

ILLUMINATE MINDS TRUST

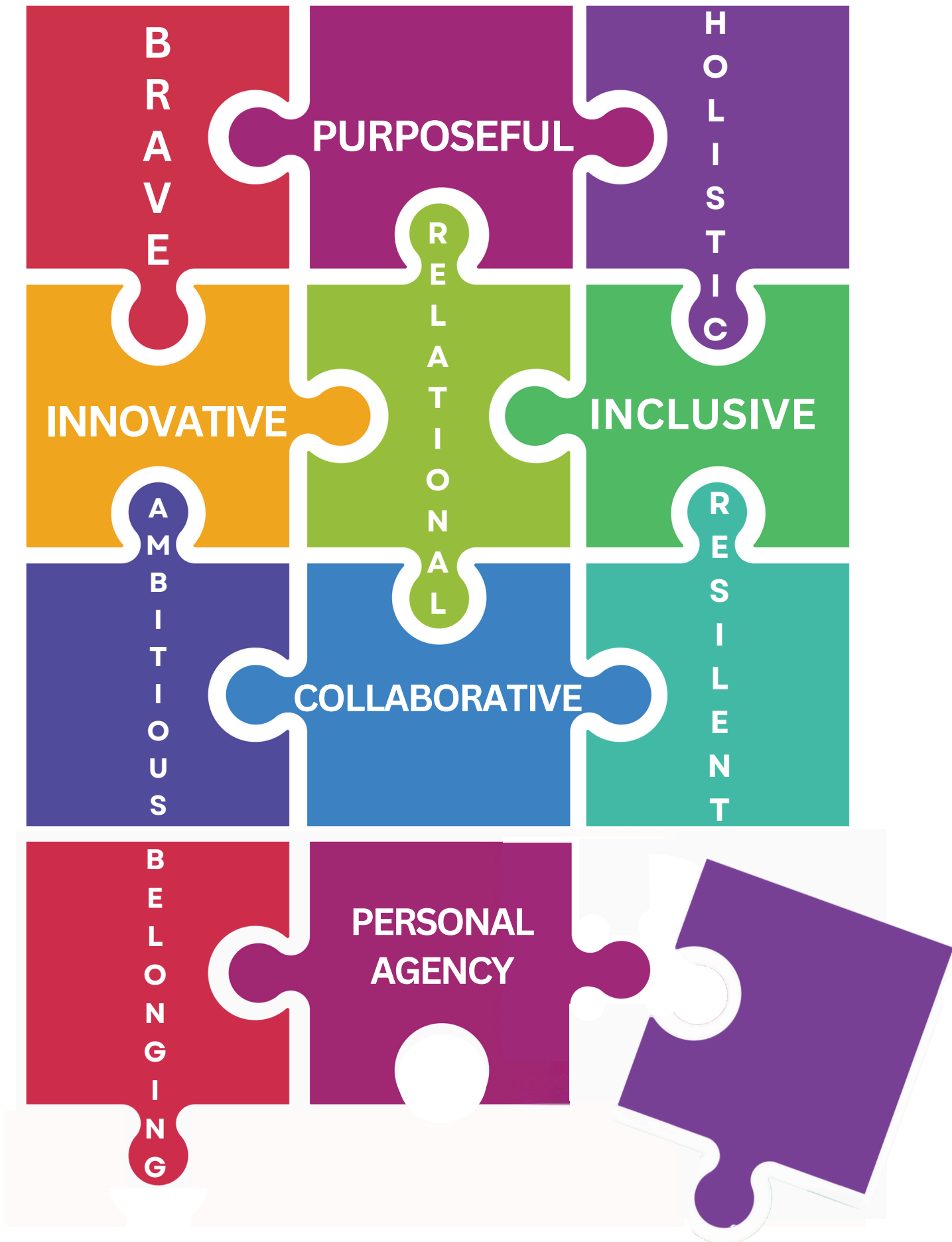
ANNUAL REPORT

2023- 2024



A learning community where everyone belongs, relationships matter and we work together to achieve "Excellence Every Day"

OUR VALUES



OUR MISSION

**Everyone belongs,
relationships matter and
we work together to
achieve “Excellence Every
Day”.**





**ILLUMINATE MINDS
TRUST**



Our Vision

Through a commitment to strong partnerships, active collaboration, outstanding leadership, exceptional teaching and an exciting and engaging curriculum offer, our schools will ignite the spark of curiosity and grow the flame of learning and achievement.

Providing a holistic educational experience builds character, promotes independence and inspires confidence, we will encourage every pupil to have a voice. develop skills, knowledge and resilience and be the very best version of themselves.

Our Trust will strive to deliver "Excellence Every Day" through a holistic curriculum offer, a "no excuses" culture and a firm commitment to ensure that all pupils access learning and experience without limits.

Our schools will beyond all else ensure that children and young people are at the heart of our communities, all we do and all decisions we make. Brave and purposeful, open to new ideas and with a willingness to innovate, our schools are preparing the citizens of the future and contributing to the creation of a new society.

Our people will light the fire of ambition and create a safe, stimulating educational environment where talents grow and pupils thrive, developing a love of learning which will sustain them throughout their lives whereby everyone in our school communities gets better and better every day and in every way.

Our pupils will be equipped with the beliefs and attributes to develop a personal moral compass which supports them in making good choices, understanding right from wrong and showing respect and consideration to others.

Reaching for the stars, dreaming big and always happy and bright, our pupils will make a positive impact on society and leave our schools well rounded, thoughtful individuals who work hard and want to achieve their best.



We work together, we share ideas, we seek new partnerships and we have the highest expectations of ourselves and others because we believe in "Excellence Every Day" and want to make each day matter.

WELCOME

Welcome to the first Annual Report of the Illuminate Minds Trust. We hope this report gives you a flavour of who we are and the moral purpose which drives us.



The last three years have seen rapid improvement and transformation for the schools and the trust. Illuminate Minds Trust is now in a strong position financially and the schools are performing well against national targets. A key feature of the trust is the robust and embedded culture which runs through our schools, ensuring that there are consistently high standards and a strongly articulated commitment to striving always for better as captured in our mission statement of “Excellence Every Day”.



MEET THE TEAM



Chief Executive Officer
Jo Southby



Chief Operating Officer
Umar Jillani



**Trust Director of SEND,
Safeguarding and Inclusion**
Beverley Evans



**Trust Teaching and Learning
Director**
Sam Robinson



Chief Financial Officer
Sandra Williams



**Trust Health and Safety/
Estates Manager**
Steve Hallinan



**Finance and Business
Officer**
Sophie Greenwood

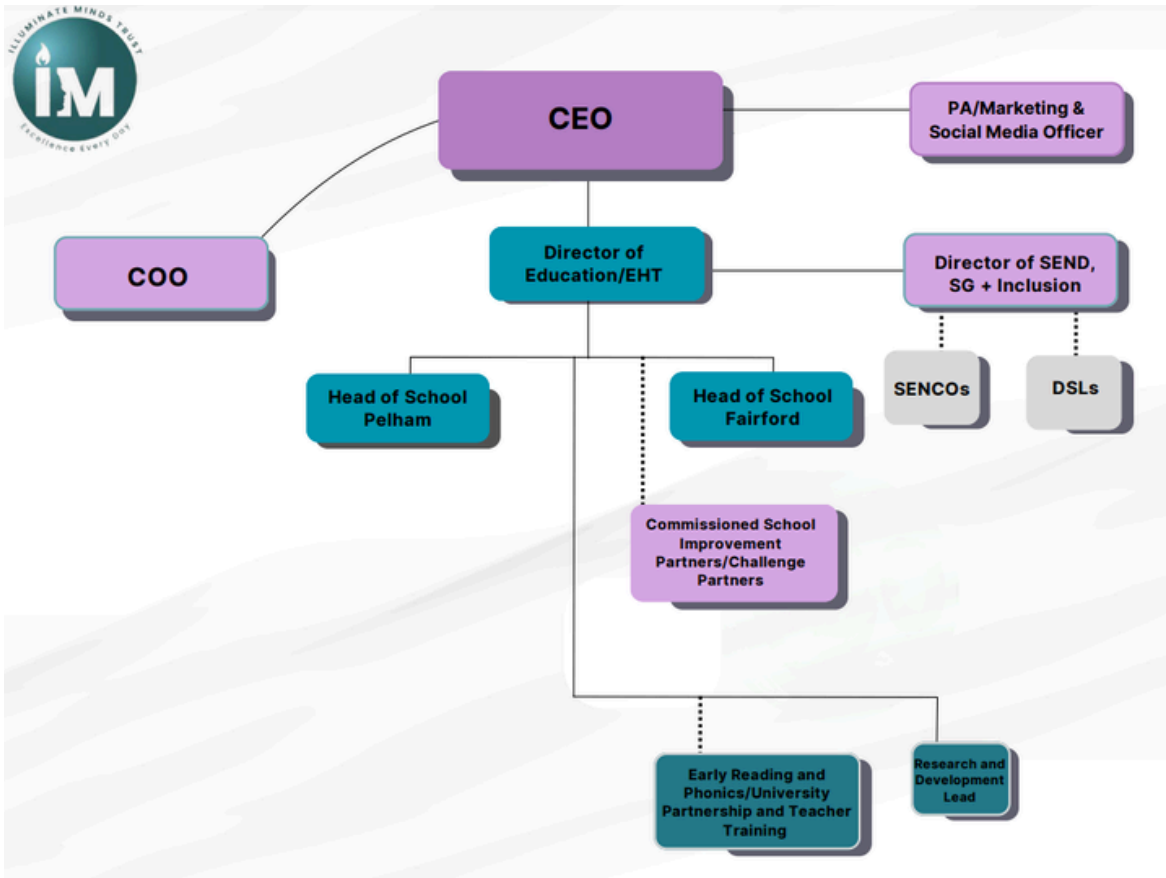


**Trust Marketing and Stakeholder
relations officer/Executive PA**
Lexi Devincenzi-hume

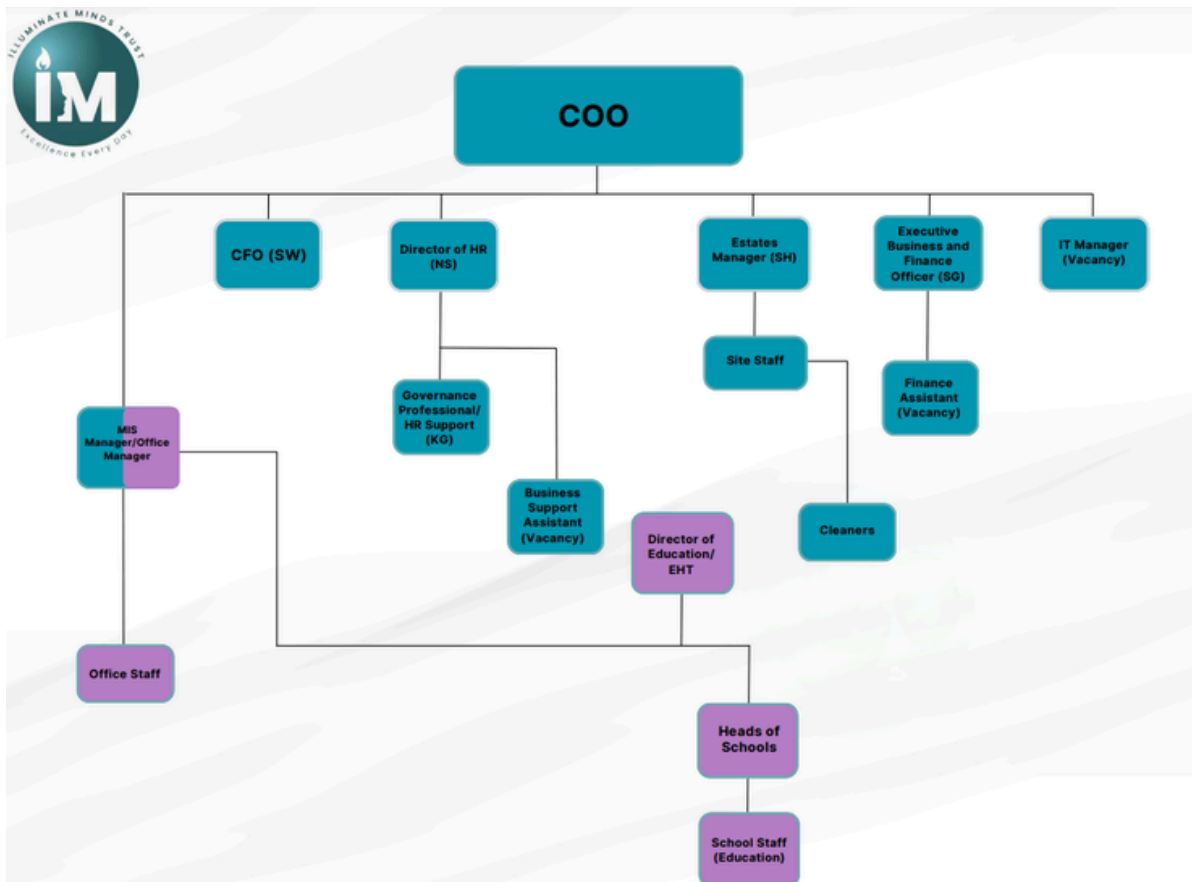


**Executive HR & Business support
Officer/Governance Clerk**
Kiran Gahir

TRUST STRUCTURE



OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE



ACCOUNTING OFFICER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trust has now been in operation since 2013 and in its current formation of two primary schools since 2015. However, it is in the last three years that the value of exploiting the trust dividend has been actualised with focus moving to a culture of “better together, stronger as one”.

Collaboration sits firmly at the centre of our approach to school improvement, staff well being and sustainability. Through a careful balance between consistency of policy and practice against maintaining the individual characteristics of each school, the trust has created a rich and mutually supportive organisation where our schools work in close partnership as standard practice.

The Trust's commitment to aspiration for all within a relational culture creates an ethos of “belonging” where the aim is for all children to develop as individuals within a caring and supportive learning environment. The Trust incorporates the only Hearing-Impaired specialist resource provision in Bexley within Pelham Primary School and promotes the use of British Sign Language as an integral part of school life. The Trust has adopted an ethos of inclusion and belonging which promotes a safe learning community and aspires to delivering the highest quality educational provision to all pupils.

During 2023/24 the schools have made significant progress and been on a journey not only of improvement but also consolidation and innovation. Leadership at both schools has remained stable throughout the year with the benefits of succession planning being observed through the promotion of staff into leadership positions. The trust moved to an adapted senior leadership structure at the end of the year to further enhance coordinated partnership working and to fully capture the benefits of practice sharing alongside of efficiencies achieved through economies of scale. A Director of Education post has been established with the resignation of the longstanding Head Teacher of Pelham Primary School opening up opportunities to pilot a different structure from September 2024.

The Central Team has been further strengthened with the development of a governance professional role and additional support for the Finance Team secured. This has enabled the trust to develop a clear pathway for a digital transformation process in relation to management information, finance operational arrangements, HR records and processes and the sharing of information across schools. A digital strategy is the next step in the trust's engagement with the TransforMATive Programme.

Although both schools' last inspection judgements were Good, Fairford has made significant progress since its inspection in March 2023 and is on a trajectory to Outstanding. The new trust leadership structure introduced in September 2024 has already resulted in rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning at Pelham which is now awaiting an imminent inspection. The leadership teams are working effectively under the Director of Education/ Executive Head Teacher. Through moves between schools based on skills being mapped to the needs of each school, leadership at each school is becoming increasingly stronger and more cohesive.

The commissioning of two new School Improvement Partners has been motivational and provided additional validation for the schools. Both schools are benefitting from fresh challenge and "fresh eyes", increasing focus on specific areas for improvement. The impact to date has been highly positive. The Trust has also joined Challenge Partners to widen networks and development opportunities for our leaders whilst at the same time broadening external scrutiny and monitoring.

Pupil attendance in both schools has improved this academic year to national levels. There has however been a pattern of unauthorised absence which is due to an increase in unauthorised term time holidays for medical treatment, sick relatives abroad and bereavements.

The quality of teaching in both schools remains good. There were concerns in the first half of the term in relation to middle leadership at Pelham Primary for English and Science, but rapid action has been taken resulting in interim leadership for English and the appointment of a new English Lead from January 2025 and additional support for the Science Lead from the Director of Education.

Staffing is a strength of the Trust. Use of agency staff remains at zero with 100% of staff directly employed since January 2022. A commitment to this approach has contributed to a healthy financial position. Recruitment has a clear strategy and combines internal succession planning, investment in upskilling the workforce and attracting new staff through a multi-faceted approach of advertisement, partnerships with three recruitment agencies, joint working with Goldsmiths College and use of the apprenticeship levy to train staff in post. Retention is high at Fairford with minimal turnover. Pelham had higher turnover at the start of the academic year 2023/24 due to external interference but this is now reduced and on a par with Fairford. A key risk for the Trust is retention of the best staff at leadership level which is one of the key drivers for growth. The partnership with Goldsmiths University and use of the apprenticeship levy have been positive in the training and development of our trainee teachers who are all progressing positively at Fairford Academy. This approach will result in an additional three fully qualified teachers for the trust in September 2025.

Governance recruitment has improved this academic year. Pelham Primary now has a new Chair and is at full complement and Fairford has the stability of a continuing Chair but new staff governor. Three new trustees have joined the board since August 2024, expanding the skills and knowledge of the board.

Safeguarding continues to be a strength of the Trust due to the backgrounds of key senior staff who have brought the approaches adopted by alternative provision and specialist settings to the mainstream environment, providing high quality, regular training and robust leadership systems across both schools.

There has been significant investment into the trust's estates to ensure our pupils are accessing engaging learning environments which reflect the needs of the school cohort. Investment in the schools was low in the past which had led to reserves being grown without any clear strategy. This has been fully addressed and there is now a schedule of works and planned developments to ensure the estates are continually improving. The recruitment of an Estates Manager to oversee Health and Safety and compliance has identified significant historical gaps but also had a positive impact in addressing these over the last twelve months. Both schools still have areas for improvement but awareness of health and safety issues has been raised and compliance more than doubled.

The financial position of the Trust is good. The Trust has healthy reserves but has equally ensured that reserves are being reinvested: 2021-2023 reserves were invested in the establishment of a Central Team and 2023-2025 there are clear plans for the improvement of the school estate. Both schools are predicting in-year surpluses supported by a continual review of the staffing resources and move to GAG pooling.

In summary, the trust is in a very strong position, providing an outstanding educational offer to pupils supported by a cohesive, consistent staff team and competent, experienced leadership group. Stakeholder feedback demonstrates that our pupils are happy and thriving, our staff are committed to our culture and ambitions and our parents value the work the trust has done to improve the schools over the last three years.

I am confident the trust will continue to go from strength to strength and excited by the journey ahead!



Jo Southby


Chief Executive Officer (Accounting Officer)

PROGRESS AGAINST OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2021-2024

The objective agreed in October 2021 have now been revisited in the context of our current position and priority areas. Over the last year there has been notable successes in achieving our original three objectives as outlined below:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

To prepare the Trust for growth in the widest sense in readiness for expansion to a family of 5-8 schools.

 **Achievements: The “Seven Cs” (Capacity; Collaboration; Coaching; Central Systems; Community; Curriculum; Cultural Capital) are fully embedded in our cross-school working practices.....**

- The capacity for growth and improvement has increased significantly through effective recruitment, retention and succession planning underpinned by embedded mechanisms for routine school to school support and the creation of cross-Trust roles.
- The Trust has invested in accreditation for executive coaches to take forward a whole trust coaching and reflective practitioner culture.
- Embedded systems are now Trust-wide due to Trust rather than school policies and joint purchasing efficiencies.
- A consistent trust curriculum has been piloted, reviewed and now embedded to reflect and deliver on the trust values and vision.
- Cultural capital underpins the curriculum and the experiences for all pupils are broad and engaging.
- A Trust CPD Annual Schedule is now embedded and has proved effective in raising standards and improving performance and consistency.
- Systems across the Trust are now fully in place and consistency is observed in approaches to teaching and learning and assessment as well as approaches to behaviour and relationships.
- Collaboration is embedded in the trust culture.
- A Central Team has been developed which now fully supports school improvement, has sufficient capacity to support new schools joining the trust and offers a comprehensive back office function.
- The schools access high quality external review and monitoring through three independent advisors and, very recently, through engagement in Challenge Partners.
- Staff are able to articulate confidently the vision and values of the trust and engage in the culture related to a strong trust mindset.

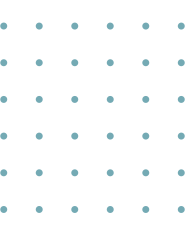
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

To create an educational offer which promotes “Excellence Every Day” for every pupil



All schools deliver a holistic curriculum which is high quality and bespoke to the unique characteristics of each school. There is a clear methodology for School Improvement and a well understood Teaching and Learning Philosophy complimented by a comprehensive, broad offer of universal training alongside CPD linked to the trust and school development plans...

- All staff are supported to embrace the pedagogical approach of the Trust.
- School improvement is publicised through a Trust document which is available on our website.
- The Trust approach to collaborative planning has reduced workload whilst enhancing partnership and in-house development opportunities for all staff.
- Both schools are judged to be at least Good under any current inspection framework and are on the journey to Outstanding.
- There is a robust and rigorous approach to Quality Assurance which is built around a coaching model, positively recognising staff strengths and identifying where skills and expertise can be shared across the Trust.
- Effective marketing strategies are used to attract the best staff to our Trust and the 100% directly employed target is achieved.
- Key Performance Indicator targets are proposed and agreed as well as data dashboards to measure and monitor impact and enable us to identify best practice across our Trust schools as well as provide meaningful data to Trustees.
- A collaborative approach to SEND and vulnerable pupils in our different environments facilitates the pooling of resources and develops a collective approach to safeguarding and attendance.
- A passport of opportunities for all pupils is developed which uses the curriculum as a vehicle for exposure to different experiences as part of our belief in the value of a cultural capital-driven approach to learning.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3



To achieve financial and organisational stability for the long term.

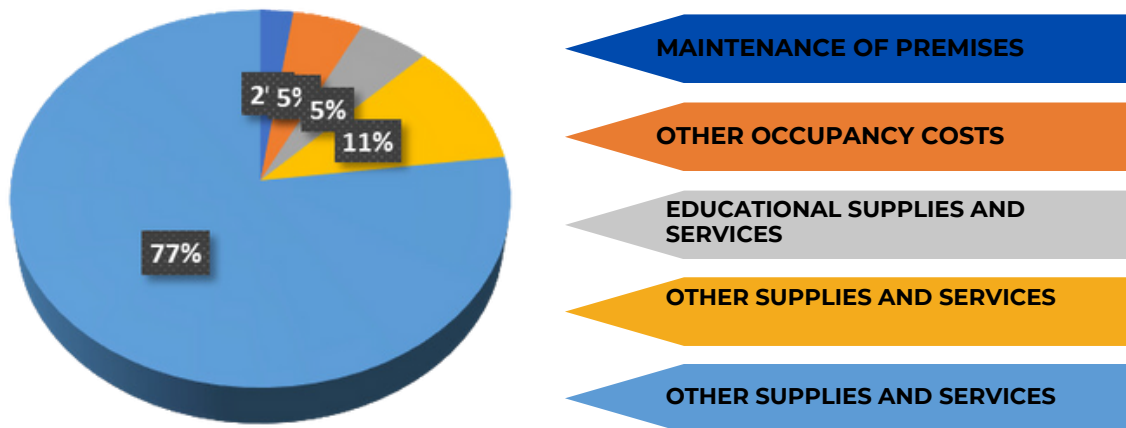
- The Trust and schools have developed a clear brand to encourage greater uptake of places and ensure our schools have few vacancies and are in a strong financial position year on year.
- Recruitment costs are below previous agency and absence costs and ensure pupils access stability and consistency of provision.
- A “trust mind-set” is now embedded with improved communication through half termly Trust newsletters and the development of formal collaborative processes across our schools.
- A collaborative approach to SEND and vulnerable pupils in our different environments has enabled the pooling of resources and developed a collective approach to safeguarding and attendance.
- Resources for premises and learning resources are planned cross-Trust to tackle differences in funding based on needs and equality of opportunity.
- The trust continues to maintain healthy reserves and is now moving towards an annual target of 1.5% annual surplus to ensure continued financial health.
- Efficiencies have been achieved by introducing GAG pooling and moving to single procurement and tendering processes.
- The Finance Team have been strengthened with internal succession planning arrangements in place and high levels of accounting and auditing expertise brought into the team through the recruitment of an experienced COO and development of the CFO function.
- An Estates Manager is now in place with oversight of health and safety and compliance resulting in swift improvement in compliance and significant investment and enhancement of the learning environments.

FINANCE

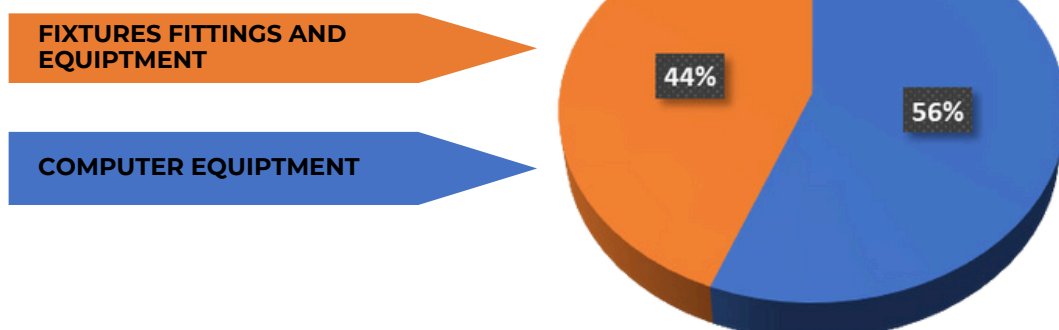
As a sector, we are in a period of financial uncertainty and educational policy change. Falling birth rates and poor place planning has made it challenging to both attract new pupils to the schools in an ever increasingly competitive market and to plan for future funding on the basis of unfilled places and unknown local demographics. However, the trust has been successful in “future proofing” itself through careful investment in succession planning, non-usage of expensive agency staff and a move to GAG pooling.

Healthy reserves and a robust investment policy continue to ensure the trust is in a secure position. Moving forward and in the context of embracing digital technology, the trust will be investing in our IT infrastructure, estates, system development and efficiency in order to allow our education teams to deliver transformative learning for all our pupils. We remain risk averse whilst being open to new opportunities where these will strengthen our position and potentially lead to growth and further efficiencies.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE



REVENUE EXPENDITURE



ESTATES & OPERATIONS



- Access Control upgrades completed.
- Investment in Pelham Primary School and refurbishment of classrooms, corridors and outside areas for EYFS.
- Improvements to the Nursery and reception boundary fencing
- New Sensory Garden completed in Autumn 2024.
- Relocation of Breakfast and After School Clubs.
- New Girls KS2 Toilets.
- New staff toilets.



- Resurfacing
- Forest School (new shelter was installed)
- Remedial work (Lightning protection)



FUTURE PLANS

- Upgrade EYFS areas at Fairford Academy and open up to promote free flow.
- Resurfacing of KS1 playground (Fairford)
- Development of satellite Forest School area for EYFS at Fairford.
- Creation of specialist classrooms to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs at Fairford.
- Completion of classroom refurbishment project at Pelham
- Development of the outdoor areas at both schools.
- Refurbishment of Reception Areas at both schools.



COMPLIANCE

Since August 2023 where the compliance for both schools was around 35% the following Gaps in servicing have been addressed.

- Legionella risk assessments have been undertaken at both schools
- Fire risk assessments have been completed (now annually)
- Asbestos management plan and registers have been put in place.
- Lightening protection testing and inspection carried out.
- Commercial kitchen maintenance and servicing put in place (Pelham).
- Annual inspection of dinning seating equipment put in place (Pelham).
- Re-certification of Pelhams gas supplies following unregistered historic certification.
- Pest control program that meets the needs of the schools.
- Internal compliance checks put in place

NEXT STEPS

- Electrical condition unsatisfactory survey (Fairford) – Along side CIF proposal, a phase of works to begin in October half term to upgrade the school's distribution boards to current regulation and standards
- Emergency lighting annual inspection and testing – arrangements to be finilised for this to be undertaken as there is still some investigative work required at Fairford.
- Fire door release (Fairford) doors to release on fire alarm activation are dependent on a network instruction to do so, this does not meet current regs and standards.
- Annual gantry stage lighting inspection required.

The schools currently sit around 64% compliant this is expected to drop slightly due to SLA tendering process completed in the summer causing lag for services that are overdue, we should be caught up by the end of the year.

It is anticipated that due to the new SLA agreement additional issues including those above will be uncovered as the standard of servicing prior would not be as robust as I am aware of lack of coverage for fire detection, intruder alarm and CCTV along with issues identified around emergency lighting once inspection and testing has been conducted.

There will also be a review of the current SLA for the following ...

➤ Playground equipment inspection

➤ Washroom services

➤ Water dispensers

➤ Ground maintenance

➤ Cleaning contract (review January 25th 2025)

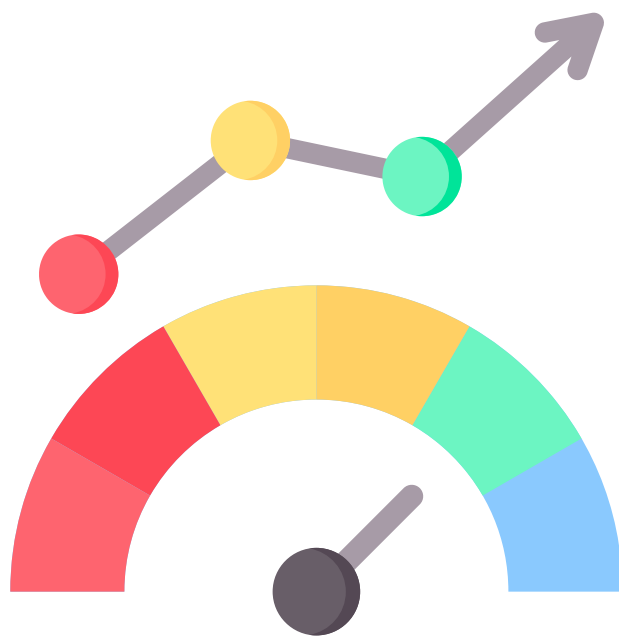
➤ Shutter servicing

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Trust has continued to focus on the three main strategic objectives which have been reported on throughout the year. These targets relate to growth, centralisation and standardisation of systems across the trust, the achievement of an educational offer which reflects the trust ambition for “Excellence Every Day” and financial planning which secures security and sustainability for the future.

Although the trust has not grown in terms of number of schools, growth has been significant in relation to the evolution of the trust and the school improvement outcomes. Pupil performance has shown sustained turnaround at Fairford, moving from a position of a five-year downward trajectory to two years of increased standards. Pelham has maintained strong performance. Growth is also demonstrated in the development of consistent systems and processes which have subsequently impacted on the raising of standards due to the streamlining of management information and the opportunities for collaborative planning and moderation which, in turn, support the raising of standards in the academies.

The Trust has also embedded a clear succession planning and career pathway strategy complimented by the combined annual CPD schedule to upskill all staff in line with our universal training offer alongside opportunities for shadowing, secondments and focused training matched to the Trust Strategic Development Plan. The impact of this has been strong commitment of staff at all levels to the vision and values of the Trust and 100% directly employed staff with nil spend on agency staff. A key success for the Trust has been the ability to recruit, retain and grow staff which has meant that there have been no difficulties in filling posts. The partnerships with Goldsmith University and use of the apprenticeship levy have also contributed to an ever-developing staff resource as teachers are frequently trained within the organisation and support staff are provided with accredited training to allow them to become specialists within their roles.



The Central Team has also evolved during the last year with all back-office functions with the exception of IT now inhouse. The impact of this has been access to consistent HR advice and guidance, improved people management at all leadership levels and robust policy review as well as, through the appointment of an Estates Manager, increased health and safety compliance and access arrangements. The overall premises appearance and maintenance have improved significantly and both schools are inviting, well presented learning environments. The plan is to move towards a directly employed Digital and IT Manager over the next twelve months to support the Trust's participation in the transformative Programme and the digital transformation of Illuminate Minds Trust.

The Trust places great value on partnerships with the local communities it serves and has worked tirelessly to reintroduce and now embed effective Parent Teacher Associations as part of our overall desire to increase our reach and impact. Parental surveys and feedback evidence the improved relationships between home and school and the broadening of our children's overall experiences. The consistent curriculum model which exists across the Trust is also complimented by the underpinning focus on cultural capital. Our ambition to make learning engaging, relatable and shaped to expose pupils to learning beyond their lived experiences is not fully actualised through the extensive programme of workshops, trips and events which take place to offer hands on learning throughout the year linked fully to what is learned in class.



Key Performance Indicators and Trust Data

The below table outlines the performance of the Trust over the period of September 2023 to August 2024, the data on the left showing Pelham Primary School and the right Fairford Academy Barnehurst.

Data Dashboard 2023/24													
School Population Context													
No. of Pupils on roll	416	427	429	433	433	435	570	566	562	559	561	563	
No. of vacancies	30	19	17	13	13	11	56	60	64	67	65	63	
% of placements filled	93.20%	95.70%	96.10%	97.00%	97%	97.50%	91%	90.40%	89.70%	89.20%	89.60%	89.9	
Number of in year admissions	16	11	5	5	9	5	34	4	11	7	13	15	
Number of in year leavers	9	0	3	0	3	0	15	4	7	10	9	13	
Overall Attendance Term 1, Term	95.4	93.70%	94.20%	94.20%	95.00%	94.50%	94.6	93.60%	92.40%	92.60%	93.30%	92.8	
% Students % of students	86%	78.00%	78.00%	83.80%	78.00%	81%	82	75.00%	74.00%	71.90%	76%	78%	
Number of pupils with severe	1	1	0	0	2	1	2	8	5	4	5	3.00%	
% Students % Excluding less	14%	22.00%	21.00%	22.00%	22.00%	19.00%	16.00%	25.70%	26.30%	32.00%	25.00%	22%	
No of students with PA	75	108	94	99	99	85	93	141	148	181	142	120	
Average minutes lost per pupil	28	31	24	14	54	55	89	67	64	67	62	67	
% of pupils with 5+ late arrivals	5.00%	4.90%	3.70%	2.70%	3.40%	4.5%	7.00%	10.00%	10.70%	6.80%	5.80%	7.00%	
% of PEX	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.00%	1.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
No of students who are PEX	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
% of pupils with 1+ FTE	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.20%	0.00%	0.20%	0.20%	0.20%	0.00%	
Average number of days lost	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	1.5	0	
% of population on reduced	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1	2	1.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	
No of pupils on PSPs (behaviour)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	
% of pupils with medical care	7.20%	5.60%	5.80%	6.00%	6.00%	6.50%	1.20%	1.20%	1.40%	1.40%	1.40%	1.40%	
No of pupils with medical care	30	24	25	26	26	28	7	7	8	8	8	8	
% of pupils FSM	16.60%	17.10%	17.30%	17.70%	17.80%	17.60%	36.10%	36.00%	36.40%	35.90%	36.20%	37.20%	
% of pupils on the SEND Register	16.30%	18.00%	18.00%	18.00%	18%	19.80%	22.00%	21.00%	21.00%	21.00%	21%	22.00%	
Number of pupils under SEN	1	1	0	0	8	8	1	4	4	4	6	2	
EHC Plans (count of pupils)	13	15	16	15	16	18	14	14	14	14	14	14	
Number of pupils under CP	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9	1	1	0	2	
Number of pupils on CIN	3	1	0	1	1	1	4	1	0	1	2	2	
Number of pupils accessing	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	4	6	7	
Number of pupils referred to	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	
Number of pupils referred to	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CiC pupils (number)	2	2	2	2	2	2	10	11	8	8	9	9	
% of EAL pupils	42.00%	43.00%	44.20%	43.90%	44.10%	44.10%	31.90%	31.00%	30.60%	30.00%	31.00%	31.00%	
Progress													
% on target - EYFS		43.00%	43.00%	40.00%	40.00%	68.00%		35.00%	35.00%	51.00%	52.00%	54.00%	
% exceeding - EYFS		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		0.00%	0.00%	12.00%	11.00%	0.00%	
% on target - Expected, below, exceeded		74.00%	74.00%	75.00%	75.00%	74.00%		52.00%	52.00%	68.00%	70.00%	68.00%	
% GDS - Reading KS1		6.00%	6.00%	16.00%	16.00%	29.00%		0.00%	0.00%	12.00%	13.00%	14.00%	
% on target - Writing KS1		68.00%	68.00%	72.00%	72.00%	74.00%		48%	48%	69.00%	68.00%	68.00%	
% GDS - Writing Expected, below, exceeded		8.00%	8.00%	10.00%	10.00%	12.00%		0.00%	0.00%	6.00%	7.00%	10.00%	
% on target - Maths KS1		77.00%	77.00%	77.00%	77.00%	83.00%		51.00%	51.00%	72.00%	74.00%	73.00%	
% GDS - Mat Expected, below, exceeded		7.00%	7.00%	12.00%	12.00%	21.00%		0.00%	0.00%	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	
% on target - Expected, below, exceeded		70.00%	70.00%	66.00%	66.00%	70.00%		50.00%	50.00%	66.00%	66.00%	68.00%	
% GDS - Res Expected, below, exceeded		20.00%	20.00%	13.00%	13.00%	13.00%		0.00%	0.00%	13.00%	13.00%	13.00%	
% on target - Expected, below, exceeded		58.00%	58.00%	59.00%	59.00%	59.00%		51.00%	51.00%	62.00%	62.00%	65.00%	
% GDS - Writing Expected, below, exceeded		8.00%	8.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%		0.00%	0.00%	9.00%	9.00%	12.00%	
% on target - Expected, below, exceeded		83.00%	83.00%	83.00%	83.00%	83.00%		46.00%	46.00%	62.00%	64.00%	66.00%	
% GDS - Mat Expected, below, exceeded		19.00%	19.00%	17.00%	17.00%	17.00%		0.00%	0.00%	5.00%	12.00%	13.00%	

KS2 Data

PELHAM						
	2022/2023			2023/2024		
	EXS+	GDS	NATIONAL EXS	EXS+	GDS	NATIONAL EXS
Reading	78%	28%	73%	87%	38%	74%
Writing	72%	17%	71%	62%	3%	72%
Maths	77%	30%	73%	82%	48%	73%
Combined	63%	10%	60%	60%	3%	61%
Fairford						
	2022/2023			2023/2024		
	EXS+	GDS	NATIONAL EXS	EXS+	GDS	NATIONAL EXS
Reading	84%	41%	73%	83%	26%	74%
Writing	61%	8%	71%	78%	12%	72%
Maths	73%	20%	73%	79%	22%	73%
Combined	53%	5%	60%	70%	9%	61%

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed, in particular those relating to academic performance/finances/child welfare/admissions. The Trustees have implemented a number of systems to assess risks that the Academy Trust faces, and have developed policies and procedures to mitigate those risks. Where significant financial risk still remains they have ensured they have adequate insurance cover. The Academy Trust has an effective system of internal financial controls and this is explained in more detail in the Governance Statement.

The principal financial risk faced by the company is that on-going pressure on funding results in a risk that deficits may be experienced. The budgeting and reporting process, including scrutiny by the Trustees of actual financial performance, mitigates the risk. The fall in pupil numbers within the borough is also a key risk which is managed through a robust approach to staffing and process of review prior to any appointment being made to ensure every post is still required and presents the most effective use of funds. Where pupil numbers have fallen, decisions have been made to reduce from 3 to 2 classes in Reception in 2023/24. The position of Fairford Academy Barnehurst in relation to pupil numbers is reviewed annually and any staff appointments take account of a reduction in classes. In order to address falling numbers, the Trust is looking to increase full time nursery provision and has introduced “Stay and Play” sessions to encourage new parents into the school whilst providing a free community engagement programme. Feedback on this is highly positive and moves are underway to introduce this now at Pelham Academy.

The improvements in medical advances have also impacted on numbers of referrals for the Pelham Specialist Resource Provision, but the Trust is in dialogue with the local authority to widen the designation of the resource and to offer an SEMH intervention programme at Fairford Academy Barnehurst, building on the significant expertise and experience of the leadership in SEND and AP education. This approach also reflects the values and culture of the Trust and its desire to promote the unique selling point of inclusion and belonging which sits at the heart of the Trust vision.

The Trust desire for growth is not dictated by necessity but by a clear belief that the expertise and learning evidenced by the Trust indicates the advantages of growth on both the current population and communities but further afield. Another key driver is the focus on reducing risk of losing leaders who have been grown by the Trust to other organisations where no career pathways exist due to the size of the Trust. A larger trust would offer more opportunities and encourage our best staff to remain with us throughout their careers.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The trust's ambition is for growth but growth in the widest sense: developing the trust offer to its current local communities and seeking opportunities to take on new schools through partnerships or mergers, particularly where there are schools which need additional support or transformation. The infrastructure of the trust is very strong, system-led and underpinned by a well understood moral purpose which informs all decision making at every level. The vision is clearly articulated and shapes future strategy.

The strategic plan for the next three years prioritises the following five focus areas:

- 1 Developing financial sustainability and growth.
- 2 Improving our learning environments, resources and facilities.
- 3 Continuing to create a sustainable staffing resource through effective CPD and succession planning.
- 4 Celebrating our successes and marketing our Trust
- 5 Review and improve management information systems to inform strategy, school improvement, pupil outcomes and reporting to stakeholders.

The trust intends to develop and implement a digital transformation programme this year with the aim of creating aligned, digital systems for finance, HR, safeguarding, attendance and progress. At the same time, the trust will continue to streamline on-line, cloud-based finance procedures to reduce unnecessary workload and achieve budgetary management in real time. The strengthening of the back office function with increased staffing to support bringing payroll and HR fully in-house brings the journey of centralisation to its final phase, again positioning the trust to upscale and support growth.

With the trust unique selling point being embedded in a fully inclusive and responsive approach to SEND, the aim of the trust is also to extend its offer to meet the needs of our local communities. This includes the establishment of specialist classes for SEMH and Communication and Interaction needs. The trust has invested heavily in the upskilling of staff to enable them to develop specialist knowledge and it is intended that this is a continuing programme in order to support succession planning and increase capacity over time with the aim of providing outreach support and training following consultation with local schools.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Contributing to our local communities is a key driver for the organisation which is why the trust will continue to expand and extend its offer to local parents for informal social, child-friendly events which encourage parents to view the schools as service-providers for the Barnehurst / Bexleyheath / Crayford / Slade Green area.

Parental engagement and mutually beneficial partnerships with parents, local stakeholders, businesses and the local authority will continue to be high priority for the trust as it seeks to develop deep contextual knowledge and work with stakeholders to find solutions to local pressure points, developing services and provision to match challenges and ensuring the trust remains central to local solutions.



OUR FUTURE AMBITIONS: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Developing financial sustainability and growth

- Introduce a GAG Pooling Policy to increase shared reserves for which schools can bid and are targeted to finance areas of need, estates development and innovation projects.
- Implement ICFP across the Trust to optimise ways of working and improve efficiencies.
- Embed three-year financial planning within individual schools' leadership self-evaluation and school improvement plans.
- Achieve in-year reserves of 2% (minimum) per school in line with new Reserves Policy.
- Review staffing structures and deployment to drive continuous improvement and reduce duplication
- Keep systems and processes under review with the aim of reducing or rationalising expenditure.
- Continue to develop the back office function through succession planning and accredited training, specifically focusing on HR, school business management and compliance.
- Increase success with CIF bids through improved commissioning and becoming more consistent in the recording and reporting of supporting evidence.
- Identify income generation streams and develop a training offer beyond our schools.
- Continue to seek networking opportunities that ensure we remain open to new ideas and values-driven collaboration in our efforts to grow our Trust.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Improving our learning environments, resources and facilities.

- Invest in the school estates to ensure all our schools are bright, welcoming and motivational.
- Develop outside learning areas which provide intervention and alternative educational settings for all children.
- Develop specialist resource provision areas in our schools matched to the highest presenting needs of our cohorts.
- Embed high expectations of classroom presentation and displays in our schools.
- Develop our sporting facilities and enhance the curriculum offer for sport as well as developing potential income generation opportunities and facilities which benefit our local communities.
- Develop resources and facilities to increase access to the performing arts and our extra-curricular offer.
- Establish a clear digital learning strategy underpinned by sound financial planning for the updating of technology across our schools.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Continuing to create a sustainable staffing resource through effective CPD and succession planning.

- Establish partnerships with universities to develop a Schools Direct Teacher Training offer with guaranteed ECT employment.
- Continue to enhance and develop the annual trust training schedule by increasing external partner delivery.
- Develop a Career Pathways Strategy in conjunction with staffing teams across the Trust to enhance succession planning and develop talent at all levels.
- Increase usage of the apprenticeship levy throughout all departments to “grow” our own staff in all areas.
- Build associate networks with other schools and grow the number of schools in the Trust to ensure the leadership capacity within the Trust are retained.
- Create a Training Brochure which offers training for staff internally and externally through both internal expertise and external partners.
- Explore incentives for staff to continue to build on our successful recruitment strategy and improve staff wellbeing.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Celebrating our successes and marketing our Trust

- Develop a Marketing function within the Trust team.
- Increasing our use of social media and other platforms to articulate our strengths and build relationships with our local communities.
- Using parent partnerships and school networks to increase the reach of our impact beyond our schools and into our communities
- Increase admissions into our EYFS provision in the face of falling rolls.
- Encourage our leaders to connect beyond our schools and local area to raise the profile of our Trust and the unique strengths we are keen to share.
- Invest in marketing publications and develop an outward-facing approach to celebrating success beyond our geographical area.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

Review and improve management information systems to inform strategy, school improvement, pupil outcomes and reporting to stakeholders.

- Continue to set high expectations for all and use outcomes and assessment data to set challenging targets for all pupil cohorts.
- Reduce variances in performance for vulnerable groups, particularly pupils with additional needs and those affected by historically low attendance.
- Review and revise reporting to all stakeholders to streamline and improve critical challenge.
- Increase the range of commissioned expertise working within our School Improvement Model.
- Ensure all schools are at least Good and on the pathway to Outstanding.
- Increase leadership confidence in articulating our journey, our successes and our next steps to engender trust and confidence in all stakeholders.
- Embed a new management information system (Arbor) and its interface with existing packages (CPOMS, Senso, Medical Tracker and SIMS).
- Introduce a new financial package to improve and streamline budget management and reporting.

GOVERNANCE



There have been no key changes in the composition of the board of trustees from the viewpoint of the positions held and the responsibilities delegated to trustees and local governors. However, there have been some changes during the year in posts held. An existing trustee was elected as Chair of Trustees on the resignation of Dr Toole and a Vice Chair has now taken up post following recruitment through our partnership with a well respected volunteer /director recruitment consultancy which supports trusts nationally in recruiting experienced and well qualified trustees. The annual skills audit identified minimal skills gaps but these have been now filled and, where there has been turnover, trustees and governors with the same or wider skills have been secured.

A new governance professional has taken up role and is undertaking professional training to enhance their knowledge through CST. The board have experienced some challenges with face to face meetings and have now moved to a combination of hybrid and virtual meetings at Trust Board level and face to face meetings at local governor level. This has enabled the trust to secure the right level of expertise and knowledge without on-site meetings presenting a barrier to recruitment or additional pressure on volunteer's time. The reporting structure and schedule for the governance function was reviewed in 2022/23 and has evolved further with trustees welcoming the immediacy of comparable information through termly data dashboards and KPI documents. The risk register has been streamlined which is also of benefit to both the academies and the governance function in the handling of risk and awareness of priority areas for consideration.

OUR SCHOOLS



FAIRFORD ACADEMY BARNEHURST



Highlights

- Strong, cohesive leadership team who are leading the school towards Outstanding.
- Experienced specialist SEND staff and comprehensive SEND offer.
- Year on year improvement in Maths and Reading, both above national levels.
- Wrap around care provision available for all pupils.
- Strong pupils voice and engagement of pupils in the life of the school.
- Expansion of opportunities for all pupils through well thought out and planned cultural capital experiences and wider learning.

School priorities

- The development of Music, Art and Drama.
- Review the PSHE curriculum and introduce Lyfta.
- Exposure of all pupils to experiences which challenge stereotypes and prejudices and promote the tolerance and community.
- Widening of our extra-curricular offer.
- Improve outcomes for all pupils in Writing.

PELHAM PRIMARY



Highlights

- Best SATs results in the school's history!
- Significant improvements in Reading and strength in Writing.
- Establishment of specialist classes for nurture and SEMH support.
- Successful and well established Forest School.
- Progress made in parental engagement and partnership working.
- Reduction in disadvantage through well planned outdoor learning and enriched curriculum offer.

School priorities

- Increase pupil numbers in EYFS and KS1.
- Further develop the SEND offer with a focus on speech and language.
- Lead on Music development and opportunities for the trust.
- Expand community engagement projects to continue to strengthen relationships.







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