



# Proposal to form a Multi Academy Trust

Consultation Document  
Autumn Term 2024



Dear Stakeholder,

We are writing to inform you about an exciting opportunity that could significantly enhance the future of our school. We are considering forming a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) alongside other like-minded schools within our borough.

This proposed collaboration aims to pool resources, expertise, and best practices to further enrich our educational provision, foster innovation, and ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning. We believe this step will build on our strong community ties and support our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional education for every child.

We continue to face considerable external challenges and must do all we can to secure the best provision and outcomes for the children in our care. Forming a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) presents an opportunity to strengthen our ability to address these challenges through shared resources, enhanced support networks, and collaborative innovation. This proposal aims to ensure that our children receive the highest quality education and are well-prepared for their future endeavours.

Your feedback is invaluable as we explore this possibility together, and we encourage your active participation in this consultation process. The following document sets out the proposal. It outlines the potential choices, benefits and challenges, the vision for this collaborative effort, and the steps involved.

We are committed to engaging with all stakeholders throughout this process and seek your views, questions, and concerns to ensure that our decision is well-informed and collectively supported. Your input is crucial in shaping the future of our school, and we look forward to your contributions in this important endeavour.

To respond to the consultation, please read through the provided document carefully and consider its implications for our school and community. We invite you to share your thoughts and questions by emailing your comments to the consultation email address shown on the letter to stakeholders. Your input is vital in this collaborative decision-making process.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our school community.



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# Our options

“Forging Ahead Together”





# Introduction

The Schools' White Paper and the subsequent Schools Bill have outlined the government's ambition for all schools to be part of a Trust by 2030.

After thorough investigation, our schools have considered the following four options:

## **1. Wait:**

Despite the change in government, Labour has not committed to reversing the intention or halting the drive toward a single system, which would consist solely of academies. This approach carries the risk of schools eventually being left with no choices and potentially being compelled to join an established Trust.

## **2. Join an Existing Trust:**

This option involves integrating into an already established Trust, benefiting from existing structures and support systems.

## **3. Wait and potentially join a Local Authority Trust:**

If the Local Authority establishes its own Trust, schools could opt to join it. There has been no dialogue regarding the Local Authority establishing a Multi Academy Trust. Dudley has been designated as an Education Investment Area.

## **4. Form a New Multi-Academy Trust:**

Considering the limited opportunities for new Trusts within our area, this option involves the creation of a new Multi-Academy Trust, offering greater autonomy but requiring substantial initial effort and resources.

We invite you to provide feedback on these options to help determine the most viable and advantageous path forward for our schools.



# Option 1. Wait

## Advantages of “Wait”:

- Minimal Disruption: Avoids immediate changes, maintaining stability for staff and pupils.
- Time to Evaluate: Offers time to observe how government policies develop and how other schools’ transitions to MATs unfold.
- Potential New Options: Unexpected opportunities may arise as policies and educational landscapes evolve.

## Disadvantages of “Wait”:

- Future Uncertainty: Schools may eventually be forced to join a Trust without the opportunity to form one with like-minded schools or select the most suitable one.
- Loss of Control: Risk of losing autonomy if the decision is delayed until it is mandated.
- Funding Disadvantage: Potentially missing out on early access to additional funding and resources available to academies.
- Competitive Disadvantage: Other schools joining MATs might gain benefits and improvements sooner, putting Local Authority schools at a disadvantage.
- Preparedness: Potential lack of preparedness for a smooth transition later, leading to rushed and less strategic decision-making.
- Decreased support from a financially challenged Local Authority.



## Option 2. Join an existing Multi Academy Trust

### **Advantages of Joining an Established Trust:**

- Established Support Systems: Access to existing resources, expertise, and infrastructure.
- Collaborative Opportunities: Opportunities for collaboration and sharing best practices with other schools in the Trust.
- Financial Stability: Potential for improved funding and financial management.
- Enhanced Professional Development: Potential access to broader professional development and training programmes for staff.
- Improved Student Outcomes: Support for improving teaching and learning, potentially leading to better student outcomes.

### **Disadvantages of Joining an Established Trust:**

- Loss of Autonomy: Potential loss of decision-making power and control over school-specific policies.
- Cultural Fit: Risk of cultural misalignment between the school and the Trust.
- Change Management: Possible disruption during the transition period and adaptation to new systems.
- Dependence: Reliance on the Trust for resources and support, which could be problematic if the Trust faces issues.
- One-size-fits-all: Potential for a less tailored approach to the unique needs of the school.



# Option 3. Wait for a potential LA Trust

## **Advantages of Waiting to Join a Potential Local Authority Trust:**

- **Current Stability:** Maintain present control and structure, avoiding immediate upheaval.
- **Local Focus:** Potential to join a Trust with a stronger local focus and community ties.
- **Time for Decision:** More time to evaluate the best options and prepare for changes.

## **Disadvantages of Waiting for a Potential Local Authority Trust:**

- **Uncertainty:** Risk that the Local Authority Trust may never materialise, leaving the school without a clear path forward.
- **Lost Opportunities:** Missing early advantages available to those joining/forming existing MATs, such as funding and resources.
- **Increased Pressure:** Later transitions might be more rushed and less strategic if decisions are delayed.
- **Competitive Disadvantage:** Other schools may progress more rapidly in improving outcomes by joining existing MATs or becoming founding members of a new MAT.





## Option 4. Form a new Multi Academy Trust

### **Potential Advantages of Forming a New Multi Academy Trust:**

- Complete Autonomy: Full control over policies, decisions, and strategic direction.
- Tailored Approach: Ability to design a Trust that meets the specific needs and vision of the founding schools.
- Cultural Alignment: Ensuring a cohesive culture that reflects the values and ethos of the founding schools.
- Innovation Opportunities: Freedom to innovate and implement new educational practices and initiatives.
- Local Collaboration: Foster strong partnerships with local schools and communities.

### **Potential Disadvantages of Forming a New Multi Academy Trust:**

- Complexity: High administrative and logistical effort required to establish and manage the Trust.
- Financial Risks: Initial financial challenges and securing sustainable funding.
- Limited Experience: Potential lack of experience in managing a Trust compared to established MATs.
- Capacity Issues: Possible strain on resources and staff as they take on additional responsibilities.
- Time-Consuming: Lengthy process, diverting focus from day-to-day teaching and learning.



# We believe that option 4 is the most advantageous for children, staff and families

## **Creating our own Multi Academy Trust (MAT) can be advantageous for several reasons:**

- **Autonomy:** Full control over decisions, policies, and strategic direction, ensuring alignment with your school's vision and goals.
- **Customisation:** Ability to design the Trust to meet specific needs, fostering innovation and tailored approaches.
- **Cultural Fit:** Building a cohesive culture that stakeholders feel aligned to, improving the retention and recruitment of high-quality staff
- **Local Partnerships:** Strengthening collaboration and exploiting specific expertise and resources to address local/national issues
- **Innovation and Flexibility:** Freedom to implement new initiatives and practices that can drive school improvement and student outcomes.
- **Focused Expertise:** Specialises solely in primary education, ensuring tailored strategies and resources.
- **Shared Best Practices:** Facilitates the sharing of age-specific teaching methods and curricula among member schools.
- **Strong Collaboration:** Enhances collaboration and support networks within a more cohesive age range.
- **Community Engagement:** Strengthens local community ties with a primary focus.
- **Relationships:** We have long-standing working relationships and established trust with the group.
- **Capacity:** The Local Authority is significantly reduced in its capacity to support schools.
- **Staff Development:** Offers tailored CPD and widens opportunities for career progression.



# Why change?

“Forging Ahead Together”





# What is a Multi Academy Trust?

A Trust is a legally established organisation that governs and manages a group of academy schools.

**Legal Entity:** The Trust is a single legal and financial entity formed to oversee multiple academies, ensuring management consistency and strategic alignment.

**Governance Structure:** The Trust is managed by a Board of Trustees responsible for strategic direction, accountability, and overall performance, ensuring all schools meet educational standards.

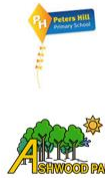
**Central Leadership:** With an executive team, such as a Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance Officer, the Trust provides leadership, financial oversight, and administrative support.

**Educational Focus:** The Trust sets a unified vision for educational excellence, promoting shared values and goals across all member schools.

**Resource Management:** It allocates resources, including funding, staff, and specialised services, to maximise efficiency and support school improvement.

**Collaboration:** Schools within the Trust collaborate on curriculum development, professional development, and best practices, enhancing educational outcomes.

**Autonomy:** Operating independently of local authority control, the Trust can innovate and tailor its approach to best meet its schools' specific needs.



# What are we trying to do?

We are four Dudley schools seizing the opportunity to create our own Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) rather than joining an existing one.

By forming our own MAT, we aspire to cultivate a tailored educational environment that reflects our shared values, vision, and aspirations.

This initiative allows us to build a collaborative framework that prioritises local needs, fosters innovation, and strengthens our community ties, ensuring that each school and its wider community can flourish within a supportive and cohesive network.



# Why 'create' instead of 'join'?

Creating a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) offers several benefits over joining one.

It allows each school to maintain autonomy, ensuring that strategic decisions align with the unique vision and ethos.

Establishing a MAT fosters a custom culture and community, driven by shared values and goals.

It provides opportunities to innovate, lead, and support other schools while tailoring educational approaches to meet specific needs.

This can enhance collaboration and professional development within your team.

We want to ensure that our schools are fully included from the very start in the creation of our own Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). This means actively involving all stakeholders—staff, pupils, parents, and the wider community—in the decision-making process.

By fostering a culture of collaboration and shared ownership, we aim to create a MAT that truly reflects our collective values and goals, enabling us to work together towards common aspirations.

Our focus is on empowerment and partnership, ensuring that everyone has a voice and a role in shaping the future of our schools.



# Benefits of School Partnerships

## **Resource Sharing:**

Access to specialised staff and expertise.  
Shared teaching materials and technology resources.  
Joint facilities like sports halls, labs, and libraries.

## **Professional Development:**

Collaborative training sessions.  
Opportunities for staff to share best practices.  
Mentoring and support networks for teachers.

## **Enhanced Learning Opportunities:**

Broader curriculum offerings and subject specialisations.  
Joint extracurricular activities and clubs.  
Cross-school projects and competitions.

## **Improved Student Outcomes:**

Shared strategies for tackling challenges and boosting achievement.  
Opportunities for peer learning and student exchange.  
Coordinated support for special educational needs.

## **Increased Efficiency:**

Economies of scale in procurement and services.  
Streamlined administrative processes.  
Collaborative problem-solving and innovation.

## **Strong Community Links:**

Enhanced engagement with local communities.  
Shared community events and outreach programmes.  
Stronger relationships with parents and local stakeholders.

## **Supportive Environment:**

Greater emotional and practical support for staff and students.  
Collaborative well-being initiatives.  
Shared pastoral care strategies.

## **Diverse Experiences:**

Exposure to different teaching styles and cultural perspectives.  
Opportunities for cultural exchange and inclusive practices.  
Broader worldview for pupils and staff.



# What does the research say?

Research consistently highlights the positive impact of collaboration across schools. Here are some key findings:

- Improved Student Outcomes - Collaborative efforts often lead to shared strategies that enhance student achievement and reduce gaps.
- Professional Growth - Teachers benefit from shared best practices, which fosters continuous professional development and innovation in teaching methods.
- Resource Efficiency - Schools can optimise resources, saving costs and improving access to specialised services and materials.
- Enhanced Problem-Solving - Joint efforts create opportunities to address common issues more effectively, leveraging diverse perspectives.
- Culture of Trust - Collaboration fosters a supportive network, contributing to a positive school culture and shared accountability.





# Hattie's Research

**John Hattie's research highlights collaboration as a critical factor in improving educational outcomes.**

**Collective Teacher Efficacy:** Hattie states that when teachers believe in their collective ability to impact student achievement, it greatly enhances outcomes. It ranks as one of the highest influences with an effect size of 1.57.

**Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** Teachers engaging in PLCs share insights, discuss challenges, and co-construct solutions. This collaborative approach helps in refining teaching practices and learning strategies.

**Feedback and Reflection:** Effective collaboration involves regular feedback and reflection. Teachers who collaborate share feedback on instructional techniques and reflect on student progress, resulting in more informed and effective teaching.

**Shared Goals:** Collaboration fosters the development of shared goals and a unified vision for student success. This alignment ensures consistency in teaching standards and approaches across classrooms.

**Mentoring and Coaching:** Through mentoring and coaching, experienced teachers guide less experienced ones. This collaborative support system helps in professional growth and elevates the overall teaching quality.

**Resource Sharing:** Collaboration allows for the sharing of resources and materials, reducing redundancy and ensuring that all students benefit from the best available tools.

**Problem-Solving:** Collaborative environments encourage collective problem-solving, wherein teachers pool their expertise to address complex educational challenges.

Hattie emphasises that for collaboration to be effective, it must be purposeful, focused on student learning, and involve deep professional dialogue. Regularly involving all staff in collaborative practices fosters a culture of continuous improvement.



# Our motivation for setting up a Trust

Enhanced Learning Opportunities	Shared Expertise	Resource Optimisation	Professional Development	Community Strengthening
<p><b>Broader Curriculum:</b> Access to specialised subjects like foreign languages, advanced sciences, or unique arts programmes. Introduction of interdisciplinary courses combining skills from multiple subjects.</p> <p><b>Extracurricular Activities:</b> Expanded clubs and societies, from sports teams to music ensembles. Joint events like science fairs, drama productions, and debate competitions.</p> <p><b>Enriched Learning Environment:</b> Diverse learning settings, including shared facilities and resources. Opportunities for students to interact and learn from peers in different schools, fostering broader social skills and perspectives.</p>	<p><b>Specialised Instruction:</b> Access to teachers with expertise in niche subjects, enriching the learning experience. Opportunities for guest lectures and workshops on specialised topics.</p> <p><b>Professional Development:</b> Joint training sessions and professional development programmes. Collaborative planning and sharing of best practices, improving teaching quality.</p> <p><b>Peer Support:</b> Creating networks for staff to share resources, ideas, and solutions to common challenges. Mentorship opportunities, allowing less experienced teachers to learn from seasoned professionals.</p>	<p><b>Shared Facilities:</b> Utilising joint facilities to reduce duplication of infrastructure. Scheduling common use of specialised rooms and equipment, ensuring maximum utilisation.</p> <p><b>Technology Sharing:</b> Pooling resources for expensive technology like interactive whiteboards, computers, and software licenses. Joint investments in digital learning platforms, benefitting all participating schools.</p> <p><b>Efficient Resource Management:</b> Collective purchasing power for supplies, reducing costs through bulk buying. Streamlining administrative functions across schools, lowering operational expenses.</p>	<p><b>Collaborative Training:</b> Joint workshops and seminars, providing varied and high-quality training opportunities. Access to a wider range of experts and specialists for professional development sessions.</p> <p><b>Mentorship and Peer Support:</b> Setting up mentorship programmes where experienced teachers guide newer staff. Encouraging peer observations and feedback to foster continuous improvement.</p> <p><b>Resource Sharing:</b> Sharing best practices, teaching materials, and innovative strategies across schools. Creating online communities for ongoing professional dialogue and support.</p>	<p><b>Local Partnerships:</b> Collaborations with local businesses, organisations, and universities for enriched learning experiences. Opportunities for students to engage in internships, community service, and extracurricular activities.</p> <p><b>Parental Involvement:</b> Encouraging active participation from parents and carers in school events and decision-making processes. Facilitating regular communication between school and home to support children's learning.</p> <p><b>Community Projects:</b> Initiatives that involve students in local projects, fostering a sense of civic responsibility. Creating joint ventures with community groups that benefit both the school and the wider community.</p>



# We do not want to be forced to join a trust

The decision to join a MAT should ideally be collaborative and involve input from all stakeholders, ensuring that it is the best fit for the school's unique context and needs. We are concerned that joining an existing MAT may lead to;

## Loss of Autonomy:

**Decision-Making:** Schools fear losing control over their day-to-day decision-making and the ability to tailor decisions specifically for their pupils' needs.

**Curriculum Choices:** An existing trust may implement a standardised curriculum, limiting a school's freedom to innovate and adapt learning programmes.

## Cultural Mismatch:

**Values and Ethos:** There might be a clash between the school's established culture, values, and ethos, and those of the existing trust, leading to discontent among staff, students, and parents.

**Community Engagement:** Schools with strong community ties may worry that these relationships could be weakened if the trust operates with a centralised approach.

## Financial Concerns:

**Resource Allocation:** There's the concern that resources might be redistributed unfavourably, leaving the school with inadequate funds to support its specific programmes and initiatives.

**Budget Priorities:** Existing trusts may redirect finances towards overarching goals that do not necessarily align with the school's immediate priorities.

## Impact on Staff:

**Job Security:** Teachers and staff may feel insecure about their roles, fearing redundancies or unwanted transfers within the trust.

**Professional Development:** There could be changes in professional development programmes that don't align with the needs or aspirations of the current staff.

## Behaviour and Policies:

**Policy Enforcement:** An existing trust may impose policies and behaviour management strategies that the school may not fully endorse, potentially affecting student behaviour and engagement.

**SEND Support:** There may be concerns about the consistency and effectiveness of SEND support under the new trust's policies.

## Reputation and Performance:

**Accountability:** Schools performing well independently may worry that their reputation could be impacted by being associated with a trust that includes lower-performing schools.

**Inspection Outcomes:** There's a concern that future Ofsted inspections might reflect the trust's performance as a whole rather than the specific school's achievements.

## Parent and Student Response:

**Community Reaction:** Parents might be resistant to change, especially if they have negative perceptions about the existing trust.

**Student Experience:** Changes in policies, curriculum, and overall school environment could disrupt students' learning experiences and wellbeing.

# Our plan

“Forging Ahead Together”





# Round Oak Collaborative

## Vision, Priorities, Principles

When establishing a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), it is vital to adhere to guiding principles that ensure its success and sustainability. These principles include shared vision and values, collaborative leadership, and commitment to high educational standards. By promoting transparency, resource optimisation, and continuous improvement, the MAT can create a supportive and effective learning environment for all involved.

**Vision** – refers to the long-term goals and aspirations a school or organisation aims to achieve. It outlines a clear image of the future, guiding strategic planning and decision-making to ensure that all efforts align with the desired outcomes for students and staff.

**Priorities** – are the tasks or goals deemed most important and urgent, requiring focused attention and resources. In a school setting, priorities help to direct efforts towards areas that will most significantly impact student learning and wellbeing.

**Principles** - are the fundamental beliefs and values that steer an organisation's actions and decisions. They establish a framework for consistent behaviour and practices, ensuring everyone works towards common goals.



# Round Oak Collaborative Vision

At the Round Oak Collaborative, our vision is to create a learning community where every pupil is challenged and supported to achieve their full potential. We believe that education should be holistic, providing opportunities for academic, social, and emotional growth. Our aim is to create a safe and inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued and respected.

We strive to foster a love of learning in our children, encouraging them to be curious, creative, and independent thinkers. We believe that every child has unique strengths and talents, and we aim to provide a range of opportunities for them to develop these. We also recognise that every child faces their own challenges, and we are committed to providing the support and guidance they need to overcome these.

We believe that education is a collaborative effort, and we work closely with parents, carers, and the wider community to ensure that our pupils receive the best possible education. We are committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares our students for their future lives as responsible, engaged citizens.

Our vision is underpinned by a set of core values, including ambition, belief, compassion, pride and respect. We believe that these values are essential for creating a positive and inclusive learning environment, and we strive to embed them in everything we do.

Overall, our vision is to create a partnership that is a beacon of excellence, where every child can thrive, reach their full potential and enjoy a life of choice and opportunity.



# Round Oak Collaborative Priorities

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- 1. Teaching and Learning:** Improving the quality of teaching and learning is a top priority for the partnership. This will involve developing and implementing a consistent approach to teaching and learning, providing targeted professional development for teachers, and using data to identify areas for improvement.
- 2. Leadership and Management:** Strong leadership and effective management will be essential for driving school improvement. This will involve developing a clear vision for the partnership, establishing effective systems for monitoring and tracking progress, and creating positive and supportive school cultures.
- 3. Pupil Engagement:** Engaging pupils in their learning leads to better outcomes and improved behaviour. We will focus on developing strategies to increase student motivation, providing opportunities for student voice and participation, and creating positive and inclusive school environments.
- 4. Staff Development:** Supporting the ongoing development of staff is critical for maintaining high standards of teaching and learning. This will involve providing targeted professional development opportunities, creating a culture of collaboration and reflection, and recognising and rewarding staff achievements.
- 5. Resources and Infrastructure:** Ensuring that the school has the right resources and infrastructure to support teaching and learning is important for success. This will involve investing in technology and facilities, ensuring that resources are allocated equitably, and developing effective systems for managing resources.





# ROC Guiding Principles

<p><b>1. Child-Centred Focus:</b> Prioritise the wellbeing and holistic development of every child, ensuring each one has the opportunity to thrive.</p>	<p><b>2. High-Quality Teaching and Learning:</b> Maintain a relentless focus on delivering high-quality teaching, with an emphasis on evidence-based practices and continuous professional development for staff.</p>	<p><b>3. Collaborative Professional Development:</b> Foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement among staff, encouraging shared learning, mentoring, and joint training sessions.</p>
<p><b>4. Inclusivity and Equality:</b> Ensure that all children, regardless of their background or needs, have access to a high-quality education. Adapt teaching to meet diverse learner needs and promote equality.</p>	<p><b>5. Shared Vision and Values:</b> Develop and communicate a clear, shared vision and set of values that guide the trust's actions and decisions.</p>	<p><b>6. Effective Leadership and Governance:</b> Establish strong, effective leadership at both the school and trust levels, with clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability.</p>
<p><b>7. Innovation and Creativity:</b> Encourage innovative teaching methods and creative approaches to curriculum delivery, ensuring learning is engaging and relevant.</p>	<p><b>8. Community and Parental Engagement:</b> Actively involve parents and the wider community in the educational process, fostering a sense of partnership and support.</p>	<p><b>9. Financial Efficiency and Resource Sharing:</b> Manage resources efficiently, pooling and sharing them across schools to maximise impact and achieve economies of scale.</p>
<p><b>10. Robust Safeguarding Practices:</b> Ensure comprehensive safeguarding policies are in place and regularly reviewed to protect all children in the trust.</p>	<p><b>11. Data-Driven Decisions:</b> Use data and assessment effectively to inform teaching, learning, and improvement strategies, while ensuring the data is kept secure and confidential.</p>	<p><b>12. Sustainable Practices:</b> Promote sustainability and environmental stewardship within the schools, integrating these principles into the curriculum and school operations.</p>
<p><b>13. Reflective Practice and Self-Evaluation:</b> Encourage a culture of reflective practice, where staff regularly evaluate their own work and seek ways to improve.</p>	<p><b>14. High Expectations and Aspirations:</b> Foster high expectations for behaviour, academic achievement, and personal development, encouraging all children to aspire and succeed.</p>	<p><b>15. Transparent Communication:</b> Ensure open, honest, and transparent communication across all levels of the trust, including with staff, parents, and the local community.</p>





# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 1. Child-Centred Focus:

Prioritise the wellbeing and holistic development of every child, ensuring each one has the opportunity to thrive.

A Child-Centred Focus ensures that all decisions and practices across the MAT prioritise the well-being and development of pupils. It promotes tailored learning experiences, fosters engagement, and meets individual needs.

Developing personalised learning plans tailored to each child's strengths, needs, and interests is essential. Implementing comprehensive wellbeing programmes, including mental health support, anti-bullying initiatives, and resilience-building activities, is crucial for a supportive environment. Engaging parents through regular communication, workshops, and participation opportunities enhances their involvement in their child's education. Creating forums for student voice fosters a sense of ownership and belonging among pupils. Offering a diverse range of extracurricular activities nurtures different talents and interests, from sports to arts to academic clubs. Ensuring inclusive practices supports all children, including those with SEND, EAL, or from disadvantaged backgrounds, to succeed and feel included. Designing a holistic curriculum focuses not only on academic excellence but also on personal, social, and emotional development. Regular wellbeing checks help monitor students' emotional and physical wellbeing, allowing early intervention if issues arise. Fostering positive relationships between staff and pupils creates a safe and nurturing learning environment. Continuous professional development for staff in child development, mental health, and inclusive education equips them with the skills needed to support every child effectively.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 2. High-Quality Teaching and Learning:

Maintain a relentless focus on delivering high-quality teaching, with an emphasis on evidence-based practices and continuous professional development for staff.

High-Quality Teaching and Learning across a MAT ensures all students receive consistent, exemplary education, regardless of their school. It boosts academic achievement, fosters enthusiasm for learning, and prepares students for future success.

Encouraging evidence-based practices means promoting teaching methods and interventions backed by robust educational research, such as Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction. Continuous professional development is vital, offering ongoing training opportunities through workshops, seminars, online courses, and collaborative learning sessions. Establishing mentoring and coaching programmes supports both new and experienced teachers, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and peer learning. Creating platforms for sharing best practices, like professional learning communities or inter-school meetings, helps disseminate successful strategies and resources across the trust. Data-driven instruction, using regular assessments and data analysis, ensures teaching practices meet all pupils' needs effectively. A system of regular lesson observations followed by constructive feedback helps teachers refine and enhance their practices within a psychologically safe environment, where their wellbeing is considered throughout. Curriculum alignment across all schools ensures a well-sequenced and cohesive approach, focusing on key knowledge, skills, and vocabulary development. Collaborative planning encourages teams of teachers to design and refine teaching materials together. Providing targeted interventions supports diverse learners, ensuring all children can access high-quality learning experiences. Promoting engaging and interactive teaching strategies maintains student interest and encourages deep learning. Reflective practice involves teachers regularly reviewing and adjusting their methods based on student feedback and outcomes. Finally, ensuring access to high-quality teaching resources, including technology, manipulatives, and specialist materials, supports effective teaching and learning.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 3. Collaborative Professional Development:

Foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement among staff, encouraging shared learning, mentoring, and joint training sessions.

Collaborative Professional Development across a MAT fosters shared best practices, strengthens teacher skills, and builds a supportive community. It enhances consistency in teaching quality and promotes innovative approaches.

Creating Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) where staff can regularly meet to share ideas, discuss best practices, and solve problems collectively is crucial. Organising joint training sessions and workshops across the trust enables staff to learn from one another. Mentoring programmes pairing experienced teachers with newer staff provide essential guidance and support. Cross-school visits allow teachers to observe different approaches and bring back successful strategies. Using online collaboration platforms like Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom facilitates resource sharing, discussions, and project collaboration. Regular CPD (Continuing Professional Development) days dedicated to collaborative learning and workshops are vital. Encouraging staff to engage in action research projects helps investigate specific areas of teaching and learning, with findings shared among colleagues. Implementing peer observations fosters a reflective practice by enabling teachers to give and receive feedback. Organising networking events allows staff to connect, share experiences, and build professional relationships. Recognising and incentivising collaborative efforts and innovations in teaching practices motivate staff. Leadership support is essential for collaborative initiatives, ensuring the time and resources needed for effective CPD are provided.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 4. Inclusivity and Equality:

Ensure that all children, regardless of their background or needs, have access to a high-quality education. Adapt teaching to meet diverse learner needs and promote equality.

Inclusivity and Equality ensure that every student, regardless of background or ability, has access to the same opportunities and support. It fosters a sense of belonging, reduces achievement gaps, and promotes a respectful, diverse community.

An inclusive curriculum adapts to be accessible and engaging for all learners, considering diverse needs and backgrounds. Differentiated instruction uses various strategies to tailor teaching methods and materials to suit each child's abilities and learning styles. Regular staff training on inclusive practices and equality ensures teachers are equipped to support diverse needs. Robust SEND support systems with clear targets and regular reviews are essential. Promoting cultural competence ensures that all children feel represented and valued within the curriculum. Parental involvement is crucial, and parents should be engaged through regular communication and inclusive school events. Teaching materials and resources must be accessible to every child, including those with disabilities. A safe and welcoming environment where children feel included and respected is vital. Regular monitoring of progress and attainment in an equitable manner helps identify and address discrepancies. Encouraging pupil voice allows children to express their views and involve them in decisions affecting their learning environment. Finally, celebrating diversity through assemblies, events, and classroom activities promotes an inclusive school culture.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 5. Shared Vision and Values:

Develop and communicate a clear, shared vision and set of values that guide the trust's actions and decisions.

A Shared Vision and Values across a MAT unify schools, ensuring everyone works towards common goals. This cohesion drives better decision-making and creates a strong, supportive culture, rooted in a strong sense of belonging.

Inclusive visioning workshops that involve staff, students, and parents are essential to collaboratively define the school's vision and values. Clear communication through newsletters, websites, and meetings is necessary to articulate these principles. Visual displays of the vision and values prominently around the school keep them at the forefront of everyone's minds. Regular staff meetings should reinforce these principles, ensuring they are central to all decisions and actions. Encouraging student engagement through projects, assemblies, and everyday interactions ensures they embody the vision and values. Consistent messaging across all schools within the MAT keeps everyone aligned. Professional development sessions should incorporate these principles to help staff integrate them into their teaching practices. Celebrating success and recognising achievements that reflect the vision and values motivate everyone to uphold them. Feedback loops are crucial for continuous feedback and refinement, ensuring the vision and values remain relevant and inspiring. Leadership modelling at all levels ensures that leaders' behaviour and decision-making align with the vision and values.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 6. Effective Leadership and Governance:

Establish strong, effective leadership at both the school and trust levels, with clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

Effective Leadership and Governance provide clear direction, accountability, and strategic planning, which are crucial for consistent improvement and high standards. They also build trust and support among staff and stakeholders.

Effective school governance and leadership require a well-structured approach. Clearly outlining roles, responsibilities, and lines of accountability ensures that all leaders and governors understand their duties. Developing a strong governance framework with experienced governors who understand both educational and operational needs is essential. Investing in leadership training and development programmes builds strong, capable leaders. Ensuring frequent, transparent communication between school leadership and the trust's board fosters a unified approach. Implementing systems for regular performance monitoring and evaluation of leaders and governors maintains high standards. Fostering a culture of collaborative decision-making between school and trust leaders enables informed, collective decisions. Developing succession plans ensures continuity in leadership and governance. Engaging stakeholders, including parents, staff, and students, in governance processes builds trust and accountability. Making data-driven decisions ensures they are evidence-based. Promoting ethical leadership practices ensures all actions align with the trust's values and vision. Lastly, creating a supportive environment where leaders feel empowered and valued is crucial for sustained success.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 7. Innovation and Creativity:

Encourage innovative teaching methods and creative approaches to curriculum delivery, ensuring learning is engaging and relevant.

Innovation and Creativity help schools adapt to changing educational needs, engage students in dynamic ways, and foster critical thinking skills.

Fostering innovation in education requires a multifaceted approach. Offering professional development enables training on innovative teaching methods and creative curriculum delivery. Collaborative planning encourages teachers to share creative ideas and best practices. Designing a flexible curriculum supports the adoption of creative and innovative teaching approaches. Integrating technology enhances learning experiences with new, engaging tools. Implementing pilot projects allows for the testing and refining of new teaching methods before wider adoption. Incorporating student-led learning gives pupils a role in their education by including their interests and ideas into lessons. Creating creative classroom environments inspires both creativity and innovation. Recognising and rewarding teachers and students who adopt innovative practices motivates continued progress. Encouraging cross-disciplinary projects promotes creative thinking and problem-solving. Continuous feedback from students and staff ensures the continual improvement and adaptation of teaching methods.





# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## **8. Community and Parental Engagement:** **Actively involve parents and the wider community in the educational process, fostering a sense of partnership and support.**

Community and Parental Engagement helps build strong partnerships, enhances support for students, and fosters a sense of belonging. It also encourages better communication and understanding between home and school, positively impacting student achievement.

Effective engagement with parents and the community is essential for a thriving school environment. Open communication is maintained by regularly updating parents and the community through newsletters, social media, and the school website. Hosting parent workshops and information sessions on curriculum topics and school initiatives fosters better understanding and involvement. Encouraging volunteering opportunities allows parents and community members to participate in various school activities and events, reinforcing a sense of community. Creating feedback channels ensures that parents and the community can provide regular feedback and suggestions. Building community partnerships with local businesses and organisations supports school programmes, while organising school events like open days, cultural celebrations, and exhibitions involves both parents and community members. Establishing active Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) fosters collaboration and communication. Showcasing student work and achievements celebrates success and involves parents in recognising their children's progress. Holding regular meetings with parents to discuss students' progress and address any concerns is critical. Finally, developing inclusive policies ensures the inclusion of diverse community voices in decision-making processes.





# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 9. Financial Efficiency and Resource Sharing:

Manage resources efficiently, pooling and sharing them across schools to maximise impact and achieve economies of scale.

Financial Efficiency and Resource Sharing maximise the impact of available funds, allowing for better investment in teaching and learning. It ensures resources are optimised and helps provide equal opportunities across schools.

Centralising purchasing for common resources helps secure bulk discounts, while shared services across schools, such as HR, finance, and IT, streamline operations. Efficient resource allocation ensures each school's needs and priorities are met effectively. Organising joint professional development sessions reduces costs and promotes consistency. Regular financial audits ensure resources are used effectively and identify cost-saving areas. Robust budget monitoring processes track spending across the trust, ensuring financial accountability. Resource banks allow schools to share teaching materials, equipment, and best practices, fostering collaboration. Developing long-term financial plans ensures sustainability and informed investments. Collaborating on grant applications secures additional funding for shared projects. Investing in energy-efficient solutions reduces ongoing costs, contributing to overall financial health.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 10. Robust Safeguarding Practices:

Ensure comprehensive safeguarding policies are in place and regularly reviewed to protect all children in the trust.

Robust Safeguarding Practices ensure the safety and well-being of all students, creating a secure environment where they can learn and thrive. It helps identify and address any potential risks early on.

Developing a comprehensive safeguarding policy for the entire trust ensures consistency whilst also affording the schools to make adaptations to ensure very local safeguarding priorities are considered and addressed. Providing ongoing safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers keeps everyone informed and prepared. Appointing designated safeguarding leads in each school oversees and coordinates safeguarding efforts. Regularly reviewing and updating safeguarding policies and procedures ensures they remain current. Establishing clear and confidential reporting mechanisms for staff and students encourages transparency. Working closely with local safeguarding boards and services strengthens partnerships. Ensuring all staff, students, and parents understand the safeguarding policies and know whom to contact with concerns promotes awareness. Conducting regular safeguarding audits helps identify and address any gaps. Implementing strict safer recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers ensures rigorous standards. Educating students about staying safe and encouraging them to voice any concerns empowers them.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 11. Data-Driven Decisions:

Use data and assessment effectively to inform teaching, learning, and improvement strategies, while ensuring the data is kept secure and confidential.

Data-Driven Decisions allow schools to identify trends, strengths, and areas for improvement, leading to more effective strategies and interventions.

Implementing a centralised data management system ensures consistency and accuracy across the trust. Conducting regular assessments gathers comprehensive data on student progress. Providing staff with training on data analysis and interpretation informs their teaching practices. Holding regular data meetings reviews progress and identifies areas for improvement. Ensuring robust data security protocols maintains confidentiality and compliance with GDPR. Using data to develop targeted interventions and support for students provides actionable insights. Benchmarking data across schools within the MAT identifies best practices and areas for development. Sharing relevant data insights with parents keeps them informed of their child's progress. Using system-level thinking and analysis of 'big' data helps us to continuously refine teaching strategies and learning outcomes promotes continuous improvement. Fostering a culture of transparency and data-informed decision-making enhances overall effectiveness.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 12. Sustainable Practices:

Promote sustainability and environmental stewardship within the schools, integrating these principles into the curriculum and school operations.

Sustainable Practices ensure that resources are used responsibly, benefiting current and future generations. They promote environmental stewardship and long-term financial health.

Embedding environmental stewardship into the curriculum across subjects fosters a green mindset. Establishing student and staff eco-committees spearheads initiatives. Implementing energy-saving measures like LED lighting and solar panels boosts efficiency. Setting up robust recycling programmes ensures better waste management. Using eco-friendly and sustainable resources promotes responsibility. Promoting outdoor learning connects children with nature. Engaging with local environmental projects and organisations builds community ties. Minimising waste by encouraging reuse and responsible consumption reduces our impact. Promoting walking, cycling, and carpooling helps lower carbon footprints. Conducting regular environmental audits tracks progress and identifies areas for improvement.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 13. Reflective Practice and Self-Evaluation:

Encourage a culture of reflective practice, where staff regularly evaluate their own work and seek ways to improve.

Reflective Practice and Self-Evaluation allow educators to continually improve by analysing their own practices, recognising successes, and identifying areas for growth. It fosters a culture of continuous improvement.

Scheduling continuous professional development sessions focusing on reflective practice encourages growth. Encouraging peer observations and feedback facilitates learning from each other. Asking staff to keep reflective journals helps note successes and areas for improvement. Setting up mentorship programmes allows experienced teachers to support newer staff. Providing tools and frameworks for self-evaluation and reflection enhances professionalism. Holding regular meetings for staff to discuss and reflect on teaching practices fosters collaboration. Creating a safe space for honest conversations about challenges and areas for growth promotes open dialogue. Celebrating small wins and progress motivates staff. Using surveys to gather feedback and encourage self-evaluation informs practice. Developing personal action plans based on reflections guides improvement.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 14. High Expectations and Aspirations:

Foster high expectations for behaviour, academic achievement, and personal development, encouraging all children to aspire and succeed.

High Expectations and Aspirations drive student achievement and motivation. They create an environment where both pupils and staff strive for excellence.

Communicating a unified vision of high expectations and success is vital. Implementing consistent behaviour and academic standards across all schools ensures uniformity. Encouraging staff to model high expectations and positive attitudes sets exemplary standards. Using praise and rewards recognises and encourages effort and achievement. Helping children set achievable yet challenging personal and academic goals fosters growth. Creating a supportive environment ensures every child feels valued and capable. Inclusive practices support diverse needs and foster equity. Engaging parents in their children's learning journey and expectations strengthens the home-school partnership. Providing extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities expands horizons. Regularly monitoring progress and providing timely interventions ensures continued development and success.



# Principles in Action – What this might look like

## 15. Transparent Communication:

Ensure open, honest, and transparent communication across all levels of the trust, including with staff, parents, and the local community.

Transparent Communication builds trust, fosters collaboration, and ensures everyone is on the same page, from staff to parents and pupils. It creates a united and supportive community of schools.

Providing regular updates through newsletters, emails, and bulletins ensures consistent communication. Encouraging an open door policy for staff, parents, and students fosters a welcoming atmosphere. Holding regular community meetings with staff, parents, and local stakeholders promotes open dialogue. Establishing clear communication channels for different stakeholders simplifies information flow. Implementing feedback mechanisms allows for the collection and action on stakeholder input. Transparent decision-making involves clearly explaining the reasoning behind key decisions. Ensuring all information is easily accessible via the school's website and other platforms enhances accessibility. Communicating shared goals and the trust's vision clearly to all stakeholders promotes unity. Fostering positive relationships through regular and honest communication strengthens community bonds. Publicly celebrating achievements and progress builds a positive culture.

# Us

“Forging Ahead Together”







# Why are we called 'Round Oak Collaborative'?

The name of a MAT (Multi-Academy Trust) helps to create an identity and set the tone for its ethos, vision, and values. An impactful name can inspire pride and a sense of belonging.

**Historical Significance** - The name draws inspiration from the historic Round Oak Steel Works, a significant part of Dudley's industrial heritage. This connection invokes a sense of pride and belonging within the local community.

**Symbol of Strength** - The oak tree symbolises strength, endurance, and growth—qualities essential for a thriving educational trust. It implies a strong foundation and the ability to withstand challenges.

**Unity and Inclusivity** - The word “Collaborative” highlights the trust’s commitment to teamwork, partnership, and inclusivity. It reflects a collective effort among schools, staff, students, parents, and the community to achieve common goals.

**Community Connection** - The name reinforces a sense of community and shared history, fostering local engagement and support. It’s a nod to the area’s past while looking forward to a prosperous future.

**Positive Connotation** – “Round Oak” sounds holistic, welcoming and positive, invoking images of a sturdy, reliable oak tree that supports and nurtures growth in all aspects. It aligns well with the educational values of nurturing students to their fullest potential both academically and personally.

**Memorability and Uniqueness** - The name is distinctive and memorable, setting the trust apart from others. It’s unique enough to stand out yet familiar enough to resonate with the local population.

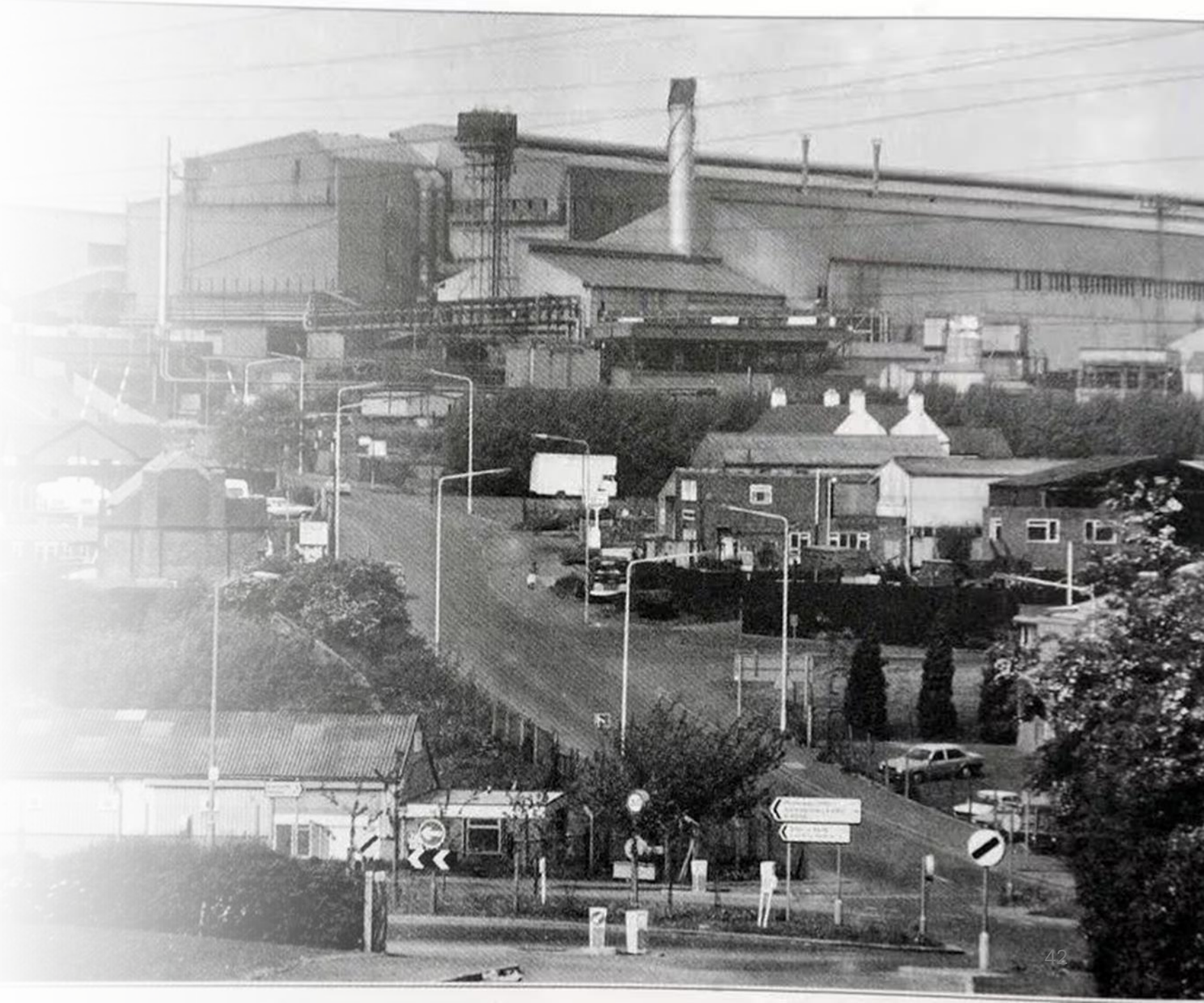
**Forward-Thinking** - While it honours the past, the inclusion of “Collaborative” signifies a modern, forward-thinking approach. It suggests innovation, adaptability, and a focus on working together to meet future educational needs.

Round Oak Steel Works was an industrial empire that became central to making the Black Country prosperous.

Many of its workers say working there was like having extended family, the friendliest of places to work, an unforgettable place to work.

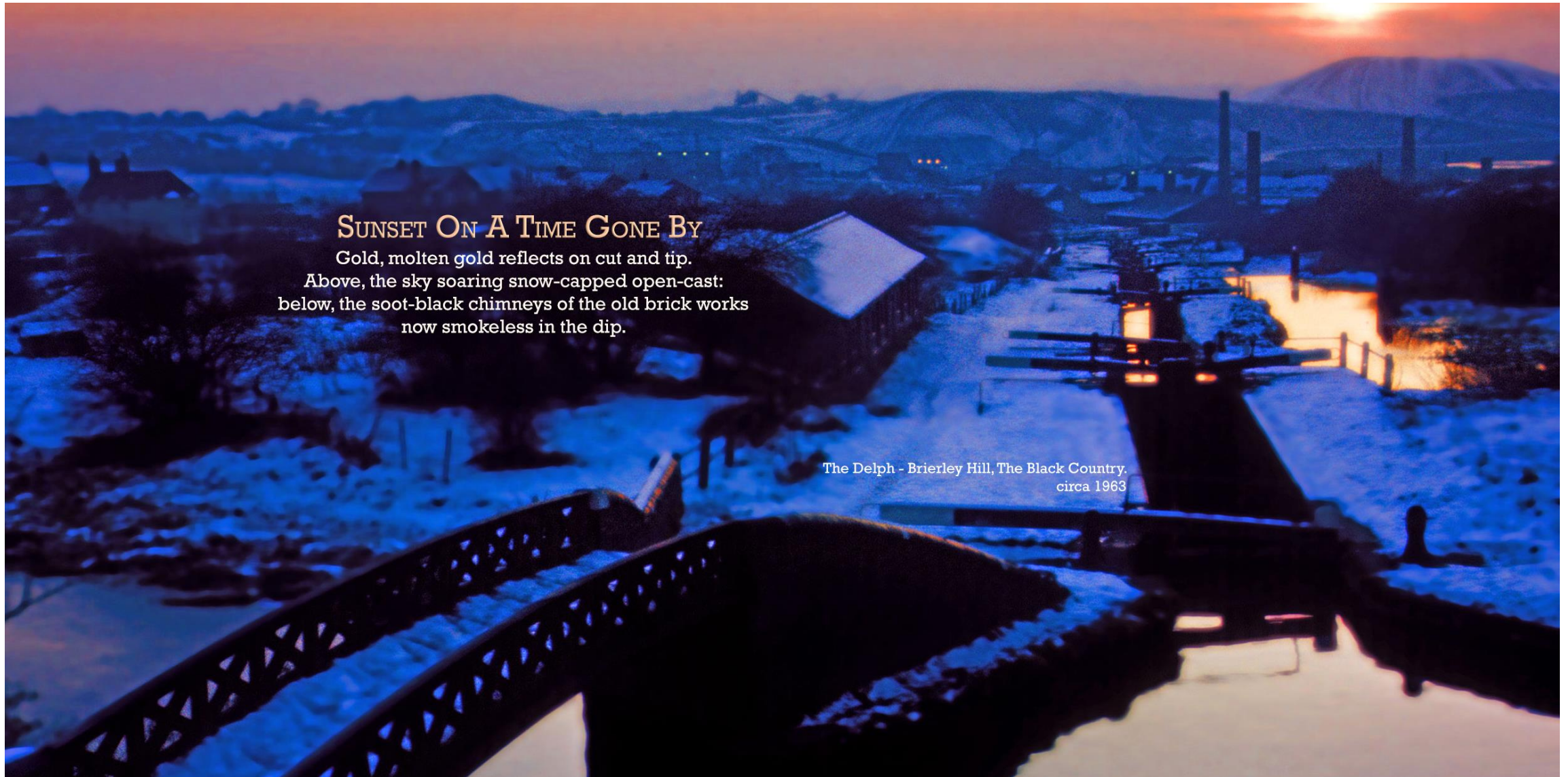
It was a major employer at that time with around 3000 workers at its peak across the 50-acre site.

We are taking inspiration from the Round Oak Steelworks, once the beating heart of the Dudley Borough. This historic site symbolised the region's industrial strength and community spirit. Just as the Steelworks adapted and thrived through changing times, we aim to channel that resilience and innovation into our own developments, fostering a sense of pride and progress.






“From 1844 - 1984 Brierley Hills landscape and its people were literally forged out of the furnaces of their own history and to this day, Round Oak is still very much a proud part of our living memory”.







**We'd go down past the locks to Stourbridge,  
along the brickworks and open cast mine;  
or up the locks to Round Oak Steel,  
next to the railway line.  
Following the wake of the tiller,  
in step with the diesel sound,  
we'd cut off the cut to Netherton village,  
sink a couple of pints at Ma Pardoe's,  
and fill our pockets with change from a pound.**

**YESTERDAYS JOURNEY**  
Round Oak Steel, Brierley Hill, The Black Country





The line of chimneys at Round Oak became affectionately known as 'The Cunarder' due to its striking resemblance to a steam liner. We hope to draw from this unique historical imagery as inspiration for our new logo, capturing the spirit of innovation and strength that characterised the Steelworks and the community it served.





# Partnership Schools

## Peters Hill Primary School

Ofsted – Good (September 2023) Peters Hill Primary School is a vibrant and inclusive school nestled in Dudley, known for its commitment to providing high-quality education in a supportive and nurturing environment. The school boasts a dedicated team of educators who inspire and challenge pupils to achieve their potential, fostering a love for learning that extends beyond the classroom. With a rich curriculum tailored to meet diverse needs, Peters Hill prioritises both academic excellence and personal development, ensuring every child is equipped with the skills and confidence to thrive. The school's strong community ties, engaging extracurricular activities, and emphasis on holistic development make it a cornerstone of the local area.

Headteacher – Mr S Duncan

PAN – 840 Ofsted – Good (September 2023)

## Quarry Bank Primary School

Quarry Bank Primary School, situated in the heart of Dudley, is renowned for its warm, welcoming atmosphere and commitment to nurturing every child's unique potential. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, designed to engage and inspire, while dedicated staff ensure personalised support for all pupils. Strong relationships with parents and the local community are central to the school's ethos, fostering a collaborative spirit that enriches the educational experience. Emphasising both academic achievement and personal growth, Quarry Bank cultivates a love for learning, creativity, and resilience, preparing children for future success.

Headteacher – Mr A Rawlings

PAN – 345 – Good (March 2020)

## Howley Grange Primary School

Howley Grange Primary School is a dynamic and inclusive educational haven located in Halesowen, Dudley. The school thrives on a commitment to academic excellence and personal growth, providing a friendly and supportive environment for all children. Its dedicated team of educators employs innovative teaching methods to deliver a well-rounded curriculum, ensuring that each pupil is engaged and challenged. With strong ties to the community and a focus on holistic development, Howley Grange fosters a sense of belonging and encourages children to become confident, lifelong learners.

Headteacher – Miss A Lewis

PAN – 420 Ofsted – Good (June 2023)

## Ashwood Park Primary School

Ashwood Park Primary School in Stourbridge stands out for its dedication to fostering a nurturing and inclusive atmosphere where every child feels valued. The school delivers a rich and varied curriculum, tailored to cater to the diverse needs and interests of its pupils. Skilled teachers and staff are committed to inspiring a love for learning and encouraging personal growth. Strong community ties and a focus on collaboration ensure a holistic development approach, preparing children to excel both academically and personally. The school's emphasis on creativity, resilience, and mutual respect creates a positive and dynamic environment.

Headteacher – Mr K Butler

PAN – 345 Ofsted (Requires Improvement (June 2024)

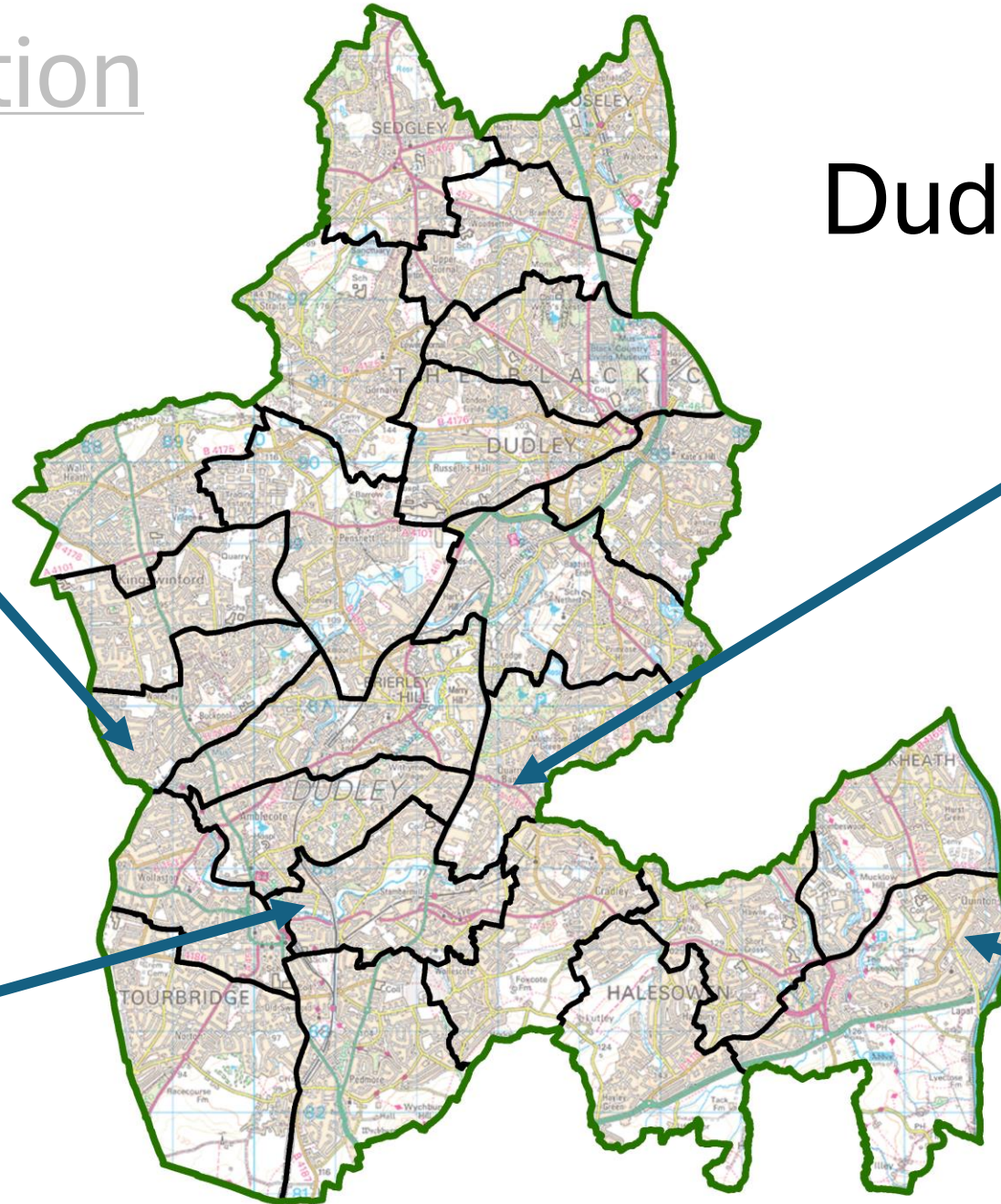


# Location

Ashwood Park  
Primary School

## Dudley Borough

Quarry Bank  
Primary School



Peters Hill  
Primary School

Howley Grange  
Primary School





# Dudley

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6604160b91a320001182b0a1/Dudley\\_\\_Dudley\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6604160b91a320001182b0a1/Dudley__Dudley_.pdf)

- Dudley, located in the West Midlands, is renowned for its rich industrial heritage and historical significance. It boasts landmarks such as Dudley Castle and the Black Country Living Museum, offering fascinating insights into the area's past. As a diverse town, Dudley features a mix of urban and rural settings, and its community reflects a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Educationally, schools in Dudley address a range of needs, from those in more deprived areas to those in more affluent neighbourhoods. The local geography, history, and culture provide ample opportunities for enriched learning experiences, from field trips to integrated curriculum activities.
- In Dudley, employment reflects its industrial roots, though there's been a shift towards service-based industries. Historically grounded in manufacturing and engineering, many residents now work in healthcare, retail, and education sectors. Recent years have seen a rise in small businesses and innovation hubs, yet pockets of unemployment remain, particularly affecting younger demographics.
- In Dudley, qualification levels vary significantly. While there is a portion of the population with higher education qualifications, a notable segment possesses only basic skills or lower-level qualifications. Schools and colleges are working hard to address these disparities by offering vocational courses, apprenticeships, and adult education programmes. This aims to uplift skill levels and improve employability.
- Health levels in Dudley reflect a mix of challenges and initiatives. The area faces higher-than-average rates of obesity, smoking, and related illnesses, exacerbated by socio-economic factors. Mental health issues, particularly among younger people, are also prevalent. However, local health services, community projects, and schools actively promote healthier lifestyles and mental wellbeing.
- Over 60% of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Dudley are in the top 20% most deprived in England in terms of Income Deprivation Domain.
- Net social trust is defined as the estimated proportion of people who say they generally trust others minus the proportion of people who say that you cannot be too careful when dealing with people. According to Onward (2023), Dudley has a social trust score of -22.2%, which is lower than the England average of -3.1%, showing that there is a lower level of social trust within Dudley than national levels. More deprived Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) are likely.





# What will each school bring to the trust

**Peters Hill** is the largest Primary School in the Dudley Borough and have great capacity for sharing expertise. We will bring several strengths to the Round Oak Collaborative Trust. These include strong governance and leadership experience. Effective teaching strategies and innovative practices with a proven record of academic excellence, high student achievement and pastoral care. Peters Hill will be able to offer support systems that are robust for pupils and staff. There are strong ties with the local community and parents that could be developed across the group. As a significantly larger than average primary school we bring advantages to a collaborative trust. These include diverse expertise and a broad range of innovative practices. We have greater resources and more substantial facilities for joint use. Peters Hill has the ability to pilot and scale new initiatives effectively before implementing them across schools. We have enhanced support systems for both staff and pupils and a wide array of experiences and perspectives for collaborative planning. As a team of staff, we are familiar with working at scale and feel this would be of benefit to the collaborative.

**Quarry Bank** Primary School is a 1.5 form entry primary school in the Dudley Borough, serving children in the Brierley Hill area. We are an outward facing school, who are always looking to innovate and develop not only our provision, but that of other surrounding schools. Our naturally curious and cooperative approach to all we do will serve the Round Oak Collaborative Trust well. We are a school that has worked alongside families in high levels of deprivation, so we understand the efforts needed to engage with hard to reach families and children, whilst also acknowledging how damaging the poverty of low expectations can be. We are a values-led school, with high levels of leadership skill and acumen – we think deeply about vision and culture, ensuring our school operates well as a collective and the wellbeing of our school community is held in high regard, within a psychologically safe environment. We deploy system-level thinking to ensure teaching and leadership standards are high and are consistently maintained, something we are proud of and would be keen to share with other schools. Our knowledge, and provision for children with SEND is fantastic and school leaders already support the LA at a system-level with ensuring improved provision across the Borough.

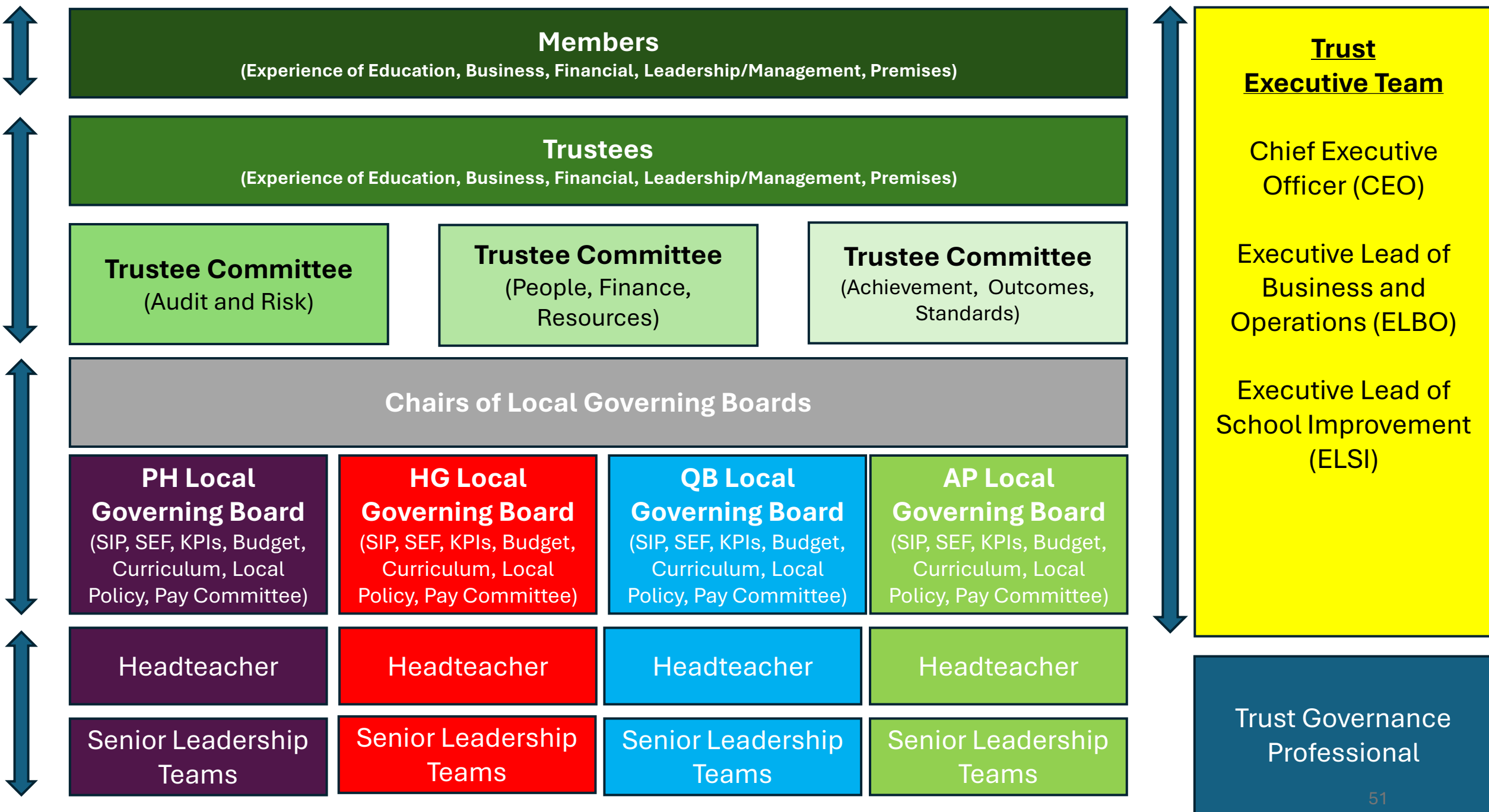
**Howley Grange** is a successful, vibrant school with a proven track record of developing each child both academically and personally, in line with our lived values. We have a well-established team culture where everyone works together for our children. There is a strong community spirit with very positive relationships with all stakeholders, especially our parents and carers. The school has extensive school grounds, including two Forest School areas. The indoor environment is well maintained and provides a safe and inclusive school for all. Pupil numbers are healthy. Howley Grange Primary has built a broad and balanced curriculum with clear sequencing and progression in all subjects. Assessment systems are robust. There is a clear approach to teaching and learning which is rooted in relevant evidence-based research. Our leadership team is experienced and along with the stable staff team, provides capacity for collaboration-sharing and learning alongside others. The Head teacher works in partnership with both the Local Authority Primary Forum and the Halesowen Teaching and Learning Community. There is a highly skilled Governing Body in place who are ambitious for the school and committed to securing the very best education and care for children across the collaborative.

**Ashwood Park** is a 1.5 form entry Primary School in the Dudley Borough serving children in the Wordsley area of Stourbridge. We have on site a 20-place base for profoundly deaf children who are taxied in from all over the borough. The school is led by the Headteacher and a Co-Head who work closely together to ensure excellent continuity throughout the week. Our SENCO is an outstanding practitioner who supports the children, parents and staff in all areas of SEND. The school runs a curriculum based on individual subjects utilizing Kapow among others. We have the PSQM science award and follow the United Nations Charter for Children- the Rights Respecting programme. Our EY department is an excellent facility and gets the children off to a fantastic start. We have a toddler group that meets every Wednesday morning. We have a Forest Schools area on our extensive grounds. The Headteacher is a co- chair of Primary Forum and we are a member of the Dudley West Learning community. The governing body strive to ensure the very best for all the children, parents and staff and work closely with the school to secure the very best education experience possible.

# Structure

“Forging Ahead Together”







# Members, Trustees and Local Governing Boards

## Members

Members act as guardians of the trust's purpose, ensuring it upholds its objectives and governance structure.

Meeting once a year to ensure that the trust operates within its Articles of Association. Reviewing the membership of Members and Trustees. Approval of Financial Accounts. Quality Assurance of work undertaken by the Board of Trustees. Appointing and Removing Trustees. Holding the Executive Team to account.

## Trustees

A trustee in a MAT oversees strategic direction, financial performance, and governance to ensure the trust meets its educational and legal obligations.

To meet termly as a board plus a committee meeting of 'Audit and Risk', 'People, Finance, Resources', 'Achievement and Outcomes'. Compliance with charity and company law. Establish the strategic priorities of the MAT. Determine Trust wide policies. Ensure financial probity and determine the funding model across the trust including setting budgets for individual schools. Review and challenge progress of the Trust against Key Performance Indicators. Agree schemes of delegations and the functions of the Local Governing Bodies.

## Local Governing Boards

A local governor in a MAT focuses on the specific needs of their school, ensuring quality education and effective community engagement

The local governing board focuses on the individual schools within the trust. They aim to ensure high standards of pupil achievement, oversee budgets, and support the headteacher. Their role is crucial for maintaining the quality of education. They oversee People, Premises and Finance along with Achievement, Outcomes and Standards in line with the scheme of delegation from the Trustees.



# Committees per term

## Trustees

- 1 x Trust Board
- 1 x Audit and Risk Committee
- 1 x People, Finance, Resources Committee
- 1 x Achievement, Outcomes, Standards Committee

## Local Governing Boards (per school)

- 1 x Local Governing Board
- 1 x People, Premises and Finance
- 1 x Achievement, Outcomes and Standards

Committees meeting every term is crucial for maintaining consistent oversight and ensuring timely decision-making. Regular meetings allow committees to review performance data, address issues promptly, and reflect on progress towards strategic goals. This frequency helps in fostering strong communication, encouraging transparency, and ensuring that any necessary adjustments can be made proactively.



# Trustee Committees

Audit and Risk Committee	People, Finance, Resources	Achievement, Outcomes, Standards
<p><b>Oversight of Financial Reporting:</b> Ensures accuracy and transparency of financial statements.</p> <p><b>Risk Management:</b> Identifies and mitigates risks.</p> <p><b>Compliance:</b> Monitors adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.</p> <p><b>Internal Controls:</b> Evaluates effectiveness of internal control systems.</p> <p><b>Audit Processes:</b> Oversees internal and external audits.</p>	<p><b>HR Management:</b> Oversees staffing, professional development, and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Financial Oversight:</b> Manages budgets, financial planning, and expenditure.</p> <p><b>Resource Allocation:</b> Ensures effective use of resources like facilities and technology.</p> <p><b>Strategic Planning:</b> Aligns resources with strategic goals.</p> <p><b>Compliance:</b> Ensures financial and employment practices adhere to regulations.</p>	<p><b>Academic Performance:</b> Monitors pupil achievement and progress.</p> <p><b>Curriculum Oversight:</b> Ensures high-quality, well-sequenced curricula.</p> <p><b>Standards Setting:</b> Defines and upholds educational standards.</p> <p><b>Assessment Analysis:</b> Reviews data to inform improvements.</p> <p><b>Interventions:</b> Implements and evaluates strategies for raising attainment.</p>

Trustee committees in a MAT are responsible for the strategic oversight and governance of the entire trust. They ensure financial integrity, set educational standards, and develop policies that guide the trust's vision and direction. Trustee committees also oversee risk management and hold the executive leadership team accountable for the MAT's performance.



# Local Governing Committees

People, Premises, Finance	Achievement, Outcomes, Standards
Staff recruitment, welfare, development, and retention.	Pupil attainment and progress data
Maintenance, safety, and overall learning environment.	Teaching quality and effectiveness
Budget management, spending, and resource allocation.	Curriculum implementation and impact
Ethos and culture and safeguarding.	SEND provision and inclusivity
	Assessment practices and results

Local governing committees (LGCs) primarily focus on monitoring and supporting individual schools within the MAT. They oversee the school's performance, ensuring adherence to educational standards, and monitoring safeguarding and wellbeing. LGCs also engage with parents and the community, offering invaluable insights to the central Trust Board for informed decision-making.



# How the trust will hold each academy to account

## Trustees:

Trustees will focus on Standards Maintenance and ensure that high educational standards across all academies. This will be achieved through resource allocation that guarantees effective and efficient use of resources. They aim for equity to provide a consistent quality of education irrespective of location or demographic. Trustees aim to ensure continuous improvement and drive this through regular evaluation and feedback. They aim to have stakeholder trust and build confidence among parents, students, and the community. Review performance data and school improvement plans and conduct regular audits and evaluations will be essential. They will ensure compliance with educational standards and trust wide policies.

They will hold each academy to account through -

Performance Reviews: Regularly analysing academic results and progress data.

School Improvement Plans: Evaluating and approving action plans for improvement.

Audits: Conducting financial and operational audits to ensure compliance and efficiency.

Visits: Carrying out school visits to monitor teaching standards and pupil behaviour.

Feedback Sessions: Holding meetings with leaders to discuss challenges and achievements





# How the trust will hold each academy to account

## Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

The CEO will align school goals with overarching strategic aims and ensures uniform standards and practices across all academies. They will identify where additional help or resources are needed and track educational outcomes and operational efficiency. They will use all available information to inform decision making that is timely and effective for school improvement. The CEO will hold Headteachers to account for academic and operational performance including setting targets and evaluating progress.

They will hold each academy to account through -

Setting Targets: Establishing clear academic and operational goals.

Performance Monitoring: Regularly reviewing data on student outcomes and staff performance.

School Visits: Conducting visits to monitor teaching practices and school environment.

Progress Meetings: Holding termly meetings with Headteachers to discuss progress and challenges.

Support and Resources: Providing resources and strategic guidance for school improvement.



# How the trust will hold each academy to account

## Executive Lead for School Improvement (ELSI):

The ELSI will ensure targeted support and directs tailored interventions where needed. They will promote consistent teaching practices and curriculum delivery and utilise data to drive improvement strategies. They will highlight best practices and share effective teaching methods across academies and foster an environment of ongoing development and excellence. The ELSI will monitor educational outcomes and implements support strategies including providing regular feedback and professional development to Headteachers and senior leaders. They will hold each academy to account through –

Regular Visits: Conducting school visits to observe practices and offer feedback.

Performance Reviews: Reviewing academic results and progress data.

Support Plans: Implementing tailored improvement plans.

Training and Development: Providing professional development opportunities for staff.

Collaboration: Encouraging sharing of best practices among academies.



# How the trust will hold each academy to account

## **Executive Lead for Business and Operations (ELBO):**

The ELBO will ensure financial health and maintain sound financial management and budget adherence. They will focus on resource allocation and efficiently use resources and facilities. The ELBO will develop operational efficiencies and support the smooth day-to-day operations. They will ensure compliance and that the trust adheres to legal and regulatory requirements. They will promote long-term sustainability and planning and ensure efficient use of resources and financial stability that will include reviewing financial reports and operational practices. They will hold each academy to account through –

**Financial Audits:** Conducting regular audits to ensure budget adherence.

**Resource Management:** Overseeing the use of school resources and facilities.

**Compliance Checks:** Ensuring adherence to legal and regulatory standards.

**Performance Metrics:** Using key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor operational efficiency.

**Strategic Planning:** Guiding long-term operational and financial planning.



# How the trust will hold each academy to account

## **Local Governing Boards (LGBs):**

The LGBs' and through the Chair will maintain local oversight and demonstrate an understanding of the community needs.

They will value accountability and maintain transparent decision-making. The LGB will strive to maintain high educational standard and ensure effective governance and strategic direction. They will encourage stakeholder engagement with parents, students, and staff.

They will hold each academy to account through –

Regular Meetings: Holding frequent meetings to review performance.

Data Analysis: Examining academic results, attendance, and behaviour records.

School Visits: Conducting visits to observe teaching and learning firsthand.

Stakeholder Feedback: Gathering input from parents, students, and staff.

Strategic Plans: Ensuring alignment with the academy's goals and strategies.



# How the trust will hold each academy to account

## Headteachers:

The Headteacher will maintain high standards in teaching and learning and improve pupil outcomes through achievement and progress. They will focus on operational efficiencies and the smooth operations of the school. They will value professional development and take action to ensure this is highly effective. They will ensure compliance and adhere to legal and policy guidelines. The Headteacher will provide regular updates to LGBs and Executive Leads. They will implement trust strategies at the academy level.

They will hold each academy to account through –

Setting Performance Targets: Establishing clear, measurable goals.

Monitoring Progress: Regularly reviewing data on academic performance and behaviour.

Financial Oversight: Ensuring proper use of resources and budgeting.

Annual Reviews: Conducting in-depth evaluations of overall school performance.

Support and Intervention: Providing support or intervention where needed.



# The lines of Accountability in the Round Oak Collaborative Trust

The integrated structure ensures constant communication, evaluation, and support, fostering continuous improvement.



- **Members:**  
Hold the Trustees to account  
Ensure the trust's objectives are met
- **Trustees:**  
Accountable to Members  
Responsible for overall governance, financial oversight, and strategic direction of the MAT
- **Chief Executive Officer (CEO):**  
Reports to Trustees  
Oversees the trust's strategy, operations, and educational performance
- **Executive Lead for Business and Operations (ELBO):**  
Reports to the CEO  
Manages financial planning, compliance, and operational efficiency
- **Executive Lead for School Improvement (ELSI):**  
Reports to the CEO  
Enhances educational outcomes and implements improvement strategies
- **Local Governing Boards (LGBs):**  
Reports to Trustees  
Provides oversight and support to individual academies  
Focuses on community and stakeholder engagement
- **Headteachers:**  
Reports to both LGBs and Executive Leads  
Manages day-to-day school leadership, adhering to trust policies and strategic goals



# Potential Members

- We are proud that we have been able to agree in principle to a group of members. This will mean that the Round Oak Collaborative will be supported by highly skilled and experienced individuals who are wholeheartedly dedicated to our mission.
- Their rich expertise spans various fields, and they bring a wealth of knowledge, innovative ideas, and proven leadership to our team. These committed Members will be the backbone of our collaborative efforts, ensuring that we consistently deliver exceptional educational standards and foster a nurturing environment for growth and development.
- We are proud to say that our Members will include experience in International Business Development, Local Authority Education and Outcomes leadership, Principal Health and Safety Officer experience, Head of Compliance at Legal Services and Principal at a further education establishment.



# Potential Trustees

- In order to ensure the collaborative grows with the interests of all schools in mind, two governors from each school will be stepping into the shadow trustee roles. This wealth of experience from across our schools will provide invaluable insights and perspectives, ensuring that our collaborative efforts are both comprehensive and effective. Their diverse expertise will drive forward our progress, fostering a unified and responsive approach to the challenges and opportunities we face as a collective.
- This will then mean that if schools decide to enter the Round Oak Collaborative, we will have a highly effective group of individuals ready to act as trustees.
- The purpose of trustees is to oversee the strategic direction and ensure the accountability and success of the collaborative, with each trustee being deeply invested in the success of our schools and the partnership.



# The executive team

“Forging Ahead Together”





# The executive team

## Supporting School Improvement

Role	Remit
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>  Holds overarching responsibility for setting and executing the trust's strategic vision.	Ensuring high educational standards and continuous improvement across all primary schools under the trust. Working with trustees and local governors to meet regulatory requirements and uphold governance standards. Overseeing financial health, allocating budgets effectively, and ensuring resources support teaching and learning priorities. Leading on professional development, fostering a supportive environment that attracts and retains high-quality staff. Building robust relationships with parents, carers, and local communities to enhance the schools' standing and support networks. Implementing consistent policies, ensuring smooth operational practices, and addressing any challenges promptly. Forecasting future needs, setting goals, and adapting to educational trends to keep the trust progressive and innovative.
<b>Executive Lead of Business and Operations</b>  Ensures efficient financial management, operational excellence, and compliance, supporting the trust's educational objectives	Overseeing budgeting, financial planning, and reporting to ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainability. Managing day-to-day operations, including facilities, IT infrastructure, and procurement processes to support teaching and learning environments. Leading HR functions, such as recruitment, employee relations, and professional development, ensuring staff welfare and effectiveness. Ensuring adherence to legal and regulatory requirements, including health and safety, safeguarding, and data protection. Assisting in the development of long-term strategic goals, particularly in areas of resource allocation and operational efficiency. Fostering positive relationships with stakeholders, including parents, local authorities, and other partners to support the trust's mission and vision. Implementing sustainable practices within the trust to promote environmental responsibility and long-term viability.
<b>Executive Lead of School Improvement</b>  Dedicated to enhancing educational outcomes and ensuring high standards across all schools within the trust	Monitoring and raising academic standards, ensuring every school meets or exceeds benchmarks. Overseeing the design and implementation of a rigorous, coherent curriculum tailored to the needs of primary pupils. Supporting and developing teaching staff through professional development programmes, mentoring, and assessment of teaching practices. Using data to monitor student progress, identify areas for improvement, and inform evidence-based interventions. Preparing schools for Ofsted inspections, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, and addressing areas of concern. Working with school leaders to set and achieve long-term school improvement goals aligned with the trust's vision. Promoting SEND inclusion, ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, achieve their full potential. Building partnerships with parents, carers, and local communities to support the educational objectives and create a supportive learning environment. Encouraging innovative teaching methods and the use of technology to enhance learning experiences. Facilitating collaboration between schools within the trust to share best practices, resources, and strategies for improvement.

# The development teams

“Forging Ahead Together”





# ROC Development Teams

## Supporting School Improvement - [Linked to the Executive Lead for School Improvement](#)

Role	Remit
<b>Trust Inclusion and Additional Needs Team</b>  Devoted to fostering an inclusive environment where all pupils can thrive, regardless of their individual needs.	Identifying, assessing, and supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), ensuring tailored interventions and resources. Adapting the curriculum to meet diverse needs, promoting independence and access to learning for all pupils. Implementing strategies to support positive behaviour, addressing any barriers to learning. Involving parents and carers in decision-making processes, keeping them informed and engaged in their child's education. Providing ongoing training for staff on inclusive practices and effective interventions. Regularly reviewing the progress and well-being of pupils with additional needs, adjusting support as required. Building relationships with external agencies, health services, and local communities to support pupil well-being. Developing and implementing policies that promote inclusion and respect diversity. Supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of all pupils through targeted programmes and pastoral care. Promoting values of equality, respect, and diversity within the school community, ensuring all pupils feel valued and included.
<b>Trust Early Years Foundation Stage Team</b>  Creating a strong foundation for young children's learning and development.	Designing and implementing a rich, play-based curriculum tailored to the EYFS framework, fostering all areas of development. Continually assessing children's progress through observations and formative assessments, using this data to inform planning. Ensuring learning activities are child-initiated and adult-guided, promoting curiosity and a love for learning. Creating a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment that supports physical, emotional, and cognitive development. Engaging parents and carers in their child's learning journey, offering support and guidance to reinforce learning at home. Providing ongoing training for staff to stay updated with best practices in early years education. Ensuring all children, including those with SEND, have equal access to learning opportunities and support. Aiding smooth transitions for children entering the EYFS setting and moving on to Key Stage 1. Promoting the health, safety, and well-being of all children, including healthy lifestyles and positive behaviour. Continuously evaluating EYFS provision, identifying areas for improvement to ensure outstanding early childhood education.
<b>Trust Deputy Head teacher Team</b>  A critical role in supporting the Headteacher and ensuring the effective running of the school	Assisting the Headteacher in strategic planning and school leadership, ensuring alignment with the MAT's overall vision. Overseeing curriculum planning and delivery, promoting high standards of teaching and learning across the school. Ensuring robust support systems are in place for pupils' welfare, behaviour, and emotional well-being. Leading professional development initiatives, mentoring staff, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Monitoring pupil progress through data analysis, ensuring effective use of assessment to inform teaching and learning. Facilitating strong communication and partnerships with parents and carers, promoting their involvement in the school community. Ensuring school policies are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed, in line with MAT guidelines and legal requirements. Supporting day-to-day operational management, including timetabling, resource allocation, and school logistics. Representing the school in external matters, liaising with other schools, agencies, and the local community to foster strong partnerships. Leading on behaviour policy, promoting positive behaviour strategies and ensuring a consistent approach across the school. Contributing to the school's improvement planning, evaluating the impact of initiatives and driving key priorities for development.



# ROC Development Teams

## Supporting School Improvement - [Linked to the Executive Lead for School Improvement](#)

Role	Remit
<b>Trust Subject Teams</b>  To ensure high-quality teaching and learning within their specific subject area	Designing a coherent and progressive curriculum that aligns with the national curriculum and MAT guidelines. Selecting and providing appropriate resources, including textbooks, digital tools, and manipulatives, to support teaching and learning. Offering guidance, training, and professional development for teachers to enhance their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills. Developing and implementing effective assessment strategies to monitor pupil progress and inform teaching. Regularly reviewing pupil performance data to identify trends, address gaps, and support targeted interventions. Promoting and facilitating connections with other subjects to provide a holistic learning experience. Organising subject-specific activities, clubs, and enrichment opportunities to inspire and engage pupils. Ensuring the subject curriculum meets the diverse needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, and offering adequate support. Keeping parents and carers informed about the curriculum, progress, and ways to support learning at home. Staying updated with the latest educational research and best practices to continuously improve teaching and learning within the subject.
<b>Trust Year Group Teams</b>  Focuses on providing consistent education and pastoral care for a specific year group.	Implementing and adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils in the year group, ensuring progression and coherence. Collaborating on lesson planning, resource preparation, and differentiated instruction to support diverse learner needs. Regularly assessing pupil progress, using formative and summative assessments to inform teaching and identify areas for intervention. Providing emotional and behavioural support, fostering a positive and inclusive classroom environment. Communicating regularly with parents and carers, sharing updates on pupil progress and ways to support learning at home. Working closely with colleagues within the year group and across other year groups to share best practices and ensure consistency. Implementing behaviour policies consistently, promoting positive behaviour and addressing issues collaboratively. Participating in ongoing training and professional development to enhance teaching practices and stay updated with current educational trends. Continuously evaluating teaching effectiveness, making adjustments to improve learning outcomes. Ensuring inclusive practices are in place, supporting pupils with SEND, and working with the SENCO to provide appropriate interventions.
<b>Trust Safeguarding Team</b>  A vital role in ensuring the safety and welfare of all children within the school	Developing, implementing, and regularly reviewing the school's safeguarding policies and procedures in line with statutory requirements and MAT guidelines. Providing regular training and updates for all staff on safeguarding issues, ensuring everyone is aware of their responsibilities and the procedures to follow. Maintaining accurate records of safeguarding concerns, incidents, and actions taken. Ensuring timely and appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns. Leading on all child protection matters, acting as Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and working closely with external agencies, including social services, to support vulnerable children. Communicating with parents and the local community to raise awareness of safeguarding practices and providing guidance on keeping children safe. Promoting and implementing measures to ensure children's online safety, including educating pupils on safe internet use and monitoring online activities. Conducting risk assessments for school activities, trips, and the school environment to identify and mitigate potential safeguarding risks. Identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils, providing targeted interventions and working with families to ensure their needs are met. Ensuring all safeguarding records and information are kept confidential and shared only with appropriate personnel. Regularly auditing and reviewing safeguarding practices to ensure they are effective and up-to-date, making improvements where necessary.



# ROC Development Teams

## Supporting School Improvement – [Linked to the Executive Lead for Business and Operations](#)

Role	Remit
<b>Trust Business Team</b>  A crucial role in ensuring the smooth and efficient operation of the schools within the trust.	Overseeing budgeting, financial planning, and accounting. Ensuring transparent and efficient use of funds in line with MAT policies. Managing the procurement process for goods and services, ensuring value for money and compliance with procurement regulations. Handling recruitment, payroll, staff contracts, and personnel issues. Ensuring compliance with employment law and MAT policies. Implementing and monitoring health and safety policies, conducting risk assessments, and ensuring a safe working environment for pupils and staff. Maintaining school buildings and grounds, managing repairs, refurbishments, and ensuring the school environment is conducive to learning. Overseeing the IT infrastructure, ensuring robust and secure systems are in place to support teaching, learning, and administration. Ensuring all practices comply with legal, regulatory, and MAT requirements. Supporting governance by providing relevant reports and information. Managing the promotion of the MAT and individual schools, handling internal and external communications and engagement with stakeholders. Providing administrative support to school leadership, including managing records, correspondence, and scheduling. Supporting the MAT's strategic objectives by contributing to long-term planning and the implementation of initiatives that enhance the trust's effectiveness and reputation.
<b>Trust Site Team</b>  Ensures the physical environment of the schools is safe, clean, and conducive to learning	Undertaking routine maintenance and repairs of school buildings and grounds to keep them in good condition. Conducting regular health and safety checks, ensuring compliance with regulations and school policies, and addressing any hazards promptly. Managing security measures to protect the school premises, including locking/unlocking buildings, monitoring CCTV, and liaising with security services if necessary. Overseeing cleaning schedules to ensure high standards of hygiene and cleanliness throughout the school. Maintaining outdoor areas, including playgrounds, sports fields, and gardens to ensure they are safe and well-kept. Managing site resources such as tools, equipment, and supplies, ensuring they are available and in good working order. Assisting with the setup and breakdown of school events, ensuring logistical requirements are met. Keeping up-to-date records of maintenance, inspections, and compliance checks, ensuring adherence to statutory requirements. Being prepared to respond to emergencies such as fires, floods, or security breaches to minimise disruption and ensure safety. Working collaboratively with school leaders and staff to effectively address site-related issues and support the school's operational needs.
<b>Trust Admin Team</b>  Essential for the smooth operation of the school, handling a range of administrative tasks	Greeting visitors, answering phones, and managing correspondence, ensuring a welcoming and professional environment. Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of pupil information, including attendance, academic performance, and personal details. Assisting teachers and staff with administrative tasks such as photocopying, document preparation, and scheduling meetings. Managing communication with parents, carers, and external stakeholders, including newsletters, emails, and school notices. Handling the admissions process, including applications, enrolments, and transitions between classes or schools. Organising school events, trips, and meetings, ensuring all logistical details are managed efficiently. Managing data entry, reporting, and analysis to support school operations and decision-making. Assisting with financial tasks such as processing invoices, managing petty cash, and maintaining financial records. Ensuring compliance with all statutory requirements, including safeguarding policies and GDPR regulations. Managing school supplies, ordering materials, and ensuring classrooms and offices are well-stocked.

# The universal offer

“Forging Ahead Together”





# Centralised Support vs Centralised Services

**Centralised Support** refers to providing consistent help and resources across multiple locations or departments, often aiming to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

**Centralised Services**, on the other hand, indicate that certain functions or operations are managed from a central point, ensuring uniformity and potentially reducing costs.

Examples of Centralised Support:

- IT helpdesk assisting all staff across different schools.
- Centralised training programmes for teacher development.
- A dedicated SEND team providing consistent strategies for SEND students.

Examples of Centralised Services:

- Central payroll system for all staff.
- Unified procurement system for school supplies.
- Central administrative services, like HR or finance.

The MAT will focus on offering centralised support rather than centralised services. This approach aims to empower each school within the MAT by providing access to expert guidance, resources, and strategic oversight without taking away their individual autonomy. By centralising support, we ensure that each school benefits from shared best practices, leadership development, and consistent quality standards, while still maintaining the unique characteristics and needs of their local community. Over time, it may be beneficial to explore centralised services if this proves advantageous for each of the schools involved.





# Centralised Support

## **Contribution**

There will be a percentage contribution from each school budget towards the Centralised Support (Executive Team). This will be an example of a 'Top Slice' and not 'Gag Pool' approach to funding. This means that each school will hold their own budget.

## **School Services**

Individual School Budget post Top slice and not Gag Pooling. Top Slice will be a set percentage of the total income for the school (Average 5.4% but dependent upon number of schools)

Gag Pooling includes the Trust holding the budget and releasing amounts to the school. The Gag Pool pays for centralised services.

## **Centralised Services**

Grown and developed over time to achieve MAT wide services through Service Level Agreements. Each school will retain the option to choose their own services but will be supported by the Executive Team to ensure best value and benefits from the multiple school approach.

## **Centralised Support**

Examples include Safeguarding, Compliance, Finance, Health and Safety, Premises, Service Level Agreements, Collaboration.



# Funding



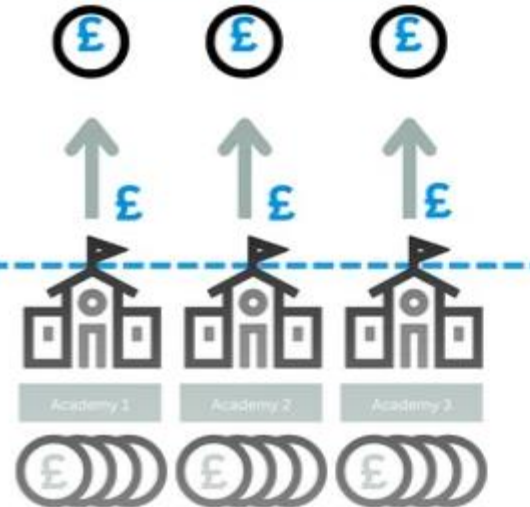
## Academies Benchmark Report 2024

2 Feb 2024 — For MATs not pooling, the average top slice contribution to the central function was in the range of **5.4% to 7.4%**

The Round Oak Collaborative aims to have a 4.5% contribution from each school budget.



### Top-slicing

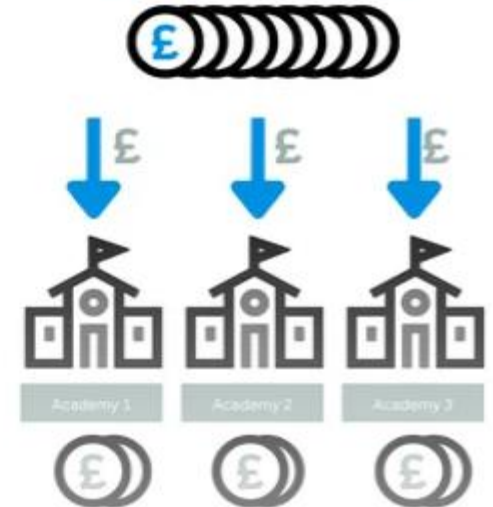


**Small  
MAT**

Fewer than  
3,000 pupils



### GAG pooling



**Medium  
MAT**

3,000 to  
7,500 pupils

**Large  
MAT**

More than  
7,500 pupils



# Universal offer

The universal offer ensures consistent, high-quality education and support across all its schools, fostering inclusive learning environments and maximising pupil potential.



## Annual School Review

- An annual school review within a MAT involves a comprehensive evaluation of each school's performance over the academic year. This review assesses various aspects, including curriculum effectiveness, teaching quality, pupil outcomes, SEND provision, and behaviour standards. Data is gathered from assessments, lesson observations, stakeholder feedback, and school records. The review identifies strengths, areas for improvement, and sets clear action plans for the next year. This collaborative process ensures that every school within the MAT maintains high standards and continuously strives for excellence.



## Support and Development Visits

- Three support and development visits per year in a MAT are strategically scheduled to bolster school performance and enhance staff development. These visits involve MAT leaders reviewing teaching practices, curriculum delivery, and pupil progress. Each visit focuses on specific areas, offering tailored feedback, resources, and professional development opportunities to staff. This ongoing support ensures continuous improvement and alignment with best practices across the MAT.



## Headteacher Meetings

- Half termly headteacher meetings across a MAT are pivotal for fostering collaboration and consistency among school leaders. These meetings provide a platform for headteachers to share best practices, discuss challenges, and align strategies with the MAT's overarching goals. Topics often include curriculum development, behaviour management, and SEND provision. Through open dialogue and peer support, headteachers can collectively drive school improvement and ensure high standards across the MAT.



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## Points of Contact



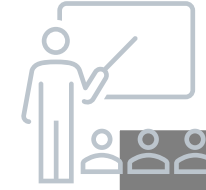
- Headteachers having direct points of contact with the CEO, Executive Lead for Business and Operations, and Executive Lead for School Improvement is vital for cohesive leadership. These regular touchpoints ensure that strategic decisions align with both educational and operational goals. Headteachers can promptly address concerns, collaboratively plan initiatives, and share feedback, fostering a unified approach to school improvement. This synergy supports well-rounded development across all schools in the MAT.

## Inspection Support



- Effective Ofsted preparation and support are crucial for ensuring that schools are inspection-ready and can showcase their strengths. This involves detailed self-evaluation, understanding the inspection framework, and identifying areas for improvement. Support can include mock inspections, staff training, and resource provision. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and readiness, schools can confidently demonstrate their commitment to high standards.

## Shared Inset



- Having one shared INSET day each year focused on the development of curriculum, teaching, and learning brings significant benefits. It provides a unique opportunity for staff across all schools to come together, share best practices, and align on educational priorities. This collective effort enhances consistency in teaching methods, fosters professional development, and inspires innovative approaches. Such collaboration ultimately strengthens the overall quality of education.



# Universal offer

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## Headteacher Appraisal



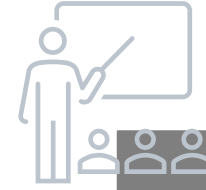
- Headteacher appraisal is a structured process aimed at evaluating and enhancing the performance of school leaders. Conducted annually, it involves setting clear objectives aligned with both the school's and MAT's priorities. The appraisal includes a thorough review of leadership impact, pupil outcomes, staff development, and school improvement initiatives. Feedback from staff, governors, and sometimes external reviewers, is considered. This appraisal not only recognises achievements but also identifies areas for further professional growth.

## Moderation



- Moderation ensures consistency and fairness in assessing pupils' work across its schools. It's a collaborative process where teachers from different schools meet to review and standardise marking against agreed criteria. This helps to align expectations, share best practices, and maintain high standards in assessment. Regular moderation sessions contribute to credible and comparable pupil outcomes, fostering trust among schools, parents, and Ofsted.

## Annual Conference



- The annual conference is a key event for fostering collaboration, inspiration, and professional development among its staff. Held once a year, it brings together teachers, leaders, and support staff to engage in workshops, listen to keynote speakers, and share innovative practices. This event creates a sense of community, encourages networking, and aligns everyone to the MAT's vision and goals. It's an opportunity to celebrate achievements, reflect on challenges, and plan for the future.



# Universal offer

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## DSL Network



- The DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) Network and Supervision is an essential support system for safeguarding leaders. This network provides a platform for DSLs to share experiences, update each other on best practices, and receive ongoing training. Supervision sessions offer confidential support, helping DSLs manage the emotional and practical challenges of their role. Regular meetings ensure consistent safeguarding standards across all schools in the MAT, enhancing the overall safety and wellbeing of pupils.

## Subject Specialist



- Facilitating subject networking and specialist support enhances teaching quality and enriches the curriculum. By creating networks of subject leaders across schools, educators can share resources, strategies, and innovations. Specialist support from experts provides targeted assistance, addressing specific challenges and promoting professional growth. These collaborations lead to more effective teaching, improved pupil outcomes, and a cohesive educational approach across the MAT.

## Inclusion Reviews



- Annual Inclusion reviews are crucial for ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their needs, receive equitable education. These reviews assess the effectiveness of teaching strategies, support services, and accessibility measures. By regularly evaluating inclusion practices, the MAT can identify areas for improvement and implement necessary changes. Inclusion reviews foster a supportive environment where every pupil can thrive.



# Universal offer

The universal offer ensures consistent, high-quality education and support across all its schools, fostering inclusive learning environments and maximising pupil potential.



## Financial Management

- 3 visits per year from the Executive Lead for Business and Operations. Supporting financial management in schools is vital for maintaining sustainability and achieving educational goals. This includes budgeting assistance, financial planning, and regular audits to ensure efficiency. Providing training for staff on financial best practices helps in making informed decisions.



## Health and Safety Audit

- An annual health and safety compliance audit is a thorough review of a school's safety practices and protocols. This audit assesses everything from building infrastructure to emergency procedures, ensuring they meet legal standards. It involves inspecting equipment, reviewing risk assessments, and verifying staff training records. The audit aims to identify potential hazards and recommend improvements.



## Operations Management

- Termly business operations support involves offering schools regular assistance with essential administrative tasks. This might include help with payroll, HR management, and procurement. It ensures that operational processes run smoothly and efficiently, allowing staff to focus more on teaching and learning. Regular reviews and updates keep the school in line with best practices and regulatory requirements.



# Universal offer

The universal offer ensures consistent, high-quality education and support across all its schools, fostering inclusive learning environments and maximising pupil potential.

## Governance Support



- Termly governor support provides school governors with the guidance and resources they need to fulfil their roles effectively. This involves training sessions, access to relevant policies, and updates on educational legislation. Regular meetings help governors stay informed about the school's progress and challenges, enabling them to make informed decisions. Clerking at all local governing board meetings will be provided. Trustees will meet with local Chairs to support them in their roles.

## Trust Wide Policies



- Trust-wide policies are essential in ensuring consistency and compliance across all schools within a trust. These policies are regularly reviewed and updated in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. By aligning with the latest DfE updates, trust-wide policies guarantee that each school adheres to national standards, promoting best practices. Having a trust monitor DfE updates ensures a unified and consistent approach to policy implementation, reducing the burden on individual schools.

## Shared CPD



- Shared CPD sessions within a primary-only MAT provide fantastic opportunities for staff to collaborate, share best practices, and stay updated with the latest educational research and techniques. These collective sessions help build a strong professional network, fostering a culture of continuous improvement across all schools. Keeping accurate CPD records is essential for tracking staff development and ensuring compliance. It allows for personalised training plans, helps identify skill gaps, and supports career progression discussions.



# Autonomy and choice

“Forging Ahead Together”





# Autonomy and Choice

Retaining school autonomy within the Round Oak Collaborative Trust is essential as it allows each school to maintain its unique character, ethos, and approaches, which have been fundamental to success.

This autonomy fosters innovation and ensures that schools can tailor their strategies to the specific needs of their pupils and communities. By preserving individual school's decision-making powers over curriculum delivery, pedagogical approaches, and pastoral care, schools can continue to build on their strengths and address local challenges effectively.

Moreover, autonomy within the ROC supports school leaders in implementing initiatives that align closely with their vision and values, leading to greater staff buy-in and community support.

Ultimately, this approach not only enhances student outcomes across the Trust but also ensures that each school remains a vibrant, responsive, and locally trusted institution.



# What will each school retain?

<b>Curriculum Design and Delivery:</b> Tailoring curriculum content to meet local needs Developing unique teaching methods and practices	<b>Community Engagement:</b> Building and maintaining local community partnerships Organising community-focused events and initiatives
<b>School Ethos and Culture:</b> Setting the vision, values, and culture Implementing school-specific traditions and events	<b>Budget Management:</b> Allocating and prioritising funding according to school needs Managing discretionary spending effectively
<b>Pastoral Care:</b> Designing and implementing pastoral care programmes Tailoring support for pupils' social and emotional needs	<b>Curriculum Enrichment Activities:</b> Planning school trips, extra-curricular activities, and enrichment programmes
<b>Staff Recruitment and Development:</b> Hiring staff that align with the school's ethos Planning targeted professional development opportunities	<b>SEND Provision:</b> Tailoring support for pupils with additional needs Implementing specific interventions and strategies
<b>Behaviour Policies:</b> Creating bespoke behaviour management strategies Ensuring policies reflect the school's values and pupil needs	<b>School Environment:</b> Designing and maintaining learning and recreational spaces Adapting facilities to meet the needs of pupils and staff

These are examples. All decisions made by the trust will balance the need for school autonomy, the values of the trust and the highest expectations and standards for all.



# What will be standardised?

<b>Benchmarking:</b> Using common assessment/Benchmarking figures, but having flexibility in data analysis and intervention strategies	<b>Safeguarding Policies:</b> Implementing overarching safeguarding policies, but adapting procedures to address local context
<b>Professional Development:</b> Adhering to MAT-wide training schedules, but tailoring CPD sessions to school-specific needs	<b>Data Reporting and Compliance:</b> Following MAT data reporting requirements, but analysing and responding to data in a school-specific manner
<b>Core Curriculum Framework:</b> Following shared curriculum endpoints, but customising content, delivery and enrichment activities	<b>GDPR and Information Governance:</b> Implementing standardised GDPR systems across the trust to ensure consistent data protection and compliance
<b>Governance Structures:</b> Participating in MAT governance, but retaining individual school governing bodies for local decisions	<b>Complaints:</b> Standardising complaint procedures across the trust to ensure consistency and transparency
<b>Technology and Digital Learning:</b> Utilising IT systems, but integrating with school-specific educational tech tools and platforms	<b>Health and Safety Compliance:</b> Standardising compliance across the trust to ensure schools adhere to consistent protocols

These are examples. All decisions made by the trust will balance the need for school autonomy, the values of the trust and the highest expectations and standards for all.



# What will be collectively designed?

## **Attendance:**

The MAT can establish a core attendance policy with minimum expectations, goals, and reporting standards. Within this framework, schools can customise strategies and initiatives to address local challenges and engage their communities. Regular reviews and shared best practices ensure a consistent approach across the trust while allowing schools to retain their unique touch.

## **Behaviour:**

The MAT can set overarching principles for a behaviour policy, ensuring consistency and shared values. Each school can then adapt these principles to their unique context. Provide a policy framework outlining expectations while allowing schools to customise specifics, like behaviour strategies and rewards. Regular meetings and feedback loops ensure alignment.

## **Teaching and Learning Policy:**

The MAT can craft a central teaching and learning policy with shared pedagogical principles and goals. Schools can then tailor these principles to suit their specific contexts and student needs. Encourage each school to innovate and share successful practices within the trust network. Regular monitoring ensures consistency while fostering creativity.

## **Staffing Structure:**

The MAT can outline a staffing structure template with key roles and responsibilities, ensuring consistency across schools. However, each school can adjust based on their specific needs, student demographics, and staff strengths. Flexibility in hiring, role definitions, and professional development allows schools to cater to their unique environments.

## **Assessment:**

The MAT can establish overarching assessment principles, like regular formative assessments, data usage, and standardised tests. Schools can then personalise the specifics: types of assessments, frequency, and methods suited to their curriculum and student needs. Continuous professional development and data-sharing practices ensure consistency whilst allowing creative assessment approaches.

These are examples. All decisions made by the trust will balance the need for school autonomy, the values of the trust and the highest expectations and standards for all.

# Frequently asked questions

“Forging Ahead Together”





# FAQs

<b>1. Will the school's identity and ethos change?</b>	No, the school retains its unique character, ethos, and traditions even within the MAT framework.
<b>2. Will there be changes in staff?</b>	Current staff members retain their positions under TUPE regulations, although there may be enhanced professional development and career opportunities.
<b>3. Can parents still communicate with school leaders?</b>	Yes, leadership remains accessible, and communication channels with parents stay in place.
<b>4. Will there be changes to school policies?</b>	Some policies may be standardised across the MAT, but schools retain flexibility in areas affecting their specific community.
<b>5. Will there be any financial impact on parents?</b>	No, joining a MAT does not incur any direct financial cost to parents.
<b>6. Will schools change their name?</b>	No, all schools will retain their name.
<b>7. Will schools change their uniform?</b>	No, all schools will retain their uniform.
<b>8. Will staff lose out?</b>	No, we are committed to all staff. This means committing to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions and maintaining staff pensions



# FAQs

<b>9. What happens with Ofsted?</b>	All schools would be closed and reopened with a new URN number. All schools would then be inspected within three years of conversion. OFSTED aim to inspect new schools in the third year of being open.
<b>10. What are the differences in funding arrangements?</b>	MATs: Directly funded by the government; responsible for managing their own budgets. LA Schools: Funded through the LA, with financial oversight from the authority.
<b>11. What are the differences in governance arrangements?</b>	MATs: Governed by a board of trustees with overall responsibility. LA Schools: Governed by a local governing body and overseen by the LA.
<b>12. What are the differences in compliance arrangements?</b>	MATs: Follow the Academy Trust Handbook and funding agreements. LA Schools: Adhere to LA policies and regulations.
<b>13. What are the differences in employment duties?</b>	MATs: Employ staff directly, managing their own HR practices. LA Schools: Employment policies guided by the LA.
<b>14. Can MATs make a profit?</b>	No. They are registered charities, and any surplus funds must be reinvested into the school's objectives, like improving educational outcomes and facilities. It's all about benefiting the students and community.
<b>15. Will academisation affect my child's education?</b>	The aim of academisation is to enhance educational outcomes through greater flexibility, innovation and opportunity.
<b>16. Can we change our mind?</b>	Yes. Schools can withdraw from the conversion process right up to the day of conversion. After this point, schools can move trusts but cannot move back to being LA maintained.



# Summary points

“Forging Ahead Together”



Summary Questions			
<b>1. What is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)?</b>	A MAT is a group of academies operating under a single trust, sharing resources, strategies, and values.	<b>8. Can a school leave a MAT if it wishes to?</b>	Yes, but it requires approval from the Department for Education and usually involves a significant process of consultation and planning.
<b>2. What are the benefits of forming a MAT?</b>	Benefits include shared expertise, collaborative professional development, financial efficiencies, and enhanced student outcomes through shared best practices.	<b>9. What are the accountability measures for a MAT?</b>	MATs are subject to external inspections, financial audits, and must meet performance metrics set by the Department for Education.
<b>3. What is the process for forming a MAT?</b>	The process involves stakeholder consultation, forming a board of trustees, legal documentation, and approval from the Regional Schools Commissioner.	<b>10. How is the curriculum managed within a MAT?</b>	The MAT may set broad curriculum frameworks aligned with its values, but individual schools adapt this to cater to their student demographics and needs.
<b>4. How does a MAT ensure school autonomy?</b>	While the MAT provides overarching policies and support, individual schools retain flexibility in curricular delivery, staffing, and specific school initiatives.	<b>11. How are decisions made within a MAT?</b>	Decisions are typically made by the board of trustees with input from local governing bodies, ensuring a balance between strategic oversight and local insight.
<b>5. What governance structure does a MAT have?</b>	A MAT is overseen by a board of trustees, with each school typically having a local governing body focusing on specific school needs.	<b>12. What is the role of parents in a MAT?</b>	Parent engagement is crucial, with MATs often having mechanisms like parent forums or representation in local governing bodies to ensure voices are heard.
<b>6. How are financial matters managed in a MAT?</b>	Finances can be centralised, providing economies of scale benefits, but schools can have allocated budgets .	<b>13. How does a MAT handle SEND provision?</b>	MATs standardise high-quality SEND provision across schools, ensuring consistent support, resources, and expertise sharing for children with special needs.
<b>7. How does joining a MAT affect staff employment terms?</b>	Staff terms and conditions are protected under TUPE regulations, although professional development and leadership opportunities often expand.	<b>15. What happens to the school's identity when joining a MAT?</b>	While schools benefit from the MAT's support and resources, they usually retain their unique ethos, traditions, and community links.



# Summary

We are excited about the future prospect of creating our own Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). This venture will enable us to expand opportunities and enhance the educational experiences for all children attending our schools.

As Local Authority support diminishes, it is crucial for us to take bold steps forward, leveraging the rich experience and expertise within our remarkable network. This transition is not a threat but a fantastic opportunity to shape the future of education in our borough.

By forming our MAT, we can prioritise the highest standards of teaching and learning, ensuring every child benefits from the best possible education. Together, we can lead with innovation, dedication, and a shared commitment to excellence, making a positive impact on our community and beyond.

# Proposed timeline

“Forging Ahead Together”





# Proposed Timeline

<b>April to June 2024</b>	Initial Exploration. Informal discussions with stakeholders. Preliminary consultations with the governing body.
<b>July 2024</b>	Initial Exploration. Establish DFE contact and draft application with Trust and School specific information.
<b>September 2024</b>	Formal Proposal. Draft consultation documents with Shadow Trust Board.
<b>October 2024</b>	Engagement. Initial meetings with staff and parents. Public meetings and online surveys. Collecting feedback and addressing concerns.
<b>November 2024</b>	Review. Analyse consultation feedback. Meetings with governing bodies to discuss findings.
<b>December 2024</b>	Decision Making. Finalising the decision based on feedback. Communicate the decision to stakeholders. Submit application to the DFE.
<b>January to February 2025</b>	Awaiting outcome from DFE Advisory Board
<b>February to July 2025</b>	Implementation - Transitioning processes and legal arrangements
<b>September 2025</b>	Aimed Conversion Date.



# Useful Links

- [NGA Website](#)
- [Academy Trust Handbook](#)
- [John Hattie Research](#)
- [Confederation of School Trusts](#)
- [The Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#)