



Succession Planning Strategy

Approved June 2022

Reviewed Remuneration Committee January 2024

Children First Academy Trust

Thrive and Achieve Together

Aspiration

Integrity

Resilience

Succession planning - Our Key Principles

This Trust is built on our key principles of;

- ✓ Providing outstanding education for the children within our schools
- ✓ Providing wide-ranging opportunities and experiences for our children which develop skills for life
- ✓ Developing a sustainable, well-led organisation with a culture of 'Children First'

Key to our principles is a commitment to developing our work-force in ways which;

- ✓ Create ownership of the vision of the Trust
- ✓ Build leadership at all levels
- ✓ Provide continuing professional development opportunities which enable all staff to develop and progress and builds effective leadership capacity throughout the Trust
- ✓ Utilise and develop the strengths of individual staff, which allows them to contribute to their maximum potential and enables them to progress within the Trust where possible, or beyond the Trust, should there not be an appropriate post available within

Aims

This strategy is based on the underlying principle that growing our own leaders will benefit each of our schools as they look to the future and will also best support our pupils to receive consistently high quality teaching within the classrooms. We recognise, and have already experienced, the huge potential to improve school standards and performance through creatively working together at all levels.

The Trust is committed to safe growth through careful succession planning that;

- ✓ Identifies leadership potential at all levels and enables training and support for professional development
- ✓ Regularly reviews and evaluates leadership structures and their effectiveness with an eye to the development of the most efficient models of leadership

- ✓ Considers it as a success when a member of staff moves on to a leadership position in another school within the Trust
- ✓ Ensures appropriate induction and support is in place for all staff, including leadership roles
- ✓ Promotes the Trust's approach to leadership development to external candidates and any new schools considering joining the Trust
- ✓ Develops a Trust culture which is seen by all current and prospective staff to offer leadership development opportunities which benefit individual staff as well as the Trust

On-going leader considerations

Trust and school leaders need to be aware that succession planning is not static but is an on-going process. Consideration need to be given regularly to;

- ✓ Which key staff may leave or retire in the next few years, and whether there is someone who could fill their post
- ✓ Who has potential
- ✓ What roles are going to be needed over the next few years
- ✓ Whether the current roles will all be necessary, or if restructuring or reallocation of duties might be suitable
- ✓ Considering the capacity of the Trust central team and how sustainable is it
- ✓ What is your strategy for growth as a Trust, and what staff will you need to deliver it and make it sustainable
- ✓ Building up expertise in the central team so that you can manage an expanding trust, and don't become overstretched

We will use the 'rule of three' for key posts in the trust, which asks:

- Who is the 3-week replacement (to cover sickness)?
- Who is the 3-month replacement (should someone hand in their notice)?
- Who is the 3-year replacement (what is the trust's long-term strategic plan)?

Identifying People and Positions

The Trust's succession plan will target senior positions to consider short-term and longer-term successors for these posts.

While some jobs will always require specific knowledge, the focus will be on identifying and developing pools of potential successors to be identified for a variety of roles.

The Trust will identify;

- ✓ Potential shortfalls
- ✓ Where there is additional capacity
- ✓ Whole Trust development priorities
- ✓ Potential leadership capacity and capability

A more specific succession planning document, highlighting these key areas, will be reviewed separately from this strategy at Remuneration Committee.

Creating Opportunities

On an annual basis, the Trust will review this succession planning document to;

- ✓ Support leadership development opportunities which are of mutual benefit to all schools such as School Improvement Team roles, Trust Subject Leaders, Trust Lead Teachers
- ✓ Consider the funding and cover for staff to attend development programmes
- ✓ Support situations where roles can be seconded to other Trust schools to gain experience and share best practice

Aligning Recruitment Practice to Consider and Promote Successors

The Trust is aware that it needs to be an attractive employer. This includes providing growth and promotion opportunities to retain staff but also involves developing effective recruitment practices. The Trust's recruitment practices are currently developing to ensure that we will;

- ✓ Be clear in recruitment publicity that the Trust is fully committed to leadership and professional development at all levels
- ✓ Make clear the support that is available to all new appointments
- ✓ Plan effectively to deliver support to new headteachers and senior leaders
- ✓ Advertise cross Trust roles, short term cover and secondment opportunities

Training and Professional Development

Our aim is for Early Career Teachers who start with the Trust to be able to progress through our different stages of career to become senior Trust leaders. With careful support and development opportunities identified, we expect teachers to be able to take on responsibilities both within and beyond the classroom. Specific Trust-led training for teachers in their 3rd year and beyond, ensures that development does not stop beyond the ECT years.

Middle leaders are encouraged to take on responsibilities that enable them to grow in their understanding of strategic matters beyond their own classroom, supported by senior leaders as they develop. National professional qualifications (NPQ) are encouraged and leaders from across the Trust come together to build peer support.

For senior leaders and Headteachers, professional development remains vital as we recognise there is room to grow at every stage of career. We need outstanding leaders who look outward to gain knowledge whilst understanding how to drive school improvement within their home school. This professional development may

be more bespoke to individual needs and the needs of the school, current situation and future career paths.

For Administrative and Support staff, it is recognised that professional development is key to the improvement of service provision at all levels and we look for talent that can be nurtured and developed. Our aim at all times is to appoint to middle and senior positions from within our schools whenever possible.

Performance Management

This is the main vehicle for driving improvement and identifying areas for development of all staff as they progress through their career. It enables the Trust to be clear and consistent in its assessment of overall performance of both teaching and non-teaching staff, including the headteacher, and supports improvement both for individuals and the Trust as a whole. It is intended to be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively and to identify areas for 'next step' training that will enable them to progress through their career.

Monitoring and Review

In implementing this Strategy, senior leadership teams, the executive team and governance will;

- ✓ Monitor leadership development within the schools and links with other Trust schools
- ✓ Maintain an overview of each school's staffing profile and implications arising
- ✓ Ensure the allocation of sufficient funding from the budget to support leadership development and other staff promotion and pay progression
- ✓ Review the delivery of this strategy on an annual basis to determine whether it is fit for purpose