



Membership Agreement

2017/18

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Introduction from the Chief Executive Officer

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” - Deuteronomy 6 (ESV)

Teaching children is an essential human task that has always been at the heart of faith communities and especially of the Church of England.

Our family of schools in the Diocese of Liverpool has a long history of excellence combined with nurture, developing in young people the resilience and character needed for life.

Christian values are the foundation of British values. Within the explicit Christian culture of our schools, pupils flourish. Across the centuries, church schools have adapted to the legislative framework specified by government. The current change to academy status for schools is as significant as the 1870 and 1944 Education Acts.

Across England the number of schools forming and joining multi-academy trusts (MATs) has grown significantly since the 2010 Education Act. The DfE expects that most schools converting to academy status will join a multi-academy trust (MAT).

Embracing the opportunities that this new framework provides, the Diocese of Liverpool seeks not only to maintain our schools, 90% of which are good or outstanding, but to extend, enrich and improve our family of schools. We believe that as a diocesan led MAT we can, for the system as a whole, create stronger bonds of collaboration and cooperation, sharing good practice, addressing areas of weakness and offering increased opportunities for professional development.

After a period of consultation in 2016 and early 2017, it was clear that our schools wanted the Diocesan Board of Education to take a strategic leadership role in the academies programme. Further consultation looked at the account in Genesis 18 of the visit to Abraham of three angels to identify the core values of the Trust:

- Collaboration
- Valuing the local
- Valuing difference
- Inclusion

We believe that we can create a Trust in which our schools will thrive under the leadership of headteachers, supported and challenged by local governing bodies and accountable to the board of directors. We are confident that this can be achieved whilst at the same time ensuring that all of our family of schools benefit from high levels of collaboration.

Strong structures across three hubs will ensure a high level of accountability and, coupled with an appropriate level of challenge, will enable local leadership to flourish. Central services will ensure value for money and the ability to monitor from a distance. A strong school improvement function will give the capacity to evaluate schools and intervene where needed.

Jesus said 'Let the children come to me.' (Mt 19)

We believe that we are fulfilling this command when we enable children of all faiths and none to flourish in our schools. The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust will have an important role to play in improving the attainment of pupils across the north-west.

Father Richard Peers

Liverpool Diocesan Director of Education

Chief Executive Officer

Vision and values

The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust welcomes young people of all faiths and none and is committed to providing each of them with a high quality education and environment where Christian values and principles permeate all that we do.

The Trust will support and develop Church of England and other schools and academies in the diocese as they strive for continuous improvement and educational excellence for all pupils. The Trust aims to create social justice and enhance social mobility by delivering a high quality education which will ensure the best possible outcomes for all its pupils.

In line with the Church of England's "Vision for Education – Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good" the Trust's vision '*embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate our vision for education: Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity.*

The vision, in line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, is for the common good of the whole human community and its environment, whether national, regional or local. It is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences, and the forming of new settlements in order to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.'

1. Liverpool Diocesan School Trust service offer

The LDST has established a range of services to support all the schools within the Trust. The services that are provided will be kept under constant review by the Trust and, in discussion with member schools, be developed and amended as required.

Schools that join the LDST will contribute a percentage of their General Annual Grant (excluding, for clarity, Pupil Premium and Top-Up Funding) to the Trust as a membership fee. In 2017/18 this will be 1% for Secondary Schools and 3% for Primary Schools. In return, they will receive the support and services described in section 1.2 of this document. This percentage will be reviewed annually and will reflect the level of support and services provided by the Trust. The remaining school budget will be ring-fenced to the school as will any surplus or deficit.

Each school within the Trust will retain a Local Governing Body (LGB) that will operate under the terms of the Scheme of Delegation. All LGBs will operate under the same level of delegated responsibility, noting that any school in a category, or where the LGB does not have the capacity to operate effectively, will be subject to appropriate intervention and support by the Trust to resolve any difficulties.

Where appropriate, and in full consultation with the LGB, the Trust may consider creative models of leadership to provide the best possible school effectiveness, and make the best possible use of available resources.

The academy conversion grant (currently £25,000) is provided by the DfE, and is paid to the LDST. The DfE impose strict parameters for the expenditure of the grant, and the monies will be used to pay for services and tasks such as legal advisors, licences and due diligence exercises. The LDST undertake to obtain best value when procuring these services.

1.1 Part 1 –Diocesan Board of Education support:

This Membership Agreement will include all the services already provided by the DBE Service Level Agreement.

1.2 Part 2 –Diocesan Multi Academy Trust Services

The LDST will provide a range of high quality services to the schools within the Trust, in exchange for the membership fee.

1.2.1 General

All LDST schools will benefit from:

- Provision of Trust Members for the LDST
- Provision of Directors for the LDST

- Negotiations with the LA on all individual school matters
- Negotiations with the LA on school matters at a strategic LDST level
- Relationships with the LA, DfE, ESFA and RSC at a strategic LDST level
- Monthly briefing sheets on all relevant topics
- Annual conference or equivalent
- Facilitated school to school networks
- Succession planning
- Risk management

1.2.2 School Improvement

All LDST schools will benefit from a school improvement service which will:

- Provide a graduated level of support, challenge and intervention to schools based on accurate categorisation of strengths, needs and priorities
- Support and challenge through a minimum of three visits a year by a School Improvement Partner
- Provide a detailed data analysis of school performance to inform self-evaluation and school improvement
- Include an annual self-evaluation from the Trust Education Officer (TEO)
- Provide quality assured professionals to act as trusted partners
- Promote self-sustaining school improvement
- Build capacity within and across schools
- Support LGBs with Headteacher performance management
- Support with Headteacher recruitment
- Develop further current and future leaders
- Work in collaboration with existing centres of educational excellence
- Share best practice, research and evidence to secure excellent teaching and learning across all schools
- Provide advice and support before, during and after an Ofsted inspection
- Ensure that every school in the diocesan MAT achieves at least 'good' in their SIAMS inspection and progresses to outstanding
- Ensure Governing Bodies are able to rigorously support and challenge school improvement.

The LDST will build on the clarity of vision and purpose of education, derived from the historic Church of England foundation of inclusive Christian Education. This vision underpins school improvement and helps to create the climate in schools to enable the whole school community to thrive.

1.2.3 Finance and Business

The LDST finance team offers professional support to enable schools to plan and manage their budgets effectively, and to ensure compliance with good financial practice. The team will work with schools to achieve effective financial management and assurance in governance, leadership and management.

LDST schools will receive:

- strategic financial guidance from a qualified chartered accountant and a central finance function
- support for financial, back office and business support functions
- provision of financial handbook, policy setting and liaison with the ESFA
- support in setting up SIMS FMS accountancy package
- guidance in setting up bank accounts and use of a bank charge card
- annual finance software licences
- training and support
- budget setting software
- 1-3 year budget preparation and management support
- budget monitoring support
- procurement, best value and contract negotiation advice and guidance
- support with applications for additional grants and funding opportunities
- management support for all month end procedures and submissions e.g. VAT returns
- support in preparing monthly management accounts
- regular budgetary support through meetings with the headteacher and LGB,
- a preparation service and audit of annual accounts
- a regularity audit
- a preparation service and submission of the SORP - charity accounts
- completion and submission of all reports required by DfE and ESFA
- compliance to the academies handbook and accounts direction
- participation in school business management forum

1.2.4 Human Resources / Staffing

The HR function offers experienced and professional advice and guidance enabling schools to manage and support staff to achieve the highest quality education for pupils. HR work collaboratively with school improvement, finance, local authorities, external agencies, HR and legal professionals and trade union colleagues to ensure schools are equipped with the knowledge and services to run effectively and successfully.

LDST schools will receive:

- Strategic HR advice and support from a qualified HR Manager via on-site visits, telephone or email communication.
- HR advisor acting as a confidante and critical friend to the Headteacher and Management.
- Regular visits including annual HR health check.
- Proactive support with all Human Resources (HR), Employees Relations (ER) and Organisational Development (OD) related cases including investigations, hearings and appeals.
- Communication, consultation and negotiation with Trade union representatives.

- Advice and assistance with all recruitment up to and including Headteacher campaigns.
- Usage of a custom built HR system, Carval (which will provide data intelligence / data reporting).

1.2.5 Payroll

The LDST works with an external payroll bureau to provide all payroll services.

- Monthly payroll processing within agreed timescales
- All applicable statutory returns to HMRC and other bodies
- LGPS and TPS support including annual certificates and audit administration
- RTI reporting
- Auto-enrolment notifications and administration
- Updates on changes to national pay scales, National Insurance etc.
- Administration of the Apprenticeship Levy
- Automated payroll journal for uploading to the finance system

1.2.6 Health and Safety

The LDST works with an external consultant to provide strategic health and safety advice to the LDST and schools. All LDST schools will benefit from:

- Up to date policy documentation through the development and coordination of common policy and share best practice
- Advice on occupational health
- Advice on welfare and security
- Educational visit training

1.2.7 Policies and Procedures

All LDST schools will benefit from:

- Up to date policy documentation and the development and coordination of common policies and the sharing of best practice.

1.2.8 Governance

All LDST schools will benefit from:

- support and advice for local governing bodies
- training and continued support of the LGB
- governance support when establishing committees etc.
- CPD/training opportunities for governors and staff

- NGA membership
- processing LGB appointments
- Chair of Governors reference group
- provision of the Scheme of Delegation
- recruiting developing and training for effective governance
- telephone support and advice
- maintenance of governor database
- support with skills audits
- attendance at LGB meetings as required.
- Governor Mark?
- Specific Ofsted training – questions that might be asked ...

1.2.9 Premises and Insurance

All LDST schools will benefit from:

- membership of the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA)
- support for a strategic approach to estates management and premises development
- negotiation and set-up of insurance premiums, including land and buildings
- advice on insurances and insurance liaison
- procurement of all legally required insurance covers
- emergency planning and implementation
- annual audit of H&S and legal compliance
- advice on catering and cleaning contracts
- cross LDST procurement of utilities
- advice on community use of facilities

The LDST will:

- apply for funding for capital works within its schools
- receive an annual Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) from the ESFA.
- oversee the equitable distribution of the available CIF allocation through a transparent prioritisation process.
- manage and coordinate consultants to facilitate efficient and effective project delivery
- coordinate all payments and claims in relation to capital projects
- monitor all financial aspects of projects to financial close

1.2.10 PR Marketing and Communications

LDST will offer a range of support tailored to meet the needs of individual schools including advice on communication reviews, strategy and policy in areas of:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Recruiting and retention
- Advertising and marketing

- Crisis communication
- Media management and liaison

1.2.11 Safeguarding

All LDST schools will benefit from:

- Agreed child protection and safeguarding policies in line with current legislation
- Training for all staff
- Advice and guidance including dealing with allegations against staff etc.

1.2.12 Legal

The LDST has a working relationship with a nationally recognised law firm.

2.0 Obligations of Individual Schools to the Trust

2.1 Any school or academy joining LDST will have to accept the Scheme of Delegation as drafted and the services provided through the membership fee. These are non-negotiable.

2.2 Termly data returns must be submitted to the LDST in the required timescales, containing key data using a standard template. This will be used to inform school improvement and how this will be best achieved.

The standard templates will be kept as short and simple as possible to minimise the administrative burden, whilst still presenting all of the required data. There will be sections for the school to self-evaluate and RAG rate

- Leadership and Management
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Outcomes for pupils
- Self-Evaluation against SIAMs Framework

There will also be a data return section which will be based on the current DfE / Ofsted criteria.

The termly reports will be circulated to the LDST board in advance of any meeting and, if appropriate, individual schools will be asked to attend the board meetings to present their reports. Attendance will be mandatory if so requested.

APPENDIX 1 - Constitution of the local governing body

1. In terms of Foundation Governor representation, the Local Governing Body (LGB) composition shall remain as the predecessor school. Should an inspection report indicate that the school and governing body is not achieving as expected, LDST reserves the right to intervene at the appropriate level, including as a last resort to replace the LGB.
2. In the event that the predecessor school has an Interim Executive Board, the LDST will appoint a committee consistent with the Articles to act as the LGB of the school.
3. The Directors (all or any of them) shall also be entitled to attend any meetings of the LGB. Any Director attending a meeting of the LGB shall not count towards the quorum for the purposes of the meeting and shall not be entitled to vote on any resolution being considered by the LGB.
4. All persons appointed or elected to the LGB shall give a written undertaking to the Directors to uphold the objects, ethos and mission of LDST.
5. Any governor vacancies must be notified to the LDST as soon as they arise and noted in LGB minutes.
6. Subject to the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the LDST Articles of Association, every member of the LGB or other officer or auditor of the LDST acting in relation to the school shall be indemnified out of the assets of the LDST against any liability incurred by him/her in that capacity in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgement is given in favour or in which he/she is acquitted or in connection with any application in which relief is granted to him/her by the court from liability for negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust in relation to the affairs of the LDST.

APPENDIX 2 - Scheme of Delegation

The Scheme of Delegation for the LDST, and the schools that are included within, is as attached. Each LGB within the LDST will operate under the terms of this Scheme of Delegation, which is subject to review by the Directors of the LDST on an annual basis.

Subject to the school achieving progress as expected, the LDST will operate a 'light touch' approach. Where an Inspection report (or any other report as defined by LDST or the DFE) indicates there are weaknesses in governance at the school, the LDST will trigger appropriate intervention (see Section 4 above). In such a case, the LGB will continue to have the same level of delegation but will be subject to greater scrutiny and evaluation about how it operates.

Glossary

CPD – Continuing Professional Development. This would be available for all members of staff and governors within LDST as appropriate.

DBE – Diocesan Board of Education. Appointed by the Diocese to oversee the education of all children in church schools in the Diocese of Liverpool. Members represent a variety of interests around church and schools. The DBE reports to the Diocesan Synod annually. There are 119 schools/academies (110 primary and 9 secondary) in the Diocese of Liverpool.

DBF – Diocesan Board of Finance. The board is responsible for the custody and management of the Diocesan Synod's financial affairs and is charged with a duty to promote and assist the work of the Church of England in the Diocese of Liverpool and elsewhere.

DDE – Diocesan Director of Education. Appointed by the DBF to lead the work of the diocese within schools/academies and to support the SIAMS process. The post is supported by a small team, some of whom are recent head teachers with a wide range of expertise.

DfE – Department for Education. This body is led by the Secretary of State for Education, who is appointed by the Prime Minister. The department is responsible for the education of all pupils in England.

LDST – the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust (the diocesan MAT). Set up by the DBE to be the operational arm of its work with converting schools. It will have 5 members and 10 directors, each with a particular expertise needed to operate a successful MAT.

ESFA – Education and Skills Funding Agency. This is the body that funds academies; money is paid to the LDST and, following deduction of the top-slice as described in Section 1.5, the balance is paid directly to each academy on a monthly basis.

HR – Human Resources. Deals with all areas of staffing and payroll.

LA – Local Authority. The body which has responsibility, through the County Council, for standards of achievement in all schools in its locality. Historically, they have provided many of the services which will now be provided by the LDST.

LGB – Local Governing Body. It fulfils all the same functions as a full governing body but is answerable to LDST, instead of the LA.

LGPS – Local Government Pension Scheme. Currently all staff, other than teachers, make contributions to their pensions through this body.

MAT – Multi Academy Trust. A group of schools who, through a legally binding agreement, have agreed to work together for their mutual benefit.

NGA – National Governors Association. A national organisation which supports governors through research, information and dialogue.

RAG – Red, Amber, Green. A quick way to assess either priorities or progress towards set targets.

RSC – Regional Schools Commissioner. Academies all fall into a region, ours is the Lancashire and West Yorkshire Region. The RSC is responsible to the Secretary of State for Education for the standards and achievements of all academies in their region.

SIAMS – Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. Anglican and Methodist schools are inspected once every five years to ensure that they are effective as a distinctive Christian school.

SLA – Service Level Agreement. An agreement between the DBF and a school for the DBE to provide a range of services. It is funded by the school and is based on a lump sum and a per capita payment.

SORP – Standard operating and reporting procedures. These will be uniform across LDST to ensure schools are able to concisely report financial and educational data to the board.

TPS – Teachers Pension Scheme. This body administers the contributions that employers and teachers make to teacher's pensions.

VA – Voluntary Aided church school. The Governing Body is the employer of all staff and is also the admissions authority. The majority of governors are appointed by the diocese. The land and buildings are usually owned by a charitable foundation.

VAT – Value Added Tax. A tax set by central government for a variety of services and goods. It is currently 20%.

VC – Voluntary Controlled church school. The LA authority employs the staff and determines the admissions policy. As an academy, the LDST would become the employer. If the land and buildings are owned by the LA, these would be leased to LDST if a school decides to join.