



Richard Spencer

Executive Headteacher, Cambridge Meridian

Academies Trust

Sarah Young
Director, Young Plus

Day 5 | Leading teaching, curriculum and assessment across a trust

- Our approach will be framed by big questions and is designed to be fluid to meet your needs, but there are emerging lessons from the sector that we will be exploring
- Avoid naming MATs or schools by name when exemplifying
- No seating plans
- No role play but actively engaged!
- You know each other we want to get to know, your experiences and respond to your needs
- No such thing as a naïve or daft question
- Please can we avoid emails and phones in the session step outside if you need to attend to things
- Spirit of 'appreciative enquiry'!



Session 1 Big Question: Should CEOs be the leaders of Teaching and Learning across their MAT?

As CEO, my challenge was not 'How do I personally lead the improvement in these schools?' The leadership team in each school was already working on that and those leaders were far closer to the classrooms in each academy than me. The challenge was actually 'How can I support senior colleagues to enable them to improve standards in their academies as quickly and efficiently as possible?'



Session 1 Big Question: Should CEOs be the leaders of Teaching and Learning across their MAT?

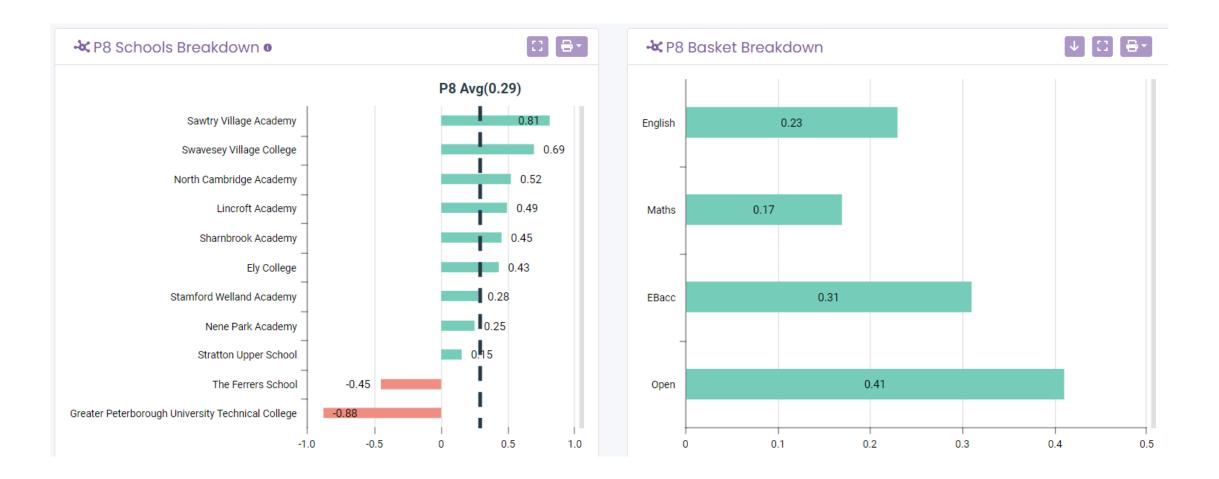
Provocations:

- Is it for the CEO to direct principles of pedagogy (e.g. Retrieval Practice in every lesson)
- Should the CEO direct the CPDL offer for all staff in a MAT?
- Is the allocation of History lessons in the KS3 curriculum a CEO decision?
- Does the CEO direct exam board choices?

Contextual considerations:

- Are any of these areas the domain of governance?
- Are these decisions or set out in any scheme of delegation a school joining the MAT might see?
- Does the size of the MAT make any difference to your view on these provocations?





What does a CEP consider when faced with data like this?
What are the questions a CEO might legitimately ask in relation to teaching?
What are the questions a CEP might legitimately ask in relation to curriculum?



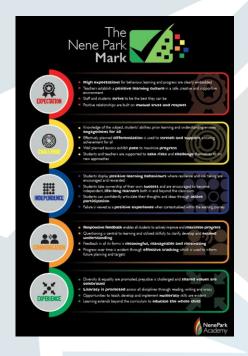
HQLE, A4A, EBL

Expert Teaching

Deliberate, Mutual, Collaborative, Targeted Each academy crafts and agrees shared standards, priorities and aims for approaches to teaching and curriculum delivery that match their context. These are used to evaluate and inform innovations







Each academy develops and evolves their teaching and learning 'standards' frameworks to inform strategic development and evaluation of 'Expert Teaching'...

These frameworks define the priorities and help align your CPD and monitoring schedule to measure the quality of curriculum implementation.



w/c	Week	Progress Report (PR) data due	Reports to go home	Academic Mentoring Window	Examinations Window	Parents' and Special Evenings	INSET	Tuesday Meetings (3.30-4.30)	Tuesday Learning (4.30-5.30) Includes 6 hours of disaggregated INSET	Trust Ext. Boundaries Events
29-Aug							Friday 1st Sept			
04-Sep	Α				PTE/M/S, NGRT, CATS and		Monday 4th Sept			
11-Sep	В	Year 11 PR1		Year 8 (PASS)	PASS 1			Meridian Curriculum Teams 1	Meridian Learning 1	
18-Sep	Α		Year 11 PR1	rear o (FASS)	Year 13 Resits					
25-Sep	В	Yr 13 PR1		Year 11 PR1						
02-Oct	Α	Yr 12 MTG2	Yr 13 PR1	real II FIXI						
09-Oct	В	Yr 9 MTG2	Yr 12 MTG	Yr 13 PR1					Meridian Curriculum Teams 2	
16-Oct	Α		Year 9 MTG	11 15 1 11						
23-Oct							Autumn H	alf Term		
30-Oct	В	Year 10 PR1		Year 9 (PASS)			Monday 30th Oct		Meridian Learning 2	
06-Nov	Α		Year 10 PR1	Teal 5 (1755)						
13-Nov	В	Year 8 PR1		Year 10 PR1	Year 11 Exams					
20-Nov	Α		Year 8 PR1	real 10 FK1	Teal 11 Exams					Act Ev
27-Nov	В	Year 7 PR1		Yr 8 PR1	Y13 Exams OPT					
04-Dec	Α		Year 7 PR1	11 O FIXT				Meridian Trust Moderation and Collaboration 1		
11-Dec	В	Year 11 PR2		Yr 7 PR1						
18/25Dec	/25Dec Christmas Holidays									

Common assessment and reporting calendar.

Supports a cycle of academic mentoring following assessment and progress reporting.

Common trust 'blue' meeting slots to enable subject networks and whole-trust professional learning to be scheduled.

Flexibility around other meetings/events as local decisions.



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04-Sep	Α				PTE/M/S, NGRT, CATS and			Monday 4th Sept	School Meeting 1	
11-Sep	В	Year 11 PR1		Year 8 (PASS)	PASS 1				Meridian Curriculum Teams 1	Meridian Learning 1
18-Sep	Α		Year 11 PR1	real o (FASS)	Year 13 Resits		School Event 1			
25-Sep	В	Yr 13 PR1		Year 11 PR1					School N	Neeting 2
02-Oct	Α	Yr 12 MTG2	Yr 13 PR1	rear 11 FM1			School Event 2			
09-Oct	В	Yr 9 MTG2	Yr 12 MTG	Yr 13 PR1					School Meeting 3	Meridian Curriculum Teams 2
16-0ct	Α		Year 9 MTG	11 13 FK1						
23-Oct							Autu	ımn Half Term		
30-Oct	В	Year 10 PR1		Year 9 (PASS)				Monday 30th Oct	School Meeting 4	Meridian Learning 2
06-Nov	Α		Year 10 PR1	Teal 5 (FA33)			School Event 3			
13-Nov	В	Year 8 PR1		Year 10 PR1	Year 11 Exams				School Meeting 5	
20-Nov	Α		Year 8 PR1	Teal 10 FK1	Teal 11 Liailis	Act Ev	School Event 4			
27-Nov	В	Year 7 PR1		Yr 8 PR1	Y13 Exams OPT		School Event 5			
04-Dec	Α		Year 7 PR1	HOPKI	113 Exams OPT				Meridian Trust Modera	tion and Collaboration 1
11-Dec	В	Year 11 PR2		Yr 7 PR1					School Meeting 6	
18/25Dec							Chris	stmas Holidays		

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Ofsted review to investigate narrowing of the curriculum

Written by: Dorothy Lepkowska | Published: 15 March 2017

Unveiling the first major investigation of her tenure, chief inspector Amanda Spielman warns of a 'corrosive pattern' of behaviour due to the conflict between league tables and the curriculum. Dorothy Lepkowska reports

Ofsted is to launch a major investigation into the curriculum amid concerns that some schools are excluding weaker pupils from entries in some subjects in order to boost league table performance.

Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector of schools, told delegates attending the Association of Schools and College Leaders' (ASCL) national conference in Birmingham, that she understood the "conflict" schools faced over providing a broad and balanced curriculum and maintaining their league table position - and that this was putting pressure on heads and teachers.



Review: Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman adopted a 'cooperative' tone in her speech to ASCL's national conference (Image: Louise Allcock / Tempest Photography)



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Speech

The importance of a knowledge-rich curriculum

Nick Gibb addresses a Social Market Foundation panel event on raising school standards



Trust Quality Descriptors (April 2023)

'One of the purposes of the descriptions is to provide greater clarity, helping to inform trusts' improvement and capacity-building priorities. The role of government is to define the outcomes we want trusts to achieve, but it is for the sector to identify and implement the most effective approaches to achieve them. As such, we have tried to avoid the descriptions stating how trusts should deliver outcomes."



Trust Quality Descriptions

April 2023



Theme	Description
Culture	Creates a culture in all its schools that is motivating and ambitious for all, including disadvantaged children and children with SEND, so that students can achieve their full potential.
Curriculum	Oversees the design and implementation of ambitious, broad, well-sequenced and knowledge- rich curricula in all of its schools.
Student outcomes	Achieves good outcomes for all its students by delivering education that is both high quality and inclusive.

Considerations for the CEO?

Theme	Description					
Culture	Creates a culture of continuous improvement in its schools through self-evaluation, challenge, support and appropriate action.					
School improvement model	Has a clearly defined and effective strategy to improve and maintain the performance of schools that are already part of the trust, as well as those that join.					
Transformation	Takes on challenging schools and transforms previously underperforming schools by delivering broad and sustainable improvement.					
System-led improvement	Supports the wider system in sharing learning for best practice; helps underperforming schools to improve; and contributes to building a trust-led system.					



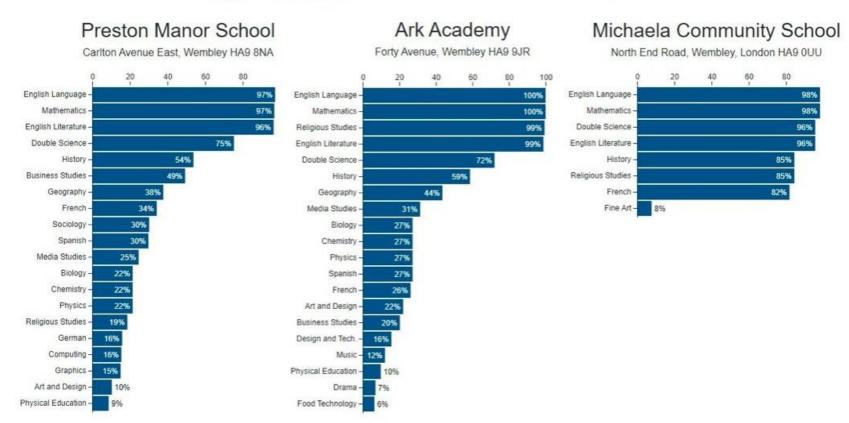
- 'all schools should be within a strong family of schools' Nadhim Zahawi Sept 2021
- 'there is still a commitment to move to a fully academised system with all schools in Multi-Academy Trusts' Barroness Barran (Dec 2021 ASCL Trust Advisory Group)
- ITT Reforms Results of Consultation published but any change is now delayed to September 2024
- Early Career Framework introduced in September 2021. Mentoring pressures is it sustainable?
- Headteacher Boards renamed to Advisory Boards and new elections held for seats
- ESFA Rapid Response Hub in response to serious academy failures with increased government debt

- National Audit Office investigation found 'sizeable minority of academy trusts are building up sizeable reserves, meaning they are spending less than their annual income on their pupils'
- OFSTED Desire to increase the number of MATSE's to 'gather information and evidence of strong MATs'
- Focus on digital innovation in classrooms what is the exact impact?
- Reserves strategy, Energy and the impact of the cost of living crisis
- Continuing industrial action into 2023/24?
- What on earth do we pay our employees?
- New government pensions, policy, direction?
- Recruitment strategy where is it?



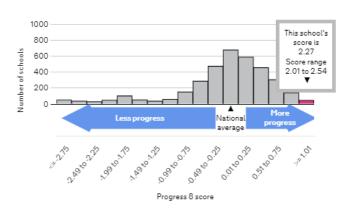


Proportions of pupils entering in 2019



Progress 8 score ?

This score shows how much progress pupils at this school made across 8 qualifications between the end of key stage 2 and the end of key stage 4, compared to other similar pupils nationally.



The local authority (Brent) average score for state-funded schools is 0.5

The average score for all state-funded schools in England is -0.03



Political Bodies	Accountability Bodies
Stakeholders	'Friendly Others'

Who are the 'stakeholders' who shape the political considerations around curriculum and teaching for your MAT?



Definition

'a cooperative relationship between people or groups who agree to share responsibility for achieving some specific goal'

Synonyms

<u>cooperation</u> · <u>association</u> · <u>collaboration</u> · <u>coalition</u> · <u>alliance</u> · <u>union</u> · <u>compact</u> · <u>league</u> · <u>confederation</u> · <u>affiliation</u> · <u>relationship</u> · <u>fellowship</u> · <u>connection</u> · Leading through deliberate strategic partnerships



- What deliberate partnerships have you chosen to prioritise?
- What deliberate partnerships have you chosen to eschew or want to ditch?
- When is the time to act in a politically expedient way to achieve a wider objective?
- Can you think of a change you have made or might make to curriculum or schooling structures that is influenced more by outside forces than a weight of evidence or professional conviction?
- Where are you positioning your MAT in the changing and emergent world of professional learning and system leadership?



Session 3 Big Question: How can we build capacity sustainably to deliver school improvement and MAT growth?

Offer central support to increase capacity of school leaders to focus on improving teaching

As a start-up school we benefitted enormously from the trust because we were able to take so many of their ideas and now we are the ones supporting new and establishing schools within the trust. Much of this is focussed on professional development: we often have curriculum leaders who are new to the trust coming to visit us to speak to heads of department here to see how we are implementing the curriculum.

Dixons Academies Trust

Influence schools to ensure teachers have the time and support to build their expertise

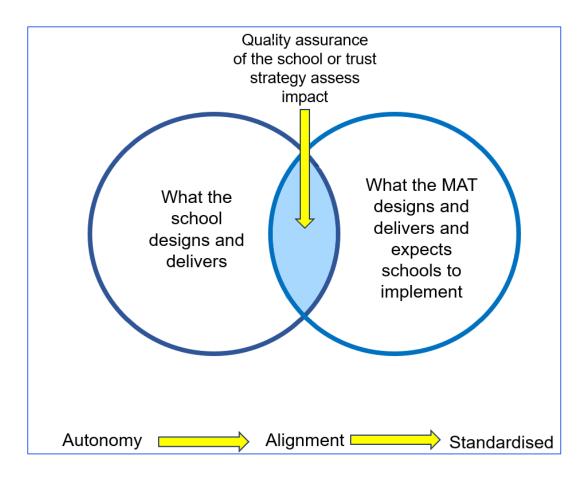
[A] key step that Ark Schools has taken to build disciplinary communities is to work with principals to ensure that the crucial leadership support is there for disciplinary communities to flourish. One of the ways we have done this is by establishing expectations across all our secondary schools, that dedicated time is timetabled each week for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues and prepare for the lessons ahead. This is an important time for teachers to really immerse themselves in the subject matter of their lessons.

Ark Schools



Session 3 Big Question: How can we build capacity sustainably to deliver school improvement and MAT growth?

"Understanding which part of the circle each school activity falls under is both difficult and nuanced, but incredibly important. It is a challenge. But it is one that trusts must resolve."





Curriculum excellence and expertise...

Meridian Trust

Over the last five years, we have steadily grown the capacity we hold to provide leadership in curriculum areas.

By 2017/18, we were able to appoint full time Curriculum Directors for English and Maths.

By 2018/19, we added capacity through secondments for cross trust curriculum leadership of the performing arts and other core subject areas.

In 2022, this team now represents around 13FTE leaders across a range of subjects and curriculum areas. Some employed directly by the core trust, some seconded for a proportion of time from their home schools.



Audrey Caldwell
Performing Arts Curriculum
Director (Primary and Secondary)



Beth Morrish
Literacy Lead (Secondary)



Charmayne Leggett
Mathematics Curriculum Director
(Secondary)



James Brown
Science Curriculum Area Lead



Emma Hardy
Art Curriculum Leader
(Secondary)



Ines McMahon
MFL Curriculum Leader
(Secondary)



Helen Wright
MFL Curriculum Area Lead
(Secondary)



Corinne Wheeler
Design and Technology
Curriculum Leader (Secondary - Food)

Session 3 Big Question: How can we build capacity sustainably to deliver school improvement and MAT growth?

Structures....

There is a need for a coherent, planned model and resource allocation for school improvement across your MAT.

- Does every school in your MAT, and every teacher in your MAT have an equity of entitlement to resource? Should they?
- What is most desirable for successful school improvement: Coherence, Consistency or Compliance?
- How and when do you know you're ready to support others?
- How do you ensure that schools joining your MAT understand and 'buy-in' to your school improvement model?

Leading through capacity for **sustainable** academy improvement



Session 3 Big Question: How can we build capacity sustainably to deliver school improvement and MAT growth?

Towards a Quality Assurance Framework...

- What proportion of QA should be 'internal', and what role does 'external' QA play?
- Are you clear what you are seeking to measure through your QA?
- How does QA inform strategic planning? When do you check that actions have been followed through?
- What is the difference between QA and an audit? Is there a distinction between compliance and quality?
- Do the executive/trust officers undertaking the QA have the credibility? How is this built?
- How do we measure the success of our academy improvement offer?



Spend a few moments reflecting on your views so far in this session or your long held beliefs and commitments. These will not be the same for us all.

- Sarah will Chair the activity and challenge participants
- Rob and Richard will trade views (which may not be their own) to get us started.
- When the discussion has begun please join the spare seat
- Share your view or challenge one of the other views
- Richard will leave his seat
- Someone else will fill his seat
- Rob will leave his seat
- Someone else will fill his seat
- The professional debate and dialogue will continue

Basically, if there is a spare seat, sit in it and air your thoughts, reflections, opinions or professionally challenge those that have already been shared!





Session 4 Big Question: What does equity and quality of offer look like in a successful school improvement team?

- Is there a QA 'team' or is the responsibility shared?
- How on earth do you schedule the QA and do you 'triage' by need (or OFSTED schedules!?)
- Curriculum Development. How do you ensure cross-trust curriculum development groups drive improvement in the classroom? How and where do you build the capacity?
- What role or engagement do you have with local research schools, hubs or other research networks? How do you measure the impact?
- What is the aim of your MAT CPDL offer? Is it about coherence, networking, specific skills. How do you facilitate it? How does it balance with school-specific priorities?
- Directorate Are you planning for and actively including non-teaching colleagues in your cross-trust CPDL offer? When and how is best?

EDUCATION IS THE SILVER BULLET EDUCATION IS EVERYTHING WE DON'T NEED LITTLE CHANGES, WE NEED **GIGANTIC, MONUMENTAL CHANGES** I JUST HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT HOW TO DO IT YET



The Meridian Trust Model for Great Schools

Vision: High-quality educational provision for all at the heart of local communities





Academic Year 2022/2023 V

- ✓ Select all
- ✓ EC
- ✓ GPUTC
- ✓ LIN
- ✓ NCA
- ✓ NPA
- ✓ NSC
- ✓ SHA
- ✓ SUS
- ✓ SVA
- ✓ SVC ✓ SWA
- ✓ TFS

Pupil Premium ...

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In Care

EAL

Yes

Gender

F M 11771

No of Students

6130

No of Boys

No of Girls

PP OF OT

12698

GIS Capacity

2400 PAN

52.1%

% of Boys

% of Girls

9.03%

% of EAL

5641 47.9%

Pupil Premium

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81.24%

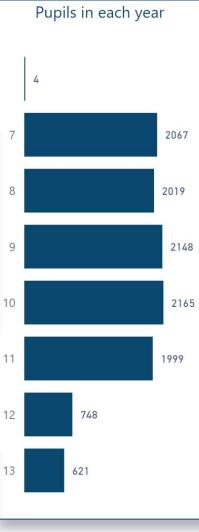
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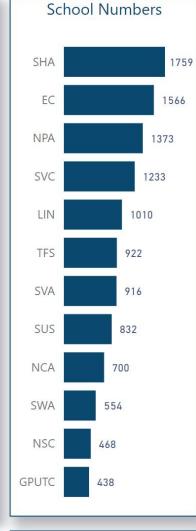
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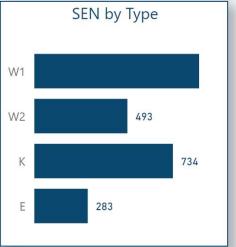
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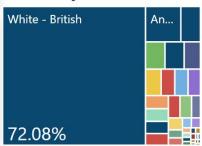


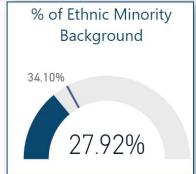










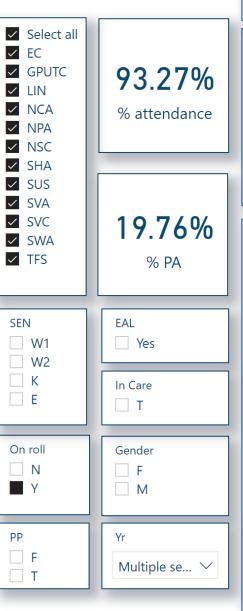


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Scenario

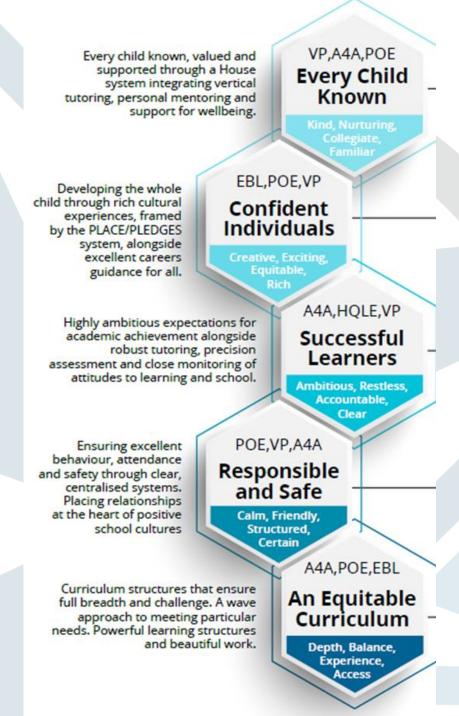
- You are the new Chief Executive Officer of a mid-size Trust with 17 academies and a total of 12,450 learners across 10 secondary schools and 7 primary schools. The secondary schools are all average or above average in size but the primary schools range in size from small rural schools to large urban schools.
- In the last two years the Trust has expanded swiftly with nine of the schools joining in that time. Of those nine, three of the secondary schools were sponsored academies with the other six being convertors.
- There are currently no outstanding schools within the Trust, though at secondary level the Progress 8 score averages +0.09 however, this masks some significant underperformance in English. Interestingly the Trust primary phase progress in all areas is consistently positive except within reading which has recently seen a decline and is now at -0.2.
- All the schools are within a 'travel to support' distance of approximately one hour of the central executive team office.
- The current Executive Academy Improvement Team is led by one of the founding school Headteachers, in addition to them leading their own larger than average secondary school and has lacked strategic direction and impact.
- So....what will your structure be to support sustainable school improvement across the entire Multi Academy Trust.
- As a group focus on the discussions we have had and identify 5 key priorities that you would want to see investment in to maximise the quality of provision and consequently improve life chances for all learners across the Trust



Session 5 Big Question: How can we frame success in terms of vision and the curriculum across a MAT?

- How do you ensure governance at all levels understands what success looks like?
- How do we celebrate success with stakeholders? How do we communicate the benefit of MAT work?
- How do you use CLFP and other strategic planning tools to establish benchmarks and targets?
- Are these processes built and genuinely informed by principals/headteachers?
- How do you ensure that leaders deliver on your priorities? What if they aren't or won't?

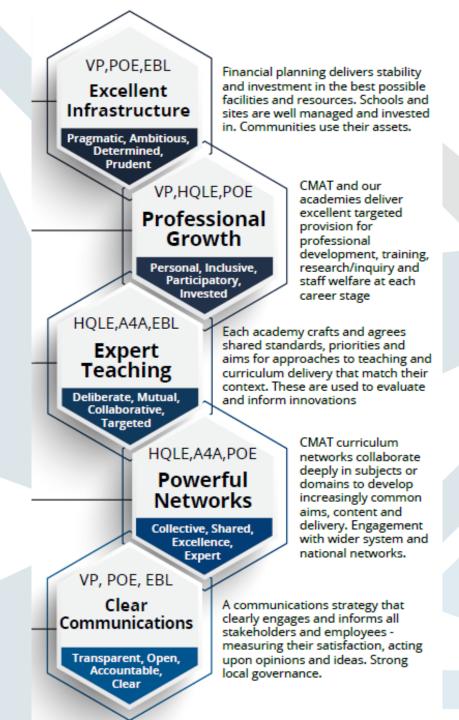




Our Values Structures: School Improvement



- We recognise that families and staff are primarily invested in schools, not in multi-academy trusts.
- We have common values, and common systems/structures that nurture those, but they look a little different in different settings. Context matters.
- The speed of the transition to implement some of these structures varies depending on the situation the school is in.
- The systems we operate are <u>proven</u> and have a range of resources and experiences behind them, but they are added to and evolved by each school who joins the trust.
- These structures are not always consistent in application, but they are coherent in terms of their values and aims.
- Equality of access and a culture that is safe, nurturing and ambitious is expected.
- Every school that has joined us has helped to shape and lead the evolution of these values structures over the last decade.



Our Values Structures: School Improvement



- We bring long term financial and operational stability and investment to our schools. This means excellent IT, site development, personnel/HR, compliance and resourcing.
- You are joining a network, both local and national, of colleagues invested in excellence.
- We are innovators and (calculated) risk-takers.
 Pedagogy and depth of subject expertise are priorities for development and training. Professional learning is extensive and expected.
- Curriculum, Pastoral and Senior leaders join a bigger team with the capacity, ideas, experience and systems to draw on.
- Meridian Trust runs our own ITT provider, our own NPQ programmes through the Teaching School Hub, and has an Institute of Education upon which you can draw and contribute to.
- You are not alone. When the crisis comes, when the call comes, when the need is there – there is experience, expertise and kindness.

The Academy on a Page Evaluation (APE)



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	Area of Evaluation	EC	GPUTC	LA
Pursuit of Excellence - CEO	Overall Evaluation - EP / P / CoAC	Refinement	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
	CLFP Targets	Meets All	Meets Some	Meets Some
Financial Position - HAN	Reserves	Clear Plan - Fixed	Clear Plan - Fixed	Clear Plan - Fixed
	3 Year Budget	Mainly Balanced	Mainly Balanced	Mainly Balanced
Post-16 - RSP	Post-16 APE Overview	Refinement	Not Yet Complete	Not Yet Complete
	School Roll	Growing	Growing	Growing
Context - MWO	Context of Cohorts	National Avg	National Avg	High Prior Attainment
	Local Reputation	Refinement	Refinement	Recovery
Every Child Known - SWI	Pastoral / House Evaluation	Refinement	Refinement	Reinforcement
(Valuing People)	Attendance Audit - Overall	Refinement	Refinement	Refinement
Confident Individuals - 84C4	PLEDGES	Refinement	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Confident Individuals - MCA	PASS	Replication	Refinement	Refinement
(Extending the Boundaries)	KS3/4 Destinations and CEIAG	Reinforcement	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Succesful Learners - ADA	KS3 Progress	Refinement	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
(Achievement for All)	KS4 Progress	Refinement	Reinforcement	Refinement
Responsible and Safe - MCA SWI	Behaviour Audit - Overall	Replication	Refinement	Recovery
Responsible and Safe - MCA SWI	Safeguarding Audit - Overall	Refinement	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Facilitatela Comingularia All	Curriculum Areas Evaluation	Refinement	Reinforcement	Refinement
Equitable Curriculum - All	SENDV Audit - Overall	Refinement	Reinforcement	Refinement
(High Quality Learning Environment)	PP Charter Delivery	Refinement	Reinforcement	Recovery
Free Heart Information 11001	IT Equipment	3 Year roll out	All spec in place	5 Year roll out
Excellent Infrastructure - HAN (High Quality Learning Environment)	IT Budget	5 year plan budgeted	5 year plan budgeted	5 year plan, not budgeted
(riigh Quanty Learning Life formation)	Estates	No Action Plan yet	Action Plan in place	Action Plan in place
	Recruitment / Retention	Replication	Refinement	Reinforcement
Professional Growth - MWO	CPD Delivery	Replication	Reinforcement	Refinement
	Staff Absence	Replication	Refinement	Reinforcement
Tooching Evacution BCD	Quality	Replication	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Teaching Expertise - RSP (High Quality Learning Environment)	Coherence	Replication	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
(Tight quality Learning Literioninient)	Innovation	Replication	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Powerful Networks - All	Meeting Engagement / Alignment	Replication	Refinement	Reinforcement
	Survey Feedback - Parents	Replication	Reinforcement	Reinforcement
Clear Communications - RSP	Survey Feedback - Staff	Replication	Refinement	Refinement
	Communications Strategy	Replication	Refinement	Reinforcement



Measuring what we value SEF through the APE is mapped to the 'Values Structures'.

Each area is monitored through QA activity, audits or reporting.

Each judgement is made with reference to criteria that are regularly reviewed.

Shared with Academy Council and agreed between Principal and EP.











Final Commitment to Action

As MAT leaders we have a duty as part of our funding agreement to advance education in the public benefit but more than that we have an ethical purpose to lead high quality education with our organisation with:

(ASCL/National Governors Association Framework for Ethical Leadership)

JUSTICE-leaders are fair and work for the good of all children We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.

SERVICE-leaders are conscientious and dutiful We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.

COURAGE-leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.

OPTIMISM-leaders are positive and encouraging. Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better

Three Takeaways from the discussion	

To make a change we have to make an effort and plan our next layer of discussion across our Trust.

To make a change we have to make an effort and plan our next layer of discussion across our Trust.

Action	Purpose	Stakeholders	Timescale
			_

[&]quot;If you are an aspiring MAT Executive, use the time to consider the initial thinking you would need to engage to initiate an effective quality of education profile across your MAT/







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