Our Vision for School Improvement
The School Performance Alliance for Richmond and Kingston, otherwise known as SPA[RK], shares an overarching vision with our schools to improve the engagement, aspiration and achievement of all children and young people in Kingston and Richmond.

The quality of teaching, learning and leadership in our schools is generally exceptionally strong and it is our belief that through working in partnership with schools we can build on the excellence that exists, while striving to reach ever greater heights.

Aims
In addition to any measures detailed within the Children and Young People’s Plans adopted by Achieving for Children (AfC) and Kingston and Richmond councils, we have three key strategic aims related to school performance and outcomes:

1. Support all schools to become sustainably Good or better while providing a network that supports and protects schools that find themselves in challenging circumstances;
2. Help all schools to continually improve provision and raise standards, narrowing gaps in attainment between groups of children and young people;
3. Cultivate a professional development framework jointly with our Teaching School Alliances that actively facilitates school-led improvement.

Our approach is also shaped by the recognition that schools are free to choose where to obtain support. As a consequence, partnership and collaboration are key characteristics of the way in which SPA[RK] operates.

SPA[RK] Membership
To ensure that statutory duties are met, Standard membership is the default status for all state-funded schools within Kingston and Richmond. All Standard members can choose to become Premium members.

Premium membership offers schools enhanced school improvement support for an annual subscription. Schools can choose specific strands of premium membership or subscribe to the full premium package. There are four specific strands:

1. Governor Support
2. School Improvement Partner (SIP)
3. Networks and FFT
4. In-school Bespoke Support (credits)

The School Improvement Strategy Group (SISG)
The cornerstone of our approach is to ensure that headteachers have a prominent role in all that we do. This welcomes and encourages their engagement across a wide range of activities undertaken by SPA[RK] but takes formal shape in the form of the School Improvement Strategy Group (SISG). The purpose of this group is to provide a governance mechanism for SPA[RK] and to support its strategic direction. Further information can be found in Appendix 1.
The School Improvement Team
The team is led by the Director of Education Services and the Associate Director for School Standards and Performance, providing a wide range of support and challenge activities to schools. Members of the team are:

- Head of Governor Support and Governor Support officers
- Senior School Improvement Advisors who act as SIPs
- 4 x Lead School Improvement Advisors (SEND, EY, English and Mathematics)
- School Improvement Advisors and School Based Advisors (with particular expertise in science, computing, 6th form, PPG, EMA and PSHE)
- Lead School Performance Advisor
- 2 x Education Safeguarding Advisors (including online safeguarding)

The team are experienced practitioners, skilled at working with school leaders, teachers and governors to improve provision and outcomes. Further information about their background and areas of expertise can be found at www.achievingforchildren.org.uk/SPARK

School to School Support
The principle of school to school support is at the heart of what SPA[RK] does. Across the 111 schools within our area there is a wealth of expertise and skills. For example, SPA[RK] utilises School Based Advisors for the development of Science. Further information can be found in Appendix 2.

Governor support
Premium membership to SPA[RK] entitles schools to the full Governor Support service offer. Governor Support can also be subscribed to as an independent strand. Schools can expect high quality support and a comprehensive training programme aimed at all governors and clerks. Full details can be found in Appendix 3.

School Improvement Partners
Schools who purchase either full Premium membership or the School Improvement Partner strand are allocated a SIP. The SIP is expected to work as a ‘partner’ and establish an excellent working relationship with school leaders, exercising their functions as equal professionals in the school improvement process. Further information can be found in Appendix 4.

Networks and FFT
Schools who purchase either full Premium membership or the Networks and FFT strand are entitled to send as many members of staff to SPA[RK] networks as they wish over the year. They also have access to Fischer Family Trust (FFT) membership. Further information can be found in Appendix 5.

In-school Bespoke Support (Credits)
Schools purchasing either full Premium membership or the In-school Bespoke Support (Credit) strand are allocated a number of credits for bespoke support. Further information can be found in Appendix 6.

Validating school self-evaluation
SIPs will seek to validate the school’s self-evaluation against the criteria detailed within the Ofsted Handbook for the Inspection of Schools. Schools are expected to have completed their self-evaluation prior to the first SIP visit each year. In reviewing the school’s self-evaluation, SIPs apply the relevant Ofsted criteria as rigorously as their knowledge of the school and of the inspection framework allows. SIPs work to establish agreement with headteachers over this, but reserve the right to make and report on judgements that disagree if considered necessary. Further information can be found in Appendix 7.
Appendix 1

The School Improvement Strategy Group (SISG)
The membership is formed of headteachers by election, the Director of Education Services and the Associate Director for School Standards and Performance. All headteachers are from schools with full or partial Premium membership of SPA[RK]. The term of office for headteachers is three years.

- 3 x primary phase headteachers (Kingston)
- 3 x primary phase headteachers (Richmond)
- 1 x secondary phase or special school headteacher (Kingston)
- 1 x secondary phase or special school headteacher (Richmond)
- Other members may be co-opted as necessary.

SISG’s responsibilities are:
- Agreeing the School Improvement Strategy and setting performance targets.
- Discussing and analysing confidential reports on the categorisations of schools made by the School Improvement Team, to refine and improve support for all schools to be sustainably good or better.
- Planning specific interventions to improve school standards, including the effective use of resources within SPA[RK].
- Reviewing the charge for Premium membership, including any tiering of charges based on school size, low pupil numbers or deficit budget.
- Keeping the terms and application of the credit system under review, managing expectations to ensure that demand and capacity are matched.
- Approving and keeping under review the format of SIP reports and Notes of Activity (NoAs) to schools.
- Contributing to selection panels for appointments to any staff posts that arise, in close consultation with the Director of Education Services and Associate Director who will lead on recruitment and selection.
- Quality assuring the service along with the Director of Education Services and Associate Director, including an annual survey of views from Premium school headteachers and chairs of governing bodies.
- Reporting on the leadership, direction of travel, priorities, quality of service and value for money to Premium school members.

SISG is chaired by headteacher members, on a rotation basis, depending on the location of the meeting. Six meetings will be held per year, on a half-termly basis. Each of these meetings will provide oversight of SPA[RK] delivery. Members are expected to declare any conflicts that may arise during discussion regarding individual schools or the overall strategy.

Meeting agendas will be circulated at least five working days before the meeting. Minutes will be distributed to members within a week of the meeting. Discussions are confidential to the group. Actions and decisions will be recorded and headteacher representatives will report through the School Improvement Forum. Administrative support for the Board will be provided by AfC.
Appendix 2

School to School Support
There is outstanding practice and a great many talented and highly-skilled teachers and leaders in our schools. Within our boundaries we have a number of Teaching School Alliances and many headteachers accredited as Local or National Leaders of Education (NLEs / LLEs). We have three accredited National Leaders of Governance (NLGs) providing extra support and mentoring for governing bodies. There are a growing number of Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs). SPA[RK] plays an important role in ensuring that this valuable resource is widely shared for the benefit of all.

SPA[RK] seeks to enhance support for schools through the engagement of school staff as Moderators, Effective Practice Leaders and Leading Teachers.

All members of SPA[RK] recognise that there is not a significant financial resource available to fund school to school support activities. The alliance encourages schools to share their expertise, time and resources freely with each other but also recognises that schools may wish to enter into their own financial arrangements regarding this.

SPA[RK] seeks to work closely in collaboration with the Teaching School Alliances (TSAs) within Kingston and Richmond to maximise the opportunities that arise from their status. The TSAs are:

- Grey Court Teaching School Alliance  
  www.greycourt.richmond.sch.uk/grey-court-teaching-school-alliance
- Kingston Teaching School Alliance  
  www.coombegirlsschool.org/page/?pid=21
- Latchmere Teaching School Alliance  
  www.ltsalliance.org
- Richmond Primary Teaching School Alliance  
  www.richmondprimarytsa.richmond.sch.uk
- Richmond Teaching Schools Alliance  
  www.waldegrave.richmond.sch.uk/52/teaching-schools-alliance
Appendix 3

Governor Support
Governor Support provides a complete support, advice and comprehensive continuous professional development (CPD) service for governors, associate members and clerks from all school settings. We provide relevant and timely guidance, advice and tools to empower governors and clerks to fulfil their duties effectively.

Our approach is to work with boards to review and challenge current practice, identify and implement solutions that best suit their needs to improve the effectiveness of leadership and management and promote school improvement.

Statutory duties
Includes the following, where applicable:

- the recruitment and nomination process of local authority governors
- changes in the constitution of the board and raising Instruments of Government
- the appointment process and support of parent governor representatives on local authority forums
- the appointment of additional governors or interim executive board members

Premium offer
Advice and support

- Online, telephone and email advice and support on any governance issue
- Distribution of links to key governance communications
- Monthly eBulletin communicating training opportunities and updates for that month
- Director for Education Service’s termly briefing for chairs and vice-chairs
- Weekly eNews for Schools distributed directly to all governors and clerks, communicating local and national educational items for information and action

Clerking support

- Assistance with recruitment and contractual arrangements of professional clerks to the governing board
- Tailored one-to-one induction and mentoring for new clerks
- Access to the clerks’ termly briefing and networking group
- Access to targeted CPD for clerks
- Governor continuing professional development
- Comprehensive, targeted CPD schedule
- Unlimited CPD attendance on governor training from the centralised CPD schedule
- Access to extensive Governor e-learning modules via NGA Learning Link
- Monthly governor CPD eBulletin

Governor continuing professional development

- Comprehensive, targeted CPD schedule
- Unlimited CPD attendance on governor training from the centralised CPD schedule
- Access to extensive Governor e-learning modules via NGA Learning Link
- Monthly governor CPD eBulletin
Appendix 4

School Improvement Partners (SIPs)
The allocation of SIPs to schools is based on a match of experience and expertise to reflect differing school needs and to ensure a balance of workload across the Senior School Improvement Team. This allocation takes into account the views of headteachers and governors but is not directed by it.

Please note: In recognition of the difficulty in recruiting sufficient suitably experienced personnel to perform this role with secondary schools SPA[RK] will consider proposals from secondary schools taking up the full Premium package for the appointment of an independent SIP. If the school shares these SIP reports on a termly basis, they will be eligible for a small rebate.

The SIP’s central role is to provide schools with support and robust external challenge. This should happen directly through the school improvement dialogue, analysis of written evidence and through accessing and brokering external support. The guiding principles for the work are described below.

The SIP and the headteacher will:

- Build excellent mutually respectful relationships;
- Focus on pupil progress and attainment across the ability range and the factors that influence it;
- Provide and receive professional challenge and support which contributes to school self-evaluation and consequent improvement planning to build on strength and support developments so that practice and performance continue to improve;
- Use evidence based assessment of performance to identify strategies to improve leadership, provision, teaching, learning, pupil outcomes and behaviour;
- Recognise and respect the school’s autonomy in planning its development;
- Recognise and respect the SIP’s responsibility to report accurately and honestly without ‘fear or favour’.

The core function of the SIP role is to support and challenge schools to improve outcomes and provision. To fulfil this function, SIPs, in partnership with the Headteacher and senior staff, will carry out the following tasks:

1. Review and comment upon the school’s:
   - self-evaluation in line with current Ofsted criteria;
   - performance in terms of pupil outcomes;
   - priorities for improvement;
   - targets for the current academic year;
   - overall effectiveness.
2. Make recommendations about the support the school needs and how to access this.

An important set of outputs from the joint evaluation and review process are the SIP reports. These reports are designed to summarise key issues and developments discussed with the school’s leadership team and provide governors with an objective external view of their school’s performance. Reports are made available to all members of the School Improvement Team to inform support for schools.

- Outcomes report: A short report on the outcomes achieved by pupils over the previous three years (where appropriate) is produced by the Lead School Performance Advisor and published to governors by the end of the first half of the Autumn term.
- Termly report to Governors: A longer and more formative report is authored by the SIP after discussions and visits that take place during the autumn term. The starting point for the report is the school’s self-evaluation. This report provides commentary on the school’s performance against agreed key priorities for improvement, alongside future targets. Once drafted, the report is sent to the headteacher for review and comment. It should be noted however that the final report is the responsibility of the SIP. The report is first published to governors by the end of the Autumn term.
The report is then developed throughout the rest of the year following further discussions and visits, with updates published termly.

Rather than have any set limit on the time a SIP may spend working with any individual school, the role requires SIPS and schools to be flexible and responsive to needs and priorities. In this way, SIPS are able to ensure that all Premium schools are able to receive highly-tailored and appropriate support.
Appendix 5

The Behaviour, SENCo and Teachers in charge of Specialist Provisions networks are all free to all schools.

Networks Package 2017-18

Primary networks
- School Improvement Forum for Headteachers, Deputies and Assistant Heads
- Early Headship Programme
- Deputies and Assistant Heads Forum
- Early Years Leaders
- Assessment Leaders
- Primary English Subject Leaders
- Primary Mathematics Subject Leaders
- Primary Science Subject Leaders
- Primary Computing Subject Leaders
- Effective Practice Networks Nursery – Year 6
- Ethnic Minority Achievement
- PSHE
- PPG Champions

Secondary networks
- School Improvement Forum for Headteachers, Deputies and Assistant Heads
- Early Headship Programme
- Deputies and Assistant Heads Forum
- Heads of Sixth Form
- Secondary English Subject Leaders
- Secondary Mathematics Subject Leaders
- Secondary Science Subject Leaders
- Secondary Computing Subject Leaders
- Ethnic Minority Achievement
- PSHE
- PPG Champions

Schools that do not have premium membership can participate in any of the above networks for a charge. The charge will be calculated over the whole academic year for that network at £43 per hour.

FFT
This provides access to FFT Aspire. The key features of this online data analysis tool are:
- Self-evaluation dashboards for a number of key stages across primary and secondary phases, allowing school leaders to better explore outcomes over the last few years for cohorts, subjects and different pupil groups;
- Target-setting estimates using FFT50, FFT20 or FFT5 benchmarks for individual pupils, pupil groups or cohorts compared to similar pupils nationally in previous years;
- Student Explorer, which enables school leaders to see a summary of pupil history, including contextual characteristic information from school census, previous attainment and attendance data.

Further information on FFT Aspire can be found at the following link: https://fft.org.uk/
Appendix 6

In-School Bespoke Support (Credits)

Schools purchasing the full Premium package are allocated
- 30 credits if their self-evaluation of overall school effectiveness is good or better,
- 60 credits if their self-evaluation is that their school requires improvement in one or more areas, and this is agreed by their SIP or confirmed by Ofsted.

Schools that have only purchased the Credit package are allocated 25 credits.

School leaders should seek advice from their SIP on how best to use credits linked to their school’s priorities for improvement. Examples for credit usage include:
- Bespoke in-school support for:
  - Improving planning and teaching
  - Developing middle leaders (self-evaluation, action planning, monitoring, parent events, etc)
  - Formative and summative assessment, teacher assessment and moderation of judgements
  - Improving provision for children with particular needs
- Work with individuals, teams or whole staff from:
  - School Improvement Advisors, including Senior and Lead Advisors
  - The School Performance Advisor
  - Safeguarding Advisors (including online safeguarding)
- Advice for governors on headteacher performance management
- SPA[RK] Ed projects
- Visits to Outstanding schools beyond Kingston and Richmond (may have a credit charge)

All school-based work will have a credit charge that is shared with school leaders in advance of the support being agreed, typically 1 credit per hour. Planning time and report writing is also chargeable. Further information is available in the Menu of Activities.

Credit usage will be recorded in the termly SIP report. School leaders will also be able to access an online summary of support received and credits used through the link on the termly SIP report. Schools are encouraged to keep track of their credit usage and if possible to pace their credit use across all three terms.

Schools that have exhausted their credit allocation may be able to purchase additional credits, subject to capacity within the School Improvement Team. If this need occurs, school leaders should discuss options with their SIP. Credits cannot be carried forward from year to year. Any schools overspent on credits, will be charged during August. Credits are generally non-transferable, although where schools are in a formal federation or trust arrangement they may be shared.
Appendix 7

Flow chart for support and challenge

Principles:
- It is the duty of Local Authorities to challenge school providers to deliver high educational standards and better outcomes for children.
- School Improvement Partners and Link Advisors will use their professional judgement to check their schools against this flow chart at least termly, more frequently if there is a concern.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Premium school – good+ (sch &amp; SIP)</th>
<th>Premium school – sch &amp; SIP disagreement</th>
<th>Standard school – low risk</th>
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| • Termly SIP visits adapted to the school's priorities, including first hand evidence of teaching and learning  
• Governor support programme  
• Access to a wide range of networks  
• 30 credits for bespoke support | • Termly SIP meeting, Chair or Vice Chair of Governors invited, including first hand evidence of teaching and learning  
• SIP report to record detail of disagreement, moderated by wider school improvement group  
• 1-day review to explore areas of disagreement  
• Pre-warning meeting at the Guildhall for Headteacher and Chair of Governors with Director of Education Services  
• Action plan drawn up, monitored termly by Director of Education Services, SIP, Diocese (if appropriate), Headteacher and Chair of Governors  
• Director of Children’s Services writes a warning letter to the school and copies this to the DfE | • Statutory services  
• Risk assessment sent to Chair of Governors  
• One visit to school of 1.5 hours in either Spring or Summer term (if possible)  
• Risk assessment updated with short paragraph and sent to Chair of Governors |

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<tr>
<th>Premium school – RI (sch &amp; SIP)</th>
<th>Premium school – High Priority</th>
<th>Standard school – high risk</th>
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| • At least half termly SIP visits, involving governors where possible, including first hand evidence of teaching and learning  
• SIP supports school self-evaluation and development planning  
• Tailored support for governors and clerk  
• SIP signposts specific SIAs, networks and / or school-to-school support  
• 60 credits for bespoke support  
• SIAs prioritise time for these schools when requested by SIP  
• Consider 1-day review  
• Consider termly Directors review | • At least monthly SIP visits, involving governors where possible, including first hand evidence of teaching and learning  
• SIP models school self-evaluation and development planning  
• Rapid Action Plan is put in place  
• SIP attendance at FGB or committees  
• SIP plays active role in brokering SIAs and school-to-school support  
• 60 credits for bespoke support  
• SIAs actively contact school and prioritise time for them  
• Reviews of key areas involving wider team  
• Termly Directors review  
• Alternative approaches to the school’s leadership and governance may need to be considered | • Statutory services  
• Risk assessment sent to Chair of Governors  
• One visit to school of 1.5 hours in either Spring or Summer term (if possible)  
• Risk assessment updated with short paragraph and sent to Chair of Governors  
• Alternative approaches to the school’s leadership and governance may need to be considered |

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