

WISE Academies

Strategic Business Plan 2021-2024

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A Message from the Chair of Trustees



As the current Chair of the Board of Trustees and as one of the founding Members of the Trust in 2011, I am delighted to introduce the latest Strategic Business Plan for WISE Academies.

Over the past ten years we have grown to become one of the most prominent Multi Academy Trusts in the region and I am truly proud to be associated with such a progressive and influential provider of education.

The pace of change in education is clear to see, and that is why I am so passionate about leading an organisation which is so well placed to respond rapidly to meet the emerging needs of the sector. Our dedicated professionals at all levels in the Trust is what makes us effective in the delivery of high quality education for all our pupils.

Every one of our academies has its individual strengths and each one contributes something important to our overall success as a forward thinking Multi Academy Trust. We all benefit from the sense of belonging that is such a key feature in our great family of schools. As someone who has spent my career in education, I have seen for myself how working together with a strong team ethos has resulted in WISE Academies having a shared approach to delivering better education for all. When challenges come along we have proved time and time again the value of being part of a strong organisation which is able to draw upon the wealth of talent that exists amongst its workforce, a supportive central team and dynamic leadership.

WISE Academies is built on a firm foundation of raising standards. Although we have much to be proud of in terms of achieving great academic outcomes, the WISE philosophy goes much deeper than just improving data. Our academies do so much to enrich the lives of our young people and the communities that we serve. Our curriculum focuses heavily on ensuring that children enjoy a broad range of new experiences, building their confidence and equipping them with the skills they need as they move into their next phase of education. In addition we place a great deal of emphasis upon ensuring the safety and well-being of all of our children and families.

There is no doubt that our collaborative approach is one of our greatest strengths, together with our relentless focus on ensuring high quality provision for all of the communities that we serve. Of course our success is also underpinned by strong accountability, good financial management and effective governance. The WISE philosophy (We Inspire Success and Excellence) is clearly reflected throughout the strategic aims set out within this document.

We have come such a long way over the past ten years and this Strategic Business Plan clearly reflects the optimistic and ambitious vision of the Board of Trustees' as WISE Academies moves into its next phase of success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margaret Stephenson'.

Margaret Stephenson

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the 2021 – 2024 Strategic Business Plan for WISE Academies Trust.



WISE Academies is now in its 10th year of operation and has achieved a great deal since its formation. Pupils always come first in WISE. Our mission is to 'Inspire Success and Excellence' in each child so that they have a strong foundation on which to build the rest of their lives, and an ambition and firm belief that they can achieve anything they set as their goal... the sky is the limit! Many of the academies in our Trust serve pupils from highly deprived communities. The significant challenge that this brings should not be underestimated, however, WISE Academies does not accept deprivation as an excuse for low aspiration.

Central to our success is the WISE Workforce. We aim to be an employer of choice – it's our fifth Strategic Aim. We want to attract great staff, invest in professional development, identify and promote talent and use the skills of individuals to make us stronger.

One of the strengths of our Trust is how we work together for the good of each other. We are more than a Trust by name, it's the trusting relationships that exist between staff, pupils parents, governors and our local communities that move us forward. All are encouraged to have their voice heard so that we can listen, self-reflect and ensure the organisation is right at every level. It is my overarching goal that everyone connected with WISE Academies has a positive view of our Trust and will recommend us to others.

We pride ourselves in being at the forefront of education. For many years, we have worked with our strategic partners through our Teaching School to support the school led system, offering initial teacher training, NQT accreditation, mentoring support, as well as delivering training on many and varied areas of education. More recently we have worked closely with the Education Endowment Foundation through our Associate Research School status. This has ensured that our Trust approaches to teaching and learning are grounded in research and our academy curriculums prioritise the importance of knowledge and strategies that support pupils to remember prior learning.

We have achieved a great deal and have a proud track record of school improvement which has been acknowledged many times at a national level, however we are never complacent and are always striving to improve further. Through ongoing self-analysis, review and learning from others, we seek to be one of the best Trusts in the country and be renowned for excellent practice in all we do, first and foremost in the education we provide for our pupils and then for our excellent central services that we provide for our academies.

This Business Plan provides a clear direction for the next three years, setting out our mission statement, our strategic aims and key performance indicators as well as demonstrating the operating models and structures that have been created in order to achieve our aspirational ambitions.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Zoe Carr'.

Zoe Carr, OBE

Executive Summary

WISE Academies is a successful multi-academy trust based in North-East England spread across three Local Authority areas. The Trust was established in March 2011 when two Sunderland based primary schools converted to form a multi-academy trust (MAT), being invited to do so by the Department for Education as highly successful schools. This was the start of one of the first MATs in the area, formed to embrace the greater freedoms afforded by the academies' agenda.



In the 10 years of its operation a lot has happened. The Trust now consists of 12 academies, primary and first schools, including an SEND special school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. The Trust has developed an excellent knowledge of all matters relating to the Academies sector, partly through the CEO being an elected member of the DfE Regional School Commissioner Headteacher Board for over six years, and partly through its varied experiences. WISE Academies has welcomed academies into the Trust that have been well performing; that have experienced difficulties so have joined as sponsored academies and whole Trusts who have needed support.

WISE Academies has an excellent record of school improvement. All schools that have been inspected since joining WISE have achieved at least 'Good' when they have been inspected by Ofsted. A number of academies have moved from a previous inadequate judgement to being well performing schools.

Pupils always come first in WISE Academies. The measure of success for the Trust is not in how many schools are part of the MAT but how well our pupils are performing academically and developing as young people. Because of this, the Trust has grown in stages, only bringing new schools into the MAT when it has been sure that it has enough capacity to support the pupils and staff and fully embed them into the WISE family of schools as equal partners.

Trust Growth

By 2012 WISE had grown to 4 academies. The two schools that joined were struggling schools before academy conversion took place and served communities based in some of the most deprived wards in the country. Within two years both schools were rated good by Ofsted, and subsequent inspections have built on this early success with the Trust's most deprived school achieving an 'Outstanding' Behaviour judgement in its 2018 inspection.

After 2012, the Trust paused its growth in order to build leadership capacity and ensure highly effective systems and structures underpinned all areas of its work. A central team was gradually established in order to allow academy headteachers to focus relentlessly on improving outcomes for pupils while the functions of Finance, Governance, Health and Safety, HR and IT were taken care of by highly skilled experts.

By 2015 the Trust was experiencing great success with three out of four of its academies achieving their highest ever results. WISE Academies had developed a national reputation for excellence and was acknowledged by both Nicky Morgan, the former Secretary of State, in her address at the Academies Show in April 2016 and Lord Nash in his address to the House of Lords in October 2015. It was at this point that WISE Academies' Board of Trustees believed that the Trust was ready to grow again if the opportunity arose.

Between 2016 and 2017, two further schools joined the Trust, a well performing school, and a further sponsored academy which was a small, rural first school. In 2019 this previously inadequate school was inspected and achieved a 'Good' outcome in all areas. Also in this year, one of the original schools in the MAT achieved an 'improving to outstanding' judgement by Ofsted.

The Trust had developed strength and depth of expertise and capacity by this time both within academy leadership and staffing structures and also in the central team. The Board of Trustees determined that the Trust was in a very strong position and growth opportunities should still be sought if they presented themselves. In 2018, a significant growth opportunity materialized, and after a thorough analysis of risk through the due diligence process, a further 8 academies joined the Trust. These consisted of 2 convertor academies and 6 sponsored academies including the re-brokerage of a Trust with 3 schools.

At this point WISE Academies paused its growth again as its key priority was to ensure that all new schools in the MAT felt supported and were benefiting from being part of the MAT.

The increased size of the Trust meant re-organisation was necessary in order to maintain oversight so it could continue to understand the needs and challenges of its schools and therefore provide agile support. The Regional Hub Structure was established and two Regional Hub Leaders were appointed. One of the great benefits of becoming a mid-sized Trust was that WISE Academies became eligible to receive automatic Schools Condition Allocation which is used to strategically improve Trust academies so that buildings are of a high standard and pupils have learning environments that are fit for modern day education.

Central Team

Trust academies are well supported by an extensive, highly skilled central support team that has grown over time and now covers every area of operation, from Finance to Health and Safety, Governance to HR, IT to Estates Management. This enables our Headteachers and senior leaders, our education experts, to focus on the needs of pupils, their parents and their communities. Never has this support been more vital than during the COVID – 19 pandemic where the Trust has worked together to navigate through the many and complex challenges that the pandemic has brought.

WISE Academies maintains a strong financial position and has a national reputation for highly effective financial management and operational systems. Senior staff have delivered many presentations on behalf of the Department for Education and the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The Trust has been featured in Government sector guidance.

Lessons Learnt

WISE Academies is a self-reflective organisation - always seeking internal and external feedback and looking to improve further as it pursues its goal of 'Inspiring Success and Excellence'. There have been many lessons learnt over the last 10 years and much experience gained. The Trust recognises that each school who joins is individual and has its own unique place within its own community. The Trust respects what has gone before and recognises that each school brings its own strengths that all can learn from and this influences and refines the Trust model of operation.

The importance of developing positive relationships between all stakeholders is paramount at a local and regional level. The Trust has seen the huge benefits of working strategically with external partners who have a shared interest in education such as Local Authorities, Local Councillors and MPs as well as the Department for Education, to ensure that the actions that are taken by the Trust fit into wider strategic planning priorities for the local areas that it serves. A great example of this has been working with one Local Authority to support the reorganisation of education in the area to ensure that all schools have enough pupils and can thrive. This has resulted in significant investment into one of our primary schools and a remodelled provision that the pupils and community can be proud of.

Future Plans

WISE Academies is now, once again, in a strong position to grow as all of the schools who joined the MAT in 2018 are embedded in the Trust, performing well and are contributing positively to development of the MAT.

There are already many MATs in existence, with more being established going forward. Some are large national trusts whilst some others are just starting out on their journey. However, few MATs will have the same level of experience, the established systems and the successful track record of WISE Academies. In the coming years, when the time is right, we hope more schools will join the WISE family so collectively we can grow in strength and provide the education that our pupils and communities deserve.

A Trust with a National Reputation

WISE Academies is proud to have received praise for its achievements at a National level. Below are some statements that have been said about the Trust:

"I firmly believe that becoming an academy can bring enormous benefits to schools and their pupils. And that's often about coming together as a trust. Multi-Academy Trusts are powerful vehicles for improving schools – by sharing expertise, working collaboratively, driving improvements. This is something we want to see more of, because it repeatedly shows that it can improve outcomes for pupils. Take the WISE Academies in the North East, which has taken on nine sponsored academies since 2012, all of which had serious performance concerns. Since then every single school inspected has been judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted."

Rt. Hon. Damian Hinds, Secretary of State for Education, April 2019 - Academies Show

"At its best, the MAT model has the potential to be the most powerful vehicle for improving schools quickly. Great examples of rapid school improvement here in the North include Zoe Carr of WISE Academies. In Zoe's case, Bexhill Academy's primary pupil outcomes have increased year on year over the last four years, from 22 percentage points below the national average to 11 percentage points above the national average. I am challenging all the RSCs to give me many more examples like this." Lord Agnew concluded his speech by saying, "By working together we can achieve so much more. And ultimately, this helps every young person to realise their full potential."

Lord Theodore Agnew, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System –
North Region Academies Conference - September 2017



"In my role as national schools commissioner, I am seeing more and more examples of this working in practice. The very best practice enables schools to thrive in a long-term, sustainable and strategic way. The improvement in outcomes for disadvantaged learners has to be central to this, and the trusts that succeed do so by building the strategy across all of their schools. A strong example that I have seen recently on a visit to the North regional schools commissioner region was Bexhill Academy in Sunderland, part of WISE Academies. In an area of socio-economic disadvantage, in 2014 the school's pupil outcomes at key stage 2 were 22 percentage points below national average. By 2016 outcomes had improved to the extent that Bexhill was 11 percentage points above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics combined for all pupils.

Part of this continuous improvement has been as a result of stronger leadership and governance. At Bexhill, both the chair and CEO joined the local academy board to provide stronger oversight and challenge. The trust also appointed a strong principal, and the CEO supported the trust's teaching practice through introducing peer-to-peer support from other leaders in the trust. Sharing teaching and leadership capacity between schools where staff were deployed to work in more than one was also a factor in seeing outcomes improve quickly, as the modelling of trust practice became embedded in the work of the school.

Sir David Carter, National School Commissioner, following a visit to Bexhill Academy, November 2017

"Now look at chains like WISE Academies Trust in Sunderland. It was established by two converter primaries in 2011 and became a sponsor in 2012. It now comprises a number of schools in the North East operating in areas of high deprivation but refusing to accept disadvantage as an excuse for low aspiration. The Trust focuses on changing mind sets, core skills and a constant approach to assessment for learning in every classroom. And in two of its sponsored schools it has seen huge jumps, as much as 25% in the percentage of students achieving Level 4 in reading, writing and maths, with one school achieving 77% and another 91%. It's no wonder that WISE stands for 'We Inspire Success and Excellence'."

Rt. Hon. Nicky Morgan, Secretary of State for Education, April 2016 - The Academies' Show

"I am writing to congratulate you, your staff and your pupils for the progress your children are making. Your school's results, as published on 10 December, show that you are amongst the 100 top performing schools in terms of the progress your pupils make between key stage 1 and the end of key stage 2. We want to ensure that every child progresses to the very best of their ability in reading, writing and mathematics so that they have the fluency in these subjects to enable them to succeed at secondary school and beyond. Your school is clearly putting great effort into achieving this. Thank you for your work in continuing the drive towards high standards of educational achievement, and congratulations again to you and your staff for your hard work and professionalism."

Nick Gibb MP, Letter to Hasting Hill Academy, December 2015

"Brilliant sponsors are transforming schools up and down the country - sponsors like WISE Academies Trust in Sunderland. The trust was formed four years ago by two strong primary schools. Two failing primary schools quickly followed and the Trust is seeing huge success. Both previously struggling schools are now judged Good by Ofsted and exam results have shot up. In the year before it became an academy just 53% of children at Hasting Hill Academy achieved the expected level in their Key Stage 2 tests. This year the trust reports that 91% of pupils met the level 4 standard."

Lord Nash, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, October 2015

Mission Statement

WE are a family of schools who exist to **INSPIRE** each pupil to believe in themselves so they experience great **SUCCESS** through our commitment to **EXCELLENCE**. Our philosophy is one of boundless aspiration...the sky is the limit.



Our Commitment

We are one team who, together, all commit to achieving our mission. Because our mission is our collective responsibility, we will work collaboratively to support any part of our family who needs help and be quick to celebrate each other's successes.

For WISE Pupils...

- We foster a love of learning and strive for all pupils to be happy and contented.
- We set the highest possible standards for each pupil and work tirelessly to support each child to achieve their full potential.
- We understand and value each pupil, recognising their unique potential and promoting their individual talents and interests so that they enjoy and achieve success in many different ways.
- We support the health and well-being of every pupil so they grow as well-rounded, responsible individuals.
- We ensure that every pupil is proficient in communication, reading, writing and mathematics and have a strong foundation on which to build future learning.

- We ensure that pupils have broadened horizons through providing them with a rich and varied curriculum so that they know the possibilities that are open to them in later life.
- We give pupils memorable childhood experiences, which will stay with them for the rest of their lives.
- We equip each pupil with the skills they need to live in an ever-evolving, technological world.
- We provide learning environments that adhere to the highest standards of safety; that are clean, organised and stimulating.

As a WISE Team...

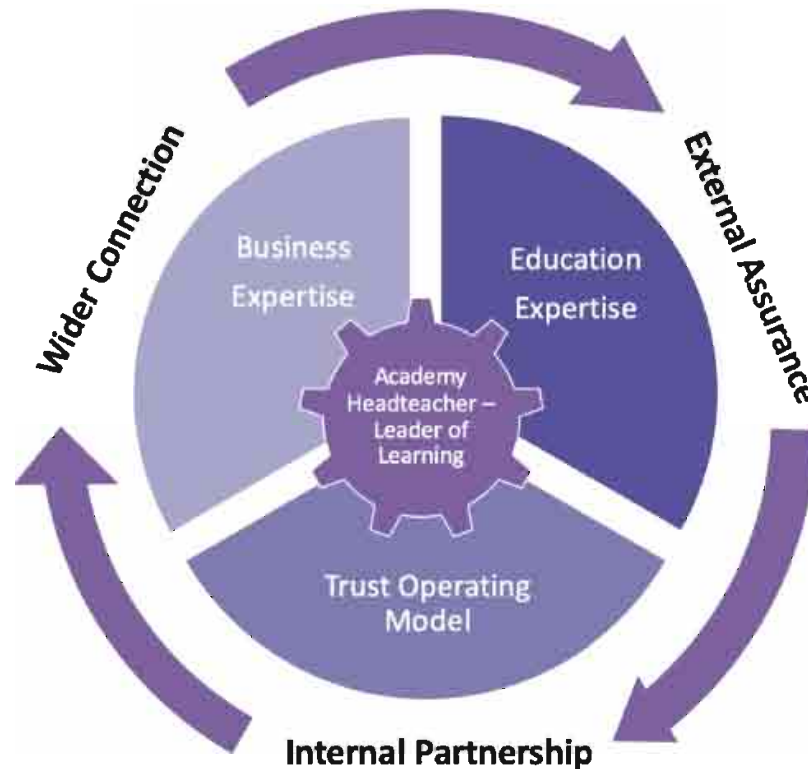
- We act with honesty, integrity and fairness in everything we do.
- We have positive, can do attitudes and be 100% committed to every pupil.
- We all carry out our roles to the highest of standards, with attention to detail.
- We act as role models to our pupils demonstrating excellence in all we do.
- We act with a sense of urgency to address any areas that do not contribute positively to the achievement of our mission.
- We value the contribution of each part of the team.
- We invest in our team in order to support their development and equip them to achieve excellence.
- We commit to on-going self-evaluation to drive us forward.
- We hold each other accountable to the achievement of our mission.
- We have high expectations and take collective responsibility for continuous improvement.

For the WISE Community...

- We treat all stakeholders with understanding and respect and always listen to feedback in order to help us to continually improve.
- We seek to be at the heart of our communities, liaising with families, local services and business for the good of our pupils.
- We are outward facing and seek to find excellence through external partnerships in order to support us in achieving our mission.
- We respect the heritage of our schools and their unique place in their unique place in their communities.
- We seeks to connect our pupils to the world of work both within their community and wider afield.

Operating Model: The WISE Way

The aim of WISE Academies is to empower headteachers to be leaders of learning, to free them to focus on the core purpose of the job - achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils, ensuring high quality teaching across the academy and delivering a well-constructed, stimulating curriculum. Other essential areas are taken care of by the highly skilled Central Team, each experienced and qualified in their own specific area of expertise.



There are some practices that are the same within the Trust which makes up the Trust Operating Model, because it makes sense to do so, and there are also unique characteristics in our schools that are driven by the passion of the leaders in each school. Often these approaches become part of our shared practice as others see how effectively they are working. Our curriculum models have been developed by our senior staff who are our education experts including Headteachers, Curriculum Leaders, Specialist Leaders of Education and our Directors of Teaching and Learning who specialise in Early Years, Mathematics, English and Curriculum development. We strive to ensure all of our approaches are based in educational research. We are well placed to achieve this through the work of our Associate Research School. Our approach is one of collaboration and joint ownership as we believe that is the most effective way of ensuring the successful implementation of the curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning.

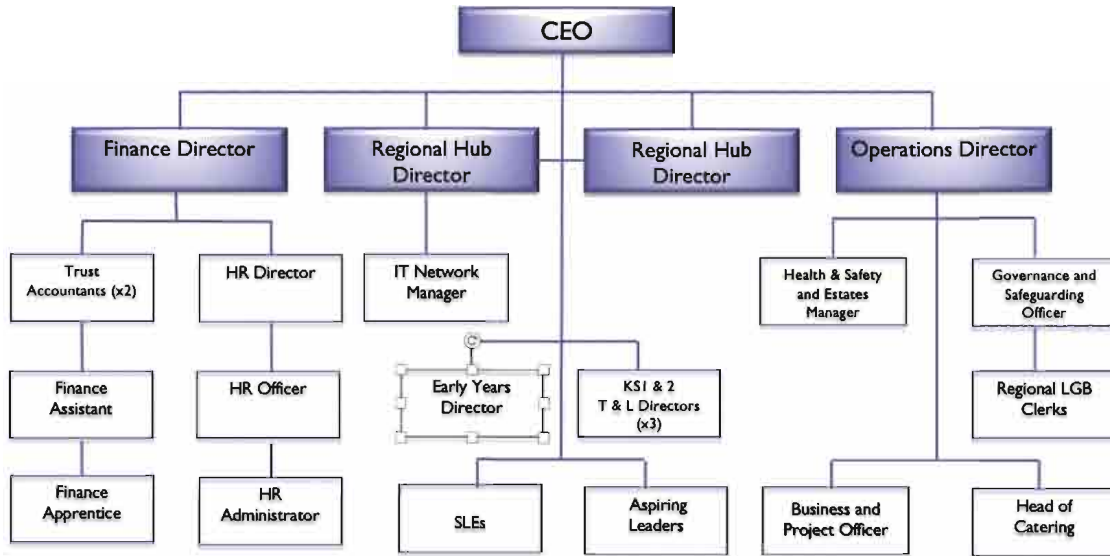
The idea of partnership is important to us and is central to the success of our MAT. We know that we can learn from each other's successes. The way we work means that we can use the talent that exists within our organisation in a creative way to allow all of our academies to move forward.

A key benefit of our MAT is that staff can quality assure the work of others, many using their experience as Ofsted inspectors, Local Authority Moderators, members of Maths Hubs and STEM Centres to provide professional support and challenge. Staff working together across the Trust provides parity in judgements and professional development for those involved. WISE Academies operates a system of peer review which gives leaders the opportunity to work with professionals from across the organisation to review an area of the school's work that the academy leader has identified. We also value external review as we always want to ensure that our own evaluation is accurate. We encourage working more widely with schools outside of the Trust, for example through Teaching School networks, to ensure that all academies continue to learn from outstanding practice elsewhere in the sector and maintain positive working relationships with other local schools.

WISE has a well-established and successful Central Team who ensure that our academies have access to efficient and responsive services which are led by staff who have a collective responsibility to successfully manage all Trust schools. It is clear that, alongside the freedoms to innovate that are afforded to the Academy Trust, there also comes a higher level of legal and financial accountability. WISE Academies has put in place a framework to ensure compliance with these expectations and this is supported by a nucleus of central support services including Finance, Health & Safety, Governance, HR, IT, Estate Management, Catering Provision.

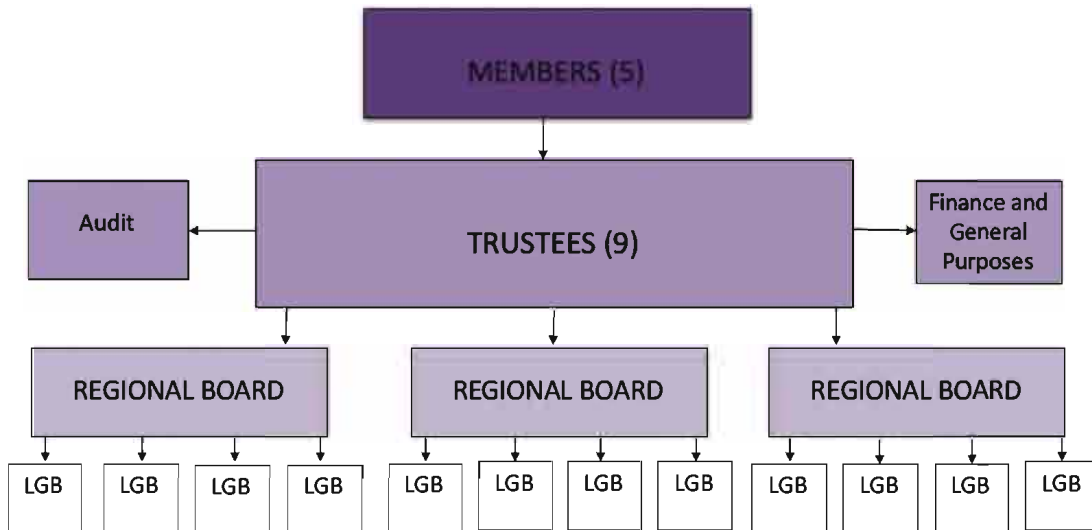
External oversight, both support and challenge, is provided across all levels of the organisation – to the CEO from the Board of Trustees, to the Regional Hub Leaders by the CEO and Regional Hub Boards, to the Headteacher by the Regional Hub Leaders and Local Governing Body, to senior leaders and staff by the Headteacher. The strong accountability that runs through the Trust ensures that progress is rapid where it needs to be and all continue to move forward and thrive.

Central Team Structure



Governance Structure

WISE Academies has a multi-layered governance structure as set out in its Articles of Association and Schemes of Delegation. This includes a Local Governing Body (LGB) in each academy; Regional Boards and a Board of Trustees (Directors) who are responsible for running the academies and monitoring standards and finances.



Trust Company Members

WISE Academies is a not for profit organisation and enjoys charitable status. It has five Company Members, all of whom have a broad range of skills and experiences including business, education, legal and church.

The Members within the Company have limited involvement in the operation of the academies and they devolve the power to run the academies to the Board of Trustees (also known as Directors). Company Members are, however, an essential part of the accountability structure of the Trust and, with this in mind, the Trust has three Non-Executive Members who do not serve on the Board of Trustees.

The members are sometimes described as being akin to the shareholders of a company. They have the ability to appoint/remove some of the Trustees and the right to amend the trust's articles of association. Members are ultimately accountable for signing off the financial statements and annual report. Trustees are answerable to the Members.

Board of Trustees

The Trustees (Directors) receive delegated powers from the Company Members to take decisions concerning the academies within the Trust. This is where high level strategic decisions are taken (such as corporate policies, Trust budget setting and leadership group appointments).

The membership of the Board of Trustees is reflective of the skills necessary to run a successful Multi-Academy Trust and includes representatives with a business background, accountancy, Health & Safety, corporate leadership, estates and education expertise.

Regional Boards

As part of the governance structure of the expanded MAT, and to take account of the increased geographical spread of the Trust, it has been decided by Trustees to establish Regional Hub Boards. These Regional Hub Boards are responsible for the oversight of the academies in their hub. Each Board has a linked Trustee who gains insights into the academies within the hub and can communicate their needs to the Board of Trustees. The Regional Hub Boards are the primary mechanism for holding Regional Hub Leaders to account for the performance of academies in their area of responsibility.

Local Governing Body (LGB)

Each Academy has its own Local Governing Body with persons appointed or elected to serve as members. The LGB has representation of parents, staff and the community. Trustees can also appoint a number of local governors. The LGB is an important part of the Trust governance structure as it can focus solely on the performance of the academy and the community that it serves.

The Trust Scheme of Delegation sets out clearly where responsibilities lie within the governance structure.

Governance Support

One of the key central services provided by WISE Academies is Governor Support which is staffed by governance professionals with decades of experiences in the field of governor support and training.

Communication

We believe that accountability and transparency is key to effective governance and this is supported by a clear communication strategy. Trustees may attend LGB meetings and they receive minutes of LGB meetings to ensure that they are aware of the key issues at each of the academies. Local Governing Bodies receive a summary of actions and discussion points from Trustee meetings. The CEO, Regional Hub Leads and WISE Governance Services act as a conduit to ensure that information flows between Trustees, Regional Boards and Local Governing Bodies.



WISE Strategic Aims

1. Provide an excellent standard of education for all pupils.
2. Ensure that Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural education underpins all activities, so pupils appreciate the importance of being well-rounded, responsible individuals.
3. Deliver robust financial management.
4. Ensure governance is highly effective and fit for purpose.
5. Be an employer of choice.
6. Deliver high quality estate management.
7. Ensure a well co-ordinated, strategic approach to IT.
8. Grow to secure sustainability, achieve greater efficiencies and support schools in need.
9. Ensure the Trust has an excellent reputation.



Key Performance Indicators



1) Provide an excellent standard of education for all pupils.

- All academies are rated at least good by Ofsted.
- Teaching is 100% good or better.
- Academy curriculums are well sequenced, cohesive and identify how the aims of the National Curriculum are being delivered in each subject.
- Average Trust KS2 outcomes at the expected standard are above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Average Trust Year 1 Phonics scores are above national average.
- Trust value added progress measures from KS1 to KS2 for reading, writing and mathematics are above average.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium progress at least as well as those who are not eligible.
- Pupils catch up from Covid - 19 related lost learning swiftly, across all ages ranges to pre-pandemic attainment.

2) Ensure that Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural education underpins all activities, so pupils appreciate the importance of being well-rounded, responsible individuals.

- Personal Development is judged 'Good' or better by Ofsted.
- Academy pupil attendance is at or above the national for similarly deprived schools.
- Trust persistent absence is below national average.
- Pupils enjoy school as demonstrated by an over 90% positive response on pupil questionnaires.
- Parents are satisfied with the quality of education provided demonstrated by an over 90% positive response on questionnaires.
- Pupils' mental health and wellbeing is prioritised further in response to the Covid - 19 pandemic as demonstrated by the achievement of mental health awards in all academies across the Trust.

3) Deliver robust financial management.

- The Trust remains a going concern.
- Reserves policy is maintained to ensure all liabilities can be met.
- External and internal audit reports identify no significant issues.
- Positive cash flows are maintained at all times.
- Adherence to all MAT financial regulations, with submissions made within prescribed timescales.
- Effective procurement ensures value for money.

4) Ensure governance is highly effective and fit for purpose.

- Compliance systems give assurance to the Board of Directors that the Trust is meeting its statutory and legal responsibilities.
- Governors at all levels have an appropriate skill set in order to fulfil their governance role as demonstrated by annual self-evaluation.
- The scheme of delegation is published on the Trust website and it clearly identifies the role of all those responsible for governance.
- Governors maintain effective oversight and management of risk in all areas of the Trust's operation.

5) Be an employer of choice.

- The Trust prioritises the health and wellbeing of its workforce as demonstrated through the achievement of the Better Health at Work award.
- The Trust is a popular employer as demonstrated by the number of applicants for roles.
- At least 95% of staff, who have been part of the Trust for over 18 months, enjoy working for WISE academies and would recommend the Trust as a good place to work.
- At least 95% of staff agree that they are effectively trained to carry out their role.

- The staff absence rate is below the national sector average for those employees who have worked for the Trust for over 18 months.

6) Deliver high quality estate management.

- Estate Strategy identifies key priorities for estate improvement and capital investment.
- Schools Condition Allocation is consistent with the Trust's criteria for use and the terms and conditions of the grant.
- All academy sites are compliant and safe.
- Trust online platform is utilised effectively for managing all aspects of statutory compliance.

7) Ensure a well co-ordinated, strategic approach to IT.

- The Trust IT vision is articulated clearly in an IT strategy and is understood by key stakeholders.
- Financial resource is committed to the delivery of the IT Strategy.
- IT systems and procedures are compliant with all statutory requirements as demonstrated through external assurance.
- IT operating systems are agile and facilitate the smooth running of the Trust to ensure business continuity.
- IT is used effectively to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- At least 80% of pupils participate in the Trust's remote learning offer when being educated at home.

8) Grow to secure sustainability, achieve greater efficiencies and support schools in need.

- Grow existing hubs and establish a fourth regional hub consisting of primary academies.
- A robust due diligence process ensures that the risks associated with potential growth are clearly understood and used to inform decision making.
- Expansion is manageable and does not jeopardise existing Trust academies.
- The Trust central team is fit for purpose and delivers high quality services to support all academies.
- The Executive Team maintain effective oversight of the Trust, know each academy well and are able to deploy resources effectively to manage risk.

9) Ensure the Trust has an excellent reputation.

- Staff engage in local, regional and national events to promote the work of the Trust.
- The Trust is an integral part of the school-to-school led system.
- All external communication is of high quality and in line with the Trust's Communication Strategy.
- Effectively promote the Trust online and in the media.
- Grow the number of staff designated as Leaders of Education or Ofsted inspectors.

