsibility of the leadership team/Local Governance under guidance from the Trust</li> <li>• Some areas of school improvement function now may be ‘light touch’</li> <li>• Local Governance fully effective</li> <li>• SIP (School Improvement Plan) fully ‘owned’ by Academy</li> </ul>	
<b>Phase 4 – Sustain (ongoing)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidence in performance</li> <li>• Increase innovation in delivery</li> <li>• Central Improvement team adopts consultancy approach</li> <li>• Monitoring activity takes place in line with MAT</li> <li>• Best practice from Academy used to develop and build others across the MAT</li> </ul>	

A more detailed breakdown can be seen in [Appendix 1](#)

## The Non-Negotiables of Knowledge Building: An Approach to Professional Development across the Trust

Our approach is based on the four propositions for school improvement from [Knowledge building - School improvement at scale](#), Confederation of School Trusts (2021):

1. The goal is for every teacher in every classroom to be as good as they can be in *what* they teach (the curriculum) and *how* they teach (pedagogy).
  2. For this to happen, we need to mobilise for every teacher the best evidence from research.
  3. There is no sustainable improvement for pupils without improvement in teaching, and no improvement in teaching without the best professional development for teachers.
  4. Strong structures (in groups of schools) can facilitate better professional development and thus better teaching and improvement for pupils because they have the capacity and can control the culture and conditions to make this happen.
1. **The goal is for every teacher in every classroom to be as good as they can be in *what* they teach (the curriculum) and *how* they teach (pedagogy)**

The curriculum is fundamentally important. How to teach (pedagogy) follows on from what to teach (the curriculum). Not the other way around.

We believe the strongest school improvement lever we have is the curriculum. Our [Aligned Curriculum Offer](#) is built around:

- Clarity about knowledge content selected - what it is and why it is there?
- Organised by subject domain because this is the best for learning and progress.
- Understanding that skill is the practised and fluent application of knowledge - skills are not acquired 'naturally' in the absence of knowledge.
- The importance of sequencing - foundational knowledge is given special attention so that there is sufficient knowledge for the next stage of learning.
- What we teach is inherently interesting so that learning is the primary motivator.
- Clarity about purpose of tasks and activities; to practise and embed new knowledge in long term memory, enabling knowledge to be integrated and applied with increasing fluency and independence.
- The curriculum is the progression model - progress in learning does not happen outside of a carefully sequenced curriculum.

**2. For this to happen, we need to mobilise for every teacher the best evidence from research.**

What good research evidence tells us makes effective practice, must govern how we train and develop teachers. The evidence is closer than it has ever been to a consensus on this and our [Professional Growth Model](#) and [Career Pathways](#) has reshaped our training and development to align with the best evidence at every stage, from initial training to advanced leadership.

**3. There is no sustainable improvement for pupils without improvement in teaching, and no improvement in teaching without the best professional development for teachers.**

Professional development is both overlooked and misunderstood. We have believed that PD is the same as INSET days or days out of school. Research shows that teachers experience significant difficulty in converting theory, even when grounded in evidence, into practice in their classrooms.

What counts for PD is crucial. Simply introducing some programmes and hoping teachers will develop expertise will not work.

PD should be measured by how it improves teaching and should include two important parts. First, it should identify a central problem of practice that it aims to inform, and second, it devises a pedagogy that will help teachers enact new ideas, translating them into the context of their own practice. In other words a strategy for helping teachers enact new ideas within their own ongoing systems of practice.

Our Teaching and Learning Leads within each academy leverage the latest evidence-informed practice from a variety of sources. The evidence-informed toolkit we use to develop pedagogy across the Trust in both whole school development and bespoke professional growth is [Teaching WalkThrus](#).

**4. Strong structures (in groups of schools) can facilitate better professional development and thus better teaching and improvement for pupils because they have the capacity and can control the culture and conditions to make this happen.**

The overriding purpose of our Trust is to create the conditions for teachers to build powerful mental models through deliberate practice of evidence-informed approaches.

The strategic oversight and accountability inherent in the Trust Central Team structure drives evidence-informed school improvement through strong [Teaching & Learning Systems](#) within each academy.

## Appendix 1

<h1>Phase 1</h1> <h1>Stabilise</h1>	Indicative Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KS2 data well below national and/or static</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 4</li> </ul>
Key leadership qualities	Strategic Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective and reassuring leadership which works collaboratively with the MAT</li> <li>• Focusing on urgent priorities</li> <li>• Ensuring team members have the right jobs</li> <li>• High visibility</li> </ul>	<p>Vision of MAT communicated at all levels. To be repeated at all opportunities.</p> <p><b>Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision of MAT used to direct activity</li> <li>• Set up emergency task force to augment the existing Governing Body or act as a local governing body</li> <li>• Deliberately kept to a small number of highly effective and experienced Governors who will hold the Academy to account and accurately report progress being made to the MAT</li> <li>• Audit existing governing body to identify strengths to support in the transition and to identify training needs and skills deficiency</li> <li>• Oversight of finances shared with governance</li> <li>• Regular reporting to MAT on progress against MAT set objectives</li> <li>• MAT works with the Head Teacher to set vision, deploy staff, that have responsibility for finances, HR, PM targets and sets the School Improvement Plan alongside the MAT Central Improvement Team</li> </ul> <p><b>Financial and Legal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit of legal requirements</li> <li>• Audit of budgets</li> <li>• Safeguarding audit and training</li> <li>• Security of school site</li> <li>• Website – to meet legal requirements and communicate vision</li> <li>• Staffing structure</li> <li>• TUPE of all staff to MAT</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a suitable Leadership Team (Skills audit). This may include re-structuring to deploy expertise.</li> <li>• Write SDP</li> <li>• Identity, branding</li> <li>• Establish marketing strategy</li> <li>• Commence strategy to engage community</li> <li>• Data scrutiny (on entry, EYFS FSP, phonics Y1 and 2, on-going in house, KS1 and KS2 attainment and progress, attendance) and areas for improvement identified</li> <li>• Update policies in line with MAT guidelines and policies</li> </ul>

<h1>Phase 1 Stabilise</h1>	<p>Indicative Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KS2 data well below national and/or static</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 4</li> </ul>
<p>Key leadership qualities</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>
	<p><b>Teaching and Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate audit of Y6 – current standards, likely outcomes at end of year, intervention begins on day one</li> <li>• Audit of curriculum coverage, pitch and expectation (including in house data and level of progress through data and work scrutiny)</li> <li>• Maths and English focus – schemes implemented immediately where necessary and non-negotiables established</li> <li>• Outline minimum expectations and learning routines (e.g. guided reading, phonics, reading, writing, mathematics, etc.)</li> <li>• Audit of Teaching and Learning strengths across all Key Stages. Report on disparities between strongest and weakest areas - Audit uses external and internal data. (Use the strengths to take the Academy into stage 2)</li> <li>• Adopt MAT wide Teaching and Learning Strategy where common schemes of work and subject expertise is maximised across the Trust</li> </ul> <p><b>Behaviour and Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If attendance and behaviour are priority areas, then MAT strategies need to be employed rapidly.</li> <li>• Establish Behaviour Strategy suitable for the school (in line with MAT policy). To be communicated to parents, staff and pupils</li> <li>• Adopt MAT wide policy for behaviour adapting to local circumstances only where centrally agreed</li> <li>• Use facilitates across the MAT to deal positively with most challenging pupils</li> <li>• Ensure those pupils who are unable to access mainstream education are educated in a setting that meets their needs</li> <li>• Ensure SEND pupils are identified, their needs are met and a strategy for further SEND development written</li> <li>• E-Safety strategy and training for staff, pupils and parents implemented</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open evening for Q and A</li> <li>• Press release</li> </ul>

<h1>Phase 2 Repair</h1>	<p>Indicative Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Either progress or attainment not yet good or in line with national</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 3</li> </ul>
<p>Key leadership qualities</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding early improvements</li> <li>• Building a medium term plan</li> <li>• MAT support retaining visibility, but increasing focus on quality assurance</li> <li>• Local leadership is in place, identified and being trained</li> <li>• Middle leaders are being trained and held robustly to account</li> <li>• Professional Development/Learning is delivered centrally</li> <li>• ECTs able to be placed at school</li> <li>• Heavy use of MAT team to retain improvements in T&amp;L</li> </ul>	<p>Vision of MAT communicated at all levels. To be repeated at all opportunities including consistent MAT language.</p> <p><b>Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a wider Local Governing Body (LGB) model to include more local representation</li> <li>• Develop a new vision in collaboration with MAT Trustees</li> <li>• Governance audit to establish strengths of new Governors and to provide them with mandatory training</li> <li>• On-going training package given to LGB in the MAT as part of their role.</li> <li>• Review level of 'delegation' versus central control</li> </ul> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT Trustees can devolve financial control if values for money measures are met.</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further focus on English and mathematics with more emphasis now on the wider curriculum being balanced and broad - extensive audit of the curriculum to be scrutinised including assessment and MAT reporting calendar. The audit must include scrutiny of suitability for different groups (e.g. SEND, AMA and PP)</li> <li>• Instructional Coaching Model introduced and weekly meets on Evidence-informed Practice</li> <li>• Leadership team take more responsibility for strategy, standards and teaching and learning with Central Improvement Team now involved in a strategic overview and coaching of senior/middle team</li> <li>• Appraisal targets still set at MAT level and monitored by Central Improvement Team</li> <li>• School development plans monitored at least termly by SLT line management</li> <li>• Short term wins needed during this stage. Including the identification of pupils who can make the biggest difference to outcomes e.g. personalised learning plan for the top 25% of pupils that will make the most difference to outcomes. SLT to be monitoring and supporting the progress of this group.</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching and Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum focus – Schemes of learning now showing correct pitch, expectation and progression and greater consistency across the school. (Subject experts training up local leaders)</li> <li>• Introduction/audit of Evidence-informed PD strategy</li> <li>• Support programme for teaching and learning, where necessary</li> <li>• Cross MAT and collaborative moderation</li> <li>• Excellent teachers identified in the Academy to support in the school improvement and develop Academy teaching practice of the wider teaching body</li> </ul>

<h1>Phase 2 Repair</h1>	<h2>Success Criteria – Indicative Measures</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Either progress or attainment not yet good or in line with national</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 3</li> </ul>
<p>Key leadership qualities</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>
	<p><b>Behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If attendance remains a priority, targets to be brought in line with MAT wide expectations</li> <li>• Embed behaviour systems and ensure consistency</li> <li>• Support programmes for behaviour management</li> <li>• Strategies now in place for all pupils who need additional support</li> <li>• Parent support programmes in place</li> <li>• All SEND/ Behavioural needs audited. Where necessary, bids put in for financial support and staffing appointments made.</li> <li>• Establish pupil voice</li> <li>• Behaviour policy being consistently applied across the academy</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve parental interaction (e.g. newsletters, open evenings, open days, surgeries etc.)</li> <li>• Parent information evenings</li> <li>• Establish staff wellbeing committee</li> <li>• Standardised system to report pupil progress to parents</li> </ul>

Phase 3 Improve	Indicative Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress and attainment in line with national or above</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 2</li> </ul>
Key leadership qualities	Strategic Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating vision and ambition for success</li> <li>• Shifting from management to leadership</li> <li>• Developing a long term strategy for improvement</li> </ul>	<p>Vision of MAT communicated at all levels. To be repeated at all opportunities.</p> <p><b>Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGB clearly articulate vision and priorities of the Academy</li> <li>• Fully functioning LGB including parents and staff members</li> <li>• LGB sets improvement targets and holds the leadership team to account reporting on a regular basis to MAT Board</li> <li>• All finances now run by Academy</li> <li>• LGB identifies areas of effective practice and has a positive view to contributing these to MAT's work</li> <li>• LGB looking to build succession planning into their SDP</li> </ul> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial autonomy within the constraints of the MAT set budgetary limits</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build capacity to improve further through specialised Professional Learning pathways including Professional Qualifications</li> <li>• Underachieving pupils identified (in all years) and provision in place</li> <li>• Plan for external courses and dissemination</li> <li>• Working groups established to address specific academy needs</li> <li>• Instructional Coaching Model established including weekly meets on Evidence-informed Practice</li> <li>• Succession planning now in place</li> <li>• Full participant in peer to peer review process</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching and Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent and effective use of Evidence-informed pedagogy</li> <li>• Consistent and effective use of mastery approach to maths and English</li> <li>• Embedded teacher routines</li> <li>• Use of Expert Teachers to model and further embed good practice</li> <li>• Use of UPS teachers to model and further embed good practice</li> <li>• Teacher collaboration to model, moderate and further embed good practice</li> <li>• Established instructional coaching programme driven by Teaching &amp; Learning Leads</li> </ul>

<p>Phase 3 Improve</p>	<p>Success Criteria – Indicative Measures (<i>Primary</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress and attainment in line with national or above</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 2</li> </ul>
<p>Key leadership qualities</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>
	<p><b>Behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies in place to maintain excellent attendance and rapid response for pupils below the threshold</li> <li>• Enhanced enrichment programme for all pupils</li> <li>• SMSC and Fundamental British Values embedded</li> <li>• Further develop pupil voice</li> <li>• Effective transition support</li> <li>• Participate in Healthy Schools and other initiatives such as Rights Respecting, Quality Inclusion, etc.</li> <li>• Excellent behaviour supporting positive attitudes to learning across the academy</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent information evenings</li> </ul>

Phase 4 Sustain	Indicative Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress and attainment consistently above national (Top 15%)</li> <li>• Ofsted Grade 1</li> </ul>
Key leadership qualities	Strategic Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing excellence</li> <li>• Looking to lead collaboration</li> <li>• Developing leaders across the Trust</li> <li>• Lead school for teaching and learning, behaviour</li> <li>• Training provision for trust</li> <li>• Developing local and national profile of the Trust</li> <li>• Award winning</li> <li>• Contributing to national educational debates</li> <li>• Winning pilot projects and additional funding</li> <li>• Focus on 3-5 year planning</li> </ul>	<p>Vision of MAT communicated at all levels. To be repeated at all opportunities.</p> <p><b>Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGB holds leaders to account, sets vision, sets SDP priorities with leadership team</li> <li>• MAT Board monitoring function only</li> <li>• LGB see their positive role and contribution to the MAT's work as a whole</li> </ul> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial autonomy within the constraints of the Scheme of Delegation and budgets setting process</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systems are in place to ensure that the vast majority of pupils' progress is on track across all years</li> <li>• Aspirational curriculum</li> <li>• Challenging PM targets set and robustly monitored and assessed</li> <li>• Lead collaborative projects that lead to publication e.g. Action Research and nationally funded projects</li> <li>• Trains other leadership teams across MAT</li> <li>• Sit on external boards/strategy groups e.g. NCETM/ITT</li> <li>• Share good practice locally and nationally</li> <li>• Strategic 5 year plan based on SWOT analysis</li> <li>• Pupils take active role in whole school leadership</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching and Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment strategy is designed to be timely, curriculum led and provides incisive feedback</li> <li>• Further developments in teaching and learning promote love of learning and independence learning</li> <li>• Constant review of up to date and innovative evidence-informed teaching practice</li> <li>• Share excellent practice wider than the MAT</li> </ul> <p><b>Behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastoral care focused primarily on promoting proactive learning behaviours including resilience</li> <li>• Pupils behaviour for learning fully embedded</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT marketing strategy used to communicate excellent practice</li> </ul>