



ASPIRATIONS

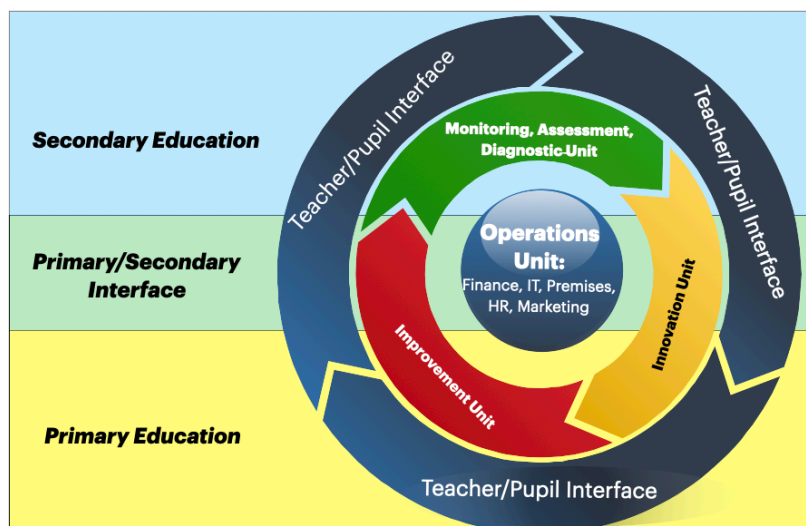
Aspirations Education Hub: The redesign of our school improvement model

The aim of our school improvement model is to diagnose, support, improve.

The present model has worked well over the years, leading to the present situation where all our academies are making good progress and financially the trust is in a good position. The support and monitoring model is essentially the same as when the trust started nearly ten years ago, albeit on a larger scale. As a Trust we model innovation and the time is right to look at what we do and to slightly streamline and improve the current model. With the continued growth of the Trust, the post Covid period, and a new academy joining us in September, it now seems to be a good time to further improve the system. The key issues that this proposed model seeks to address are:

- A clarification of the role of the Regional CEO
- A revision of the trust monitoring of academies
- A return to the pre-Covid levels of support for schools requiring significant improvement
- A development of teacher CPD
- A focus on staff and student wellness
- A drive for creativity and innovation in education in line with our five year plan
- Moving all academies to a position where they are performing as the Aspirations expected 'Lighthouse' site.

Aspirations Education Hub



Monitoring, Assessment, Diagnostic Unit

This unit drives the standards of each academy. It monitors all aspects of academy performance, diagnoses strengths and weaknesses and assesses performance

Improvement Unit

This unit works closely with the other units providing support and training to help improve the performance of teachers, support staff, pupils and academies.

Innovation Unit

This unit is where good practice is shared, developed and spread across academies. It is also the place where new approaches and ideas are trialed and developed. This unit is the main link with employability and student leadership

Operations unit

This unit supports the work of all academies by providing the essential support to help academies operate effectively - finance, IT, premise, HR, marketing, etc

The proposed model incorporates the development of the Aspirations Education Hub. The aim here is to fully support the teacher/pupil interface where teaching and learning takes place. This would be achieved by establishing three operational units:

1. The Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit
2. The Improvement Unit
3. The Innovation Unit

These would be supported by the Operations Unit.

What are we trying to achieve?

1. To drive the full implementation of the Trust's five-year plan.
2. To ensure all Aspirations Academies become 'Lighthouse' sites.




The monitoring process

Each academy will aim to provide a high quality education, relevant to the needs of the 21st century, for all pupils. The ultimate aim is for each academy to move towards the attainment of 'lighthouse site' status. Monitoring, diagnosis and support will cover the following **performance indicators**:

1. Pupil attainment and progress
2. Behaviour and attitudes
3. Curriculum - coverage of the National Curriculum, examination requirements and curriculum innovation (ensuring challenge and engagement).
4. Pupil and staff wellness
5. Staff development
6. Employability and skills development
7. The Aspirations Framework and Student Leadership
8. Innovation and creativity
9. Working with and supporting other academies
10. Leadership and management

Each Academy will annually be placed in one of the following three categories following a full diagnosis of their performance. This decision will be made by the EOB. *In 2021/22 the current system of stage 1 and stage 2 academies will still be used, although academies will work towards the achievement of the 10 performance indicators, with the first Lighthouse sites awarded this status in June 2022:*

- *Lighthouse Sites.*
- *Aspiring Sites.*
- *Emerging Sites.*

Site Type	Description	Features
Lighthouse Sites 	Sites that exemplify the actions expressed in the trust vision and can serve as models to other academies; Such academies sustain deep, systemic change and achieve recognised national priorities. Aspirations will showcase these sites.	Lighthouse sites must be at the expected level in terms of Trust monitoring evidence against ALL the ten performance indicators outlined above. They must also have at least one particular strength that can be shared with other schools
Aspiring Sites 	Sites with initiatives underway that position them with the potential to soon become Lighthouse Sites. Aspirations will facilitate support to ensure these sites attain the Lighthouse category as soon as possible.	Aspiring sites should be the expected level in five or more of the performance indicators.
Emerging Sites 	Sites that are early in their practices and processes and demonstrate potential to become Lighthouse Sites within three to five years. Aspirations will support these sites in their work.	Emerging sites are working towards the expected level in at least five of the performance indicators.

An explanation of roles and functions

- The Regional CEOs** would link the four units (Operations Unit, Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit, Improvement Unit, Innovation Unit) to help manage their regions strategically and to promote the aims of the Trust. The Regional CEO role would become more strategic, to offer Principals support but also to challenge and hold them to account for driving the Improvement Plan. CEOs need to visit the schools regularly, every two weeks, but not to diagnose issues, the role should mainly focus on working with the Principal on supporting the successful implementation of the Improvement Plan and to guide them on their path to the 'Lighthouse' status. CEOs should do two or three monitoring visits to our academies outside their region each year to help to moderate standards. CEOs manage all aspects of their region in delivering the Trust's aims and working towards the implementation of the five-year plan. The Regional CEOs help Principals develop their Improvement Plans and meet regularly with them to monitor and support progress. Regional CEOs still regularly conduct learning walks as they need to maintain a very good knowledge of each academy. Each CEO will also have a national, whole trust responsibility ensuring full support and management of the operation and oversight of primary and secondary education.
- The Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit.** The monitoring role we believe should be performed by the Trust's Standards team, re-shaped as the Monitoring Assessment and Diagnostic Unit. This would be led by the National Director of Education and Standards, supported by several seconded Specialist Leaders in Education/[Lead Specialist Teachers](#) (primary maths and primary literacy, secondary English, maths and

- Academies doing well in all areas, 'Lighthouse' sites, would have a termly light touch monitoring visit
- Academies expecting an Ofsted inspection would have monitoring visits but also a bespoke Ofsted related monitoring and support plan
- Academies operating as 'Aspiring' or 'Emerging' sites would have a range of half-termly monitoring visits
- The annual review process would be replaced by the above monitoring system.

The Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Team would maintain an updated dashboard for the Executive Operational Board recording the position of each academy against the ten performance indicators.

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The Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Team will assess each academy against the performance indicators criteria (Currently being worked on):

- **The Improvement Unit.** The aim of the Improvement Unit is to offer strategic professional development and school improvement support for the Trust, academy, team and individual, with a positive impact on pupil outcomes and staff recruitment and retention.

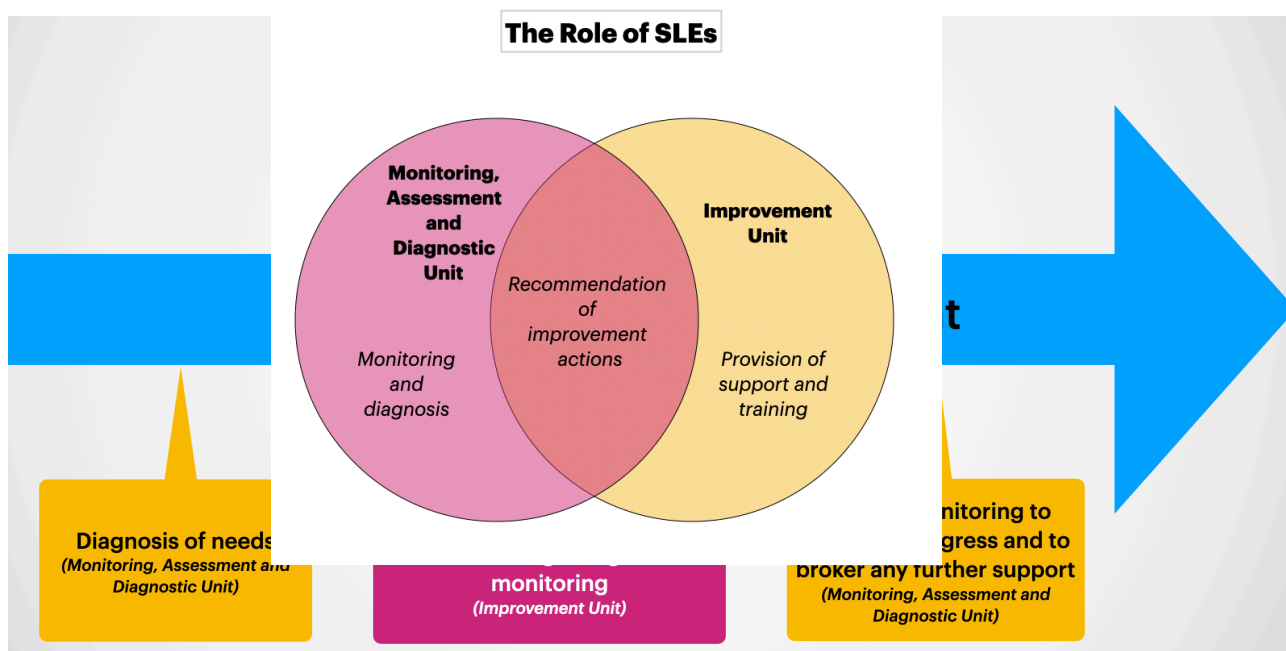
Building on the aims of the academy's improvement plan (SIP) and the findings from the Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostics Unit, the Improvement Unit will work with the Principal and Regional CEO to formulate a bespoke, strategic Professional Learning and Development Plan for the academy. This agile plan will be in place to respond immediately and provide timely access to high quality professional development opportunities. It will enable the principal to create or further develop an enabling environment within their academy, where a culture of learning and research drives staff development and improves teaching and learning. Every teacher, and other specific staff members, will have a Teacher Development Roadmap, which is strategically linked to the academy's improvement plan (SIP).

The Improvement Unit will utilise existing known expertise available within the academy, region and Trust. As well as providing access to a broad suite of internal and external training and learning programmes, which are available at a local and national level and may carry external accreditations. Academies will be audited to highlight strengths that can be harnessed to provide support across the Trust. Starting with the 'Lighthouse' sites, the aim would be for every academy to become a satellite, specialist learning and development provider; at a regional or Trust-wide level.

SLEs will play a key role in the new Improvement Unit. Lead SLEs will be centrally funded to be released one day per week to provide training and coaching in their own and other academies, as planned in the Professional Learning and Development Plans for each academy. SLEs will also work as part of the Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit, supporting the monitoring of all academies.

Overall, the Improvement Unit would manage:

- All Trust-wide training and development courses, including the Incubator programmes
- Links to external accreditations, including new NPQs and apprenticeships
- Training and deployment of SLEs
- Aspirations training
- Applied Trans-discipline Learning training
- Early Career Teacher training and monitoring, through regional ECT Leads
- Support for regional training and development
- Academy professional development & learning audits, and actions



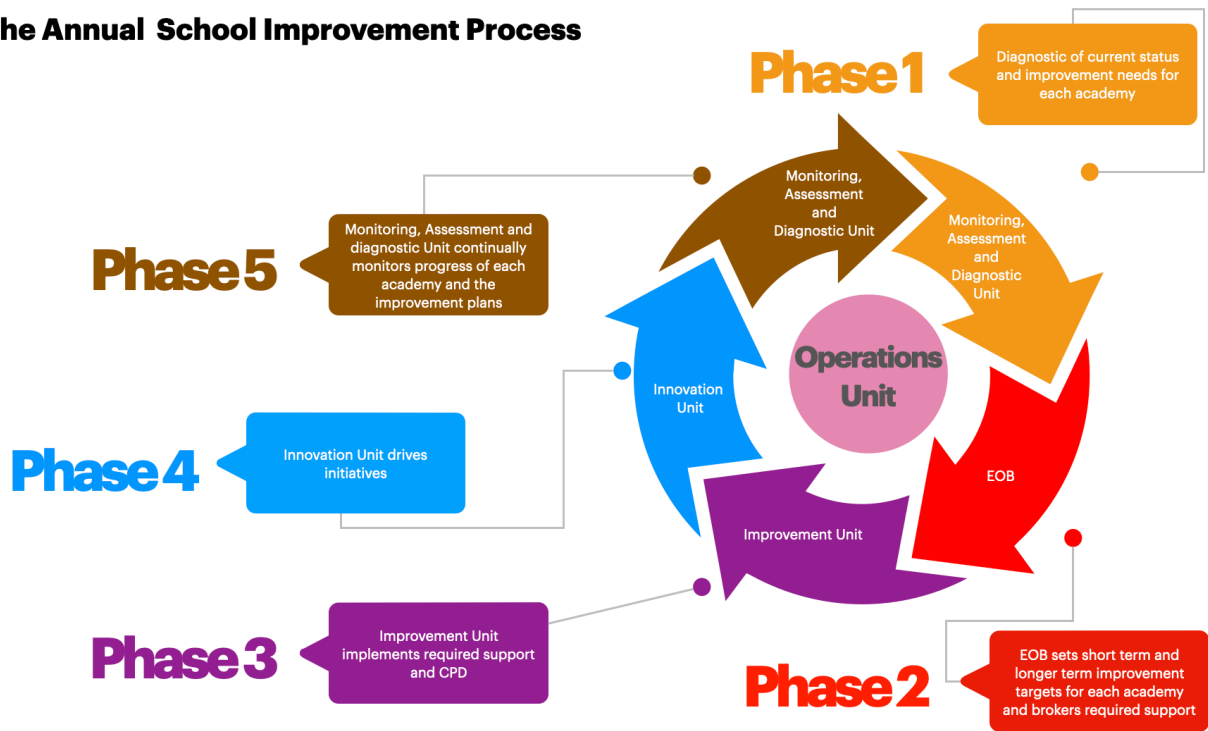
- **The innovation unit** would be where good practice is shared, developed and spread across academies. It is also the place where new approaches and ideas are trialled and developed. This unit is the main link with employability, curriculum development and student leadership. The Innovation Unit would manage and drive initiatives such as KS2/3 No Limits curriculum, the Aspirations Employability Diploma and the Aspirations Framework. With the development of ideas through the Innovation Unit it will be increasingly important to link research with the impact of the initiatives.

Management of the Aspirations Education Hub

The Managing Director and the Deputy Managing Director would manage the Aspirations Education Hub:

- **Managing Director (MD):**
 - To ensure the successful operation of all elements of the Aspirations Education Hub with all Aspirations Academies becoming or working towards 'Lighthouse' sites within the scope of the five-year plan. New academies joining the Trust would have 5 years to reach this point.
 - The MD would directly manage the Operations Unit and the Innovation Unit
 - The MD would line manage the Regional CEOs and the National Director of Education and Standards
- **Deputy Managing Director:**
 - To oversee the teaching, learning, assessment and training elements of the Aspirations Education Hub

The Annual School Improvement Process



- Directly manage the Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit and the Improvement Unit

Accountability and Governance

To ensure full transparency and accountability there will be regular reporting to both the Regional Trust Boards and the main Trust Board:

- The leads of the Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit and the Improvement Unit will report each half term to the Regional Board in the form of a template outlining the progress each academy is making as an emerging, aspiring or lighthouse site.
- Each term a full report from each unit will be provided for the Trust board.

Appendix:

Full explanation of roles and functions

Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit
Diagnoses the needs of each academy to help drive short-term and long-term Improvement Plans towards the goal of becoming a 'Lighthouse' site.
Working with Regional CEO devises short-term and long-term improvement plans for each academy
Regular monitoring of all academies
Organisation and utilisation of SLE's, Principals, SLT members, regional CEO's in the monitoring process
Reporting to EOB on progress of each academy against the 10 performance indicators and maintaining monitoring logs and EOB dashboards
Contribution on EOB in deciding on the nature and range support provided by the Improvement Unit for each academy
Provision of Ofsted preparation support
Management of the assessment processes for all key stages

Improvement Unit
Provide strategic professional development and school improvement support for all academies - manage all CPD at national and regional level
Build on the aims of each academy's improvement plan (SIP) and the findings from the Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostics Unit, to formulate a bespoke, strategic Professional Learning and Development Plan for the academy. (Working with the EOB and Principal)
Develop a culture of learning and research to drive staff development and improve teaching and learning
Ensure every teacher has a Teacher Development Roadmap, which is strategically linked to the academy's improvement plan (SIP).
Utilise existing known expertise available within the academy, region and Trust.
Provide access to a broad suite of internal and external training and learning programmes, which are available at a local and national level and may carry external accreditations
Audit academies to highlight strengths that can be harnessed to provide support across the Trust. Starting with the 'Lighthouse' sites, the aim is for every academy to become a satellite, specialist learning and development provider; at a regional or Trust-wide level.
Manage SLEs to play a key role in the new Improvement Unit.

Innovation Unit
Share and develop good practice across all academies
Trial and develop new ideas and approaches to teaching and learning
Manage the development and provision of employability across the trust

Manage the Aspirations framework and student leadership
Manage curriculum development across the trust
Manage the research process

Operations Unit
Central Finance Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial budget setting meeting with the Academies to discuss and offer advice and calculations on proposed budget. • Confirmation/lock of agreed budget on the financial system(Sage) as per board approved budget plan(aids in effective budget setting). • Finance Budget Report for period1-12. • Budget Monitoring Reports (BMR) and Cumulative Expense Analysis (CEA) reconciliation. • Produce management Accounts report for period 1-12 and discussion with Academy. • Compliance with ESFA deadlines to submit reports such as VAT submittal, balances and reserves • Processing of salary actuals - monthly. • Clearing of salary suspense items - monthly. • Clearing of salary commitments - monthly. • Process monthly system journals for salaries through fund to bank/payroll control route. • Input any salary/pension/NI percentage changes on the financial system in accordance with latest government updates. • Service Term Mapping (salary report used for management purposes). • Investigation of material salary variances and notifying school/payroll department to adjust accordingly. • Preparation and completion of closing the old year on the Sage financial system. • Preparation and completion of opening the New Year on Sage financial system. • Producing management reports and attendance to finance committee meetings. • Producing a specific Academy based Bench Marking Report (1 per year). • Producing a cash flow statement on behalf of all academies to ensure a health bank balance throughout the year. • Payroll control account reconciliation – investigate any material differences and notify school/ payroll department. • Remote support (offsite) • Financial statement preparation and completion.(External Audit)
Central and Regional Premises Team

- Planned Maintenance
- Reactive Maintenance
- Capital Projects - Feasibility, design & Project Management
- Contract Management
- Emergency Response
- Statutory Compliance Management
- Planned Works
- Project/Works Risk Assessment & Method Statements
- Energy & Sustainability Management
- Insurance Claim Management
- ESFA & DfE Reporting
- Health and safety

Central IT Team

- IT ServiceDesk Monitoring - The local IT teams respond to Service desk tickets raised in Academies within the Trust. Escalations to the third line when required.
- IT Security - Antivirus, Firewall and Filtering management
- Email management
- Network Management
- Google Tenancy Management
- Trust device support (Personal devices not supported)
- Software Management
- Hardware installations
- Liaising with third party Vendors
- On and Off site Backup Management
- Audio Visual Management
- Local Printer management
- Wifi Management
- Device leasing
- Internet contracts
- Phones Systems
- IT software and hardware Procurement

Central HR, Governance and Compliance Team

HR

- Development and review of HR policies and template HR documents (e.g. employment contracts) for use in academies
- Advice and, as necessary, direct support relating to HR casework (probation, disciplinary, capability, grievance, absence management, restructuring/redundancy, TUPE) including, in liaison with the Trust's lead for safeguarding, HR case work associated with safeguarding issues (most particularly, allegations against staff) *(most often it would remain necessary for a manager within the Academy to play a key role in progressing the case work)*
- Advice relating to queries about pay and terms and conditions of employment (includes payment in lieu calculations relating to term time only contracts; teachers' directed time; interpretation of sick pay scheme, maternity/adoption/shared parental leave provisions; flexible working requests)
- Support with trade union relations (including holding regular meetings with national representatives) *(there would still be a need for Principals to engage with unions at a local level (if necessary, with support from the central HR team) but this would not generally extend to negotiations about policies determined at a trust wide level)*
- Support in liaising with E-Teach and Retinue to ensure academies are making best use of resources available for staff recruitment and direct support to schools in dealing with appointment processes requiring a certificate of sponsorship (appointment of non UK nationals)
- For newly opening schools - support with their staff recruitment processes
- Advice on apprenticeships for staff support for administrative and approval processes relating to the Apprenticeship Levy

Compliance

- Advice/support relating to dealing with complaints (most often it would remain necessary for a manager within the Academy to play a key role in progressing case work associated with a complaint but with input from the central HR&C team)
- Support in liaising with Judicium regarding GDPR issues and FOI requests
- Developing template GDPR related policies provided by Judicium to be appropriate for use by Aspirations academies
- Advice/support in other compliance matters such as details that academies need to publish on their websites and policies they need to have in place
- Advice to schools on processes relating to admissions (e.g. consultation requirements for proposed changes to arrangements) and direct support to newly opening schools in their admissions process
- Support to schools in their work on developing and maintaining an up to date risk register

Governance

- Clerking of Regional Board meetings
- Advice/support to academies in parent governor election process
- Support in induction and administration of training for Regional Governors

Central Media, Marketing Team

- Crisis Comms: Dealing with any issues that are likely to attract negative media headlines for our schools.
- Press & Media: Producing stories/content showcasing the work taking place in our 16 academies which will then be sent to local press, national press, TV, Radio, trade press.
- Social Media: All stories produced are posted on our Twitter & Facebook as standard and LinkedIn when appropriate.
- Marketing: Producing content for advertorials, scripts for radio ads and leaflets.

Other Central Team Roles	
Managing Director	
Strategically manage all aspects of the trust	
Ensure the successful operation of all elements of the Aspirations Education Hub	
Drive the trust towards the achievement of the five year plan	
Directly manage the Operations Unit and the Innovation Unit	
Line manage the Regional CEOs and the National Director of Education and Standards	
Deputy Managing Director	
support the MD in strategically managing all aspects of the trust	
Oversee all teaching, learning, assessment and training elements of the Aspirations Education Hub	
Directly manage the Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit and the Improvement Unit	
Regional CEOs	
Link the four units (Operations Unit, Monitoring, Assessment and Diagnostic Unit, Improvement Unit, Innovation Unit) to help manage their regions strategically and to promote the aims of the Trust and achievement of five year plan.	
Support Principals in all aspects of their work, ensuring a main focus on teaching and learning	
Develop, support and ensure the achievement of each academy development/improvement plan	
Hold Principals to account for the performance of their academy	
Visit each academy in their region regularly (at least once every two weeks)	
Take part in the monitoring of academies outside of their region (at least 3 a year)	
Manage the Regional Trust Board as chair	
Sit as an observer on the trustBoard and provide a half-termly regional report	
Sit on the EOB	
Lead on a national, whole trust responsibility	
Provide training and support as required	
National Director of Education and Standards	
Manage the diagnostic and monitoring process of each academy	

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