

BIRMINGHAM SPECIAL SCHOOLS CO-OPERATIVE TRUST

Strategic Plan (Collaboration Agreement)

26th April 2022

Between:

1 Longwill School for Deaf Children;

2 Dame Ellen Pinsent School;

3 Hamilton School;

4 Baskerville School;

5 The Pines School;

6 Fox Hollies School

(together, the "Schools")

7 Wilson Stuart School;

8 University College Birmingham

9 University of Birmingham

10 Hays

(together, the "Partners")

(taken together, the Schools and the Partners are the "Parties")

Background

(A) The Parties are committed to supporting the activities of Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust (the "**Trust**") and have agreed to work together in good faith to:

- a. advance the education of the learners of the Schools;
- b. advance the education of other members of the community; and
- c. otherwise to benefit the community

in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.

(B) The Parties agree that school improvement, performance and development of its staff are key areas of the Trust's strategy and that they all have a shared interest in contributing to the vision of the Trust with a range of expertise to support its aims and objectives

Co-operative Values

1. The Parties agree that in discharging their obligations under this Agreement they shall at all times act in accordance with the national Co-operative Society values self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity, honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.
2. When considering applications from new member or partner schools or organisations, the Trust will keep these values in mind as an essential characteristic for admission to the Trust.

Co-operative Trust Values

Having agreed to uphold the Trust's values, the Parties agree to adhere to a set of working protocols which will underpin all aspects of our collaboration. The parties will work in a manner which is underpinned by:

- a. Trust
- b. Confidentiality
- c. Open and honest discussion
- d. An appreciation of how actions can impinge and impact on others
- e. A focus upon the workings of the Trust at a collaborative, rather than at individual school level

Focus

The focus of the activities of the Trust shall be on the following key areas:

- a. Ensuring high quality provision for special education learners;
- b. High quality professional development to promote leadership at all levels;
- c. Creating mutually beneficial, meaningful partnerships.

Trust Operational Matters

The central point of contact for Trust activities and communications sent in relation to this Agreement is the Trust Project Lead, contact details: bssct@deps.ac

The Parties acknowledge that the Trust board meets on a termly basis. Each meeting is to be attended by:

- a. the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors/Foundation Governor of each School;
- b. the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors of each Partner School.
- c. representative from each Partner organisation
- d. staff, community and parent representatives from Forum, once formed.

Dates of meetings of the Trust board are agreed in the summer term meeting each year. Quoracy for the meetings will be at least 50% of the total number of Board members. Proxy voting (via email) by Head Teachers will be permitted, however, representatives of the Head Teachers (eg, DHTs) who attend the meeting in the event of the Head Teacher's unavailability, will not be eligible to vote at the meetings.

The Trust will consider new member or partner's applications thoughtfully. This would be through a formal application process, which would take place on a termly basis. The co-operative values of the Trust guide and influence the open, democratic and caring ethos, which is held by all Trust schools. Consideration of the ethos, values and principles of new schools is therefore important to ascertain the extent to which new school would align themselves to the existing Trust. Therefore, any new applicant school would have the opportunity to visit the schools within the existing Trust and, likewise, Trust members and partners would welcome the opportunity to meet with school staff and visit the school as part of the joining process.

Schools' Obligations

The schools' leadership and governors will ensure that the Schools shall:

- a. agree and engage with an annual development plan to contribute to school improvement;

- b. subject always to the provisions of data protection legislation, share agreed data with one another at key points in the academic year. Such data shall include but shall not be limited to pupil progress and attendance data;
- c. commit to release staff for to support subject development and CPD.
- d. permit at least one representative from another School to sit on the interview panel for the recruitment of head teacher/head of school posts, and agree to support the recruitment process for other posts when invited to do so;
- e. jointly contribute to maintaining a vibrant and dynamic Trust website and newsletter, which supports the work of the Trust as well as providing information as to its work to the wider community;
- f. offer expert advice, guidance and support upon any aspect of SEN to member and partner schools.

Partner Schools Obligations

The Partner School, Wilson Stuart School, agrees to conform to all of the expectations and requirements of Member Schools as outlined in the Background, Focus, Cooperative Values, Operational Matters and School Obligations sections as previously described.

Partners' Obligations

The Partners acknowledge that they have been selected carefully for their expertise and ability to contribute to the vision of the Trust and agree that they shall respectively provide the following services to the Schools, in each case in accordance with a protocol agreed between the Trust and the Partner in question:

University College Birmingham, as an academic organisation, shall:

- i. Support CPD to a range of staff in schools from non-accredited through to masters level qualifications
- ii. Work in partnership with staff in schools or independently to conduct research regarding areas of mutual interest and benefit
- iii. Work in partnership to develop apprenticeship staffing within the schools for both support staff and aspiring teachers
- iv. Work in partnership on Initial teacher training including school direct
- v. Continue to develop placement activity for UCB learners in school settings
- vi. Support SEN development
- vii. Provide aspirational activities for learners
- viii. Provide a venue/base for the co-operative trust meetings

University of Birmingham, as an academic organisation will strive to provide:

- i. Career Progression Development programmes that school staff can apply to;
- ii. Aspirational activities that school learners can engage with;
- iii. Informed advice and mentoring to school staff
- iv. Opportunities for schools to be involved with the University's research;
- v. Signpost University students to placement opportunities at the "Trust"
- vi. Provide a venue/base for the co-operative trust meetings

Hays

- i. Advice on recruitment
- ii. Provide a range of CPD events across the year as well as priority access to workshops, seminars and networking events.
- iii. Support Student access to employment.
- iv. Offer Safeguarding Support at a reduced rate
- v. Provide a venue/base for the co-operative trust meetings

The Partners shall each send a representative to each meeting of the Trust board wherever relevant and practicable.

Trustees' Obligations

Trustees' terms of office are effective during the period of their relevant role.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees is elected annually and will hold office for the period of a year.

Any one of the Foundation maintained schools who become a Partner as a result of becoming an Academy, joining a Multi Academy Trust or otherwise shall:

- Refer to partner school obligations

Financial

All schools and academy partners shall contribute, as above, a percentage of their annual budget (place + top-up funding) towards a Trust budget, which will be held in the Trust bank account.

The amount of each school's contribution will be reviewed annually at the summer meeting.

Termination

Any Party may terminate its own obligations under this Agreement on one academic year's notice.

General

Each Party is responsible for its own costs in relation to its Trust activities unless agreed otherwise.

Participation in the activities of the Trust shall not preclude any of the Parties from continuing to work in or co-operate with any other partnerships in which they may be involved.

This agreement has been entered into on the date stated at the beginning of it and reviewed on an annual basis at the Birmingham Special Schools Co-operative Trust Board Meeting in the summer term.

Agreement adopted by the Board of Trustees at meeting on 21st June 2022.

Signed**Chair**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees