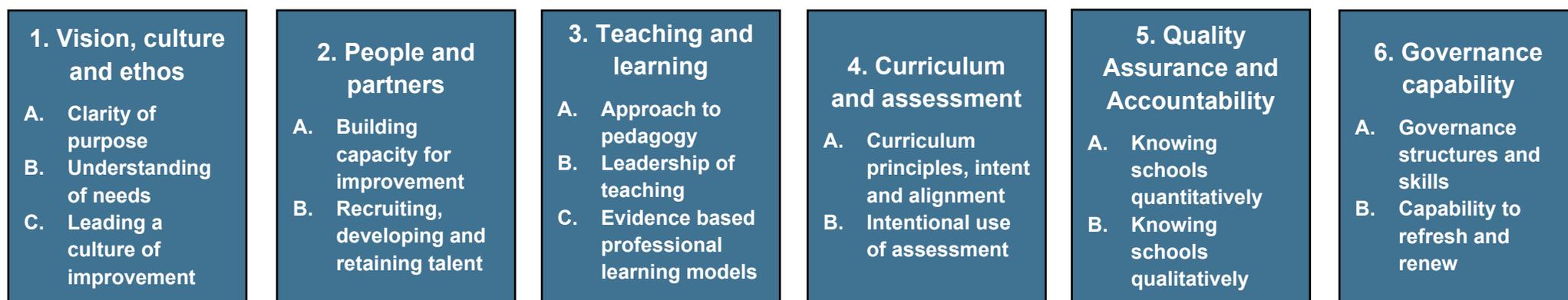


MAT Assurance Framework

This framework has been designed to help Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) understand their current capacity to *support and drive* school improvement – so that they can build and strengthen their current capacity and potentially to grow their capacity to support more schools.

The framework breaks down school improvement capacity into 14 elements, under six main headings. These are based on research about what works in MATs and similar networks of schools internationally. The framework - which was initially developed by and tested with a group of MATs in the SW region - does not assume that there is one best way to support and drive school improvement as a MAT; instead, it isolates the questions, issues and practices that should enable all kinds of MAT to become more effective in supporting their schools to improve.

The MAT assurance framework:



How to use this framework

For each of the 14 elements, the framework identifies questions to start with as well as additional questions to consider. It describes what strong and weak improvement capacity would look like in a MAT.

Use the questions and descriptions to rate your MAT against each element along a four-point scale from red (weak capacity) to green (strong capacity). Descriptions have deliberately not been provided for the 'Amber Red' and 'Amber Green' ratings. If you think that your MAT matches neither the 'Red' nor the 'Green' description, think about which end of the scale it is closer to, and choose the appropriate rating. The right-hand column has space to mark your rating. Guidance about possible uses of this framework - with examples from MATs - has also been published.

Remember: this tool is diagnostic, not evaluative or judgemental. The aim is to identify your MAT's most significant areas of strength and challenge, so that you can build your capacity for improvement. A 'Green' rating does not mean that an element is currently perfect, just that it is an area of strength upon which to build. Likewise, a 'Red' rating does not imply failure or underperformance, it simply highlights an area where capacity building should be a priority.

Element	Questions to consider	Red (weak) looks like...	Green (strong) looks like...	Current rating
1. Vision, culture and ethos				
<p>1A. Clarity of purpose</p> <p>Vision for the MAT Link to strategy Roles and responsibilities</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <p>i. Does the MAT have a clear vision of what excellent education looks like in practice?</p> <p>ii. Has the vision been widely communicated within and beyond the MAT? Does it drive decision making at all levels across the MAT?</p> <p>iii. Does the MAT know <i>how</i> it will improve the schools in its trust to deliver its shared vision for excellent education?</p>	<p>i. The MAT has not yet fully developed and refined its vision for the quality of education such that it is insufficiently precise</p> <p>ii. The vision hasn't been communicated to schools within the MAT or the wider community</p> <p>iii. School improvement initiatives are often reactive and/or incoherent and consequently have limited systematic impact</p>	<p>i. The MAT has a clear and compelling vision for the quality of education it expects to deliver in all of its schools</p> <p>ii. There is a clear and shared articulation of <i>how</i> schools across the MAT will be supported to improve, and this is followed systematically across the MAT</p> <p>iii. The MAT vision has been widely communicated and shared internally and externally with key stakeholders</p>	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <p>iv. Can the MAT articulate and explain how its strategy for improvement connects to its vision for excellent education?</p> <p>v. Has the MAT clearly articulated the distinctive roles of the MAT, clusters and individual schools in driving continued school improvement?</p> <p>vi. Do directors, trustees and staff share the vision and approach, and does it inform and drive decision making at all levels across the MAT?</p>	<p>iv. There is no shared language of improvement across the MAT and schools can't see how the improvement strategy connects to the overall vision for education</p> <p>v. There is limited clarity across the MAT about the roles of key players in driving school improvement</p> <p>vi. Staff and leaders in schools are largely unaware of the vision; key decisions are reactive and ad-hoc, or mainly viewed through the lens of an individual school</p>	<p>iv. The MAT is able to exemplify how its vision for educational excellence can be achieved through an aligned language and practical examples that form the basis of MAT wide expectations</p> <p>v. The distinctive roles of all those responsible for driving school improvement have been clearly defined, and regularly reviewed</p> <p>vi. Everybody in the MAT is aligned around the educational vision and can describe what it looks like in practice. Fidelity to the vision drives all key decisions</p>	

<p>1B. Understanding of needs</p> <p>Pupil/School Needs Link to MAT priorities Approach to school improvement for different schools</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Does the MAT have a clear understanding of the full spectrum of needs of pupils in its schools (i.e. SEND, pupil premium, low and high prior attainment and EAL pupils)? ii. Does this understanding of needs and performance link to priorities for improvement across the MAT as a whole? iii. Is the MAT's understanding of the improvement priorities of different schools within the MAT informed by a strong understanding of the data and evidence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Leaders' understanding of the differing needs of pupils is superficial; decisions are too often reliant upon assumption/guesswork ii. MAT leaders' priorities for improvement are unclear or too numerous to be manageable and/or do not address the needs of specific groups of pupils or schools within the MAT iii. The MAT's approach to school improvement is not sufficiently refined – or data-informed – to respond to evidence of pupil and school needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. MAT and school leaders go beyond headline data to understand variations and trends in performance between groups of pupils within/between schools, phases and geographies ii. MAT leaders have developed a manageable set of priorities for improvement to meet the specific needs of their schools, pupils and communities iii. MAT leaders have a deep understanding of the performance of different groups of pupils across its schools and a differentiated approach to meeting the needs of all pupils and schools 	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Does the MAT know how to differentiate its approach to school improvement from its weakest to its strongest schools? v. Does the MAT have clear systems and processes to diagnose the needs of new joiners and ensure they quickly get the support they need? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. The MAT's approach to improvement is inflexible and doesn't take account of new evidence or the improvement journeys in individual schools v. The MAT doesn't have systems to quickly diagnose the needs of new joiners and develop a bespoke plan for support and intervention to meet their needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. MAT leaders can point to ways in which they have adapted their approach to meet the needs of schools at different stages of improvement and build improvement capacity for growth v. The MAT quickly diagnoses the needs of new joiners and provides any support needed 	

<p>1C. Leading a culture of improvement</p> <p>Aspirations for pupils Non-negotiables vs autonomy for schools Staff engagement Innovation</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Is the MAT systematic in how it fosters high aspirations and expectations for pupils in all its schools? ii. Is the MAT clear about what it regards as the non-negotiables for school improvement and where schools have autonomy to decide for themselves? iii. Is the leadership structure of the MAT clear about responsibility for school improvement with clear accountabilities for impact? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Aspirations and expectations are insufficiently ambitious and inconsistent across schools within the MAT ii. There is confusion and inconsistency over what are MAT-wide expectations and what schools are able to decide for themselves iii. It is unclear how responsibility for school improvement is structured across the trust or how it relates to the leadership of teaching and learning within individual schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Aspirations and expectations for all pupils are universally ambitious in all MAT schools and this is systematically reinforced by MAT leaders ii. The MAT has a clear rationale for what decisions and activities it expects to happen at MAT level, cluster (or regional) level and school level iii. The relationship between the leadership and accountability for school improvement at school and MAT level is clear and well understood by all 	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Do staff across the MAT feel like they have been genuinely engaged in co-constructing the approach to improvement? Are they committed to working across the MAT to support all of its schools? v. Is the MAT's approach to developing consistency and respecting the identity and context of individual schools reviewed and adjusted on the basis of evidence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Staff feel that they have not been involved in developing (and are not motivated by) the approach to improvement, which has consequences for levels of engagement with the MAT and willingness to support others v. There is unhelpful rigidity in some aspects of the relationship between the MAT and their schools, coupled with too much fluidity in other areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. The MAT has opportunities for school leaders and staff to engage with and participate in development of school improvement initiatives at whatever point the school joins v. The balance between autonomy and consistency is reviewed and adjusted in light of evidence and feedback from school leaders within the MAT 	

2. People and partners

2A. Building capacity for improvement

Capacity for school improvement
Using the MAT's best leaders and teachers
External partners

Questions to start with:

- i. Does the MAT have a clear strategy which sets out **how it will structure and locate capacity for school improvement** both currently and for anticipated growth?
- ii. Does the MAT have a clear **system for identifying who are its best leaders and teaching staff** and which schools have strength in specific phases or subjects?
- iii. **Does the MAT know where its areas of weakness are**, in terms of curriculum and teaching and learning performance, and how it plans to tackle them with rigour and urgency?

- i. The MAT lacks the structures, expertise or capacity to deploy teaching and learning support effectively across its schools in response to identified needs
- ii. Where pockets of expertise exist, it is often in isolation and not widely known; as a result, schools look externally before looking to internal colleagues
- iii. The MAT does not understand its main weaknesses and/or does not have a clear plan to address these weaknesses (including using external expertise where appropriate)

- i. MAT leaders organise the teaching and learning support between schools, clusters and the centre based on a clear, evidence-informed theory of action and evidence of impact
- ii. MAT leaders 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
- iii. MAT leaders have a clear understanding of their weaknesses and a plan for addressing them; they are open to learning from and with others

Additional questions:

- iv. **Are system leaders and lead practitioners being used strategically** to support other schools, model good practice and coach their peers?
- v. Does the MAT make use of an intentional and **prioritised set of partnerships and networks** that contribute to improvement?

- iv. The MAT hasn't yet developed mechanisms to use its most effective leaders/practitioners to support and develop other staff and schools across the MAT
- v. Limited and incoherent use is made of hubs of recognised expertise such as Teaching School Hubs and National Leaders of Education

- iv. The MAT adopts carefully considered approaches to using system leaders and lead practitioners and promotes knowledge transfer through coaching, modelling and enquiry led learning
- v. Recognised hubs of expertise such as Teaching School Hubs or National Leaders of Education play an integral part in supporting school improvement

<p>2B. Recruiting, developing and retaining talent</p> <p>Recruiting to the MAT Staff Progression Talent Management</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Does the MAT have a clear approach to recruiting staff at all levels - teaching assistants, teachers and leaders? Do staff seek to join the MAT or do they see employment as largely defined in the context of an individual school? ii. Does the MAT have a well-developed strategy for developing teaching staff throughout their careers? iii. Does the MAT have a common model for appraising staff and identifying priorities for staff development? iv. Does the MAT have a clear strategy to promote staff well-being and manage workload? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Staff recruitment and development is delegated to schools; there is no co-ordinated approach across the MAT; staff decide whether to join the school rather than being part of the wider MAT ii. Teaching staff and leaders are not able to benchmark their current performance against clear expectations, which restricts the MATs ability to support promotion and development opportunities iii. There is no common model for appraisal; appraisals are left to individual schools to manage and do not focus on staff development across the MAT iv. The MAT approach to staff well-being and workload is unclear, or is left to schools to determine for themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The MAT has a clear approach to recruiting and developing the best staff in line with its vision; staff are attracted to a school because it is part of the MAT ii. The MAT provides consistent expectations for the standards teachers are required to meet from NQT year onwards; there is a clear development pathway for all staff, which might include placements across the MAT iii. A shared model for appraisal helps school and MAT leaders make informed choices on deployment and development; appraisals help staff grow as professionals iv. The MAT has a clear approach to staff wellbeing and workload that identifies actions that the MAT and schools can take to support staff at all stages of their career 	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Do all staff understand what opportunities for progression look like across the MAT and how they can gain promotion? vi. Is there a MAT succession planning and talent management strategy supported by formal development programmes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Progression and promotion opportunities are not understood by staff and not used in order to grow/retain talented teachers and leaders vi. There is no systematic approach to developing talent; staff have to find their own opportunities to develop and may choose to leave to find opportunities as a result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Progression and promotion is clear and transparent and give staff who demonstrate their effectiveness opportunities to progress vi. The MAT is implementing a talent management strategy to place staff where they are most needed; middle/senior leaders are deployed strategically and supported by formal development 	

3. Teaching and learning

3A. Approach to pedagogy

Pedagogical principles
Sharing practice across the MAT
Evaluation/evidence

Questions to start with:

- i. Are the **principles which underpin the MAT's approach** to teaching and learning visible and understood by all?
- ii. Is there a shared understanding across the MAT about **what great teaching and learning looks like**, based on research and evidence?
- iii. Does the MAT provide **regular opportunities to share and learn** from outstanding practice?
- iv. Does the MAT have **clear expectations and systems for a well-ordered learning environment** and meeting the needs of pupils with behaviour issues?

- i. The MAT has not yet developed or defined the core principles which will underpin its approach to teaching and learning
- ii. There is wide variation in the pedagogical approaches employed across individual schools, which make it difficult to embed a shared language of learning or provide informed leadership of teaching and learning across the MAT
- iii. There are little/no opportunities for teaching staff to see great teaching in practice
- iv. Behaviour management and the learning environment is left to individual schools to manage, with mixed and varied results

- i. The MAT's approach to teaching and learning is underpinned by core principles informed by a wide evidence base of proven practice
- ii. The MAT's principles of learning provide a common language that facilitates conversations about teaching and learning across the MAT
- iii. There are regular opportunities for teaching staff to see and learn from really great practice
- iv. MAT leaders set clear expectations for the learning environment. Schools are able to access strong systems for behavioural support when needed leading to high standards across the MAT

Additional questions:

- v. **Does the MAT designate phase/ subject experts** who focus on deepening subject knowledge, developing the curriculum and schemes of work?
- vi. Is there a coherent approach to evaluating the **impact of specific pedagogies and interventions** by the MAT?

- v. Collective subject leadership is underdeveloped. Where phase/subject experts have been designated, their role is unclear and not adding value
- vi. Individual approaches to teaching and learning are isolated within individual schools, limiting opportunities for MAT wide improvement

- v. Phase and subject expertise across the MAT plays a vital role in developing excellent subject and phase pedagogy
- vi. Fresh approaches are introduced in a carefully managed way and are forensically evaluated before being rolled out across the MAT

<p>3B. Leadership of teaching</p> <p>Role/impact of school and middle leaders Skills of leaders of teaching and learning Other support for improving teaching</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Does the MAT invest in developing the skills and capacity of leaders to lead and facilitate teacher training and development? ii. Are school/middle leaders supported and empowered as leaders of teaching and learning? Are they equipped to help teachers adopt highly effective techniques in the classroom? iii. How does the MAT invest in both the design and delivery of high quality programmes and support to improve teaching and teachers? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Leaders lack the confidence or expertise to identify effective teaching practice and/or provide support and are not supported to develop these skills ii. The role of middle leaders as leaders of teaching and learning is underdeveloped. Too frequently, middle leaders are not expected/supported to help teachers grow as professionals iii. The MAT has not developed a menu of effective approaches or programmes to improve the quality of teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Middle leaders have the expertise and tools to lead constructive conversations on effectiveness of teaching and learning ii. Middle leaders have an explicit role as leaders of teaching and learning and are effectively empowered and supported with high quality professional development iii. The MAT's leadership of teaching is informed by its core principles of learning bringing coherence and depth to the design and development of programmes and support 	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Does the MAT enable leaders of teaching and learning to have time to consider their impact on improving learning across the MAT? v. How effectively do MAT leaders use evidence in their leadership of teaching? vi. Does the MAT have systems for engaging and involving pupils on how to improve teaching and learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. The MAT does not prioritise the leadership of teaching and learning, delegating it entirely to individual schools v. New approaches to teaching and learning are adopted without a clear rationale and strong evidence that they will be an improvement on existing practice vi. There are few opportunities to engage with pupils' experience of teaching and learning or use pupil voice to improve teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Leadership of teaching and learning is prioritised as the most important improvement activity in schools v. The MAT is involved in developing and learning about what works, uses evidence intelligently, and changes practice based on their own in-school evaluations and external research vi. There are strong systems in place for engaging and involving pupils and using this information to improve teaching and learning 	

<p>3C. Evidence based professional learning</p> <p>Culture of learning Approaches to professional learning Involving pupils</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Are MAT leaders creating and sustaining a 'culture of purposeful learning' in every school? ii. Does the MAT have a clear approach to professional learning and development that combines coaching, classroom practice and engagement in research? iii. Does the MAT have a culture and system for encouraging, assessing and scaling up innovation, and the identification and dissemination of best practice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Opportunities are not intentionally provided for staff to innovate or improve their own practice through professional learning and development activities ii. The means for practice-based professional learning exist only in isolated pockets (if at all); there is no clear approach across the MAT to professional learning iii. The MAT cannot articulate its approach to best practice. As a result, there is no systematic process for taking successful innovations to scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. MAT leaders foster a culture of learning in which staff can develop their practice and test the impact of their practice through structured reflection ii. The MAT has developed the 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 iii. The MAT has a clearly articulated approach to best practice. Evidence-based innovation thrives. There are clear processes for realising the benefits of successful innovation across the MAT 	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Are teachers engaged in the right balance between formal learning and developing their practice with their peers? v. Are systems for teachers to observe and develop aspects of classroom practice together linked to the MAT's and schools' priorities for improvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Staff seldom engage in purposeful inquiry with their peers v. The focus of any practice based learning is ad-hoc and not related to the MAT's priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Staff gain confidence through purposeful models of observation, development of practice and exposure to outstanding practice, and can say how this has helped them improve v. Practice-based learning and research are focused on areas likely to make the biggest impact on the MAT's priorities 	

4. Curriculum and assessment				
<p>4A. Curriculum principles, intent and alignment</p> <p>Age-related expectations Curriculum design Curriculum resources</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <p>i. Does the MAT clearly articulate shared curriculum principles and its curriculum intent?</p> <p>ii. Are there common age-related expectations for each year group across the MAT? (e.g. do all staff agree on what represents a year's worth of progress?)</p> <p>iii. Is curriculum content and design informed by the age-related expectations and the principles that underpin the MAT's vision?</p>	<p>i. The MAT has not clearly defined its shared curriculum principles and leaders and staff are unclear about the MAT's curriculum intent</p> <p>ii. Staff do not have a shared understanding, and limited opportunities to benchmark, pupil progress; as a result there are no consistent expectations as to what constitutes year-on-year progress across the MAT</p> <p>iii. The MAT's vision and common expectations have not informed the creation of a shared approach to curriculum, based on evidence</p>	<p>i. The MAT has a clearly defined curriculum intent and principles that inform the work of leaders and staff in academies in the MAT</p> <p>ii. Staff across the MAT have shared expectations of pupil progress; these are regularly benchmarked within the MAT and externally</p> <p>iii. Everyone in the MAT has a consistent answer to the question: 'what do we want pupils to know and achieve?'; this informs a disciplined and evidence based approach to curriculum development</p>	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <p>iv. Do the curriculum models align with the MAT's shared curriculum principles and/or where local curriculum decisions are made, do they fit the MAT's curriculum intent?</p> <p>v. Does the MAT expect and facilitate shared lesson planning and the development of shared schemes of work/resources to support teacher workload?</p>	<p>iv. Individual academy curricula do not align to the MAT curriculum principles and are not consistent with the curriculum intent</p> <p>v. The MAT does not facilitate the development and dissemination of shared curriculum and lesson resources, and as a result efforts are duplicated across the MAT</p> <p>vi. There are few opportunities to review the effectiveness of</p>	<p>iv. Staff understand which elements of the curriculum are common, where they have discretion to innovate, and why. They can clearly articulate how their curriculum fits with the wider MAT curriculum intent</p> <p>v. Staff are expected and supported by the MAT to develop and access shared resources and evaluate their effectiveness</p> <p>vi. MAT leaders regularly review the curriculum from the perspective of pupils to ensure it provides</p>	

	vi. Can the MAT clearly demonstrate the impact of the curriculum design?	the curriculum for all pupils. The curriculum has evolved without the use of evidence; as a result pupils lack continuity year to year	continuity for pupils' learning and promotes effective transitions	
4B. Intentional use of assessment MAT approach to assessment Assessment tools Moderation	<u>Questions to start with:</u> i. Is the MAT clear about the purposes of the different types of assessment and how they inform conversations about progress in relation to the agreed age-related expectations? ii. Does the MAT operate common assessment cycles across its schools? iii. Does the MAT have systems in place for shared moderation ?	i. The rationale underpinning the MAT's approach to assessment is underdeveloped or not widely understood ii. Assessment cycles are not aligned; the variation between schools means that data on progress is available at different times and therefore hinders meaningful comparison or moderation iii. There are few opportunities and no systems for shared moderation of assessments	i. The purpose of both formative and summative assessment is understood across the MAT, and aligned to the vision, curriculum and age-related expectations ii. Assessment cycles are common across all schools in the MAT, allowing a common picture of progress and comparisons between schools iii. Shared moderation of assessments is routine and underpins the MAT's expectations of what constitutes strong progress	
	<u>Additional questions:</u> iv. Do staff/schools across the MAT follow a broadly consistent approach to assessment based on shared training and peer review? v. Does the MAT systematically review and share the impact of different assessment tools and approaches used by schools?	iv. An inconsistent approach to assessment makes comparisons across the MAT difficult v. The impact of different assessment tools is not shared or is not considered at all	iv. A clear policy is being followed on the regularity and consistency of assessment; this is reinforced by shared training and peer review v. MAT leaders ensure that the impact of all assessment tools in use is systematically reviewed, and that the results are shared widely and used to inform future decisions	

5. Quality assurance and accountability				
<p>5A. Knowing schools quantitatively</p> <p>Use of data across the MAT Granularity of data Performance conversations</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <p>i. Is performance information shared openly? Are conversations between MAT and school leaders open and effective?</p> <p>ii. Do MAT leaders have an integrated picture of performance, pulling together data on progress, attainment, wellbeing, exclusions and other qualitative information?</p> <p>iii. Does the MAT benchmark its performance and progress with other MATs?</p>	<p>i. A culture of transparency has not been established, data is not widely shared. MAT-school conversations are infrequent, superficial and/or defensive</p> <p>ii. MAT leaders' view of performance is limited to their own internal data/opinions and does not take account of the full range of information available</p> <p>iii. Any benchmarking is broad-brush and only with schools' local/traditional competitors</p>	<p>i. Data is shared widely and informs regular, honest, action-focused conversations with schools</p> <p>ii. At all levels (classroom, subject, phase and school) there is effective use of the full range of available data to identify issues regarding progress and to target interventions effectively</p> <p>iii. Performance and progress for each school and the MAT as a whole is specifically benchmarked against schools/MATs regionally and nationally with similar characteristics</p>	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <p>iv. Does the MAT have a well-developed and timely approach to use of data?</p> <p>v. Does the MAT operate smart data systems – i.e. once inputted, can data be aggregated, disaggregated and analysed for different schools/groups of students?</p> <p>vi. Do performance and appraisal conversations of school and MAT leaders reflect the progress being made and capture the future focus of improvement?</p>	<p>iv. The MAT does not have a consistent approach to capturing data. Data collection cycles do not inform timely conversations about quality and improvement leading to impact</p> <p>v. Data collection/analysis is cumbersome and involves duplication of effort; schools are often asked for the same information multiple times which increases workload pressures</p> <p>vi. Performance conversations focus on compliance, process and assigning blame</p>	<p>iv. The MAT has a well thought out data strategy that gives MAT and school leaders and staff access to data when they need it during the year</p> <p>v. A single MIS system is used effectively across the MAT to allow easy analysis of data by school or student group which helps reduce staff workload</p> <p>vi. Performance conversations focus on improvement and development and are informed by evidence</p>	

<p>5B. Knowing schools qualitatively</p> <p>Reviewing progress Parent/pupil feedback Peer Review</p>	<p><u>Questions to start with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Do MAT and cluster leaders regularly meet with school leaders to review progress and is there a clear agenda/template for the conversation so that it is replicated with consistency across all schools? ii. Are MAT and school leaders conducting regular learning reviews across the schools in the MAT in order to triangulate KPIs with the daily lived experience in schools? iii. Is the MAT systematically building in parental and pupil feedback into its assessment of how well schools are progressing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The MAT has not yet developed a routine cycle of school improvement review and monitoring activities. Meetings between MAT/cluster and school leaders are infrequent, ad-hoc and unstructured ii. MAT leaders' views of what is happening in schools is based purely on reported information and occasional lone visits iii. Parent and pupil feedback is not considered by MAT leaders when assessing school performance and progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. MAT/cluster and school leaders meet regularly, in step with the rhythm of the school year; their meetings systematically cover the different aspects of school performance and improvement and have a clear agenda so that everyone comes ready for a focused conversation that helps drive improvement for all ii. MAT and school leaders regularly visit schools/classrooms together (e.g. for joint learning walks, lesson observations) so that they develop a shared picture of their schools iii. MAT leaders employ a range of techniques to gather parent and pupil feedback; this feedback is an integral part of assessing schools' performance and progress 	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Is the MAT using a rigorous quality assurance or peer review model (involving schools within and/or beyond the MAT) to help schools identify development needs? v. Is the MAT using the expertise of staff and middle leaders to work on issues where the need for improvement is identified? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. There is no systematic approach to quality assurance or peer review. Schools are left alone to identify their own development needs with no outside support v. Staff and middle leaders are not seen as a resource for problem-solving across the MAT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. A formal quality assurance or peer review model is in place, enabling school leaders to identify development needs through structured conversations with peers v. Staff and middle leaders are frequently deployed to solve problems across the MAT based on their expertise 	

6. Governance capability

6A. Governance structures & skills

Focus on SI
Skills to focus on SI
Roles and responsibilities for SI

Questions to start with:

- i. **Is there a clear focus on school improvement in your governance structures?** Is it a core part of the board's regular cycle of business?
- ii. Is the overview of MAT performance presented in a clear and timely way that **empowers the MAT board and its committees (including local bodies) to ask the right questions** about performance, and exercise their respective accountability functions?

- i. There is little or no discussion about school improvement or reflection about what is/is not working at board level to improve schools within the MAT
- ii. The MAT board and its committees (including local bodies) are unclear about performance across the MAT. Data provided to governance boards/trustees is too high-level, too detailed or otherwise too opaque to enable intelligent questioning and accountability

- i. School improvement is a core part of the cycle of business of a trust board and local boards and there is strong culture of scrutiny and challenge around school improvement at all levels
- ii. The MAT board and its committees (including local bodies) are provided with a clear picture of school performance across the MAT (based on performance data and qualitative information) and regularly challenge leaders

Additional questions:

- iii. Do you have the **right skills and attitudes at board level** to focus on school improvement and provide robust challenge to hold the executive to account?
- iv. Are the **roles of the trust board and its committees (including local bodies)** in relation to school improvement clearly defined? Are they clearly set out in the scheme of delegation? Does this work in practice?

- iii. There are no or few board members with the necessary experience and skills to focus on school improvement and no plans in place to develop those skills
- iv. The role and responsibilities for school improvement between the board and its committees (including local bodies) are confused or unclear and not set out in the scheme of delegation

- iii. There are regular opportunities to review the skills and expertise at board level to reflect a balance of educational understanding to focus on school improvement. Development opportunities include a focus on school improvement
- iv. The scheme of delegation identifies clearly the responsibilities to develop the overall school improvement strategy, implement it and evaluate the impact of school improvement activities on pupils

<p>6B. Capability to refresh and renew the MAT</p> <p>Reviewing governance Collecting feedback Evaluating and learning from others</p>	<p><u>Question to start with:</u></p> <p>i. Does the MAT board regularly review its own performance and effectiveness? Does it use peer review for governance and/or facilitate learning between governance boards /trustees across the MAT?</p> <p>ii. Is the MAT board looking to learn from other MATs in the region, and from other MATs about their approaches to governance and school improvement?</p>	<p>i. The board rarely or never reviews its own effectiveness. There is little visibility between local bodies across the MAT and no sharing of effective practice</p> <p>ii. The MAT is focused inwards and not looking to learn from other MATs at this stage</p>	<p>i. The board regularly reflects on its own effectiveness and there are clear mechanisms for the board to engage with local bodies and for local bodies to learn from each other and share good practice</p> <p>ii. MAT leaders regularly network and share best practice with colleagues developing a shared understanding of the opportunities and challenges across a sub region</p>	
	<p><u>Additional questions:</u></p> <p>iii. Is the MAT's governance structure reviewed regularly as fit for purpose?</p> <p>iv. Does the MAT board ensure there is the right level of succession planning, training and future proofing to changes to the MAT?</p> <p>v. Does the MAT board have a plan for growth and are the implications of this plan for school improvement capacity understood?</p> <p>vi. Does the board regularly collect feedback from staff, pupils and parents?</p>	<p>iii. The MAT has not asked itself questions about the effectiveness of its governance structures nor had an external review</p> <p>iv. The MAT has no succession plan in place for governance</p> <p>v. The MAT has a vague aspiration to grow but no clear sense of timescales or detailed aspirations. It has not considered the implications of growth for its school improvement model</p> <p>vi. The MAT doesn't collect feedback from staff, parents or pupils and/or this information is not shared regularly with the board</p>	<p>iii. The MAT can demonstrate a development of governance over time in order to best meet the needs of the schools in the trusts and has reviewed its own governance in the last 3 years</p> <p>iv. The MAT has a clear succession plan for governance</p> <p>v. The MAT has clear and well articulated aspirations for growth and a detailed plan to deliver them. This includes plans to build governance, leadership and school improvement capacity</p> <p>vi. The board receives regular reports on staff, pupil and parent views including an overview of any complaints</p>	