

## Lincolnshire County Council - LA response to need

Since September 2016, Lincolnshire County Council has no longer provided a traded service of School Improvement Consultancy to maintained Schools and Academies. The main provider of this activity has, and is set nationally, to come from Teaching Schools and School to School sector support through activities such as peer review and such like. Schools and Academies can choose from the market place of who they would like to use to support them continually improve their outcomes for Lincolnshire children.

The Education Team, based within Lincolnshire County Council, is a focused strategic team being involved on providing the strategic support, challenge and direction where required. In essence, we desktop assess schools that may trigger concerns (using national benchmarks) and we then engage with the School or Academy to provide monitoring and challenge activities to ensure they are taking the appropriate steps to address concerns. This process is managed through the continuum of risk illustrated in the [School Improvement Strategy document 2016-2017](#). The work of Schools and Academies is routinely reviewed to ensure that the level of vulnerability is accurately gauged and appropriate escalation occurs where necessary.

The main link between the Local Authority and Schools/Academies is via Lincolnshire Learning Locality Leads, of which there are currently four with one vacancy who previously been Education Advisers. Each Locality Lead engages directly with relevant maintained schools and makes the same offer to Academies (although Academies do have the right to decline this engagement) and regular reviews the actions taken and provides clear signposting to source of relevant providers against the needs of the Schools. Locality Leads also provide intelligence around district level intelligence and needs so that the Teaching Schools can continue to develop the provision they make and to ensure the connectivity to the correct support at the right time.

The Locality Leads currently work in the following way:

Pat Claxton	North and South Kesteven
Yvonne Shaw	Boston and South Holland
Matthew Spoons	Lincoln City and West Lindsey
Carol Smith	East Lindsey

The activities of support, monitoring and challenge include the following:

- Supporting Head Teacher recruitment in maintained schools in conjunction with the Governing Body and working alongside the LCC Consultant Head Teacher Team
- Monitoring the activities of Governors in maintained schools

- Reviewing School Development Plans and auditing effectiveness/ appropriateness of these of addressing concerns
- Assisting with monitoring activities such as data reviews, auditing of evidence, and compliance
- Ensuring deadlines and actions are delivered in a timely manner to have a positive outcome for learners
- Managing difficult situations through issuing Formal Warning Notices based on performance, standard and/or safety
- Developing connections and relationships between individual Schools, clusters, networks and partnerships in a way that work best for them
- Developing the role and effectiveness of the Teaching School provision by co-ordinating and assisting with applications for funding for School to School Support. (Lincolnshire was very successful this, gaining over £140,000 to support Schools/Academies that we felt were vulnerable in conjunction the Teaching School Alliances).
- Providing strategic advice and guidance to Leaders and Chairs of Governors
- Provide OfSTED advice and guidance through our own School OfSTED Inspectors knowledge training and experiences carrying out inspections regularly
- Providing direct support to maintained School's during an inspection

As a Local Authority, we also maintain lines of communication with the sector in a partnership the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership by maintaining:

- Weekly Safeguarding and News Bulletins for all Schools/Academies
- Running a series of Head Teacher briefings three times a year in each district
- The continuous offer of direct engagement with all establishments to champion outcomes for Lincolnshire Children
- Maintain a Governor Support function providing direct advice and guidance as well as distinct training offer

Currently, we are directly working with 70 Schools and Academies, at a variety of levels and for a number of reasons. For some, it is simply a case of new leadership needing support and there are a small number of cases where we are carefully managing the actions of a Governing Body through Strategy meetings where a multi-disciplinary team provide guidance and agreed actions. So far, our view of Schools has been accurate in the vast majority of cases thus provides assurances that those schools engaged in sector led activity do not necessarily need further support in terms of a traded offer from LCC and/or direct intervention from the Education Team. That said, feedback has been positive around the challenge and monitoring the Locality Leads have provided in those Schools/Academies that are experiencing difficulties.

Moving forward, we are committed to working in a strategic relationship with the Teaching Schools and networks of Schools so that we can focus on specific district matters that impact on standards. For example, specific issues such as English as an Additional Language or Boys underperformance can be supported and challenged through a district level approach of targeted support to impact on Lincolnshire outcomes in comparison with its statistical neighbours, the East Midlands and nationally. A main vehicle for this will be the funding and research opportunities offered by the Kyra Research School, based in Lincoln but funding for research activities across the East Midlands. Consequently, we have to consider ourselves as a key co-ordinator when approaching this activity rather than the direct provider or commissioner of School Improvement activity.

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