



**The Sycamore
Church of England
Trust**

Grow together, Learn forever

5 Year Strategic Plan

2022 - 2027



Grow together, Learn forever

Improvement Strand: Developing Our People

Context and rationale

As a small MAT we recognise that the single, most important resource we have is our people. They make our ethos a reality through their day-to-day work. By our people, we mean every person that works for one of our schools, irrespective of role. Whilst we believe in effective systems, we fully realise that these systems are necessary to enable our people to flourish, excel and make the biggest difference in the places that matter most.

With this in mind, and in an environment where teacher recruitment remains a challenge, we are committed to enhancing the work of the Bury Schools' Alliance and our partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University to recruit and improve our staff through a programme of high-quality, continuous professional development (CPD). We are also committed to achieving a high level of retention across the trust. We will work in partnership with the Church of England's Foundation for Educational Leadership to construct and develop an integrated career development offer that includes high quality CPD and the suite of NPQ opportunities that are currently available.

Improvement Strand: Developing Our Systems

Context and rationale

As a MAT, one of aims is 'we expect all our schools to actively support each other and to share best practice for the benefit of all.' Some may refer to this as being 'all about systems' or, even more negatively, removing autonomy. To us, quite simply, it means what works exceptionally well in one school should be rolled out across other schools to achieve the same positive impact. We take this seriously because it drives continuous school improvement. It does not mean that all our schools are identical. Indeed, another of our core principles is that 'we encourage each of our schools to celebrate its distinctive identity within our trust community.' Nonetheless, as a group, we decide on best practice and then consistently implement it across all our schools. This best practice includes such things as curriculum, assessment, and reporting (and other uses of data), intervention strategies, Quality Assurance processes, Teaching & Learning initiatives and CPD to support them. Put simply, if something doesn't work, we change it; if it does, we invest in it and promote it in all our schools.

Improvement Strand: Growing and Developing Our Trust

Context and rationale

The trust is highly likely to grow from three schools to at least six, by the middle of 2023. This fulfils our initial, ambitious growth plan, especially as the two schools that originally joined us were vulnerable and in need of support. Whilst we have achieved significant success together, there is a need to develop all those other (sometimes unseen) things that are all necessary to ensure continuing improvement.

These areas are numerous, varying from such things as finances and HR services, to H&S and premises management support. There has already been a significant investment in central services to accommodate our growth. The purpose of this is to 'clear the desk' of a Headteacher for him/her to concentrate on improving the outcomes of the young people in their schools.

Also included in our improvement plans for the organisation is the commitment to sustain a strong and robust governance structure. This will incorporate high-quality training and accessible, data rich documentation to inform and support governance, at both trust and individual school level.

There is also the feeling that, whilst we were busy with the improvements we have secured so far in our two sponsored schools, we may have neglected an opportunity to ‘tell our story’ more effectively. We are, to date, a high-impact trust that is delivering in the area that matters most – improving the life chances of the young people that we serve.

In telling our story, we feel that the time is right for us to change our trust name from Christ Church CE MAT. We propose to change the name of the trust to **Sycamore Church of England Trust** from 1st July 2023.

It is a priority for us to articulate that to all current and potential partners.

Mission

We have at the centre of our mission and purpose the belief that every child has a right to educational excellence through the provision of high-quality schooling.

Vision

As a trust, we wholeheartedly embrace the Church of England’s Vision for Education. We are committed to working within a respectful and compassionate environment. We exist to serve the young people in our care and have a small number of core principles:

- We expect all our schools to actively support each other and to share best practice for the benefit of all.
- We encourage each of our schools to celebrate its distinctive identity within our small trust community.
- We are committed to providing quality-assured services to keep our schools legal, financially robust, and continually improving.

Values

Our values are underpinned by our Christian ethos.

Everyone associated with The Sycamore CE Trust is encouraged to explore their own spirituality and to appreciate and understand that of others. We recognise that our values are held in common by people of different faiths and by schools without a designated faith. It is for this reason that we will also support and sponsor non-Church of England schools, as well as those within the faith.

Our shared values of inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience, and excellence, are fundamental to the way in which all the schools in the trust operate on a day-to-day basis. We are proud of our culture and the ways in which we are embedding these values right across the trust.

Aspiration

*“But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.”
Psalm 33:11*

We set high expectations for ourselves, our children and our staff so that each of us is supported to achieve our own potential. We expect nothing but the best from ourselves and from others.

Inclusion

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4

We understand everyone is equal, without exception. We value and encourage diversity and difference. We proactively seek to learn from others.

Excellence

But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. 2 Corinthians 8:7

We provide rigorous support and challenge to our schools and our children. We strive for excellence in all we do.

Compassion

*Be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.” 1
Peter 3: 8*

We care for each other. We respect each other and treat our friends and colleagues how they would expect to be treated. We make sure we are safe, feel loved and are actively supported at all times.

Resilience

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

We are ambitious and reflective. We are determined and brave in making decisions and when facing challenges. We expect our schools to provide us with the skills and knowledge to guide us through our future as lifelong learners.

Strategic Objectives

1. To raise attainment and continually improve pupil progress through increasing the quality of provision in all our schools.

Why is it important?

Our vision for our trust school improvement is clear: Enabling our leaders to take the improvement of our schools into their own hands. Our academies are part of a selfimproving partnership of schools. The wider trust will do all it can to ensure that we are enabling and investing in rapid, effective and sustainable school improvement in all our schools. Our school improvement strategy is at the heart of all aspects of our trust’s work; it defines who we are as a trust and its impact measures our effectiveness.

We see the curriculum as something that embraces more or less everything that a child does, linked to their school life. It is an embracing set of skills, knowledge, understanding and experiences with the thread of our trust core values and principles running through it. It is the mechanism through which children journey towards a better understanding of themselves and the role they can and will play in the community and society.

When a child leaves one of our schools they will know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They will have had a broad experience that included academic, sporting/physical activity, dramatic, artistic, musical and most importantly, personal growth opportunities. Our schools will provide time for children to learn and enjoy their learning before and after the school day. We know that this can play a crucial role in keeping their interest and excitement.

In all our trust schools, we deliver an enriched curriculum offering a wide range of opportunities for every pupil, at every school. Deep learning is an integral part of our curriculum: high quality learning that sticks with you for the rest of your life. Our curriculum draws on the knowledge of successful pedagogies of the past while maximising the opportunities of the findings from the latest research into the future. Our staff build knowledge and practises that foster deep learning and whole system change. Staff are empowered by innovative performance management and professional development opportunities.

Strategic Objective 1: To raise attainment and continually improve pupil progress through increasing the quality of provision in all our schools.		
Indicators of Success		
Year 1 - 2	Year 2 - 4	By Year 5
Increasing the wide range of opportunities provided for our pupils to an enriched curriculum at each school within and across the trust including a set of metrics. This is expressed clearly on schools and trust websites along with research informed practices.	All schools offer wider opportunities for pupils. The following percentages have accessed them at least once: Wider Opportunities (Music): 25% Wider Opportunities (Arts): 25% Wider Opportunities (Sport): 50%	External quality assurance reviews conclude that all schools have a good curriculum which is broad and balanced, enriched and offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils. 50% plus are delivering an outstanding curriculum.

	Wider Opportunities (STEM): 35% Wider Opportunities (English): 35% Wider Opportunities (Visits): 100% Wider Opportunities (Residential): 25%	
Progress and attainment outcomes for pupils exceed national averages by end of each key stage. Graded good or better by Ofsted. All leaders are trained in the effective use of data to ensure that they can identify groups of pupils who need targeted intervention.	All leaders use data to forecast potential areas of concern in a way which allows timely and rapid intervention to be put in place without costly and reactive actions being required.	All schools providing outstanding education fit for the 21st century resulting in pupils in all schools making progress above the national average.
Reinvigorated leadership pathways resulting in impactful and positive change which results in improved outcomes for all groups of pupils. A focus on middle leadership across the trust.	Development of subject networks across the trust in which expertise is shared regularly. The development of shared cloud based resource areas as part of digital strategy to reduce teacher workload.	The quality of leadership in each trust school, and externally validated quality assurance evaluations, result in sustained self-improving schools.

Strategic Objective

2. Staff engage in professional development activities that enable them to flourish and demonstrate impact on teaching and learning.

Why is it important?

People are our greatest asset. High quality teaching and leadership is the key to closing achievement gaps and ensuring all children fulfil their potential. However, for many school leaders developing and retaining their staff can be a challenge and a barrier to delivering outcomes for pupils and sustainable growth. Together, we will create a highly skilled and motivated workforce empowered to deliver our vision and mission. We will become an employer of choice, committed to growing the leaders of tomorrow.

- Embed teaching and leadership development programmes that are focused on our trust schools understanding that to effectively develop staff and strengthen our talent pipeline learning and development must be aligned to strategy. This allows staff to put learning into practise in a meaningful way with autonomy and accountability for real outcomes. Flexibility is key - our leaders will re-evaluate and refine strategic priorities and tailor the development we offer to meet the needs of our trust.

- As our education system becomes more uncertain, complex and ambiguous, leaders will find it increasingly difficult to provide clarity of direction. Predicting what our future organisation will look like, let alone the leadership models needed to drive it forward is a growing challenge. As our leaders grow they will need to manage increasing levels of complexity and ambiguity. The most effective leaders think long term and joining the dots to see patterns and systems. This vertical development will require development on the job and for our leaders to gain exposure to different roles and assignments that stretch their capabilities.
- Employer brand (within a culture and climate of alignment and collaboration) our trust's reputation as an employer is key. A strong brand will reduce recruitment costs, increase retention, and build loyalty and commitment from our staff. Recruitment and retention is one of the most important issues for our schools and our trust; building a strong employer brand is key to achieving sustainability and delivering the best outcomes for our pupils. To attract the right candidates, we will continue to articulate our vision and values aligning this to why people should want to work here. By highlighting our trust values and ethos, and demonstrating how they underpin our ethos, culture and climate, teachers and leaders will know what to expect. We will attract high quality applicants if they believe that they are a good fit for our trust.
- We will develop a more holistic view of HR with responsibility for employer brand sitting with executive leaders. Social media, technology, and media will be maximised to allow our future employees to identify and connect with our trust. Our executive leaders will develop our online profile, ensuring it embodies the employer brand of our trust to secure our long-term recruitment needs and differentiate ourselves from competitors.
- Social media is key to our strategic brand management, communicating with stakeholders and future employees both online and offline is increasingly important in shaping the employer brand. Social media is intertwined reputation with stakeholder experience. We will source current advocates, do staff surveys, turning responses into testimonials and sharing these online to attract the right candidates for the future.
- We must continue to engage the employees we already have. Employee advocacy is increasingly important. Employer reputation ultimately hangs on the strength and integrity of our organisational culture, and this works both ways. The strength of our employer brand will have a significant impact on the quality, pride and engagement levels of our current employees.

Strategic Objective 2:

Staff engage in professional development activities that enable them to flourish and demonstrate impact on teaching and learning.

Indicators of Success		
Year 1 - 2	Year 2 - 4	By Year 5
<p>ECT Programme RQT Programme Middle Leaders Programme NPQ Pathway and training for Senior Leadership, Headship & Executive Leadership Subject Leadership training Curriculum updates Bespoke support programmes as directed by trust leader Access to teacher Research Groups for Masters and PhD credits.</p>	<p>Fully utilise the National College online resources that the trust has purchased to support professional development for all. Expectation embedded that all staff complete the core offer of professional development provided to them either through face-to-face training or through an online platform.</p>	<p>Staff are suitably skilled for the delivery of a 21st century curriculum so that pupils are prepared for the future world of work.</p>
<p>The trust has a talent management programme that supports and develops talented teachers and leaders and equips them to work effectively across the trust in different roles. These blend CPD opportunities with wider leadership experience. Secondment opportunities result in highly effective succession planning.</p>	<p>The trust has a talent management plan for emerging and senior leaders in the organisation that means the trust can deploy our most talented staff to work in more than one school on secondments or permanent transfers, creating career development and succession solutions.</p>	<p>The trust has a talent management plan that has matured and now includes staff at all levels across the trust. Senior leaders have worked in more than one trust school and middle leaders and the best teachers are deployed across the trust to sustain and deepen impact.</p>
<p>Overhauling current performance management procedures with a newly reinvigorated system that measure what “we value” this includes both teachers and administrative staff.</p>	<p>Explicit link between performance management and developmental pathways to address identified next steps - focusing on aspects which really matter to Christ Church MAT and the individual.</p>	<p>The Professional Development Pathway we offer is identified as a key incentive for working in Christ Church MAT so that we become the employer of choice.</p>

Research and evidence underpin everything that we do and our staff regularly contribute to discussions on evidence informed practice.	Professional learning teams across the trust participate in at least one project with the Education Endowment Fund.	Professional learning teams across the trust contribute to several research projects including EEF and outcomes are shared on trust website.
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Strategic Objective

- 3. Developing new partnerships to provide further opportunities for our pupils and staff and to ensure the trust remains a capacity giver to the wider community.

Why is it important?

As we mature, developing new critical partnerships is essential if we are to succeed in the delivery of the rest of our strategic objectives. New partnership developments include: more schools joining the trust, developing high trust relationships with stakeholders, and establishing formal enterprise and employability links. Our key driver will always be improving pupils’ life chances and that of the local communities we serve. The Sycamore CE Trust takes its duty of social responsibility seriously and as an active community engagement strategy it is imperative that we effectively communicate our strategic objectives along with vision, mission, and values through an effective public relations strategy.

Strategic Objective 3:

Developing new partnerships to provide further opportunities for our pupils and staff and to ensure the Trust remains a 'capacity giver' to the wider community

Indicators of Success		
Year 1 - 2	Year 2 - 4	By Year 5
The trust has an active community engagement strategy, endorsed by key partners who will work with the trust to deliver its strategic objectives. The trust will lead strategic community working and secure additional funding for the benefit of the young people and their families.	The community strategy is embedded and part of the fabric of the trust with clear impact measures for pupils and the wider community. Developmental programmes are embedded with the aim of engaging parents and families back into learning and support reintegration back into the workplace.	The trust will be seen as a leader in the field of community engagement to improve the life chances of children and young people across Bury and impacts on the local and regional economy.
The trust will work with partners, other trusts and academies in providing targeted back-office functions and shared professional development pathway support.	The trust will engage with reciprocal good practise visits which focus on pedagogy and leadership with clear impact measures for pupils and the community we serve.	The trust will engage in rigorous peer reviews between MATs. Providing genuine challenge and informing ongoing MAT to MAT support which impacts on the life chances of the pupils in our care.
The trust will continue to strengthen positive working relationships with local training providers, universities and recruitment agencies to ensure that vacancies are filled with high quality, values matched staff in all positions across the trust.	The trust will work with MAT collaborators to create talent pools through ITT pathways which can be tapped into when vacancies emerge so that local MATs can grow and nurture new talent coming into the system.	The trust will provide opportunities for co-ordinated approaches to meeting local school needs and to meeting challenges such as joint recruitment campaigns with other MATs and academies.
The trust will work with existing partnership MATs and academies in providing high quality training opportunities for teachers, leaders and support staff, including accredited pathways (e.g. NPQs) where appropriate.	The trust works collaboratively with other trusts in offering access to our pathway provision so that we continue to contribute to the educational system as a whole and ensure impact on pupils' life chances.	Coordinated approaches between MATs and partners to delivering CPD - including leadership development, ITT and pathways for support staff at all levels with accreditation for all participants.

Central offer continues to be strengthened in terms of quality and value for money so that it continues to provide capacity for future growth of the trust and is embedded practise in all existing schools.	Shared services between Christ Church MAT and other local MATs based on strategic coordination and avoidance of duplication where possible.	The trust will provide opportunities for coordinated approaches to meeting local school improvement needs and to meeting challenges such as joint procurement.
Visits continue to other MATs with ad-hoc learning dialogue between executive leaders on focus strands of improvement.	Continued membership of regional MAT networks, sharing best practise and learning and building trust on all sides.	Christ Church MAT becomes a strong platform for collaboration and innovation. Providing opportunities to share and debate best practice in Bury and across Greater Manchester.

Strategic objective

4. To build a strong infrastructure which is financially viable and sustainable.

Why is it important?

We strive to become a cost-effective organisation that delivers efficiency, effectiveness, and growing economies of scale to be able to provide the resources required to meet our objectives. Our trust must have longevity and be sustainable. Our financial planning and adherence to standards will ensure that we continue to build reserves. We aim to spend no more than 75% of our income on employment costs. Value for money is a key concept. We aim to secure the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay over the period of use of the goods or services bought. In keeping with our insistence on financial probity, we will invest wisely to recoup the best return for our investment. In addition, we will seek to attract funding to improve our school estate and resources.

Strategic Objective 4: To build a strong infrastructure which is financially viable and sustainable.		
Indicators of Success		
Year 1 - 2	Year 2 - 4	By Year 5
<p>Risk management: Further develop the trust risk register to ensure future proof. Have in place a robust business continuity and disaster recovery plan.</p>	<p>Risk management: From testing of business continuity and disaster recovery plan, review and develop as necessary.</p>	<p>Risk management: A fully robust risk management system in place across the trust.</p>
<p>Digital strategy: Research and develop a strategy for devices that are used by the end user Review current ICT infrastructure to consider if future proof and develop a plan for progressing. Research and review ICT engagement in classrooms and with staff to identify a strategy moving forward that will support the digital strategy.</p>	<p>Digital strategy: Build into the budget a rolling programme for implementation of agreed future approach to devices/infrastructure. Start implementation process of agreed ICT platform for staff and pupils.</p>	<p>Digital strategy: Environment is fit for purpose across the trust for teaching and learning. The digital framework supports, enhances and creates an efficient teaching and working environment.</p>
<p>Governance: Review our current induction / training programme and develop a robust structure Consider succession planning and develop a strategy for management of this.</p>	<p>Governance: Embed induction/training programme.</p>	<p>Governance: The members, trustees and local academy partners work in partnership with the trust.</p>
<p>Financial: Fully embed GAG pooling across the trust. Develop and embed ICFP to inform the budget process moving forwards. Agree an investment plan and fundraising strategy for the trust and start implementation. Design and embed an appropriate reforecasting process to enable</p>	<p>Financial: Fully embed ICFP with all stakeholders involved in the process. Reduced focus on grant funding and more opportunities for additional income generation.</p>	<p>Financial: Curriculum and finance are considered together and work in synergy to provide the very best for the pupils across the trust.</p>

appropriate reporting to the board.		
Estates management: Develop an estates vision strategy and asset management plan that is in line with the future strategy of the trust Devise a strategy for automating the compliance management aspects of estates management.	Estates management: Implement estates vision, strategy and asset management plan Roll out automating the compliance management aspects of estates management.	Estates management: The trust estate is fit for purpose, safe and secure for all pupils.

Risk Management

Every public sector organisation should have systems for identifying and managing risk - both opportunities and threats - suited to its business circumstances and risk appetite. Every organisation faces a variety of uncertainties, both positive and negative, which can affect its success in delivering its strategic objectives, budget, and value for money.

At Christ Church MAT, risk management is a key governance task for the trust board. The board has delegated the task of monitoring the trust's risk registers to the audit committee and respective scrutiny boards. Feedback from the operational level informs the strategic risk register through the escalation route. Each school within Christ Church MAT also conducts their own individual risk assessments including those for health and safety.

The risk management framework present in the trust should ensure that the following steps are taken:

- identification of risks that could adversely influence the achievement of the trust vision. Assess, evaluate, and rank each of these risks.
- Develop plans to manage these risks including preventative controls, mitigation processes and contingency plans
- Monitor each of the risks via the risk register
- Report to the board in a timely manner

The trust actively seeks to recognise both threats and opportunities and decides how to respond to them including the setting of internal controls. It takes a strategic view of risk across the trust, factoring together all the relevant input it can reasonably use. It may only be at board level that it is really possible to scan the horizon for emerging trends, problems or opportunities that might change the trust's working environment.

Finance Strategy

The trust must take full responsibility for its financial affairs and use resources efficiently to maximise outcomes for pupils.

The trust must have sound internal controls and a control framework that ensures the following:

- Delegated financial authorities are complied with
- Appropriate segregation of duties
- Co-ordinated planning and budgeting process
- Discipline in financial management is applied
- Capital projects are planned and appropriately overseen
- Assets are managed and secured appropriately
- Regularity, propriety and value for money
- Reduced risk of fraud and theft

The DfE are continually reviewing their oversight of trusts and have implemented numerous metrics and reporting requirements that Christ Church MAT must adhere to. The future finance strategy must focus on ensuring all of these are complied with and reporting to the DfE is accurate. The most notable areas of consideration are integrated curriculum led financial planning (ICFP) and benchmarking.

In addition to the above, there are continued pressures on budgets moving forwards with rising staffing and non-staffing expenditure combined with unknown future funding levels. The key areas of consideration moving forwards should be around a robust and regular budget/re-forecasting process and identification of other areas to obtain income for the trust.

Governance

The Academy Handbook states that trustees must maintain robust oversight of the trust and they must focus on three core functions:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- overseeing and ensuring effective financial performance

Governance is therefore a crucial element to ensuring the future sustainability and viability of the trust. The key areas of consideration are as follows:

- Ensuring that the trust recruits and retains high quality members, trustees and local academy partners
- Clear succession planning for all roles across the members, the trust board and local academy partners
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are in place and there is easy access to the scheme of delegation
- Ensuring that there is an effective induction and continual professional development programme in place
- Ensuring that reporting is robust and aids effective decision-making.

Estate Strategy

In order to support the strategic management of the trust's estate, the following should be developed:

An estates vision that is aligned to the trust educational vision and has a clearly defined medium to long term view.

An estates strategy that explains how the above vision will be carried out over a three-to-five-year period.

An asset management plan that sets out the actions needed to achieve the strategy for the short to long term.

The key focus for year one is to review our current estate and develop the above to feed into the future strategy of the trust.

In addition to this, statutory compliance must continue to be high on the agenda for the trust to ensure policies and processes adequately support this moving forwards.

HR Strategy

Education is fundamentally a people business and we will completely invest in our people strategy. The HR function plays a central role in delivering people service solutions to the trust. A clear and documented people strategy and plan is essential in order to incorporate our vision for the kind of employer we want to be and a plan of how we get there.

One of the key Success Factors of a high performing organisation is valuing their staff, together with the efficient and effective systems and procedures in place to ensure the trust attracts, retains and motivates a workforce that will enable it to succeed.

The HR function should focus on value adding activities to support the execution of the trust strategy and objectives by:

- ensuring procedures are in place to ensure an effective and efficient HR service
- focus on roles determining how the services delivered through existing members of staff
- to ensure governance is in place
- utilising the technology in place to enable an efficient service
- to ensure compliance with HR legislation and employment updates

To ensure we achieve the HR objectives, it is essential that we identify the skills and competences required, continue to a source talent, and attract new talent or retain existing talent and how to create and maintain a high-performance culture within HR. Also important is to develop training to fill any critical gaps in to build the advanced skills required for HR to fulfil its operational and strategic role.

Staff engagement is a priority to ensure each that we retain good staff- engaged workforce will deliver discretionary effort and go the extra mile. Engaged employees are more likely to be active advocates for the trust in the local community.

Recruitment is now an online market with the use of the Internet and social media, but it is essential that the trust optimises technology and adopt a proactive, candidate centric and modern approach to recruiting. A priority for the trust is to be an employer of choice applying our policies and practises equitably and consistently across all staff groups explore no risk benefits to staff. Greater emphasis on recruiting on trust values.

A fit for purpose induction programme and welcome pack for new staff joining the trust ensuring the best introduction possible for new starters with the trust.

Succession planning (that identifies talent and builds leadership capacity at all levels) for our trust to grow sustainably and for schools to achieve consistently good and improved pupil outcomes over time. Our executive leaders need a steady supply of high quality staff and leaders. Effective succession planning is key to achieving this.

To be a successful organisation, we will combine succession planning and learning and development to create a long-term process for managing talent across the organisation. Effective succession planning will identify and prepare high potential employees for specific roles. Training and development is then targeted to fill key skills gaps for the role in question.

Community Strategy

Schools are a central part of the community, not just an educational establishment for children and it is the view of our trustees that we must play our part in ensuring our community has a sense of belonging and identity. Our trust acknowledges that it is accountable to the communities it serves and as such will follow an active community strategy which is endorsed by key partners who will collaborate to deliver its strategic objectives.

One of the trust values is aspiration and not only are we aspirational for our pupils, we are aspirational for their families and the communities we serve. Christ Church is resolute in its ambition to make a difference to the families within our communities, particularly the disadvantaged families who may require additional help and support to provide meaningful positive impact on their day-to-day lives.

As a trust we appreciate the importance of positive engagement with parents to ensure barriers and challenges are overcome that impact on parental engagement. We will strive to ensure that there is a critical connection between school and the community, ensuring a positive impact on educational outcomes.

Digital Strategy

IT and digital technology is changing the world. Twenty years ago, the world was a much different place and this is certainly no different in education. For us to deliver outstanding teaching and learning, with exceptional outcomes for pupils we must ensure that our IT is fit for purpose and has the capacity to deliver education for future generations. It was predicted that there were in excess of 3.2 billion users of the Internet in 2015, a huge increase on the estimate of 400 million users in 2000.

With this in mind, we must prepare children, staff, senior leaders, and governance for an ever changing, increasingly internet based, digital world.

Context of ICT in the trust:

- Any additional equipment, including hardware and software, requires capital investment. Whilst investment in end user devices is more visible, as much consideration needs to be given into the IT infrastructure as a prerequisite to investment in devices.
- With changes to central government funding, the educational finance landscape looks to challenge schools further and further with their spending. We will consider how the pooling of funds across the trust will support our digital strategy.

- Key messages and resources will be shared efficiently and effectively around the trust, ensuring that all pupils, staff, senior leaders, and trustees have access to all of the tools they need to fulfil their function.
- Online safety policy and education will be consistent across all our schools resulting in children being protected from dangers in the digital world.
- The trust will provide opportunities to empower middle and senior leaders to embed technology-enhanced learning in all areas of the curriculum.
- Key IT partners will be engaged with ensuring that staff and pupils in all our schools have access to up-to-date knowledge and resources in order to maximise pupil outcomes.
- The trust will adhere to data protection legislation as set out in the GDPR ensuring IT systems have appropriate access controls and data management processes to ensure all data is correctly managed.
- The digital strategy will have a reliable and thorough disaster recovery plan in place to ensure all schools can maintain high quality teaching and learning at all times.

Marketing Strategy

Marketing is still a relatively new concept in education. However, it is now an important function of a Multi-Academy Trust. To be the top choice for parents in the local area, to be the employer of choice, to be a trust with the local community at its heart requires an effective marketing strategy. Well-known hurdles include budget limitations and having to appeal to a completely new audience each year and with the rise of digital marketing channels, marketing the trust effectively is becoming even more competitive and complex.

Marketing in the interactions with our pupils, parents, community, and businesses is increasingly important in this digital world. As the trust develops, it is essential that the trust as a strong employer has a brand which promotes both the trust and its schools effectively. In order to support the formation of new partnerships, potentially new schools joining the trust, developing relationships with stakeholders and establishing formal enterprise and employability links.

Our reputation as an employer is key. A strong employer brand will reduce recruitment costs, increase retention and build loyalty and commitment from our staff. Recruitment and retention is one of the most important issues for our trust and schools; building a strong employer brand is key to achieving sustainability and delivering the best outcomes for our pupils. To attract the right candidates, we will continue to articulate our vision and values aligning this to why people would want to work within the Christ Church Multi-Academy Trust. By highlighting our trust values and demonstrating how they underpin our ethos, culture and climate, teachers and leaders' expectations will be met.

A top performing website is essential. Regular updates, including online blogs with thoughts from teachers, classroom news and recent milestones and events would be an effective way to engage with parents and showcases how we celebrate pupils' successes.

To take full advantage of social media platforms is essential as this supports the development of our employer brand. Social media will enable the trust to connect with wider audiences while developing a distinct brand identity, maximising opportunities to identify future employees. Executive leaders to develop their online profiles, ensuring it embodies the employer brand of the trust, to secure our long-term recruitment needs and differentiate ourselves from competitors.