



Every School a Good School

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

2010



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Brian Duff, Principal, Carnmoney Primary School

Ray Gilbert, North Eastern Education & Library Board

Paul Lawther, Belfast Education & Library Board

Ann Mallon, Vice-Principal, St Paul's High School, Bessbrook

Brian McAuley, C2k

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INTRODUCTION

Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement aims to raise standards and promote equality in all our schools. Its vision is to embed across all schools the characteristics of effective schooling: effective leadership; child-centred provision; high-quality teaching and learning; and a school connected to its community. At the core of the policy is self-evaluation, using performance data and other information, leading to sustained self-improvement. Effective self-evaluation, and the actions that flow from it, should deliver improved educational outcomes and experiences for all pupils. Self-evaluation must be an integral part of the school development planning process with the resulting actions and targets captured in School Development Plans (SDPs).

Article 13(3) of the 1998 Education Order places a duty on Boards of Governors, through the scheme of management, to prepare, and periodically revise, a school development plan. In doing so, Boards of Governors are required to consult the principal and consider any guidance provided by the Department of Education, the Education & Library Boards, and, in the case of Catholic maintained schools, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), and also any inspection findings.

The Department has made regulations setting out the requirements relating to the preparation of school development plans, including the matters to be addressed in an SDP (set out in the Schedule to the regulations), the period a plan is to have effect for, the arrangements for publishing the SDP and the timescale for reviewing SDPs (see Annex A).

Support for school development planning

The Department is providing this guidance under Article 13(3) of the 1998 Order. It signposts relevant paragraphs in the regulations and the Schedule at Annex A (pg 18) for ease of reference. The guidance is intended to support every school in embedding a reflective, inclusive, robust and evidence-based process of self-evaluation, planning and actions to bring about improvement in pupil outcomes. The guidance is supported by the range of existing support materials (some of which are listed in Annex G).

Importantly, schools can also avail of advice, support and professional development to support their self-evaluation, action-planning and target-setting (including feedback on their SDPs) from the Boards and CCMS, and also from RTU and C2k (in advance of the establishment of the Education & Skills Authority). Schools, particularly those in challenging circumstances, are encouraged to avail of this support from the outset.

Purpose of the SDP

The school development plan (SDP) is a strategic plan for improvement. It should bring together, in a clear and simple way, the school's priorities, the main measures it will take to raise standards, the resources dedicated to these and the key outcomes and targets it intends to achieve. It will set out the overall 'roadmap' for the three years ahead, with a focus on the school's key priorities, identified following a process of self-evaluation. It will be evidence based and clearly linked to the school's policies and action plans, but these do not have to be included in the actual SDP document itself. It should be a living document that all members of staff will use as a reference point in evaluating, developing and improving their work. The SDP need not be an extensive document. It is important that the SDP keeps a close focus on pupils, their learning and improving the outcomes they achieve.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors and the principal play a vital role in leading school improvement. It is therefore essential that governors and the principal, the leadership team and all staff demonstrate commitment, engagement and involvement in the development planning process. They should also ensure that effective arrangements are in place to support self-evaluation and action to bring about improvement at all levels in the school. The Board of Governors has a legislative duty to prepare and revise the school development plan. Governors may choose to delegate the preparation of the plan to the Principal. However, **it is the Board of Governors that must formally approve the plan** and in doing so their formal approval should be recorded and dated (e.g. in the minutes of a governors' meeting or on the plan itself). If the Board of Governors prefers to undertake the preparation of the plan, they must consult with the Principal. The Board of Governors must ensure that effective arrangements are in place for monitoring and review and approve formally any subsequent revisions to the plan.

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It is extremely important that the individual/group leading the preparation of the SDP involves teaching and other staff and consults with pupils and parents, and any others involved in the life and work of the school, e.g. other schools, FE colleges, business or statutory and voluntary agencies or community groups providing services in the school (para 7 of the Schedule). It is for schools to determine the most appropriate arrangements for consultation, which is a crucial part of the process and will promote a sense of ownership and collective working towards improvement.

Characteristics of effective school development planning

Inspection evidence has identified the following as strengths in the school development planning process:

The school's leadership and management team demonstrates a strong commitment towards planning for improvement.

- The principal encourages others to undertake a leadership role and supports a culture of self-evaluation, in which there is a sharing of responsibility for monitoring and evaluation from classroom teacher level through to senior management level.
- The school's leadership team gives a high value to the contributions of staff, leading to an increased sense of ownership and greater breadth of commitment to development planning.
- There is appropriate consultation and involvement of others in the SDP process, including governors, pupils and parents.
- Good use is made of self-evaluation support materials and quality indicators, such as those indicated in Together Towards Improvement, along with internal and DE benchmarking data, to help schools to set their own improvement priorities.
- Good use is made of quantitative and qualitative information to inform future planning and support, including information obtained from

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self-evaluation, particularly in relation to peer classroom observations facilitated through PRSD.

- Whole school priorities are identified, including literacy, numeracy and ICT, and successfully integrated into the work of the school.
- Appropriate reference is made to standards, with appropriate baselines and SMART¹ targets for improvement, including targets for literacy and numeracy for the current academic year.
- There is a strong focus on the quality of pupils' learning, with their attainments being central to the development planning process, and the quality and effectiveness of teaching.
- There is an appropriate balance between targets to address barriers to learning and support pupils' health and well-being and to improve their attainments (including in end of Key Stage assessments and public examinations).
- There is a systematic and planned approach through the PRSD process to providing staff development opportunities, which are aligned well to the priorities identified in the SDP.
- There is a well-embedded culture of accountability at all levels within the school.
- There are arrangements for the regular and systematic review and evaluation of progress, as prioritised in the school development plan.

Overview of school development planning process

The following section provides an overview of the self-evaluation and development planning process, summarised in Figure 1. By working their way through this process, and reflecting

¹ SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable yet challenging, Realistic and Time-bound

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openly and honestly on standards and learning experiences, schools should be able to produce a robust plan that, if effectively implemented, will bring about improvement. It is important to point out that there is no single 'best' way or template approach to school development planning; we do not want to be prescriptive; in fact creativity and innovation is encouraged! A range of approaches is already in existence (e.g. the use of Investors in People and the European Foundation for Quality Management Model) and what works well in one school may not fully suit the needs of another. It is therefore for individual schools to determine their approach to self-evaluation and development planning; the key is to ensure that planned actions are effectively implemented and result in improved outcomes for pupils.

Fig 1: The school development planning cycle



Stages in Self-Evaluation and School Development Planning

Stage 1: What is our vision for our school?

The plan should start with a clear statement of the school's ethos and outline its vision, values and mission statement, as appropriate to the context of the school and its pupils, parents and staff (para 1 of the Schedule). This will provide a clear policy direction for

whole-school planning. Evidence shows the positive impact of a strong ethos and a culture of high aspiration and achievement where every pupil is valued, cared for and supported to fulfil their potential. It is therefore important that schools take time to evaluate their ethos by reflecting on what it is understood to be, what it is intended to be, and how it will be given effect to through all areas of school life, from curriculum to child protection and pastoral care. It is important to involve pupils, parents and staff throughout, as a school's ethos should be understood and shared by all those involved with the school and should demonstrate a concern to promote equality, good relations and respect for diversity (see *chapter 5 of Every School a Good School – the Governors' Role*).

Stage 2: How well are we doing?

The stage involves self-evaluation, informed by the effective use of qualitative and quantitative data, to identify strengths and areas for improvement (para 2 of the Schedule).

In considering the matters included in the Schedule (reproduced at Annex A), schools will find it useful to self-evaluate using the characteristics of a good school, and the associated indicators of effective performance, as set out in *Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement* (pgs 13-16 of ESaGS, reproduced at Annex B, pgs 21-22, of this document). The indicators are set out under the headings of:

- Child centred provision.
- Effective leadership.
- High quality teaching and learning.
- A school connected to its community.

At post-primary, schools should conduct their self-evaluation in the context of progress towards meeting the requirements of the Entitlement Framework (EF) and work within the Area Learning Community.

Schools may find it useful to assign 'ratings' or a scale to their self-evaluation conclusions, for example based on the performance indicators and descriptors used by the Education & Training Inspectorate (ETI) (included at Annex C).

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Self-evaluation must be evidence-based and will be informed by the effective use of performance and other data. Data can be qualitative or quantitative.

Qualitative data will include inspection reports relating to the school, input from teachers as reflective professionals and feedback obtained from consultation with pupils, parents, staff and, where appropriate, other agencies and organisations the school may be working with or seeking to work with. Feedback might include perceptions and attitudes towards the school, including views on its perceived strengths and areas for development, and input on specific priorities or policies. Qualitative data may also include pupil reports and records, including transfer reports for pupils newly admitted to the school.

Quantitative data will include data relating to:

- pupil performance and achievement, such as end of key stage assessment outcomes, public examination results, and the outcomes of standardised or diagnostic assessments;
- contextual factors, such as enrolment trends, the proportion of pupils with special or additional educational needs, the socio-economic background of pupils, the number of pupils from Newcomer, Traveller or Forces families etc; and
- at post-primary, data relating to the availability and provision of courses as part of the Entitlement Framework, provided by the EF Online Audit Tool.

Data will be available, or can be collected, within the school and through C2k systems, eSchools, the Department (e.g. in the annual Target-setting and Benchmarking Circular) or the education support bodies.

To avoid the need for repetition and duplication, schools are encouraged to make most effective use of their existing systems, including C2k and eSchools, to maintain and update data, including to keep records of evidence used in self-evaluation and to monitor progress made against the targets included in the SDP.

In stressing the benefits of using data effectively, it is also important to make clear that data is not an end in itself. The focus is on using data to identify areas for improvement and to

inform actions to bring about improvement in teaching, learning and, ultimately, in pupil outcomes.

In analysing data, it may be helpful to consider the following three questions:

1. How well are we doing compared to ourselves, i.e. what are the trends over the last 3 to 5 years?
2. How well are we doing compared to schools in similar circumstances?
3. How well are we doing compared to schools in our Board area and to all other schools? How well are we doing compared to the Board's targets and the Department's overall targets for improving achievement in literacy and numeracy?

Further information and prompts to consider in analysing data are provided at Annex D.

It should not normally be necessary to conduct a full self-evaluation of provision every year – in most cases it will be sufficient to update performance information and review and update actions set out in the plan. However, a full self-evaluation should be undertaken at least once every 3 years as part of the process of revising the school development plan.

Stage 3: What more do we want to achieve in 1 to 3 years?

The next stage is to determine a few (e.g. 2 to 4) key whole-school priorities for the 3 years ahead. The Board of Governors, principal and staff should work together to determine the areas where current levels of performance need to be maintained, and those areas to be given priority for development or improvement. Schools should take care to set a manageable number of priorities for improvement and not attempt to take forward too many major developments concurrently.

Each school will set its priorities for improvement based on the outcomes of its self-evaluation, through which the school will have identified its strengths and areas for improvement. In setting priorities, schools should take account of:

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- The progress made on previous targets set in the SDP (see para 4 of the Schedule).
- The priorities for education set by the Minister, in particular the policy for school improvement, and the Department's PSA and long term targets (see Annex E).
- Any needs and priorities identified on a local area basis, including the provision of extended services and, at post-primary, the delivery of the Entitlement Framework and associated area learning community plans.
- The school's financial position, including its current and future legal and contractual commitments, to ensure the school remains within budget (para 3 of the Schedule).
- The context in which the school is working, including the challenges and opportunities it faces, such as those arising from changing demography or new policy developments (para 5 of the Schedule).
- Any generic recommendations or areas for improvement identified in the Chief Inspector's report or in ETI thematic or survey reports.

Schools are also encouraged to consider how they might promote the principles of sustainable development in setting their priorities (see Annex G).

Stage 4: What must we do to make it happen?

The next stage is to develop a strategic plan setting out the actions that will be taken to achieve the identified priorities (para 8 of the Schedule). The SDP will set out the high-level actions and will be supported by detailed policies and action plans, e.g. for specific departments, for specific areas of the curriculum or for specific aspects of provision for pupils (e.g. SEN & Inclusion, pupil health and well-being, extended schools planning etc). It might be developed in collaboration with other schools and external agencies (including statutory, voluntary and community groups) and, at post-primary, should align to the area learning community plan.

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The SDP is required to cover a 3-year period, on a rolling basis (regulation 5). Therefore actions will be most detailed for year 1 of the plan, with targets, timescales and responsibilities recorded. For years 2 and 3, action planning will be higher level, focusing on targets and actions to be taken forward. While SDPs will be kept under review throughout the year, at the end of the 1st and 2nd years, the plan should be reviewed in light of progress made, the availability of resources and developments to DE policy, and updated with more detailed actions for the subsequent year. At the end of the 3rd year, the school is required to revise the SDP.

The action plan should include:

1. Planned outcomes for improvement in quality of learning and teaching and in the standards attained by pupils.
2. SMART targets for raising standards of attainment, particularly in communication, using mathematics and using ICT. Targets should align with the Department's PSA and long term targets for improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy (see Annex E) and should be set in line with the requirements of the target-setting regulations² and the annual target-setting and benchmarking circular (see Annex F).
3. Actions to be taken to bring about improvement, along with timescales for completion.
4. The member(s) of staff assigned with lead responsibility for each action.
5. The financial and other resources to be used in support of each action.
Resources include:
 - (a) Financial – the identification of anticipated costs and the planned use of the school's LMS budget (including, where appropriate, the use of Targeting Social Needs (TSN) funds distributed through the Common Funding Formula for the Local Management of Schools), and other funding streams, which should then inform the annual budget-setting

2 The 1998 Education (Target-Setting in Schools) Regulations

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process. The plan should cover the incoming financial year in detail, with indicative resource planning for the following two years (with advice on the required level of detail from the relevant Funding Authority). Plans should be consistent with the financial resources available to the school and be based on realistic assumptions as regards projected pupil numbers and income, together with reasonable estimates of costs on key areas of expenditure.

- (b) Human – costing of staff (teaching and non-teaching) time involved, the potential to provide Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time for teachers, and provision for the professional development needs of staff, including provision for substitute cover and the planned allocation of Baker days and School Development Days. It is important that the SDP links closely to the school's arrangements for Performance Review & Staff Development (PRSD).
- (c) Any resources available through links with schools and other organisations.
- (d) Other resources – materials, equipment, ICT, accommodation, school facilities and internal and external environment.

Clear success criteria against which intended improvements can be evaluated and which focus on improved experiences and outcomes for pupils.

Agreed strategies by which the Board of Governors, in consultation with principal, will regularly monitor, review and evaluate progress.

A template is provided at Annex I, which schools may use to draw up their action plan, if they so wish, and can of course adapt to suit their own needs.

Stage 5: Take action and review progress

It is crucial that, once approved, appropriate attention is given to ensure that the SDP is implemented effectively and efficiently, with the commitment of staff sustained and the planned resources made available.

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The Board of Governors and the principal should also put in place arrangements to regularly monitor and review progress against actions, and to resolve any difficulties or slippages in actions, and to monitor and review how resources are being used in support of actions (including the use of TSN funds). This will include an annual review of progress made against the targets set out in the SDP (regulation 7). Schools can also avail of monthly LMS Budget and Expenditure Reports to monitor expenditure against budget.

Schools should evaluate, with evidence, the effectiveness of actions upon completion, focusing on outcomes achieved for and by pupils. In doing so, schools may wish to consider a 'value-added' approach to assess how effective it has been in raising standards for pupils during their time at the school.

Communicating the School Development Plan (Regulation 6)

Once approved, schools are required to provide a copy of the SDP to each member of the Board of Governors, the principal and each member of staff and to send a copy to their Board (and, in the case of Catholic maintained schools, to CCMS). Schools are also required to make a copy available at all reasonable times (free of charge) to anyone who might ask for it..

Schools should also make a copy of the SDP available to parents, for example by publishing the action plan³ on the school website, or by providing a summary of the actions planned in the school's newsletter or other form of existing communication with parents. The support of parents and the community will be an important asset in improving outcomes for pupils. Schools are therefore strongly encouraged to inform parents and their local community about their plans to bring about improvement and the key outcomes they want to achieve – and to find ways to engage them effectively in the improvement process. In considering ways of linking with parents and the community, schools may find it useful to draw on good practice from the Extended Schools programme (see Annex F).

³ *ie the completed template at Annex F.*

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Reporting by Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is also required to publish an annual report on the steps it has taken to discharge its duties during the year⁴. The report has to include, among other things, pupil achievement in end of key stage assessments and public examinations, the steps it has taken to develop links with the community, and a financial statement and report on how the school's budget had been used. Schools in receipt of TSN funds are also required to account for their use of those funds; in doing so, they may find it helpful to use the template provided at Annex H to provide information on how the funds have been deployed to tackle educational underachievement and to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Revising the School Development Plan

Schools are required (regulation 7) to revise the SDP:

- after the end of the 3 year period covered by the SDP; and
- if the school is inspected, no later than 6 months after the inspection report is published.

This involves repeating the process from Stage 1, working through each stage as appropriate.

Inspection

ETI will continue to evaluate and comment upon the quality of school development planning in the course of school inspections.

⁴ Article 125 of the 1989 Education Reform Order and the 2003 Education (School Information and Prospectus) Regulations.

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Annex A

STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2010 No. 395

EDUCATION

**The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern
Ireland) 2010**

Made - - - - - *29th November 2010*

Coming into operation- - - - - *24th January 2011*

The Department of Education, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Articles 13(3) and 90(3) of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998⁽⁵⁾, makes the following Regulations:

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and shall come into operation on 24th January 2011.

Revocation

2.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005⁽⁶⁾ are revoked.

(2) The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 shall continue to apply to school development plans prepared or last revised before 24th January 2011.

Application

3. These Regulations apply to school development plans prepared or revised by the Board of Governors of a grant-aided school, in pursuance of the requirements of the scheme of management for the school under Article 13(1) of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, on or after 24th January 2011.

Matters to be addressed in school development plans

4. The matters to be dealt with in a school development plan are set out in the Schedule.

The period for which a school development plan is to have effect

5. Subject to regulation 7, a school development plan prepared or revised in accordance with these Regulations shall have effect for a period of 3 years beginning with the date on which the preparation or the last revision of the plan was completed by the Board of Governors.

Publication of a school development plan

6. A school development plan shall be published by—

⁽⁵⁾ S.I. 1998/1759 (N.I. 13) to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations
⁽⁶⁾ S.R. 2005 No. 303

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- (a) a copy of the plan being provided to each member of the Board of Governors of the school, to the principal of the school and to each member of the teaching and non-teaching staff of the school;
- (b) a copy of the plan being provided to the Board for the area in which the school is situated and, in the case of Catholic maintained schools, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; and
- (c) a copy of the plan being made available on request at all reasonable times, free of charge, to any person.

Monitoring, review and revision of school development plan

7.—(1) The Board of Governors of a grant-aided school shall monitor and review the progress made during each school year against the school development plan and revise it as they consider necessary.

(2) Without prejudice to paragraph (1), the Board of Governors of a grant-aided school shall revise the school's development plan –

- (a) no later than 3 years beginning with the date on which the preparation or last revision of the plan was completed; and
- (b) following an inspection of a school under Article 102 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986⁽⁷⁾, no later than 6 months from the date on which the report on such an inspection is published by the Department.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Education on 29th November 2010.



Katrina Godfrey
A senior officer of the
Department of Education

⁽⁷⁾ S.I. 1986/594 (N.I. 3); Article 102 was substituted by S.I. 1996/274 (N.I. 1), Article 33, and amended by S.I. 1997/1772 (N.I. 15), Article 25 and Schedule 4.

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SCHEDULE

Regulation 4

MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED IN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

1. A statement and evaluation of the ethos of the school.
2. A summary and evaluation, including through the use of performance and other data, of the school's strategies for—
 - (a) learning, teaching, assessment, and the raising of standards of attainment among all pupils, in particular in communication, using mathematics and using Information and Communications Technologies (ICT);
 - (b) providing for the special, additional or other individual educational needs of pupils;
 - (c) promoting the health and well-being, child protection, attendance, good behaviour and discipline of pupils;
 - (d) providing for the professional development of staff;
 - (e) managing the attendance and promoting the health and well-being of staff;
 - (f) promoting links with the parents of pupils at the school and the local community, including other schools, the business community and voluntary and statutory bodies; and
 - (g) promoting the effective use of ICT, including its use to support learning and teaching, continuing professional development and school leadership and management.
3. An assessment of—
 - (a) the school's current financial position and the use made of its financial and other resources; and
 - (b) the planned use of the school's projected resources during the period covered by the plan in support of actions to bring about improvement in standards.
4. An assessment of the extent to which the school has met its key targets, or the progress that has been made towards these key targets in any school development plan which a school development plan supersedes or revises.
5. An assessment of the challenges and opportunities facing the school.
6. The arrangements made by the Board of Governors to consult and take account of the views of pupils, parents, staff and other persons or bodies in the preparation of the plan.
7. Identification of the areas for development, which shall be informed by the school's self-evaluation and include—
 - (a) the school's key priorities for the period of the plan, based on the Department's priorities for education;
 - (b) planned outcomes, including planned outcomes in learning, teaching and raising standards of attainment, which, in the case of schools other than nursery and special schools, must include targets for raising standards of attainment in communication, using mathematics and using ICT;
 - (c) the actions to be taken to achieve the outcomes mentioned at sub-paragraph (b) and final dates for completion;
 - (d) the financial and other resources available to the school to be used in support of the actions identified at sub-paragraph (c) to achieve the outcomes identified at sub-paragraph (b); and
 - (e) the arrangements for the Board of Governors, in consultation with the principal, to monitor, review and evaluate progress made against the school development plan.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations, which are made under Article 13(3) of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, relate to school development plans in grant-aided schools.

Regulation 2 revokes the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, subject to savings in relation to development plans made or last revised before 1st August 2010.

Regulation 4 and the Schedule set out the matters to be dealt with in a school development plan.

Regulation 5 requires that, subject to regulation 7, a school development plan has effect for a period of three years.

Regulation 6 sets out the arrangements for the publication of a school development plan.

Regulation 7 requires Boards of Governors to annually monitor and review progress made against the school development plan. It also requires a school development plan to be revised after three years or no later than 6 months following the date of publication of a report of an inspection of a school carried out under Article 102 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

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Annex B

**EVERY SCHOOL A GOOD SCHOOL
 - A POLICY FOR SCHOOLS
 IMPROVEMENT: INDICATORS OF
 EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE**

CHARACTERISTIC	INDICATORS
Child-centred provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions on planning, resources, curriculum and pastoral care reflect at all times the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school. • A clear commitment exists to promoting equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity. • A school culture of achievement, improvement and ambition exists – with clear expectations that all pupils can and will achieve to the very best of their ability. • Effective interventions and support are in place to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning. • There is a commitment to involve young people in discussions and decisions on school life that directly affect them and to listen to their views. • A commitment exists to ensuring that all children follow an educational pathway which is appropriate for them in a school or through a collaborative arrangement with another school, further education college or other provider. • The highest standards of pastoral care and child protection are in place. • A commitment exists, through being a healthy school, to supporting healthy children, who are better able to learn and develop.

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CHARACTERISTIC	INDICATORS
High quality teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A broad and relevant curriculum is provided for the pupils, including through the Entitlement Framework for pupils at Key Stage 4 and above.• An emphasis on literacy and numeracy exists across the curriculum.• Teachers are committed and enthusiastic, enjoying a positive relationship with their pupils and with other school-based staff and dedicated to improving learning.• Teachers use adaptable, flexible teaching strategies that respond to the diversity within the classroom.• Assessment and other data is used to effectively inform teaching and learning across the school and in the classroom and to promote improvement.• Rigorous self-evaluation is carried out by teachers and the whole school, using objective data and leading to sustained self-improvement.• Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils.• Education outcomes reflect positively on the school and compare well, when benchmarked measurement is undertaken, against the performance of similar schools.

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CHARACTERISTIC	INDICATORS
Effective leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An effective school development plan is in place, providing clear and realistic targets for improvement based on a sound vision for the school.• Governors understand their responsibilities and provide clear strategic direction as well as support and challenge to the Principal in carrying forward the process of improvement.• School leaders demonstrate a commitment to providing professional development opportunities for staff, particularly teachers, and promote a readiness to share and learn from best practice.• Teachers are given the opportunity to share in the leadership of the school.• The resources at the disposal of the school are managed properly and effectively, with appropriate arrangements in place for financial management; attendance management; and working relationships.• School leaders monitor and evaluate effectively school outcomes, policies, practices and procedures and the School Development Plan itself.

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CHARACTERISTIC	INDICATORS
A school connected to its local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community that it serves.• The school and its teachers are held in respect by parents and the local community who in turn actively support the work of the school.• The school uses its involvement in particular programmes (for example Extended Schools or Specialist Schools) effectively in meeting the needs of the community and nearby schools.• Good relationships and clear channels of communication are in place between the school and the education agencies that support it.• The school works closely with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies whose work impacts on education, especially Health, Social Services, the Public Library Service and, where appropriate, local Neighbourhood Renewal groups.

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PERFORMANCE LEVELS AND DESCRIPTORS USED IN ETI REPORTS

Outstanding

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Very Good

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Good

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational (and pastoral) provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

Satisfactory

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in [standards/learning and teaching/leadership and management] which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively.

Inadequate

In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is inadequate; the areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified significant areas for improvement in [standards/learning and teaching/leadership and management], which need to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of its learners.

Unsatisfactory

In the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this school is unsatisfactory; the areas for improvement significantly outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified major areas for improvement in [standards/learning and teaching/leadership and management] which need to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of its learners.

EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA

Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement emphasises the importance of the effective use of data in informing action to bring about improvement. This will be particularly important in informing self-evaluation and target-setting and facilitating the monitoring of progress. Data is not an end in itself; the focus is on making use of the data to identify areas for improvement and to inform actions to improve outcomes for pupils.

When analysing the available data, it may be helpful to consider the following:

Standards

- How does our present performance compare with the achievement of the school in previous years?
- Is performance in any area(s) of the curriculum significantly lower or higher than in others?
- In looking at pupil performance in any area of the curriculum over time, are there any steady trends, e.g. upward or downward?
- Is the performance of a particular year group or key stage significantly lower or higher compared to their expected achievement or to the performance of the previous cohort(s)?
- Is the performance of a particular class significantly lower or higher compared to another class in the same year group?
- Are some groups of pupils performing better than others? If so, why?

Learning, teaching and intervention strategies

- What systems and practices in our school are influencing our pupils' learning and achievements, positively and negatively?
- What specific strategies appear to be working well and what strategies less well?

Contextual factors influencing pupil achievement

- What factors from outside the school may impact on our pupils?
- What trends do we see in our pupil populations with regards to identified additional or special education needs?
- How do our literacy and numeracy scores correlate with attendance?
- What areas of literacy and numeracy are the most difficult for our pupils?
- How does the performance of boys compare to that of girls across the curriculum?
- Are there significant performance discrepancies among the general population of pupils and pupils who have special or additional educational needs, Newcomers, etc?
- Do we have overlap among sub-groups of our pupils? (For example, how many of our pupils with special education needs receive free school meals? How many of our Newcomer pupils are on our SEN register?)

Comparison with other schools

- How does our performance in literacy and numeracy compare with other schools?
- How does it compare with schools of a similar size?

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- How does it compare with schools in the same Free School Meal band?
- How does our performance in literacy and numeracy compare with the averages for the Board area and for NI?

Tools available to support effective use of data – C2k and eSchools

Schools can access a range of data and report-producing facilities through their C2k SIMS system and through eSchools that will support their school development planning.

The eSchools online data warehouse was introduced to improve access to a range of reliable and accurate data across the education service and to support planning for improvement.

eSchools provides schools with monthly reports containing a range of data that enables them to identify trends in performance and compare themselves with schools in similar circumstances. Schools can then use this data to inform their self evaluation, benchmarking, planning for improvement and monitoring of performance.

eSchools reports have provided contextual data (e.g. enrolment, attendance, FSME, SEN and EAL) that will be useful to schools in their self-evaluation. From September 2010 examinations-based reports will also be available. eSchools is therefore an increasingly important resource for schools and a key tool in promoting the effective use of data across the education service.

A number of case-studies, illustrating how some schools have used data to support their improvement, have been developed and are available via [ESaGS.tv](http://www.esags.tv) and http://www.rtuni.com/conferences/page.php?page_id=14.

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KEY DE POLICIES FOR EDUCATION

The following list sets out the Department's key policies for schools:

Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement.

Statutory curriculum and its assessment arrangements.

Entitlement Framework.

Literacy and numeracy strategy.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

The Way Forward for Special Educational Needs and Inclusion.

Early Years Strategy.

The Review of Irish-medium Education.

Pupil Health and Well-Being.

Child Protection and Pastoral Care.

Professional development of teachers, leaders and school workforce.

Promoting stronger links between schools, families and communities, including through the Extended Schools and Full Service Schools Programmes.

Further information on the range of policies Boards of Governors are required to have in place can be found in *Every School a Good School – a Guide for Governors* (to be made available on the DE website in the 2010/11 school year).

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RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SELF-EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

- DE Circulars on School Development Planning and Target-Setting, including Benchmarking data, available via www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/03-schools_impvt_prog_pg/03-schools_school_improvement_programme-target-setting_pg.htm
- *Every School a Good School – the Governors' Role*, available via www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/5-school-management/79-school_governors_pg/schools_79_governor-roles-and-responsibilities_pg.htm
- ETI Together Towards Improvement – versions for pre-school, primary, post-primary and special schools, available via <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement.htm>
- ETI materials to support self-evaluation at whole-school and subject level, such as the Evaluating and Improving Series, available via <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/document-archive/document-archive-post-primary.htm>
- ETI Support for Self-Evaluation Report, to be made available via www.etini.gov.uk.
- ETI Evaluation of School Development Planning 2007-2008, available via <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-post-primary/surveys-evaluations-post-primary-2009/an-evaluation-of-school-development-planning-2007-2008-post-primary.htm>
- ETI Evaluation of the use of School Development Days 2008-2009, available via <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/surveys-evaluations/surveys-evaluations-post->

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[primary/surveys-evaluations-post-primary-2009/an-evaluation-of-the-use-of-school-development-days-2008-2009-post-primary.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/primary/surveys-evaluations-post-primary-2009/an-evaluation-of-the-use-of-school-development-days-2008-2009-post-primary.htm)

- GTC The Reflective Teacher, available via www.gtcni.org.uk.
- DE Guidance on Entitlement Framework, available via www.deni.gov.uk.
- DE Circular on Extended Schools, available via www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/03-schools_impvt_prog_pg/schools-sch-impvt-extschoolsguidance.htm, guidance and best practice available via www.niesis.org, and ETI's Evaluation of Extended Schools July 2010, available via www.etini.gov.uk/an-evaluation-of-extended-schools-july-2010.pdf.
- DE Circulars on Teacher issues, available via www.deni.gov.uk/index/teachers-pg/81_teachers-payandconditions_pg.htm.
- LMS Budget & Expenditure Reports available via <http://lms.nielb.com/Login.aspx>.
- Further advice, support and guidance materials are available from the Boards and CCMS.
- Information on Investors in People (IIP) is available via www.delni.gov.uk/index/iip-nta/now.htm.
- Information on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model is available via www.efqm.org/en/ and www.cforc.org/.
- Guidance on school development planning provided for schools in the south of Ireland is available via <http://www.sdpi.ie/publications.html>.
- Guidance on strategic and financial planning provided for schools in England is available via <http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/vfm/>.
- Guidance on self-evaluation and planning for improvement provided for schools in Scotland is available via <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/generic/journeytoexcellence>.

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Schools are strongly encouraged, in preparing their school development plan, to address ways in which they might promote sustainable development through the school's teaching and learning, leadership and management and engagement with its community.

Schools are at the forefront of sustainable development – through their core function of delivering high quality and relevant education, they have a central role in equipping our young people with the skills and attitudes they need to sustain our future economic and social development in the medium and longer term. That includes the fundamental skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, as well as the self-confidence and social responsibility that are so important in shaping the entrepreneurs, employers, employees and community representatives of the future.

The most widely known international definition of Sustainable Development is:

"Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."⁸

Sustainable development seeks to improve the quality of people's lives without compromising the life-support system on which we all depend – the earth. It involves thinking differently about how we live and work and is itself sustained by the skills, knowledge, innovation and creativity of citizens.

⁸ *Our Common Future (The Brundtland Report) – Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development, as quoted in Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland: First Steps Towards Sustainability.*

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The Sustainable Development Strategy⁹ points out that it is important for young people to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours needed to live more sustainably through their formal and informal education. This can be achieved through the promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) across the curriculum and through particular curricular areas such as Personal Development & Mutual Understanding/Learning for Life and Work.

However, ESD is more than environmental and citizenship education. The focus is on a concern for people and, in the context of schools, encompasses:

- **Curriculum** – motivating and equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and understanding to make informed and responsible decisions, promote healthy lifestyles and progress to future education and employment;
- **Campus** – the construction and operation of the school's buildings, its internal and external environment (including to support the delivery of the curriculum), and the management of its resources (e.g. waste management, energy efficiency, procurement procedures, fair trade, active travel); and
- **Community links** – addressing the school's relationships with its local community and working in partnership with other schools, colleges, business and voluntary and statutory agencies, and community groups, for example through extended services and the community use of school premises¹⁰.

Schools can therefore provide an exemplar of sustainable development in action, helping to build coherence among a range of school policies and practices for the benefit of children and their families.

Many schools recognise the potential of sustainable development to transform the experiences and outcomes of pupils, whilst improving the environmental performance of the school and contributing to sustainable communities. However, it is recognised that schools are at different stages in promoting ESD and will identify priorities on the basis of their own self-evaluation.

⁹ <http://www.ofmfmni.gov.uk/sustain-develop.pdf>

¹⁰ Article 140 of the 1989 Education Reform Order enables school Governors/trustees and managers to consider making school premises available (when not required by or in connection with the school) for use by members of the community served by the school.

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A range of materials are available to support schools in considering ways in which they might promote sustainable development:

- The Education for Sustainable Development Good Practice Guide, available via <http://www.selbclounagh.org/files/ESD2005.pdf>.
- The ETI report on Effective Practice in Education for Sustainable Development in a Sample of Primary, Post-Primary and Special Schools in Northern Ireland, available via <http://www.etini.gov.uk/>.
- DE Guidance on Community Use of School Premises, to be made available via www.deni.gov.uk.
- DE Guidance on Community Relations, Equality & Diversity Policy, available via www.deni.gov.uk.
- The Equality Commission provides advice and publications to support schools in promoting equality and good relations, available via <http://www.equalityni.org/>, such as Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts - A Strategy to meet our needs for the 21st Century.
- The Sustainable Development Commission produces a range of materials and case studies, available via http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/northern_ireland.php and <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/schools.html>
- Eco-Schools, available via <http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>
- The Environmental Education Forum NI, which has produced a resource guide, available via <http://www.eefni.org.uk/>.
- Resources produced for schools in England, available via <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools/>.
- The Education for Sustainable Development & Global Citizenship website for schools in Wales, available via <http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/english/welcome.asp>.

- Sustainability and Environmental Education exists to enable the education sector to engage with ESD and environmental education, available via <http://www.se-ed.org.uk/>

Resources are also available from a range of charities and interest groups.

ACCOUNTING FOR TARGETING SOCIAL NEED (TSN) FUNDING

Targeting Social Need (TSN) funding is one of the factors within the Local Management of Schools (LMS) Common Funding Formula (CFF) which delegates funding to grant maintained schools. TSN is intended to support schools in addressing:

- the additional costs of educating children from socially deprived backgrounds, regardless of ability, and the particular challenges faced in schools with high proportions of children from such backgrounds; and
- educational underachievement, by recognising the extra support required by pupils performing below the expected level for their age, regardless of social background.

(Note that funding for pupils with special educational needs is separate from TSN funding and is provided within whole school resources and/or specific central support from the relevant funding authority).

It is important that schools evaluate how effectively they use these funds and account for their use. Schools should include specific reference in their plans and reporting procedures, within the School Development Planning process, to demonstrate how they are using their TSN funding and how this aligns with whole school improvement strategies. The 'TSN Accountability' reporting exercise, which was previously completed separately as part of the LMS Outturn reporting process, will now form part of the annual reporting process for every School Development Plan and schools may find it helpful to use the template below in reporting on their use of TSN funding.

ADDRESSING TSN

	USE OF FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR TSN 20xx/xx	£
	Income	
1	Allocated for Educational Attainment	
2	Allocated for Social Deprivation	
	Total	
Use of funds (estimated where necessary) – for example:		
1	Extra staff to:	
	(a) create smaller class sizes	
	(b) provide specialist support for learning needs	
	(c) provide pastoral care and home-school liaison	
2	Staff development programmes linked to TSN	
3	Curriculum materials and equipment for additional educational needs	
4	Other (please specify)	
	Estimated total resources	
	Narrative For example specific actions and associated resources used by the school in addressing the social deprivation and or educational underachievement needs of pupils.	

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TEMPLATE ACTION PLAN

Template Action Plan
 Note: This is provided for guidance purposes; schools can choose to present their action plan in alternative formats if they wish.

SCHOOL:		Ref no:		DATE:		
Priority Areas for Development Identified by Self-evaluation:						
Where are we now? (with reference to priority areas for development noted above and informed by evidence)						
Outcomes	SMART Targets	Timescale	Actions to bring about improvement	Time/materials/staff development including costings	Staff/lead responsibility	Success criteria
Strategies to Monitor and Evaluate:						



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