School Improvement Policy

> **"I am the vine; you are the branches.**
> **If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit"**
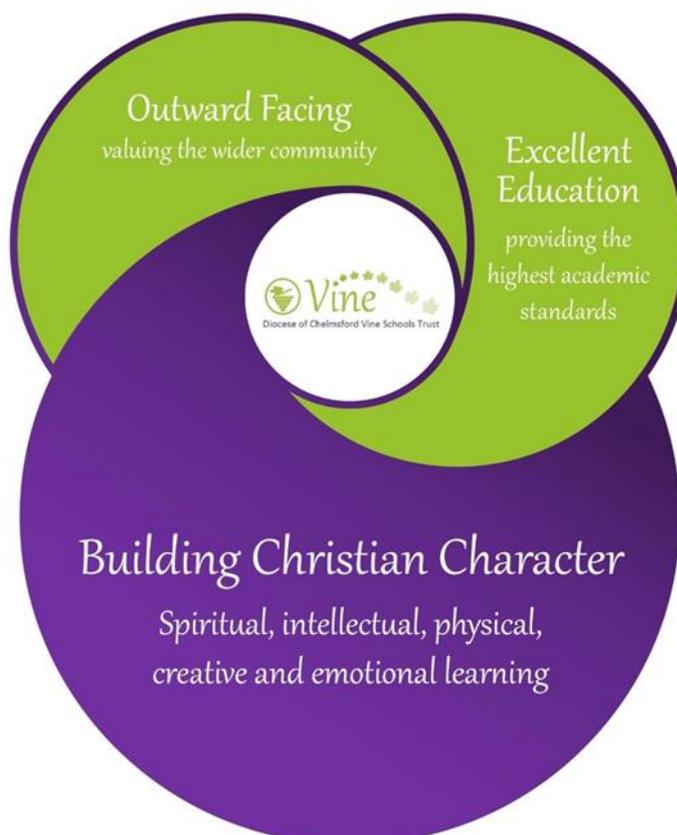> **(John 15:5)**

This is a mandatory policy for all Vine schools that has been noted and implemented with no amendments by this school.

Policy Reference:	A001 V1.7
Approved by Vine Schools Trust on:	Autumn 21
Adopted by this school on:	Autumn 21
Next review:	Autumn 23

Vision & Values

V	**V**aluing every person
I	**I**nspiring great teaching
N	**N**urturing academic excellence and Christian Character
E	**E**xcelling, unlocking great potential

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1. **Introduction**

   This document sets out the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trusts approach to school improvement.

2. **Priorities for school Improvement**

   Development of the Christian character, vision and values of each school as a driver for school improvement through:
   o   Work with diocesan advisers
   o   Sharing expertise within the trust and with schools outside the trust
   o   Supporting RE leaders to deliver a relevant curriculum.

   Provide broad curriculum entitlement that enables pupils to:
   o   Access all national curriculum subjects to a high standard
   o   Develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding
   o   Develop strong learning behaviours
   o   Be fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

   Build Leadership Capacity through:
   o   The recruitment and retention of high-quality leaders
   o   Providing or facilitating training to develop leaders at all levels
   o   Providing robust performance management for all leaders
   o   Supporting senior leaders through coaching and mentoring.
   o   Ensuring that self-evaluation is accurate and informs school improvement planning
   o   Ensuring that school improvement plans are focused on the correct priorities and actions to address priorities are fit for purpose.
   o   Direct support for leaders from school improvement leaders, specialist leaders in education.

   Provide Excellent Governance by:
   o   Providing training and support to governance members to enable them to be effective in delivering their responsibilities.
   o   Through an effective recruitment programme Working to ensure that Local Schools Boards consist of members with the right skill set enabling them to support and challenge the Senior Leadership in their schools
   o   Providing professional clerking to support the Boards, at all levels
   o   Providing opportunities for cross Trust networking/information/communication/ sharing thus ensuring consistency of reporting

   Professional Development will be provided or facilitated to:
   o   Build leadership skills
   o   Develop staff subject knowledge and the understanding of pedagogy.
   o   Coaching leaders to find solutions
   o   Provide access to National Professional Qualifications, or other suitable training opportunities

   Sustainability and effective resource management will be supported through:
   o   Efficient and effective use of resources.
   o   Support to manage finances to build sustainable school improvement.
   o   Provision of a stimulating school environment.

3.   **School Improvement Approach**

Contributing to school improvement is the responsibility of all trust employees, and governors and trustees (central and school). School leaders will prioritise their schools but will also contribute to the

development of other trust schools where they have the expertise and capacity to do so. The central school improvement team will support and challenge school leaders in relation to self-evaluation and school improvement and provide trust wide support through the provision of professional development.

School improvement leaders will work with the director of learning to categorise schools and allocate support which is proportionate to the level of need. Categorisation will be informed by:

- o   School self-evaluation
- o   School improvement priorities
- o   Pupil outcomes including academic achievement, behaviour and attendance
- o   The quality of the curriculum
- o   Inspection findings (Ofsted and SIAMs)
- o   Internal review outcomes
- o   Governance evaluation

Refer to table on next page for details of categorisation and possible responses.

Categorisation			
Risk	**Support**	**Developing**	**Secure**
- The school is failing its pupils in relation to one or a combination of the Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development, Leadership and Management or Early Years - Improvement is too slow. - Safeguarding is not effective. - Christian Character may be a weakness.	- The school needs significant improvement in some key areas. - Trust support is needed to secure and sustain improvement. - Christian character may be a weakness. - Safeguarding is effective.	- Moving towards good (based upon Ofsted Criteria) but improvement is needed in some key areas. - Christian Character is almost fully developed but some improvements are needed. - Safeguarding is effective.	- Likely to be good or better in inspection and able to sustain this position independently. - Can contribute to the support of other schools in the trust. - Christian Character of the school is well developed in all areas. - Safeguarding is effective.

Possible Responses to Categorisation. Note: this table provides examples and other actions may be taken where required.			
Risk	**Support**	**Developing**	**Secure**
- The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will attend a school causing concern meeting with the CEO and members of the school improvement team to agree a response to weaknesses in the school. - A trust improvement board may be formed to replace the local governing body. - School improvement leader time will be increased to provide support for leaders and to ensure that improvement is rapid. - Specialist leader of education time will be allocated to support improvement in the quality of education and curriculum leadership. - The director of learning will monitor the work of school leaders and the central team. - An executive headteacher may be put in place at the school. - Financial control may be centralised. - School reviews will be completed, based upon priorities identified by the SIL or DL - A safeguarding review will be completed.	- The Headteacher, School Improvement Leader and Director of Learning will meet to agree actions for the school. - School improvement leader time will be increased to provide support for leaders and to ensure that improvement is rapid. - Specialist leader of education time will be allocated to support improvement in the quality of education and curriculum leadership. - Support may be provided to governors so that they provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. - The governing body may be supported by the trust governance adviser. - School reviews will be completed, based upon priorities identified by the SIL or DL - A safeguarding review may be completed.	- The school improvement leader and headteacher will agree priorities for improvement and monitor progress against them. - The school improvement leader will support self-evaluation through monitoring and evaluation in school. - The director of learning will monitor progress through school review meetings with the school improvement team. - Half termly school-based meetings will be completed by the school improvement leader and at least one online meeting will be completed each half term. - Specialist leader in education support may be allocated to support school priorities. - School reviews may be completed and, if so, are likely to be linked to school improvement priorities.	- Likely to be good or better in inspection and able to sustain this position independently. - Can contribute to the support of other schools in the trust. - Christian Character of the school is well developed in all areas. - Safeguarding is effective. - Half termly school-based meetings will be completed by the school improvement leader and at least one online meeting will be completed each half term. - Specialist leader in education support may be allocated to support school priorities. - School reviews may be completed and, if so, are likely to be linked to school improvement priorities.

6 | P a g e   Source – DL KP

4.Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher / Executive Headteachers:
o   Are accountable for the education of the pupils in their school. They also have a responsibility to contribute to the improvement of the trust as a whole either personally or through the sharing of effective practice with their trust colleagues.
o   Will complete robust self-evaluation and ensure that weaknesses are addressed through a robust school improvement process.
o   must exemplify the professional standards and create a culture where school improvement can flourish.
o   Will ensure that workload is managed carefully so that staff are focused on meeting the needs of pupils in the school.
o   Will ensure that a curriculum is delivered which is relevant to the needs of pupils and upholds the values of the trust.
o   Promote high achievement in each subject in the curriculum and help underachieving groups to close gaps with all pupils.
o   Will create a culture which promotes exemplary behaviour of the vast majority of pupils and supports those who find it difficult to regulate their behaviour to make improvements.

Director of learning (DL)
o   The DL will provide strategic leadership for school improvement and will line manage the school improvement team. The DL will lead the trust response for schools causing concern and support the delivery of professional development internally and with the trust's partners. The DL will report to the trust board about the quality of education provided by each school.

School Improvement Lead (SIL)
o   SILs will work directly with schools to support school improvement. Their role includes challenge and support. They will provide coaching, guidance, professional development and have a key role in the performance management of the most senior leader in a school.

Specialist Leader in Education (SLE)
o   SLEs will be assigned to schools to support the development of curriculum leadership and to support the improvement of teaching and learning. They will also make a significant contribution to the trust programme of professional development and support school evaluation through their work in schools and through data analysis.

Chair Local Board/Local Schools Board (LB/LSB)
o   The Chair of the LB/LSB has the primary responsibility amongst the local board/local governing body for the provision of support and challenge to the headteacher. They are responsible for ensuring implementation of and compliance with, all delegated functions from the Vine Trust Board.

Vine Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
o   The CEO is appointed by the Vine Trust Board, the Accounting Officer and responsible for the day to day running of the Vine Trust.

Vine Trust Board
o   Although most of the functions of running the academy are delegated to the Headteacher or LB/LGB, the Vine Trust Board have ultimate responsibility and accountability. Therefore, if required they can exercise this responsibility at any time.

Vine Chief Operating Officer (COO)
o   The COO is appointed by the Vine Trust Board, the Chief Financial Officer is accountable for the financial and operational management of the Vine Trust and its Academies. The COO provides strategic financial support to academy senior leadership teams and the LB/LGB including guidance around financial forecasts. The COO is the line manager for the TFM, TSM, TOM, ASO and TPA.

 Vine Governance Lead (VGL)
o   The VGL will support the development of effective governance across the trust.
o   The VGL will provide advisory support to the Directors, CEO and DFO as and when required.

5. What happens when a school joins the Trust
Before a school joins the Vine Trust the directors will carry out an assessment of the school's strengths and development areas. This is called 'Due Diligence'. This is so the Vine Trust is in a position to provide appropriate support as soon as you join and so that the Vine Trust is aware of where your academy can provide support to others.

Due diligence will report on the areas set out in appendix A.

Following the writing of the due diligence report the Headteacher, CEO, COO and Director of Learning and Trust Governance Lead Executive will meet with school leaders to plan for the integration of the school into the trust and to plan support for transition and ongoing school improvement.

6. Professional Development

The central team will provide a range of professional development opportunities to support school improvement. When planning professional development, consideration will be given to trust wide priorities, national developments and priorities and the needs of individual schools.

Professional Development activities may include:
o   Supported moderation
o   Courses (online or in person)
o   Coaching and mentoring
o   Modelling
o   Work with groups of leaders or individuals in schools
o   Access to opportunities outside of the Trust

Appendix A
Due Diligence Planning Meeting - Template

Academic Due Diligence

School	
Headteacher	
Chair of Governors	
Date, Time and Location	
Due Diligence Completed By:	
Evidence Gathered	
General Observations	

Area	RAG Risk Assessment			Comments
	Red	Amber	Green	
Vision and Governance				
Development and Strategic Planning				
Curriculum Development				
Admissions Marketing / Communications strategy				
Safeguarding				
Academic Attainment and Progress				

Valuing Inspiring Nurturing Excelling

Financial Due Diligence

Academy	
Headteacher	
Chair of Governors	
Date, Time and Location	
Due Diligence Completed By:	
Introduction	

Area	RAG Risk Assessment			Comments
	Red	Amber	Green	
General Information				
Finance				
Staffing				
Governance				
Skills Matrix				
Contracts				
Capital				
Related Party Transactions				
Premises				
Other				

Further Actions	