



**Symphony Learning Trust**

**Aspiration. Innovation. Excellence.**

# Self-Evaluation

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Fairfield  
Community  
Primary School



Thornton  
Primary  
School



Thyorn Field  
Primary  
School



Hugglescote  
Primary School



The Hall  
Primary  
School



Orchard  
Community  
Primary School



Donisthorpe  
Primary  
School



Newcroft  
Primary  
Academy



Glen Hills  
Primary  
School



Ashby Hastings  
Primary  
School



The Meadow  
Community  
Primary School



Old Mill  
Primary  
School



Foxton  
Primary  
School



Ashby Hill Top  
Primary  
School



Ashby Willeesley  
Primary  
School



**Symphony Learning**  
TRUST



# Overview of Symphony

## The Aims

### 'Aspiration, Innovation, Excellence'

- All pupils to be the best versions of themselves.
- All pupils to have an enriched, exciting and **innovative** learning journey, irrespective of their background.
- All pupils to feel valued, safe and happy.
- All pupils to be prepared for future life to be wholesome, respectful, **aspirational** global citizens.
- All pupils to experience an **excellent** all-round education.

## The Vision

All in the Trust are committed to continuing to raise standards and to inspire young minds. In an ever-changing world, SLT is committed to provide balanced, inspirational and exciting learning experiences for our pupils, with our values of aspiration, effort, tolerance and integrity underpinning this drive.

Symphony Learning Trust has a proven track record of devising and leading national initiatives and highly effective School to School support. We are proud of the impact we have upon outcomes for children across our schools and the drive we have to continue to raise standards and the further improve the quality of education we offer all of our pupils.

## Key details

Symphony Learning Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust with fifteen primary schools. We place outstanding learning and teaching at the heart of all our activities. **Our 2025 KS2 results, showing a Trust average of 10% above the National Average for Combined Expected and Above Standard, coupled together with the emphasis of the well-being of our pupils and staff, demonstrate the strength of Symphony.**

3 Year Trust Data - Overall Achievement and Progress

Special Measures		Serious Weaknesses		Requires Improvement		Good		Outstanding	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- Our three year Trust data shows achievement in all four key areas as above / well above National Averages.
- Progress data has generally shown good increases to now be more consistently above / well above in each area.

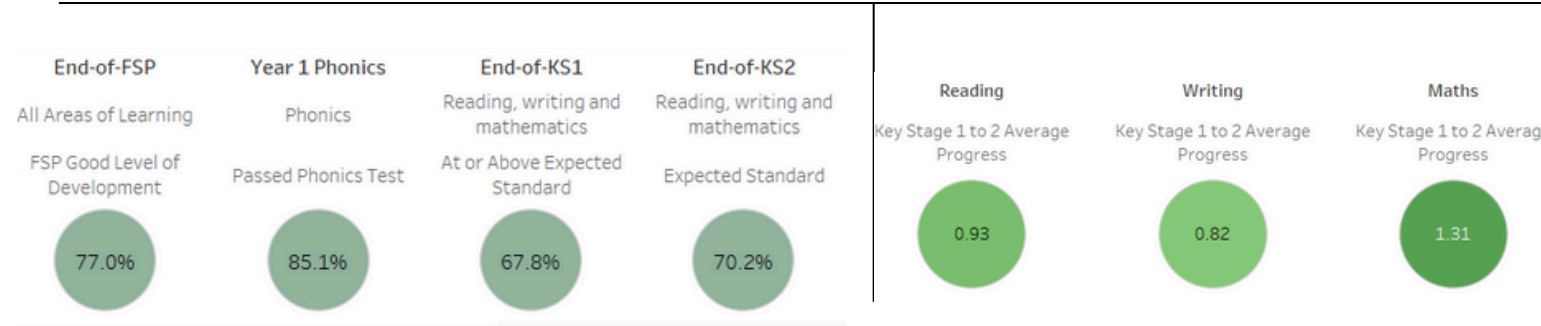
Target

To ensure achievement and progress in all areas remains well above National Average.

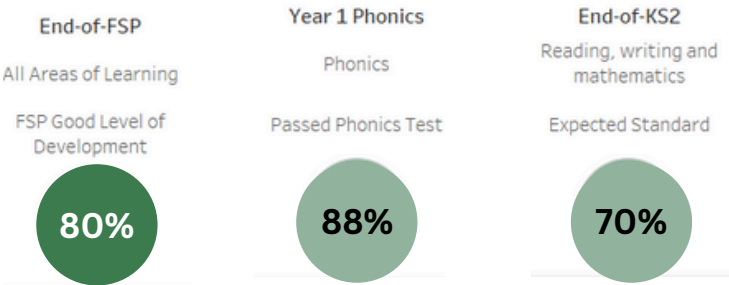
2022/23

Achievement

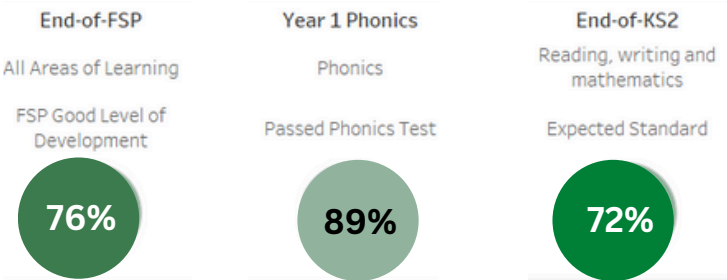
Progress



2023/24



2024/25



# 3 Year Trust Data - Disadvantaged Achievement and Progress

Special Measures		Serious Weaknesses		Requires Improvement		Good		Outstanding	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- Our three year Trust data shows achievement in all four key areas for disadvantaged pupils are generally good
- Progress data has generally shown increases to now be consistently above / well above in each area.

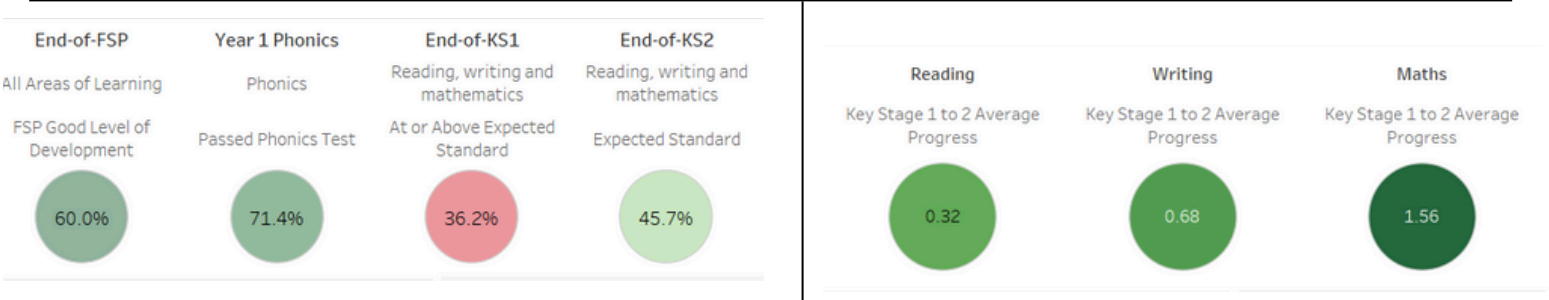
Target

 To ensure achievement and progress in all areas continues to improve

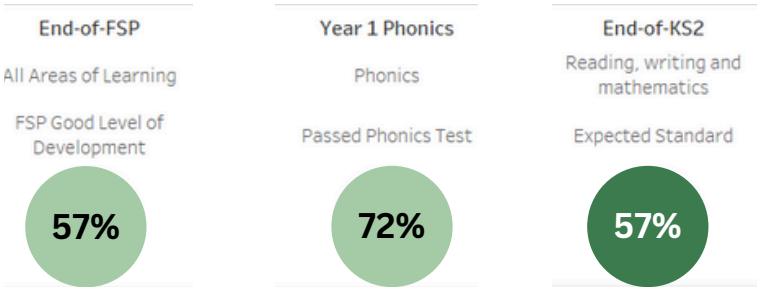
## 2022/23

### Achievement

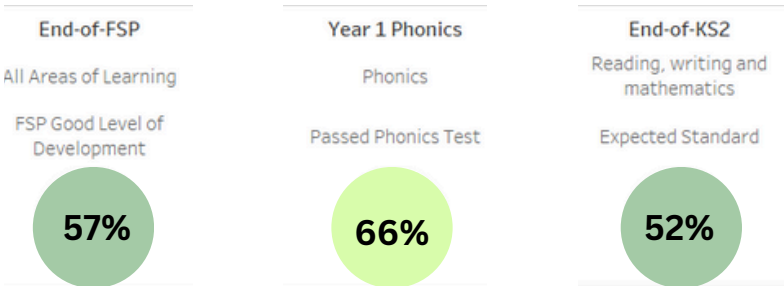
### Progress



## 2023/24



## 2024/25



# Effectiveness of Governance and Leadership

Special Measures		Serious Weaknesses		Requires Improvement		Good		Outstanding	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

We judge Governance and Leadership of the Trust as 'very good/outstanding'

**Target** To ensure skills for Trustees and Members continue to represent all areas of continual development  
To ensure growth and effectiveness of the Centralised Leadership Team continue to drive even greater Trust-wide school improvement

We judge effectiveness of Governance and Leadership as 'very good/outstanding' due to the following reasons;

- Outcomes and progress for pupils have risen from 'Good' to be consistently above/well above National Averages.
- At all levels of leadership (Trustee, Centralised Team, Local School Leadership and Governance), clear and dynamic leadership with proven outcomes can be seen.
- All schools have either maintained or improved Ofsted scores and have achieved very positive Peer Review outcomes;

School	Ofsted	Peer Review
Glen Hills	GOOD 2024	GOOD 2025
Fairfield	GOOD 2021	GOOD 2024
The Meadow	GOOD 2021	GOOD 2024
Old Mill	GOOD 2021	GOOD 2025
Ashby Hastings	GOOD 2024	GOOD 2025
Ashby Willesley	GOOD 2022	GOOD 2024
Orchard	GOOD 2025	GOOD 2024
Ashby Hill Top	OUTSTANDING 2024	OUTSTANDING 2024
Newcroft	OUTSTANDING 2025	OUTSTANDING 2024
Thornton	GOOD 2023	GOOD 2024
Donisthorpe	GOOD 2025	GOOD 2024
Foxton	GOOD 2023	GOOD 2025
The Hall	GOOD 2023	N/A
Hugglescote	GOOD 2022	N/A
Thythorn Field	GOOD 2024	N/A

# Governance and Leadership overview

***Please click on underlined text for link to Symphony website***

In 2022 The Symphony Learning Trust received a Governance Review led by the NGA. The report demonstrated how strongly governance and leadership work together to allow all pupils to succeed.

## Centralised Team

- **CEO** and **DoP** have considerable experience of leading Outstanding schools and also raising standards in schools which require rapid and sustained improvement.
- **CFO** and **Finance and Operations Lead** also have considerable local and Trust level experience of establishing and maintaining effective financial and operational procedures.

**Target** To further increase the Centralised Team to develop Estates and HR leads as the Trust grows.

## Members

- The five Members have considerable educational and business skills which challenge, support and drive the vision and success of the Trust

## Trustees

- Annual skills audit demonstrates full compliment of skills required.
- **Chair of Trustees** is highly competent and challenges the CEO/CFO as well as supporting the Trust.
- Governance review in 2022 highlighted considerable strengths of Trustee competence, knowledge and level of challenge for the Centralised Team.

**Target** To further increase the educational expertise within the Board of Trustees

## Headteachers

- Considerable experience in leading Good and/or Outstanding schools.
- Track record of Heads who have external experience of school improvement.
- Large capacity for future career development to be Executive Heads.

To ensure Heads receive support to ensure their schools continue to further improve and develop

**Target** To ensure that when heads move into Exec Headship, they receive correct support to ensure their role continues to develop.

## Business Development Group

- CFO and Finance and Ops Lead lead the BDG effectively with regular meetings
- SBMs are all effective in their roles.

**Target** To ensure SBMs continue to have opportunities for extended roles within the Trust.

## Local Governing Bodies

- All schools have effective LGBs who have key roles in school monitoring and evaluation.
- CEO/Chair of Trustees / CFO have termly meetings with CoGs to maximise communication and dialogue
- CEO and DoP attend an LGB meeting per school at least once a year.

**Target** To continue the support and monitoring of our LGBs with the aim to maximise effectiveness.

In every area of leadership within the Trust, we follow the same principles;

- Effective communication
- Valuing every role within the Trust
- Effective delegation which promotes collective responsibility for success

Investing in developing all staff within the Trust to provide career pathways.



# Effectiveness of School Improvement

Special Measures		Serious Weaknesses		Requires Improvement		Good		Outstanding	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- We judge our School Improvement effectiveness of the Trust as 'outstanding'

## Target

To ensure that monitoring continues to be effective

To ensure the strength of the Teaching Development Group continues to develop

The Trust place a large importance in S2S support. This is achieved in a variety of ways. Informal and collegiate support is a vital part of creating the high pupil outcomes demonstrated by Symphony. The EDG network of school leaders underpins this. It provides peer support on a two weekly basis, with large amounts of time given to providing solutions to school challenges across the Trust. The non-threatening and supportive environment fosters open and honest conversations which in turn leads to solutions provided by education professionals with many years of school leadership expertise.

Formal support is used in a variety of ways depending on need. Where a school continues to perform well (Data and OFSTED), it receives an annual, bespoke peer review. The priorities for the review are agreed with the school leaders in advance and are often related to individual school SEF and core priorities. The peer reviews utilise the existing school leaders and experts from our TDG (teaching development group) to make formal judgements about a particular area or focus.

From these judgements reports are produced and shared with the school, Trust leaders, Trustees and school LGBs. These accurate snapshots are used to produce action points to help move schools forward. Where necessary, actions from these reviews can be facilitated by members of Symphony TDG deployed to work alongside a school to achieve a desired outcome.

Targeted support is used should a school be in an undesirable OFSTED category or show weakening or low national data trends. This support is put in place by Trust leaders and will take the form of regular school improvement monitoring visits. Each visit will have a bespoke focus and will be accompanied by relevant members of the EDG to work alongside school leaders to quickly find, action and remedy any challenges a school maybe facing.

Following each monitoring visit members of the TDG will be deployed to support any specific teaching and learning issues identified within the school. The TDG will work alongside practitioners to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and adapt practices where necessary. Targeted support has been used successfully inside and outside of Symphony leading to rapid improvement of schools. This has been seen by improvements in national data and OFSTED gradings.

Since 2019 many of our schools have increased their Ofsted gradings which demonstrates the strength of our Peer Reviews, school improvement work and our TDG impact.

# Attendance and Exclusions

Special Measures		Serious Weaknesses		Requires Improvement		Good		Outstanding	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

We judge Attendance as 'Good'

**Target**

To ensure we maintain our 'lower than National Average' persistent absenteeism

To ensure our overall attendance improves to be well above the National Average

To ensure our fixed term and permanent exclusions remain at/below National Averages

Key - Better than NA      Approx 'at' NA      Worse than NA

## Attendance headline information

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Absence levels	5%	4.7%	4.3%
Disad absence	7.5%	7.7%	6.5%
Persistent absence levels	11.3%	11.5%	8.6%
Disad absence PA	23.9%	28.1%	23.6%

## Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Suspensions	2.28%	3.09%	20.8%
Permanent Exclusions	0.09%	0.00%	0.03%



# Effectiveness of Financial Management

Special Measures		Serious Weaknesses		Requires Improvement		Good		Outstanding	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- We judge our Financial Management effectiveness of the Trust as 'good/outstanding'

## Target

To ensure that financial monitoring continues to be effective

To ensure the strength of the Business Development Group continues to develop

The Trust has an experienced CFO who is accountable for the financial stability of the schools within the Trust and is being managed to an excellent standard. The CFO is also responsible for the Operations (Estates, HR, IT, Health and Safety) and significant improvements have been made across all areas. This is further strengthened with the appointment of the Trust Finance and Operations Lead and Trust Finance Admin roles.

The Finance Team and SBM's have delegated responsibility to the CFO, with termly and/or monthly meetings taking place to share best practice and provide leadership and direction to the Finance and BDG group.

A number of Internal and external audits taken place to review the financial processes and procedures and it has been noted, that as a Trust we are compliant, effective and efficient. The Trust are maximising the use of the Finance MIS systems across all schools and sharing best practice.

The Trust has seen growth with the number of schools increasing from seven to 11, over the last two years, processes and procedures have been embedded and they are now sharing centralised resources.

The CFO has ensured centralisation of processes, procedures and systems, which have generated efficiencies and the financial benefits rolled out to all schools.

## Target

Develop the Trust Finance and Operations Lead role to ensure they have effective financial oversight across the Trust.

## Target

Maintain the high standards for Internal Scrutiny and External Audits undertaken annually Embed the Estates Strategy to deliver the Estates Plan with the SCA funding that has been recently confirmed.

## Target

As the Trust grows develop the central services and procurement to ensure school efficiencies and providing best value are embedded in the Trust

# Effectiveness of Safeguarding

## We judge safeguarding to be effective across the Trust

### Target

To ensure the organisation, impact, monitoring and implementation of all safeguarding procedures remain effective in every setting .

### Safeguarding is effective because...

- Trust monitoring through peer reviews and annual safeguarding audits demonstrate robust procedures are in place at all schools.
- All OFSTED inspections state that safeguarding meets the required standards in all areas.
- Evidence of tenacious persual of any concerns are documented by DSLs and DDSLs
- The Trust ensure that every school has up to date training in all aspects of safeguarding training.
- KCSIE updates checked and understood by all employees.
- Schools demonstrate a strong understanding of their communities and build strong relationships with their distinct demographics.
- Trust schools share resources and good practice about specifc updates to changes in legislation.
- Attendance for all is strong across the Trust.
- All Trustees and Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and allegations management training.
- Pupil surveys (2024) State the following *"96% of children say they have never been bullied" , "99% of pupils say they feel safe at school", "100% of children say they know they can speak to someone if they feel worried"*
- The trust monitor E-safety within the curriculum and training for staff.
- Multi-agency support is used effectively to support children and families with more complex needs.

# Key priority overview

Focus area	Target	Strategies	Monitoring process	Responsibilities
Outcomes for pupils	To ensure progress and achievement for EYFS, Phonics, and KS2 remain above/well above NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bespoke peer reviews for each school to ensure areas of development are key focus</li> <li>Core Plans from schools scrutinised for effectiveness of prioritising key areas for development</li> <li>TDG deployed to support schools in key areas</li> <li>Moderation between Symphony schools</li> <li>SDG focus work in key areas</li> <li>Bespoke assistance for any new schools joining Symphony</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review outcomes</li> <li>NTS testing and monitoring of results</li> <li>Data meetings with school leaders</li> <li>Work of TDG and SDG</li> </ul>	CEO DoP Headteachers
	Disadvantaged pupils - To ensure achievement and progress in all areas continues to improve and that progress in all areas remains positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bespoke peer reviews for each school to focus on pupil premium as necessary</li> <li>Core Plans and Pupil premium plans from schools scrutinised for effectiveness of supporting disadvantaged pupils</li> <li>TDG deployed to support schools in key areas</li> <li>Focus on effectiveness of how pupil premium budget is spent by each school</li> <li>Pupil Premium SDG focus work in key areas</li> <li>Bespoke assistance for any new schools joining Symphony</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review outcomes</li> <li>NTS testing and monitoring of results</li> <li>Data meetings with school leaders</li> <li>Work of TDG and SDG</li> <li>Focus on Pupil Premium Spending plan / effectiveness</li> </ul>	CEO DoP Headteachers CFO Fin and Op Lead
Effectiveness of Governance and Leadership	To ensure skills for Trustees and Members continue to represent all areas of continual development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant training to be planned from outcomes of skills audit</li> <li>Investigation of new Trustees or Members should the need for specific skills arrive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of skills audits</li> </ul>	Chair of Trustees CEO CFO

Focus area	Target	Strategies	Monitoring process	Responsibilities
Effectiveness of School Improvement	Continually adapt peer reviews to ensure they are inline with current OFSTED frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that peer reviews are bespoke but follow current legislation and guidance from OFSTED inspection handbook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure that OFSTED reports align with Peer reviews</li> </ul>	CEO/ DoP and TDG Leader
	Ensure that external members join peer reviews to build in further QA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue relations with Inspiring Leaders and other local Trusts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links with other trusts continue to grow.</li> </ul>	CEO/DoP
	Teaching Development Group; Ensure that all key areas are covered by staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to enrol new members from Symphony staff and Symphony rising stars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All key areas are covered</li> </ul>	TDG Leader
	Ensure that staff have current educational knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use CPD and Inspiring leader meetings to ensure staff have up to date knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPD regularly attended by all</li> </ul>	DoP/ TDG Leader
Attendance and exclusions	To ensure we maintain our 'lower than National Average' persistent absenteeism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular attendance info from each school relating to PA.</li> <li>Ensure schools maintain their vigilant approach to tackling persistent absenteeism</li> <li>Ensure that schools receive effective attendance support from their external agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information from data dashboards</li> </ul>	DoP / CEO
	To ensure our overall attendance continues to be well above the National Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular attendance info from each school</li> <li>Ensure schools maintain their vigilant approach</li> <li>Ensure that schools receive effective attendance support from their external agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information from data dashboards</li> </ul>	DoP / CEO



Focus area	Target	Strategies	Monitoring process	Responsibilities
Effectiveness of Financial Management	To ensure feedback from Audits remain consistently of a high standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Finance Training to LGB's, Heads and School Staff</li> <li>• F &amp; O Lead deliver on going training on finance MIS systems to SBM's and Finance Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Scrutiny</li> <li>• External Audits</li> <li>• Submission of returns within DFE deadlines</li> </ul>	CFO F & O Lead BDG
	Develop metrics to benchmark schools in the same categories to increase efficiencies and savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to improve the finance processes and procedures as efficiencies are identified.</li> <li>• Deliver KPI's and ICFP via ISOT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark against DFE KPIs</li> <li>• Track efficiencies</li> <li>• Identify gaps in schools using ICFP and implement a suitable plan</li> </ul>	CFO F & O Lead BDG
	Deliver the Estates Strategy, linked to Net Carbon, Sustainability and H & S Agree and implement Estates Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estates priorities agreed with schools and Trustees</li> <li>• Appoint an estates lead</li> <li>• Appoint H&amp;S lead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estates Plan</li> <li>• Estates Lead</li> <li>• H &amp; S Lead</li> </ul>	CFO F & O Lead Estates Lead H & S Lead
	Allocate SCA funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how SCA funding will be allocated and the assessment model</li> <li>• Track income &amp; expenditure in the financial year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to I &amp; E to Trustees termly</li> <li>• Submit annual SCA return to DFE</li> </ul>	CFO F & O Lead Estates Lead H & S Lead
	Identify contracts and Services that can be centralised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H &amp; S contracts procured centrally</li> <li>• Identify IT hardware that can be procured centrally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EVERY to support with H &amp; S contracts e.g. Asbestos, Legionella, Fire etc.</li> <li>• IT Strategy to support focus of IT Hardware to be purchased centrally.</li> </ul>	CFO F & O Lead IT Support providers

Focus area	Target	Strategies	Monitoring process	Responsibilities
	Develop the central team to include Estates, H & S, IT & HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the Trust grows, increase capacity for H &amp; S and Estates Lead</li> <li>• Appoint IT Lead (15 schools)</li> <li>Implement the top five priorities as detailed in the IT Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust is at a point whereby full-time H &amp; S and Estates Lead can be appointed to manage H &amp; S and SCA funding as part of the Estates Plan</li> <li>As funding is secured appoint an IT Lead and internal HR support</li> </ul>	CEO CFO DoP F & O Lead
<b>Safeguarding</b>	To ensure the organisation, impact, monitoring and implementation of all safeguarding procedures remain effective in every setting .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue with robust monitoring</li> <li>Ensure that peer reviews have safeguarding focus</li> <li>Ensure good practice is shared between schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Reviews and safeguarding audits</li> </ul>	CEO and DoP