



Good to Great Schools Policy

Appendix 1 School Self Evaluation

September 2024

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Appendix 1

1.1 School self-evaluation

Effective schools know themselves well. They draw on evidence systematically collected, identify their strengths and frankly discuss their weaknesses. They are prepared to measure themselves against the best standards set by others and are committed to taking effective action to further improve the outcomes for their pupils.

Successful, self-evaluating schools will regularly ask themselves rigorous questions about:

- Academic standards for all pupils
- Effectiveness of curriculum provision, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- The well-being of pupils and staff
- Suitable learning challenges for all and meeting pupils' individual needs
- The identification and removal of barriers to learning and to school improvement
- The quality of education; namely the ambition and intent of the planned curriculum, the quality with which curriculum programmes are delivered and the impact of curriculum programmes on all groups of learners.
- The effectiveness of school leadership at all levels
- The effectiveness of school governance in providing a sense of direction to the school, working as a critical friend and holding the school to account
- Quality assurance and the effectiveness of school systems of data analysis
- The consistency with which school policies are implemented by all staff
- Their ability and readiness to take advantage of opportunities and developments outside the school, including learning from the experiences and success of others

1.2 Key points:

Schools should shape for themselves a process that is clear, fair and transparent.

- It needs to be rigorous, evaluative and based on robust evidence.
- It should be integrated with routine management systems, embedded in school improvement planning, and not be undertaken solely for the purpose of inspection.
- Schools must listen to and use the views of their stakeholders to inform actions.
- The school's recorded summary of its self-evaluation process should be updated at least annually and include information about the impact of its action on learners; assertions and lists of initiatives are unhelpful.

1.3 The acid tests

The process a school employs to identify its strengths and weaknesses is not prescribed. The best schools have simple processes. Whatever approach is taken, the acid tests below should be considered:

- (1) Does the self-evaluation compare how well the school serves all of its learners with the best schools, and the best comparable schools?
- (2) Is the school's self-evaluation based on a good range of telling evidence that includes the views of key groups e.g. staff, pupils, parents?
- (3) Does it involve key people in the school and inform school improvement planning?
- (4) Does it lead to effective action?

1.4 Gauging the capacity for sustained improvement

	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Impact Analysis	Evidence is thorough, secure and comprehensive. It is carefully gathered and systematically examined through a programme of well-defined processes linked to key questions.	Evidenced is robust and well organised: a range of quantitative and qualitative measures is used well to track the performance and experience of individuals and key groups.	The school has an adequate range of evidence. Systems, particularly the use of assessment data, continue to be developed, and checked against benchmarks.	Information from monitoring systems is not very well triangulated or comprehensive. The school has limited evidence demonstrating progress on priorities.
Evidence	Impact analysis is accurate, insightful and sharp. Mitigation of barriers/risks is always strong. Decisions are based on incisive assessment of issues, factors and options.	Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. It identifies the impact of actions. Barriers are truthfully diagnosed and then tackled energetically and determinedly by all areas of the school.	Analysis demonstrates impact but needs further probing to determine more precisely the quality and impact of teaching and the progress made against vision/stated objectives.	Impact analysis does not rigorously or honestly assess performance. It does not reveal the true scale of the problems that the school is facing or identify possible solutions
Managing Improvement	The SEF and School development planning are complementary in setting direction: evaluation always leads to a well thought out agenda for improvement. Plans are well constructed, simply expressed and systematically monitored by senior managers, middle leaders and governors. There is good cohesion between strategies, clear sequencing of actions and precise aspirational success indicators.	Evaluation produces a strong sense of direction. This is translated into clear priorities based on a well thought out and shared agenda for improvement. Plans build on strengths and address any relative weaknesses robustly. All areas adopt ambitious success indicators. There is good alignment between strategies; actions are astutely chosen, well allocated resources and regular reviews of progress.	School evaluation identifies clear priorities. It sets a common sense of direction which focuses on improving outcomes. Planning follows evaluation and analysis but is not evenly applied or targeted in all areas of the school. Some success indicators lack sharpness. Strategies, resources, including the use of external partners, and alliances, are beginning to be harnessed to accelerate improvement.	There are discrete activities to raise attainment but these are not well woven together to reveal a credible overall strategy for improvement. Line management, monitoring and review have limited impact; these do not ensure that policies, systems and procedures are used well and that any underperformance is short lived. Improvement activities are not linked to precise success indicators.

	<p>Leadership is forward thinking. It demonstrates a welcoming disposition to external advice and new ideas. Staff, governors, learners, parents and other stakeholders are very much seen as problem solving participants. They routinely review, benchmark and challenge performance.</p> <p>There is a clear record of managers and governors setting and meeting appropriate targets for school improvement. There is ambition, consistency, maintenance of high quality provision, innovation and/or a relentless drive for improvement. This is reflected in the school's ethos.</p>	<p>Continuous review of performance is established and involves leaders at all levels, governors, learners, parents and others, such as external partners. External advice, support and challenge are positively received and tactically used to maintain high quality and/or further improve effectiveness.</p> <p>There is success and/or improvement in pupil outcomes. Rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation are central to how the school works. They are used to set aspirational targets, promote consistency and drive improvement. This is demonstrated in and supported by the school's ethos.</p>	<p>Leadership is open and ambitious. It is receptive to external advice, support and challenge. The school is still developing the role of leaders and managers at all levels, staff, governors and learners as active participants in evaluating, reviewing and improving the performance of the school.</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation continue to be developed and used by managers and governors to embed ambition. This is being used to develop consistency, improve performance and establish good practice. The school's ethos actively supports its drive for improvement.</p>	<p>Key leaders and governors are defensive when facing criticism. They do not get beyond the headlines to identify cultural or organisational barriers. Leaders find it difficult to judge the effectiveness of colleagues, be insistent and hold them to account for standards and the quality of work.</p> <p>Senior managers are not able to offer authentic leadership that gets others to do what they want. Leaders do not have the ability to take tough stands, set non-negotiables and relentlessly push for improvement. Expectations are modest and do not promote high performance from pupils and staff.</p>
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