

Becoming a Mead School

There are always teachers working across our schools to discuss good practice, both in termly network meetings and ongoing, informal communication. Staff appreciate that their equivalent from another school is there to draw upon at any time. There's a real sense of networking and sharing ideas.

**Gary Aldred, Principal of Abbey Mead
Primary Academy**



Introduction



We are delighted to introduce you to The Mead Educational Trust (TMET).

Formed in 2014, TMET is a well-established, respected multi-academy trust in Leicestershire, with a growing family of primary and secondary schools.

TMET exists to make a positive difference to the life chances of children and to our wider community. We do this through an ethos of 'our schools' over my school', to benefit all our pupils and people.

At the heart of all we do is a commitment to provide our schools with excellent school-to-school support, our pupils access to a world-class education, and our staff with high quality professional development.

We value cross phase work and have deliberately recruited a mix of primary and secondary schools into the Trust. We are actively looking to grow our special school provision. All our schools have common values and core operational systems, with adaptations for individual contexts and needs.

Through The Mead Institute of Professional Development, which encompasses our SCITT and Teaching School Hub, we provide excellent professional development opportunities and actively spot and nurture leadership potential.

At the helm of our Trust is a group of carefully chosen trustees, including leaders of education and key leaders within our wider business community. These guardians of our Trust, supported by our core central team and effective business management systems, ensure that we keep exceptional education provision at our core.

If you have questions about our Trust that are not answered in the following pages, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Anthony Glover, Chair



Sarah Ridley, CEO





Making a positive difference

While each school in The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) is special and unique, we are united in the belief that by working together we make a positive difference:

- for our learners
- through our governance
- through our leadership
- through our staff
- to the educational landscape
- through effective operations

We make a positive difference through an ethos of 'our schools' over my school', to benefit all our pupils and people. We believe that every young person, from any background, deserves an equal chance to be successful in whatever they choose to do. We want to share our love of learning with these young people in order to open the doors to their futures and prepare them with the knowledge and confidence to thrive.

We are committed to improving our local community by investing in our children and young people. We do not see education as a way out of the local area, but rather a way for our children and young people to make a positive difference within it; to make it a more thriving, prosperous, and welcoming community for everyone.

'Together we make a positive difference' signifies our determination to leverage the collective strength and depth across the Trust to ensure that all our schools are able to provide an excellent education for all learners or are making strong progress towards doing so.

We are fiercely ambitious for all the children and young people in our schools and therefore expect the best from all who work in them. In turn, we believe that every TMET employee should be empowered to reach their full potential. We support them by providing opportunities to widen their horizons, try out new ideas and progress their careers. Every one of our employees can make a positive difference to the life chances of our children and young people.

We aim always to recognise and celebrate diversity and individuality, with the wellbeing of each pupil at the heart of all work in our schools.

By working together and supporting each other, everyone in TMET has a role to play in ensuring that all our schools make a positive difference. To facilitate this collaborative work, our aim is that all Trust schools are within a 40-minute radius of TMET's central office in Leicester.

Visions and values

Our Vision

The TMET vision is to enable our pupils to become knowledgeable, conscious, compassionate and happy people who will make a positive difference wherever life takes them.

Our Values

The TMET family of schools has developed a set of guiding principles (the 7Cs) that define who we are and help to guide us as we strive to make a positive difference.

- Challenge:** Providing an excellent education by having high aspirations for all. Providing a platform for pupils to challenge themselves and others, so they can become the best they can be and contribute actively to society.
- Creativity:** Providing pioneering, vibrant and transformative learning experiences that are open to all. Offering a well-researched and evaluated curriculum, which acts as the catalyst for personal growth.
- Culture:** Respecting and celebrating diversity, enriching the lives of our pupils. Providing inspiration to participate in, and respond to, artistic and cultural experiences.
- Collaboration:** Working effectively and harmoniously together across phases, knowing our strengths will influence every step of our development, and celebrating our successes.
- Community:** Building a sense of belonging in a reflective and stimulating environment. Celebrating care, kindness and difference, allowing positive relationships to flourish and ensuring communication is excellent.
- Character:** Nurturing and developing personal attributes such as perseverance, resilience, confidence, optimism, tolerance, respect, community spirit, honesty, integrity and dignity.
- Courage:** Committing to challenge racial and social injustice and to promote personal and societal change. Making decisions based on clear high moral values and delivered with compassion and integrity.



There are so many things about the school and the Trust that make it an incredible place to work. I've had the opportunity to take part in leadership development at another secondary school in the Trust, which I found really beneficial for my current role. I'm also part of a subject improvement forum across several schools which I find incredibly useful.

Subject Leader, Modern Foreign Languages, Castle Mead Academy



Expectations of our schools

We believe every school, regardless of where it is on its school improvement journey, has a positive contribution to make. All our schools have their unique strengths, as well as areas for improvement, and are constantly learning from each other.

We expect that all schools joining TMET will add value to our educational offer for children and young people across the Trust. We believe that the experience of supporting and collaborating with other schools provides valuable professional development for both teaching and support staff.

We recognise that schools will join us with differing levels of effectiveness; some may require significant additional support at the point of joining and will be a net beneficiary until they reach good or better effectiveness.

For schools that are interested in joining the Mead family, we ask that they be prepared to embrace the following:

Vision and values

All schools that join the Trust should fully engage with and be committed to the vision, ethos, systems, and ways of working across the Trust. This includes embracing our values: the 7Cs.

Collaboration

Our schools share expertise, funding, resources and best practice to benefit all pupils and people across our Trust. We make decisions transparently and strategically, in the interest of all our schools. All schools should be willing to work collaboratively in this way to make a positive difference to all. Staff should be prepared to be involved in Trust-wide initiatives and networks.

Contribution

All converter academies or existing single academy trusts (i.e. those deemed good or better by Ofsted) should be prepared to demonstrate what and how they will contribute to the growth and development of the Trust. This capacity will be identified at the initial due diligence phase.

Commitment

All sponsored academies will be required to commit to engaging with the Trust's support and challenge. This commitment will be established at the initial due diligence phase.

Framework for improvement

We expect all schools to engage with an annual evaluation process to assess strengths, areas for development and overall risk. This process helps to inform both Trust-wide and individual school priorities. TMET will monitor progress against these priorities during the year.

Financial viability

All schools will need to prove that they are financially viable or that the leadership/structural model adopted on entry is financially viable. If a recovery plan is in place, this must be robust and approved by both the DfE and the Board of Trustees prior to the school joining.

Central services

All schools within TMET benefit from central services including finance, IT services, payroll, HR and governance.

Becoming a TMET School

If you share our enthusiasm and commitment to work together to make a positive difference to all our learners, our staff, our communities and Leicestershire as a whole, we very much would like to talk to you. Our ambition for the Trust is one of sustainable growth, leading to a family of between 15-30 schools including at least one special school.

Our commitment to all our schools is to provide a supportive and inclusive environment that challenges and enables them and their pupils to be the best they can be.



Other than the school names, unifying us as a family, there is not an overt 'trust' stamp on everything. It's just there quietly in everything that we do. It's the commitment from everybody that these children deserve the very best regardless of their starting point. They come first in our decision making.

**Zoe Simpson, Principal
of Kestrel Mead Primary
Academy**

Benefits of joining TMET

School improvement

Leading by example and working together to make a positive difference are at the heart of what we do.

Annual evaluation process: Our schools benefit from an annual evaluation process to assess strengths, areas for development and overall risk. As part of the Evaluate, Plan, Implement and Review cycle, TMET will monitor progress against these priorities during the year to ensure the Trust's overall School Improvement Framework remains responsive to schools' needs.

School-to-school support: School Improvement Forums, both phase-specific and cross-phase, meet monthly to allow principals to share effective practice and to work together on challenges and new initiatives. This opportunity for shared strategic thinking leads to consistency of expectations.

Trust-wide network groups also connect staff with specific roles, allowing them to share good practice and support each other. They include groups for subject leaders, SENCOs, designated safeguarding leads, premises managers and academy managers.

School improvement: Our School Improvement Team is made up of experienced senior and middle leaders with Trust-wide leadership roles as part of their remit. This means a ready supply of expertise to help schools develop opportunities for growth and address issues in a timely manner.

Collaborative curriculum: We have a trust-wide curriculum intent for both primary and secondary phases, which outlines the overarching goals and values that guide the educational approach across all our schools. This shared curriculum intent reflects our commitment to high-quality education and aligns with our vision of developing knowledgeable, compassionate, and engaged learners.

Diversity

The cultural and socio-economic diversity of Leicester and Leicestershire is reflected in our schools and the communities they serve. We see this as a real strength, as it gives staff and pupils a multitude of experiences and perspectives they may not otherwise have. We encourage schools to celebrate and share their unique characteristics with other schools across the Trust.

We also value cross-phase work and provide forums to enable our primary and secondary colleagues to collaborate and learn from each other. Five Mead schools have designated specialist provision (DSPs) for children with additional needs and this expertise also supports our mainstream provision.





Benefits of joining TMET continued

Opportunities for staff

TMET is committed to succession planning and talent spotting, supported by appropriate CPD programmes and secondments. Staff are given the opportunity to work across schools, providing expertise and support to others while developing their own skills and career paths.

Opportunities for pupils

Alongside a strong academic experience, we want our children and young people to experience a broad range of opportunities that build their cultural capital, develop skills outside the classroom, and unleash their passions and talents.

As well as forums for staff to collaborate, TMET brings together learners from across our schools for competitions, learning challenges and opportunities to experience different cultures and communities.



The best thing about being part of TMET is the relationships that the schools have with each other. As an ECT, I had so many opportunities to meet with ECTs in other Trust schools, to moderate our work and pick up good ideas that we could take back to our own classrooms.

Class Teacher, North Mead Primary Academy

Benefits of joining TMET continued

Governance

The Trust has a skilled Director of Governance with over 20 years of experience in school governance, who provides training, advice and support for all levels of governance. Chairs and vice chairs meet termly to share good practice and information.

The Trust provides support with recruitment, induction and ongoing training for governors (known in TMET as academy councillors) and clerks. We provide governor training and development within TMET and externally.



When my school joined the Trust, I was working as a learning mentor but I knew I wanted to qualify as a teacher. I had started looking at PGCE options when the Trust approached me about an in-school training route to teaching. Everyone has been brilliant. They don't say no; they say 'how can we help you get to where you want to be?'

Music teacher
working across TMET primary schools

Central services

Our experienced, dedicated and welcoming central Trust team provides business and operational expertise and support. A centralised operational function frees up time and resources for schools, allowing them to focus on their key priorities.

HR and Payroll: We offer comprehensive HR support and an online payroll service to all Trust schools. This streamlined HR approach ensures that principals can discuss matters in a confidential and timely manner, receiving expert guidance and strategies to deal with HR casework and policy issues.

Finance: Our centralised finance service reduces the burden on schools by processing invoices and placing orders. The finance team work closely with principals and academy managers to set and monitor school budgets, ensuring that they are balanced and sustainable. Schools also benefit from financial savings around bulk purchasing of goods and services.

Catering: TMET schools have access to a centralised catering provision that delivers nutritious, consistent and cost-effective meals to our pupils.

Data: We have a centralised data team who analyse school and trust data to support school improvement.

Estates: TMET provides support on a range of estates matters, including major project planning, property development, budget planning, business continuity planning, and DfE data collection surveys. Schools have access to compliance audits including asbestos management plans and fire risk management. All schools are included in the Trust's three-year capital funding strategy.

IT: Our centralised IT team provides services directly to all users, as well as IT procurement to achieve best value for money. Our fully managed IT service includes an ICT helpdesk, website maintenance and support, system and data backup management, and supplier management.





Please get in touch if you would like to know more about joining the TMET family of schools.



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