



Great Academies
Education Trust

GREAT ACADEMIES EDUCATION TRUST STRATEGIC PLAN JAN 2022 - SEPT 2025



VISION AND VALUES

Our Vision

All pupils will make exceptional academic progress in all subjects and regardless of age or stage will become work and college ready.



Great Academies Education Trust will be a truly outstanding, outward facing multi-academy trust supporting its academies, from their starting points, to become outstanding schools.

Our academies will be schools where pupils are valued as individuals, where they will have opportunities to achieve highly, lead strongly and develop into confident, responsible and successful young adults.

Our Values

All individuals will embody our values.



OUR AMBITION FOR OUR STUDENTS

We want our students to know, understand and experience the GREAT values and to recognise that these values can contribute to them being the best that they can be.

Our students come first and everything we do is designed to ensure that each and every student enjoys their education and achieves their best possible outcomes. We want them to be healthy and happy as they progress through their education, developing a love for learning and developing the highest aspirations for themselves.

Our ambition for our students is that they understand how they learn best and become increasingly confident as they progress through our academies. They will become well prepared for the world of work, understanding how to manage their personal finances and economic well-being.

We want our students to gain a deep understanding of the rapidly changing world that they are growing up in, that technologies can be used as a power for good and that they have a role to play in promoting and securing environmental sustainability. To recognise that they can be empowered to shape their own futures as well as making positive contributions to the futures of their communities.

The greatest proportion of our students' experience is the curriculum that we offer, and our ambition is that our values will underpin the curriculum and their learning experiences.



GREAT ACADEMIES' CURRICULUM STATEMENT.

The thread of the GREAT values should run through the entire curriculum.

Our curriculum is the experience a student receives from almost every aspect of life in one of our academies. This ranges from the taught and learned curriculum content, knowledge, understanding and skills, to the experiences gained in the extra-curricular offer. Our academies will provide time for students to learn and enjoy their studies before and after the school day. We know that this can play a crucial role in keeping their interest and excitement.

We want to enable our students to recognise our values and to be driven and guided by them, to gain a better understanding of themselves and place, to be selfless and have a willingness to volunteer to play a role in their community. This will support our students to become self-aware, reflective and to have empathy in understanding others and their needs.

Our curriculum will empower our students to be confident and brave, and where it exists, to be able to address a lack of self-confidence. It will be engaging and relevant, promoting a love of learning and enabling our students to be able to think critically about information and to be able to determine what is accurate, and what is false. This will promote our students to have high aspirations, and to expect to achieve them.

Our students doing as well as they possibly can in examinations and assessments is important and we take their attainment seriously so we strive to make it as good as it can be. To achieve this, we will help students to be resilient, determined, adaptable and flexible in approach. They will be adept at problem solving, creative in what they do, able in the management of risk and willing to both lead and participate in teamwork.

In delivering our curriculum we will aim for our students to be in, and to know how to keep in good mental health. We will support the development of character and encourage them to be passionate about what they do, understanding democracy and the world we live in, to be environmental champions and culturally aware. Students will be given a broad experience that includes academic, sporting/physical activity, dramatic, artistic, musical and most importantly, personal growth opportunities.

Our curriculum will support students in the development of their friendships, to always be honest and open and to have loyalty.

In our GREAT academies, we place the student at the heart of everything we do. Every student is of equal value and we will always work tirelessly to support their individual needs.



Our vision for a GREAT academies' curriculum offer is one that reflects our values in its intent and implementation, for instance

Genuine	Respectful	Excellence	Achievement	Togetherness
<p>A curriculum that is factually accurate and knowledge based, whilst developing skills and understanding. It teaches students to think critically and recognise true or false news.</p>	<p>A curriculum promoting understanding and tolerance of others.</p>	<p>A curriculum delivered through the highest standards achievable in the processes of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>An ambitious curriculum that has impact on students achieving the best possible outcomes.</p>	<p>A curriculum that has a common core for all, and flexibility to offer bespoke pathways and specialising as a student progresses from KS3 to KS4.</p>
<p>A curriculum that is relevant to young people. It is related to real-life and thriving in adulthood, including improving their employability, professionalism and entrepreneurial outlook.</p>	<p>A curriculum that respects diversity and is inclusive of all our learners irrespective of background, ability or need.</p>	<p>A curriculum where excellence is the standard, whether in the classroom or outside it, including an enrichment offer and cultural capital experiences.</p>	<p>A curriculum that enables every pupil to achieve their potential.</p>	<p>A curriculum that promotes teamwork and learning and working for the greater good of all.</p>
<p>A curriculum that prepares learners to achieve highly when they are tested and prepares them for their next step.</p>	<p>A curriculum that promotes positive attitudes and values.</p>	<p>A curriculum that is built on the National Curriculum and where possible improves it.</p>	<p>A curriculum that engages every learner and is designed to secure the highest levels of achievement in academic, and other outcomes.</p>	<p>A curriculum which we develop, implement and review in partnership to ensure our best is shared and of benefit to all.</p>
<p>A curriculum that is informed by prior attainment, and pitched at a level to stretch all students.</p>	<p>A curriculum that enables students to learn from mistakes, and gives them the confidence to take risks.</p>	<p>A curriculum that is logically sequenced, with clarity about what is taught, and why and when it is taught.</p>	<p>A coherent curriculum sequenced to enable learners to build on prior learning and incrementally improve their knowledge, memory recall, understanding and skills.</p>	<p>A curriculum that reflects changing local, regional and national labour markets.</p>
	<p>A curriculum that promotes an understanding of different opinions and teaches students how to evaluate and engage positively with different points of view.</p>	<p>A curriculum that ensures Early Years provide the best possible foundation for future success through the key stages.</p>	<p>A curriculum that offers all students the entitlement to choose to follow the recognised EBacc suite of qualifications, but not at the expense of minority subjects.</p>	<p>A curriculum that is adapted to meet the additional needs of all groups of learners, and is designed to be accessible for, and enable progress for every group of students.</p>
	<p>A curriculum that develops the ability to build strong and positive relationships.</p>			

TO SUPPORT OUR VISION, WE WILL:

- Use our Intervention and Support Team to help grow the capacity of our internal and external networks as part of our Multi Academy Trust School Improvement offer.
- Use our alliances with the Aspire Hub of Multi Academy Trust and the Rochdale Pioneers Partnership to support our academies and collaborate with other Multi Academy Trusts, networks and schools.
- Develop all of our staff as ambassadors for the Trust and what we stand for.
- Share knowledge of our vacancies and succession planning and use our School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) to grow the teachers of tomorrow, to support our academies and other schools.
- Use the Board risk register to drive improvement priorities and as a focus to inform agenda setting across the Trust to mitigate risks.
- Ensure that our future ambition for growth is timely and planned with diligence, so that we know it is the right action and that by growing we can bring benefit to existing and potential academies. This will include outward facing collaborative work with other schools and trusts. Through this collaboration (Dixons Academies Trust) we will benchmark ourselves against other trusts to ensure we continue to develop and remain outward looking.



CONTEXT

Improving the outcomes at all of our academies is the urgent and imperative focus for the Trust.

In terms of Ofsted judgements, at the start of 2022, the trust was judged to have three academies graded Requires Improvement (RI) and one academy graded Good. This means we will implement targeted support for Copley Academy, Great Academy Ashton and Silver Springs Primary Academy to enable them to progress to comfortably meet the Good grade descriptors and the same targeted support for Middleton Technology School to meet the Outstanding grade descriptors. After the period of pandemic related school closures through 2020 and 2021, our emphasis is on rapidly recovering the lost ground in learning, knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. In tandem with recovery, rapidly improving outcomes in progress and attainment for all students but particularly disadvantaged students, students with SEND and High Prior Attaining students (HPAs) (in all subjects/stages) remains key.

Intended Impact in terms of Ofsted accountability from our Strategic Plan

The plan of work is to be undertaken during 11 academic terms from January 2022 to September 2025. The intended impact with respect to the 2021 Ofsted framework is;

1. Improve Great Academy Ashton, Copley Academy and Silver Springs Primary Academy from the RI category and receive at least a Good Ofsted judgement in the next scheduled inspection for each academy.
2. Continue to demonstrate good progress and action at Middleton Technology School to receive an Outstanding judgement in its next scheduled inspection.
3. When any school joins the Trust, to ensure it is rapidly placed on a trajectory of improvement to secure the best possible accountability judgement.



THIS WILL IN LARGE PART BE MET BY ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

Our pupils and communities

1. To provide Great Academies' students with a rounded experience including wider achievements and enrichment.

In addition to securing great academic outcomes, we will ensure that all of our students benefit from and experience a wide entitlement to extra-curricular activity. After consulting with stakeholders and drawing on good practice (Middleton Technology School Enrichment for all), by August 2022 this will be enshrined in the 'Great Academies Charter of Enrichment for Students'. By August 2023, we will have monitored participation and have measurable outcomes in terms of student wider extra-curricular activities and by 2025, an education with Great Academies will be synonymous with benefiting from a rounded and world-class education.

2. To develop 'Great Academies in the Community' partnerships with our local communities

By September 2022, we will co-ordinate the outward facing dimension of each academy with their local community stakeholders including; parent bodies, local authority representatives, partner schools and trusts, the business community, and third sector organisations. By 2023, all academies will have thriving programmes of engagement with community stakeholders and become increasingly recognised as being truly at the heart of their communities.

Our Performance

3. To design and deliver the best possible curriculum and teaching standards leading to the best outcomes for all of our students.

Our focus will be on curriculum in its broadest sense, covering the entire experience of the Great Academies' education. Our starting point will be the intended design and delivery of our curriculum. We aim for our students to achieve the best possible academic outcomes and to have a broad, rounded education experience in all of our academies. All measures such as academic outcomes, student attendance and exclusions data, will reach and then improve upon national average data. We will achieve this by systematically implementing our school improvement model, including a relentless focus on improving the

quality of provision in our schools, and specifically ensuring teaching that is routinely great. We will place a great emphasis on the importance of literacy and numeracy, and undertake a trust-wide approach to improving standards in reading. High levels of attendance also comes from supportive and caring staff who ensure that an exciting broad curriculum awaits our students.

In terms of impact and outcomes, our high aspiration is that by September 2025, we will be in the top 20% performing Multi Academy Trusts for secondary academies, and Silver Springs Primary Academy will be in the top 10% nationally in the DfE primary performance tables. This requires an immediate focus from 2022 on current Y4 and Y9, and a plan for sustained improvement with subsequent years. By September 2027, all of our long-standing academies will be in the top 5% of similar schools, meaning that our Multi Academy Trust will be in the top 5% of similar Multi Academy Trusts. New academies joining the Trust will be given appropriate targets to support the overall objective for the Trust within a three-year period from the point of joining. All performance measures will improve on FFT 50, meet FFT 20, and reach FFT 5 over this time. Where the Covid pandemic has delayed DfE performance tables in 2020 and 2021, we will continue to scrutinise our academies performance against the most reliable data sets that we can source or national average data that is published by DfE.

4. To work towards greater sustainability including a carbon net zero status.

This is a newly introduced strategic objective for the Trust and will develop over time. The DfE draft strategy "sustainability and climate change" was published in November 2021 and a final strategy is expected in April 2022. By September 2025 our approach to sustainability will be embedded across the Trust and we will be contributing to the 2030 Sustainability Agenda. We will have reviewed how we teach about; sustainability; the environment; climate change; and achieving net zero carbon emissions. We will give our students a voice in the strategic direction that we take, including school-level projects and competitions. We will aim to reduce our overall consumption year on year, including projects around increasingly sustainable transport and improved estates and ways of working. We will seek involvement for our students in the national Education Nature Park & Climate Leaders Award and promote progression into green skills and careers.

Our People

5. To develop and promote staff good health and well-being through Charters for our People

As we move out of the 2020-21 two years of pandemic, we recognise we can strengthen our offer to support and promote staff well-being and good health. In 2020, we introduced our first trust wide staff survey, which we will maintain as an annual process securing the best possible response rate from staff. We will ensure that we respond to and act on the main themes emerging from staff surveys. By September 2022, we will be signed up to the DfE well-being charter and all of our academies will be signed up the Great Academies Staff Well-Being Charter.

Our finance and resources

6. To manage our finances and resources efficiently to secure and sustain the best provision and opportunities for the future

By September 2022, curriculum led financial planning (CLFP) will be understood by all leaders and managers and schools will recognise the imperative to reach balanced income and expenditure in-year budgets. This will be supported by monthly financial reports, quarterly Local Governing Committees and termly Financial Accountability Meetings (FAMs). By September 2022, all schools will return a surplus of at least 3% of GAG in order to sustain total reserves of at least 10% of in Year GAG and enable a strategic estates management and an ICT refresh-programme.

Our structure, support and operations

7. To develop and provide Great Academies Central Services through our central structure, support and operations

By September 2022, we will have completed a process of alignment across our academies to ensure efficient practices and protocols are standardised against agreed practices of excellence, including our Great School Improvement Model, our finance, HR, governance, estates and ICT functions. These will clearly define the capacity and bespoke support systems required by and offered to each current and future academy.

8. To grow the Great Academies Education Trust

By September 2022, 23 and 24, we will have maintained a pipeline of potential partner schools who may join our Multi Academy Trust, supported by marketing materials and a strategy to engage new prospective partner schools. We will be clear on the 'Ws' of who, when, where and why, as well as ensuring that we have the capacity for sensible growth. By September 2024, we will have at least three more primary schools in our Trust and by September 2025 we will have developed two clusters of around 4-6 schools in each of Rochdale and Tameside, with a view and strategy for growth into other regional areas in the north. If our local partner primary schools are slow to work with us, we will look for primary partners further afield.

THE THREE STRANDS OF OUR STRATEGIC PLANS

This corporate strategic plan sets out a clear strategic direction for the next 3-5 years. Milestones are identified by September 2022, 2025 and where reasonable, 2027.

It confirms and puts into practice our vision and values and what we want for our students; outlines a number of key objectives that apply across the trust; and the corporate key performance indicators (KPIs) that keep us focused on the achievement of our strategic objectives. The strategic plan is the foundation for our strong sense of organisational purpose, a 'golden thread' that is shared by all trustees, Local Governing Committees, school leaders and wider workforce colleagues through the alignment of academy and central improvement plans and individual performance management objectives.

Importantly, our plan builds on the strength of our Multi Academy Trust, a strong moral purpose lived through our GREAT values, and a deep commitment to make a positive transformational difference to the lives of our young people.

Our trustees will ensure that the principles of best-practice Multi Academy Trust modelling are developed to allow Great Academies to benefit in each strand, which will include;



Governance

- Highly effective governance at all levels
- The very best in governance development and training
- Strong recruitment and retention of expert governors and trustees.



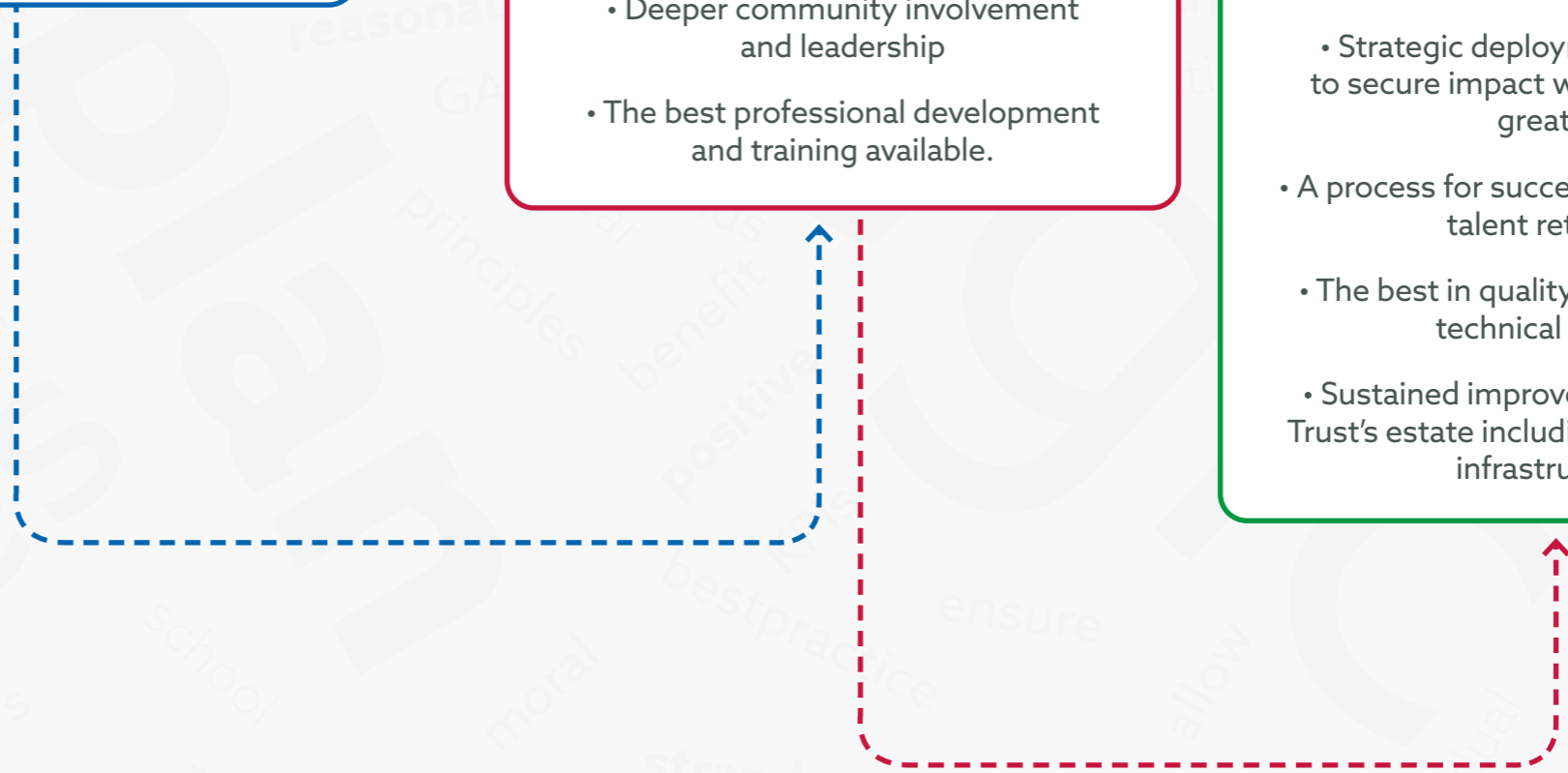
Education

- Routine collaboration and sharing of best practice
- Strong focus on improving curriculum, teaching and learning
- Widening and deepening enrichment opportunities for our students
- Deeper community involvement and leadership
- The best professional development and training available.



Operations

- Clarity and understanding on the measures required for financial success and sustainability of the Trust
- Economic benefits of scale and efficient contract management
- Increased re-investment into academy estate, ICT and facilities
- Strategic deployment of funding to secure impact where the need is greatest
- A process for succession planning and talent retention
- The best in quality professional and technical training
- Sustained improvement across the Trust's estate including IT facilities and infrastructure.



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN

There are five key elements of our strategic intent:



Objectives 1 and 2; Our students and school communities.

Curriculum, expectations, behaviour, quality teaching, collaborative partnerships, innovation.

- We will ensure that all our students will have access to curriculums that are broad and balanced, offer opportunities for enrichment, develop the whole person, and are both relevant and future proof, committing to the National Youth Guarantee.
- We will work with all schools to ensure that the highest expectations and aspirations are set for all of our students.
- We will share learning from the Behaviour Hub initiative 2021-23, and ensure that all of our schools have the highest standards of student behaviour. Our students will learn in an orderly environment where they feel

safe to learn, free from any disruption. We will insist on excellent behaviour and not accept excuses for poor behaviour.

- We will secure the best quality of teaching, since it is this that will bring about the academic outcomes we want. We will support all schools in getting the best quality CPD, training and development to improve classroom practice.
- We will ensure that each individual child is known, understanding them, their background, and their needs, working in partnership with their families.
- We will endeavour to make our students GREAT citizens, able to make a positive contribution to society.

Our communities and marketing

Community

- We will enhance the contributions of employers and the wider community to the lives of our individual academies.
- We will develop a platform for alumni to re-engage with schools and to support the work of the Trust.
- All academies will have a Community Engagement Action Plan, with objectives placing each school at the heart of its community, enabling them to become not only a hub for learning, but a community resource for life-long learning.
- The Community Engagement Action plan will possess measurable aims and objectives that show how the school and the wider Trust engage in collaborative projects with our parents, local communities, businesses and civic partners to deliver change and improvements to education and the wider society.
- Each academy will ensure that their facilities are promoted and available for their local communities in terms of life-long education, health, sports, arts and more general community usage.
- Each academy website will develop to be interactive with their community, providing both statutory and relevant information. The Trust will evaluate websites regularly and feedback developmental advice and guidance. Individual websites will be clear and regularly updated on the priority of KCSIE.
- Each school will host regular parental forums (termly) with themed agendas for parents, and the Trust will gather parental questionnaire data on an annual basis to guide agendas and priorities.

Marketing

- We will raise the profile of the Trust and our academies throughout Tameside, Rochdale and beyond by celebrating the work and development in raising standards and transforming lives. Improve communications, increase our presence on social media outputs, and use our websites more effectively to communicate the achievements within the Trust.
- We will maximise opportunities to enhance the visual environment of each school, creating showcases to display student work and creating spaces in which to celebrate student successes.

Objectives 3 and 4; Our performance:

Monitor, challenge, support, intervene, collaborate, teamwork

- We will use data wisely and effectively to inform, monitor, intervene and review.
- We are committed to improvement that is rooted in the individual needs and context of each Great Academies school.
- Our model will develop into clusters in Rochdale and Tameside.

Sustainable Futures

- We will involve and give a voice to our students in approaches to sustainability.
- We will seek more sustainable ways of working in the way we run our estate and conduct our business.
- We will develop our approaches to reduce, reuse, recycle, recover.
- We will endeavour to illustrate our progress against clear metrics such as our carbon footprint.

Objective 5; Our People

Training, partnerships, ambition

- The key to our success is the strength of GREAT values demonstrated in leadership at every level.
- We are committed to ensuring quality leadership from trustees and governors to colleagues in our classrooms and offices.
- We know that an inclusive, open culture, where we look after staff well-being and leaders and staff at all levels feel consulted, developed, valued and listened to is vital.
- We are committed to living up to our Equality and Diversity policy and statement as approved by each Local Governing Committees in February 2022; Great Academies and the respective Local Governing Committees are committed to equality and diversity because of the collective determination to ensure that every child and member of staff, no matter his/her background or family/personal circumstances, fulfil their potential.
- We will embed routine, systematic collaboration across our schools to ensure the best possible leadership opportunities.

- We will ensure that all newly recruited employees share and demonstrate the values of the Trust through robust recruitment and induction processes.
- We will use our annual Trust-wide staff survey to inform how we develop our People Strategy.

Objective 6; Our finance and Resources

Robust budgeting, procurement, efficiencies, economies of scale, resources

- We will rationalise 'back office' systems, policies and processes for less duplication and more efficient resourcing.
- We will ensure that internal financial controls are robust and fit for purpose.
- We will provide opportunity and draw on the expertise and resource within individual schools to serve the wider trust.
- We will identify opportunities for income generation by employing an individual in a self-funding role, providing support and expertise to all schools.
- We will ensure that all schools are financially viable and have annual balanced budgets.
- We will review and develop our Trust reserves policy ensuring viability of support over time.
- We will routinely audit and review contracts due for renewal across the trusts schools to identify opportunities for tendering at scale whenever possible.
- We will ensure that internal financial systems will provide a proactive approach to support schools with budget management, providing training as necessary.

Objectives 7 and 8; Our structure, support and operations

Quality Assurance, Strategy, Process, Networking, Organisation

- We are committed to a universal and equitable approach for all of our academies.
- Our central officers will provide effective advice, support and challenge.
- We will ensure that communications are continually improving to give regular feedback and developing an agenda that will continually improve service.
- We will be outward facing and seek best practice from other organisations.
- We will develop marketing plans and strategy to recruit students to our academies.
- We will implement strategic growth in numbers of academies when the time is right, and with the right partners.

GROWTH STRATEGY

The Trust's growth ambition over time is to develop two clusters of around 4-6 schools in each of Rochdale and Tameside, with a view and strategy for growth into other regional areas in Greater Manchester/the north.

We recognise the benefits of being a cross-phase Trust and seek growth in the primary phase as well as the secondary phase.

During the timeframe of this strategic plan we will apply the following principles for growth:

- Good or Outstanding schools
- Geographical proximity to existing academies and Greater Manchester
- Financially resilience
- High proportion of 1st preference parental choices in Year 1 or Year 6

We would apply each of these principles in the context of each case. Any school joining Great Academies would be expected to commit to the Trust values and Operating Model:

- Trust curriculum principles
- Trust Teaching and learning principles
- Trust approach to managing assessment data and core monitoring
- Trust governance arrangements
- Bespoke identity within Trust corporate branding

We will create capacity from the Board to monitor and support growth.





**Great Academies
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