School Improvement Strategy 2015 - 2017

We unite across Suffolk to enable every child to be the best they can be
Foreword

Ensuring all children receive the best possible education is a commitment that we all share. A strong and secure education equips children to be the best they can be and provides them with the foundations on which they will build successful and fulfilling adult lives.

This aspiration places great trust and expectation on all of those who work in the education system. We must all make sure that we fulfil our responsibilities in ensuring all children receive the quality of education they deserve and their parents expect.

Raising the Bar is the council’s overarching programme to raise attainment, increase aspiration and ensure that there are the right opportunities for all our children as they move into adulthood. Central to the Raising the Bar ambition is the need to increase the pace of improvement in schools in Suffolk, build on the best practice that is already happening in schools and support and challenge those schools where standards are not yet high enough.

This strategy therefore sets out in clear terms the role of teachers, school leaders, governors, parents, the Local Authority (LA) and the Learning Partnership in school improvement.

The document goes on to describe how the LA will monitor all schools and intervene in schools of concern. Our targets for increased attainment are clearly set out and we see this strategy as a further stage on a journey that will ensure all Suffolk schools are judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted.

Whilst there will of course be a differentiated role in respect of intervention between academies and other schools, our hope is that all Suffolk schools will work in partnership with the LA and the Learning Partnership to take responsibility to monitor, support and challenge as part of the family of Suffolk schools.

Through Raising the Bar we look to change and inspire the culture, enabling every Suffolk child to reach their potential and look forward to a bright and fulfilling future.

We are confident that together we can raise the bar and build a better system; a system where school leaders challenge their peers to drive up standards and the LA provides support and timely intervention to a school led self-improving system.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and local context</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising the Bar</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key priorities and targets for Education and Learning</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Years – school readiness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Learning Partnership – self improving schools</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School leadership</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and learning</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of the governing body</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of parents</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable learners – removing barriers to learning</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Virtual School for looked after children</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of the Local Authority in school improvement</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervening in underperforming maintained schools</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervening in underperforming academies and free schools</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for schools and settings</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of Schools’ Choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful links</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Improvement Strategy 2015-2017

Introduction

This document sets out the Suffolk School Improvement Strategy 2015-17. It is ambitious in its expectations and is clear in recognising the need for a change in culture if we are to deliver rapid improvements in outcomes for children.

The strategy is also clear about the respective roles of all the stakeholders and their collective responsibility to ensure every Suffolk child reaches their potential.

Schools’ Choice is owned by Suffolk County Council and began trading in April 2014. Its purpose is to provide high quality cost-effective services to support school leaders in their work to raise attainment. Schools’ Choice gives a single ‘front door’ for schools to purchase services.

This updated version of the School Improvement Strategy builds on the previous document which was developed following an extensive formal consultation with schools and other stakeholders in Spring 2014.

The strategy also addresses respective roles of the LA, Schools’ Choice and individual schools. It also articulates the developing relationship between these organisations and the wider regional and national accountable bodies.

Suffolk has been on a rapid journey to review its strategy, its services and its priorities in the last 12 months. The council has ensured that raising educational attainment is its number one priority and our strategic priorities have been drawn from the revised ambitions of Raising the Bar. LA staff have been relentless in their work to improve the quality of the education and learning service activity and challenge the perception held by some school leaders.
It is also true that many school leaders, teachers and governors have embraced the challenges of our shared improvement journey and are delivering improving outcomes for the children of Suffolk. A number of the strongest school leaders and governors are making a valued contribution to support school improvement beyond their own schools through the time and support they are committing to help others.

This journey is by no means complete but together we unite across Suffolk to enable every child to be the best they can be.

National and local context

All LAs have a legal duty to promote high standards and the fulfilment of children and young people’s potential.

Under section 13A of the Education Act 1996 LAs must:
- Promote high standards in schools and other providers
- Ensure fair access to opportunity for education and training
- Promote the fulfilment of learning potential

Additionally the Children Act 2004 established a statutory chief officer post (Director of Children’s Services (DCS)) and Lead Member for Children in every upper tier LA, with responsibilities for education as well as social care services. In respect of education the DCS must ensure:

- Fair access to schools for every child
- Provision of suitable home to school transport
- Promote a diverse supply of strong schools
- Promote high quality early years provision
- Access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure time activities
- Children and young people participate in decision making
- Participation of children and young people in education or training

These statutory requirements and the rapidly changing education landscape provide the backdrop for Suffolk’s School Improvement Strategy. The strategy is an important element of Suffolk’s Raising the Bar programme.

Raising the Bar is creating a joined up response to raise attainment, increase aspiration and ensure that there are the right opportunities for all children as they move into adulthood.
Ensuring every child attends a good or outstanding school is central to the council’s Raising the Bar ambition. We believe this is achievable within the next three years and our School Improvement Strategy is driven by this commitment.

To achieve this ambition we need to address the underperformance in some geographical areas of Suffolk to ensure that wherever a child lives there is a good or outstanding school for them to attend.

We need to rapidly increase the pace of improvement. This increased pace needs to be greater in some parts of the county.

Although we acknowledge that there have been some improvements, they have not been great enough and we need to close and remove the gaps to national performance indicators. Our ambition is for Suffolk to exceed national performance indicators.

Taking stock of where we are currently and benchmarking against national is a core part of our improvement journey.

At the end of the 2013/14 academic year, educational performance at age 11 and age 16 was low and below national. Trend data available showed that results improved at key stage 2.
However, analysis of the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in Key Stage 2, which had previously been closing, has widened. This is an area we need to address and will require all parts of the system to support. We will, in particular, use some of the most effective school leaders to assist in narrowing these gaps.

**Ofsted inspection outcomes in Suffolk**

At the start of 2014, internally tracked Ofsted section 5 inspection outcomes showed that 70% of Suffolk schools were judged to be good or better. At the start of 2015 this has improved to 73%. Although this improvement is positive and encouraging we need to work collectively to increase the pace at which schools are securing good or better Ofsted judgements.

**Locality variation**

Across the county there is significant variation in test and examination outcomes and Ofsted inspection judgements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Re4+</th>
<th>Wr 4+</th>
<th>Ma 4+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich North/East</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich South/West</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowestoft/Waveney</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Suffolk</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich North/East</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich South/West</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowestoft/Waveney</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Suffolk</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of November 2014
Raising the Bar

As the LA, we know that a focused effort is required to raise attainment in order to meet the needs of all children and young people. To do this we need to ensure:

• The gap is closed between underachieving groups in Suffolk and all children nationally
• There are no differences in attainment depending on where you live in Suffolk

To support this, the Raising the Bar programme objectives are:

• Every child reaches their potential
• Every child attends a good or outstanding school
• Every child is given the best preparation for life before and beyond school

For 2014/2015, Raising the Bar has the following priorities:

• Improving schools - to increase the number of good and outstanding schools in Suffolk (as judged by Ofsted) and to improve results and progress
• Increase sector led school improvement - to establish a Learning Partnership that promotes and facilitates system led improvement
• Teacher recruitment - to attract and retain quality teachers in Suffolk
• Work Inspiration - to increase children’s understanding of work opportunities and employability skills through further development of the Work Inspiration Brokerage Service and providing an online platform to showcase the economy

Employers, schools, parents, the county council, governing bodies, the Learning Partnership, voluntary and community groups and the wider public sector are all involved in achieving the ambitions of Raising the Bar.
Key priorities and targets for Education and Learning

Taking into account the national context, the framework of the Raising the Bar programme and consultations with the educational and wider community, we have set the following key priorities:

• To improve the overall attainment of Suffolk schools to above national average and above the mid-point of our statistical neighbour group by 2017
• To significantly narrow gaps in attainment for vulnerable groups, ensuring their attainment is at least comparable to similar children in the rest of the country
• To have no schools failing to meet the floor standard

To achieve this we are:

• Transforming our school improvement approach to ensure that it is fit for purpose, delivers high quality challenge and support, and intervenes swiftly to arrest declining standards in schools
• Implementing a new and transparent performance and monitoring system that is shared with all schools and understood by school leaders. The transparent sharing of all school performance data will support an acceleration in the development of a self-improving system
• Establishing, in association with school leaders, a robust and valued Learning Partnership which will take the lead role in developing system leadership

---

1 Targets are based on assessment measures currently in use nationally. These are subject to change.
Early Years – school readiness

A key priority in Suffolk is to ensure that the development needs of our youngest children are met so that they are ready for school.

We understand that the quality of early childhood experiences have a significant impact on a child's future.

In Suffolk, the LA works with vulnerable families to support their access to the free two year old entitlement.

The LA also works with all providers of early education in the private, voluntary, independent (PVI) and maintained sectors to ensure:

- All eligible children (our most vulnerable two year olds, all three and four year olds) take up a high quality early education place
- There are sufficient free early education places made available in a flexible way to meet the needs of parents.

The Learning Partnership – self improving schools

The vision of the partnership is:

“The Suffolk Learning Partnership will foster collective responsibility for the lifelong learning of all children and young people in Suffolk. Leaders and teachers will model the pride and ambition we seek for all students, improving outcomes for all groups of learners. There will be renewed respect for education in Suffolk.”

The LA is committed to supporting and enhancing the development of system led improvement. Valuable work by Headteachers in developing a vision for the Learning Partnership is contributing to the development of this ambition. Teaching School Alliances form an integral element of this work.
School leadership

Leadership is crucial to ensure that the vision of Raising the Bar is achieved. School leaders are instrumental in providing the drive to improve standards in Suffolk schools.

- Headteachers should provide effective leadership to improve and generate a high standard of teaching in schools.
- They should through regular and rigorous performance management, secure high quality teaching which leads to effective learning over time for all pupils.
- Headteachers are accountable for the educational performance of the school, to ensure good or better outcomes for all pupils and to ensure that there isn’t a gap between vulnerable groups and all Suffolk children.
- Headteachers should ensure that accurate self-evaluation and monitoring informs and influences the school’s improvement plan.

Increasingly there is a national expectation upon school leaders to take ownership for all children, not only the children who attend their school. For example, the growing number of executive Headteachers who have responsibility for more than one school across a locality. The development of new styles and approaches to school leadership are already underway in the county.

Teaching and learning

The key to achieving our shared ambition for all children and young people to reach their potential is establishing and sustaining high quality teaching and learning in all Suffolk schools. Teachers are at the forefront of this goal and it is vital that good and outstanding teachers are recognised and encouraged to share their knowledge, skills and success. Equally where teaching is less than good or outstanding it is important that teachers are challenged and supported to improve.
We unite across Suffolk to enable every child to be the best they can be

Governors are central to the ambitions of Raising the Bar and are a vital element in the council’s commitment to improve standards. Governors have a direct impact on school improvement in maintained schools, free schools or academies. This role is continually evolving with schools gaining more autonomy.

In all Suffolk schools, the governing body is directly responsible for:
- Developing, with the Headteacher, a vision and strategic direction for the school, and ensuring it is implemented through policies and plans
- Holding the school to account to ensure high educational performance is achieved; this includes
  - Carrying out the performance management of the Headteacher
  - Monitoring progress to ensure that every pupil in the school gets the best possible education
- Holding the school to account for efficient use of financial resources, delivering good value for money, ensuring good financial systems, protocols and practice, and complying with legal requirements

Governors are expected to uphold the 7 principles of public life:
- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

They should be self-evaluating, accessing training and using the services of a professional clerk to ensure their working practices have the greatest positive impact on the school. This is available through Schools’ Choice (website address available under ‘useful links’ section of this strategy).

The role of parents in school improvement

Parents have a central role in supporting and encouraging aspiration. The majority of parents want their children to do well; the school systems need to ensure that parents are supported.

In particular parents should:

• Have high aspirations for their children and their school
• Encourage their children to reach their potential
• Respond positively and in a timely manner to requests from the school to assist their children to do better
• Positively and constructively challenge their school if they feel their child is at risk of not realising their potential

Guidance and advice for parents can be found on the Suffolk Parent Hub, an online space which is managed by a team of parenting coordinators based throughout Suffolk (the website address can be found in the ‘useful links’ section of this strategy).

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Service (SENDIASS) also provides information and support to parents, carers, children and young people (aged up to 25 years) in relation to special educational needs and disabilities. More details can be found on their website, which can be found in the ‘useful links’ section of this strategy.
Vulnerable learners – removing the barriers to learning

The council’s Raising the Bar programme sets out clear ambitions that all local children and young people should be supported and challenged, in order to achieve their full potential on the journey to adulthood. Children and young people can be vulnerable to underachievement for a variety of reasons. We must be ambitious and unrelenting in our commitment to ensure that the most vulnerable have the best possible education. Tackling underachievement starts with quality teaching, a commitment to inclusion and an uncompromising expectation that all children have potential that we sometimes need to unlock.

Schools have a vital role to play in removing barriers to learning through the work they do in the classroom, the informal curriculum and the work they do with families. The LA recognises that some children with the most complex needs require support beyond the school. For this reason, we provide a range of timely, targeted programmes of activity to assist schools in delivering our shared ambition of enabling and empowering all Suffolk children and young people to be well positioned to optimise their life chances and choices.

Examples of such interventions include: the Specialist Learning Support scheme, a service jointly commissioned with health to support learners with complex medical conditions, the County Inclusive Resource working with schools to support learners on the Autistic Spectrum and the Behaviour Support Service, which offers targeted intervention, school level support and staff development in the area of challenging behaviour.

The LA Education and Learning team offers an integrated, multi-professional response to children and families’ needs which contributes to our vision for SEND learners, that they have their full range of needs met through a high quality Suffolk “local offer”. The LA has worked closely with parents and carers, children and young people, schools and partner agencies to create the Suffolk “local offer”, developing services that meet the full range of needs to improve outcomes and life chances for vulnerable learners.

The LA 2015-18 SEND strategy: Improving Outcomes for local children, young people and families, sets out the Suffolk vision to deliver a timely, needs led outcome, focussed on response to need and achieved through effective joint working with parents, carers, children and young people and our partner agencies.
The Virtual School for looked after children

Looked after children face a number of unique challenges in realising their potential. This vulnerable group of learners are a particular priority for the council, given the specific responsibilities we hold for them. Outcomes for this group nationally and locally often do not reflect their true potential and all parts of the system; the school, the LA and partners agencies need to marshal our shared resources to drive forward.

Schools are uniquely placed to offer support for learning and also stability to this group of children and young people. Indeed, school may be one of the few constants in their lives for some of this group. Educational achievement for this group is important, not only to allow them to successfully move into adulthood but because educational achievement is a crucial mechanism for enhancing a child or young person’s self-esteem and feelings of worth.

The LA has a shared ambition with schools for all Suffolk’s looked after children to progress and achieve their potential, making appropriate choices and securing a future in which they are confident and fulfilled.

The LA recognises that schools cannot do this work alone and in order to support schools we operate a Virtual School for Looked After Children and have the Looked After Children Education Support Service (LACESS).

The role of the Virtual School and LACESS is to:
- Proactively monitor the attainment, progress, attendance of all looked after children the council has responsibility for
- Support education planning for looked after children
- Hold all stakeholders to account and rapidly intervene and support when necessary
- Work positively and proactively with schools to ensure that looked after children make at least good progress and the pupil premium grant that schools receive is being used effectively to support improved outcomes
- Provide professional development and training for designated teachers
- Provide advice to social workers and carers to help with Personal Education Plans, ensuring they are robust and contribute to attainment, progress and wellbeing
The role of the Local Authority in school improvement

The LA has a range of statutory duties in order to promote high standards and fulfilment of children and young people’s potential. The county council’s Education and Learning team leads on the council’s statutory duties regarding school improvement. The Education and Learning team is key to the council’s Raising the Bar programme. All LA work will be subject to quality assurance.

The LA’s school improvement activity is underpinned by a number of core functions:
- Champion for children and young people - through a rigorous and transparent monitoring process based upon robust data and communication the Education and Learning team will identify underperformance. As autonomous organisations, schools will need to identify how they will address concerns about performance and improve outcomes for children and young people. The Education and Learning team will ensure that the plans for school improvement are fit for purpose
- Partnership - the LA will encourage and support partnership and collaboration that improves outcomes, shares best practice and contributes to system led improvement. This includes strengthening existing partnerships such as families of schools, teaching school alliances and locality collaboration
- Respect for the autonomy of all schools – school leaders and governors are responsible for standards. It is their role to ensure the vision for the school is ambitious and plan for sustained improvement to ensure all children achieve their potential
- Brokerage - the Education and Learning team will broker a range of local, regional and national school improvement associates
Service provider - the LA provides a range of services including targeted school improvement, support and challenge, and specialist support in the areas of SEN and inclusion. The services to schools will be provided through the single front door of Schools’ Choice, the school trader owned and run by Suffolk County Council. Details of Schools’ Choice are set out further on in this strategy. Schools’ Choice aims to provide high quality services to those schools who decide to purchase support from them, however it is entirely up to schools as to where they seek support.

Intervening in underperforming maintained schools

The LA has a clear duty to intervene when standards in a school are not good enough. This duty is informed by Schools Causing Concern: Statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education (DfE) 2014. Triggers for intervention in a school can include:

- Unacceptably low standards - standards below the floor for either attainment or progress
- Low standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils
- A sudden drop in performance
- Historic underperformance
- Standards are unacceptably low in relation to expected outcomes or pupils’ prior attainment

When intervention is necessary the LA will work with school leaders to develop a robust action plan that will achieve rapid progress. The LA will support and challenge the school to achieve progress against this action plan. Where underperformance persists and is not being rapidly addressed by school leaders a range of intervention approaches will be deployed which might include a structural solution such as academisation.

Where school leadership is deemed to be weak and there is a lack of engagement with support that is offered, the LA will use the full range of statutory powers at its disposal to secure improvement.

The council’s top priority is raising attainment and this is the motivation to take robust action. This action can include the use of additional LA governors, removal of budgetary control, the replacement of the governing body with an Interim Executive Board (IEB) and where appropriate forced federation. In addition the LA may request immediate Section 5 Ofsted Inspection of a school of concern.

In the case of underperforming academies, the LA will liaise directly with the DfE’s Academies Division, The Regional Schools Commissioner and the Education Funding Agency, where local academy leaders have failed to provide confidence in plans for improvement.

Additionally the council may use its democratic mandate to call academy leaders of underperforming schools to council scrutiny committees to account for performance in their schools to the elected representatives of the citizens of Suffolk.
The Local Authority role in monitoring and intervention to ensure high standards in all schools

A
Termly analysis of data provided by schools.
See Flow Chart TWO

B
Annually published data analysed twice a year

C
Section 5 Ofsted outcome and/or intelligence from an Ofsted themed inspection at any time

D
Identification of strong practice to share wider
Identification of schools on track to become or maintain good or better Identification of schools judged as, or vulnerable to, being RI Identification of schools judged as, or vulnerable to, declining an Ofsted grade. Using evidence from A, B, C and responding to the questions asked as detailed in Appendix One

E
If evidence indicates that the school is vulnerable to not being good, more detailed analysis and information seeking about current achievement and provision.

F
If a school has been judged RI or Inadequate or wider evidence indicates that the school is not on track for good or better or is predicting a declining trend, LA ensure an action plan is in place with appropriate milestones and success criteria and support is being used based on a forensic analysis conducted with the school. Pace of improvement monitored

G
Evidence indicates that the pace of improvement needs to accelerate and/or capacity of leadership needs strengthening to bring about required improvements within expected timescale. LA top level action taken which might include: School Improvement Board/ Warning Notice /IEB / Additional Governors/ Notice of financial Concern / Forced Federation. The above action would be taken to ensure rapid improvement.

1 Flow chart taken from the ‘Securing good or better learning for all Suffolk children booklet’ provided by the LA
Intervening in underperforming academies

A significant number of secondary schools and a growing number of primary schools are academies with some being converters and some being sponsored. There are also a small number of free schools in the county.

Where standards in these schools are of a concern the council will take rapid action. The council takes its responsibility for all children very seriously irrespective of the type of school that they attend. For this reason the LA risk rates all schools and based on this termly risk assessment identifies academies where performance is a concern. Because these schools operate outside the control of the council, we will undertake the following actions:

- The LA informs the academy and sponsor if appropriate, of the risk rating
- The LA invites academy senior leaders and sponsors (where appropriate) to a 1-1 challenge meeting with the Director for Children and Young People
- The LA shares the risk rating with the Regional Schools Commissioner, including the actions that would have been taken if the school was maintained for example, issuing a warning notice
- The LA will also write to the Minister of State for Schools requesting urgent intervention where there are significant concerns about a school or an academy sponsor

The LA meets regularly with the Regional Schools Commissioner to ensure the Department for Education plan and implement appropriate actions to improve outcomes for Suffolk children.
Support for schools and settings

Historically the council has been very paternalistic with its schools and this was highlighted as an issue of concern in the Raising the Bar report ‘No School an Island’\(^1\). As the strategy illustrates, this is a historic relationship that is being transformed.

In the past, support for maintained schools always came in response to schools in rapid decline and was reactive. This current strategy highlights the increased pace in which schools are identified and prevented from further decline. This new approach has been shared with schools through the termly risk rating process. All schools which are risk rated have an individual response.

In the past the council was too slow in recognising and responding to the decline in some schools, particularly those with historic good and outstanding Ofsted judgements. The new approach is thoroughly documented in the ‘Securing good or better learning for all Suffolk children’ booklet.

Resources

The LA has a duty to ensure that resources are used effectively. The Suffolk Schools Forum oversees decision making about resource allocation and undertakes the appropriate monitoring.

The LA also delivers a wide range of statutory functions with regard to education and the allocation of funding for this work is agreed by the Schools Forum. Through Schools’ Choice the council delivers a range of traded services to schools.

The role of Schools’ Choice

Schools’ Choice is a trading organisation owned and operated by Suffolk County Council. Its role is to provide a single front door for all schools offering a wide range of high quality cost-effective services to support school leaders in their work. These services will assist school leaders to spend more time and resource on raising educational attainment. Schools’ Choice offers schools the following services:

- HR services
- Finance and payroll
- Buildings and premises
- IT support
- Broadband
- Governor services
- Traded school improvement services
- School Safe training and support

Over time the range of services provided will grow in response to the needs and demands of schools. Schools’ Choice provides a market leading range of services to schools who decide to purchase support from them; however it is entirely up to schools as to where they seek support.
Useful links

DfE  www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

Ofsted  www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

Raising the Bar  www.suffolk.gov.uk/rtb

Schools’ Choice  www.schoolschoice.org

SENDIASS  www.suffolk.gov.uk/sendiass

Suffolk Learning  www.suffolklearning.co.uk

Suffolk Parent Hub  www.suffolk.gov.uk/parents

Further documentation supporting this strategy will be made available via www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-council/plans-and-policies/raising-the-bar-briefing/raising-the-bar-school-improvement-strategy/