



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MODEL



PONTEFRACT
ACADEMIES TRUST

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As an educational Trust, we work as a group of schools in collaboration as one entity to improve and maintain high educational standards across the group. Our trust has a single legal and moral purpose: to advance education for the public benefit.

The formal collaboration is the Trust operating model of school improvement. All schools operate within a seven strand operating model. This formal framework within which our schools work allows formal challenge and support. The model is rooted in the five guiding principles of the Trust. These principles are:

- Achievement without excuses
- Excellence as standard
- Pupils come first
- Our people matter
- Stronger as one

Our guiding principles include a strong focus on our culture and the importance of executing our systems and processes with precision. This culture and consistency is reflected below.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels in our Trust is critical in our drive to run great schools. It is critical to our schools that staff understand our values, mission and overall strategy. Leaders across the Trust are highly visible and important in carrying the culture and role modelling the Trust values, so that priorities align and do not conflict. Central leaders work hard to ensure school leaders can focus on the improvement of teaching and learning. Trust leaders are focused on delivering a high quality of education so that our pupils leave schools with strong outcomes. This has meant investment in people and systems centrally and at local school level. Leadership in the Trust includes:

- Investment in a trust school improvement team, including primary and secondary executive leaders and subject specialists
- Centralised services provided in finance, human resources, data, governance and estates
- Aligned systems and structures providing a framework for collaboration and joint improvement thinking
- Professional learning and development for leaders, including members of School Performance Review Boards
- Clear lines of performance assessment and accountability frameworks that run from the Board of Trustees through to Executive Leaders, Heads of Schools and School Performance Review Boards
- Aligned frameworks and structures for Trust strategic planning, school improvement planning, and school self evaluation

ACHIEVEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

The Achievement and Improvement Cycle is the Trust's quality assurance and assessment process. This a standardised model described by Ofsted as the 'golden thread of accountability' across the Trust and its schools. The Achievement and Improvement Cycle allows the Trust and schools to sharply focus on improvements not least the deficits in the academic, social and personal development of our pupils. Aspirational targets are set for pupils and progress is tracked forensically so staff in schools can then remove any barriers that are hindering progress. Our schools follow a common curriculum, our summative assessment and internal data collection processes are fully aligned.

- Common primary and secondary assessment strategy
- Standardised accountability and dashboard meetings with formalised reporting
- Standardised quality assurance activities Trust-wide including; pupil focus groups, lesson observations and visits, subject deep dives, book scrutiny and themed learning walks
- Executive led and external school reviews
- In-house Ofsted training for all leaders and staff

TEACHING AND LEARNING

We understand how great teaching can unlock doors and raise aspirations for the pupils in our care. We want every pupil to thrive in a school environment where barriers to learning are systematically removed and potential is exceeded, regardless of starting points. To ensure a consistent teaching approach for our pupils, but one in which individual flair and creativity are not stifled, we use a bespoke teaching rubric which incorporates our PLACES framework (progress, learning, assessment for learning, core skills, employability skills and, stretch and challenge). This framework ensures that we relentlessly focus on the fundamental pedagogy that makes a difference and keeps the individual pupils at the heart of our daily practice. It is used as a focal point for all that we do in the classroom and keeps our teachers focused on our moral purpose; to develop successful pupils who are literate, numerate and prepared for their next steps in life with the correct knowledge, qualifications and skills.

- A relentless focus on pupils learning and remembering more over time
- The most effective teaching strategies identified within the framework are consistently shared and applied
- The PLACES framework is at the heart of our teaching rubric which creates a solid framework for excellent practice
- Regular training is provided to all staff on the implementation and impact of the framework
- It is central to our teaching practice and our CPD programmes
- Provides the baseline for our curriculum design and is mirrored and implemented from early years to Key Stage 4



CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

As a locality based education Trust a large proportion of our pupils join our schools in the early years and follow their education journey through to 16. The uniqueness of the Trust's geographical make up allows us to work across phases to ensure seamless transition. The curriculum plans across the Trust follow the National Curriculum and we aim to ensure pupils have strong knowledge and skills acquisition. This focus on strong knowledge retention across a broad range of subjects will allow them to move on to the next phase of their education with confidence.

- Six strand curriculum with common intent: 1. knowledge acquisition, 2. skills acquisition, 3. character/wider development, 4. co-curricular, 5. reading and literacy 6. assessment.
- Curriculum plans and resources are standardised to aid robust common delivery and staff work load
- Reading strategy common to all schools and focus on the systematic teaching of phonics.
- Schemes of work standardised along with lesson resources
- Joint experience and deeper learning days
- Collaborative curriculum construction from staff across the Trust
- Directors of subjects work closely with both phases of education
- Extensive transition activities
- The development of cultural capital and pupil character through the primary school's '50 things you will do before you leave' strategy
- A primary curriculum centred around a 'literary canon' and six themes
- Seamless mapping of knowledge and skills in the primary to secondary transition process
- Knowledge and skills are cross fertilised between subjects to immerse pupils in learning and develop mastery and fluency
- A highly inclusive curriculum that develops pupils of all abilities including those with SEND

PEOPLE

We recognise that in order to get the best from our staff we have to invest in them. Providing staff the tools to do their jobs well includes ensuring that they have access to high quality professional learning. Weekly sessions take place across all schools. This is an opportunity for staff to engage in new developments, but to share and reflect on current practice and embed Trust-wide initiatives.

- Trust-wide newly/recently qualified teacher programme
- Subject specific professional development
- Strategic partner of teaching school alliance to develop specialist leaders in education
- Trust wide training and developments on teaching and learning, behaviour, inclusion, SEND and latest Ofsted framework
- Teaching and learning group ambassadors who deliver training across primary and secondary phases

INCLUSION

As a Trust we are ambitious for all our pupils. We are determined that this ambition is modelled daily, so that all pupils, including those with SEND receive a high quality educational experience. Our curriculum plans and staff look at pupils' needs, starting points and their aspirations for the future. We believe all pupils should have access to a broad curricular experience.

- Inclusion has a high profile and status in all schools, with a senior leader having designated overall responsibility for inclusion
- Specialist SENCOs in all primary schools
- Specialist SENCOs and assistant SENCOs in all secondary schools
- Trust-wide network meetings formally collaborate, share practice and align processes regular SEND reviews to evaluate and further improve practice
- Investment in educational psychologists and speech and language therapists
- Additional and specialist curriculum support, including literacy support pathways and nurture provision

COMPASSIONATE RIGOUR

We are passionate about ensuring we exhaust all strategies so our pupils exceed their potential, this means being compassionate in every aspect of our approach and leaving nothing to chance. In practice, this means not lowering the bar and having high expectations of everyone. Research tells us the biggest barrier to learning in schools is poor behaviour, particularly low level disruption in lessons. It almost goes without saying that attendance is paramount to success and a key focus for our schools.

- Clean line of sight from the primary BFL policy to secondary common language
- Consistency with implementation
- Non-teaching pastoral staff in pace
- A praise and rewards culture
- A mantra of consistency; firm and fair and a personalised approach when necessary
- Specialist attendance staff
- Forensic daily tracking and intervention of attendance
- Home visits
- Walking bus initiative
- Parental engagement and support
- Pupil support
- Common routines

