



Academies Trust

A group of children in school uniforms are running through a grassy field with trees in the background. The children are in motion, and the scene is bright and sunny.

**Strategic Plan**  
**(Short version)**  
2022-2025

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# Introduction

Since 2010 we have grown from two academies to thirty. Whilst our rate of growth was impacted by the pandemic, we will achieve our target of 40 academies by 2025. Continuing to serve areas in the North, North West and the Midlands. All 40 academies will be 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

This is the short version of the strategic plan, find the more detailed version on the Trust website.

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## Our Intent: Do What Matters Most

With improvement of our schools at the forefront, we are taking the organisation to the next level; moving from an "evolving" Trust to a "mature" Trust.

### Trust Strategic objectives and targets

- Consistency in all financial systems, operations and processes
- Audit in all areas
- A financial model that ensures equality of resources

### Operational Objectives

- Grow to 40 schools within the next 18 months
- Move from 3 hubs to 4 hubs - making the Staffordshire and Merseyside hubs self-sustainable
- Increase the number of special schools and improve capacity and expertise
- Develop Due Diligence process to better assess cultural alignment

# Strategic Direction

## Core Values

Everyone in the Trust honours our fundamental commitment to the Ways of Being Co-op. No matter what we do, they are how we do it.

### Ways of Being Co-op:

- Do what matters most
- Be yourself, always
- Show you care
- Succeed together

### Co-operative Values

- Self-help
- Self-responsibility
- Democracy
- Equality
- Equity
- Solidarity

### Co-operative ethical values:

- Openness
- Honesty
- Social responsibility
- Caring for others

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## Belonging to Co-op Academies Trust

We have a single legal and moral purpose, to advance education for public benefit.

### Evolving to a mature Trust

- Working together to support school improvement
- Enhancing opportunities for children and staff
- 'High challenge, high support' culture
- Specialists and experts across the Trust
- Developing a community all through Co-op Academies Trust education
- Staff professional development and career opportunities
- Sharing good practice through our innovation networks across academies
- Trust networking between colleagues and knowledge mobilisation
- Regional hub structure in HR, Finance, Governance, IT, Marketing and Engagement, Health and Safety and Safeguarding

We provide challenge, support and guidance in all key compliance, so that our schools are safe, well resourced, with strong leadership and are great places for staff and pupils.

Our schools will engage with their communities and understand their civic role and responsibilities to raise educational standards and aspirations.

Leaders and Governors are empowered to find solutions that suit local context and challenges supported by our regional hub model.

### Be yourself, always: Strategic objective and targets

- Use Trust expertise to give our SEN students the best learning experiences
- Be socially inclusive and adopt LA admission policy in all academies
- Continue to work with Local Authorities in applying for new Free Schools

## Being part of the Co-op Community

One of our most unique features is Co-op's sponsorship. Co-op understands their commercial community responsibility, supports local communities and addresses social mobility issues.

This support was particularly evident during the pandemic as our vulnerable families were supported with £2,500,000 worth of food vouchers and 7000 Chromebooks.

The Co-op's vision is 'Co-operating for a Fairer World' and we play a key role in delivering the most vital aspects of this vision.

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## Co-operating for a fairer world for our colleagues

Our schools have a mental health action plan to support staff. We have trained experts within our schools in leadership and mental health first aid.

### **Show you care:** **Strategic objectives and targets**

Inclusivity is at the heart of everything we do. We're developing inclusive leadership, provisions and culture. We serve diverse communities and want our schools to be representative of this.

### **Be yourself, always:** **Strategic objectives and targets** **(within the next three years)**

- Our People Strategy makes our academies great places to work. We prioritise well-being and workload, so we can deliver equality in all areas
- Continuing to reduce the gender or equality diversity pay gap within recruitment
- Offering a real living wage guarantee for all areas of the Trust
- Our AGC members will represent the same levels of diversity that exist within our communities by the end of 2025



# Strategic Direction

## Co-operating for a fairer world for our communities

Co-op provides a careers programme with activities and enrichments for all our schools. This includes virtual work experience, physical work experience and informative workshops.

We work together to provide opportunities to make sure young people are heard, make a difference, and develop essential skills for employment.

By starting early and educating all children about careers, we are being proactive in our approach to inspire positive futures.

### **Succeed together:** **Strategic objective and targets**

- Deliver a Co-op Careers programme for all our students in all academies, designed to raise the hopes and ambitions of students as well as the local community's aspirations

We're working with Co-op to make sure all of our schools have breakfast club provision and holiday access to food for those in need. We want all of our schools to offer free access to food services to those members of the community who need it.

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## Co-operating for a fairer world for our planet

Climate change is at the top of all our schools' agendas.

We support Co-op's ten point Climate Change action plan and our focus is on reducing our carbon footprint and playing a key role within our communities.

Every school will have a trained sustainability lead and we will actively encourage our students to complete the Climate Leader Award.

### **Show you care** **Strategic objective and targets**

- Be a Green organisation working towards a carbon neutral footprint and giving full consideration to being totally environmentally friendly

## Co-op and the way forward

We will develop a community engagement programme; building on our academies existing work so that we have the greatest positive impact on our communities.

### Show you care:

#### Strategic objectives and targets (within the next three years)

- All staff, pupils and parents become Co-op Members and understand what it means
- Academies know, understand and deliver on their civic roles and responsibilities
- Being a pivotal part of our regions and supporting our communities
- Ensure stakeholder voices are heard and taken into consideration in decision-making
- Co-op Academies are schools of choice in the community and our student numbers are at capacity or oversubscribed
- Looking for further ways that the Trust can benefit and work with the Co-op
- Every academy has a community strategy



# Strategic Ambition

## School Improvement

We have strong regional services in key compliance areas and have developed our central school improvement offer to accelerate progress.

Schools will benefit no matter where they are on their journey towards good, outstanding or sustaining excellence.

### Our current school improvement offer includes:

- Regional expertise in: Governance, IT, HR, Finance, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Marketing and Engagement, and Admin
- Trust wide systems, audit and accountability frameworks
- Regional Directors oversee each area and play a major role in school improvement working with our Academy Governing Council's
- Common assessment at key benchmarks with full data analysis in crucial areas
- Central contracts to promote best practice and achieve financial value
- An excellent CPD programme for all
- Supporting individual schools locally with regional improvement budgets

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## Developing from an evolving Trust to a mature one

- Offering our schools key objectives and best practice. Supported by a large Director team and expert Curriculum Leaders
- A large team of Specialist Leaders of Education
- Co-op Community Managers to build community partnerships
- Regional Sport Events and Leaders to develop activities and enrichment
- Regional Music and Cultural Leaders to help develop Arts provision
- School to school work and partnerships

### Succeed together

#### Strategic objectives and targets (within the next three years)

- 100% of our academies achieve at least 'Good' after joining the Trust
- Existing Academies to achieve 'Outstanding' and 'Good' outcomes by 2025
- All of our schools annually achieve positive progress pupil scores
- New schools joining the Trust will achieve positive progress and accelerated improvement
- All of our schools for all pupils achieve at least national averages for attendance
- Get best value for money within our central contracts
- Ensure our SCA is concentrated on those academies that really need it
- Offer every possible service to our academies in-house

# Leadership, Career Professional Development (CPD), Schools Direct and Succession Planning

We have excellent capacity and ability within our leaders; from central leadership to regional leadership through to regional directors and executive headteachers, headteachers, senior staff and middle leaders.

We have an active, impactful and thorough CPD programme. This provision will continue to develop and become even better, including more opportunities for support staff.

We talent-spot and build our leaders of the future, making sure we offer every individual equal opportunities. Colleague voices continue to be heard through activities like the 'Your Voice' survey.

## Be yourself, always: Strategic objective and target (within the next three years)

- To develop our Risk leadership and practice, maintaining a healthy balanced risk appetite that evolves and changes as we grow

We promote Student Leadership and Voice within all of our schools; developing Leadership opportunities so that our students have the skills they need to succeed. Empowering our young people to become outstanding Co-op citizens ready for modern day challenges.

We are developing our new Schools Direct and Early Careers programme in partnership with Bright Futures Educational Trust. We want to make sure we fully represent the diversity that exists within our communities so everyone knows what a "Co-op Teacher" is.

## Do what matters most: Strategic objective and target (within the next three years)

- Deliver an outstanding Schools Direct and Early Careers programme for all of our schools, ensuring we have an equal and diverse world-class workforce ready to be recruited
- New schools joining the Trust must develop a staffing framework that is cost effective and fits in well with our Hub and Central Team services

We will continue to grow our networks across the Trust to be more effective, efficient and also more accommodating for support staff.

# Strategic Ambition

## Curriculum

The Curriculum should encourage children to be ambitious and ambassadors of a co-operative way of life.

Academies develop their own curriculum supported by the Trust Curriculum Principles statement for both mainstream and special schools and written in consultation with all members of the Trust community.

In line with our Co-op commitments, our schools will develop an anti-racist curriculum over the next three years in partnership with Co-op and Leeds Beckett University.

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## Digital Technology

We will continue to use digital technology to become more effective and efficient and continue to enhance the learning experiences of our children.

Developing our IT model will make us become more efficient and save money to reinvest further in this area.

### Do what matters most

#### Strategic objectives and targets (within the next three years)

- Deliver an innovative, effective and efficient IT central service, offering good value for money and ensuring the provision is of the highest quality within education





## Educational Recovery

The past few years have been incredibly difficult, but it has strengthened the resilience and co-operative structures of our Trust.

This Strategic Plan sets aspirational but achievable targets. We are only as strong as our most vulnerable pupils and this is why it's imperative to ensure they succeed. We know we can achieve this together.

### **Growth and Development five year targets 2022 to 2027**

- Grow in other regions; developing our regional and central support model
- Develop the infrastructure and capacity to be able to go beyond forty schools
- Develop more opportunities where young people can attend Co-op academies throughout every phase of their education

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## Consultation: Co-operation and Collaboration

The Strategic Plan was produced in consultation with colleagues at all leadership levels and areas. Town Hall meetings were completed in all twenty seven schools attended by support and teaching staff.



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Academies Trust

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