

Voluntary Convertors: Due Diligence (Primary)

The following outlines the DSAT due diligence process and criteria. The process has three stages, the first being for the school and Governors to advise the Trust of their interest in joining the Trust following their detailed scrutiny of the Trust's vision and key principles; this will lead to detailed conversations between the school and the Trust as stages 2 and 3 are worked through.

This process does not exist in order to be selective, but rather to safeguard those schools already within the Trust. It is to make sure that the expertise, resources and support on both sides, the prospective joining school and the Trust, are fully understood and that it is within the capacity of both parties to fully commit.

Stage 1: Cultural Fit

The school is expected to review, discuss with the Trust if necessary and confirm their acceptance of the following key principles that outline their commitment to the wider Trust family

- The school's vision and ethos are in harmony with the Trust's vision to build distinctive Christian learning communities
- The school will proactively engage in mutual school to school partnership/s, working with individual schools and groups of schools to develop and innovate
- The school will be supportive of partnership working at all levels of the academy's life; committed to developing learners across their own school and the Trust
- The school will specifically support the leadership, teaching and learning of a school that is underperforming within the Trust where it possesses appropriate capacity and expertise
- The school adopts an agreed scheme of delegation and Service Level Agreement
- A top-slice is mutually agreed between Trust and school
- The school will take part in an annual collaborative review to validate and moderate school self evaluation

The school is also asked to acknowledge the following:

- Should a school after joining the Trust become vulnerable in relation to either financial or performance measures then the Scheme of Delegation will include powers for the level of delegated decision making to be reviewed.

The Trust believes there are benefits to a school in joining, and would expect the school to review, consider, discuss if necessary with the Trust, and then acknowledge the following:

- The Trust offers a model of multi academy conversion within the context of the Church of England, protecting and preserving the school's Christian Trust Deed.
- For community schools the Trust provides a vehicle for academy conversion which will respect the predecessor school's heritage and values whilst expecting the school to interpret the Trust's vision and ethos within the context of their own community



- The school will belong to a supportive and caring Christian family of academies; the Trust and the convertor school will be committed to supporting each other to secure individual and shared vision
- The school will belong to a network of academies, with a structured process of enabling school to school support; the school will be able to give and to receive. The Trust will support each school to further develop and to celebrate what it does well, develop mutual partnerships and through joint practice development improve the practice of all partners, leading to innovation.
- The Trust is committed to a deep model of school improvement which has adult professional learning at its centre. The Trust will support the development of CPD opportunities, for example, leadership development; the improvement of teaching and learning; curriculum planning; coaching and mentoring, which would be more difficult for an academy to achieve on its own.
- The Trust is committed to support the development of outstanding accountability and self evaluation systems which support and validate the autonomy of each school; the convertor academy will be entitled to draw on the Trust's school improvement personnel to provide moderation of the school's self evaluation, in a working relationship that is robust, transparent and supportive.
- The convertor academy will be entitled to draw on the Trust's services: Human Resource Manager; Academy Finance Manager; School Improvement offer; Buildings Officer; Admissions Officer; Governor/Local Advisory Board services; (in line with the negotiated Service Level Agreement).
- The Trust is able to offer support for succession planning, including the potential of career progression across the Trust
- The Trust is able to offer mechanisms to create economies of scale, procuring across the Trust where appropriate e.g. purchase of consumables

Stage 2: Performance and Effectiveness Assessment

A **School Performance Review** will be undertaken by the Trust in full collaboration with the school's leadership. The review will be led by an external school improvement consultant and will involve a SIAMS consultant (unless a SIAMS inspection has been undertaken in the past 12months).

The review will take **full account** of the school's own evaluation and consider each of the key areas of the Ofsted and SIAMS inspection processes.

The reviewer will produce a report for the school and for the Trust Board in relation to the school's overall effectiveness:

- The achievement of pupils at the school
- The quality of teaching at the school
- The behaviour and safety of children at the school: education performance, attainment and progress
- The quality of leadership in and management of the school, including governance

including consideration of the outcomes of the most recent Ofsted and SIAMS inspection and progress towards achieving the priorities set out for improvement

The School Performance review will be supported by a series of appendices, led by specialists in conversation with the school and Local Authority covering each of the following criteria:

- Size and financial viability
- Buildings: capacity/suitability/maintenance
- Liabilities – Human Resources; Financial; Legal
- School to school partnerships
- Christian ethos, vision, SIAMS outcomes and priorities

Stage 3: Acting on the outcomes of the Performance Review

Based on the agreed outcomes of the review process the following criteria will be used to inform the level of delegation the Trust is able to pass down to the local governance, and whether any mandatory improvement services are required in order for the school to enter the Trust.

All of this will be discussed, documented and shared in a transparent way with the current governing body and leadership of the school.

1.1. Education Performance: attainment and progress

Progress:

- From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making expected progress, and the proportions exceeding expected progress, in English, reading and writing, and in mathematics are close to or above national figures over a three year period. For pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support, the proportions are similar to, or above, those for other pupils in the school or are improving.
- Progress across year groups in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently strong and evidence in pupils' work indicates that they achieve well.
- The learning of groups of pupils, particularly those who are disabled, are looked after children, are from ethnic minority groups or are those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, is generally good.

Attainment:

- For **primary** schools attainment is at or above national expectation for both English, reading and writing (both L4+ and L4b+ combined - not in RAISE this year but on DfE performance tables) and mathematics combined outcomes at Key Stage 2
- Where attainment, including attainment in reading in primary schools, is low overall, it is improving at a faster rate than nationally, over a sustained period.

1.2. The performance of infant and first schools:

For schools that do not collect the data outlined above, such as Infant or First schools, we will use the following information to build a view of a schools performance:

- The last two Ofsted inspection grades, with focus particularly on judgments for overall effectiveness, capacity to improve and leadership and management;



- End of KS1 data from RAISE is near to or above national
- We will also consider any additional evidence which the school feels is significant in evidencing their performance.

1.3. Inspection outcomes:

- Latest Ofsted report with a specific focus on capacity to improve, outcomes and leadership and management, each judged to be at least good; leadership with elements that are deemed outstanding

1.4. Additional Evidence

- Any other matters that the school may wish to use in order to demonstrate that it is performing well in other aspects of educational provision e.g. sport; citizenship, music, RE

1.5. Vision and Ethos:

- The school's vision and ethos are in harmony with the Trust's vision to build distinctive Christian learning communities

1.6. Size and Financial Viability:

- The trend of number on roll: evidence of robust and sustainable intake including children from within the local community (supported by postcode analysis)
- **Primary:** the school is able to sustain a minimum of three classes with the principal teaching no more than two days a week. (Typically at least 90 children minimum)
- Current and future budgets reflect a balanced budget supporting an appropriate staffing model, supported by a viable three year trend and forecast

1.7. Buildings – capacity/suitability/maintenance

- Split site/s are financially viable with educational provision judged to be good on all sites
- Building stock is fit for purpose and effectively managed; where there are buildings issues there is a managed plan for resolution

1.8. Liabilities – Human Resources; Financial; Legal

- Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is typically good with outstanding features.
- Evidence that the staffing profile is effectively managed e.g. capability processes; grievance; redundancy requirements

1.9. School to School Partnership:

- The school is committed to school to school partnerships and collaborative working
- The school has a successful history of partnership working and is able to evidence the impact of this