



Be happy
Be successful
Be proud
Be Bankfields



STEEL RIVER

ACADEMY TRUST

Steel River Multi-Academy Trust Strategic Plan 2021-2024



Strategic Plan 2020-2023

Steel River Multi Academy Trust

Introduction

On 1st September 2019, Steel River Multi Academy Trust was formed. The Trust was set up by four founding schools with the clear vision of developing a MAT structure which centred on collaboration whilst retaining the identity and uniqueness of each of the individual schools.

The overarching aim of Steel River Academy Trust is to create schools that inspire, are aspirational, motivate and equip children with the necessary skills to succeed. We pride ourselves on the holistic approach to developing children personally, academically, creatively, physically and socially as well as promoting positive mental health. We aim to empower our children to become responsible adults of the future and make positive contributions as local, national and global citizens.

The strategic plan for 2021-2024, is intended to outline the strategic objectives of the trust over the next three years, sharing and defining our vision and ethos, and setting out the key goals and performance measures that will determine the success of our Trust as a whole along with our individual academy schools in delivering high quality and inspirational education of all our pupils.

The overarching strategic plan will inform and be informed primarily by the individual Academy school self-evaluations, pupil outcomes and resulting school improvement plans. In addition, the strategic plan will focus on securing improvements in centralised functions such as finance, Governance and leadership as well as external support systems through robust control measures and systems of accountability to develop a solid base for potential future growth.

Our Schools

Bankfields Primary School



Be happy
Be successful
Be proud
Be Bankfields



Whale Hill Primary School



United but uniquely individual

Our Motto 'It's not where you start that matters- it's where you finish!'

Our Vision

- Create a safe, happy, nurturing and inclusive environment that allows all our children to flourish
- Challenge everyone's mind-set to foster a love of learning, curiosity and belief in possibilities
- Overcome any barriers that may stand in our way
- Develop independent, resilient and self-motivated learners who are aspirational
- Ensure children are exposed to a wide range of experiences to explore their interests, talents and passions, and to become well informed young people who are able to form their own opinions and make effective choices

Overall, we will ensure that the Academy Trust proactively adds value to each academy school, ensuring the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts. Our aims will be set out through the 6 key areas which are the foundations of our Trust.

People – recognising and valuing the contribution made by our students, staff, parents/carers and stakeholders. Our staff are our greatest resource and as such we invest in them through high quality CPD, ensuring they have access to the latest educational research and technology, empowering them to deliver high quality educational experiences to all our children. Staff are well led and managed and work in an environment that is conducive to positive mental health and wellbeing. We support our staff to become strong practitioners and leaders through collaboration, external support, tailored CPD and leadership programmes, thus developing effective progression and succession planning. The Trust's ambition is to develop a highly motivated and skilled workforce who feel valued and empowered, making Steel River Academy an employer of choice.

Leadership

We aim to establish effective Trust leadership with the right people, with the relevant experience and skill set, to deliver our vision and priorities. Trust leaders will ensure robust systems and procedures are in place for finance and school

improvement whilst implementing clear systems of accountability that deliver strong practice and ensure compliance in all aspects of Trust business.

We have established an effective Executive team made up of the Head teacher group who work collaboratively to set and deliver school priorities, drawing on the wealth of skills and experiences available to continually improve educational experiences and outcomes for children.

Governance

We are developing Governance at all levels to be robust, based on best practice and striving for excellence. Trustees and LGB members will have the right level of knowledge, skills and attributes to set the strategic direction of the Trust and monitor and evaluate effectiveness of systems, policies and procedures. Trustees and LGB members will be effective in their statutory duties as roles and responsibilities of members are clearly defined and understood. Board members will feel empowered to ask the right questions about school/trust performance and hold school/Trust leaders to account whilst cultivating a culture in which Executive Leaders are able to thrive.

Finance

A robust and sustainable approach to finance that maximises value for money, minimises the risk of fraud or misappropriation of funds and keeps central costs as low as possible. This will ensure that funds are utilised to enhance the educational experiences and provision of all children and supports our schools in achieving their objectives.

Curriculum/Outcomes for children

A rich, inspiring and engaging curriculum that is aspirational for all our pupils and enables them to be the best they can be. The curriculum will provide opportunities to succeed in all aspects of their educational and personal development and will provide memorable experiences that ignites a lifelong love of learning and continuously prepares them for the next stage of their educational journey.

Buildings and Facilities

We aim to ensure our buildings, facilities and resources are fit for purpose, support exceptional educational provision, meet our stringent Health and Safety and Safeguarding requirements and have robust maintenance and repair cycles planned. We will continue to develop a positive and stimulating environment for our children and staff to thrive and where our families and visitors feel welcome.

Each of our Academy Schools will contribute to achieving our aims, supporting each other through collaboration and partnerships to ensure we are the best we can be.

Key Elements to our success

- Strong leadership at academy and school level that transforms the culture
- The pursuit of excellence is demonstrated in a relentless drive for improvement in teaching, learning and progression
- Collaboration and strong networks across the Trust to share best practice and develop staff expertise
- Excellent governance that challenges, supports and holds leaders to account
- Recognising the strengths of teachers and continually developing and empowering them
- Outstanding teaching and pedagogical knowledge
- A broad and balanced curriculum that has expert knowledge, skills and progression as well as individual needs at its core
- Confident, resilient and independent learners
- High aspirations and expectation of all who work in our academies and a shared belief that all our pupils can succeed
- Secure and effective partnerships with parents/carers, the local community, Local Authority and other local schools, businesses and professional organisations

Short term plan (year 1)

Key Area	Priorities	Actions	Monitoring	Success Criteria
1. Finance	2. Review finance policies including financial handbook to strengthen practice across the trust.	Policies to be reviewed by CFO and CAO taking into account recommendations and comments from both internal and external auditors.	Trust board meetings FAR committee meetings Scheduled internal and external audits. CAO/CFO to monitor implementation of policies.	Policy calendar is kept up to date with policy reviews completed in a timely manner. Policies and financial handbook are robust with the whole finance team understanding and following procedures within them.
	3. Review Financial procedures within the financial software to ensure correct processing of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purchase orders and authorisation • gifts and hospitality registers • balance sheets and reconciliations 	CFO to work with SBMs across the trust to ensure a consistent approach to financial management across all schools and to ensure all procedure are aligned. Training and support is sourced for SBMs and central finance team to ensure they are able to adequately fulfil their roles in all aspects of financial management.	Trust board FAR committee CFO to monitor individual school's financial procedures and take swift action to address areas of weakness. CFO/CAO to ensure all information is collated and prepared accurately	Processing of financial information is accurate and consistent across all schools in the trust. Internal and external audits show strong practice across the trust with fewer areas for improvement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income and expenditures • accruals accounting • monthly pay role checks 		and in a timely manner prior to audits	
	<p>4. Strengthen admin support systems across the trust to ensure strong practice in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy management • Website management • Managing SRAT email account • DPO administrative tasks • Organising documents for board/committee meeting • Providing admin support for CFO and SELs 	<p>Effective training for SBMs across the trust</p> <p>Full assessment of the central team and discussions on whether further appointments need to be made to support the CFO, SELs and trustees to ensure compliance and strong practice in trust management, including finance.</p> <p>Assess external support systems that can be utilised to strengthen finance and management systems and ensure compliance in all functions</p>	<p>CFO to identify training needs and source appropriate CPD.</p> <p>Internal and External audits</p> <p>CFO/CAO monitoring</p> <p>FAR committee meetings</p>	<p>Strong admin support in all areas of trust management.</p> <p>Documents are produced accurately and reviewed in a timely manner.</p> <p>Trust is compliant in its statutory and legal responsibilities.</p> <p>Outcomes of internal and external audits show strong practice in all management and finance systems</p>

Key Area	Priorities	Actions	Monitoring	Success Criteria
<h2 style="text-align: center;">2. People</h2>	1. Ensure an effective high quality CPD programme is in place for staff at all levels that is aligned with the latest educational research and use of technologies	<p>Additional support and CPD for NQTs and RQTs who have missed out on the full induction programme due to the pandemic</p> <p>Identify aspiring leaders and middle leaders for NPQ qualifications and additional leadership training</p> <p>Encourage staff to identify own CPD needs and source effective training</p> <p>Provide mentoring support for new subject leaders from more experienced leaders across the Trust</p> <p>HTs to identify common training needs for groups of staff to complete together to ensure strong links and cost savings</p>	<p>All schools to keep CPD training logs which are reviewed termly</p> <p>Trust to collate a bank of effective educational training providers monitored by HTs</p> <p>PP to keep records of coaching/mentoring across the trust</p> <p>Trust training record</p>	<p>The Trust has highly skilled staff at all levels who are strong classroom practitioners and leaders. Staff drive school improvement through their knowledge of the curriculum, keeping up to date with new thinking and initiatives and who know how technology can be used to enhance educational experiences</p>
	2. Ensure a continuous programme of support for staff wellbeing is in place and	<p>Annual work life balance sessions in all schools</p> <p>Trust leaders to source effective external support for staff who need it</p>	<p>Outcome of staff questionnaire</p> <p>Minutes from work life balance feedback</p>	<p>All schools have stable staffing levels with low levels of staff absence and staff turnover</p> <p>The Trust has effective ongoing support systems</p>

	<p>embedded across the Trust</p>	<p>Annual questionnaires to gain a true picture of staff morale and well being</p> <p>Effective support for staff to be confident and effective in their role through high quality CPD, coaching and mentoring, ensuring a supportive and collaborative culture in all school and promoting positive mental health</p> <p>Time given to staff to fulfil their leadership responsibilities</p>	<p>analysis of staff absences and staff turnover</p> <p>Performance management reviews</p>	<p>in place along with specialist programmes of support when required</p>
	<p>3. Identify outstanding practitioners from across the trust to make up a comprehensive and diverse school Improvement team to support with improving outcomes for children</p>	<p>Begin to build a highly effective school improvement team through identifying strong, experienced teachers and leaders from all 4 schools</p> <p>Develop skills through effective CPD and collaboration to help shape an effective self-improving system across the Trust</p>	<p>Application process across the 4 schools to help identify our strongest leaders/practitioners</p> <p>Effective CPD led by external consultant, School Improvement Lead and experienced leaders to ensure the school improvement team carry out their role with a high level of professionalism, support and accountability</p>	<p>Highly skilled and inspirational school improvement team who lead an effective self-improving system across the trust.</p> <p>Staff will share and learn from best practice, resulting in excellent provision and outcomes for children across all schools</p>

Key Area	Priorities	Actions	Monitoring	Success Criteria
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Leadership</p>	<p>1. To develop a strong, knowledgeable and effective central leadership team who can offer appropriate support and challenge to secure an effective self-improvement system in all aspects of trust business</p>	<p>Clearly defined and segregated roles for SELs to ensure a strong focus on key areas and accountability within them</p> <p>Effective support for SELs through developing strong networks with other Trust leaders and engaging in the DfE 'Trust to Trust' support programme</p> <p>CFO&CAO to work with SBMs to ensure consistent and high standards of financial management in all schools</p> <p>Identify areas of need to strengthen the central team and ensure systems and procedures are robust. Increase capacity to sustain strong practice in all areas through additional appointments if necessary along with procuring external support services</p>	<p>External monitoring to assess the effectiveness of trust leaders e.g. external consultant for school improvement, internal and external auditors for financial management</p> <p>Performance management with external consultant</p> <p>Ofsted Inspections</p> <p>DfE, RSC and EFSA</p>	<p>Strong leadership across all aspects of Trust business ensures strong systems, procedures and processes are in place.</p> <p>A positive reputation for the Trust with all external agencies, places the Trust in an excellent position for future growth</p> <p>Strong leadership will lead to excellent outcomes and educational experiences for all children across the trust</p>
	<p>2. Evaluate and expand the role of the Executive team and working</p>	<p>Further develop roles and responsibilities of the Executive team to ensure all staff have responsibility for a key operational area</p>		

	<p>parties across the trust to ensure strong leadership , consistency of approach and drive for school improvement</p>			
	<p>3. Develop subject leaders across the trust to support with the implementation of the wider curriculum and ensure they have the knowledge and expertise to support staff in further developing aspects of the curriculum and deepening the subject knowledge of staff</p>	<p>Further develop subject leader networks</p> <p>CPD sessions for subject leaders with Faye Hemming to develop skills in monitoring and evaluation and developing pedagogy</p> <p>Develop links with secondary colleagues</p>	<p>Minutes for subject leader network meetings</p> <p>Reports from FH</p> <p>Subject leader monitoring files</p> <p>CPD records</p> <p>Attainment and progress of pupils</p>	<p>Confident and effective subject leaders across all schools are champions for their subject and ensure the quality of teaching and learning results in strong outcomes for children</p> <p>Subject leaders lead schools in achieving quality marks for individual subjects</p>

Key Area	Priorities	Actions	Monitoring	Success Criteria
4. Curriculum/ Outcomes	1. Ensure an effective and robust COVID-19 recovery plan is in place across all schools within the trust to ensure children catch up on lost learning and reach age related expectations	All schools to create a detailed COVID recovery plan that explains how: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch up funding will be spent • Provision to help children settle back in to full time school • Improve attendance • Support children’s mental health and wellbeing • Support for anxious families • Support for children who have not accessed remote learning • Narrowing the gap for SEN and disadvantaged pupils 	COVID recovery plans Pupil Data School reviews Attendance and exclusion figures	Effective systems in place to support children to settle back in to full time schools Good use of catch up funding to secure rapid improvements in attainment and progress Effective support for families through EWO and SLT to help children return to school Effective strategies to manage pupils’ behaviour and avoid further disruption to their own and other learning
	2. Develop an effective aspirations and careers curriculum across the trust to develop a range	Schools to appoint an aspiration and careers lead in each school All schools to sign up to the TVCA Primary careers programme	Feedback from Careers lead network meeting SEL monitoring Careers lead monitoring	Careers Leads drive a strong STEM, Enterprise and Careers Education across schools Children take part in a variety of STEM,

	<p>of skills, broaden horizons and learn about the world of work</p>	<p>Schools to engage in a range of STEM, Enterprise and careers events on offer through the programme</p> <p>Organise Trust Enterprise events</p>	<p>School Reviews</p> <p>Ofsted reports</p>	<p>Enterprise and careers activities which develop a range of skills, raise their aspirations and teaches them about the world of work and the different educational and career paths available to them</p>
	<p>3. Develop and implement a wider curriculum across the trust which is designed to meet the needs of children within each context, is well sequenced, progressive and ambitious, and where key knowledge is embedded at each stage of their learning and built upon throughout their educational journey.</p>	<p>Each school's curriculum aligns with the Trust curriculum action plan</p> <p>All schools develop an ambitious wider curriculum which is designed to meet the context and needs of each school</p> <p>Curriculum is well sequenced and builds on previous learning at each stage of the children's learning, ensuring appropriate progression in knowledge and skills</p> <p>Curriculum design ensure appropriate time is allocated to each subject to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum</p> <p>Monitoring of curriculum intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum through teaching and learning is MAT wide & consistent.</p>	<p>Curriculum Intent</p> <p>Curriculum Planning</p> <p>Curriculum impact through assessment and moderation</p> <p>School Reviews</p> <p>Feedback from subject leader networks</p>	<p>Each school has a well-designed, ambitious curriculum which meets the needs of the children within each school's context</p> <p>Key principles and vision of the trust are visible in each school's curriculum design</p> <p>At the end of their primary school journey, each child leaves with a broad range of skills and knowledge in each subject area and ensures they have an awareness and opinions on local, national and global issues</p>

Key Area	Priorities	Actions	Monitoring	Success Criteria
5. Governance	1. To review external support systems for the trust board in areas such as HR, Governance support and Legal to ensure members have the right support and advice to carry out their functions effectively	<p>Work with SELs to source improved support services in HR, Legal and Governance to ensure they are provided with strong guidance information and advice</p> <p>Liaise with other trusts to obtain testimonials on effective service providers</p> <p>Carry out a full tendering process to ensure value for money</p>	<p>Testimonials from other trusts</p> <p>Scrutiny of quotes, contract details and capacity, and location of providers</p>	<p>Strong support services In place, providing the right information, advice and guidance on all trust matters</p> <p>Trust receives a highly professional service from providers who ensure that information /documentation provided is accurate and presented in a timely manner</p>
	2. Ensure high quality training and induction is offered to all existing and new Trustees.	<p>Governance support ensures training provided is good quality, up to date and accessible to trustees at all levels</p> <p>SEL to produce Trustee induction pack that provides contextual information about the Trust and individual schools</p>	<p>Trustee training log</p> <p>Skills matrix</p> <p>Trustee induction pack- updated annually</p>	<p>High quality training is completed by Trustees, supporting them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively</p> <p>Trustees have a good understanding of the schools within the trust and understand the strengths and challenges within all our schools</p>

	<p>3. Develop effective risk management at board level and ensure effective mitigations are in place</p>	<p>Improve and maintain documentation of risks and procedures for the control of those risks</p> <p>Accurately identify risks and prioritise them in to a manageable order so that action can be focused on significant risks</p> <p>Monthly monitoring of the management of significant risks to reduce unwelcome surprises and impact</p> <p>Categorise risks using a functional approach such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic • Financial • Operation • Compliance <p>Design early warning indicators to alert leaders and trustees so that early action can be taken</p> <p>Work will be prioritised In light of effective risk analysis</p>	<p>Monitoring at board and leadership level is on an ongoing basis to ensure adequate control measures are in place</p> <p>Triggers will be highlighted in monthly reports</p> <p>CFO/SEL monthly monitoring</p> <p>Trust board termly monitoring</p>	<p>Effective risk management improves the decision making, business planning and prioritisation by developing a thorough understanding of efficient allocation and use of resources</p> <p>Early warning indicators ensure triggers are highlights early to address the issue before it happens or at least before it gets too serious</p>
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Key Area	Priorities	Actions	Monitoring	Success Criteria
6. Buildings and facilities	All schools to carry out an updated conditions survey to assess short, medium and long term requirements	SLE to arrange conditions survey for all schools Maintenance and repair needs will be prioritised to ensure high standards of health and safety and safeguarding of all stakeholders	Conditions survey reports Maintenance and repair plans SEL reports FAR committee	Well planned maintenance and repairs will minimise emergency works and disruptions to the day to day running of the schools. Each school site is appealing and gives a positive impression
	To create a buildings and assets management plan	Buildings and asset plan will include an: Estates vision which is aligned with the Trust's educational vision and ethos Estates strategy which maps out what needs to be done to school buildings and facilities to ensure they support educational needs and goals Assets management plan – will encompass the above whilst ensuring related policies and procedures are in place , the people and educational provisional within each school is protected, running costs are controlled and urgent work is responded to effectively	FAR Committee SEL Reports Risk Register CFO reports Audits	Buildings and assets management plan ensures decisions are based on a sound understanding of the current condition and performance of each school's building and facilities. All school buildings are in a good state of repair with work planned in a timely manner to limit the extent of repairs and disruption to teaching and learning

				Through the buildings and assets plan, Trustees and leaders not only maintain buildings to a safe and acceptable state, but also enhance and improve them
	Begin to Identify Funding for capital projects and source effective bid writers to support in future funding bids	<p>CFO to explore the different funding streams available and time frames for applications</p> <p>SLEs to work with mentors from 'Equals Trust' to support with accessing future funding for capital projects and make links with specialists within the field of successful bid writing</p>	<p>SELs</p> <p>Trustees</p>	<p>Trust board and Trust leaders are familiar with the different funding streams available to them and how to apply for capital funding.</p> <p>Trust will procure the services of a bid writer who will successfully access funding on behalf of the Trust</p>

Medium and long term plan (years 2&3)

Key Area	Year 2 – 2022-2023	Year 3 -2023-2024
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use benchmarking data and KPI's to inform and improve the decision making processes in the Trust • Review, amalgamate and create central contracts to ensure economies of scale and 'value for money' is achieved • Streamline central services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust Reserves are at a level that ensures financial stability • Develop a strategy for Trust growth • Embed robust admin and finance systems across the Trust to ensure capacity to facilitate Trust growth strategy
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have full and effective central team/services in place to ensure effective support and practice in all functions of Trust business. Central team and support services will be made up of Trust employees and range of external personnel secured through SLAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish lead professionals across the trust to support with school improvement. Effective leaders within the school improvement team will be identified as 'specialists' in specific areas, based on proven record of achievements/impact, training and qualifications and leadership qualities
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop a comprehensive CPD programme for staff development and create more opportunities for staff career progression, succession planning and establishing a self-sustaining model • Fully implement MAT system of creating consistent expectations for different pay grades and UPS standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MAT makes use of partnerships and networks outside of the Trust to utilise the skills and expertise of outstanding practitioners within the Trust to offer support to other schools/MATS in areas of school improvement • A strong programme of coaching and mentoring is embedded across the Trust
Curriculum/ outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an agreed and consistent approach/methodology for assessment of foundation subjects across all schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an improved programme of moderation across the Trust to ensure judgements are aligned and consistent with suitable experienced and trained staff leading the process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop subject knowledge and pedagogy of all staff to increase the amount of 'outstanding' teaching across the Trust and improve outcomes for children • Develop a rigorous monitoring and review plan for all schools to enable the Trust to gain an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses and bring about rapid improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools within the Trust are judged to be at least good by Ofsted, recognising that all children within the MAT are receiving a high quality curriculum with strong outcomes for all groups of children • Ensure that self-review documentation shows the position of the Trust in terms of curriculum, teaching and learning and outcomes in a way that is not just the aggregation of the individual schools, but demonstrates the overarching MAT strategies and their impact
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop and strengthen Trust wide policies and procedure • Annual review of scheme of delegation to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the Trust • To develop a robust succession plan to ensure trust sustainability, continuity and long-term success. • Conduct a Trust self-review using the 'Governing board self-review tool' to identify strengths and areas for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise an External review of Trust governance through NGA • Annual review of scheme of delegation to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the Trust and is understood by all parties
Buildings and Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply to the different funding routes for capital projects to continue to upgrade and improve each school site <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (DFC) Devolved formula capital 2. (SCA) Schools conditions allocation 3. (CIF) Conditions improvement fund 4. (UCS) Urgent Capital Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review IT systems and infrastructure to: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review buildings and facilities to: • Replace and modernise outdated facilities • Improve image, look and aesthetic of each school site • Make more efficient use of existing space • Plan for changes e.g. increase in numbers, specialist provision etc. • Increasing energy efficiency and sustainable use

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Facilitate outstanding teaching and learning and recognising that the use of technology can revolutionise schools' curriculum offer2. Adequately meet the business and administrative needs of the Trust	
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