



Support on your  
**SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT  
JOURNEY**

Providing extra capacity and expertise for Multi-Academy  
Trusts and groups of schools who are collaborating to improve





“

If you can't trace a line between the work  
you are doing and the improvement  
in a young person's life, then stop!

”

# WELCOME TO THE **SDSA**

Supporting the school sector  
for 20 years has strengthened  
our belief that:

The solutions needed to  
improve outcomes exist  
within our schools

School-led partnerships provide  
the best route to significant,  
sustainable improvement

Partnerships often welcome  
extra capacity to develop  
and implement ideas

Having experienced first the challenge of school leadership to develop effective partnerships, I now lead the SDSA as a not-for-profit, behind-the-scenes organisation to support school partnerships. As the school-led improvement system moves forward, we continue to find that partnerships welcome bespoke services to meet their needs.

The SDSA provides school improvement support for groups of schools that are collaborating to succeed. I am proud that as an organisation over 70% of our work to support school partnerships comes from referrals and repeat business. We feel this shows that the extra capacity, expertise and our unobtrusive style is welcomed.

The SDSA invites you to look through this brochure which provides a snapshot of support for our clients on their school improvement journey.

Please get in touch to discuss the creation and development of specific services that would support the improvement journey of your partnership.

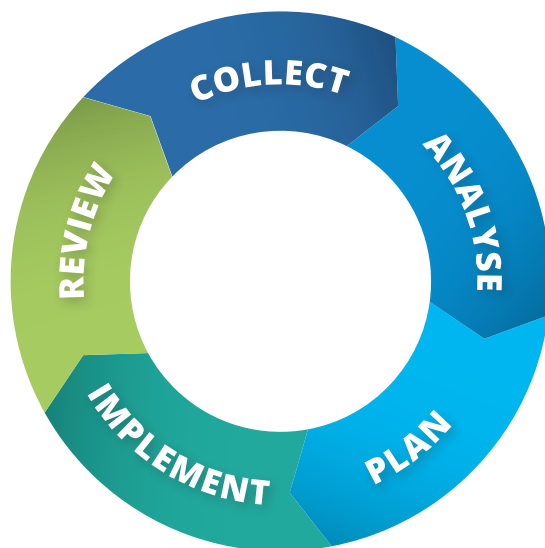
**Peter Chilvers**  
*CEO, SDSA*



Providing extra capacity as  
your not-for-profit partner

# THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

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## **COLLECT**

Collect data and gather intelligence

## **ANALYSE**

Analyse partnership data and intelligence

## **PLAN**

Partnership improvement plan forming

## **IMPLEMENT**

Project management capacity and expertise

## **REVIEW**

Review activity and evaluate its impact



# COLLECT DATA AND GATHER INTELLIGENCE

Challenge and interrogate data and information to ensure that the partnership focus for improvement is channelled effectively.

## What we can help you achieve

- A streamlined approach to compiling performance and achievement data
- A holistic view of teachers, leaders and support staff's capabilities and achievement against performance standards
- A clear view of staff's well-being and understanding of the team opinions around key topical issues
- A robust online self-evaluation diagnostic tool for curriculum development
- Understanding of the views and opinions of pupils using large scales surveys
- A clear and concise understanding against the school improvement partner notes of visit



## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

### PARTNERSHIP INTELLIGENCE GATHERING SYSTEM

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"The SDSA has supported our school improvement processes as a newly-formed, city-wide partnership. They have created and managed **an information hub for us which integrates school data with the performance reports** of peer challenge triads. The SDSA's 'can do' attitude and flexibility to produce exactly what we needed for a good price, makes them an invaluable organisation."

Leicester Primary Partnership

### LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

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"For several years we have been delivering regional leadership development programmes for those progressing towards headship. As part of the SDSA package of support they have supported every participant to complete **self- and peer 360° evaluation against the programme standards and receive individual feedback**. We are always impressed by the great value and personalised support that the SDSA provides."

East Midlands Teaching Schools





# ANALYSE PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION

Challenge and interrogate data and information to ensure partnership focus for improvement is appropriately placed.

## What we can help you achieve

- Clearly articulated school and partnership priorities through sophisticated desk analysis
- A partnership profile of workforce strengths and areas for development
- A structured and effective peer challenge process as a tool to analyse and identify priorities for improvement
- Key priorities identified through the analysis of large school systems, identifying schools requiring specific support and schools who can provide it





## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

### MAT-WIDE REVIEW OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP

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“We were looking for a tailored leadership programme for the 40 most senior leaders within our academy schools. The SDSA started by creating our **own leadership standard to reflect the character and ambition of the trust and then built and delivered a bespoke programme** for us that responded directly to the analysis that this generated. We can't speak highly enough of the SDSA's readiness to listen to our needs and add value to what we have achieved.”

Nottingham Academy

### CITY-WIDE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

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“The SDSA has provided several years of support to the primary schools in Derby as we have developed our city-wide improvement strategy. They have created **school-by-school analysis that has enabled us to map priorities and identify the schools in need of support and those able to offer it.** Being a designated Opportunity Area has brought additional DfE scrutiny and the SDSA's facilitation has been essential.”

Derby Primary Strategy Group





# PLANS THAT IMPROVE OUTCOMES

Construct an outcomes-focussed improvement strategy that uses school-to-school support to build professional capabilities and partnership capacity.

## What we can help you achieve

- Well-developed improvement plans for whole-school systems
- Strategic partnerships to develop an area wide approach
- Strong applications for strategic school improvement and other funding sources
- Effective delivery of high-impact programmes for school improvement and leadership development



## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

### CREATING BESPOKE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES

“We funded the SDSA to develop a school leadership programme for mental health, based on their analysis of unmet need and growing demand within the education sector. They **delivered a complex national contract well, creating and piloting a high quality, strongly-evaluated programme** and rolled it out nationally to almost 1000 schools through a cascade model.”

Health Education England

### SUPPORTING SCHOOL-LED IMPROVEMENT PLANS

“We appointed the SDSA to provide co-ordination across our Opportunity Area initiative in Derby. **Their intelligent and dynamic delivery has continually responded to the needs and aspirations of school leaders to construct robust and imaginative plans.** This not only attracts the inward investment of central government but is also achieving tangible impacts for Derby's children.”

Derby Opportunity Area

### PLANNING MULTI-SCHOOL PROJECTS

“The SDSA worked with eight partnerships to submit applications to the Strategic School Improvement Fund. Their success rate of 75% compared favourably with the national average below 30%. This success, in large part, was due to SDSA's **ability to engage with the sector and articulate complex plans in an accessible format.** As a result, substantial improvement projects have been delivered in Leicester, Derby, Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.”





# IMPLEMENT PROJECT AND PARTNERSHIP PLANS

Ensure efficient and effective delivery  
of the partnership's improvement plans

## What we can help you achieve

- Effective implementation of cross school/partnership-led improvement programmes
- High quality delivery of large scale, long term and area-wide improvement programmes
- Effective brokerage of targeted support utilising school expertise within partnerships
- Streamlined mobilisation of school/partnership-wide programmes



## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

### DELIVERING A MAJOR READING PROJECT

“The project management of the SDSA was fundamental to the success of Project READ in Derbyshire schools. Their end-to-end support from the pre-application stage right through to final evaluation **provided our partnership with the capacity we required** to provide training, organise inspirational activities and deliver in-school initiatives that have made such a positive difference so many vulnerable readers.”

Project READ Derbyshire

### DIRECT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

“At a point when we were struggling to find exactly the support we needed, we were delighted to discover the SDSA's bespoke approach. The **in-school package of training and support that they co-produced and delivered** with us not only significantly improved the quality of our maths teaching but also led to major gains in pupil outcomes.”

Sacred Heart Academy

### DELIVERING A CITY-WIDE EAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

“We are now in our third year of working with the SDSA to co-ordinate our city-wide plan to improve EAL achievement. From the outset they have worked with us to **build leadership capacity within schools through the highest quality CPD**. They have supported the development of new EAL SLEs and helped us to embed sustainability through professional learning networks and school-to-school support.”

Leicester Closing the Gap





## REVIEW ACTIVITY AND EVALUATE IMPACT

Evaluate the impact of improvement activity upon leadership and workforce competence and pupil outcomes.

### What we can help you achieve

- Clear and transparent evaluation of impact upon participants, schools and pupils
- Studies of stakeholder and participant feedback using online tools
- Clear understanding of need using student and pupil voice surveys
- Impact evaluation studies of longitudinal programmes
- Review of system-wide improvement strategies
- National studies of workforce trends and service analysis



## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

### IMPACT EVALUATION REPORTS

“The SDSA has been a significant partner throughout our city-wide reading improvement project for several years. Their analytical approach has ensured that **impact evaluation was built in from the beginning and there was always clarity of purpose in every element of the project.** Each year’s new developments have been in direct response to the sophisticated evaluation that the SDSA supplied.”

Leicester KS2 Reading (SSIF)

### NATIONAL SERVICE-LEVEL SURVEY

“The SDSA has been an essential partner in our national work for several years. At a time when cuts to public services have steadily reduced the amount of support available to learners with a physical disability, the SDSA’s support for pdnet has actually raised our profile. In particular, the SDSA’s **design and delivery of our national surveys has provided us with the strong rationale we needed** to present to the DfE and upon which to plan and deliver our work.”

pdnet national organisation

### LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME REVIEW

“60% of our recent Securing Headship participants have successfully taken their next career step since the programme. The **structured evaluation of personal and professional development** that was led by the SDSA within our programme and their imaginative use of poster presentations and anthologies for effective knowledge exchange between participants has made a significant contribution to their success.”

Securing Headship programme





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