

Vulnerable Schools Strategy

The Diocesan Education Teams seeks to support schools that are vulnerable. We define vulnerability as follows:

1. Educational Performance and Curriculum Provision

- 1.1 Ofsted and SIAS reports.
- 1.2 Performance results and Value Added data, with trends noted over a number of years.
- 1.3 Assessment of SEN provision and quality at the school.
- 1.4 Analysis of behaviour and attendance data.
- 1.5 Assessment of the quality of curriculum provision.

2. The Safeguarding of Children and Young People

- 2.1 Internal procedures for emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing.
- 2.2 Serious allegations against members of staff.
- 2.3 Poor engagement with the Local Safeguarding Board and its activities.

3. School Leadership and Management

- 3.1 Assessment of the performance of the school leadership and management (evidenced using Ofsted data).
- 3.2 Assessment of the impact of any headship vacancies and/or long term illness in the senior management team.
- 3.3 Inappropriate stress levels indicated by unusual behaviour, general disorganisation or lack of focus.
- 3.4 Withdrawal of attendance at external meetings and training.
- 3.5 Concerns expressed by governors, staff or fellow Headteachers.
- 3.6 Assessment of current improvement plans including clarity of vision.
- 3.7 Quality of engagement with the Diocese.
- 3.8 Ability to appoint and sustain suitable senior leaders.
- 3.9 Capacity to continue to improve.

4. Governance

- 4.1 Consideration of performance of Governing Body.
- 4.2 Vacancies and attendance levels.
- 4.3 Engagement in Governor training.
- 4.4 Relationship between Headteacher and governors.
- 4.5 Availability and content of minutes.

5. Staffing

- 5.1 Assessment of any long term staff vacancies and staff retention difficulties.
- 5.2 Any capability, grievance or disciplinary issues.
- 5.3 Deployment of Reserved Teachers.

6. Geography - location and performance of adjacent Schools

- 6.1 Assessment of the location of the school as compared to the children attending, transport links etc.
- 6.2 Assessment of the distance to adjacent schools, category of adjacent schools (choice and diversity), parental preference for neighbouring schools and their educational performance, size and capacity.

7. School Size

- 7.1 Assessment of the school's size in relation to the local catchment and context.
- 7.2 Assessment of the numbers of pupils in the school's designated area, numbers of eligible pupils attending the school, predicted pupil numbers in the short/medium term (typically falling), plans for future house building and predicted number of births in the local area (typically rising).

8. Buildings and Site Issues

- 8.1 Assessment as to the condition of the buildings.
- 8.2 Assessment of the suitability of the building for their purpose.
- 8.3 Assessment of disabled access issues and other statutory responsibilities.
- 8.4 Assessment of surplus space at the school and potential alternative use.
- 8.5 The care and attention paid to the premises.

9. Finance

- 9.1 Considering the revenue costs at the school against the LA average, but in context of specific circumstances at the school.
- 9.2 Assessment of the school's performance in managing the revenue budget over a number of years in the context of specific circumstances at the school.

10. Parental confidence and relationships in the community

- 10.1 Consider the school's 'standing' in the local community, its popularity and local parental confidence (parental preference and oversubscription)
- 10.2 Views expressed by Parochial Church Council or other local community groups.

11. Response to critical incidents

- 11.1 Substantial damage to building such as fire or flood.
- 11.2 Serious accident to a child.
- 11.3 Substantial attention from national media.

If you have any concerns about your school please contact your Diocesan Education Officer or Governance Officer in the first instance.

Rural Schools offer a significant contribution to the education landscape in this region whilst also facing particular challenges. The National Society (2014) recently published *Working Together: The Future of Rural Church of England Schools* which offers some useful evaluation tools for school leaders and governors.