



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

# An Introduction to the Trust





# Introduction

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership is a high-performing multi-academy trust of 29 schools clustered in North Somerset and Bath & NE Somerset. The Trust's 26 primary-phase schools and three secondary schools perform strongly in both local and national comparisons. They offer local children and families a rounded education, a broad and balanced curriculum and consistently high standards of teaching and learning.

## Member Schools

School	Phase	Capacity	Ofsted Inspection	Joining date
Gordano School	Secondary	1940	Outstanding	1st Sept 2016
High Down Infant School	Infant	300	Outstanding	1st Sept 2016
High Down Junior School	Junior	360	Good	1st Sept 2016
Portishead Primary School	Primary	480	Good	1st Sept 2016
St Peter's CE Primary School	Primary	540	Good	1st Sept 2016
St Mary's CE Primary School	Primary	105	Good	1st Sept 2016
Backwell School	Secondary	1728	Outstanding	1st Jan 2018
Chew Valley School	Secondary	1253	Good	1st Feb 2018
Backwell CE Junior School	Junior	240	Outstanding	1st Feb 2018
West Leigh Infant School	Infant	180	Outstanding	1st Feb 2018
Northleaze CE Primary School	Primary	210	Good	1st Feb 2018
Yatton Infant School	Infant	270	Outstanding	1st April 2018
Yatton CE Junior School	Junior	360	Good	1st April 2018
Grove Junior School	Junior	300	Good	1st April 2018
Hannah More Infant School	Infant	180	Good	1st April 2018
Wraxall CE Primary	Primary	105	Good	1st July 2018
Flax Bourton CE Primary School	Primary	135	Outstanding	1st Oct 2018
Bishop Sutton Primary School	Primary	209	Outstanding	1st Jan 2019
Stanton Drew Primary School	Primary	70	Outstanding	1st Jan 2019
East Harptree CE VC Primary School	Primary	105	Good	1st Jan 2019
Ubley CE VC Primary School	Primary	80	Good	1st Jan 2019
Winford CE VC Primary School	Primary	150	Good	1st Jan 2019
Blagdon Primary School	Primary	110	Not yet inspected	1st Oct 2019
Whitchurch primary School	Primary	315	Good	1st April 2020
Burrington CE Primary	Primary	75	Good	1st Jan 2023
Wrington CE Primary	Primary	197	Outstanding	1st Jan 2023
Churchill CE Primary	Primary	196	Good	1st Feb 2023
Golden Valley Primary	Primary	415	Outstanding	1st Feb 2023



# The Trust's Vision

The Trust was established with the mission of 'service to our community' and this is set out clearly in the Trust's vision statement.

## Excellence from Nursery to Sixth Form

**The Trust's values and beliefs are defined by:**

- Collaboration between schools delivering excellence for children and young people.

### The Trust's Values and Beliefs

- Belief in the transformational and life-enhancing power of education
- Service to the community
- Partnership and professional generosity
- Honesty and openness

### The Trust's Aims are to deliver

- A rich and exciting curriculum where all pupils thrive and develop character
- Strong progress in outcomes, especially for disadvantaged children and young people
- Excellence in professional learning and development
- Strong and strategic leadership at all levels
- High quality and cost-effective central services

### The Trust's Culture

- Significant delegated authority to each Headteacher and Governing Body
- That schools maintain their own character and distinctiveness



The Trust emphasises an '*all-through*' educational journey and it is hoped that the great majority of pupils will undertake all their school education within the Trust. This culture means that transition between key stages is a top priority and Trust leaders and managers focus on ensuring that teachers and staff have strong working knowledge of future and previous provision so that they can prepare or follow up in a way that makes education continuous.

Enshrined within the Scheme of Delegation is responsibility and decision making at a local level. The Trust gives a significant measure of delegated power to its Heads and Governors in the belief that local leaders are best placed to match their schools to local needs. It is also the view of the Trust Board that ownership of their work is essential to attract, motivate and retain the best leaders. Where there are concerns about standards, performance, management or safety the Trust will intervene immediately. LSP is a Partnership. The Trust's Board and leaders regard that as both a key value and a meaningful advantage.



On a more detailed level, the Trust has defined four tenets of the strategy that will deliver its vision:

**A. Educational standards: increasing the quality of provision in all Trust schools.**

1. To ensure that all schools in the Trust are at national average or above in terms of their outcomes for all pupil groups and that each school in the Trust promotes social mobility and is closing the attainment gap for its SEND and/or disadvantaged pupils.
2. To ensure that our schools provide the very best teaching to promote high-quality learning and strong outcomes for our children and young people, enabling staff to make a real difference to pupils in every school.
3. To ensure that all schools improve their Ofsted grading if they were requiring improvement or are in a category of concern on joining the Trust; or maintain their grading if good or outstanding on joining.
4. To implement a CPD programme in partnership with our partner Teaching Schools to ensure that our staff have the right skills to raise standards further, deliver good teaching and learning, and disseminate best practice in order to grow leaders that can lead, succession plan and talent manage future leaders.
5. To ensure that there is a rigorous and robust programme of quality assurance that helps to support staff, build expertise and capacity, and raise standards to deliver positive outcomes for pupils.

**B. Leadership and people: providing outstanding governance, executive leadership and school leadership with clear succession planning; attracting, developing and retaining the best people to work in Trust schools.**

1. To ensure that the Board of Trustees acts in the best interests of the Trust, governing in accordance with its articles of association and having governance arrangements that demonstrate vision, clarity of relationships, effective oversight and sustainability whilst achieving the greatest possible economies and value to schools in line with the Trust aim, values, mission and style.
2. To ensure that Local Governing Bodies, executive leaders and Trust headteachers provide effective leadership (both rigorous and supportive) and deliver an excellent school experience that is sustainable over time by embedding systems leadership and securing effective governance.



3. To develop future leaders and effective succession planning for Trust schools.
4. To attract, develop and retain talented and capable staff to posts in our schools and central team.

**C. Developing and growing our partnership: strategic growth of our existing partnership to deliver the benefits of cross-phase education in defined geographical communities; and, where appropriate, sponsor existing schools or create new school provision to meet the needs of our geographical area and communities.**

1. To grow the Trust in a measured way to ensure that standards are maintained and improved and that there is sufficient capacity to bring about rapid progress as required.
2. To develop and define the concept of the cross-phase Hub providing children and young people with a cohesive educational journey from early years to post 16.
3. To engage with opportunities to sponsor existing schools or deliver new schools/provision to meet the needs of our geographical area and communities (this may include special or alternative provision).

**D. Operational effectiveness: ensuring a financially viable and sustainable multi-academy trust delivering high quality and cost effective services to schools; enabling schools to maximise their resources to increase the quality of provision.**

1. To ensure that the Trust has business arrangements that are efficient and effective, and enables it to deliver on its commitments to grow and prosper and to deliver value for money across all our operations.
2. To optimise our budget, we will aim to deliver best practice, but at the same time minimise risk and provide value for money.
3. To support schools to maximise the resources to improve outcomes for children and young people through activity such as the joint procurement of services to bring about better value for money and economies of scale.
4. To develop an efficient and effective school estate which supports and responds to enable the delivery of education services across the Trust.







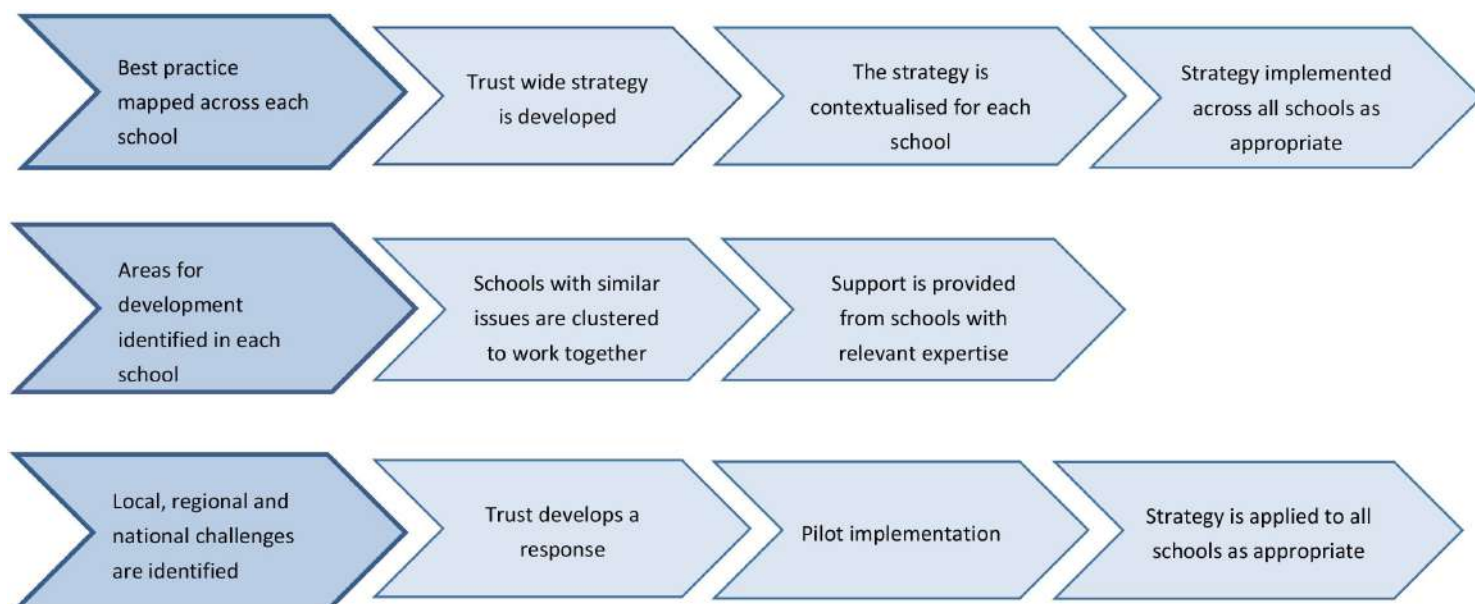


## 2. A model for school improvement in Trust schools

The Trust believes school improvement is a collective responsibility and that collaboration is key. The Trust in partnership with its schools will:

- pursue an unwavering focus on outcomes and the development of the whole child;
- ensure every pupil is at the heart of all the Trust does;
- do 'whatever it takes' to ensure each pupil can achieve;
- have ambition and high expectations across all areas of delivery and for the quality of provision in each Trust school;
- promote excellence;
- expect all staff to create a culture of positivity, high expectations, a sense of achievement and success.

### The Trust school improvement model is based on collaboration:







# Inclusion and engagement with families

Positive engagement with education and the daily presence at school transform a child or young person's life chances. Trust schools in aggregate have higher than national attendance. The Trust intends to maintain and improve on this track record.

Trust schools have standardised systems and messages about school attendance and the Trust contracts three days a week of Educational Welfare Officer support from Noble Education.

The Education Welfare provision includes undertaking home visits and includes an assessment of the challenges that impact a child's school attendance with the parent/ carer and developing Parenting Contracts and Attendance Plans for children with persistent absence. To support this, the Trust's attendance policy takes a very firm line on absence during term-time. Systems across the Trust are based on those developed at Gordano School.

The Trust has low exclusion rates and works closely with the North Somerset 'Out of School Panel' and Bath and NE Somerset Behaviour and Attendance Panels to reduce and find alternatives to exclusion. The Trust now employs an advisory teacher to support schools with inclusion and best practice in SEND and behaviour for learning. This is an area targeted for further development and growth in the coming year.

To engage 'hard to reach parents and carers' the Trust will offer a full programme to encourage families to engage including making sure parents feel listened to, giving feedback, helping parents to support homework, being creative in where events are held and who is invited, using social media to start conversations, setting up blogs, involving parents in action research and workshops to support their child's learning journey.







# Trust Operating Model

Whilst guaranteeing meaningful freedoms for schools, the Trust ensures that its schools reap the benefits of being part of a large trust. The operating model is based on a devolved approach to school leadership and management with significant freedoms delegated to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers. Schools take advantage of best practice sharing; school improvement expertise; continuing professional development opportunities for all staff and the economies of scale that can be generated within an organisation with significant central capacity. The Trust has its own HR and Finance teams and employs or retains its own experts in School Improvement, Special Educational Needs and Educational Welfare. All academies work with Teaching Schools to deliver a vibrant and current programme of professional development for staff. The Trust also has a governance development programme.

## Growth of the Trust

The Trust has undergone rapid and successful growth from six schools when it was formed in September 2016 to 23 schools at Easter 2020. Whilst this represents an unusually steep growth trajectory, this growth has been overseen and approved by the Regional School Commissioner's (RSC) office whose role it is to assess the capacity and capability of multi-academy trusts to grow.

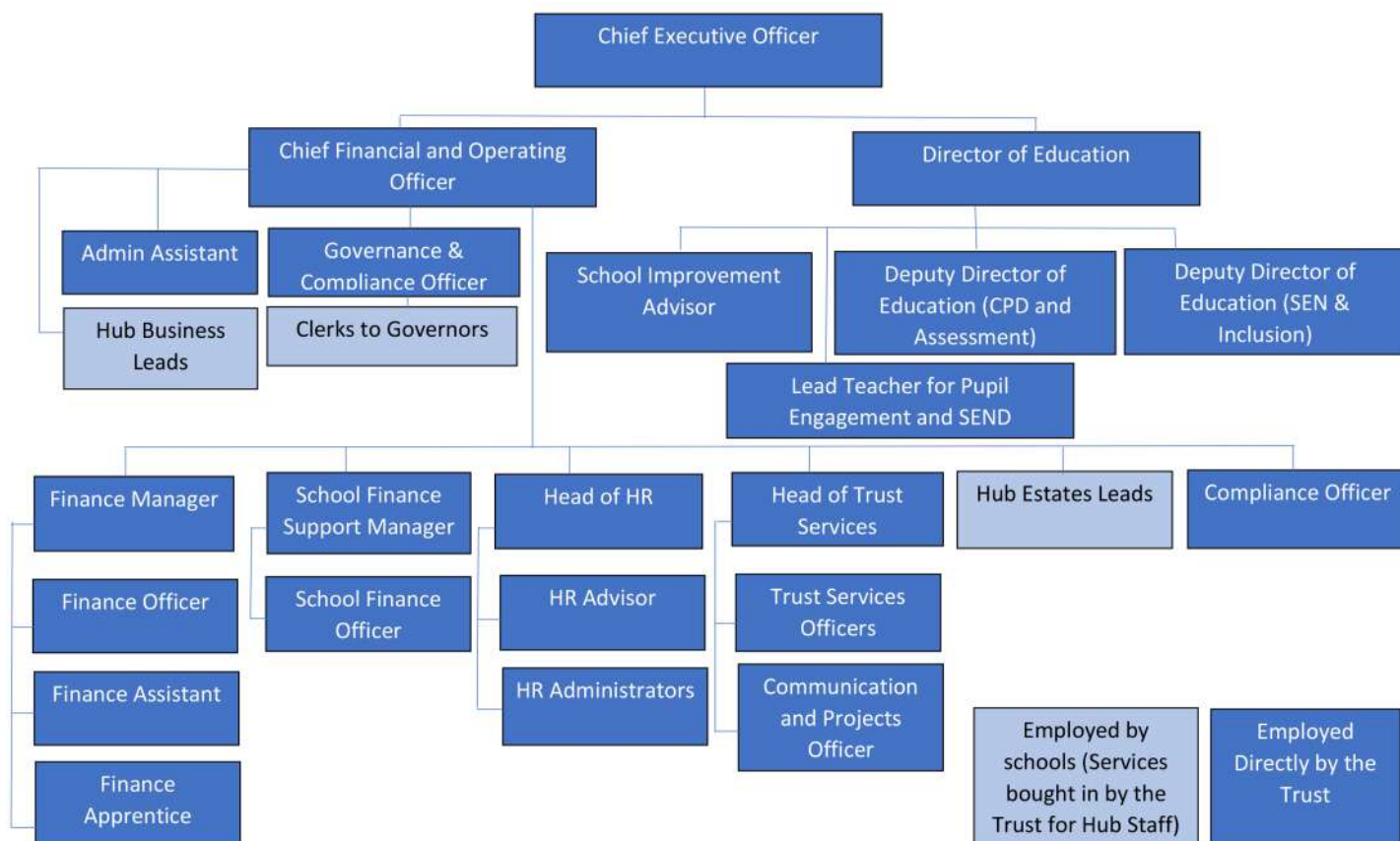
The Trust's senior management and chair maintain regular dialogue with the RSC and have inspired confidence in the RSC's team such that the Trust has been permitted and indeed encouraged to take on additional schools. In her annual review of January 2018 the RSC for the South West wrote, *"I am pleased with the progress your Trust has made since the Portishead primaries joined in 2016 and the plans you have put in place to continue development."* During meetings and interactions with the RSC, the methodology that the Trust uses to improve and maintain standards and outcomes is explored in detail. As well as being held robustly to account by the Trust Board, the RSC as the middle-tier regulator also performs this function in the name of raising standards and improving life chances for all children within the region.





# Central Team Capacity

The first six schools in the Trust were all in the Portishead area and central services were mainly provided from Gordano School. The central services of the Trust are now almost completely independent of the schools. The current capacity of the central team is shown in the diagram below. Further growth may necessitate adding several more staff but the key posts are all in position. The Trust has built an exceptionally strong and well-established team of professionals to deliver the Trust's growth strategy as defined by the Board of Trustees. The critical functional skill sets are all represented.







# Key Personnel

## **CEO and Accounting Officer: Gary Lewis**

Gary initially trained in accountancy after which he moved into teaching History and Politics. He has worked in Manchester, Wiltshire and Bath (holding posts as Head of Sixth Form and later Curriculum Deputy) before taking up post as Headteacher of Gordano School which he held from 2010 to 2017. Gordano was judged as Outstanding by Ofsted in 2012 and retains that grade.

Gary has been an NLE since 2013 and in that role has worked with a number of schools. Three of the Primaries that he has supported were successful in moving from Requires Improvement to Good following Ofsted Inspections. He has been an Ofsted Inspector since 2013 and has inspected both primary schools and secondary schools. In 2014 Gary worked on a DfE research project for schools minister, Nick Gibb. The project was focussed on Mastery Mathematics in Primary and secondary phases and included making a research visit to work with school leaders and the national Institute of Education in Singapore.

## **Chief Financial & Operating Officer: Louise Malik**

Louise was formerly Head of School Finance and then Head of Educational Transformation at North Somerset Council. She facilitated the Schools Strategic Forum and was a member of the DfE Schools and Academies Funding Group (SAFG). She was on the National Fair Funding Conference Steering Group and chaired the South West Region Fair Funding Group. Louise has deep experience in financial management and strategic planning. She is supported by a number of qualified accountants amongst the next management tier.

Louise has 28 year of experience of working in Education. Throughout this period she has worked in partnerships with schools to devise and deliver sustainable budgets. This has included establishing frameworks to operate within, supporting schools to manage deficit budgets, restructuring staffing levels and finding more cost efficient alternatives. Louise has established, managed and reviewed a wide range of services to provide support to schools – both internally delivered and externally commissioned. These services have ranged from financial support services to school lunch provision to the provision of School Improvement and Education Psychology services.



## Director of Education: Sharon Roberts

Sharon started her teaching career as a secondary school teacher in Dorset. She has also taught in schools in Manchester and Bristol, moving to primary education after the birth of her children. She has been Headteacher at St Peter's Church of England Primary School in Portishead since 2005.

St Peter's is an English Hub and is one of 34 schools across the country chosen by the DFE to support other schools in the teaching of phonics and early reading.

Sharon is also a National Leader of Education.

Sharon works part-time within the Central Team, alongside another role within the wider Trust.

## Head of HR: Tania Newman

Tania is a Chartered Member of CIPD and has over 13 years' HR experience of working in the education sector. Tania began her HR career in 1990 in the engineering sector for British Aerospace (Space Systems) followed by Weir Strachan and Henshaw, specialising in Training and Development, which included developing Chartered Graduate Development schemes for those industries.

In 2004 Tania joined Filton College (SGS) a further education establishment and was appointed as HR Manager in 2005 as a member of the Leadership team. In 2006 Tania joined Clifton College where she remained until 2018 as HR Director. Tania was part of the Senior Executive Team at Clifton College and played a key role in developing the schools' and HR strategy across the College.

Tania has over 30 years' experience of working in Human Resources, and has experience of driving business change and people strategy by partnering with key stakeholders whilst minimising organisational risk. Tania has implemented a number of HR systems successfully which improved management information and supported business needs.





A background image showing a group of children in a classroom. They are sitting at a wooden table, looking at a large open book or project. The children are wearing school uniforms. The image is slightly blurred, focusing on the children's activity.

## Head of Trust Services: Tim Monelle

Tim has previously worked in management at the Bank of Ireland. From 2010 until 2018 he was Head of Communication, ICT and Data at Gordano School. He has experience in procurement, strategic IT, business partnerships, data protection and all aspects on communications strategy. He is a non-executive Director at the Hargreaves Lansdown Charitable Foundation.

## Commercial systems

The Trust uses the finance package PSFinancials and the Orovia budgeting software. The Trust Auditors are Bishop Fleming and the Trust has six years of unqualified management letters in annual audits. Browne Jacobson are the Trust's solicitors and subscribe to their HR service. Additionally the Trust procures Educational Welfare Support from Noble Education, admissions service from North Somerset Council, SEND support from Somerset County Council, H&S and Risk support from Delegated Services and Internal Audit from iWest. In Spring/Summer 2022 the Trust will be introducing a new HR system.

## Governance Arrangements

A key differentiator of the Trust's offer to schools is that each school's individuality and ethos is valued and supported and this is made manifest in the school's governance arrangements.

The Trust exists both to promote the sharing of excellence and capacity and to support each school in maintaining its own identity and ethos. Every Local Governing Body may issue its own ethos statement and the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive and other bodies within the Trust will be mindful of the importance of each school retaining its own identity.

This Scheme of Delegation is granted by the Board of Trustees and the Trustees will withdraw this delegation or part of it if there is significant concern supported by robust data around the actual or predicted outcomes for pupils, the safety and welfare of pupils or the financial stability of the School.



# The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the statutory Governing Body for all schools within the Trust. The Board oversees standards of education across the Trust and set the strategic direction for the MAT. It closely monitors the performance of schools educationally, operationally and financially.

## Local Governing Bodies

The Board of Trustees establishes a Local Governing Body in each school or Federation, with agreed delegation arrangements. The Trust has well established and robust governance arrangements, based on a hub model as illustrated below.

## Governance Training and Development

The Trust provides a full training offer for Governors and Trustees to ensure that they can hold leaders to account for the outcomes of all pupils and disadvantaged pupils and monitor the impact of pupil premium funding against the quality of provision and outcomes. These events are facilitated by the Executive team, our National Leaders of Governance and by external speakers.

The Trust also funds National Governance Association silver membership for all Governors and gold membership for Trustees. The Trust provides The Key for Leaders membership for all our schools and has a programme of induction for all new Governors and Trustees.

The Trust's Chair of Trustees, Adele Haysom, is a National Leader of Governance. She is currently supporting a number of schools and LAs with Reviews of Governance.

The Board of Trustees have issued a Self-Evaluation Toolkit to each Local Governing Body and have introduced an annual conversation between LGB Chair and the CEO (supported by one Trustee) so that the outcomes of the review can be explored and developments in governance planned.







# Governance Best Practice

The LGBs 'RAG rate' key messages from each LGB meeting which are then reported to the next Board of Trustees Meeting. The CEO also reads all LGB minutes and provides a report to each Board meeting. The CEO attends LGB meetings in rotation.

The Trust is comprised of three Hubs. Each Hub has a Chairs Development Group which meets at least three times a year and consists of the Chairs of each LGB and two Trustees. The Chairs Development Group is about communication and co-ordination and is not a decision-making structure within the Trust.

The Trust is fully cognisant of the importance of the Trust Board having the skills to plan the Trust's strategy and to monitor the impact of Executive Leaders and Headteachers. The Trust has worked with Academy Ambassadors to recruit experienced and skilled Trustees to fill gaps in the Skills Matrix. Trustees are interviewed for the position.

The Board now includes several Senior Executives from multi-national companies, an accountant and two recently retired National Leaders in Education. The Vice-Chair is an NLG and was recently Chair of an Interim Executive Board at a school in Special Measures. Biographies for Trustees are available on the website.



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