Key changes for the 19/20 RAF

- School Improvement (SI) Portal: RAFs will be submitted online via a new portal, for review by TSC then approval by DfE within the portal
- Improvement areas: Group 1 improvement areas (Leadership, Governance and Financial Management) and Group 2 areas (including broader areas e.g. curriculum or pedagogy, behaviour, SEND). Up to four improvement areas are recommended, Leadership must be included.
- Rationale: required for each improvement area to demonstrate *how* the actions proposed meet the needs of the school, drawing on the EEF logic model
- National Programmes: the approved national programmes in Annex B should be used where they exist and have capacity to support the school. Where a relevant national programme is not available, well-evidenced programmes from other providers with a proven track-record should be identified.
- Outcomes focus: each proposed activity should include anticipated outcomes. Progress against delivery and outcomes will be monitored on a termly basis.
- Sign off: the CEO of the MAT/SAT or Headteacher, and the Chair of the school's Governing Board must agree to the plan before it is submitted to TSC for tier 2/3 schools.

Tier 1 Return

Tier 1
- Tier 1 schools will **not** need a full RAF completing.
- A Tier 1 Return will be required which captures a **brief summary** of:
    - which improvement area(s) are being addressed (e.g. leadership, governance, curriculum development)
    - the identified issues / need within the school
    - the activities delivered / planned with a high level rationale
- The Tier 1 Return will be submitted via a new School Improvement (SI) Portal

Completing the Tier 2 & 3 RAF

- Summary data: contextual data about the school (accessed through the SI Portal). NLEs supporting primary schools should also refer separately to available Phonics data.
- Improvement areas (group 1 and group 2): up to four improvement areas should be recommended, one of which must be leadership
- Ofsted findings / description of the issues: recommended actions should link to findings in the latest Ofsted report
- Rationale for the proposed actions for each improvement area: must demonstrate *how* the proposed actions address the identified need and *why* the system leader has been selected where you are recommending support from a designated system leader.
- The description of the recommended actions should:
    - Identify what each action will entail, who will be delivering it and when (including start and end dates)
    - Be sequenced over the three terms where possible, so that priority issues are addressed first
    - Detail expected outcomes for each activity broken down by term
    - Outline expected costs
- National programmes: the national programmes listed in the RAF portal and Annex B of your NLE guidance should be used where available and appropriate. Where subject specific activities are proposed, alternatives to national programmes must be accompanied by *evidence* of effectiveness of the proposed approach.
- Expected outcomes: specific outcomes should be identified for each activity.
- Funding: total estimated costs must not exceed £16,000 (or £24,000 for Tier 3 schools) and must be completed within three terms.

Tier 2 & 3 RAF submission process

A RAF will need to be submitted for all Tier 2 and 3 schools. RAFs will be drafted and submitted via the SI Portal for TSC review and then to DfE for approve.

NLE drafts the RAF including identified need, proposed activities and rationale
- NLE discusses any subject specific actions with the relevant Hub (or equivalent) and confirms endorsement where not using approved programmes
- NLE can seek clarification from TSC / DfE (RDD) before submitting e.g. for eligibility of a specific proposed action if not a DfE approved programme

Within 5 days

RAF submitted to TSC via SI Portal for review / comment and sign off

TSC leads may request clarification / additional information to be added to the RAF

Within 10 days

RAF submitted to DfE (RDD) for review and approval
- DfE (RDD) may contact TSC / NLE for clarification / more information
- If approved, grant letter issued to NLE copying in TSC, DfE (RDD) and school
- If declined, RAF will need to be re-submitted via the SI Portal by the NLE to TSC and then DfE (RDD)

Top tips for RAF completion

Who?
Be clear on *who* will be delivering each activity. Where designated system leaders will be supporting activities, indicate *why* they have been selected to do so

What?
Know the funding criteria and RAF completion guidance. Ask TSC for clarification if you're unclear.

Set out the proposed activities in as much detail as possible.

Be clear on the changes to the 2019/20 RAF. Take time to familiarise yourself with the SI Portal before drafting your first RAF.

When?
Be clear on timeframes / end dates for funded activities across the three terms. Allow time for monitoring.

Adhere to the timeframes / deadlines provided by TSC / RDD

Where?
Keep in contact with the TSC (ensure you can be contacted by email). Use local connections e.g. with Research Schools to stay evidence informed.

Why?
Have clarity on the problem you are highlighting which needs addressing.
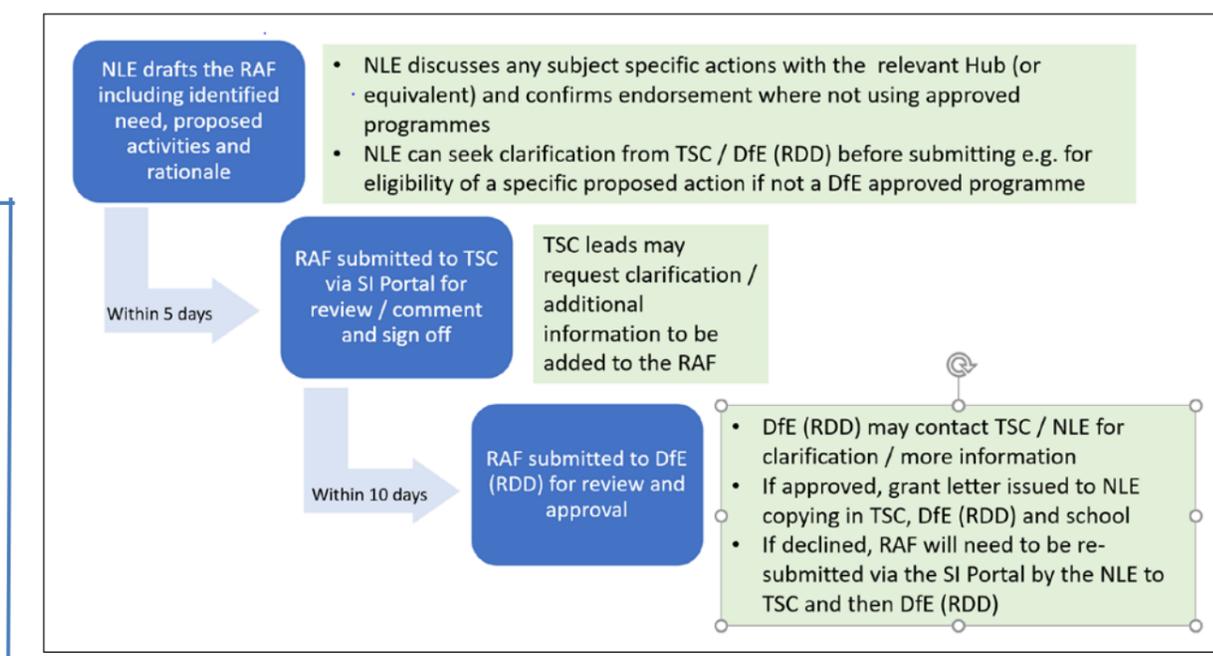
Key guidance for RAF completion

1. SI 2019/20 NLE guidance – word document handbook
2. NLE training event slides
3. EEF logic model (to help inform your rationale for the proposed activities for each improvement area).
4. Online portal training and guidance for NLEs which will be issued in October

Monitoring the 19/20 Offer

For Tier 2 and 3 schools, NLEs will monitor the activity on a termly basis. The purpose of this is to:

- ✓ Track progress of activities, including whether the intended outcomes are being delivered.
- ✓ Gather evidence to indicate of the impact of the support provided.
- ✓ Ensure the project is demonstrating good value for money
- ✓ Update or re-focus plans if required, in discussion with DfE.

You should allocate time (approximately 1 day per term) throughout the plan to monitor progress.

Termly monitoring will take place as follows:

- ✓ Term 1: to report on whether activities are on track (delivery only).

- ✓ Terms 2 and 3: to report on whether activities are on track *and* on progress towards outcomes (delivery and impact)

- ✓ All monitoring information will be reported within the SI Portal, against the actions and outcomes identified in the RAF.

NLEs will be able to report to DfE on whether activities (whether funded or unfunded) are on track; and if necessary recommend that some activities are paused in order to ensure priorities are delivered. NLEs will be able to recommend that funding is withheld where activities have not taken place or have been paused.

Monitoring the 18/19 Offer

The monitoring approach for schools receiving support under the 2018/19 offer is different (and more light touch) to that for the 2019/20 offer.

NLEs supporting Tier 2 schools will require one End of Project report. A template for the end of project report will be sent to you directly for completion in April 2020.

The end of project report will be organised by the school improvement theme and will cover:

- A description of the predicted outcomes
- Dates the outcomes were expected to be delivered
- An indication of whether the outcomes were achieved
- Evidence that the outcomes have been achieved.