



Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith
Education through Regional Working



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Education through Regional Working
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Schools Causing Concern 2017-18

Cynghrair o 6 awdurdod lleol yw ERW a reolir gan gyd-bwyllgor cyfansoddiadol cyfreithiol.

Y nod yw gweithredu strategaeth a chynllun busnes rhanbarthol cytunedig a chefnogi gwelliant ysgolion.

ERW is an alliance of 6 local authorities governed by a legally constituted joint committee.
Its aim is to implement the agreed regional strategy and business plan to support school improvement.

Draft Pending Joint Committee Approval

1.1.1. Schools Causing Concern

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School Causing Concern

For the purposes of this guidance, a “school causing concern” is a school which is:

- Meets one or more of the following grounds for intervention and is subject to a Warning Notice issued under the 2013 Act.
- Not subject to Warning Notice but meets one or more of the grounds for intervention one to six noted below.
- Deemed by Estyn to require significant improvement or require special measures
- one or more of the grounds 1-6 for intervention exist and there is a related risk to the health or safety of any person that calls for urgent intervention (no warning notice is required).

Ground 1: The standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low.

Ground 2: There has been a breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed.

Ground 3: The behaviour of pupils at the school or any action taken by those pupils or their parents is severely prejudicing, or is likely to severely prejudice, the education of any pupils at the school.

Ground 4: The safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by a breakdown of discipline or otherwise).

Ground 5: The governing body or head teacher has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a duty under the Education Acts.

Ground 6: The governing body or head teacher has acted, or is proposing to act unreasonably in the exercise of any of its or his or her functions under the Education Acts.

1.2. Ladder of Support

During the Autumn Core Visit, each school in ERW will be engaged in a dialogue with the Challenge Adviser to come to an agreed judgement on capacity to improve (letter) and a support category (colour). Schools in the 4 support categories will have the following characteristics.

Red Support Category
A school in this category may receive up to 25 days of Challenge Adviser time.
The school will automatically receive a letter from the Local Authority where appropriate statutory powers may be invoked.

School support category – Red: Schools causing concern			
Level of support	Level of intervention	Support	Way forward
<p>In addition to the support provided for the other categories:</p> <p>Headteacher and Chair of Governors meet with Education Directorate / Learning Service's SMT and relevant members of the School Improvement Team to discuss performance and improvement.</p> <p>LA intervention to support improvement is confirmed.</p>	<p>Intensive:</p> <p>Two day SCC visit. Recommendations must be included in the SDP</p> <p>The Director of Education or equivalent will consider issuing a warning notice under the provisions of the School Standards and X Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. Only in exceptional circumstances will this not be actioned.</p> <p>Warning notices will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the grounds for intervention; 	<p>25 support days, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the core entitlement; follow-up support, challenge and intervention work which is focussed on improving pupil outcomes, the quality of leadership and/or provision; regular visits, e.g. half termly to monitor action plan and collect evidence to report to the Director of Education or equivalent; and mandatory challenge adviser support days 	<p>The LA will closely monitor to ensure that sufficient progress is being made to bring about a rapid improvement in outcomes, leadership and provision. A key indicator of this will be the urgency and rigour with which the head, SLT and governing body implement actions for improvement.</p> <p>If urgent intervention is required, the local authority can action.</p>

<p>A LA action plan of co-ordinated support is drawn up, detailing the nature and level of support, timetable for action and expected outcomes. The programme will dovetail with the school's own improvement programme.</p> <p>Half-termly evaluation on progress provided to the Director of Education or equivalent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the reasons why the authority is satisfied that the grounds exist; • the action which the governing body is required to take in order to deal with the grounds for intervention; • the period in which the action is to be taken by the governing body ('the compliance period'); and • the action the local authority is minded to take if the governing body does not take the required action. <p>All schools causing concern will be required to receive additional days from challenge advisers to support and accelerate improvement.</p> <p>Where it is deemed necessary further specific leadership support will be considered on a case by case basis. This is likely to include an accelerated improvement board.</p>		<p>Intervention may include:</p> <p>Requirement to secure advice or collaborate</p> <p>The appointment of additional governors</p> <p>The appointment of an IEB – a specially constituted governing body which replaces a school's existing governing body.</p> <p>The suspension of delegated authority for the governing body to manage a school's budget</p> <p>Power to give directions and take steps.</p> <p>Failure to secure improvement will result in further intervention processes being applied, including, where necessary, application to Welsh Ministers to direct the federation of a school causing concern or that a school in special measures be closed.</p>
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1.2.1. The role of the 6 Local Authorities within ERW

Providing effective support and challenge plays a key role in addressing low performance, raising standards and improving the quality of education. It is important that ERW and the six local authorities, working in partnership with schools, put in place effective mechanisms for performance monitoring. Such mechanisms have a key role in providing early identification of issues that need to be addressed. ERW Challenge Advisers play a vital role in securing successful interventions and improvements in schools. The main priorities for the Challenge adviser can be summarised as:

- monitoring schools' progress systematically
- identifying at an early stage schools where there may be problems and
- acting quickly to prevent difficulties occurring or escalating by providing effective targeted support and/or intervention.

The focus should be placed on maintaining good and open relationships and collaborating with schools to create the conditions for sustainable success. Annually Erw Challenge Advisers will:

- evaluate the school's performance
- identify priorities for improvement
- plan effective change and
- broker with the school any additional support it may need from capacity within ERW, LA and further afield

Where a school requires additional assistance to improve, the six LAs in ERW are statutory responsible for ensuring that an appropriate support package for the school is developed. Usually the support package will be provided by ERW and the LA. Support brokered by ERW will be tailored to the school's particular requirements and designed to assist it in the areas specifically identified as requiring improvement. Interventions will be based on the principle that 'the level and depth of intervention is in inverse proportion to a school's success and capacity to improve'.

1.3. The use of statutory powers

The six Local Authorities in ERW have powers to intervene where a school is causing concern. The Local Authorities are responsible for managing school improvement through providing support, monitoring, challenge and intervention to the schools. There is an expectation that if intervention is required, the local authority with support from ERW will take that action.

1.3.1. Supporting Schools Causing Concern

Where a school is considered as a School Causing Concern, the local authority at this stage will inform the governing body and the headteacher of its concerns. In such circumstances ERW Challenge Advisers will, in discussion with the school's governing body and senior management team, take prompt and early action to identify areas for improvement and agree appropriate action.

ERW is responsible for working alongside and supporting governing bodies and school management teams in securing ongoing improvements in standards. Particular attention is given to supporting and where necessary, intervening in schools where performance is unacceptably low or where other issues are having an adverse impact on the operation of the school.

When we have concerns about the quality of learning, standards achieved by pupils or leadership and management, prompt action will be taken by ERW. Such concerns may be based on both quantitative and qualitative evidence including analysis of performance data and direct observation of the quality of teaching and pupils' work. As previously outlined, ERW has a clear and robust ladder of support and intervention which trigger specific actions to be undertaken.

As a pre-cursor to the statutory interventions available to the six LAs in ERW, a package of support could be provided to a school causing concern via an **Improvement Panel**.

1.3.2. What is an Improvement Panel?

An **Improvement Panel** is offered as an option to a school that is causing concern. The **Improvement Panel** approach is a non-threatening partnership approach to meeting the development needs of the school.

Following a trigger point in respect of either:

- quality of learning
- standards achieved by pupils
- leadership and management
- governance or financial management

The Local Authority will offer the Governing Body and School Management Team the opportunity to set up an **Improvement Panel**.

1.3.3. Membership of the Improvement Panel

Membership would include school leaders, governors, senior officer/s from the Local Authority/support staff from ERW (Challenge Adviser) and any others whom the governing body feel would be required to provide additional targeted support. It is usually chaired by a LA official.

1.3.4. Principles of an effective Improvement Panel

- **Collaborative relationship with schools-** the relationship with schools is the most important factor in the process. There is consensus that this relationship must be collaborative.
- **Clear roles and responsibilities-** and agreed action plan will give the school and the LA officers, who are working with them, a clear sense of their roles and responsibilities in the process. This means that the school's staff will be aware of the expectations on them, and the implications of failing to meet these expectations.
- **Contact and context-** we believe that the process is heavily dependent on regular contact with, and in-depth knowledge of, the local context.
- **Coordination and communication-** the need for good coordination and communication between the LA, ERW and the school, as well as between LA officials themselves.
- **Creating self-sufficiency, not dependency-** interventions need to be targeted and tapered. This approach means that schools get the support that they need, but will also be trained to be self-sufficient at the same time.
- **Challenging as well as supporting-** Interventions should be challenging as well as supportive. 'Supportive challenge', combined with the partnership model of intervention, will help to build trust and efficacy in the school improvement process.
- **Creating effective leaders by coaching and capacity building-** strengthening school leadership is believed to be a critical element of the process. Securing school improvement therefore often requires capacity building among school leaders and teachers, and LA officials alongside ERW will play a key role in helping school staff to acquire the skills and competencies they require for effective teaching and school management.

How will the **Improvement Panel** be organised/managed?

1. **Contact school-** the LA will notify the Chair of Governors/Headteacher that the school meets one or more of the grounds outlined and that ERW and the LA will be working more closely and intensively with the school to secure the required improvement.

2. **Meeting schedule-**The *Improvement Panel* will meet regularly, usually on a monthly basis at an agreed time accessible to all its members. It will develop and monitor an Action Plan to address the identified issues/concerns.

3. **Prepare flexible and tailored action plan to meet the school's needs-** a school causing concern will be required to have a detailed action plan that will help the school's leadership team identify and address the challenges that the school is facing. (at the end of this document) This plan will be drawn up by the school leadership team and the Chair of Governors in collaboration with ERW and the LA. All records of visits and support provided will be recorded on the ERW central logging system. An impact summary will be required once every term.

4. **Provide additional expertise-** ERW Challenge Advisers will play a key

role in brokering additional support for the school causing concern e.g. another school with specific support, specialist input from Associate School Improvement Officers, ALN support, Governors Training and Financial Support.

5. Support and strengthen school leadership- improvement secured through capacity building of existing headteacher and staff by securing attendance at targeted ERW consortium leadership training or bespoke LA sponsored leadership training

6. Work in collaboration with schools- the relationship is still viewed as a collaboration and a partnership between the LA and the school.

1.3.5. How will progress be monitored?

The **Improvement Panel** will also be responsible for monitoring progress and reporting progress to the full Governing Body, ERW and the LA. This will be done through-

- IP agenda items and reports being delivered in a standing agenda item on full Governing Body meetings
- Reports from the SMT
- Reports from LA officers and ERW Consortium officers such as Challenge Advisers
- Schools visits and progress reports from LA officers
- Annual Analysis of the school's data and National categorisation
- In some cases, a shadow Governing Body standards sub-committee will monitor the work of the Improvement panel

In addition, the LA with ERW support can conduct more formal progress review of the school as and when required

1.3.6. What happens after the Improvement Panel?

Once the work of the IP is finished and the school is functioning as a good school the responsibility for the monitoring of the plans and the school outcomes is taken over by a Governing body sub -committee responsible for pupil outcomes and standards. Most good schools will already have this arrangement in place and have 'shadowed' the work of the IP during its inception.

1.3.7. What if the Improvement Panel approach does not secure improvement?

With both the Improvement Panels and the Management Board if matters are not resolved within an agreed measurable period, the local authority will consider whether it is appropriate to serve the governing body with a 'Warning Notice' as provided under Section 15 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Local Authorities have **statutory powers** of intervention when dealing with schools causing concern. These are included in the guidance document [Schools Causing Concern - Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities 202/2016](#)

A local authority has the power to intervene in a maintained school if:

- The local authority has given a warning notice and the governing body has failed to comply with the authority's satisfaction within the compliance period.
- The school requires significant improvement.
- The school requires special measures.

A local authority can:

- appoint additional governors
- appoint an Interim Executive Board
- suspend the delegated authority of the governing body to manage a school's budget

1.3.8. Categories of Estyn Follow up Activity and Involvement of the Challenge Adviser.

Expectation of Support and Challenge to Schools in Estyn Review

1. It is expected that schools in Estyn Review will be placed in an amber support category and will **not** necessarily meet the grounds for a school causing concern. However, this might depend on the timing of the core inspection.
2. The PIAP is constructed with the Challenge Adviser at the earliest opportunity and should include the following headings as per Estyn guidance:
 1. Actions (must be clear and precise)
 2. Responsibilities
 3. Success criteria (always relating to learner outcomes)
 4. Resources (including the use of Challenge Advisers)
 5. Monitoring (how and by whom)
 6. Milestones (along the 12 to 18-month pathway)

The PIAP should become the main body of the School

Development Plan. The PIAP should be signed by the Chair of the Governing Body.

3. Schools have the clear message that the onus is on them to show that they know themselves better when re-visited. Estyn do not want to see raw evidence but evaluations based on each recommendation. When constructing the PIAP together, in partnership, consideration should be given to the main body of the inspection report and not just the written recommendations. The word

'however' in any report signals the area of improvement.

4. Schools should be made aware of what to expect during monitoring activity right from the outset in order for schools to evaluate evidence along the way. There should be a clear agreement from the outset of when the Challenge Adviser will visit the school to monitor the extent to which the school is evaluating its own progress.
5. The key to this is that schools monitor themselves and evaluate their own progress during the year. By the first Estyn monitoring activity both the Challenge Adviser and the school will have a clear report, against each recommendation, on the level of progress made. Estyn will monitor the school's progress in addressing the recommendations highlighted in the report about 12-18 months after the report's publication. In the first instance, the monitoring activity will take account of documentary evidence, for example the school's evaluation of improvements made since the core inspection and the most recent challenge advisor's report. If there is clear evidence of progress and its impact on improving pupil outcomes through the documentation, Estyn will remove the school from the list of schools requiring Estyn review and no further follow-up activity will take place. If clear progress is not evident at this stage, then, normally, inspectors will visit the school. If clear progress is not evident at this stage, then, normally, inspectors will visit the school.
6. If a monitoring visit takes place, this will be brief (one-and-a-half days in a primary school and two days in a secondary or all-age school). If the evidence provided by the school during the visit shows that clear progress has been made in addressing the recommendations from the core inspection, including early impact of improvements on pupil outcomes, normally inspectors will remove the school from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring. However, if inspectors judge during the visit that insufficient progress has been made, then the school will require further monitoring. As a result, the school may be judged to require significant improvement or special measures and be placed in one of these statutory categories.
7. The regional template for schools in an Estyn review needs to be used when writing the final report. The LA Chief Education Officer will quality assure the report before it is sent to Estyn.

These principles need to be consistently applied across the region.

Expectation for Support and Challenge to Schools Requiring Significant Improvement or Special Measures

1. Schools in special measures normally take 18 months to 24 months to come out of the statutory category. These schools should be challenged to make rapid improvements within 12 months by the challenge adviser and local authority.
2. Schools in need of significant improvement are expected to come out of this statutory category in 12 months, for secondary that can be longer depending on verified data
3. Schools must receive 25 days (including Challenge Adviser and Subject Specialist support) between the date of feedback and the date of re-visit.
4. Leadership and self-evaluation will be the biggest challenges for the schools in statutory categories. Taking inexperienced/ temporary staff on an improvement journey will also be a challenge. Schools in Special Measures need Estyn permission to employ Newly Qualified Teachers.
5. There is a risk that current leadership arrangements will change as a result of the school being placed in a statutory category. The response will need to be factored into the support package.
6. The Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors will be key to driving success forward. Both will need to take real ownership of the school's post inspection action plan as this will immediately become their school development plan.
7. The Cabinet Secretary for Education can ask the LA for an update on progress at the school during the next academic year so clear and precise monitoring is important.
8. The Headteacher should agree to produce a post inspection action plan in draft format before the publication date of the inspection report.
9. The quality of the PIAP is key to the success of the school and this should be thoroughly evaluated by the challenge adviser. Written feedback must be recorded.
10. The Challenge Adviser will **author** the LA action plan and this must be signed off by the Head of Hub.
11. Support will only be brokered through the school's challenge adviser. This will ensure effective co-ordination and onward monitoring. It is the Challenge Adviser's responsibility to monitor all support activity in the school

12. The support plan or LA action plan will support the PIAP and must be shared with stakeholders to ensure that roles and responsibilities of all those involved are clear from the onset. There is a regional template for this (see template at the end of this document)
13. An improvement panel will be convened to meet on a monthly basis. Both Chair and vice chair should attend. Terms of reference will be agreed with the clear aim of securing improvement. The challenge adviser should attend these meetings.
14. The challenge advisers will be responsible for **monitoring progress** in all recommendations and where there is slow progress, matters must be escalated to the Chief Education Officer
15. The school must be allowed space to improve and the time invested in the PIAP/ LA action plan now should reduce over expending resources later on.
16. All stakeholders should know what their role is and have access to all key documents
17. Parents are entitled to know how the school will plan for improvement and this should be communicated in tandem with the release of the report.

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2. **AWDURDOD LLEOL:**

Ysgol sy'n Peri Pryder - School Causing Concern

Datganiad Gweithredu a Chynllunio - Statement of Action and Planning

2016-2017

2.1.1. Ysgol/School:

Pennaeth/Headteacher:

Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr / Chair of Governing Body Ymgynghorydd

Her / Challenge Adviser:

Cyswllt Awdurdod Lleol/Local Authority Contact:

Cyd-destun / Context

Priority 1:

Very Good Progress	Strong Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Limited
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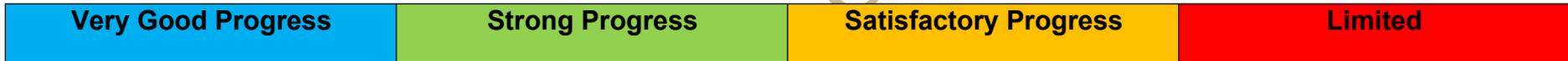
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Annual
Priority 1							

<p>Success Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Priority 1 -				
School Actions (SDP or PIAP)	LA / ERW Support, Monitoring and Intervention	Person Responsible	Key Dates	Outcomes & Progress Commentary
1.1	1.1			
1.2	1.2			
1.3	1.3			
1.4	1.4			

1.5	1.5			
1.6	1.6			
<u>Review and Actions agreed:</u>				<u>Actions Completed:</u>

Priority 2:



	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Annual
Priority 2							

Success Criteria:

-

Priority 2 -				
School Actions (SDP or PIAP)	LA / ERW Support, Monitoring and Intervention	Person Responsible	Key Dates	Outcomes & Progress Commentary
2.1	2.1			
2.2	2.2			
2.3	2.3			
2.4	2.4			
2.5	2.5			
2.6	2.6			
<u>Review and Actions agreed:</u>				<u>Actions Completed:</u>

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Priority 3:

Very Good Progress	Strong Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Limited
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	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Annual
Priority 3							

2.1.2. Success Criteria:

Priority 3 -				
School Actions (SDP or PIAP)	LA / ERW Support, Monitoring and Intervention	Person Responsible	Key Dates	Outcomes & Progress Commentary
3.1	3.1			
3.2	3.2			
3.3	3.3			
3.4	3.4			
3.5	3.5			
3.6	3.6			

Review and Actions agreed:				Actions Completed:
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2.2. Priority 4:

Very Good Progress	Strong Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Limited
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	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Annual
Priority 4							

2.2.1. Success Criteria:

• Priority 4 -				
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School Actions (SDP or PIAP)	LA / ERW Support, Monitoring and Intervention	Person Responsible	Key Dates	Outcomes & Progress Commentary
4.1	4.1			
4.2	4.2			
4.3	4.3			
4.4	4.4			
4.5	4.5			
4.6	4.6			
<u>Review and Actions agreed:</u>				<u>Actions Completed:</u>

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2.3. Priority 5:

Very Good Progress	Strong Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Limited
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	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Annual
Priority 5							

2.3.1. Success Criteria:

Priority 5 -				
School Actions (SDP or PIAP)	LA / ERW Support, Monitoring and Intervention	Person Responsible	Key Dates	Outcomes & Progress Commentary
5.1	5.1			
5.2	5.2			
5.3	5.3			
5.4	5.4			
5.5	5.5			
5.6	5.6			

Review and Actions agreed:				Actions Completed:
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2.4. Priority 6:

Very Good Progress	Strong Progress	Satisfactory Progress	Limited
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	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Annual
Priority 6							

2.4.1. Success Criteria:

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Priority 6 -				
School Actions (SDP or PIAP)	LA / ERW Support, Monitoring and Intervention	Person Responsible	Key Dates	Outcomes & Progress Commentary

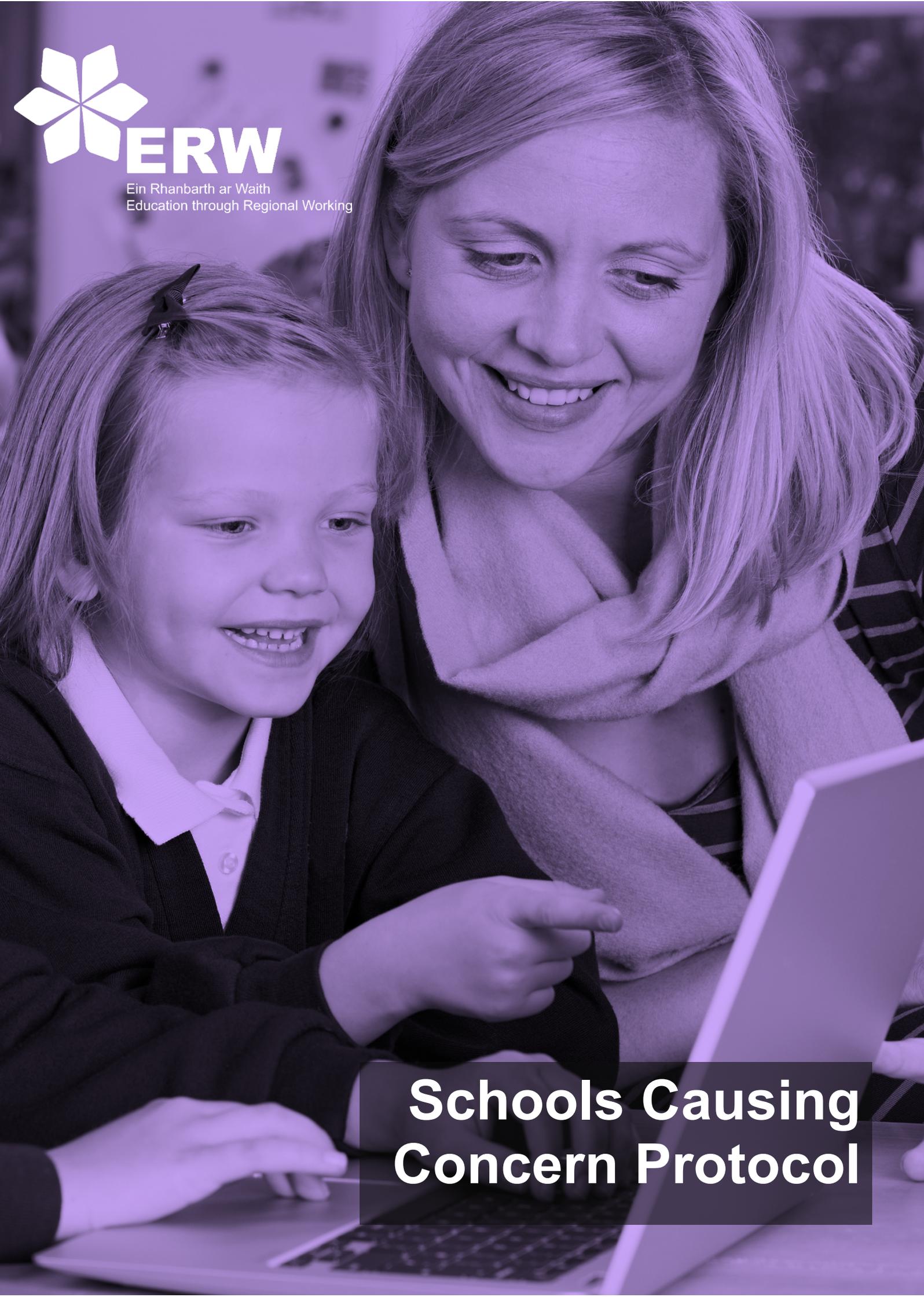
6.1	6.1			
6.2	6.2			
6.3	6.3			
6.4	6.4			
6.5	6.5			
6.6	6.6			
<u>Review and Actions agreed:</u>				<u>Actions Completed:</u>

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ERW

Ein Rhanbarth ar Waith
Education through Regional Working



Schools Causing Concern Protocol

Schools Causing Concern Protocol

ERW has a clear mission of actively working together to improve teaching and learning to secure the best outcomes for all learners. We aim to ensure that none of ERW's schools become schools causing concern at that no schools in ERW require follow up by Estyn. During its monitoring visit to ERW, Estyn noted that progress against recommendation 1: - *“Ensure that school improvement services address the performance of schools causing concern, particularly in the secondary sector,”* was too slow.

Estyn noted that ERW supports improvement in primary schools better than in secondary schools. Estyn also identified that *“the central team has ensured a comprehensive programme of training to support and develop the work of both primary and secondary challenge advisors across the region.”*

However, Estyn identified that the lines of accountability for addressing issues in schools between the central team and the six local authorities was unclear

As a result, ERW proposes that the following early identification and escalation procedures form a clear line of accountability which place clear expectation on all stakeholders to work collaboratively and to take shared responsibility for all schools across the region.

The protocol highlights clear expectation that any areas for improvement in a school are identified very early, and that any initial concerns are escalated at the earliest opportunity so that support and intervention can be mobilised on a regional level. It is therefore expected that the number of schools identified as schools causing concern will be nominal.

The roles of Challenge Advisers, ERW Central Team officers, Directors and elected members are clearly identified throughout the escalation process. The support provided to schools will be bespoke and based on need and the profile of each individual school as highlighted in ERW's School Improvement Strategy.

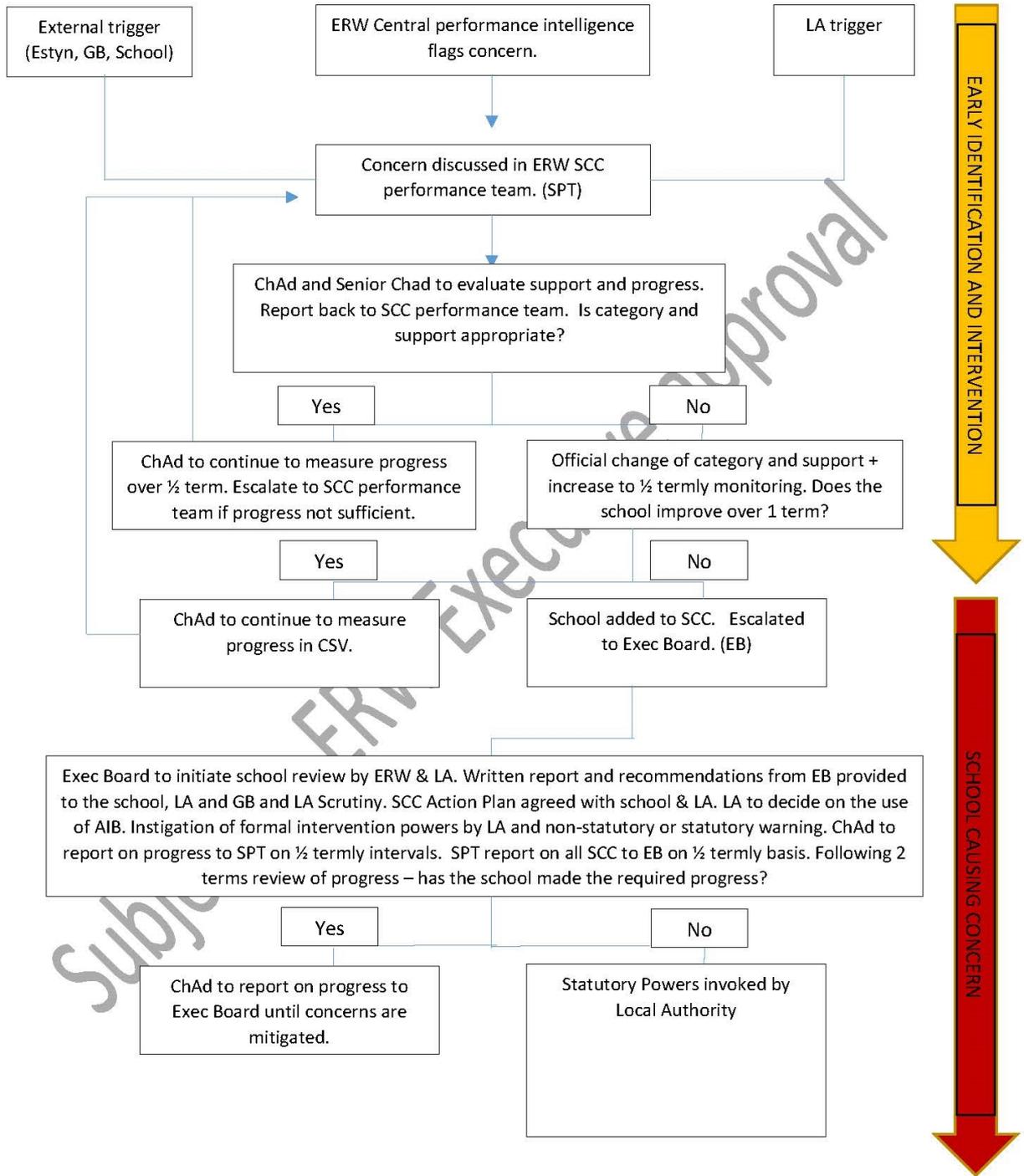
Membership and Terms of Reference (See flow chart on last page)

Group	Membership	Remit
<u>Schools Performance Team (SPT)</u>	Challenge Adviser Senior Challenge Adviser Head of Teaching and Learning Head of Support and Performance Head of Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To meet every ½ and analyse all intelligence available to identify early concerns. 2. To discuss early identification of concerns. 3. To ratify any escalation decisions. 4. To report to Partnership Board
<u>Executive Board or its equivalent.</u>	ERW Managing Director Six Local Authority Directors Chair of Headteacher Board	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To meet every ½ term to receive and deliberate on reports from SPT. 2. To work collectively towards a shared responsibility for all schools causing concern across the region.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. To initiate review of schools causing concerns and to provide recommendations to Governing Bodies.4. To ensure that a robust and focused Action Plan is in place for all schools causing concern.5. To ensure that a consistent approach to statutory powers is implemented across all 6 LAs6. To provide to ERW Joint Committee with update written report on the profile of schools causing concern across the region.
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Protocol for Identifying Concern in Schools and Escalation Procedures



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