

# Our Improvement Journey

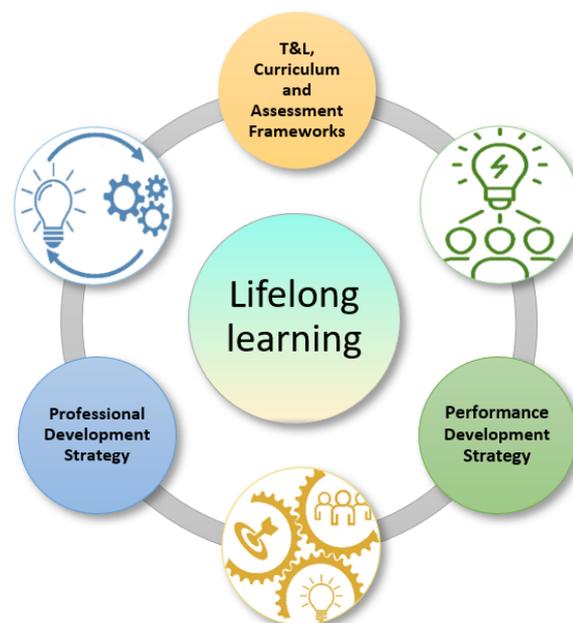
## Our Approach

Central to our strategic aims is our vision for learning:

*empowering pupils as lifelong learners, through excellent teaching and conditions for learning.*

We have a number of Key Strategies that we ensure schools align to as they are essential for achieving this vision: Teaching & Learning, Performance Development and Professional Development.

There are three golden threads that run throughout these strategies and throughout our Strategic Plan: careful implementation, purposeful collaboration, and growing people. These interconnected implementation strategies are fundamental to achieving our strategic aims and our vision for learning.



## Careful implementation



First and foremost, we recognise and build on our strengths. Where change is required, we use an evidenced-informed approach to school improvement. We have invested time in ensuring that school leaders understand and employ the principles of effective implementation.<sup>1</sup> This includes making ‘fewer, but more strategic, choices and pursuing these diligently’, giving enough time for changes to be truly embedded in practice. We give very careful consideration not only to *what* changes and interventions we put in place but *how* we will put these approaches into practice, treating implementation as a process to be executed in carefully planned stages. We create cultures of shared leadership and cultivate supportive climates in our schools, for example where staff feel trusted to try new things and make mistakes.

## Purposeful Collaboration

We value our diversity and the unique character and ethos of each school. We support schools in doing what is right for their community. All of our schools have features which make them centres of expertise and excellence, but we firmly believe that deliberate collaboration to access and share the best practice across our schools is the key to effective school improvement. Therefore, we aim to invest in system leadership and purposeful collaboration at all levels. For example, we offer Professional Learning Communities (PLNs), hub moderation and opportunities for peer review at all levels of leadership as key mechanisms for promoting this.



Having shared principles for pedagogy (our Teaching and Learning model), curriculum and assessment enables us to provide tailored, high-quality collaborative CPD Projects. More generally, our shared principles ensure a common language and shared understanding of what makes great teaching and drives standards up.

We aim to continue to extend and improve opportunities for partnership, networks and collaboration, to ensure that each school continues to thrive and leading to improved educational outcomes. Partnerships enabled by our Julian Teaching School Hub (TSH) and Research School greatly enhances our staff development offer and school improvement work. Through these partnerships we also make links with other Trusts, offering mutual support and challenge. We seek to continue to develop stronger partnership with other Trusts, including with the other Catholic Trust in our diocese, Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Trust, as well as those schools wishing to join our Trust in the future. The

<sup>1</sup>Based on EEF's 'Putting Evidence to Work: A School's Guide to Implementation' 2019

enhanced opportunities for collaboration provided by responsible growth will enable us to ensure excellent standards of teaching and learning and ensure there is support in place for teachers to achieve this.

## Growing People



Since our creation we have been on a journey of continual growth and improvement. As we grow in size, we gain more capacity and expertise across the Trust, which supports us on our collective improvement journey. Key to this journey is to continue to foster a sense of belonging and a culture of collective commitment.

Our Trust People Strategy (and subsidiary Performance Development and Professional Development strategies) emphasises how we plan to invest in our people and the importance of developing and growing our staff. It emphasises a systematic and deliberate approach to planning how we attract, develop and retain the very best people, to enable us to offer the very best education for our pupils. We aim to develop a compelling offer to attract an exceptional workforce and provide high-quality, evidence-informed continual professional development for staff at all stages of their career, to enable them to be the best that they can be, meet high professional standards, and have purposeful and fulfilling careers. This will enable us to future proof leadership and place staff where they are most needed and can make the most impact.

We value and care for every member of our Trust. We are deeply committed to providing effective support for the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and adults in the Trust, including a commitment to ensuring children feel safe and valued and reducing unnecessary workload for staff.

The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve outcomes for their pupils. We recognise the central role of teachers and other educators in developing engaging and challenging learning tasks and creating the optimal conditions for learning. Therefore, we will continue to support schools to implement the Trust's key strategies, as well as providing high quality Trust CPD programmes, to develop educators' knowledge and expertise to deliver high quality teaching and learning and disseminate best practice to ensure rapid improvement.

Having access to wider expertise and a pool of talented staff, leaders and governors as our Trust grows in size will provide more opportunities for developing staff, growing future leaders and enhancing our school improvement strategy. The enhanced opportunities for collaboration provided by responsible growth, such as hub working and secondary phase collaboration, will enable us to ensure excellent standards of teaching and learning and ensure there is support in place for teachers to achieve this. However, careful planning will be required in order to ensure that the Trust has the capacity to meet the needs of new schools joining, without compromising existing schools' performance and progression.

Ensuring a stronger infrastructure with efficient central services, will enable our schools to focus on their core educational purpose, whilst the Trust leads on financial and resource management and provides high quality support for school improvement. To this end we will monitor and work to enhance central services we currently offer or plan to offer in the future.

