



Transforming Lives
EDUCATIONAL TRUST

A photograph of a male teacher with a beard and safety glasses, wearing a blue shirt and a purple lanyard, interacting with two young students in a science laboratory. The students are also wearing safety glasses and school uniforms. They are gathered around a piece of scientific equipment, possibly a fume hood. The background shows laboratory equipment and a large flexible duct.

School Improvement Approach

Working together to deliver excellence



Introduction

Great schools are relentless in their drive to improve.

It's difficult to make the right changes at the right time, whilst keeping culture strong and standards high. In today's schools this is ever more challenging for leaders, and testing on resources and time. For schools working on their own, or without the support and security of a school trust, these tensions are magnified.

That's why our approach to school improvement is rooted in collaboration and partnership. Every member of the TLET team has a shared commitment to our vision to be the transformers of a better tomorrow for our children, young people, and their communities. This unites leaders across our family of academies to work together in the best interests of others. As a Trust, our approach to school improvement provides the tools, time, and talent to facilitate collaboration-based improvement, bringing together the best people, thinking, and resources to support lasting and positive change. Put simply, we do better together.

Each phase of our school improvement approach has been developed using tools and frameworks to make school improvement accessible, inclusive, impactful, and sustainable - reducing the burden on leaders and maximising impact across all aspects of school life.



Sian Hartle
Director of Education



Helen Stevenson
Chief Executive Officer

About our Trust

Transforming Lives Educational Trust is a family of academies. Everything we do reflects our ambitions for pupils, students, and wider stakeholders alike.

Our ambitions

At the core of this were three strategic ambitions that drive everything that we do, we call this ‘The TLET Way’.

Through the transformative values of courage, kindness and loyalty, together we:



Nurture
Potential

We flourish in
the places we
create together.



Inspire
Community

We champion each
other to make
a difference.



Deliver
Excellence

We strive to
achieve our best.



A principles-led approach

We know that all schools and their communities are different, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to meeting school improvement needs.

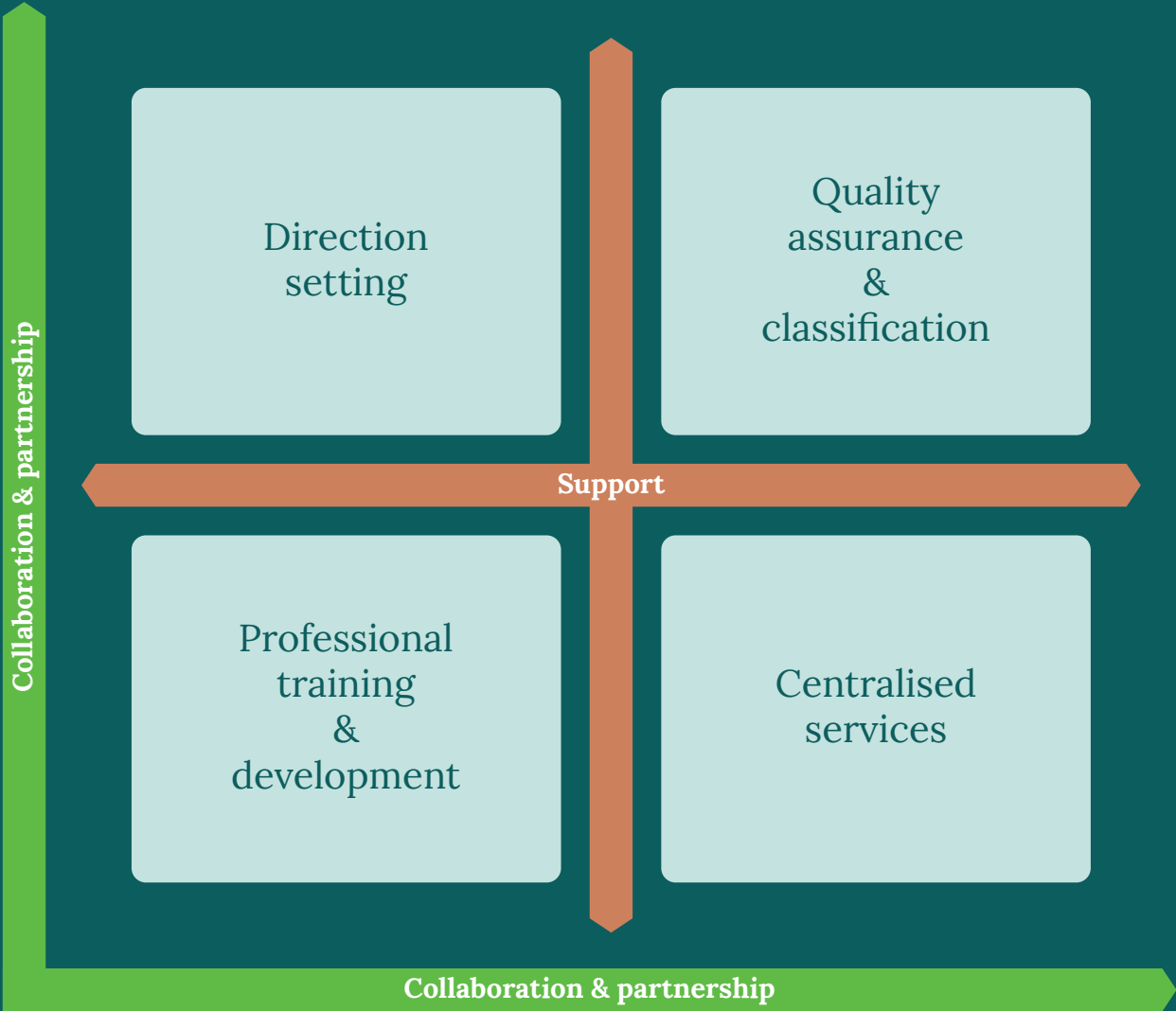
Underpinning our approach are some core principles, giving us a platform on which to deliver an effective school improvement model that is highly responsive to academy needs – with the sole aim to consistently deliver excellence for our children and staff.

These principles are:

- School improvement activity is underpinned by our values of courage, kindness, and loyalty.
- Approaches are firmly grounded in research and evidence-based strategies.
- We collaborate across and between our academies, sharing expertise for the benefit of all.
- Resources are deployed equitably so that all pupils, students, and staff receive what they need, when they need it.
- Operating systems are aligned, where possible, to support collaboration and reduce workload.



Our School Improvement Model



Support

At the heart of our school improvement activity is the support we provide to our academies. All schools need support to achieve their goals, and in varying amounts at any one time.

Leaders of TLET schools can rely on the certainty and security of the support our Trust provides in helping them to drive forward improvements.

Our school improvement team work with school leaders to scope academy development plans, using these as the foundation for identifying support. Plans are based on sustainable

short-to-medium term improvement goals to ensure that our academies are looking beyond the current academic year.

We focus on sourcing the best support at the best time. Typically, this support will come from our on-hand school improvement team which includes Local Leaders of Education, drawing on their expertise in leadership, curriculum, pedagogy, and safeguarding.

We also enjoy strong relationships with external partners that broaden the support we provide to academies, including those with Teaching Hubs, educational and recruitment consultants, National and Local Leaders of Education and Governance, universities, and neighbouring school trusts.

Direction setting

School improvement without a clear destination is likely to end up off course and academy leaders are best placed to determine the school improvement priorities and goals for their academy.

By working in partnership with academy leaders, we aim to empower them to innovate with courage in the best interests of the community they serve, whilst providing the support leaders need to focus on driving improvement.

Setting goals and targets is an important starting point of any school improvement strategy as it provides direction and motivation. It enables our leaders to focus their resources and efforts to ensure consistent progress over time.

Working with academy leaders, we set short-to-medium term targets across a range of metrics to ensure academy performance and improvement can be measured. They include:

- Targets for each of the key benchmarks – Good Level of Development, Phonics, KS1, KS2, KS4 and KS5.
- To ensure parity, fairness, and transparency, these targets are derived consistently across all academies, through a single applied methodology.

- To ensure accountability, the main target data points are directly comparable with national statistics.
- The targets are agreed annually and inform academy development plan priorities, which become the focus of Trust support.

These targets have a focus on being challenging but achievable and are designed to ensure rapid progress or sustained high performance.

It is important for our pupils and students that we are ambitious for everyone, and we commit in our Equity Pledge to ensuring that all pupils make better progress in our academies than they might do in other settings.

Quality assurance and classification

We believe that school improvement is a continuum and that all our academies can improve further, regardless of their results or latest Ofsted judgement.

Knowing our academies well is the cornerstone of our school improvement approach and having a deep knowledge and understanding of performance, in all its facets, means that support can be given with precision, maximising impact for our communities.

Our rigorous trust-wide quality assurance framework and schedule means that we can utilise all the evidence of school performance, from the many aspects of school life, to provide a realistic and rounded evaluation of an academy's current position, its potential risks, and where improvements can be made.

Working in collaboration with academy leaders and using a range of indicators, from internal and external quality assurance activities, we can determine an academy's health. These indicators cover the full spectrum of school life and direct our annual cycle of quality assurance activities. The evidence from this builds a comprehensive picture of our academies, which we use to determine levels of need and the types of support we provide against our classification framework.



Professional training and development

Growing greatness in our staff powers school improvement by unlocking the potential of our children and young people. That's why at TLET, professional training and development for all our staff is at the heart of our People Pledge to nurture potential. We know that when our staff thrive, everyone else flourishes.

Our approach to professional development is shaped by evidence-based thinking which we use to facilitate better working practices, better partnerships, better outcomes, and better work-life balance, whilst at the same time keeping our programmes accessible to all and manageable for busy people. They range from trust-wide, whole staff 'essentials' training that make sure everyone feels well-prepared for the day-to-day, through to individualised pathways that get others ready for the next step in their career.

This commitment begins at the start of the professional journey with our highly successful Initial Teacher Training provision and our excellent on-boarding and induction programme for new staff.

Our universal professional training and development offer includes:

- Trust-wide annual conference
- safeguarding training
- online bite-size training
- career pathways
- subject networks
- leadership development programmes
- annual Trust programme to address identified needs across all settings

We also have a growing number of professional networks, such as SENDCos, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Early Career Teachers, middle leadership, and senior leadership, which meet on a half-termly basis. There are also a range of subject specific, cross-phase networks for teachers as well as role-specific networks for support staff. These important sessions, aside from delivering exciting, professional development, also provide valuable relationship-building opportunities amongst the TLET family to support professional life and wellbeing.

Through our strong partnerships, we can ensure access to external and national qualifications such as NPQs, which a large proportion of staff undertake, facilitated by our school improvement team.

Centralised services

School leadership is diverse and all encompassing, and more often than not leaders find it hard to balance the urgency of day-to-day school operation with the importance of strategic school improvement. It can feel like there's not enough time in the day.

That is why we have invested in a highly effective and efficient central services team so that all our academies, regardless of size, have access to high-quality support. This is a key enabler for school improvement, helping to lighten the burden on school leaders so that they can do more of what they love – supporting our pupils and students to have a second-to-none school experience.

Our central team departments are led by industry experts who provide core services in:

- School improvement
- Finance
- HR
- Estates
- Operations & compliance
- Safeguarding
- IT



Appendix: School Improvement Framework

Classification	Universal	Enhanced	Bespoke/Urgent
Sustain	Business Services - TLET adds value to its academies through the provision of core centralised functions and services (Finance, Operations, HR and IT) - See Central Service Framework document. - The core purpose of the Central Business Team and the services it provides is to unburden and return capacity to academy leaders, thus enabling them to concentrate on continuous school improvement and pupil outcomes. Education Service	Where an academy is classified as 'Sustain' the enhanced aspect of academy improvement focuses on leveraging the leadership and any other areas of expertise to support the wider improvement model to the benefit of all academies in the Trust. - Additional professional growth for the Principal – professional coaching, executive leadership opportunities and national training opportunities - Greater involvement in wider school improvement across the Trust for identified staff with required skills sets and expertise - Both of these provide additional capacity and expertise for system leadership - Increased focus on 3-5 year planning	- Bespoke solutions to a defined, temporary need - Risk based approach – individual and time sensitive. - Intervention from the Trust's Executive Team or other commissioned specialists.
Improve	Target-setting – Target setting is an important aspect of a school improvement strategy as it provides direction and motivation. It enables leaders to focus their resources and efforts to ensure that each academy makes consistent progress over time. Every academic year the Trust sets targets with each Academy to ensure school performance and improvement can be measured. These targets are challenging but achievable and they are designed to ensure rapid progress or sustained high performance. Quality Assurance and Classification – a rigorous trust-wide quality assurance framework and schedule means that we can utilise all the evidence of school performance to provide a realistic and rounded evaluation of an academy's current position, its potential risks, and where development is needed. This is reported in the academy's Evaluation Statement (AES) Principals and the Local Governing Boards assess the current classification of the academy using the TLET classification framework in the AES and rate how secure the current position is.	Where an academy is categorised as 'Improve' the enhanced aspect of academy improvement focuses on continued sustainable development with enhanced oversight but also begins to identify and utilise potential contributions of expertise. - Increased frequency of link meetings with Principal with ADP priorities addressed directly - Greater development of leadership at distributed levels and informed succession planning - Recognition of increasing ability of leaders to provide expertise and collaboration across the Trust through existing Trust structures such as Professional Networks.	- Bespoke solutions to a defined, temporary need - Risk based approach – individual and time sensitive. - Intervention from the Trust's Executive Team or other commissioned specialists
Repair	Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – Through our People Pledge, TLET is committed to high quality CPD and training for all its staff in every academy. The universal offer includes: - ITT and Early Career Framework programmes - staff conference - role-specific training - online CPD Pathways - annual Trust programme of CPD to address national or local changes or demands - Senior and Middle Leadership events - Professional networks (specific to role for both teaching and support staff)	Academies in the Trust, or those joining the Trust, working at the first two stages of the four-stage model (stabilise and repair) will access our core offer but will have enhanced challenge and support, proportionate to identified need as follows: - Partnership in completion of an ADP and Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) - Weekly link meetings with Principal and with Chair of LGB to review ADP/SEF - Brokering of external reviews to support development in specific areas of need - Modelling of best practice and aligned approaches - Planning for distributed leadership	- Bespoke solutions to a defined, temporary need - Risk based approach – individual and time sensitive. - Intervention from the Trust's Executive Team or other commissioned specialists.
Stabilise	Leadership support for Principals – one-to-one link meetings with Executive Leaders, coaching, TLET Leadership group membership and active involvement in collaborative working practices and wider Trust development. Wellbeing support for Principals and Senior Leaders is an important part of our universal offer, acknowledging the pressure of roles at this level.	- Partnership in completion of a Rapid Improvement Plan (RIP) and rigorous Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) - Support for implementation of best practice policies and aligned approaches - Weekly link meetings with Principal and with Chair of LGB to review ADP - Mentoring for the school leaders with enhanced programmes of individualised support including supervision/ wellbeing support - Provision of organisational structures to generate improvement - Support and guidance around Ofsted schedule and EIF (if applicable) - Increased governance oversight to ensure the effectiveness of rapid improvement. This may include: weekly CEO reports to the Chair, Link Trustee participation in LGB meetings to monitor progress, focused visits to the school and reporting back to the Trust Board.	- Bespoke solutions to a defined, temporary need - Risk based approach – individual and time sensitive. - Intervention from the Trust's Executive Team or other commissioned specialists.
Monitoring and Governance	Target setting – The targets are agreed and reviewed annually at Trust Board and inform the priorities in academy development plans (ADP). Targets and ADPs are reviewed by the Local Governing Board for each academy. Quality Assurance and Classification – The classification outcomes are moderated by the Director of Education and reported to the Trust Board as part of the Trust's risk approach. Continuing – Professional Development (CPD): Recorded and reviewed on SCHOOT and Every and reviewed by the Director of Education and Head of HR Leadership support	Individual LGBs, Chairs and Link Trustees to monitor impact of actions via ADP, SEF and AES	Executive Trust Leaders to monitor impact of commissioned specialists and projects

Academies who are new to the TLET family

We warmly welcome the approach of those academies seeking to join the TLET family. Academies that join TLET will undergo a full analysis of the current status of the academy using the Trust's Education Due Diligence Process. This process will be undertaken by the CEO and Director of Education and a classification will be provided, followed by the collaborative creation of an Academy Development Plan to best support school improvement

Our TLET family



ASHLAWN
SCHOOL



Infants



Juniors



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SCHOOL

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