

Strategic Business Plan 2021-2024

2021 version



Our vision for Valour Academy is that all children will feel loved, happy and safe.



We will provide each child with many and varied opportunities to develop their character to feel accepted; to develop a sense of belonging; to be driven and resilient and to be inspired and be inspiring.

Valour Multi Academy Trust, Walbottle Village Primary school, The Green, Walbottle, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 8JL

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Valour Academy Trust is an exempt charity and company limited by guarantee registered in England with company number 1076640

Dame Nicola Stephenson Nov 2021

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PART ONE 1. Our Vision



Our vision for Valour Academy is that all children will feel loved, happy and safe.



We will provide each child with many and varied opportunities to develop their character to feel accepted; to develop a sense of belonging; to be driven and resilient and to be inspired and be inspiring.

We hope achieve this through the following aims:

- To raise the aspirations of each individual within our school community so everyone strives for personal excellence in everything they do;
- To help students build on their strengths and overcome their weaknesses;
- To prepare each child for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of life and to develop enquiring minds.
- To encourage children to respect and care for themselves, others and their environment.
- To provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum that combines excellence in teaching with enjoyment of learning.
- To instil in the children a high level of self-esteem and confidence in their own worth.



‘We love learning and are passionate about the high standards we can achieve in all aspects of life. We give our best and expect the best from one another.’ Dame Stephenson 2021

2. Our Context

Valour MAT was established in June 2017 to provide a formal relationship between two National Support schools Walbottle Village Teaching school and Beech Hill Primary which brought together 2 Outstanding primary schools both driven to support other schools whenever possible. We aim to transform provision and outcomes for schools which chose to join our partnership in the North East of England.

Alongside our improvement work in our current academies, Valour MAT is working actively with other schools and aims to work with the RSC to grow its family of academies. This will enable a greater level of system-led improvements, further opportunities for collaboration between leaders and staff at all levels of the organisation.

Valour offers an opportunity for schools to convert to academy status within our trust and keep their individuality and be supported to thrive in their own context.

We would welcome schools who are interested in dynamic collaboration, working in conjunction with a range of partners, to deliver tailored programmes of school improvement that will meet the needs of each academy.

As we have built our academy based staff, we can offer services to academies that will support improvements to teaching and learning, allowing schools to focus on their core business rather than being distracted by academy business. Our finance team are exemplary.

Valour MAT is based around the previous Walbottle Village Teaching School and has close relationships with all the schools in the teaching school alliance. We offer the flexibility to meet schools where they are on their journey and adapt to their specific circumstances. We also work with schools in neighbouring local authorities who need specific support for teachers and leaders. Walbottle Village Academy is a National Support School, a Teaching School and is graded good. It is located in the outer west of Newcastle and serves 206 children. Beech Hill Academy is a National Support School, a Schools Direct hub and is graded outstanding. It is located in the outer west of Newcastle and serves 451 children.



3. Our Strategic Aims

Strategic Aim 1: Outcomes

All academies are enabled to maintain good outcomes.

- a. To improve standards in reading, Writing and Mathematics so year on year more pupils achieve and exceed ARE and progress exceeds that made by pupils with similar starting points.
- b. To secure outstanding teaching and learning of a rich and broad curriculum in each academy.
- c. To ensure that groups at risk of underachieving make at least good progress.
- d. To strengthening the distinctiveness of Valour academies.

Strategic Aim 2: Leadership

To ensure outstanding leadership and governance at Valour Trust Board, local Advisory Board and academy level.

- a. To develop a fully functioning, outstanding Trust Board that represents the full range of skills required.
- b. To embed outstanding governance at the LAB level, focused clearly on raising standards.
- c. To empower leaders to lead the improvement journey within and beyond their academies, being held to account for outcomes.

Strategic Aim 3: Academy Improvement

To establish a self- sustaining, system led, collaborative approach to improvements that enables rapid improvement where required.

- a. To secure an accurate and robust self- evaluation process.
- b. To develop school to school support.
- c. To build stronger links with the RSC, Teaching School Hub and training providers.

Strategic Aim 4: Business

To strengthen Valour MAT by incorporating new academies and ensuring future stability

- a. To commence measured and systematic growth.
- b. To deliver high quality services to academies.
- c. To develop the structure of the organisation.
- d. To deliver a strong financial plan.

Strategic Aim 1: Outcomes

All academies are enabled to maintain outstanding outcomes.

- a. To improve standards in reading, Writing and Mathematics so year on year more pupils achieve and exceed ARE and progress exceeds that made by pupils with similar starting points.
- b. To secure outstanding teaching and learning of a rich and broad curriculum in each academy.
- c. To ensure that groups at risk of underachieving make at least good progress.
- d. To strengthening the distinctiveness of Valour academies.

Success criteria 2022

SC1. Outcomes and progress at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are above national levels on aggregate across Valour MAT and in each academy.

SC2. Outcomes in Y1 phonics are above national average across Valour.

SC3. All teaching is at least good in each academy.

SC4. Groups at risk of underachieving are progressing above those of other children nationally and achievement gaps are narrowing.

SC5. All academies are judged to be at least good in Ofsted inspections.



Key Performance Indicators

K1. Aggregate results are at least in line and mostly above national levels for attainment and progress.

KP2. Attainment and progress of disadvantaged children is inline or above their peers.

KP3. 100% of teaching is at least good.



Strategic Aim 2: leadership

To ensure outstanding leadership and governance at Valour Trust Board, local Advisory Board and academy level.

- a. To develop a fully functioning, outstanding Trust Board that represents the full range of skills required.
- b. To embed outstanding governance at the LAB level, focused clearly on raising standards.
- c. To empower leaders to lead the improvement journey within and beyond their academies, being held to account for outcomes.

Success criteria 2022

SC6. Valour Board is recognised as being high- performing and has the full trust of the Regional Schools Commissioner and the academies to lead the organisation forward.

SC7. The Scheme of Delegation provides clarity of responsibility and is well understood and implemented.

SC8. Leadership, including governance, is judged through our own systems and external review to be at least good in each academy.

SC9. Local Advisory Boards (LAB) demonstrate clearly through their minutes and monitoring role, that they provide appropriate challenge and are clearly focused on raising standards in teaching and learning.

SC10. Substantive leadership at senior level and well – developed middle leaders, are demonstrating strong progress in each academy as evidenced by head teacher updates.

SC11. All on-going safeguarding, health and safety, and legal responsibilities continue to be met.

Key Performance Indicators

KP4. Policies for safeguarding, health and safety, HR and finance are all reviewed during 2021-2022 and updated where necessary.

KP5. Leadership is externally verified as at least good in all valour academies.

KP6. Valour MAT meetings and LAB meetings are running at full complement with attendance levels in excess of 85%

Strategic Aim 3: Academy Improvement

To establish a self-sustaining, system led, collaborative approach to improvements that enables rapid improvement where required.

- a. To secure an accurate and robust self-evaluation process.
- b. To develop school to school support.
- c. To build stronger links with the RSC, teaching School Hub and training providers.

Success criteria 2022

SC12. All academies benefit from frequent monitoring visits from the CEO, in line with the academy's current needs, bringing rapid and measurable improvement where most needed.

SC13. Evaluation by academies matches that of the CEO and is verified by external evaluation.

SC14. Each academy's improvement plans align with Valour's strategic plan and are specific to the needs of each academy, demonstrating rapid progress in any areas of focus.

SC15. We continue to access grant funding to support improvement work through our National Support School status and activities.

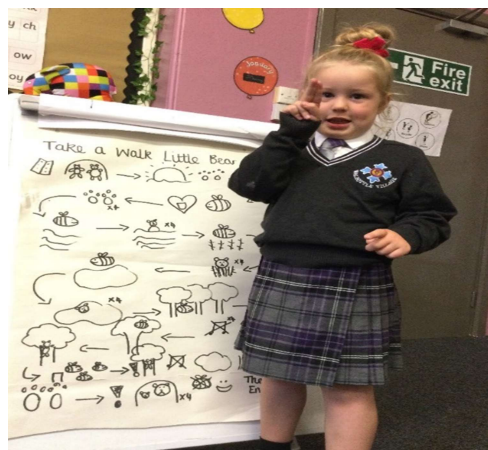
SC16. There is a range of opportunities for joint practice development across Valour that leads to improvements in teaching and learning.

SC17. Valour leads in the deployment of training places and there is evidence of recruitment, across the teaching school alliance, coming through this pool of school direct trustees.

Key Performance Indicators

KP7. All academies are at least good in Ofsted and external reviews.

KP8. The majority of school improvement is led by Valour and the teaching school alliance.



Dame Nicola Stephenson Nov 2021

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Strategic Aim 4: Business

To strengthen Valour MAT by incorporating new academies and ensuring future stability

- a. To commence measured and systematic growth.
- b. To deliver high quality services to academies.
- c. To develop the structure of the organisation.
- d. To deliver a strong financial plan.

Success criteria 2022

SC18. The trust has grown to include 700 pupils.

SC19. Academies express high levels of satisfaction with Valour services.

SC20. We achieve sponsor academy status.

SC21. The staffing structure is clearly developed to manage school improvement and finance effectively.

SC22. Valour is able to effectively deliver growth and improved services across the academies.

SC23. Financial forecasts indicate a stable budget position going forward, with no deficits corporately or in individual academies.

Key Performance Indicators

KP9. Valour has grown to 700 pupils, aiming for 750 pupils by 2023 and 1000 pupils by 2024.

KP10. Valour operates in at least break- even position, generating additional income to maintain the additional extras offered to the children.

KP11 Clear plans are in place for eliminating individual academy budget deficits over a 2 year period, by the end of 2024 or within 2 years of joining Valour.



Risks

These strategic Aims, particularly the latter in relation to the business development of Valour must be considered in line with the Risk Register that is in place to manage opportunities and risks that exist.

PART TWO 4. Our annual plan 2018

Strategic Aim 1: Outcomes- *All academies are enabled to maintain at least good outcomes.*

a. To improve standards in reading, Writing and Mathematics so year on year more pupils achieve and exceed ARE and progress exceeds that made by pupils with similar starting points.



Accountable to LAB, Valour trust.

Actions	People	Date
Ensure a rigorous and clear focus on improving outcomes for pupils at the key milestones across the Trust in English, Maths and the wider curriculum.	HT	Ongoing
Clear data analysis at academy level and also trust wide that celebrates successes and identifies key areas for development.	CEO HT	July 22
Identify common themes in areas for development between academies and group academies together for development work and pair together to share good practice where it needs to be shared.	CEO	July 22
Data tracking approaches to be refined to focus on the use of age related expectations, enabling more effective analysis for improvement and accountability.	HT LAB	Jan 21
A template Headteacher Report to Governors, to include a data report, to be implemented.	HT	Dec 21
Focus on quality of curriculum delivery in reading, writing, grammar, spelling and punctuation and maths for mastery through recommended schemes and programmes of study.	HT	July 22
The newly established Local Advisory Board Standards Committee to proceed with its programme of meeting with Head teachers to support and challenge progress in our academies.	HT LAB	June 22

Head teachers to be the lead officer reporting to the Standards Committee with a sharp focus on outcomes and performance data.	HT	Dec 21
Appraisal process, with Head teachers and staff, including support staff, to have clear link to outcomes and performance, supported by HR trustees, reviewing recommendations.	CEO VT HT HT CEO	Nov 21 June 22
Identify specific areas for improvement in each academy for inclusion in their improvement plan.	HT	June 22
Establish clear and appropriately challenging targets for end of year outcomes and monitor progress towards these, using FFT too effectively and regularly benchmark.	HT	June 22
Review interventions at academy level to ensure sufficient impact and that staff are suitably trained.	CEO HT	June 22
Review use of Teaching Assistants (TAs) to ensure best use is being made of these to raise standards.	SENCo	Jan 22
B. To secure at least good teaching and learning of a rich and broad curriculum in each academy.	People	Date
Review findings from Academy Improvement Meetings and on-going self-evaluation.	CEO	On going
Ensure that Academy Improvement Plans clearly identify further improvement of teaching.	HT LAB	Feb 22 Nov 22
Broker internal and external support as required.	CEO	Feb 22
National Support Schools to deliver packages of support to schools requesting our help.	CEO HT	Sept 22
SLEs to deliver Improving and Outstanding Teaching Programmes to develop practice in schools we support and for any new starters in Valour.	HT DHT HT SLE	Jan 22 Jan 22
In-school development for deputy heads and middle leaders.	HT	Jan 22
Further develop opportunities for collaborative learning, with a particular focus on primary writing through INSET training and curriculum development.	CEO	June 22
Update skills register of SLEs and use more effectively for sharing best practice across our teaching school alliance.	HT	June 22
Develop data systems that support efficient assessment of foundation subjects to support progress across the wider curriculum.	HT	June 22
To share practice across the Trust and beyond that strengthens the quality of provision.		

c. To ensure that groups at risk of underachieving make at least good progress.	People	Date
Use data to track the progress of key groups at academy level and trust-wide.	HT CEO	July 22
Complete the Trust-wide strategy for Disadvantaged/ PP pupils, giving an overall view of performance, provision and expenditure.	HT PP champions SENCO	July 22
Review range of interventions in place and ensure that they are accelerating progress.	Attendance officers	April 22
Monitor attendance of vulnerable groups to identify any potential areas of concern.	Attendance officers	On going
Focus on children with SEND across the Trust, working in conjunction with the SENCO group, to monitor data and share practice together to ensure maximum progress.	FSW	April 2022
In addition to the above, ensure that senior leaders and class teachers are focused on the needs of more able pupils to ensure high rates of progress.	HT	March 22
D. To strengthening the distinctiveness of Valour academies.	People	Date
Continue to promote the work on character across the academies.	DHT	Jan 22
To provide wider opportunities for the children to serve the communities in which they live.	DHT	July 22
To remove the cultural barriers often associated with low income by providing the children with experiences such as London West End theatres, visiting restaurants and residential trips.	HT CEO	Ongoing
To ensure all children partake in charitable work to recognise there are always children struggling more than themselves.	HT	June 22
For children to value love, happiness and safety above material objects and provide opportunities for the children to deepen their self believe and compassion for themselves and others.	CEO HT	July 22
' one cannot fully be considered compassionate unless that includes compassion for oneself' Dame Nicola Stephenson		
Monitoring/ Evaluation		

Progress will be monitored and evaluated by the following means: CEO report to Valour Board; HT reports to the Standards Committee Headteacher reports to LABs; Trust and Academy Data Reports; On-going reports received from CEO; OFSTED inspection reports; External review reports.	Valour Trustees	Dec 22
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Strategic Aim 2: Leadership- *To ensure outstanding leadership and governance at Valour Trust Board, local Advisory Board and academy level.*

- a. To develop a fully functioning, outstanding Trust Board that represents the full range of skills required. Accountable to LAB, Valour Board.



Actions	People	Date
Valour Members to develop their functions to provide appropriate support and challenge to the Board of trustees.	Chair of Board	Oct 22
Trust Board to be the champions of the vision.	VT	Dec 22
Induct new Board Directors and rapidly develop their confidence and understanding in their role.	Chair of Board	Dec 22
Board to carry out annual self-review against characteristics of a successful MAT.	Chair of Board	Dec 22
Identify potential new trustees who can be sought to fill skills gaps where required.	VT	Dec 22
Carry out a review of the trustee's performance to include attendance, expertise, membership and impact on outcomes.	Chair CEO VT	Dec 22
Ensure that all safeguarding, health and safety and legal obligations are met.		

		Dec 22
b. To embed outstanding governance at the LAB level, focused clearly on raising standards.	People	Date
Extend use of the Governance materials on the Trust's website.	HT	Dec 22
Ensure LAB play an active role in school self-evaluation and monitoring standards.	HT	Oct 22
Update Scheme of Delegation on an annual basis.	CEO HT	
Establish better opportunities for training for LAB Members.		Nov 22
Access effective advice for LAB through the NLG and LA Governance Advisor.	HT	Oct 22
All LABs to submit draft minutes and a copy of the Head teacher's Report to the CEO within two weeks of each meeting.	HT	Oct 22
LABs to work with HT to develop succession planning for Chairs and Vice Chairs, as well as to identify recruitment needs.	HT	July 22
Develop a range of more effective documentation to support LAB in their role and to ensure expectations for are clear as well as the associated responsibilities (7 principles of public life).	CEO	Dec 21
c. To empower leaders to lead the improvement journey within and beyond their academies, being held to account for outcomes.	People	Date
Trust Board to ensure effective implementation of the appraisal of Valour Services staff, including the CEO and Chief Finance Officer (CFO)	VT	Nov 21
Deliver effective induction for new Head teachers and Senior Leaders, with clarity regarding who is responsible for what aspect.	CEO	Dec 21
Appraisal to clearly identify areas for personal /professional development / support for Heads.	CEO VT	Nov 21
Rigorous link to pay back to the Trust Board HR Committee.	CEO VT	Nov 21
Revisit Trust-wide responsibilities with the Headteacher group, such that capacity is expanded, and establish clear expectations of what is required, building into appraisal.	CEO	Nov 21
Reporting structures established such that Heads and the CEO can feedback appropriately to the Trust Board.	CEO	Sept 22
Ensure that appraisal for other senior leaders are rigorous and effective.	CEO VT	Sept 22

Delivery of the Senior Leader / Middle Leader programmes to ensure a clear focus on coaching and support to develop monitoring and evaluation for high impact.	HT LAB	Sept 22
Develop the Trust HR Strategy to ensure a strong emphasis on succession planning at all levels of the organisation, including the next generation of Head teachers.	HR VT	Sept 22
Monitoring/ Evaluation		
Progress will be monitored and evaluated by the following means: CEO reports to Valour Board; Headteacher Appraisal report to HR Committee; Headteacher reports to LABs; LAB minutes; Chair's reports to Valour Board; OFSTED inspection reports.	VT	Dec 22

Strategic Aim 3: Academy Improvement- *To establish a self- sustaining, system led, collaborative approach to improvements that enables rapid improvement where required.*

a. *To secure an accurate and robust self- evaluation process.*



Accountable to LAB, Valour trustees.

Actions	People	Date
To establish and develop our Individual Academies Improvement Plans (IAIP), ensuring that support is sharply focused on needs from data analysis.	CEO HT	July 22
Develop our support to other schools in a more system-led way that accelerates progress and allows more rapid intervention.	CEO	April 22
Ensure that individual academy plans align with Valour Strategic Plan.	CEO	June 22
Establish effective reporting procedures from the HTs to the CEO.	CEO	Feb 22
Further refine each academy's self-evaluation statement to ensure that they accurately and efficiently reflect the position of each academy and that they align with reports from LABs.	HT/ LAB	Dec 22
	CEO	Dec

Partner with another academy trust to carry out a process of self-review against the 'Characteristics of a Successful MAT' document.		22
Develop the work of the support schools to utilise strengths of SLEs and others, and to develop ideas in a more open and proactive manner to share resources and strengths.	CEO	Dec 22
b. To develop MAT to MAT support.	People	Date
Develop and embed the peer review aspect of the MAT, ensuring that this is refined as required in order to provide the maximum impact.	CEO	July 22
As the work of MAT develops, utilise the roles of the SLEs to facilitate and encourage greater cross MAT improvement activity.	CEO	July 22
Where academies are deemed to be performing strongly and making sufficient progress, ensure that the Head teachers are provided with the opportunity to support other schools facing greater challenges, within and beyond the Trust.	CEO	Dec 22
Identify outstanding partner schools and standalone academies within the North East of England, to share good practice across a wider sphere.	CEO	Dec 22
Encourage opportunities for schools and staff to visit other Trusts to conduct learning walks and observe children's learning.	CEO/HT	Dec 22
c. To build stronger links with RSC, Teaching school hub and training providers.	People	Date
Strengthen links with the Teaching School Hub within the North East area and deliver programmes of support as required.	CEO	Dec 22
Monitoring tightly the quality of support provided to schools and the impact it has had in terms of pre-agreed success criteria with appropriate follow-up.	CEO	July 22
Be involved in close work with the RSC	CEO	Dec 21
Work in partnership to deliver the remainder of the school-to-school improvement work in North Tyneside	CEO	Jan 22
Monitoring/ Evaluation		
Progress will be monitored and evaluated by the following means: CEO reports to Valour Board; Headteacher Appraisal report to HR Committee; Headteacher reports to LABs; LAB minutes; Chair's reports to Valour Board; OFSTED inspection reports.	VT	Dec 18

5. Our Financial Plan



a. To maintain measured and systematic growth.	People	Date
Review growth strategy for next 3 years and plan for next stages for funding capacity growth.	CEO CFO	Jan 22
Visits to groups of schools / standalone academies interested in converting to academy status.	CEO	Dec 22
Ensure that current new academies are fully integrated into the work of Valour, including training for new governors and leaders.	CEO	Jan 23
Seek further opportunities and solutions for bringing small schools into the Trust that can utilise shared staffing and resource arrangements.	CEO	Dec 23
Due diligence with those wanting to convert and seeking approval.	CEO CFO	Dec 23
b. To deliver high quality services to academies.		
Review the quality framework through which we judge the quality of what is provided to the academies – self-evaluation/survey.	VT CEO	July 22
Complete an HR Strategy.	HRT	July 22
Carry out a review of job descriptions, contracts and other HR paperwork to ensure all is fit for purpose and in accordance with latest good practice and guidance.	CEO	Nov 21
c. To develop the structure of the organisation.		
Ensure the effective induction of new head teachers, senior leaders and other staff.		

Identify opportunities to share staffing and expertise across academies, particularly in areas such as SEND, IT, Finance, Premises.	CEO HT	Jan 22
Develop the administration and business support services as Valour grows, centrally and within academies to ensure a rational function.	CFO CEO	Jan 22
As the organisation grows, review staffing and support at all levels, centrally and within academies to ensure maximum value for money.	CEO CFO	May 22
Establish effective process of review with external providers to provide specialised legal, financial, safeguarding, health and safety, and human resources support.	VT	May 22
Carry out a thorough review of Valour estates in order to plan for future premises development and capital bids.	CEO CFO	July 22
Audit of need as far as IT development is concerned, moving towards a more joined-up and coherent network across Valour which brings greater efficiencies and better communication.	CEO CEO CFO	Aug 22
	CEO CFO	March 22
d. To deliver a strong financial plan – see worked financial model below.		
Deliver on the 2021-22 budget, identifying savings and better value for money where possible.		
Budget planning meetings with all academies to secure longer-term financial planning.	CEO CFO	July 22
Work closely with those in potential deficit situations to plan for avoidance or recovery.	CFO CEO	April 22
Strengthen the month-end timetable and deliver promptly finance reports to academies in line with a published timetable to support LAB monitoring.	CFO CEO	Jan 22
Complete procurement review in respect of goods and services provided to academies to identify savings (target £20k in first year) and secure best value and economies of scale across the organisation to include:	CFO	March 22
- Human Resources; Payroll; Insurance; IT and electronic equipment; Stationery; Energy; Teacher supply; Safeguarding; Health and Safety; Management Information System.	CFO	March 22
	CFO	Feb 22
Apply for grant funding for projects such as IT and curriculum development.		March 22
	CEO CFO	

Ensure that funding streams are identified to secure the on-going financial future and expansion of Valour MAT through such as the Sponsor Capacity Fund and the Condition Improvement Fund.	CEO CFO	March 22
Continue to be in a position where each school is not dependent upon financial support from contingency and is able to build a healthy surplus for the long term good of Valour (3% of income).	CFO CEO	April 22
Monitoring / Evaluation		
Progress will be monitored and evaluated by the following means: Chief Executive's report to Valour trustees; Finance Reports to Resources Committee; External audit; Education and Skills Funding Agency; Internal surveys		Dec 22

Financial Planning Model 2021-2025

	2021/21	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Income	£3,837,511	£3,934,442	£4,009,311	£4,113,377
Expenditure	£3,785,213	£3,880,912	£3,990,479	£4,112,129
Surplus/deficit	£52,299	£53,530	£18,832	£1,248
Surplus as % of income	13.6%	13.6%	4.6%	3%
Pupil Numbers	609	608	609	609
Central support costs as % of income	5%	5.1%	5%	5%



6. Glossary

CEO Chief Executive Officer

CFO Chief Finance Officer

EYFS Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception)

FFT Fischer Family Trust – providers of assessment information

GLD Good Level of Development (Early Years)

HRT Human resources trustees.

LAB Local Advisory Board

NGA National Governors' Association

OFSTED Office for Standards in Education

RSC Regional Schools Commissioner

SC Success Criteria – measure of success by end of the Plan

SENCO Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SLT Senior Leadership Team

