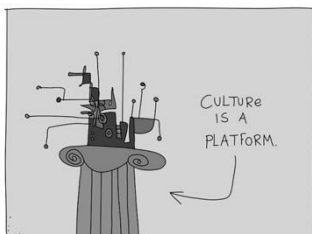


Strong Trust | Great Schools | Meeting Need

The following pre-reading provides the background for the Education Plan, 2023-24. The Plan seeks to continue to invest in building a **strong trust**, with **great schools** that **meet the needs** of all children in all settings.

Our Trust



The Education Plan for 2023-24 seeks to strengthen our **Strong Trust**, particularly our investment in culture, collaborative structures and aligned approaches, to empower leaders and colleagues to build **Great Schools**, that **Meet the Needs** of all children, in all settings; prioritising disadvantage *even over, attendance first*.

Trust-wide Investments over time are supporting academies and colleagues to perform in a higher and more consistent **performance space**; evidence of our **Trust Dividend**. Building on this maturity, leadership, social and intellectual capital, and the combined strength of the Trust we can become more effective (and efficient), so that all schools achieve sustained high performance and greater *equity through education*.

The Education Plan | *An architecture of opportunity*

A **Strong Trust**, with lived values and collegiate culture, that builds effective leadership and collaborative structures and shared, co-constructed curriculum and assessment, offers the opportunity for colleagues to build...

Great Schools where leaders(hip) is developed to create strong cultures for children and colleagues and invests in great teaching to raise standards. Leadership in each setting prioritises, builds relationships and implements well, holds nerve and seeks irreversible change that will...

Meet Need of all children in all settings, so that as a Trust we achieve greater Equity through Education, where we invest in Specialised education, SEND and on prioritising disadvantage even over other foci. At all times we seek to have a lasting impact on children and colleagues into the future; Belonging, Status and Esteem.

Effective Leadership

"The stars we are given. The constellations we make." (Rebecca Solnit)

Effective leadership builds Great Schools

A significant investment in leadership is required for colleagues and academies to exploit all the aspects of our **Strong Trust** and to build **Great Schools** that **Meet Need**. The Education Plan seeks to build on our **on-going investments** to strengthen the Trust and secure stronger, more sustained performance in each school. This is seeking to create a more effective **architecture of opportunity** for colleagues and children, possible when groups of schools collaborate and make good decisions about how to secure improvement.

Seeking Irreversible change

Great Schools have leaders and colleagues who deliberately seek improvement and impact, knowing that only through careful evaluation, prioritising, and implementing well will they achieve the sustained high-quality provision that will outlast our present stewardship. It is leadership that sets direction, builds relationships and implements well that secures the very best futures for all children.



Effective leadership seek irreversible change by implementing well. This implementation seeks to deliver a change/impact that is *significant, persistent* and *irreversible*. So that, securing stronger sustained performance is **contingent** on a specific action or approach that delivers an impact that is **significant** (measurable and

evidential) and is **persistent** (lifts performance over time); that becomes **self-sustaining** (embedded in norms and behaviours).

Playing in the Final Third

To secure sustained, irreversible change we need to lead well, prioritise and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our actions. We know that only a third of actions typically make a difference and we do not have time to play everywhere... we need to play in *the final third*.

Negative Third

Bland Third

Positive Third

Typically, **only one third** of actions taken by Trusts and schools lead to improvement and a smaller proportion again achieve sustained performance. It depends on:

- **Deeply thoughtful, evidenced evaluation** of performance. *Think Slow, Act Deliberately.*
- Identify and prioritise the **next best strategy for securing future value**. *Placing a few bets.*
- **Implement well**, in all stages of implementation, holding nerve, map checking, refining, and deliberately implementing to secure efficiency, effectiveness and increase the potency of the strategy. *System over symptoms.*
- ...So that **it becomes what we do** (is not additional/bolt-on), is the norm, has changed understanding of what we do and is self-sustaining (it no longer requires additional energy or focus) – irreversible and antifragile (strengthens, not weakens under stress). *Achieving culture change so that we make better decisions more often.*
- Avoid the **undisciplined pursuit of more**.

The disproportionate influence of focusing on excellence: *on doing a few things well*

When we reach outstanding provision in one area the leadership and approach that achieved and sustained that performance influences how we lead and implement in other areas. This is because it is more about the approach than a specific strategy. **It is about system over symptoms.**

It is this **culture change and philosophy on leadership** and change that drives greater value over time. By unswervingly focusing on one area, we **train the organisation on excellence**, on what it takes to make a long term, lasting impact. It requires **myopic focus and map checking**: to commit, iterate and innovate on one (or two) areas. This creates a deliberate performance culture.

Key Questions (for the start of the year)

1. What is your evaluation of the **present performance** of the Academy? How do you do this? Using what evidence?
 1. How far are you using the **Strength of the Trust** to support performance?
 2. How far have you built a **Great School**? Leadership, Culture, Teaching
 3. How far are you **Meeting the Needs of all children**?
2. What is your **focus for this year**? (are you playing in the **final third**?)
 1. Why is this the priority? (on what evaluation?)
 2. Will the change be **Significant, Persistent and Irreversible**?
 3. How strong is **Implementation**? How far is this the lens of success?
 4. How far is change irreversible, the norm, embedded in values, habits and behaviours?
3. How far are we **meeting the needs** of all children?
 1. How far are you prioritising **disadvantage even over**?
 2. How strong is **SEND** provision? How are you securing adaptive teaching?
 3. Are we meeting the needs of **all children**? How do you know.

*The following unpicks in more detail the elements of **Strong Trust, Great Schools, Meeting Need**: the Education Plan for 2023-24*

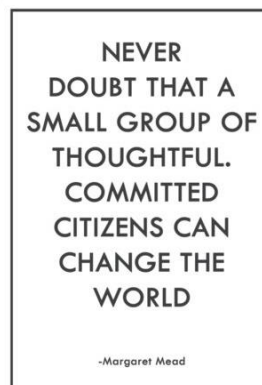
Strong Trust

A shared understanding of the **features and facets of a strong trust** is crucial as we embark upon a period of growth, change and improvement. We must be clear about our rationale for being, working and remaining together.

We are a system trust contributing to and drawing from the sector and as a strong trust we are values-led and purpose driven. The CLF moral purpose, tied to our **shared HEART values**, provides the framework for our **trust moral capital**.

Collaboration is at the heart of our trust and has been part of the CLF mantra, mission and DNA for as long as the trust has existed and yet the benefits and impact of meaningful collaboration has taken years to realise and continues to have further unrealised potential.

The investment in **deliberate collaboration through and beyond our networks and communities** is a demonstration of our **shared social capital**. We choose to come together, not because it is easy, but because it **strengthens our collective impact for all our children**. Colleagues are impelled to collaborate for the greater good, utilising domain and subject passion and seeking to **secure Equity through Education**.

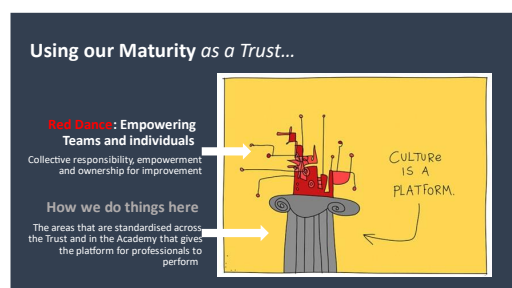


As we move forward as a mature and growing trust over five clusters, it is imperative to consider how we bring people together. Which configurations and facilitations will ensure the development and strengthening of our trust, our academies and our provision for all our children?

Co-construction and joint endeavour, with people at the centre, have shaped our ways of working. Communities of practice are supported and **propagate professional learning**. These will remain firm fixtures, **foundations upon which we will develop and refine our trust architecture**.

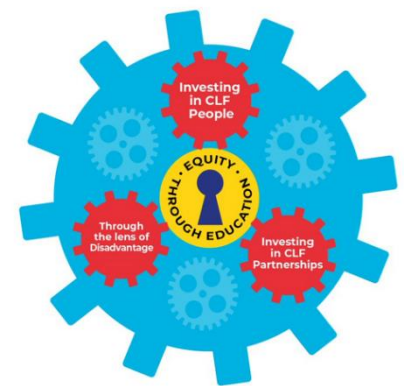
The investment in our **shared curriculum**, our **joint assessment practices** and our collective approaches to **secure great teaching** are the **backbone of our trust knowledge capital** and it is incumbent on us to invest deeply in this vital aspect of school leadership and professional competence for all colleagues. We know that this work is ever onward; iterations will continue as we evaluate and further develop our expertise and empower experts to iterate together on behalf of all.

Our clear and **coherent School Improvement model** is consistent, equitable and principled. Yet, crucially, it is bespoke and responsive to the needs and developments for each and every school in our trust. This is **our organisational capital** and is an essential component in the ongoing success and development of our strong trust.



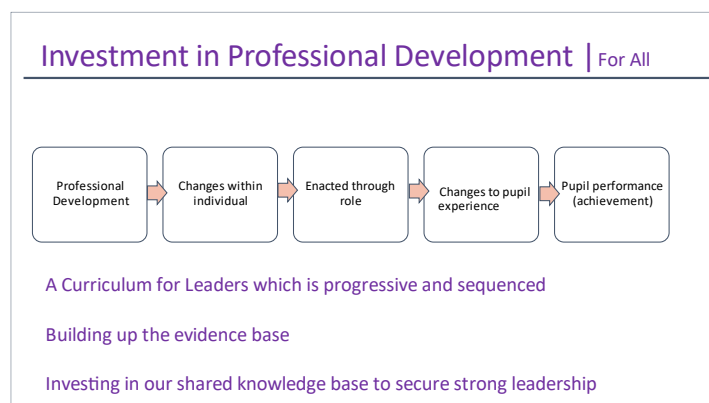
The column is the thing. It is a manifestation of **the way we choose to build, grow and develop leadership** and teaching across our trust. Standardisation, standards and ways of working are beneficial and necessary. We have invested, defined and refined the strands and strata over more than a decade.

Investment in leaders through our commitment to a trust-wide and bespoke leadership development curriculum and an investment in CLF Principals is a manifestation of the **2030 Core Strategy: investing in CLF People**. This will include a common core content which explores and secures CLF knowledge and know-how and will support our aim to develop the highest quality leadership to impact on learning and outcomes for our children and **secure Equity through Education**.



A coherent curriculum which builds and binds to enable and empower all school leaders to benefit across our trust will be a key feature of this investment in leaders across the trust. **Time will be invested to enable leadership capacity and competence** to be developed through this sequenced and progressive curriculum for leaders and will form the **foundations and framework for our shared networks and communities**.

Our **Professional Development platform** exists as a repository for the essential and seminal reading and research - crucially, the papers and publications will be **handpicked and curated and viewed through the lens of our trust, our leaders and securing the greatest impact for our children**.



Our shared understanding of the pillar, platform and flame and red dance is crucial. The commitment to ongoing investment in the elements that make up the column is a **collective responsibility for us all as guardians**. In the pillar, intentional and deliberate design of the aspects that are standardised across the trust has evolved and developed over time. **Strong leaders in our trust understand and recognise the importance of investing in the column** and adding strength to ‘the way we do things here’ the way we do things here to benefit all schools, all children. **The impact must be measured by the everyday learning experiences of every child in our care.**

Space for colleagues to lead, in their context to benefit the children and families in their community, is imperative. **Providing a platform for colleagues to create and innovate is an essential element of the way we work across our trust.** Creativity and a **clear mandate to make brilliant stuff happen** within context is **encapsulated by the flame and red dance**. Leaders within our strong trust are empowered, supported and guided to make good decisions increasingly more often about that which matters most.

There is a **responsibility on all leaders in all settings to acknowledge and embrace our duty of care: across our trust** we hold a **moral, social and organisational responsibility** to enact the roles of **stewards and guardians** of our **shared artefacts** and to commit to effective implementation at both trust and academy level. **The strength and success of our trust is seen through the actions of each of us and measured through the experiences of every child.**

Great Schools

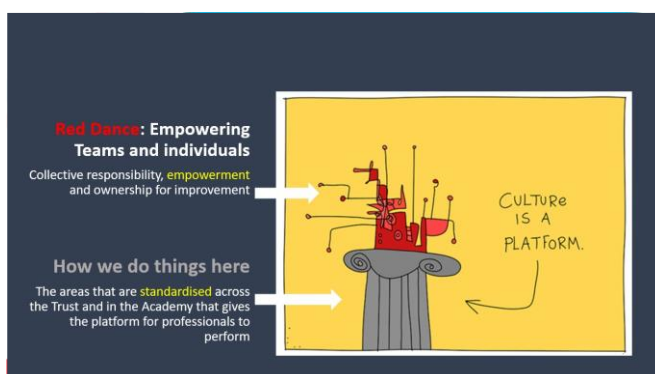
Behind the improvement journeys of each of our schools, sits a narrative of school and trust; **intertwined and connected; working in symbiosis to do better for all children**, particularly those experiencing disadvantage.

We talk about prioritising **disadvantage even over other areas...focusing on attendance first.**

June 2023 | 100% Good+

Inadequate (4)	Requires Improvement (3)	Good (2)	Good, with Outstanding	Outstanding (1)
		Bristol Brunel Academy ↑ John Cabot Academy ↑ King's Oak Academy ↑ City Academy Bristol ↑ Hanham Woods Academy ↑ Digitech Studio School Bristol ↑ CLF Post-16 ↑ Bestbrook Primary Academy ↑ Minerva Primary Academy ↑ Heron Moor Academy ↑ Uphill Village Academy ↑ SCITT ↑ Snowdon Village ↑	Bristol Met Academy ↑ Hans Price Academy ↑ Summerhill Academy ↑ Wallcourt Farm Academy ↑ Evergreen Primary Academy ↑	Haywood Village Academy ↑ Homevale Academy ↑

Yet to be inspected: Broadoak Academy, Winterstoke Hundred Academy and Lime Hills Academy



Our **shared language** is solidified in the image and concept of **pillar and flame**, an assimilation of complicated and complex as our description of what the sector might simply refer to as: alignment. CLF leaders know that this is *so much more* than simple alignment! It is a nuanced articulation of our work together over time; **a cultural platform from which we will grow and scale to meet the needs of a larger trust.**

The what: what makes schools great?

A story of our collective trust and sector wisdom

It is not surprising that with the **hard-won realisation of trust dividend**, we have developed **increasing opinions about what makes schools great; what defines greatness within the CLF.** We expect leaders to have opinions in their settings too, about what works here, *'this is how we do things here, and this is why...'*



In defining these tenets of great schools, through existing structures and our trust-wide Principal leadership curriculum, we seek not to simply build up the pillar and expand complicated alignment, but **to deliberately, and fiercely, protect the flame.** We will be providing clarity, guidance and support to leaders as we explore our opinions on what makes our schools great; **empowering future leaders to embed their own versions of greatness in their schools and contexts**, serving our communities and meeting the need that comes to the gate each day.

We will explore **this substantive knowledge and wisdom, the components of great schools**, through existing structures that have served us well over time – our quality assurance frameworks (Academy Review Meetings, Academy Review Visits, School Improvement Group+ and Performance Reviews), our collaborative structures and networks, professional development spaces and our subject communities. As CLF leaders we will unpick and share practice relating to:

- Developing leaders(hip)
- Great teaching
- Strong culture, and
- Attendance *first*

And we will be asking ourselves:

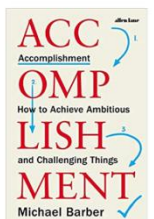
How well do we do this? Where is the impact? And so...what next?

The how: how do leaders embed strong culture?

A story of prioritisation and implementation.

Barber's 7 Challenges

1. Prioritise
2. Review Progress
3. Do simple things incredibly well
4. Plan delivery
5. Focus myopically
6. Intervene decisively
7. Avoid the 'undisciplined pursuit of more'



Research and experience tell us that effective leadership teams work together with their school communities to understand their schools' ever-onward improvement journeys, to explore options then **judiciously pick the next steps with care, precision and ambition for success**; they prioritise well. Once selected, effective leaders implement school improvement priorities by **using quality assurance and feedback** to deliver change

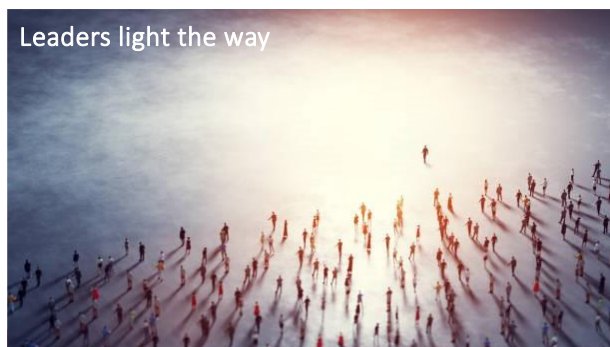
with maximum impact. They plan delivery and focus myopically on improvements, and measures of success, maintaining both momentum for improvement and clarity in expectation. Across our trust there are multiple formal and informal opportunities to collaborate to impact positively on school improvement priorities including close work with our school improvement team and trust hubs – **CLF leaders maximise these opportunities** and reinforce learning in these spaces by making links for colleagues '*school is trust and trust is school*'. Implementation is then sustained by rewarding and supporting good implementation practice and scaling delivery as appropriate.

Our solid commitment to developing leadership will result in leaders(hip) across each academy that **set direction** (place a few best bets), **build strong relationships** and communicate well. CLF leaders will **implement with excellence** by **maximising opportunities for feedback and quality assurance**, intervening decisively and maintaining momentum for school improvement priorities. CLF leaders **look upstream to analyse underlying causes of problems** and adjust implementation and approach accordingly. Where implementation is effective, culture moves to accommodate well implemented teaching and leadership strategies; **strong culture is our evidence of effective implementation**.

This year we seek to use our **collective trust wisdom** to pinpoint greatness and **explore the context of implementation that has led to success**; to articulate implementation as part of our shared language and embed tenets of great schools across the new breadth of our trust.

Whilst considering the how we lead great schools, we will unpick together how well CLF leaders:

- **Prioritise** school improvement priorities.
- **Implement effectively**.
- **Develop opinions** about great teaching and **demonstrate impact of these in classrooms**.
- **Think upstream** to solve problems, referencing implementation as a process for delivery of priorities.
- Develop leaders across their teams through **structured professional development**, paving the way for others.
- **Demonstrate impact through improved culture**.



Great Schools

Together this year we will explore the components of great schools (the what), alongside improved awareness of strong implementation (the how), to ensure that better decisions are made each day by leaders across our trust. This will impact positively on provision and outcomes for all learners, disadvantage *even over*.

Meeting Need

All children should be able to see themselves in our schools and in our school curricula and system; should have their voices heard and their experiences validated; should be able to access the support necessary to achieve agency - all children should be challenged towards this end.

This includes children with significant learning need, with attachment difficulty, with adversity in life, as well as all other children. Meeting the needs of All Children is probably the **most exacting standard of all the HEART values**, simply because of the competing demands it embodies.

All children should be evident within our inclusion systems - receiving the rewards and recognition they deserve and getting the help they need, in classrooms and buildings that are calm, focused, supportive and alive. Our systems should **expose and recognise** need. If, as leaders, we discern that a group of children is over- or under- represented in any area, the responsibility lies with us to first understand that phenomenon and then to address it both immediately and over time.

Before we can meet the needs of the children in our care, we first must understand what those needs are, and this comes through **effective formal and informal assessment** and information gathering. Part of our strategy to meet need involves refining and developing systems to know the extent of our children's needs as well as reviewing and developing the systems by which this information is put to best use, for example through examining and sharing what makes effective tutoring at secondary, effective daily briefings and de-briefs in specialised settings and effective child-centred progress meetings at primary.

Understanding and meeting need is a **significant professional development activity**, to which we will continue to commit as a trust in order to ensure that our children benefit.

All children need to have the supporting environments and relationships to learn, and they need to be challenged within their zone of proximal development. The trickiest element for teachers, leaders and those supporting children to learn is knowing, understanding and managing these zones for the children in their care so that each child receives **the necessary support and challenge** to achieve the aims of our curriculum.

The post-pandemic needs of our students are greater than perhaps we have ever known, and the likely direction for our sector is that **more children with high needs will have these needs met within mainstream schools**; whilst there will be growth and development in the SEND and AP sectors, these will not, and should not, cater for all children with high needs. Mainstream settings will continue to serve the majority of children regardless of need; they will continue to support the majority of children with high levels of need. Mainstream settings need to shift our mindset and practice considerably in the coming years to manage this change. Our 'best bet' in these circumstances is to invest heavily in individual teacher professional development to **increase our 'resting level' of expertise in SEND**. There will remain a role for specialism in any number of areas, but our base level of expertise for each classroom teacher in our trust should enable us to meet high needs within our classrooms – all our classrooms – in the interests of all our children. Not only will this benefit our children but also our teachers and those supporting learning because there is greater professional fulfilment in meeting need because of an investment in development of expertise.

This greater investment in professional development to meet need for students with diagnosed and undiagnosed SEND will be supported in part by the expertise that exists in the CLF Specialised Provisions, which have increased in number in 2023 to include three Special SEMH schools and two Alternative Provisions. These settings have both established expertise and developing expertise in a range of social, emotional and mental health needs as well as other areas that are often linked to the

above, including speech, language and communication needs and moderate learning difficulty. Our CLF Specialised Provisions will play a **distinct and important role** in our strategy for meeting need, just as specialised provisions play a vital role in the sector at large. Specialist settings exist to meet the very highest and exceptional needs for children who need an entirely different setting in order to be able to access and benefit from the aims of the CLF curriculum and to ensure effective progression to work, training and further study.

As newer provisions within the Cabot Learning Federation, our Specialised Provisions will focus on learning from the best and most expert in the sector, whilst deepening their understanding of the needs of their own cohorts and communities, so that they become **the very best schools of their type** in their locality. As teachers, leaders and those working with children in our specialised settings, there will be a significant focus on refining and deepening our own expertise, reflecting together on existing and emerging research, sharing learning across sites and settings, and commissioning in additional and bespoke training where appropriate. Working more closely with mainstream settings will enable our specialised provisions to have greater access to academic subject specialism for benchmarking and professional development. The methods by which our specialist staff adapt and enhance the CLF curriculum in order to meet specific needs will be of particular value and interest to mainstream colleagues who are developing their own professional understanding and effectiveness in relation to the broadening spectrum of mainstream need.

It is in this area that some of the most exciting work may occur in the coming years; as we recognise that meeting student need isn't a binary activity, and that children do not neatly fit either into mainstream or special settings, we look to find **ways to meet more of a child's needs**. For some children who might never access a specialist setting or who might never need one, there may be significant benefit in accessing particular strands of specialist work through cross-trust collaboration.

Our collaborative spirit and shared goals and values has thus far enabled individual children to benefit in our trust. We have seen over time that our passionate pursuit in diminishing the impact of disadvantage on educational attainment for individual children has made a significant difference to many, and there is more we can and must do. Meeting Need as a trust is as much about continuing to be schooled by our learners in the impact of disadvantage *on them, today* just as we continue to build on the successful strategies we have established thus far: focusing on **oracy as a critical tool** for enabling learners experiencing disadvantage to make accelerated progress; understanding and fostering a **deeper sense of belonging for every learner**; building **Benevolent Childhood Experiences** more systematically into our children's school experiences so that every learner benefits and our most disadvantaged children stand to gain the most. As we seek to expand and deepen our work on Belonging, BCEs and oracy, our work on Meeting Need will become better understood and more developed.

By being better and more habitual about diminishing the effects of disadvantage on our learners, we set the scene for focusing on becoming more expert at meeting need across the board and in particular for children with SEND. Our areas of focus fit within a spectrum that we have been honing and understanding over many years and this is a natural progression both in terms of our trust narrative and development and in the sector with regard to national areas of and levels of need. Ultimately this work is about how we achieve our **mission**, aligned with our **values**, in this country in this decade. It is both about being **strategically insightful and situationally aware**, acting accordingly for the sake of **all our pupils** as well as those beyond our usual reach.

