

Rationale for our four key areas of improvement

Improvement Strand Number 1: Developing Our People

Context and rationale:

As a Trust we recognise that the single, most important resource we have is our people. They make our ethos a reality through their day-to-day work. By our people, we mean every person that works for one of our schools, irrespective of role. Whilst we believe in effective systems, we fully realise that these systems are necessary to enable our people to flourish, excel and make the biggest difference in the places that matter most.

With this in mind, and in an environment where teacher recruitment remains a challenge, we are committed to enhancing the work of the Trinity Teaching School Alliance (TSA) in order to recruit and improve our staff through a programme of high-quality, continuous professional development (CPD).

We are also committed to achieving a high level of retention across the Trust, via our CPD programme (which maps support across an entire career of a potential Trinity employee), as well as the numerous professional opportunities that are built into our work across a number of schools.

The Trust understands that an employee who excels often has to 'go the extra mile' – we are determined, wherever possible, to recognise and reward that performance, as well as ensuring that the wellbeing of all staff is at the forefront of our thinking.

Improvement Strand Number 2: Developing Our Systems

Context and rationale:

As a Trust, one of our aims is 'we expect all our schools to actively support each other and to share best practice for the benefit of all.'

Some may refer to this as being 'all about systems' or, even more negatively, removing autonomy. To us, quite simply, it means what works exceptionally well in one school should be rolled out across other schools to achieve the same positive impact. We take this seriously because it drives continuous school improvement. It does not mean that all our schools are identical. Indeed, another of our three core principles is that 'we encourage each of our schools to celebrate its distinctive identity within our trust community.'

Nonetheless, as a group, we decide on best practice and then consistently implement it across all our schools. This best practice includes such things as curriculum, assessment and reporting (and other uses of data), intervention strategies, QA processes, T&L initiatives and CPD to support them and BfL policies. As a guiding principle we expect approximately 80% of overall practice to be consistent, with a further 20% potentially being different and distinctive to an organisation.

The final point to make about our systems is that they are regularly reviewed, by the leadership of each school, and amended if necessary. If something doesn't work, we change it; if it does, we invest in it and promote it in all our schools.

Improvement Strand Number 3: Developing Our Organisation

Context and rationale:

The organisation has grown from one school to six, in just under three years, with another two schools set to join us. This fulfilled our initial, ambitious growth plan, especially as the schools that joined us were vulnerable and in need of support. Whilst we have achieved significant success together, there is a need to develop all those other (sometimes unseen) things that are all necessary in order to ensure continuing improvement.

These areas are numerous, varying from such things as finances and HR services, to H&S and premises management support. There has already been a significant investment in central services to accommodate our growth. The purpose of this is to 'clear the desk' of a principal in order for him/her to concentrate on improving the outcomes of the young people in their schools.

Also included in our improvement plans for the organisation as a whole is the commitment to create a world-class governance structure. This will incorporate high-quality training and accessible, data-rich documentation to inform and support governance, at both Trust and individual school level.

There is also the feeling that, whilst we were busy with the improvements we have secured so far in our schools, we may have neglected to opportunity to 'tell our story' more effectively. We are, to date, a high-impact Trust that is delivering in the area that matters most – improving the life chances of the young people that we serve. It is a priority for us to articulate that to all current and potential partners.

Improvement Strand Number 4: Developing Our Partnerships

Context and rationale:

One of the real success stories of the Trust to date is just how many external partners we are working with. As well as all our schools collaborating locally (and play a full part in local improvement forums, as well as behaviour partnerships), we have developed MAT-to-MAT working partnerships that have improved our work in areas such as moderation, assessment and CPD practices.

We are also privileged to be the home of the Trinity TSA, the West Yorkshire Maths Hub and White Rose Maths. Through the work of the former, we have over one hundred partners and work across a number of local authorities. This work focusses on improving recruitment and retention rates in education, as well as enhancing provision in all schools (within and outside of the Trust).

Our work in maths educational is nationally and internationally renowned, with over a thousand partner schools (and counting)! The WYMH serves a specific region that spans a number of local authorities; the work of White Rose Maths is more diverse and widespread, including offering free resources, bespoke CPD packages and targeted support for any institution in need of it.

As a result of this history, we understand the importance (and benefit) of real collaboration and as such, promote an 'open door' philosophy towards supporting wider system leadership. We will continue to explore partnerships in whatever form work for the young people within our schools and for the benefit of those outside of our Trust.