neXus

Multi Academy Trust

Collaborative School
Improvement Framework

1. INTENT

School improvement is the core business of Nexus Multi Academy Trust. As the responsible maintaining authority for our academies, Nexus MAT has a duty to ensure that all of our schools are in a state of continual improvement. We deliver this through our belief that local leadership and governance can best determine a school's improvement priorities, within a wider accountability framework that ensures this is being executed successfully and at the required pace.

The MAT improvement team is comprised of the Headteachers from each Academy and any associate schools; the Trust CEO and Central Trust Officers. The work is co-ordinated, facilitated and evaluated by the Assistant CEO - School Improvement and reported to the Standards Committee, which supports and challenges developing Trust practice. Our "Foundations for School Improvement" are based upon 7 core principles, inspired by the work of Forum Strategy:

Vision and values	Collective commitment	Capacity	Intelliegence gathering	Shared processes	Improvement activity	Quality assurance and quality improvement

At Multi Academy Trust level, we have defined our "Big 3" improvement priorities, which are the three strategic priorities for school improvement that we expect to see constantly tested and challenged in all our academies. These "Big 3" fall under the Trust's overarching strategic business objective of "Increasing quality of provision in our education system", and are as follows:

Increasing quality of provision in our education system

1. All our children and young people enjoy their learning, thrive and realise their potential.

2. All our children and young people are responsible citizens who actively contribute to society.

3. All our academies are continually improving the quality of our provision.

These have been determined because we believe they are the 3 statements which give us the clearest line-of-sight on the quality of teaching and learning in our academies. We have developed a High Level Dashboard which helps the Trust Board to manage our performance through reviewing a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which fall out of the Big 3. Many of the KPIs in the Dashboard mirror the Indicators of Success as outlined in our strategic objectives.

Vision & Values

Our vision is that we are constantly "**Learning together; to be the best we can be**."

This vision is what Nexus aspires to and is as relatable to every employee and partner of our Trust as it is to our children, young adults and their families.

In order to achieve our vision, we have the following mission statement:

- **Our learners and their families are at the centre of what we do**;
- **Our employees and partners are passionate about being the best that they can be;**
- **Our Trust is relentlessly focused on improvement**

Underpinning our vision and mission statement are our core values. These have been defined by our workforce and governors and resonate with the values that all partners of Nexus MAT hold.

We believe it is really important and that we are, in all the things we plan and do: **Inclusive; Child Centred; Family Focused; Caring; Passionate; Nurturing; Encouraging Enriching; Empowering**.

We bring these high expectations to everything we do, and we are really excited to work with partners who share this ethos.

The vision and mission define our goals and our values are intrinstic to our work and the measure of our success.

Collective Commitment

We have responsive leaders who show concern and respect for their staff and protect teachers from issues that detract from their teaching time and focus.

The Trust promotes Ethical Leadership in all aspects of its' work and is a member of the Ethical Leadership Pathfinder Project[1]

We are committed to this project as we agree with its values and vitues and that:

- Schools are where society looks after its young until they are old enough to assume the mantle of adult responsibility;
- School leaders have to be diligent and trusted professionals and public servants;
- Every decision and judgement school leaders make sets an example to children and should promote ethical behaviour in succeeding generations: how we do things is as important as what we do;
- In a landscape where schools are of many different sorts and responsible to many different people, society must be able to rely thousands of individual decision-making leaders to do the right thing, themselves.

Our Improvement Framework is developed around the principles of collective efficacy with the Trust instilling a culture where:

- Schools are provided with opportunities to participate in important Trust-wide decisions including identifying improvement priorities;
- Networks of staff across our schools agree goals which have a direct and measurable impact on positive pupil outcomes;
- Teachers can get out of their classrooms and gain insight into best practice and learning from one another through professional conversations;
- Discussions and debates are used to reach consensus about fundamental educational issues;

[1] https://www.nga.org.uk/ethicalleadership.aspx

Capacity

Within our workforce we recognise that we have a wide range of specialisms and expertise in an eclectic range of areas. Some are known through being Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE), however: we also recognise staff who, in their day to day work, demonstrate skill, knowledge and understanding in the absence of a formal deignation such as SLE.

All Headteachers are able to contribute to identifying Trust wide improvement priorities and also to identify staff within their schools who have the knowledge, skills and motivation to lead or participate in developing these. We endevour to have a strong understanding of where specific expertise exists across the MAT and how it can be used to support other schools, and develop system leaders alongside key partners.

We aim to achieve this through adopting carefully considered approaches to using system leaders and lead practitioners, promoting knowledge transfer through coaching, modelling and enquiry led learning.

'Learning together to be the best we can be' means that we remain outward looking, seeking to learn with and from others; developing partnerships with Teaching Schools and other Trusts. A key underpinning of any learning culture is having a licence to try and fail. Whilst we must always be clear about our accoutnbailities to our learners and our communities, we must also accept that failure is something that enables learning, and having a culture where this is accepted is a cornerstone of enabling a learning culture.

As part of our school improvement covenant, The Trust makes a commitment to all its academies to invest in improvement activity that delivers system change acorss the organisation. In return, the Trust has agreed expectaions for how this is resourced:

A. All Nexus Headteachers are part of the Trust's Strategic Leadership team, and make a commitment to actively contribute to the MAT improvement priorities and be equally mindful of the whole as well as their individual school needs;

B. All Nexus Headteachers (or one of their senior leadership team) commit to at least 2 days per term to undertake Trust school improvement activity;

C. All Nexus academies are part of one Trust estate, which can be made available for use by the Trust and other schools within the MAT without cost, unless additional costs are incurred (e.g. refreshments);

D. All employees will be supported to engage in Trust networking events as part of our commitment to continuing professional development;

E. Where the Trust seeks to utilise a school leader or employee to support MAT improvement activity, there will be no financial loss for any school in supporting this and all commissions will be agreed with and through the Headteacher, at cost;

F. Whilst each academy has its own vision and mission statement unique to its context, all academies commit to the Trust vision, mission statement and values and will actively engage in initiatives which realise these;

G. Ethical leadership and collective efficacy underpin our behaviours as leaders and employees and are the standards we are all held to in all we do.

2. IMPLEMENTATION
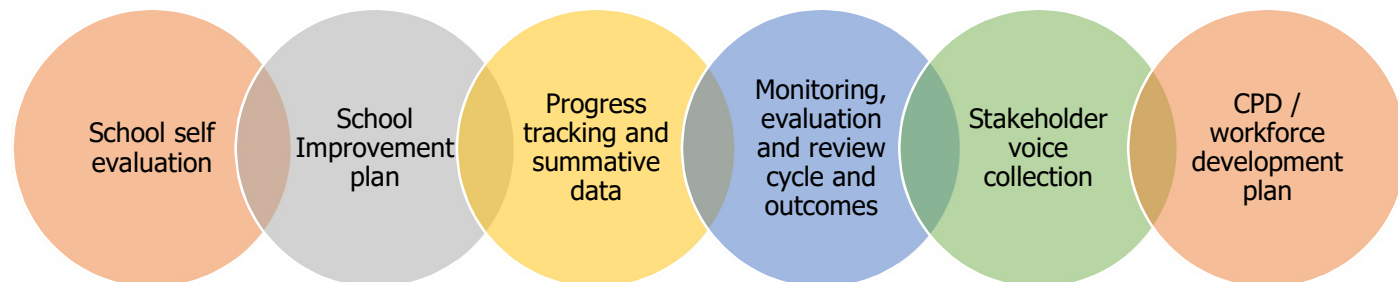
Intelligence Gathering

Our improvement model is based upon collaboration where individual School Leaders work together to address common issues and themes bourne out of intelligence, information and data.

Each school conducts their own school improvement processes and Quality Assurance activity which is augmented by a challenge and support process commissioned by the central Trust. This provides a wealth of information and data which can then be collated to gain a Trust Wide view and inform future priorities. We expect that schools will be open and transparent in sharing their data with the Assistant CEO - School Improvement Lead, CEO and the Headteacher group.

The Headteacher group are continually reviewing where elements of intelligence gathering can be aligned, standardised or remain autonomous.

Shared processes

The information which we expect schools to hold and share with Governors and the Trust includes (but may not be limited to):

School self evaluation

School Improvement plan

Progress tracking and summative data

Monitoring, evaluation and review cycle and outcomes

Stakeholder voice collection

CPD / workforce development plan

Each academy is able to transfer this information to an evolving performance dashboard. This information can then be collated to ensure that Local Governors, Directors, the Executive and the Department for Education have a clear oversight of the quality of provision at a local level. This includes defined key performance indicators which overlays a school's self-evaluation and informs the common MAT improvement priorities and planning.

The Trust also utilises DfE models, such as the Integratad Cirriculum and Financapl Planning (ICFP) and the School Resource Management Self Assessment toolkits to structure resource allocation at the point of budget setting.

Improvement activity

Whilst it is essential we know how our academies are delivering against the expectations of Government (as articulated and inspected by Ofsted), we are also really clear that we must express what is important to our MAT community so that we can evidence how and why being part of Nexus Multi Academy Trust has made a positive impact on the lives of the children and families we serve. That is why we developed our **big 3.**

In order to offer support and challenge to our academies in a meaningful and helpful way, it is important that the Trust seeks to understand the priorities within each of the academies and collectively across the Trust. This collation of priorities ensures that Trust-wide improvement work enables the principles of efficacy and collaboration.

In addition to priorities collated from all schools, the Trust also takes account of local and national priorities when planning improvement activity and the Central team along with School Senior Leaders are members of networks and partnerships.

The identified areas of collaborative work are identified below. Each area of work is led by one of the Headteachers or delegated to a member of the workforce with particular specialism or expertise.

Collated priorities and common themes Lead Heads Work Programme		
Arts	Assessment	Behaviour Leads
CPD	Curriculum	Data Reporting
EP Contract	Governance	ICFP
Moderation	NQT/RQT Support Network	Partnerships
Peer review	PSHE / RSE	Pupil Voice
Research	Safeguarding Health Checks	SIP Review and Collation
SMSC	Stakeholder voice and engagement	Wellbeing

These collated priorities are identifed within the Collaborative School's Improvement Framework delivery plan, which outlines what we will achieve; how we will do it; why it's important; and how we will know we've been successful: all framed around the "Big 3".

1. All our children and young people enjoy their learning and make at least good progress

	What we will achieve	How we will do it	Measurable outcomes
1.1	• All academies ensure a broad, rich and personalised curriculum to meet the needs and interests of their pupils • All staff have a secure understanding of: ▪ personalisation ▪ pupil groups ▪ subject knowledge ▪ effective learning and teaching strategies	• Ensure all Academy Headteachers understand the implications of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework upon curriculum design. • Senior Leaders ensure that time and resources are available to support collaborative learning and practice. • Senior leaders ensure they evaluate CPD and that effective practice is shared within and across academies via Synergy platform.	• Academy leaders clearly articulate their curriculum framework and rationale. • Increasing numbers of staff are engaged in collaborative development activity • Multiple Networks linked to collective priorities established across the Trust engaging Leaders to collaboratively address common themes.
1.2	• Assessment and tracking information is used to set end of year expectations, plan teaching and learning strategies, identify additional support needs and to inform academy improvement activity	• To form a task and finish group to agree summative assessment progress measures for children working: ▪ At non subject specific levels ▪ Entering subject specific levels ▪ At pre key stage standards ▪ At Age Related Expectations.	• All academies clearly articulate their approach, rationale and procedures to ensure high expectations as well as accurate assessment and tracking procedures Assessment leads meet to moderate and Benchmark assessment information.
1.3	• All academies will drive and support collaboration utilising staff interests and areas of expertise at all levels.	• To co-construct Ethical Leadership Principles for all collaborative work within the Trust. • Collate School Improvement Priorities and create networks to address	• All academies agree to and demonstrate in practice an understanding of the shared Collaborative Leadership Principles across the Trust.

1. All our children and young people enjoy their learning and make at least good progress		
What we will achieve	**How we will do it**	**Measurable outcomes**
• To ensure that improvement activity is centred within a Quality Assurance framework.	common themes across schools involving leaders at all levels. • To develop a 3-year framework of Quality Assurance activity. • Peer Review will take place each term as part of a Quality Assurance Cycle.	• Multiple Networks linked to address collective priorities established across the Trust engaging Leaders to collaboratively address common themes. • Joint moderation activity supports triangulation regarding progress. • Increasing numbers of staff are engaged in collaborative development and QA activity
1.4 • All academies ensure ▪ pupils are safe and feel safe ▪ pupils are protected and helped to keep themselves safe from bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. ▪ staff and pupils deal effectively with instances of bullying behaviour and/or use of derogatory or aggressive language	• All academies: ▪ implement agreed safeguarding policies and practice ▪ are moving towards the new PSHE and RSE frameworks ▪ empower and listen to pupil voice • Standards Committee monitor via termly collaborative and external monitoring and review reports	• Safeguarding policies and practice are secure in all academies • All academies can evidence positive approaches to empowering pupil voice

1. All our children and young people enjoy their learning and make at least good progress		
	What we will achieve	**How we will do it**	**Measurable outcomes**

	What we will achieve	**How we will do it**	**Measurable outcomes**
1.5	• Pupil attendance (overall and identifiable groups) is in line with the national average or higher. • Persistent absence rates for all pupils, and for different groups will be at least in line with national figures.	• Attendance policies in each academy articulate robust procedures and action plans to track and manage absence effectively are in place.	• All academies set and achieve challenging annual attendance targets. • Persistent absenteeism is reduced year on year

2. All our children are responsible citizens who make an active contribution to society

	What we will achieve	How we will do it	Measurable outcomes
2.1	• All academies, individually and collectively: • recognise that emotional health and wellbeing influences pupils' cognitive development • have effective approaches to promote personal development, positive behaviour and pupil welfare.	• Behaviour Leads network developed to share practice, moderate and support one another. • The range of nurture and enrichment opportunities within and across academies impact positively on pupils' personal development and welfare. • Profile of Restorative Practice raised.	• Behaviour policies and practice, together with their monitoring, review and evaluation are secure within and across all academies. • All academies can evidence the positive impact of nurture and enrichment opportunities
2.2	• Staff and pupils deal effectively with instances of bullying behaviour and/or use of derogatory or aggressive language.	• All academies will: ▪ sustain restorative approaches ▪ ensure pupils have the confidence to express their concerns and know what to do in relation to such instances ▪ maintain pathways, such as pupil councils, to empower Pupil Voice. ▪ Behaviour data.	• Pupils feel safe • Pupils have a voice. • Academies have processes in place to monitor, review, maintain and develop effective safeguarding procedures
2.3	• Equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity is promoted across the curriculum	• All academies ▪ recognise their pivotal role in ensuring life opportunities are available to all and in helping all members of their academy community to promote equality and positive relations	All academies meet statutory requirements (website etc.) and evidence British Values in curriculum and employability opportunities.

2. All our children are responsible citizens who make an active contribution to society		
What we will achieve	**How we will do it**	**Measurable outcomes**
	• promote SMSC ethics and British Values throughout the curriculum and daily life of the academy.	

3. All our Academies are continually improving our quality of provision

		What we will achieve	How we will do it	Measurable outcomes
3.1		All academies: • A joint collaborative approach to using research based practice in our schools. • To share research based practice with others fully in the Trust through the synergy website. • To share research within the Trust at a wider school level with new and established partners.	• Develop a shared website to bring together existing research. • Develop the roles of Research Champions within each school. • To QA research between each of the schools. • To offer access to the synergy board for other settings to use and explore.	• All academies have identified active research champions. • Synergy website is live and used by all academies. • Schools are actively involved with partners outside the trust in a research capacity.
3.2		All academies: • Will collectively agree that behaviours are a form of communication. • Will collaborate together to ensure all schools feel supported in dealing with challenging behaviour. • Will develop a shared useful recording system for behaviour incidents that can be informative to all.	• To establish a behaviour leads group with a shared understanding of the intent, implementation and impact of the group. • To develop a report writing system whereby it can be used by all and adds value to impacting on behaviour in all academies. • To develop a share understanding that behaviour in the first instance is a communication and ways in which it is reflected upon are consistent to the values of the Trust.	• Shared group understanding statement used by all. • Report writing system that is consistent in its use but reflects the differing needs of the academies and the children in their journeys. • Academies through the wellbeing surveys feel supported and confident in dealing with challenging behaviour.

3. All our Academies are continually improving our quality of provision

	What we will achieve	How we will do it	Measurable outcomes
3.3	All academies: • contribute to shared peer review, moderation and quality assurance processes • External review of academies provides triangulation and moderation of judgements and link to focused internal and external 'health checks'.	• Launch School to School Review's with a focus upon School Led identified priorities. • Maintain consistent schedules for completion of core MER and improvement cycles • Leaders are tasked to support and enable (e.g. SLEs, middle leaders) peer reviews on agreed focus areas • External reviews are used to moderate self-evaluation judgments. • Consider a system of annual 'Health checks'	All academies: • overall effectiveness rated at least 'Good' • contribute to peer review
3.4	• We will encourage and support opportunities for staff and governors / trustees at all levels to talk, explore, learn and share together creating a community of aspiration across the Trust.	Increase the number of staff at all levels collaborating on improvement activity within, across and beyond Nexus academies, e.g.: • collaborative learning and enquiry • action research • coaching and mentoring • sharing (best) practice • Active links with Teaching and Research Schools • Intranet, social media usage.	• Increasing numbers of staff and governors / trustees sharing practice and contributing to improvement activity • Collation and sharing of case study material across Trust

3. All our Academies are continually improving our quality of provision		
What we will achieve	**How we will do it**	**Measurable outcomes**
	• Launch and raise the profile of the Synergy Platform to collate and share ideas, research and practice.	
3.5 • All leaders are competent and confident to provide outstanding leadership and management	• Provide opportunities for leaders to work together to share expertise and drive agreed priorities • Ensure clear career pathways at all levels, including accredited CPD (e.g. NPQML, NPQSL, NPQH) • Succession plan across the MAT developed through talent spotting and support staff in the Trust into leadership positions.	• The number and trend of leaders and aspirant leaders engaged in relevant CPD • Succession planning, including a focus on 'growing our own' is evident in each academy and across the Trust • Centrally held information regarding staff identified as future leaders / CPD accessed. • A system to recognise the significant contributions from staff is in place.
3.6 • Develop partnerships with teacher training agencies to increase the capacity for staff to develop professionally.	• Initiate contact with the Universities and teaching schools alliance to assess what offer is at each stage of staff development. • Develop an easy to access guide on how to become a teacher and beyond for all academies "The Nexus Offer!" • Develop a 'specialism module' that guides teacher trainee students towards a career in specialist settings.	• Meet with partner agencies to develop shared understanding of strengths and areas to develop in current offer. • Develop a key information guide to promote the 'Nexus Offer'. Write and deliver a new specialist module for the trainee partner agencies.

3.   **IMPACT**

Quality assurance & quality improvement

Quality assurance within Nexus Multi Academy Trust involves the systematic review of programmes, systems and processes to maintain and improve quality, equity and efficiency to improve teaching and learning – with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners. Our quality assurance approaches include mechanisms that are external and internal to schools and the MAT. External mechanisms may include peer reviews with other MATS or externally sourced audits or review. Internal mechanisms may include school self-evaluation, staff appraisal and classroom-based student assessments. These mechanisms have different but complementary purposes. They are part of a coherent,

integrated system, with the different mechanisms supporting and reinforcing each other. This kind of productive synergy maintains a clear focus on school development.

Quality assurance is important for accountability as well as to support ongoing development of schools and of teaching and learning which supports and challenges schools to adapt to the changing needs of our pupils. The focus is not only on improvement but also innovation and research which can then be shared for the benefit of all learners.

In a school improvement model based upon the principles of collective efficacy it is important that we use peer review/research to learn from one another and to test our thinking, including creating partnerships with other MATs or groups of schools. In order to facilitate this, we will continue to pursue the following activities:

- Trust and school leaders meet regularly to discuss and systematically cover the different aspects of school performance and improvement with a clear agenda so that everyone comes ready for a focused conversation that helps drive improvement for all;
- Trust and school leaders regularly visit schools and classrooms together (e.g. for joint learning walks,

lesson observations) so that they develop a shared picture of their schools;

- Gathering parent, staff and pupil feedback as an integral part of assessing schools' performance and progress;
- Implementing a formal quality assurance model – which includes peer review and research - enabling school leaders to identify their own development needs from their improvement plans and self-evaluations;
- Deploying staff across the MAT, based on their expertise, where this meets the needs of all parties.
- Developing an infrastructure and networks to support shared professional learning and development – e.g. through subject networks, peer-to-peer coaching and observations and reflections on classroom practice linked to the MAT's priorities;
- Promoting practice-based learning and research that are focused on areas likely to make the biggest impact on the MAT's priorities;
- Sharing practice and research using an on-line platform – Synergy;
- Developing and implementing a Data strategy that gives the Trust, governors, school leaders and staff access to data when they need it during the year;
- A mechanism for sharing Data across the MAT through sourcing a single Management Information System (MIS) to allow easy analysis of data;

- Ensuring that school improvement is a core part of the cycle of business of Trust governance with a strong culture of scrutiny and challenge around school improvement at all levels.
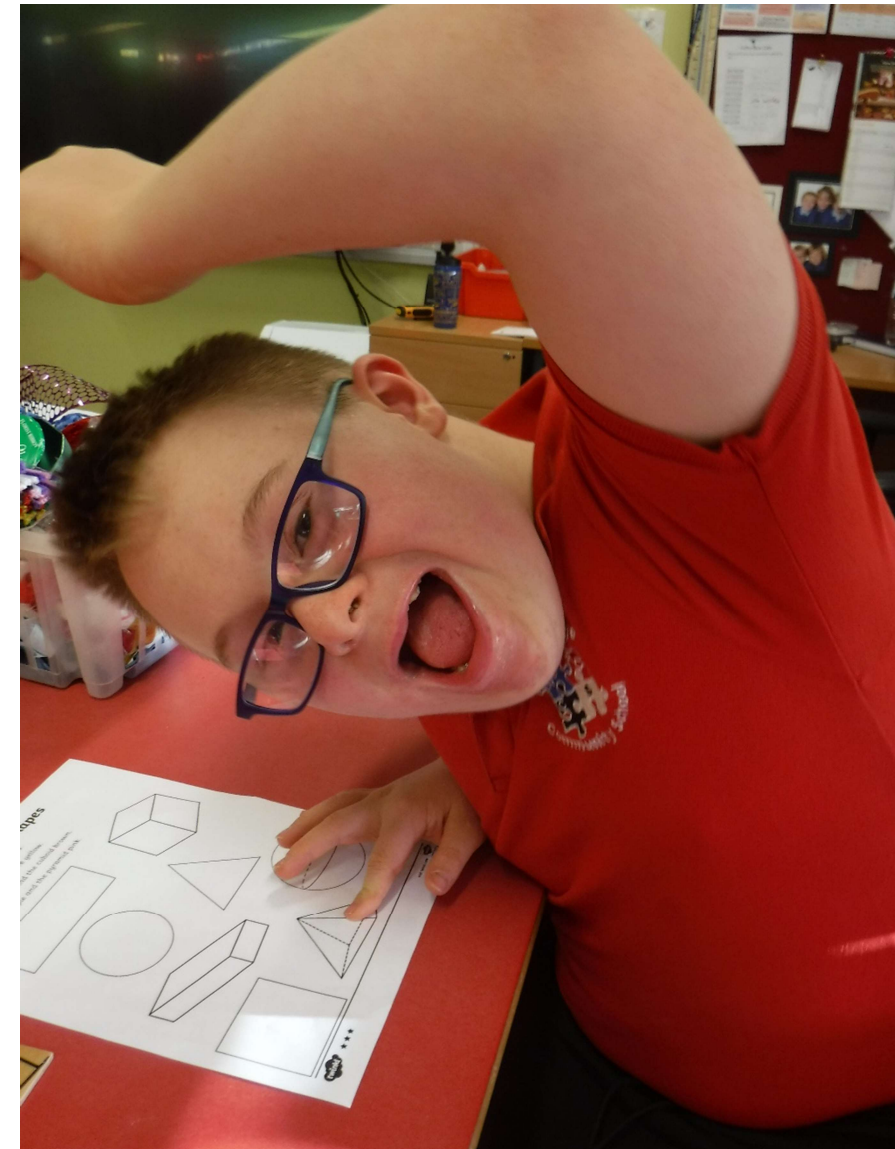
Whilst it will cotninue to evolve to respond to the changing structure and needs of the MAT, the folliwing is an example of what the Trust's Quality Assurance calendar looks like.

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
CEO / Lead Head / Headteacher supervision meeting	MSIP visit with 3 agreed areas of focus	CEO / Lead Head / Headteacher supervision meeting		MSIP visit with 3 agreed areas of focus	CEO / Lead Head / Headteacher supervision meeting
Review School SEF		Review School SEF		Review School SEF	
Agree areas of support from SEF		Agree areas of support from SEF			
Quality of teaching and learning peer review			Quality of teaching and learning peer review		
Dashboard data collection (previous academic year)	Pathways Data drop and collation	Dashboard data collection (Autumn data)	Pathways Data drop and collation	Dashboard data collection (Spring data)	Pathways Data drop and collation
School Development Plan Review and Collation	Attendance data	School Development Plan Review	Attendance data	School Development Plan final review	Attendance data
School self - evaluation	Safeguarding Health Checks		Stakeholder voice – pupils, parents, staff	Safeguarding Health Checks	
NQT network		NQT network		NQT network	
	Behaviour lead network		Behaviour lead network		Behaviour lead network
	Assessment leads network		Assessment leads network		Assessment leads network
	ICFP and benchmarking				
Moderation groups					
External review of self-evaluation					

A summary of our School Improvement model is as follows:
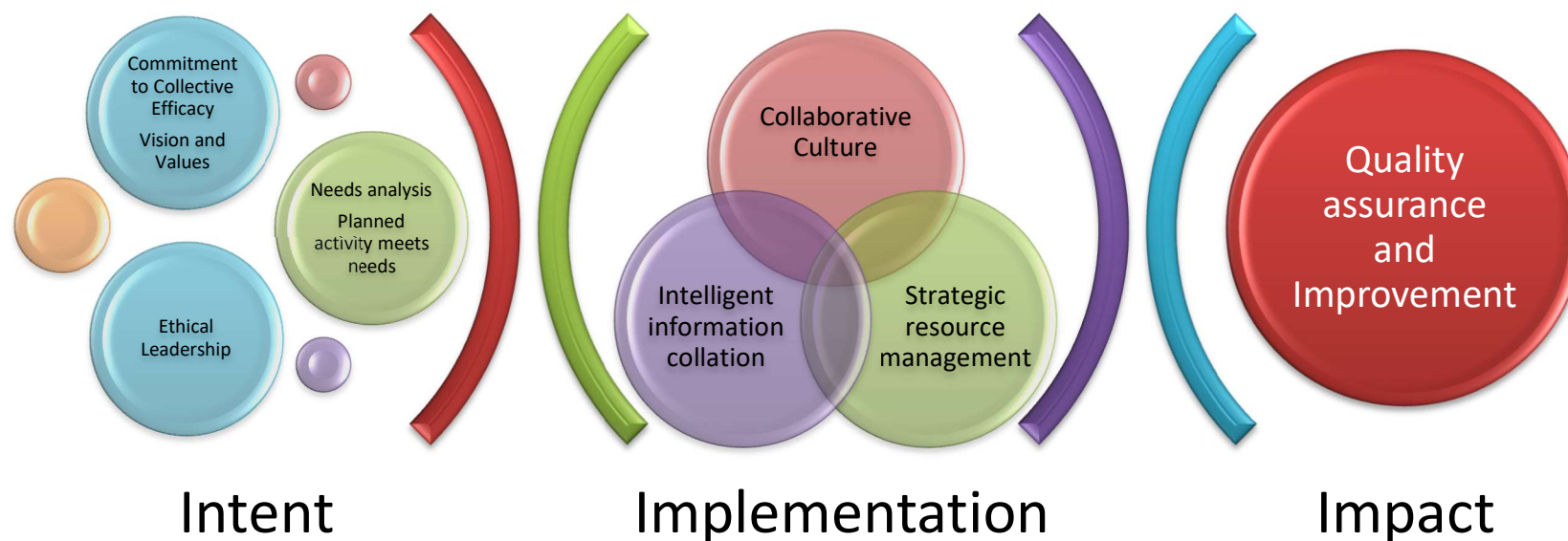
This framework will be accompanied by an annual MAT improvement plan which will be approved and monitored by the Trust Standards Committee, in conjunction with the "local" overview and scrutiny function of the local governing bodies.