



Join us to discover
what's special about
Children First
Academy Trust



ASPIRATION • INTEGRITY • RESILIENCE



WELCOME TO **CHILDREN FIRST ACADEMY TRUST**



**Jenny Tosh,
Chair of Trustees**



**Jane Flynn,
Chief Executive Officer**

Welcome from the Chair of Trustees and the CEO.

As a relatively new Trust, we are keen to share with others our successes since its formation. We are very proud of what we have achieved and are passionate about providing the best education and opportunities for our children.

As a group of school leaders and Trustees, we all have a role in building the ethos of our Trust, ensuring throughout that our culture of 'Children First' drives any decisions that are made.

We want to learn from each other. Sharing the best practice within our schools, whilst looking beyond our Trust to learn from the excellent practice elsewhere, building partnerships with schools that share our values.

Our governance is strong and effective, working closely with the CEO and the Headteachers to drive the strategic direction of the Trust. We are collegiate in our approach, engaging widely, delegating effectively and recognising our accountability to our communities as leaders of the Trust.

If you are interested in joining our senior leadership team or finding out more about the opportunities we can offer, please visit our website at: childrenfirsttrust.co.uk or get in touch at chair@childrenfirsttrust.co.uk.

ABOUT US



WHO WE ARE

Formed in April 2019, Children First Academy Trust was created through five local primary schools coming together, recognising the value of working together to improve the education we can provide for our children.

Our schools are all located geographically close to each other in Edmonton, North London where there are significantly high levels of deprivation. The Indices of Deprivation (IDACI 2019) shows that our communities live in the lowest 10-20% for deprivation nationally with 35% of our pupils being eligible for Pupil Premium funding. 72% do not have English as their first language and there are over 50 languages spoken within most of our schools.

Our schools range from two forms of entry to four forms of entry with an overall current pupil number of 3115 (October 2021 Census). Most of our schools have provision for two year-olds and all have Nurseries within them. The annual Trust budget is approximately £20 million.

Our Governance is made up mainly of local people, with a wide variety of skillsets and backgrounds. Local Governing Boards work at school level to monitor the impact of school improvement strategies, whilst the Trustees are responsible for the performance of the Trust schools as a whole. They recognise their moral and legal responsibility to guide the Trust with integrity and aspiration.

Currently consisting of five-member schools, as the Trust matures, we are keen to work with other schools, recognising the exciting opportunities that are possible when working closely together within a Trust. Our guiding principle is to deliver a first-class education through partnership, innovation, school improvement and accountability and we welcome interest in joining Children First from other schools who wish to become part of this journey with us.



RAYNHAM
PRIMARY SCHOOL



WHAT DRIVES US?



OUR PRINCIPLES

Thrive and Achieve Together

To lay the foundations for successful life-long learners and positive local, national and global citizens of the future through our values:



To provide outstanding education for the children within our schools

We believe that our children deserve the best education, regardless of their background, their ability or their economic circumstances. We believe that, through collaboration and maintaining best practice across each school, we will develop a shared understanding of how to raise standards and outcomes across the Trust.

To provide wide-ranging opportunities and experiences for our children which develop skills for life

We believe that all children should have the same high quality opportunities in life, both in education and in wider enrichment. With each school at the heart of its community, the Trust will actively seek out experiences for the children, which will enable them to grow in skills, understanding of the world and personal ambition.

To develop a sustainable, well-led organisation with a culture of 'Children First'

We will build on the culture of openness, transparency and trust, which already exists within the Headteachers' Board, to drive the direction of the Trust. We will ensure that the right people with the right skillsets and ethos lead the organisation into the future. We are committed to developing high quality teachers and support staff as well as identifying future leaders who will lead with integrity and creativity within the schools and across the Trust.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT



Our purpose is in the name – ‘Children First’.

The Trust was created through school leaders and their Governing Boards, recognising the strength we can gain through collaboration. In this it is quite unique.

There is no one lead school but instead we work together as Heads with the CEO to drive school improvement across all the schools. Whilst the Trustees have strategic oversight of the Trust, the Headteachers’ Board is the strategic and operational driving force of the Trust, acknowledging the expertise of the leaders in their schools.

Each school maintains its uniqueness whilst learning from each other. In our short time of existence, we are already sharing best practice at all levels and supporting each other to be the best schools we can be for the children we serve. Curriculum development,

rationalisation of systems and shared professional development are just some of the many benefits achieved so far.

All of our schools are in areas of significant deprivation and we pride ourselves on a culture of no excuses for under-achievement and no limits to what is possible.

As the Trust develops and grows, we recognise that all our systems and structures must continue to be built around our common purpose – Children First – so that all we do only enhances what we provide for our children.

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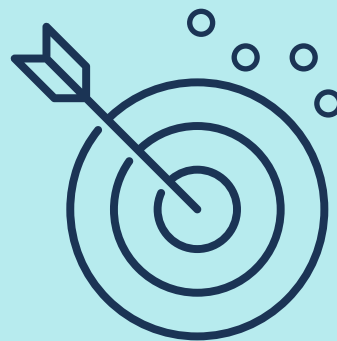
As an experienced Headteacher already when the Trust was formed, I have really valued being part of driving forward for all of our schools. My school, both staff and children, have gained so much from being part of the Trust.

Stewart, Headteacher



Our Headteachers

IMPROVING TOGETHER



Our core value of integrity runs through all that we do.

Trust and School leaders share a real culture of openness and honesty, recognising each school's strengths and working together to provide each other with the tools to improve.

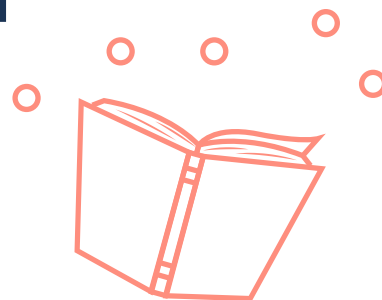
We invest deeply in building relationships within and across schools between leaders and teachers, sharing a professional respect for each other, which enables us to have professional conversations

and hold each other to our common purpose. We expect the best from everyone and don't shy away from difficult conversations, recognising that all of our decisions are made with children at the heart.

The CEO, along with the Headteachers, through the Headteachers' Board, leads from the front, modelling the values and enabling true collaboration to take place.

WHAT WE DELIVER

AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION



Deprivation is not regarded as a barrier to high achievement.

All that we do reflects this belief, with one of our schools recently being highlighted as a case study in the new Education Endowment Foundation report (Autumn 2021), for their excellent practice in the use of Pupil Premium funding to drive high quality teaching and learning across the school.

Our high standards and expectations are reflected in the excellent progress our children make by the time they leave us. Several of our schools achieve well above national standards in all areas, both for progress and attainment, with those eligible for pupil premium often achieving even higher, and our aim is to continue to build on this success across all of our schools.

Reading is the priority for our children so that they can then access the full curriculum as they move through their education. Language development is key and opportunities to expand their knowledge and understanding runs through all that we do. We ensure we keep everything simple, effective and enjoyable, creating thinking teachers who are keen to develop their craft.

Curriculum planning is at the heart of our success. It reflects the differences between schools whilst ensuring shared systems and practices support all of our schools to improve. Built around the National Curriculum, we ensure each school can identify their own drivers which are woven throughout their planning.

We have a very high proportion of children with significant needs and we are passionate about ensuring every child achieves success. Inclusive practice therefore runs through all of our schools.



WHAT WE DELIVER

OPPORTUNITIES & EXPERIENCES



We recognise that education is much broader than just what happens in the classroom.

Our children deserve rich opportunities and experiences that enable them to see beyond their immediate environment so that they grow in skills, understanding of the world and personal ambition.

Our curriculum introduces them to these new experiences with a focus on building cultural capital through all subject areas. Role models from diverse backgrounds are celebrated and experiences beyond the school gate are intentionally planned for, to give the best to our children. For example; children from Galliard travelled to Poland as part of an Erasmus project in 2019; Raynham Primary participated in the Children's Parliament on Climate Change

in October 2021; Brettenham Primary is a UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting School; children from Wilbury Primary won the national Peter Jones's Tycoon Competition in 2021 and Fleecefield are part of a national project to promote reading for children, staff and families.

Where we can add value as a Trust, opportunities are provided across all the schools such as cross-Trust debating and public speaking competitions and Meet the MP events. We are currently running a very exciting Trust-wide Connecting Classrooms project with schools in Nepal with a focus on sustainability.

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My role is to work across the Trust enabling all schools to have the best facilities for teaching computing. We're investing significantly in this area and my aim is that our Trust will be a beacon of excellence for teaching computing!

Nick, Trust Computing Lead

OPPORTUNITIES SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM



As a Trust we believe that the best way to enhance the life chances of our children is to enable collaboration between schools within our Trust and beyond, to combine our wisdom.



We are confident that utilising the talent and knowledge that is already within our schools is the best way to raise standards. We therefore invest in growing leaders at all levels from within, enabling our staff team to be the best they can be.

Our Trust School Improvement Team is drawn from experienced teachers across our schools, drawing on their knowledge and specialisms to build our capacity for improving schools. Whilst remaining in their own schools, they work together with the CEO to innovate, practice and refine what we do.

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I love working with the early years leads across Children First Academy Trust! As a team we have developed an open, collaborative and supportive culture, which reflects that of the Trust. Through working together, we have been able to approach the many new developments in the EYFS with cohesion, consistency and confidence.

Sophie, Trust Early Years Leader

WHAT WE DELIVER

A SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION



Our values and focus on 'Children First' run through all that we do, including how we develop and grow the Trust itself.

Any decisions taken regarding structures and processes must improve support to schools and enable them to raise standards for our children.

Our central team is lean. Adding to it is carefully considered, ensuring that school improvement and value for money are at the heart of the decision. Schools currently contribute 5% of their GAG funding to the central budget. This covers on-going staffing costs, including the central team, our Trust EWO and the School Improvement team and also leaves a significant amount which can be allocated by the Headteachers' Board for specifically supporting schools. Last year's central budget was able to fund full phonics resources for three schools, a consultant Speech and Language Therapist, refurbishment of one school's IT suite and a large amount of professional development support, particularly around Early Years and reading.

Our central Finance Team provides financial services to all the schools. Whilst responsibility for budget setting and monitoring as well as requisitions, lies at school level, the daily financial

processes, from ordering to invoicing, are all managed centrally. This has released the Business Leaders from the aspect of finance to concentrate on all other aspects of their role.

We receive capital funding from central Government (SCA), which we allocate to capital projects based on need. In the short time of our existence, significant work has taken place which includes a new boiler plant room at one school, refurbished water system at another and several flat roofing replacements.

We are a growing community and are very open to considering new schools joining our Trust or working alongside us. Our guiding principle is to deliver a first-class education through partnership, innovation, school improvement and accountability and we would welcome schools to get in touch and discuss how we might work together.

Jenny Tosh (Chair of Trustees)

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