



GROWTH STRATEGY

2023 - 2026

The Trust's ambition is to expand our family of primary schools who currently work together in a coherent manner to meet the needs of learners in the area and beyond. We have an ambition to increase the number of schools in the Trust, but in growing we will act in a timely and considered manner. We feel a sense of responsibility and obligation to expand, however we will only grow when we feel we have strong capacity to do so. It is the responsibility of the Trust to build capacity as we continue to develop.

We are committed to growth in the Wakefield, Kirklees and surrounding areas as we feel we are in a strong position to be able to support schools in these localities due to both proximity of central team support as well as harnessing school to school support. We also want to focus on these geographical areas to enable collaborative working, partnership and support for all our schools

We have built capacity within our central team through recent appointments and internal development and effectively support schools within our current structure. As we grow, we will need to consider additional capacity required to support back-office functions as well as continuously reviewing our strategy for school improvement.

We welcome good or outstanding primary schools to join us in order to strengthen the school improvement capacity that already exists across our Trust. As we currently have capacity to grow our network of schools, we also welcome schools with an OFSTED rating of 'requires improvement' or even 'inadequate'. We actively encourage schools to engage in an associate membership model if they feel this would be a suitable opportunity for them at this time.

The Trust will apply these principles in context, not rigidly ruling out schools wishing to join who do not meet all of the criteria.

When a school is proposed to be part of our Trust we will consider:

- school values in line with our ethos
- size of school and designation (Church of England and non-Church designation)
- financial position of school
- geographical location
- Ofsted category of the school
- our existing capacity to support the school effectively
- ability to add value / diversity to the Trust

Nonetheless, our moral obligation to raise standards and provide effective support remains the overriding consideration and this must be considered in terms of ensuring that no existing children or schools are placed at detriment.

The Trust will serve a range of communities including those with relatively high levels of deprivation. What we will not do:

- put competition before collaboration
- expand through sponsorship without all existing academies being in a strong position
- not do anything that would be detrimental to any young person, staff, or school in a neighbouring community

When considering an application from a school to join, the Trust will complete a rigorous due diligence process to determine the school's current position and our ability to add value to the school. Any new school joining the Trust will be asked to fully commit to the Trust's operational model whilst recognising that every school is unique.

There is a recognition that the educational landscape can change suddenly. We would look to respond positively if the right opportunity for growth presented itself, or to accommodate a request from a relevant body e.g. the Diocese or Regional Director. We will also consider geographically closely located groups of schools who express an interest in joining us.

Growth Strategy

Our ability to grow is reliant on ensuring a suitable talent pool of strong system leaders exist. Alongside leadership of school improvement, it is important to be able to generate the capacity and skills for school improvement activity itself.

In the next two years, we are keen to develop geographical hubs, making it easier to communicate, share good practice, and create a common ethos within the Trust. Our belief is that colleagues and pupils will benefit most from local hubs of around 5 or 6 schools.

Growth: 2023 – 2026

It is our ambition to grow to between 15 to 20 primary schools, and CAPA College, over the next three years.

It is our intention to:

- sponsor any vulnerable local schools (whilst taking note of the principles above)
- continue to share good practice throughout the Trust to raise achievement and standards
- further embed effective and efficient central core support systems for all schools within the Trust to ensure sustained value for money and economies of scale
- continue and further expand the development of leadership roles across schools to improve leadership and management, maintain and continue to improve standards and develop the capacity for growth in future years
- create and embed the corporate training and performance system to improve school outcomes and retain and recruit high quality staff
- continue to build on established collaborative partnerships including with Leeds Teaching School Hub and the Maths and English Hubs to ensure that we achieve excellent learning opportunities through evidence-based research, shared good practice and quality first teaching
- further develop Trust-wide professional networks – with a focus on improvement and professional development which are key to developing a sense of collective support and commitment to other schools.
- further develop the culture of peer challenge and review between schools, with Headteacher and SLT members at the centre, to embed a sense of shared responsibility for improvements in other schools.
- further develop the opportunities leaders can gain through supporting other schools ensuring opportunities are created to develop and retain high potential staff with 'stretch opportunities'
- further develop the language of 'collective efficacy' – including the use of: 'our academies' to ensure that the Trust is viewed as one organisation
- place an onus on commitment to Trust-wide improvement and the success of other schools within the recruitment process for senior leadership positions
- expand the monitoring and reporting models using a wider range of sources and conduits of intelligence include regular anonymous surveys of staff to gather views on workforce motivation, wellbeing, professional development, and their perceptions of school performance.
- develop Trust wide parental surveys and pupil voice interviews

Marketing

Marketing and promoting an online presence will be a key area of development for us. Effective communication, particularly from our Trust website, has required careful thought and planning to ensure it supports the wider school trust strategy. The Trust marketing strategy will be regularly reviewed to ensure the effective use of the technology and social media opportunities.

People Strategy

Within our growth strategy and overall school improvement strategy the Trust is committed to developing the workforce in ways which:

- distribute leadership throughout the schools
- utilise the strengths of individual staff and enable them to contribute to their maximum potential
- provide continuing professional development opportunities which enable staff to progress within the schools
- develop systematic talent audits of staff to identify skills and experience that may not be obvious based on the current staff roles or responsibilities and ensure that those who are identified are provided with the necessary development to undertake leadership roles
- continue to develop a strong talent pool of exceptional local leaders.