



# EXETER LEARNING ACADEMY TRUST

## School Improvement 2021-2022

Within the Trust we have a number of staff with school improvement expertise in a range of fields. We also have staff with strong potential who are keen to develop their experience and expertise within this field. It is important that schools are supported in their school improvement journey but also that they are challenged and held to account to ensure that our children across the Trust achieve the best possible outcomes. Following a year of disruption within our education system, the mission to close the gap in learning for our children is even more urgent.

The school improvement strategy begins with school leadership teams working with the CEO to identify areas of priority based on data, monitoring and quality assurance, the appraisal process and feedback from pupils, parents and governors and developing their school development plans (SDP). The quality of the teacher has a significant impact on the outcomes of pupils, especially our disadvantaged learners and therefore all proposed strategies should consider two main points:

1. How will this improve outcomes for our disadvantaged learners (the bottom 20%)?
2. How will this improve the quality of education within our school?

The ELAT School Improvement Team (SIT) will consist of current school leaders and associates from within our staff workforce. There is an annual cycle of school improvement activities that all leaders are required to follow as activities of the ELAT SIT will often link to these. The following school improvement process will take place as a minimum for all schools. Where a school is causing greater concern, additional meetings with the CEO or interventions from the SIT will be planned.

### School Improvement Meetings

These meetings will take place termly with the CEO. In the Autumn Term the school link Trustee will attend along with the Chair of the LGB. Questions will be sent in advance to school leaders to support their preparation and also to enable them to invite others from the school leadership team to the meeting if they wish.

## **Pupil Progress Meetings**

These meetings take place termly between the CEO or member of the SIT and the Headteacher. They will focus on the levels of attainment for all pupils and the progress of disadvantaged learners in addressing their gaps in learning. These meetings will be timetabled to follow in school PPMs.

## **Peer reviews**

Each school will have an annual peer review. The purpose of the peer review is to enable leaders to quality assure their evaluations and provide insights into areas of school improvement that are successful or at risk of not having impact on the outcomes for the children. It also provides additional school improvement development for senior and middle leaders involved in the process.

The lines of enquiry will be decided by the school leadership team and the SIT and will always focus on the quality of provision for the bottom 20% of pupils, supporting our mission to improve outcomes for disadvantaged learners. The peer review will follow the agreed protocol for how we work detailed in appendix a. A formal report will be produced, and a summary meeting held with the chair of the local governing body (LGB) to support their monitoring role. Additional reviews can take place where there is need. Peer reviews will be followed up with a meeting with the CEO approx. 6 weeks later to review the impact of the review and the school's response.

## **External reviews**

External reviews will take place every 2 years ideally using either experts from other Trusts within the region or external consultants. These reviews will ensure that the Trust Board and Local Governors have an additional source of evidence from beyond the Trust to ensure the work of the SIT is having impact. It will provide school leaders with external quality assurance of their self-evaluation and the actions they are taking to bring about improvements.

## **Appraisal**

Quality appraisal processes are essential to school improvement to ensure staff are able to improve and progress professionally. The appraisal handbook supports appraisers in setting appropriate targets and monitoring progress across the year.

## **Incremental Coaching**

The quality of the education in the classroom will always be reliant on the quality of the teacher. Teaching is a complex and skilled profession and in order to continue to improve and progress teachers need to continue to engage in research and self-evaluation. Within ELAT our culture is to 'always strive to get better' and we believe that coaching improves teaching. We want teachers to take risks without fear of judgement and to be able to engage in professional discussions about their practice. All schools will have trained coaches and all teachers will be coached for at least half a term each academic year. Each year, we will continue to train staff in coaching techniques, increasing the capacity for coaching year on year.

## **The ELAT School Improvement Team**

All school leaders are members of both the Trust Leadership Team and the School Improvement Team. They have areas of expertise that they are required to develop Trust wide to enhance the education for all children. As a minimum, Headteachers are expected to commit 12 days to the Trust's School Improvement Team. Where there are significant performance or capacity issues within a school, the Headteacher could be asked to direct that time to their own school.





The school improvement team will also have 4 associate members. These roles will normally be in place for one academic year and candidates will need to apply and be interviewed for the post. Associates will need to demonstrate that they either have a strong track record in school improvement or are keen to develop their skills in this area and are up to date with the latest research and evidence. Associates will be expected to support school improvement across the Trust schools in their specialist field. These areas will be determined by the Trust Leadership Team as part of their annual self-evaluation. Associates could be asked to lead or participate in peer reviews, provide CPD, lead a working party across the Trust etc. Associates will be provided with 12 days per academic year to fulfil their role.

We are keen to ensure that we provide our staff with the opportunity to take risks and appreciate that not all strategies will have successful outcomes, but what we learn from these will be important for our future work. The Trust Leadership Team will either mentor or coach the associates (whichever is the most appropriate based on experience and expertise).

<b>ELAT School Improvement Team (SIT)</b>				
<b>Rachel Shaw</b>	<b>Jo Dentith</b>	<b>Alice Purcell</b>	<b>Justin Stone</b>	<b>Sharon Tarr</b>
Disadvantaged learners	Special Educational Needs – teaching and learning	Reading	Safeguarding Inclusion	Incremental Coaching
Teaching and learning	Curriculum Development	Curriculum development	Pupil welfare	School improvement processes and systems
Trust CPD offer				
<b>Associate Members</b>				
	Frankie Radmore Conor Moore	Steve Webber	English Hub	Tessa Fenlon
	EAL – Clear induction process for children. Identify best practise. Making links and audit.	Curriculum enhancement and community links	Development of vocabulary – developing a precise strategy for teaching vocab.	EYFS New Framework

**External Support**

The Trust is keen to continue to build strong links with other Trusts and will look to develop reciprocal models of school improvement support.

The Trust also engages with specialist external advisors, maths and English hubs and the South West Institute of Teaching for expertise and high quality CPD for our staff.

**Putting Evidence to Work**

The work of the School Improvement Team will be informed by the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) “Putting Evidence to Work” research. Associates will need to complete the online course prior to undertaking any school improvement work. This process supports schools in ensuring that their implementation plans are focussed on the area that is likely to have the most positive impact on pupil outcomes.



### Summary of school improvement

School risk analysis	School Improvement Support
<p><b>Low</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Annual school improvement cycle</li> <li>➤ 3 x school improvement meetings</li> <li>➤ 3 x pupil progress meetings</li> <li>➤ 1 x Peer Review</li> <li>➤ CEO visits</li> <li>➤ CEO support with the SDP and summary SEF</li> <li>➤ Appraisal cycle</li> <li>➤ ELAT CPD package including moderation meetings, subject leader meetings, development of coaching and access to online training modules.</li> <li>➤ Support from Associate SIT members.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>All of the above and as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fortnightly meetings with CEO for mentoring, coaching and reviewing progress</li> <li>➤ Additional SIT team capacity</li> <li>➤ Headteacher support</li> </ul>
<p><b>High</b></p>	<p>All of the above and as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Whole school review by SIT to identify priority areas with termly visits to monitor impact</li> <li>➤ Additional Headteacher support from another school within the Trust, at least one day per week</li> <li>➤ Additional funding from TB to support whole school improvement initiatives.</li> <li>➤ Additional coaching for teachers</li> <li>➤ Bespoke training package</li> </ul>

Appendix 1.

## Peer Reviews

### Protocols

- We are focussed on ensuring we support the school in improving outcomes for their pupils, particularly the bottom 20%.
- We will demonstrate the leadership behaviours we expect in others - organisation, empathy, rigour, punctuality, positivity, clarity and determination
- We will be open to challenging conversations
- We will not discuss outcomes in teacher's classrooms or public spaces
- We will positively acknowledge all staff in school
- All school safeguarding protocols will be followed
- All notes taken during the visit will be written onto evidence forms and left with the headteacher.

One week prior to visit head sends out to the team:

- A maximum of 2 areas for the group to monitor/evaluate
- School development plan – key areas to be investigated highlights
- SEF – only areas relating to key objectives

ASP/Most recent school data

8.00am- Headteacher meets the SIT (School Improvement Team) and presents the current picture of the school

8.45 – 9.30 – SIT plans the programme of day

9.30 – 10.30 – First evidence gathering session

10.30 – 11.00 – Coffee break and catch up on what has been observed – review programme and make changes if necessary

11.00 – 12.00 – 2<sup>nd</sup> evidence gathering session

12.00 – 12.30 Lunch

12.30- -1.00 – SIT review meeting

1.00 – 2.00 – Final gathering of evidence (session 3)

2.00 – 3.30 – SIT collaborative evaluation and report writing.

3.30 – 4.30 – Present findings to Headteacher and a Governor and agree key priorities for future visits for governors and school leaders.



Creating our future together

