**Primary Networks within the Coventry Education Partnership – 2023/24**

**Purpose & Principles**

In Coventry, we have the highest expectations for the achievement of children and young people. We believe all children and young people have the right to achieve their full potential whatever their culture or background.

The local authority (LA) recognises that it is the responsibility of school leaders to secure improvement in their school. As part of our working partnership with all schools and settings, the LA acts as a champion of educational excellence for children and young people, forging strong professional relationships and networks. Primary school improvement networks are a key feature of the Coventry school-to-school support system. They enable school leaders to engage in professional collaboration with colleagues across the system for the benefit of children in the city.

The core principles of primary school improvement networks are:

* Working in the best interest of all pupils
* Open and transparent sharing of information
* An equal level of giving and receiving of support over time
* Respecting and valuing all partners’ views and opinions
* Commitment to collaboration

The primary purpose of each school improvement network is to facilitate effective school improvement through collaborative action, support and challenge.

**Network activity – scope**

Network activity should always focus on raising aspirations and improving opportunities and outcomes for children.

All networks will:

* Have a strategic leadership group (consisting of the headteacher / principal of each school) that meets on a regular basis, at least six times during an academic year
* Agree an annual action plan that responds to Coventry Education Partnership priorities and takes into account the context and self-evaluation of all schools
* Offer specific support to schools where a need is identified
* Ensure the network is represented in all Coventry Education Partnership forums (e.g. attendance at generic groups)
* Provide moderation and standardisation opportunities which support the statutory duties of the Local Authority

Networks can also:

* Provide networking opportunities for colleagues in similar positions across different schools (e.g. SENDCOs, subject leads, ECTs)
* Collaborate on joint projects that do not directly focus on school improvement
* Collaborate on joint approaches that enable schools to use resources efficiently
* Provide moderation and standardisation opportunities that extend beyond statutory expectations

School improvement funding provided to networks annually must be used for those activities that all networks will do (the first list above). It should not be used to support activities in the second list.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

All headteachers / principals will:

* Collaborate in network activity in line with the purpose and principles described above
* Share information about school performance with honestly and transparency
* Contribute to the development and facilitation of an agreed action plan
* Commit to attending all strategic leadership group meetings (or sending an appropriate deputy with decision-making authority)
* Enable colleagues from their schools to participate in agreed network activity
* Be prepared to play a fair role in representing the network at Coventry Education Partnership forums

Network Leads will:

* Be responsible for ensuring that
* Set and share agendas for each strategic leadership meeting and ensure that notes / actions are shared with all network heads / principals
* Maintain an overview of the strengths and areas of development of the network
* Maintain an awareness of trends and pressures in schools across the network and be prepared to share these with appropriate LA officers and at the Primary Network Improvement Board

The Local Authority will:

* Provide overall facilitation of the network model, including providing appropriate support for network leads
* Provide funding to enable each network’s action plan (with funding graduated to the needs of schools within each network)
* Provide funding to enable each network lead to carry out their function effectively
* Provide appropriate data to enable each network to analyse shared strengths and areas for development

**Network Lead Criteria**

The selected network lead will be nominated by the network and meet the following criteria:

* Current NLE, ELE status or Ofsted inspection training (current)

Or meets the aspects below:

* Good/outstanding Ofsted across the board
* 2 years Headship
* 2 years minimum in current school
* Evidence of staff providing outreach/supporting other schools

All network leads must have the full support of their school’s Governing Body.

Each network should also have a named deputy network lead who, in most instances, would also meet the criteria detailed above. The deputy network lead would be able to attend the Primary Network Improvement Board and/or lead network meetings in the absence of the network lead.

**Primary Network Improvement Board**

The Primary Network Improvement Board meets 6 times in each academic year. It is attended by:

* The network lead of each network (with an appropriate deputy attending if the network lead is unavailable)
* Relevant LA officers

The purpose of the Primary Network Improvement Board is to:

* Scrutinise, ratify and review progress of network action plans
* Share good practice and areas for development in network approaches across the city
* Review the impact and effectiveness of shared school improvement strategy and contribute to future strategic decision-making
* Address any other business deemed appropriate by the board

**Organisation Principles**

* Network size varies according to the membership of each group – groups below five are deemed too small to have capacity to operate and groups below eight should be able to identify other school-to-school support capacity from beyond their network
* If the percentage of schools with an Ofsted judgement of requires improvement, serious weaknesses or special measures category exceeds 20%, the network needs to be able to identify other school-to-school support capacity from beyond their network
* Schools within a shared Multi Academy Trust will, in general, remain within the same network
* Federated schools will remain in the same network
* Faith schools will have an option to work within the same network
* Geographical location will be taken into account but not be the primary factor

**Movement between networks**

* Joining / Leaving new network - Proposals for schools to change networks will be brought to the network leads group for ratification – schools wishing to change networks should inform the network lead and/or Senior Advisor for Education Improvement
* Removing a school from a network - If a network feels that a school within the network is not engaging with or contributing to the network the network lead will provide the evidence to the network leads group for consideration.
* Systematic review - The membership of networks across the city will be reviewed annually to ensure that they continue to demonstrate the necessary capacity to deliver improvement.

**Shared school improvement strategy**

The Coventry Education Partnership agrees key priorities annually which should be a core focus for network actions.

Each school improvement network will also receive a comprehensive and interactive data set which summarises key performance measures and trends over time. This will help networks (alongside each school’s own self-evaluation) identify strengths and areas for development across a range of measures and prioritise their actions and resources.

Each school improvement network will produce an action plan, setting out its priorities and expected outcomes that will secure improvement across the network as a whole. The Local Authority will provide funding for each network (allocated based on number and categorisation of schools) to support this plan. It is expected that each network will provide an evaluation of its impact each year. This will be shared across the network, at the Primary Network Improvement Board and with the Local Authority.

**System evaluation and accountability**

The organisation and impact of the network system is evaluated annually by Local Authority Officers with input from leaders within the system (including at the Primary Network Improvement Board). The Education Standards Board providers oversight and accountability.

**Network Terms of Reference**

Each network should develop and review a terms of reference document annually. This should include (but not be limited to):

* Purpose and Principles
* Roles and Responsibilities
* Membership
* Information Sharing
* Finance
* Meetings
* Network Activity

The ToR can directly reference content from this network organisation document. Model Terms of Reference documents can be provided if required.