



Diocese of Norwich  
St Benet's  
Multi Academy Trust



# Prospectus

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# Welcome from the CEO

Immeasurably more than we can imagine.  
Creating a culture of aspiration for all.



# Our Schools



I am very proud to be the CEO of St Benet's MAT and to work with like-minded and ambitious colleagues, trustees and governors who are all focused on improving the experiences and outcomes for children and young people from all backgrounds and beliefs.

Christian values are the foundation of our work and our engagement with the Diocese of Norwich enables us to deliver a wealth of opportunities and support for our schools.

I hope that this Prospectus gives you a flavour of our ethos and the way in which we value, support and challenge those who work and learn in our family of schools. The best way to really understand what makes St Benet's special is to meet with some of those involved in this journey and I would be very pleased to arrange this. Contact details are available at the end of this Prospectus.

Our academies are open to all and accepting of all regardless of faith. Our passion and ambition are to see children and young people in all our academies achieve excellent educational outcomes alongside developing and growing into their potential as individuals made in the image of God.

Our culture is one of high aspiration for all. This is rooted in our Christian values as demonstrated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We have a desire to see our academies acknowledged as places of aspiration, high quality learning, achievement and hope making a significant contribution to the communities they serve.

**Richard Cranmer**  
Chief Executive Officer

- Alburgh with Denton CofE Primary Academy
- Dickleburgh CofE Primary Academy and Pre-school
- Diss Infant Academy & Nursery
- Diss CofE Junior Academy
- Garboldisham CofE Primary Academy
- Harleston Sancroft Academy (a 3-16 CofE School)
- Morley CofE Primary Academy
- Newton Flotman CofE Primary Academy
- St Mary's CofE Junior Academy
- Tacolneston CofE Primary Academy

**Our academies strive to provide a high quality education for children and young people in Norfolk.**

All our schools have children at the heart of what they do. Some of our academies are very small and rural, others are much larger and in market towns. Each has their own distinctive character and all operate within the Christian ethos and values of the Diocese of Norwich and St Benet's Multi Academy Trust and benefit from the support and development opportunities that the Trust provides.

Our collaborative, peer-to-peer approach to support brings many benefits to our schools and our staff. We recognise best practice, celebrate successes, and harness and share the expertise within our community.



# Trust Responsibilities

St Benet's MAT is collaborative. We let Headteachers run their schools, we engage with local communities and governors and we put structures in place to secure accountability.

Certain responsibilities will always remain with the Board of Trustees:

- Headteacher recruitment
- Headteacher performance management
- Core Trust policies
- Approval of targets for pupil outcomes
- Appointment of the Local Governance Committee Chair

Our Central Team provides our schools with a range of services. For example, the St Benet's Executive Leaders' Forum brings together school leaders and Trust officers in a consultative and productive forum, determining the priorities and developmental needs of the schools within the strategic plans set by the Trust Board.

Trust officers and Headteachers recognise the particular strengths of individual teachers and use them in a specialist leader capacity; we have seen improvements to early years, writing, phonics and mathematics provision across the Trust.

Our Best Practice Groups bring together subject leaders and teachers from every school, from infants through to secondary, in creative and collaborative training sessions that shape curriculum development and provide reassurance and support.



**Richard Cranmer**  
Chief Executive Officer

Accounting Officer and strategic lead for the Trust. Responsibility for reporting to the Board of Trustees, DfE, Regional Schools Commissioner, Regional Director, Local Authority and Diocese of Norwich. Lead for growth planning, financial planning, risk register.



**Sam Nixon**  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Oversees strategic development plans relating to school improvement and financial planning, reports to Board of Trustees on school improvement and standards, line manages Headteachers.



**Paul Seeman**  
Head of Standards & Quality Assurance

Provides the Trust with a clear understanding of strengths and areas to develop in line with the Education Inspection Framework. Reports on standards in schools and carries out annual Collaborative Review of Education (CRE) programme.



**Kelly Stokes**  
School Improvement Officer

Focus on curriculum and teaching and learning. Leads training and in-school work based around the Trust Strategic Development Plan priorities.



**Suzannah Kay**  
Personal Assistant to CEO

Responsibility for administrative functions within the Central Team; liaison with schools, Local Authority, DfE and ESFA; diary management for CEO and DCEO; events management; production of Trust newsletter and website management.

# Support Services

An essential part of our Education Strategy is to provide a number of high quality, value for money services, thereby taking much of this responsibility from the Headteacher and local governing bodies and gaining cost advantages.

This allows school leaders to concentrate on educating children, teaching and learning and working with the local community.

Our academies can access a package of core central services grouped under the following headlines:

- finance and business support
- governance, HR and policy support
- other (including PR, branding and communications)

We have brokered a number of services and contracts that academies have the option to use as well as mandatory services such as health and safety, with value for money and quality of provision as our priority.

Established in September 2019, our education support services company, Diocese of Norwich Education Services Company (DoNESC) provides back office services, but not school improvement support. It is jointly owned by the Diocese of Norwich but its board of directors includes three independent directors to give balance and bring appropriate expertise. It is a 'not for profit company'. The company's objective is to provide high quality, value for money services for all the St Benet's academies. Robust governance and risk management ensures any potential conflicts of interest are managed well. There are clear,



formal contracts for all services provided to ensure transparency and the ability to monitor value for money (VFM). Each year a VFM report is produced. Every three years an independent reviewer will check the costs of the services provided by the company against those available in the market. This will ensure that the Trust and schools are still obtaining value for money for these services. This approach will give consistency of financial probity, policy implementation and risk management.

By developing this work within one company there are efficiencies and savings that can be made. The objectives set for the company are to:

- ensure high quality, VFM services are provided for academies and schools
- ensure systems and performance meet legal and funding body requirements
- maximise opportunities for driving through cost savings to allow greater investment in frontline services
- actively encourage and positively respond to customer feedback
- ensure a risk-based approach is taken supported by robust risk management



# Codifying our Culture



All multi academy trusts work in slightly different ways. At St Benet's we are driven by our core values which can be distilled down to:

Immeasurably more than we can imagine.

Creating a culture of aspiration for all.

Headteachers run our schools. Schools retain a significant amount of autonomy. Unless the school is in a challenging situation we do not prescribe curricula, behaviour or pedagogical approaches. We support schools in implementing and embedding approaches and practices that work for their community.

As a Trust it is our role to create the aspirational culture in which all our staff work. To do this we have specific areas where we align schools so that their collaborative work can have the maximum impact on standards. The Trust creates this culture through the mechanisms laid out below. We offer support and challenge to our leaders in the following key areas:

- Curriculum Design
- Curriculum Delivery
- Developing Leaders
- Accurate Evaluation & Planning
- Data Informed Decision-making and Accountability
- High Aspirations for All

# Curriculum Design

Our schools design their own curricula to meet the needs of the children in their school.

The Trust supports this through significant training and support.



## English and Maths

In English and Maths we have Trust Improvement Leads (TILs) who are subject specialists and chair subject lead groups.

In English this has involved extensive training of all staff in 'Mastering English' which focuses on high quality modelling by teachers; developing whole school spelling and grammar approaches and working with the local English Hub to ensure each school has a high-quality well resourced synthetic phonics programme. We continue to prioritise reading and to keep developing the love of reading at the centre of our Trust work.

In Maths all our schools are on the journey to become Math Mastery schools. For each school this can look different (many use Power Maths, others do not) but all work with our TIL to ensure staff training is of the highest standard. Recently a range of professional development opportunities have been delivered for Subject Leaders, Teachers and Teaching Assistants. Our schools also all work with the Angles Maths Hub (Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form in Norwich) in work which is co-ordinated by our TIL.

## Foundation Subjects

Each school designs and delivers a curriculum that is right for the children in their school. The Trust has worked with external organisations (e.g. ARK) and with our founding schools to develop more than one strong curriculum offer. Where new schools have joined the Trust and had significant gaps in their existing curriculum work we have used our existing models to support rapid improvement. We provide subject leaders with training and guidance on how to lead their subject effectively and how to develop assessment systems that allow them to refine their curriculum to best meet the needs of children in their school.



# Curriculum Delivery



**Headteachers are responsible for ensuring the curriculum is implemented effectively in their school.**

The Trust are creating a Trust-wide Professional Development offer for the future which will provide high-quality training as part of a sustainable school improvement model.

In response to the EEF 'Effective Professional Development' research, a group of senior leaders from across schools in the Trust are developing an Instructional Coaching model to ensure all staff receive the highest quality training. This is led by our TIL for Teaching and Learning who uses Rosenshine's Principles and the Teaching Walk-Thrus approach created by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli to provide a Trust-wide shared understanding of what high quality teaching and learning looks like.

Whilst each school will prioritise initiatives or areas based on their own needs, these shared underpinning principles ensure effective collaboration at all levels.

# Developing Leaders



**Leaders in our Trust are supported in their development through Trust-wide programmes and cross-school involvement.**

All our Headteachers sit on the Leaders Forum which provides a forum to help shape the Trust's development.

Headteachers are line managed by the Deputy CEO and supported and developed through mechanisms such as the CRE (see Accurate Evaluation & Planning section) and formal and informal visits.

Deputy Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers and Lead Teachers come together through the Trust's Senior Leader Network. This group meets half termly and includes taught elements, reviews of research and visits to schools. This group also plays a role in shaping and driving Trust initiatives.

Through our partnership with the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership we support a number of staff each year to complete NPQs. Other professional development and training of leaders is also encouraged and supported.



# Accurate Evaluation & Planning



**Headteachers self-evaluate using the shared Trust format and decide and develop their own Academy Improvement Development Plans.**

As a Trust we have developed our Collaborative Review of Education (CRE) process to support this accurate 'self knowing'.

Our Head of Standards and Quality Assurance (HoSQA) leads a peer review model that aligns with each school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF). Regular visits allow the Headteacher, HoSQA and a Headteacher from another school to work collaboratively to identify areas of strength and areas to improve.

This means Headteachers do not have to complete self-evaluation and the plans to support improvement in isolation. They are supported by their peers and the Trust central team.

We also provide workshops and planning sessions for development plan writing, and we work alongside other Trusts (Diocese of Norwich Education & Academies Trust, Derby Diocesan Academies Trust and Aquinas Church of England Education Trust) to share best practice.

# Data Informed Decision-making & Accountability



**All of our primary schools use PiXL assessment and the same self-evaluation format. This alignment allows schools to work together effectively and ensures the central accountability structures are in a shared language.**

**This is key as Trustees are accountable for the performance of all schools.**

Each term there is an Academy Review Meeting chaired by the Deputy CEO which involves the Headteacher, Senior Leaders, Local Governors and a Trustee.

The process draws on a range of data (statutory data, PiXL, CRE, SEF, OFSTED, Academy Improvement Development Plan updates) to review the school's improvements and help support further improvement.

These meetings also function as a key element in the Local Governance Committee Meeting structure, providing a focus on standards and agreeing future monitoring actions.

These meetings provide an opportunity to identify any additional support a school may need or expertise and support they may offer elsewhere.



# High Aspiration for All



**The schools within the Trust have high aspirations for all pupils and, under the leadership of each Headteacher, Pupil Premium Leads and SENDCOs play a key role in this.**

As a Trust, we facilitate collaboration between SEND leads and have implemented the 7Cs programme across our schools through a Trust-led training programme.

Our SENDCOs work together across schools in a best practice group. We also commission specialist support for training and bespoke in-school support based on needs.

For Pupil Premium leads we offer workshops to support the utilising of research and best practice to meet the needs of Pupil Premium children through effective use of the Pupil Premium grant.

Our schools share best practice in meeting Mental Health and Wellbeing needs and the Trust brokers partnerships to support this work.





## Contact us

Phone: 01603 550147

Email: [info@stbenets.org](mailto:info@stbenets.org)

Web: [www.stbenets.org](http://www.stbenets.org)

Orchard House  
Hall Lane  
East Tuddenham  
Norfolk  
NR20 3LR

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