



Red Kite Learning Trust
School Improvement Strategy



What we believe

The Red Kite Learning Trust is committed to **nurturing ambition, delivering excellence and enriching children's lives**. Our School Improvement Strategy sets out how we do this.

Autonomy and accountability

We respect the unique nature of each school in our Trust and its place within its own community. We believe that leaders know their schools well and are best placed to develop and deliver the precise vision for excellence within their own school. This leads to better outcomes for all. Our scheme of delegation (SoD) allows a high level of autonomy for Headteachers and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) of schools within the Trust that are judged as outstanding, good or are improving rapidly. The scheme of delegation sets out clearly the responsibilities of the school and we expect Headteachers and Local Governing Bodies to lead monitoring and improvement work.

An ethical approach

The Trust is committed to working with integrity in an open and honest way and fully exemplifying the Nolan Principles in its work and behaviours. This means that we do not adopt 'quick fix' solutions to school improvement that would have a negative impact in the longer term or create problems for neighbouring schools.

Being ethical does not mean being 'soft'; we expect governors, school leaders and Trust leaders to be prepared to take difficult decisions if they are in the best interest of our young people. When our decisions have a direct impact on people, including staff and students, we would expect leaders to behave in a humane way that reflects our principles as a Trust.

What we do

Curriculum

We expect our Head teachers and Principals to ensure excellence for all through the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all learners. The National Curriculum provides a baseline for schools to work from, but we would envisage every school being even more ambitious for the learning of their children. The Trust's aims and values are guiding principles that the Trustees expect the curriculum to reflect. Decisions regarding what children learn and experience will be made with a focus on improving children's welfare and life chances rather than chasing a particular statistical measure. Each school will take a slightly different approach based on their context but must be able to explain the rationale for their decisions to the Trust and to Ofsted inspectors when required. We judge ourselves against the criteria laid out in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework because it outlines what research indicates is strong educational practice.

Our Pillars

Our schools are supported by four central 'pillars' that allow Headteachers/Principals to focus on teaching and learning, progress and the welfare of the children in their care. These pillars are our central support services: Finance, HR, Estates and Technology. We have worked together to develop a strong infrastructure that realises the benefits of working as a group to create a 'Trust Dividend'- additional benefits that could not be enjoyed as a stand-alone school. Our pillars help schools achieve our mission to **nurture ambition, deliver excellence and enrich children's lives**.



The Trust has its own HR team, policy set and IT system and provides a bespoke service to schools. Close financial monitoring using a central finance system with the opportunity for rapid benchmarking and analysis is another element of support. Similarly, our Estates Team are responsible for keeping all our sites safe using a centralised compliance system. Co-ordinated capital investment means we can make the best use of our funding to help leaders make their schools brilliant, safe and sustainable places to work and learn. The introduction of a Trust - wide network infrastructure and shared management Information Systems allows real-time monitoring of key data at school and Trust level. Our Trust Senior Data Analyst is able to work with colleagues across our Trust to produce insights from the data that helps support school self-evaluation using key metrics around progress, attainment, attendance and behaviour. Our pillars support school effectiveness but also workload reduction, efficiency and shared approaches to problem solving.

Opportunities for collaboration

School leaders are increasingly developing and adopting shared systems that ensure the benefits of the best are felt by all our schools. The Executive Group, consisting of the Headteachers from all the Trust schools and chaired by the CEO, meets monthly and facilitates the sharing of key information and good practice.

As we mature as a Trust, we are increasingly seeking out opportunities for curriculum collaboration across all our schools. Our 'hunger for social justice' and equity is more likely to be satisfied when we work as a partnership to design, iterate and innovate. We are committed to ensuring that all our children access a high-quality curriculum by providing support and direction for the development of a co-constructed curriculum offer that provides a minimum expectation for all our schools. Schools will be encouraged to fine tune the curriculum to make sure it meets the needs of their own children. The curriculum will not be 'set' by our Trust. We value our teachers as professionals and believe an outstanding curriculum is best achieved when teachers and leaders are empowered to use evidence, creativity and a deep knowledge of their children to co-create a curriculum for all.

The Red Kite Alliance

The Trust is built on the extensive collaborative school improvement capacity that has been developed in the Red Kite Alliance. All schools in the Trust are members of the Alliance and benefit from the wide range of opportunities this provides. Clear relationships exist between the Trust and Red Kite Education (RK Teaching School Hub, RK Teacher Training and RK Alliance), the Computing Hub and the Maths Hub. Being a member of the Trust ensures that a school is 'plugged into' a rich network of support through these institutions, each one of which has the RKL as the lead body. The collaborative network across the Alliance provides a rich web of support for schools at both primary and secondary level. Regular reviews of all the schools in the Alliance and data sharing at a granular level allow appropriate expertise to be identified and targeted when needed or accessed upon request. There are established protocols for sharing capacity across the Alliance and a high trust environment that allows freedom of knowledge movement which is crucial to continuous improvement.

Support for leaders

Our Headteachers are the people who will really make the schools successful, we need their inspiration, dedication and energy to drive up standards in all our schools. We support and nurture our Heads and aspirant Heads across the Trust through further developing coaching and giving regular access to continuing professional development opportunities that have impact. We enable enquiry visits to schools in contrasting contexts that are delivering excellent outcomes for young people. We want all our Heads to feel they are part of a dynamic, supportive learning community that celebrates



excellence and rewards achievement. We promote a collegiate and open approach to leadership that also gives the opportunity for Heads and Principals to take a lead role in an aspect of the Trust's development.

Governance

Weaknesses in governance can quickly manifest themselves in failures in school leadership and the accumulation of risk that can lead to school vulnerability. To prevent this from happening, the Trust ensures that there is a consistent, high-quality approach to governance in all Red Kite schools. The RKLTL governance handbook supports all governors and governor training events and conferences are part of the calendar. The Chair of the Trust takes a proactive role working with our Governance Lead in the development of governance arrangements. The Trust is also taking an active role in governor recruitment, working with local employers and other agencies to bring talented and skilled individuals into our local governing bodies.

For Further details of our Core Offer see Appendix 1

Monitoring and evaluation

Our Primary and Secondary Directors of Education work full-time on school improvement. The Directors monitor performance, identify effective practice and broker support from within and beyond our Trust. Their experience as school leaders, LA advisers and curriculum specialists gives them the expertise to ensure every school designs and delivers a curriculum that meets the needs and aspirations of all our children and young people. **Appendix 2- School Improvement Team Structure.**

Our Directors of Education also identify leaders to move into 'pan-Trust' executive and specialist leadership roles to provide additional capacity as required. This team is supplemented by experienced consultants that the Trust can call on as required. Their work will include providing externality to quality assurance work across the Trust as well as providing individualised intervention, support and coaching as required. Refer to Appendix 2- Structure of The School Improvement Team.

The Trust has a primary and secondary 'Executive Leader' who are practising school leaders with significant release time that allows them to support other leaders across our Trust and beyond. Both our Executive Leaders are current Ofsted Inspectors and can provide highly effective support, coaching and interim leadership when required.

School leaders, trust directors of education and wider trust personnel are expected to carry out a range of evidence gathering and monitoring activity which enable schools to be held to account by Trustees.

Quality Assurance

Primary Core Offer

- There is a minimum core offer of three monitoring visit for all primary schools conducted by the Director of Primary Education. Visits are spread across the year at key points to measure progress towards Trust and school improvement priorities.



- Monitoring the delivery of School Improvement Plans ensuring actions are appropriate and leading to strong outcomes for pupils.

Secondary Core Offer

- 4 day-long curriculum reviews per year based on the Ofsted Deep Dive methodology carried out by the Director of Secondary.

A 'score card' undertaken by senior leaders in schools will inform a personalised offer of support and challenge for each school. This is brokered by the Directors of Education in consultation with the Headteachers/Principals and CEO. **Refer to Appendix 3 for a model example. Appendix 4** lists the data which will be considered as part of the desk top analysis.

Schools at Risk

Review of data and quality assurance activity may indicate that a school is 'at risk'. Other factors such as the ones outlined below may also indicate concerns that the school is vulnerable.

- A pattern of parental complaints
- A particular Ofsted judgement
- Significant leadership challenges e.g. absence of Headteacher
- Serious safeguarding concerns
- Loss of trust and confidence in the leadership of the school with parents and/or the staff

Schools that are judged to be 'at risk' will have their scheme of delegation adjusted in a proportionate way depending on the circumstances and context. This, for schools in a high-risk situation, can include the deployment of an executive leader, de-delegation of responsibilities away from the LGB and removal of local financial controls. Where there is evidence that the leadership of the school, including the LGB, is a barrier to progress an Interim Executive Board (IEB) can be put in place. The details of this process are described within the Scheme of Delegation. Such a serious response should not usually be required. The Trust would expect support to be available, and have the impact necessary, to avoid removal of delegated powers.

Following being placed into an 'at risk' category the actions of the CEO may include:

- Review the Scheme of Delegation and gain approval for variation from the Trustees
- Appoint a Trust Leader to take a lead on the improvement strategy for the school and co-ordinate actions
- Allocate an Executive Leader from within the Trust to work with the school to produce a recovery plan that is approved and monitored at Trust level
- Identify capacity from across the Alliance to support where required
- Set up monthly reporting back to CEO and Trust on progress with recovery plan
- Institute a review of the LGB and appoint additional members if required or move to an IEB

R Sheriff
CEO



APPENDIX 1

RKLT CORE OFFER	
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Trust INSET Day, beginning of the academic year Safeguarding • External speakers and trainers to deliver professional development • Regular Partnership Meetings via the Alliance and Teaching School Hub focusing on key themes • Bespoke internal training and support as required • Access to the National College and Leadership Matters webinars and resources • A programme of professional development focused on key priorities for our schools, as well as national priorities • Opportunities to support delivery of ITT, NPQ, ECF and other regional CPD through Red Kite Education
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Leader Days focusing on our Trust’s strategic priorities • Individual Headteacher meetings led by the CEO or Director of Primary to develop leaders on a range of aspects of school including the quality of education, leadership and management and school development priorities • Coaching programmes for leaders at different levels and opportunities for leaders to coach • Termly leadership Curriculum Days led by the Directors of Education to promote collaborative working, share best practice, develop improvement programmes, discuss standards across our Trust, plan staff training etc. • Involvement in the Alliance Peer Reviews as a Peer Leader working alongside external consultants with significant Ofsted experience • Opportunities for strong leaders to support other schools • Leadership Development programme for leaders at different levels, including NPQs • Alliance networks for Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers • Governor Training Schedule in place to support strong governance • Attendance at Secondary and Primary Red Kite Day Conferences
DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION	<p>The Directors of Education are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring and sustaining high-quality curriculum provision, teaching and learning, assessment and leadership in all schools • Monitoring the delivery of School Improvement Plans ensuring that actions are appropriate and leading to strong outcomes for pupils • Delivering universal, bespoke and tailored training to all schools, individual schools, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff • Co-ordinating and facilitating Curriculum Collaboration Days and Executive Days • Headteacher Performance Review
TRUST EXECUTIVE LEADERS	<p>The Executive Leaders support in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Headteacher position • Development of internal capacity of leaders to raise standards and improve outcomes. • Coaching and mentoring Headteachers/Principals and senior leaders • Preparing leaders for inspection • Improving the quality of teaching and learning; developing pedagogical practice • Data and assessment and the impact this has on the progress of pupils • Focused school support.



<p>TRUST SUBJECT LEADS</p>	<p>The Trust Subject Leads support through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading Trust curriculum networks • Subject Leadership development programmes • Dissemination of effective practice across schools • Targeted support to focus schools to improve provision and standards, which is identified and brokered by the Directors of Education • Mentoring to Leaders new to our Trust and new to role • Developing teaching and learning in other schools through high quality modelling, mentoring and coaching to support individuals, subject leaders and whole school improvement across schools • 			
<p>NETWORKS</p>	<p>Termly and half termly networks for a range of professionals to share and develop best practice for example:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="306 779 1543 954"> <tr> <td data-bbox="306 779 970 954"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • SEND • Mathematics • English and writing moderation </td> <td data-bbox="970 779 1543 954"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years • Curriculum Subjects </td> </tr> </table>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • SEND • Mathematics • English and writing moderation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years • Curriculum Subjects
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APPENDIX 2



RKLT - School Improvement Team



