



The school-led system: the developing policy context

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Why RSCs?

The eight Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) came into post in September 2014 and report to the National Schools Commissioner (Sir David Carter)

RSCs take decisions regarding academies on behalf of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State remains responsible for the academy system and will hold RSCs to account for the performance of academies in their region.

RSCs provide expertise and local knowledge for the management of the academy system:

Develop school autonomy.

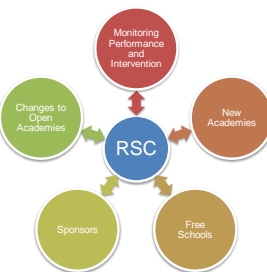
Give system leaders greater influence over the direction of the academies system.

Regional decisions, centrally supported – Supported by their Headteacher Boards, RSCs bring decision-making closer to schools by adding greater local/regional knowledge and context.

Create an evolving system – allowing flexibility for the system to continue to evolve as the number of academies and free schools grow.



What do RSCs do?



- Intervene in failing academies and Free Schools
- Decide on new academies
- Decide on new sponsors
- Build academies / Free School pipeline

So that...

- Better decisions made locally
- More capacity to tackle failure
- More opportunities to share practice
- Better policy made in centre

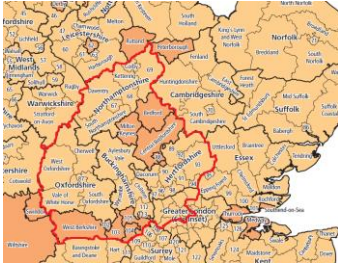
And most importantly....

- Higher standards in system





North West London and South Central region (NWLSC)



- Covers 27 LA areas
- 7 Dioceses
- 379 Primary academies
- 341 Secondary academies
- 114 Sponsors
- 111 Free Schools



Making sense of the accountability landscape

- SATS and MATS are accountable for outcomes in their schools
- OFSTED assesses how well schools perform against schools with same context
- RSC challenge and support those schools not yet good enough
- NCTL provides the pipeline of teachers and leaders and system capacity
- Local authorities oversee SEN, admissions, safeguarding, transport and sufficiency of places



Education and Adoption Act 2016

- Academy Orders**
 - A duty on the SoS* to issue an Academy Order to all inadequate[†] maintained schools
 - A power for the SoS* to revoke an AO, for instance where a schools is found not to be viable
- Duty to Facilitate**
 - A duty on LAs and GBs to facilitate conversion where an AO is or has been issued to a school eligible for intervention. A power for SoS* to direct a LA/GB to take specified steps to facilitate conversion
- Warning Notices**
 - A power for the SoS* to issue Warning Notices to maintained schools (as exists now for LAs).
 - A Schools Causing Concern guidance published on the DfE website.
- Inadequate Academies**
 - A power for the SoS* to terminate even the oldest academy funding agreements of inadequate academies quickly & easily
- Coasting**
 - A power for the SoS* to intervene in coasting schools & academies (will apply once 2016 results are published & coasting provisions have been laid - Dec 16 Primary, Jan 17 secondary)

*And by extension the RSC
[†]Inadequate means Ofsted category 4 (Special Measures or Serious weaknesses)





What is a 'coasting school'?

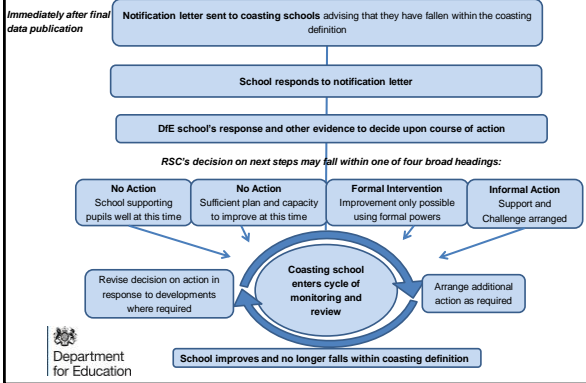
A coasting school is identified when data shows that, over a three year period, the school is failing to ensure that pupils reach their potential. A school will only be coasting if performance data falls below the coasting bar in all three previous years.

Schools will be identified for the first time in December 2016, based on revised 2016 performance data

The coasting definition is not linked to Ofsted judgments



Coasting Process Overview



Where to find more info

- The [Schools Causing Concern guidance](#) is a useful reference material that is published on gov.uk





What to do?



Why do it?

- Be both a giver and receiver of support
- Back office services allow leaders to concentrate on core purpose of their role; Teaching & Learning
- Positive benefits for pupils (wider perspective)
- Wider range of career options and development opportunities
- Broader pool of expertise and support to drive up professional standards
- Strong leadership structures at every level
- Greater financial sustainability
- Economies of scale
- Additional resources for teachers and pupils
- Want to take control of your future. Don't want to be left behind or have less choice in who you make a partnership with.



What to consider when joining a MAT:

- Do you already have a good working relationship with the school/s?
- Is collaboration and partnership at the heart of the organisation?
- Do you have a comparable ethos?
- Can you sign up to the MAT vision and values?
- What is their track record of school improvement?
- What school improvement structure is in place? Impact?
- What is the scheme of delegation?
- How are successful schools used in the MAT?
- How much autonomy is given to successful schools and leaders?
- What is the top slice? What do we get for our money? Is it value for money?
- What is the governance structure? Will my school have representation at trustee level? How does the Local Governing Body work?
- What is the role of the lead school(if there is one)?
- Are all principals involved in leading and developing the MAT?
- Can we retain our own identity and unique characteristics?
- Are we close enough geographically to work together?





What to consider when forming a MAT:

- Provides a local solution for local schools
- Supports a mixed economy of MATS in an area-avoids monopolies
- Do you have the Governance expertise you need? If not, where will you get it from? www.academyambassadors.org
- Will your planned partnership work beyond the current leaders tenure?
- How will you balance type of school/level of challenge?
- How will you develop /utilise your school improvement offer?
- Do you share an ethos and values with your partner schools?
- What is our current capacity of the governing body , school leadership team and back office staff? Are they willing/able to take on additional responsibility?
- Will there be a lead school? If so for how long before this is reviewed or modified?
- How big do we think we want to grow? Over what period?
- What powers responsibilities will be delegated? What will be retained centrally?
- Is the school strong enough to convert and establish a MAT on its own?
- Is your latest OFSTED report 'outstanding' or good with outstanding features?
- Is pupil attainment and progress above NA?
- Are your school finances healthy?



Department
for Education

Concerns: Lack of autonomy

All trusts need to have a CEO, executive principal, or equivalent. There has to be an accounting officer who takes the lead .

It should not be necessary for good headteachers to lose accountability/autonomy whilst they and their school perform well.

Trust governance structures allow good headteachers and governors to have wider influence than they might have at present.

Look carefully at the scheme of delegation-it will tell you what responsibilities are retained centrally and which ones sit with local Governing Bodies

The CEO/EHT does not have to lead on *everything* that the MAT does. There should be a partnership between the leaders. Play to individual strengths.



Department
for Education

Academy Sponsorship

- **Schools have an exciting opportunity to become part of the school improvement system moving forward**
- **Benefits of sponsorship;**
 - Formalises existing school improvement work undertaken by schools.
 - Supports surrounding local schools in difficulty. Possibly supporting a feeder school which will benefit your school.
 - Provides greater opportunities for staff and enables schools to keep and grow good staff.
 - Trust can benefit from economies of scale as it grows.
- **Support to become a sponsor;**
 - Funding available when you take on a school
 - Sponsor Capacity Funding to support the growth of your Trust
 - Support from established sponsors in the region.
 - Excellent Non-executive Directors available in the region to be a Member or Director of your Trust.



Department
for Education



Free Schools

Opening a Free School

- Wave 12 closed on the 28th September and is under assessment
- The pre-registration portal is also open now for groups wanting to submit an application for Wave 13, which will open early next year

Changes to the application process

- The Department has streamlined the process to make it easier for groups to apply and open new schools without lowering the quality bar;
 - Where applicant groups have a strong educational track record for a particular part of the application, or where the department already holds information, we will re-use this information to avoid asking groups to repeat information
 - Sponsors and MATs of 2 or more schools are also eligible for an RSC capacity letter
- Updated application and assessment guidance can be found on the GOV.UK

Support for applicant groups

- New Schools Network provide free advice and support for those interested in establishing a free school as well as guidance: www.newschoolsnetwork.org/



Department for Education

Funding for academies

- To cover the costs of conversion
 - £25,000
- Sponsorship funding
 - £70,000 to £150,000 depending on the sponsorship arrangement. Further details can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511128/sponsored_academies_funding_advice_for_sponsors.pdf

Other

- Sponsor Capacity Funding
- MAT Capacity Funding



Department for Education

Guidance available on GOV.UK

Expanding your academy trust: resources for multi-academy trusts

Published on 7 September 2016

Content includes:

- Regional Schools Commissioners
- People and leadership
- School improvement
- Governance
- Growth and development
- Finance

www.gov.uk/government/publications/expanding-your-academy-trust-resources-for-multi-academy-trusts/expanding-your-academy-trust-resources-for-multi-academy-trusts



Department for Education



'Schools that work for everyone'

- Consultation document published on 12th September 2016 – 'Schools that work for everyone'.
- The points made are for consultation, not legislation. They include:
- expecting **independent schools** to support existing state schools, open new state schools or offer funded places to children whose families can't afford to pay fees
- asking **universities** to commit to sponsoring or setting up new schools in exchange for the ability to charge higher fees
- allowing **existing selective schools to expand and new selective schools to open**, while making sure they support non-selective schools
- allowing **new faith free schools to select up to 100% of pupils based on their faith**, while making sure they include pupils from different backgrounds

Consultation: Schools that work for everyone

- Over the last six years our education reforms have delivered many more good school places and there are over 1.4 million more children in good or outstanding schools.
- But for too many children in England, a good school remains out of reach. There are 1.25 million children attending primary and secondary schools in England which are rated as either requiring improvement or inadequate.
- At the same time, demographic pressure for good school places is increasing.
- Our consultation sets out a series of reforms to encourage high-performing institutions to create more good school places in the state sector.

Selective Schools

- There are currently 163 existing grammar schools in England, educating around 166,000 students. 99% of selective schools are good or outstanding.
- Legislation currently prohibits any new selective schools and prevents existing non-selective schools from becoming selective. We want more good schools, including selective schools, but we want selective schools to make sure they help children from all backgrounds.

Proposals

- Lift the restrictions on new selective education, allowing new selective schools, expansion of existing ones and non-selective schools to become selective.
- This will be on the condition that these schools also contribute in a meaningful way to the outcome of all pupils, for example, through prioritising the admission of disadvantaged pupils and supporting other local pupils in non-selective schools.

Questions

- How do we best support existing selective schools to expand?
- How do we best support non-selective schools to become selective?
- Are the conditions set out in the ConDoc the right ones for ensuring that selective schools improve the quality of non-selective places in their areas? What else could we consider?
- What is the right proportion of children from low income households to be admitted to new selective schools?



Faith Schools

There is currently a 50% cap on the number of children admitted by faith for oversubscribed new free schools. The evidence suggests that this rule does not achieve inclusivity and prevents some high-performing faith schools from expanding.

Proposals

- Allow new faith free schools up to 100% faith admissions and replace the 50% cap with a series of strengthened safeguards to improve inclusion.
- These safeguards may include: proving demand from parents of other faiths; twinning arrangements with faith schools of different religions; or joining a mixed-faith Multi-Academy Trust, including sponsoring non-faith schools.

Questions

- By removing the 50% cap on faith school admissions, how might we ensure that faith schools continue to espouse and deliver a diverse, multi-faith offer to parents?

Tell us your views

- The consultation is open until the 12th December 2016 and the government's response will be published in Spring 2017
- We strongly welcome opinions from all stakeholders
- Please visit GOV.UK to submit your views
- www.gov.uk/government/consultations/schools-that-work-for-everyone

Contact us

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Twitter: [@RSC_NWLSC](https://twitter.com/RSC_NWLSC)

The NWLSC RSC office sends out termly newsletters –if you would like to be added to the distribution list sign up <http://eepurl.com/b3kmAH>.
