

Sussex Learning Trust Strategic Improvement Plan 2024 - 27

Our Mission		Our Vision		Our Values (related Nolan principle)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote and support the best interests of children in the communities we serve To advance education for the public benefit To exercise civic duties and responsibilities for the wider good of the local community 		Sussex Learning Trust academies work collaboratively to provide 'world class' formational and transformational opportunities helping our young people realise their potential and equipping them in their journey towards personal fulfilment and responsible citizenship .		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect (objectivity, selflessness) Integrity (objectivity, accountability, honesty) Resilience & Perseverance (leadership) Kindness (selflessness, openness) Confidence (Leadership) Optimism (leadership) 	
Strategic aims for sustainable improvement					
1 Vision, values, strategy and culture	2 People, learning and capacity	3 Assessment, curriculum and pedagogy	4 Quality Assurance and accountability	5 A sustainable learning organisation	
1.1 An ambitious vision underpinned by shared values and a high-trust culture	2.1 An effective approach to recruiting, developing and retaining high quality staff	3.1 Shared age related expectations and a consistent approach to assessment	4.1 Fit for purpose collection, analysis and reporting of school and group-wide performance data	5.1 Financial sustainability demonstrated in balanced budgets and demonstrable VFM in relation to the vision & values	
1.2 A coherent but responsive strategy with clarity on core team and school-based roles	2.2 Systems to identify, develop and deploy leadership expertise to address school improvement needs	3.2 Shared principles for a curriculum which aligns with the wider vision	4.2 Use quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate school performance and to inform next steps	5.2 Estates/Premises provide excellent environments to complement the ambitious aspirations for learners	
1.3 Alignment around shared practices which support improvement	2.3 Systematic ways of moving knowledge and evidence around, within and between schools	3.3 Develop shared principles for teaching, learning and the success of learners	4.3 Appropriate challenge and support for member academies	5.3 Growth - collaborative and collegiate work provide opportunities and best value resource deployment	

The board of Trustees have been fundamental to the formulation of this strategy and are confident that it aligns with the trust’s charitable objects, covers all pillars of trust quality and sets out its aspirations for growth over time. Trustee [committees](#), link roles and board

meetings will:

- Ensure that the trust is performing effectively in all areas in accordance with its vision, strategic aims and key performance indicators
- Hold the CEO and Central team to account for the educational performance of the Trust and its pupils
- Oversee the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

The Trustees will ensure that the trust is performing effectively against each of the strategic aims via following the committees and link roles:

1 Vision, values, strategy and culture	2 People, learning and capacity	3 Assessment, curriculum and pedagogy	4 Quality Assurance and accountability	5 A sustainable learning organisation
People and Culture Group Designated Lead Trustee Roles: Kath Russ (EDI)	People and Culture Group Designated Lead Trustee Roles: Kath Russ (EDI) Rich Stevens (safeguarding)	Designated Lead Trustee Roles: Kath Russ (EDI) Nicola Waters (QA) Rich Stevens (safeguarding)	Designated Lead Trustee Roles: Nicola Waters (QA) Rich Stevens (safeguarding)	Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Capital & Growth Group Designated Lead Trustee Roles: Rich Stevens (H&S)

Key Trust-wide performance indicators:

Academies remain oversubscribed with ‘first-choice’ learners.

The Quality of Education is rated as at least ‘good’ across all academies with the aim to be ‘Outstanding’

Pupil/students outcomes show trends towards top 5% performance indicators across all (most) academies, especially for disadvantaged learners.

Global Strategic Priority - Create a better environment for our pupils by improving biodiversity, reducing air pollution and creating environmentally sustainable working practices.

1 Vision, values, strategy and culture

Strategic area (what we are aiming for)	Current priorities (what we need to develop)	Implementation		Key performance indicators (success criteria and monitoring date)
		Activities (how we are going to do it and target date)	Lead	
a) A clear brand identity in the local, and wider, community	To more clearly define our Trust-wide vision and values to all stakeholders. A clearer articulation of the 'SLT dividend' - "stronger together...."	Communications strategy , November 2024		See Communications strategy KPIs
b) An ambitious vision underpinned by shared values and a high-trust culture	To define our Trust-wide vision and values in a crystal clear way across member academies. To have a clearer articulation of the 'SLT dividend' - "this is how we are stronger together...." for Trust staff	CPD on cultural development based on the principles of Radical Candour (caring personally and direct feedback). Autumn 2024 and on-going		SD
		Implementation of People and Culture Committee that proactively monitors cultural buy-in. January 2025 and then termly.		JK
		Regular communication from the CEO/DCEO and Central team to staff and pupils. Termly assemblies and attendance at staff meetings and CPD sessions.		JM
		Regular communication from the CEO/DCEO, Central team and Trustees to Local Governing Bodies. Termly meeting attendance.		JM SD
c) A coherent and responsive strategy with clarity on core team and school-based roles	To develop the Trust Central team, in response to recent growth, in order to deliver a world class central function. To formalise an SLT approach to standardised or aligned practice	To enhance clarity of the role of the Central team by developing SLT staff intranet/website based on APC guidance . Devise partnership agreements and a scheme of delegation for each central service - Launch - January 2025. Further develop - Spring and Summer 2025. Central team function-led - 'the SLT way' Central team organogram with matrix management clearly defined.		SD
		An evidence-informed approach to school improvement - AOAP documents are working strategic documents. December 2024		JM JK
d) Alignment around shared practices which support improvement	To refine the school improvement strategy and success criteria to more clearly evaluate and demonstrate the performance of schools that are already part of the trust, as well as those that join.	· SLT criteria for self-evaluation to categorise each academy and to identify development priorities for each academy. Summer 2025		SD/JM
				Termly evaluations from leaders demonstrate positive feedback on clarity, efficiency and effectiveness of Central services Central and school-based staff can demonstrate the impact of being part of SLT on school effectiveness through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly academy ADP and SED reviews • Increased effectiveness evidenced by progress against SLT and AOAP categorisation. On-going

2 People, learning and capacity				
Strategic area (what we are aiming for)	Current priorities (what we need to develop)	Implementation		Key performance indicators (success criteria and monitoring date)
		Activities (how we are going to do it and target date)	Lead	
a) An effective approach to recruiting, developing and retaining high quality staff	<p>To launch a Trust People strategy to facilitate the realisation of our strategic goals.</p> <p>To ensure we are fully-staffed with excellent candidates.</p>	<p>Effective oversight of <u>People Strategy</u> by People and Culture Group including identification of and agreement with strategic priorities. Developing an action plan to deliver agreed activities. Spring 2025</p>	JK	<p>Positive increase in application rate, success rate of recruitment campaigns and in development activity Easter 2025</p> <p>Positive increase in attraction of good quality candidates through positive brand identity. Baseline measure: Easter 2025</p> <p>Audits demonstrate values are explored as part of selection criteria. Baseline Nov 2025</p> <p>Audits demonstrate improved quality and consistency of values led adverts. Baseline October 2025</p> <p>Staff surveys demonstrate improved satisfaction with reward and engagement Baseline Autumn 2025</p> <p>Increase in number of secondments and sharing of professional expertise for all staff ensure our reward and recognition strategies are inclusive Baseline Autumn 2025 with termly audits to show positive trajectory on a termly basis.</p> <p>Positive increase in EDI performance indicators through attraction, retention, development, reward. Baseline Autumn 2025 with termly audits to show positive trajectory on termly basis.</p> <p>Positive increase in quantity and quality of RDPs across the Trust Baseline Spring 2026 with annual audits to show positive trajectory.</p>
		<p>Implementation of an effective HR software system to streamline the application and selection process Autumn 2025</p>	JK	
		<p>improve the advertising materials and application processes to make top talent more likely to apply. Spring 2025</p>	JK/KH	
		<p>Ensure selection decisions identify candidates who are a good cultural fit as well as having good quality technical skills. Autumn 2025</p>	JK	
		<p>Use HR software system to develop Trust wide role specific development pathways for both teaching and support staff Spring 2026</p>	JK	
		<p>Develop a structured process to agree priorities for use of apprenticeship levy and a standardised application process for staff. Summer 2025</p>	JK	
		<p>Develop a programme of focused wellbeing initiatives that spans the academic year. Summer 2026</p>	JK	
<p>Review Occupational Health and Employee Assistance programmes to ensure they are responsive to the needs of our people Spring 2026</p>	JK			



2 People, learning and capacity continued				
<p>b) Systems to identify, develop and deploy leadership expertise to address school improvement needs</p> <p>c) Systematic ways of moving knowledge and evidence between schools</p>	<p>Increase career options, develop emerging talent and succession plan</p> <p>Distribute leadership and plan for leadership succession.</p>	<p>Develop and implement online role specific training profiles and compliance training profiles. Spring 2026</p> <p>Develop a standardised approach to monitoring and recording training and development activity. Spring 2026</p> <p>Develop bite sized people management skills development modules for middle and senior leaders. Initial modules to be in place by Autumn 2026</p> <p>Ensure induction processes identify personalised training and development pathways Spring 2026</p>	<p>JK</p> <p>JK</p> <p>JK</p> <p>JK</p>	<p>Training records are actively updated and maintained as part of HR Files. Baseline Spring 2026</p>
	<p>Further develop and formalise a mechanism to actively share best practice across SLT academies</p>	<p>Increased number of Trust-wide forums for teachers and support staff, including multidisciplinary specialist networks. Mapping of existing forums Autumn 2024, Gap analysis Spring 2025</p>	<p>JK/SD</p>	<p>Annual staff surveys indicate impact in relation to each network's intended outcomes. Summer term</p> <p>Bi-annual staff RDP reviews and SED QoE reviews demonstrate impact. February and July</p>
<p>d) Ensuring best use of our people</p>	<p>HR is organised in an effective and efficient way that is aligned with Trust and local academy development plans</p> <p>Absence is effectively managed to ensure our people are effective and appropriately supported</p>	<p>People and related finance processes are reviewed and re-engineered to reduce time, duplication and as much use of HR and payroll software as possible and published on HR intranet. Key processes to be live on intranet for Spring 2025.</p> <p>People team continuous development is facilitated by ensuring CPD opportunities at half termly team meetings. Autumn 2024</p> <p>Develop KPIs to ensure appropriate focus of People Team and academy leadership time. KPI's to be fully agreed Spring 2025 once software system is agreed.</p> <p>Policies are reviewed and updated to ensure user friendly and in line with organisational cultural values Ongoing with termly progress</p> <p>Positive relations with our recognised trade unions both through informal and formal partnership working achieved through improving opportunities for productive two way discussions. Ongoing with termly progress</p>	<p>JK/JH</p> <p>JK</p> <p>JK</p> <p>JK</p> <p>JK</p> <p>JK</p>	<p>KPIs start to be implemented and baseline figures for all established between Easter 25 and Spring 26.</p> <p>Termly reported analysis show positive trajectory on impact of KPIs Spring 26</p> <p>Line Managers workload is reduced through effective streamlined processes Sept 2025</p> <p>Baseline absence rates are established and are decreased. Sept 2025</p> <p>HR Software system is introduced and demonstrates reduction in time lost to administration. Sept 2025</p> <p>HR Intranet pages provide self service that receives feedback of positive impact on line managers time and increases skills and awareness of effective people management. Initial info Jan 2025. Completed by Jan 2026</p>



3 Assessment, curriculum and pedagogy continued			
<p>c) Embed shared principles for teaching, learning and the success of learners</p>	<p>Each academy consistently applies the Trust principles & expectations in what makes a great lesson</p>	<p>Further enhance Trust-wide forums to ensure alignment around shared practices which support improvement, a stronger CPD element and visits to best practice, locally and nationally. Standard format for agenda and minutes, including annual intended outcomes. Timeline for each network</p>	<p>SD JK</p> <p>Annual staff surveys indicate impact in relation to each network's intended outcomes. Summer term Bi-annual staff RDP reviews and SED QoE reviews demonstrate impact. February and July</p>



4 Quality Assurance and accountability				
Strategic area (what we are aiming for)	Current priorities (what we need to develop)	Implementation		Key performance indicators (success criteria and monitoring date)
		Activities (how we are going to do it and target date)	Lead	
<p>a) Collection, analysis and reporting of school and group-wide performance data</p> <p>b) Quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate school performance and to inform next steps</p>	<p>To further streamline data collection and reporting processes by employing a Trust-wide Primary assessment information system to enable the efficient collection and analysis of data to inform SED and ADP.</p> <p>Consistent use of precise and robust evidence to inform ADPs and the Trust strategic plan</p>	<p>Use of common data sets (e.g. PAG, Reading Age, MiDYIS etc) to inform progress and attainment targets, tracking and to inform teaching and learning. April 2025 Common assessment policies and procedures, respecting differing contexts. April 2025 Ability to share common accountability measures in similar formats. Launch September 2025</p> <p>Academy leadership teams and the Central Team create an academy specific plan for Central team support linked to the SLT categorisation criteria and AOAP based on: Pupil performance data/Attendance/Exclusions - link to termly HT reports to LGB. Input from all Central team functions; finance, people, estates and health and safety. Termly from Spring 2025</p>	<p>SD</p> <p>JM</p> <p>SD</p>	<p>Termly Trust-wide moderation sessions demonstrate consistent and accurate assessment. Spring 2025 and on-going Termly data review meetings demonstrate that analyses of pupil attainment data inform reflection and action. Leaders report being able to access and analyse data quickly and efficiently. December 2025 and on-going</p> <p>Termly updates to ToAP and AoAP documents Central Team action plan reviews Termly from Spring 2025</p>
<p>c) Appropriate challenge and support for member academies</p>	<p>To develop the Trust Central team, in response to recent growth, in order to deliver a world class central function.</p> <p>To further streamline and standardise school improvement and evaluation processes to enable the efficient use of Central resources</p>	<p>Link to 'Vision, values, strategy and culture' - A coherent and responsive strategy with clarity on core team and school-based roles based on APC guidance, partnership agreements and a scheme of delegation for each central service. SLT staff intranet/website. Launch - January 2025. Further development - Spring and Summer 2025.</p> <p>CEO and DCEO to agree Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets with schools each year - used in headteacher RDP and to monitor school performance. Autumn 2024 and then termly.</p> <p>Programme of policies to test regarding implementation/compliance 2024/25. Termly linked to Finance, audit and risk committee.</p> <p>Periodic risk register reviews to make decisions about levels of risk and where and how to allocate central team resources in order to address any issues identified. Half termly linked to LGB meeting schedule</p>	<p>SD</p> <p>JM</p> <p>SD</p> <p>JM</p> <p>JM</p> <p>SD</p>	<p>Termly evaluations from leaders demonstrate positive feedback on clarity, efficiency and effectiveness of Central services. April 2025 and on-going</p> <p>Increased school effectiveness as demonstrated through the HT RDP process. February and July 2025 Termly updates to AoAP documents, including pupil achievement data analysis. January, April and July 2025</p> <p>Policy audit reviews</p> <p>Risk register reviews at LGB and Trust board meetings demonstrate effective risk management. Termly</p>

5 A sustainable learning organisation

Strategic area (what we are aiming for)	Current priorities (what we need to develop)	Implementation		Key performance indicators (success criteria and monitoring date)
		Activities (how we are going to do it and target date)	Lead	
a) Financial sustainability	Ensure that all key stakeholders have the necessary information to inform financial planning and decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of FLOs (Finance Liaison Officers) - regular budget meetings and access to rolling budget on Access Budget software. Launch in Autumn term. Further development - Spring 2025. On-going training for staff on Finance Portal - Autumn term onwards Half termly meetings with CFO for HTs November 2024 CEO and CFO strategy plan to outline options Ongoing from Autumn 25 	JHo	This will be measured by stakeholder feedback and the ability of member academies to set balanced budgets on schedule. Autumn term 2024 onwards as part of the scheduled re-forecasting and budgeting process
	Ensure consistent approach to budgeting, reporting, accounting and procurement throughout the Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and development of the finance team including transfer of line management of SBMs to the CFO Spring term 2025 Regular network meetings Spring term 2025 	JHo	This will be measured by the timely completion of month end management reporting to be monitored by CFO monthly. Spring term 2025
	Develop use of systems to reduce administrative burden of managing income from lettings, nursery, wraparound care and trips/visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Operations Portal initially at WPSA, WGPA and WPPA (as a pilot) and then expanded to whole Trust Initial launch - January 2025. Expansion across Trust by Autumn 2025 	JHo	KPIs will include reduction in staff time in managing these activities including reduction in manual journals, improved credit control and more effective budgeting. Spring term 2025 onwards
	Ensure best value is achieved in respect of procurement and service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of shared procurement benefits e.g. through IT procurement, cross-trust tendering for services Autumn term onwards Officers continually look for efficiencies in shared services including a review of the APC (Annual Partnership Contribution) Initial exercise in November 2024. On going review Consideration of Hub provision for SEND/AP Initial discussions Spring 2025 All vacancies are considered against a 'vision of the future' of SLT Central Office Autumn term onwards 	JHo	This will be measured by cost savings achieved and service improvements. Reviewed as part of scheduled re-forecasts and 2025/26 budget setting
	Ensure income from non government sources are maximised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise lettings potential at all sites Autumn term onwards Investigate sponsorship and grant opportunities Use of Investment platform for interest generation Registered in Autumn 2024. Strategy implemented - Spring 2025 	JHo	KPIs will be related income December 2024 onwards as part of the scheduled re-forecasting and budgeting process

5 A sustainable learning organisation

Strategic area (what we are aiming for)	Current priorities (what we need to develop)	Implementation		Key performance indicators (success criteria and monitoring date)
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b) Estates/Premises	Ensure all Estates and associated staff are suitable to support the delivery of Teaching & Learning	Estates Management plan/strategy to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 - 26 Capital projects (Action to identify and prioritise main capital projects by school). December 2024 SCA funding allocation policy and procedures (Identify current & forecast future SCA funding as part of prioritisation strategy). December 2024 Pre-Planned Maintenance / Audit of existing facilities (Implement new scheduling software - WPSA pilot site) Live by December 2024 Training of existing estates team (Create relevant programme of courses through with TES Training Platform or specialist). April 2025 Working draft/framework in place by December 2024. 	JHy	Live complete document which provides visibility of all priorities (Initial Draft Document Dec 2024) Then becomes live document to be reviewed (Termly during Capital & Growth Meeting) Measure success of Capital Projects & site developments including meeting deadlines, satisfaction, does it meet the brief. (Project Debrief - Adhoc basis) Participants include School/LGB/Trustees Live scheduling and measurement of PPM, H&S and Digital Resources (Dec 2024 new system implemented) Accurate Forecast of costs which allow the planning of work accordingly. (Ongoing review cycle however initial SCA Forecast added to draft plan/strategy by Dec 2024)
c) Health & Safety & Compliance	Ensure all H&S Policies/Procedures and Training supports the delivery of Teaching & Learning	H&S/Compliance policy and procedures / risk assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy ratified and framework live December 2024 Internal Scrutiny and audits. (Need to appoint 3rd Party provider to carry out scrutiny) Appoint and book for Spring Term 2025 Develop training and guidance resources (Differentiate between responsible named staff and those carrying out and recording various checks) Ongoing November 2024 to April 2025 	JHy	Implement and embed H&S Framework (Dec 2024 followed by termly monitoring) Trust and individual Academies are compliant. (Termly monitoring, measuring progress on actions associated with different H&S Categories) This can be evidenced in a consistent, transparent and auditable fashion through regular audits (Termly meetings) Produce evidence of external auditing of processes (Spring 2025)
d) Digital	Ensure all Schools have the IT hardware and infrastructure to support their delivery of Teaching & learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Digital Resources to align with the Digital Strategy. (Update Asset Register across all schools with potential to use new software package). Summer term 2025 Ensure infrastructure can support current and future requirements (Scrutinise Asset register identifying gaps between actual resources available and proposed vision) Spring term 2025 Monitoring and auditing responses breach/security concerns (Ongoing) Trustwide Communication Project (Lease Lines, Monitoring & Filtering, Phone system) 	JHy	Regular review of Digital Services KPIs. (Twice monthly LMM with Director of Digital Strategy) Feedback from Service Users via surveys and anecdotal feedback (Weekly School visits - Gain feedback from relevant staff) Create & Establish an SLA which is agreed by both the Central team & Schools (Spring 2025)

5 A sustainable learning organisation				
Strategic area (what we are aiming for)	Current priorities (what we need to develop)	Implementation		Key performance indicators (success criteria and monitoring date)
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e) Governance	The Trust and governing boards are fulfilling its strategic functions and ensure a clear vision and strategy routinely evidenced through the support and challenge they provide school leaders.	<p>Expand on the current scheme of delegation to create a Trust governance plan, with consideration given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an external review of governance • Skills audit and training for governors and trustees (e.g. in Health and Safety Matters) • Structures to support trustee and governor development and effectiveness • compliance with regulatory, contractual, and statutory requirements, including safeguarding. <p style="text-align: right;">Initial discussion February 2025</p> <p>As evidenced by meeting minutes, trustees, governors and the central executive team clearly and confidently articulate the impact of their role in relation to pupil outcomes. Governors routinely hold leaders to account for the quality of education experience provided to pupils.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On-going linked to Trustee meeting and LGB meeting schedules</p> <p>Trustees and governors are involved at the development stage of academy and Trust improvement plans. Share best practice from CFS.</p>	JM	<p>Holds executive leadership team to account for the effective implementation of the trust strategy and operating plan, including in relation to the use of resources and the drivers of impact. February, May and October 2025</p> <p>Assures itself of the integrity of financial information.</p> <p>Assures itself that there are robust risk controls and risk management systems.</p> <p>Assures itself that there is compliance with regulatory, contractual, and statutory requirements, including safeguarding. January, March, May and July 2025</p>
f) Growth	To have a dynamic, flexible and differentiated strategy for growth	<p>Growth Strategy (Revision under construction)</p> <p>Develop a clear model of integration for new academies, including due diligence.</p> <p>Further develop the Trust's relationship(s) with single schools and similar-sized Trusts for the benefit of all parties</p> <p>Actively seek opportunities to bid for new free-schools that can enhance our vision of collaborative best practices.</p> <p>Review the SLT Way for primary, secondary and all- through education to ensure it remains contemporary and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Look to further develop (regional, national and potentially international) partnerships</p> <p>Updated Sussex Learning Trust website - High quality digital platform and refreshed video materials that demonstrate the strengths and benefits of joining SLT. Summer 2025</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>JM</p> <p>JM SD</p>	Growth