

Good Shepherd Catholic Trust

Three Year Action Plan

2024-2027



Vision

Our vision is the provision and development of a world class community of Catholic schools, providing the highest possible care, support opportunities and outcomes for every child. Pupils are cherished for who they are, as much as for what they achieve and all achievements are celebrated.

The Trustees will work closely with schools, their governors, staff, parents and the local community to develop together the successful citizens of our future.

Values

'I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.'
(Jer. 3:15)

The distinctive ethos of our Catholic MAT is founded on the Gospel values of faithfulness, humility, truth, forgiveness, tolerance, dignity, service and respect. They are at the heart of all we teach our young people as part of an inclusive and diverse curriculum and inform our five core principles:

1. **Lead by example:** respect others as you would wish them to respect you
2. **Strive for excellence:** be the best you can be in all you do
3. **Education for all:** with a particular duty of care for the poor and disadvantaged
4. **Common Good:** working in partnership towards environmental sustainability and providing mutual support to benefit all
5. **Service and Inclusiveness:** reaching out to other schools requiring support

Executive Summary 2025-2026

The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust currently consists of one secondary school and seven primary schools. It is part of a wider group of fourteen schools in total (3 secondaries and 11 primaries) which were grouped together in 2016 by the Diocese of Brentwood as a ‘School to School’ support group.

Over the 2024-25 academic year, the Headteachers of the trust schools had 4 planned, formal meetings throughout the year as the ‘Leadership Group’, which acts as an advisory board to the trustees. The Chair of Governors join these Leadership Group meetings three times a year. The meetings focus on improving the Good Shepherd Trust and strengthening provision for the pupils in each of our schools, now that a stable and strong central set of services and trust structure has been established.

The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust is founded on the principle of the **common good** and **subsidiarity** (see notes below on this). We try and ensure that our trust’s central authority only has a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed more effectively and economically at a local level, by the schools and LGCs. Over time, we may find that, with the support of the Leadership Group and Trustees, some further centralisation of specific services and functions takes place if schools and Trustees feel that would be beneficial, but this is likely to be a gradual and organic process which is guided by the school leaders and approved by the Trustees.

Subsidiarity and Solidarity

Subsidiarity: *The principle of subsidiarity governs the way the Trust and the schools work together and underpins policies and procedures adopted by the Trust. By subsidiarity, we show the value we place upon the distinct identity of each school within the Trust.*

Solidarity: *Within the Trust we recognise that each person is connected and dependent on every other person. Each school within the Trust is called upon to work in solidarity, with a determination to commit to the common good; that is the good of all and of each individual because we are all responsible for all’. (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 38).*

We host two Trustee committee meetings each term. The first meeting has a focus on ‘Finance, Audit and Risk’ with the second half term meeting focussing on ‘School Standards and Resources’. This is followed by a termly full Trustee meeting.

Our current approach to help maintain effective communication includes regular ‘Trust Bulletins’ issued to schools with details of important updates and actions. Schools also produce a termly, one-

page report for trustees which is presented at the trustee ‘standards and resources’ meeting each term.

We have an annually updated 3-year action plan in place that includes our Key Performance Indicators and a ‘School to school’ support matrix which summarises the areas of support and development for each of the trust schools, which should form the heart of the trust’s work going forward.

To date, the following 14 roles and services were established at the centre of the trust;

Finance management software (Access)

HR service (EPM)

Payroll service (EPM)

Teacher’s pensions management (EPM)

Clerking service (HES)

Legal support (Winckworth Sherwood)

Audit services (William Giles – external audit / Price Bailey – internal scrutiny)

Health and Safety Audit Service (RPA Insurance Scheme, 2021-22 academic year)

Site Condition Surveys, including Mechanical and Electrical (Barkers, 2022-23 academic year)

Risk Management Software (Risk Manager – includes asset register and site maintenance tools)

Leadership Support and CPD (Impetus)

GDPR – DPO (4 schools)

Central trust website

CFO

CAO

Following two new Headteacher appointments in January 2024 the trust has made two further leadership appointments in September 2025. One Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (St Joseph’s Dagenham)

The Diocese of Brentwood have formed a Catholic Multi-Academy Working Group with the aim of reviewing the current organisation and networks of CMATs across the Diocese. This groups work will continue in 2025-26 under the direction of Bishop Alan and the new Diocesan Director of Education.

M. Corcoran

September 2024

*‘Within a changing landscape of national educational policy and provision I believe we need to reinforce and develop the relationships between our schools. **We are at our best when we work together, for each other, in service of the common good, embracing both solidarity and subsidiarity.** This is essential to all decisions and actions undertaken by our Catholic schools’.*

Bishop Alan’s Pastoral Letter on ‘Our Catholic Schools’ - Education Sunday, 9 September 2018.

Good Shepherd Catholic Trust Action Plan: 2024-2027

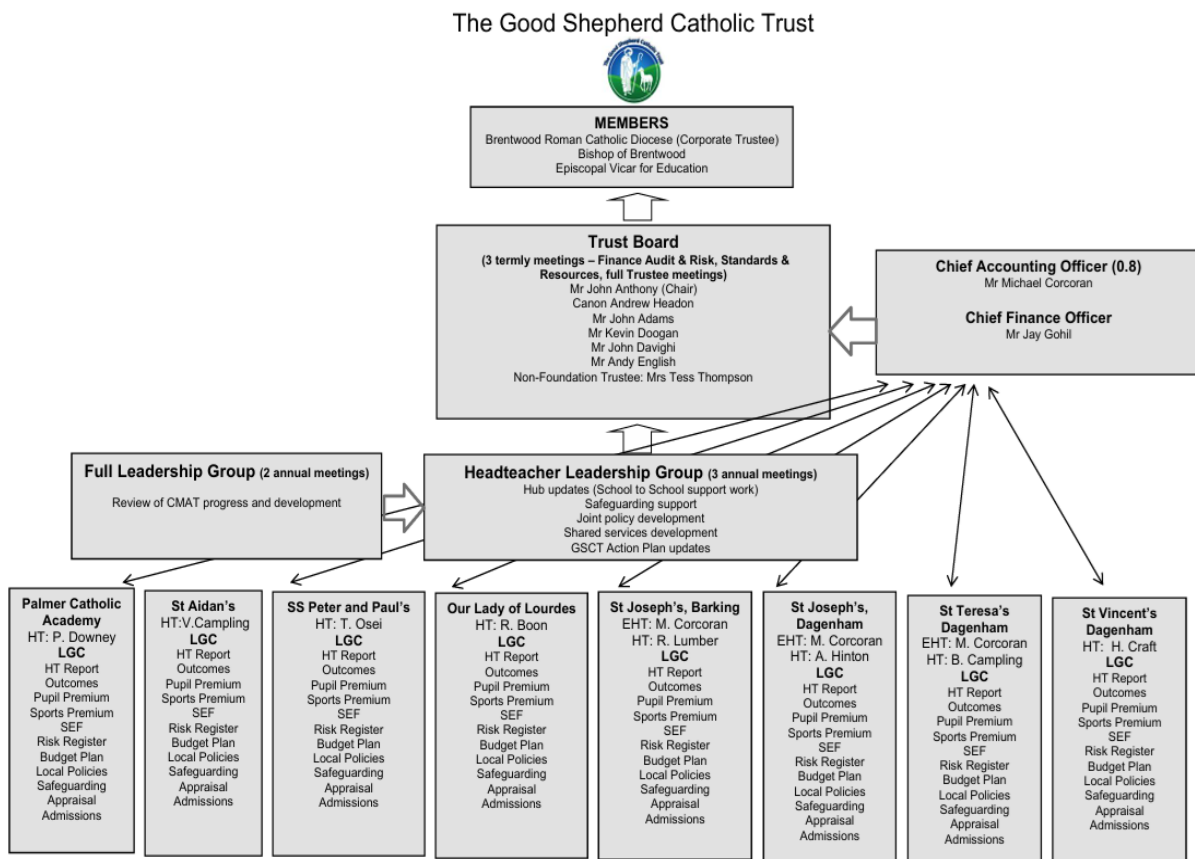
This action plan maps the following which will take shape over the next academic year:

1. Our organisation chart
2. Summary of achievements to date 2024-25
3. Aims and Objectives 2024 – 2027
4. Audit Recommendations and Actions 2024-25
5. Self-evaluation

Appendix A: 'Schools Curriculum' Matrix

Appendix B: Archived Action Plan KPIs/Objectives

1. Trustee Organisation Chart



2. Good Shepherd Catholic Trust... Achievements to date 2020-2025

Staffing

- New HT and DHT appointed in autumn 2025
- Senior leadership support for non-trust schools whilst Headship recruitment is completed
- Staff support across trust schools for finance (ABMs), site management and staff training purposes

Standards and Improvement

- Trustees are provided with a termly Trustees Report by each school (collated by the CAO) summarising updates on standards, safeguarding, school improvement and Catholic life.
- Inspection outcomes (monitoring visits, Section 8 and CSI to date) show strong and improving schools within the trust. Improvement also supported by regular link visit notes
- Early development of the Subject Network to share good practice and plan school improvement priorities (Ongoing development priority for 2025-26 with 'subject hubs')
- Further joint school reviews, with a focus on sharing good practice and recognising areas of strength.
- Informal school visits for senior staff to a number of schools to look at general good practice and focus areas of strength.

Finance and central services

- Business Managers part of an integrated and supportive team which meet on a regular basis
- Internal and external Audit processes in place (new providers in 2022-23 carried out internal scrutiny again for 2025)
- All our schools are audited and compliant with legislation with low to medium recommendations
- Cost savings across the central providers include significant % savings on standard services provided to 'stand-alone' schools/academies due to group purchase power. (most significant at present is HR, Payroll and Finance software)
- Central clerking service for main meetings across the trust schools is high quality
- High quality HR services and Payroll services
- Legal support retainer for all trust schools with Winckworth Sherwood sees significant use by a number of schools.
- There are a common set of 35 central statutory policies across all schools with 25 of those published on the trust website

Buildings and estate

- Site Health and Safety audits undertaken by RPA, with online action plans now live for all trust schools
- Access to range of site, health and safety training and updated through the RPA academy insurance scheme's portal

Catholic Ethos

- All our schools are good or outstanding in Section 48, with Catholic School Inspections (CSI) rolled out
- We have good links with our Parishes, Diocese and local community
- Trust Mass celebrated for fourth consecutive year in September 2025

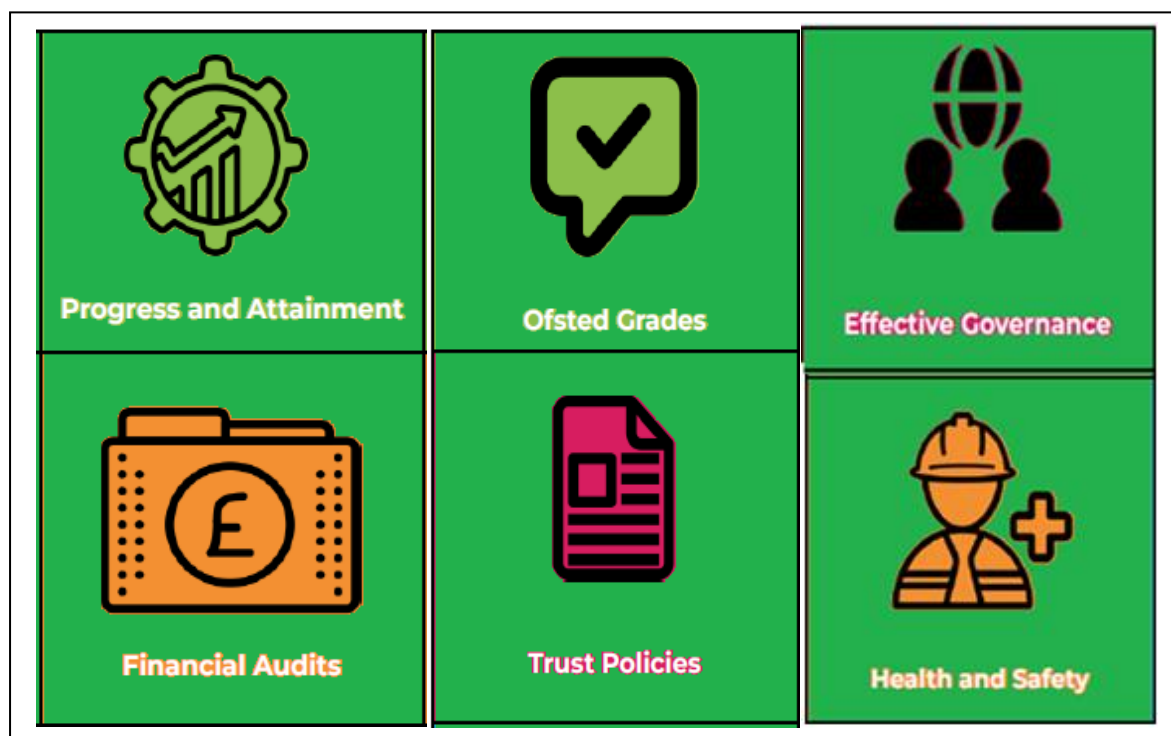
Trust Growth

- CFO supporting central function and school support
- Expectations that all MAT schools are contributors / centres of excellence as well as beneficiaries of support (Curriculum Matrix – appendix A)
- Additional Trustee(s) were appointed for 2024/25 with key skills for trust board. One non-foundation trustee with HR expertise.

3. Aims and Objectives 2024-2027

As a Catholic Trust, our overarching aims continue to focus on **sharing good practice** and **improved outcomes**, **reducing administrative burdens** on schools where possible and **seeking best value and reduced costs** as a group of schools. We detail below a range of specific objectives for the year ahead under our key headings.

We will use the following Key Performance Indicators to help us measure our progress towards our five key strategic areas below;



1. Staffing

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2024-25	Full Pay Policy review in the inner/outer London boroughs	Review and consultation on any remaining adaptations to academy pay policies and wider awards to ensure full parity	Complete All trust schools now follow the LBR or LBBD Pay Policy and review cycle
2025-26	Review opportunities for joint role across the trust and 'hub schools' including SEND.	Key areas such as site staff, finance support and IT staff reviewed (considering apprentice roles) to consider cross-school roles leading to	
2026-27	Review opportunities for joint role across the trust	Key areas such as site staff, finance support and IT staff reviewed (considering apprentice roles) to consider cross-school roles leading to	

2. Standards and School Improvement

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2024-25	Complete Trust '360' visits to remaining schools	360 visits to arrange and complete at Palmer, St Vincent's. SJD, St Aidan's.	In progress Six CSI and Ofsted Inspections led to a revised visits timetable for 2025-26
2025-26	Complete Trust '360' visits to remaining schools Implement 'Hub School' visits to schools for subject/area leads to strengthen links between trust middle leaders Adapt to new school inspection framework for Sept 2025	360 visits to arrange and complete at Palmer, St Vincent's. SJD, St Aidan's Minimum of three 'good practice' PM or twilight visits to trust schools to begin 'Hub School' initiative. CPD and training on new framework and changes to reporting (Impetus)	
2026-27	Embed those with lead roles across the trust (within subject leader networks etc) to their role develops	Roles of some key/highly competent staff are further developed, having a wider impact beyond their own school.	

Please also see the 'Supporting Standards Matrix 2020-2021' (Appendix A)

3. Buildings and Estate

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2024-25	5-year maintenance plan on urgent and non-urgent work continues and <u>a clear focus/strategy on sustainability and minimising environmental impact is agreed.</u>	Schedule work and maintenance over a 5-year period continues which can be used to plan SCA allocations effectively. Adapt application process to better recognise the criteria for improved energy efficiency and suitability for projects.	Complete Full SCA allocation for 2024-25
2025-26	Renew Barkers school surveys for September 2026 with visits in autumn 2026. Explore a site/estate management retainer.	Review/renewal of the 2023 Barkers site condition surveys carried out to identify progress and remaining areas for funding Central company for site support, statutory testing, maintenance schedule and bid support leads to proactive support and consistency across trust.	
2026-27	Renew Health and Safety Site audits for schools	RPA Health and Safety audits reviewed with site visits reviewing previous actions	

4. Finance and Central Services

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2024-25	Review and update of the Finance Procedures Manual Implement high interest account for reserves with Natwest	Finance Procedures Manual updated in line with new Academy Handbook and updated Diocesan Scheme of Delegation. Full benefit of interest levels for trust and trust schools with high interest rates	Complete Complete Natwest 30-day account agreed for some reserves (agreed with schools) to be transferred in 2025-26
2025-26	Review of audit providers (external and internal scrutiny)	Procurement process to ensure best value for all audit processes for following academic years 26-27 onwards.	
2026-27	Review of central service offers in line with MAT growth and development	Review and procurement for key central services in line with trust size	

5. Catholic Ethos

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2024-25	<p>Review of CSI outcomes (5 schools to date, with 3 further inspections for 2024-25) to identify key themes and foci for Leadership group and 360 visits.</p> <p>Further senior leadership appointments (reserved posts) as required</p>	<p>Targeted CPD and training on areas of CSI which are identified for further development</p> <p>Monitor movement across trust HT and DHT posts to support reserved post appointments</p>	<p>Complete Impetus Education CPD support for school SLTs on a termly basis – runs Sept' 25-Aug '26</p> <p>Complete Two SLT appointments completed.</p>
2025-26	<p>Adapt to changes in Catholic School Inspections and framework following wider Ofsted inspection changes</p> <p>Senior leadership appointments (HT and DHT posts across trust schools)</p>	<p>CPD and training on new framework and changes to reporting</p> <p>Leadership vacancies to be filled in line with Diocesan protocols.</p>	
2026-27	<p>Review of CSI outcomes (5 schools to date, with 3 further inspections for 2024-25) to identify key themes and foci for Leadership group and 360 visits.</p>	<p>Targeted CPD and training on areas of CSI which are identified for further development</p>	

4. Audit Recommendations and Actions 2024-25

Key Development Areas and Services

1	Joint INSET/CPD for trust schools (Spring 2026)
2	Central CPD offer for leadership training and ongoing support (Impetus support 2025-26)
3	SENCo/SEND support and oversight for trust schools (Shared role and funding support)
4	Implement support staff pay statements (Summer 2025) AND EPM providing the SLT (HT and DHT) pay statements.
5	Estates management support and planning – part of the next trust estates condition review – possible estate management company retainer.
6	Develop talent management and development strategy across the trust schools (Linked to point 7)
7	Allocate 'Subject Hubs' at schools to promote good practice
8	Explore a central trust 'union facility time' agreement and central funding pool

Central Trust Actions

1	Direct parental engagement with parent information meetings and Q&A
2	Trustee training and induction – recording more clearly on Governorhub
3	Develop central Trust SEND policy/statement to compliment school level reports
4	Re-vamp the Equalities Policy with focus on action points and objectives
5	Seek support on sustainability planning with a view to assisting with the production of Climate Action Plan for the trust

Cyber Security Audit Actions

1	Develop annual penetration testing for school networks- LGFL or outside provider
2	Additional cyber training for trust staff to compliment NCSC training (LBR Information Security Training offer)
3	Implement trust model policy for E-Safety
4	Circulate model 'acceptable use' agreement for pupils (Palmer model)
5	Agree a trust-wide approach to MFA on all relevant systems and log ins
6	Update trust central contracts register to reflect licence agreement for IT including anti-virus and malware protection
7	Update model BCPs/Cyber Response Plans to include critical asset recovery

Governance Audit Actions

1	Add specific actions points and goals for the trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plan (EDI)
2	Collate a full trust meeting schedule to include all LGC and trust meeting dates and events (Present on Governorhub but new format to be drawn up)
3	Central trust SEND policy statement to compliment school level policies and SEN Reports
4	Governorhub 'effectiveness tool' to be utilised by all trust and governor boards as a skills and effectiveness audit
5	Adopt one trust 'self-evaluation' process to be completed and reviewed (eg; DfE Mat Assurance Framework)

5. The Good Shepherd Trust – Self Evaluation 2025-26

School and last Inspection Date	Leadership and Management	Quality of Education	Behaviour and Attitudes	Personal Development	EYFS	Summary of Most Recent Inspection Areas for Development
Palmer Catholic Academy 25.01.2022 Graded	2	2	2	2		In a few subjects, curriculum sequencing is not very coherent. This means that pupils' learning does not always build progressively towards planned end-points. Leaders should ensure that further curriculum development takes place A few pupils display attitudes towards others that lead to some pupils feeling isolated and upset. Leaders must ensure that their approach to preventing such attitudes has greater impact
St Aidan's 21.09.22 Graded	2	2	2	2	2	At times, teachers expect pupils to carry out work that does not build well on prior learning . Pupils struggle to complete these tasks successfully, and in turn are unable to practise and develop their knowledge. In some foundation subjects, such as music, the curriculum has recently been reviewed and implemented. There is some variability in the way that the curriculum is being delivered because staff are getting used to the new curriculum expectations.
SS Peter and Paul's 08.10.24 Ungraded	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	No areas for development
Our Lady of Lourdes 24.06.25	1	1	1	1	1	No areas for development
St Joseph's Barking 20.03.24 Ungraded	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	No areas for development
St Joseph's Dagenham 27.06.23 Graded	2	2	2	2	2	A clear and coherent curriculum in place with key knowledge, skills and vocabulary identified and mapped out. However, at times, teachers are not drawing on this guidance precisely enough when

						<p>delivering the curriculum to pupils. This means that pupils can find it hard to recall knowledge fluently</p> <p>On occasions, teachers are missing opportunities to recap and reinforce learning. Some teaching is not identifying and addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge or misconceptions in their understanding.</p>
<p>St Teresa's 24.09.24 Graded</p>	2	2	1	1	2	<p>In some subjects, teaching does not check accurately enough what pupils already know. Some teaching does not build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge, and pupils miss out on opportunities to deepen their understanding.</p> <p>In some foundation subjects, the curriculum is not linked sufficiently well to what pupils already know</p>
<p>St Vincent's 25.02.25 Ungraded</p>	2	2	2	2	2	<p>In some subjects, teaching does not enable pupils to regularly revisit their learning from previous terms and years. The school should ensure that pupils revisit and remember their prior learning so that they can build on what they know as they move through the curriculum.</p>

Appendix B: Archived KPIs / Action Plan Areas

Staffing

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2021-22	Vacancies across trust schools advertised centrally/internally as well as locally and nationally where required.	Range of 'internal' (inter-trust) opportunities for staff to progress careers within the group of schools as an alternative to external moves.	Complete and ongoing
2022-23	Staffing skills matrix (in addition to school support matrix) leading to named teachers/CPD leads for specific areas of expertise	A tool to drive further school improvement and promote staff development within the trust schools/career development. (Also see 'Standards and School Improvement' section)	Complete as part of '360' school visits
2023-24	Update staff absence procedures/policy with the Leadership Group to explore a uniform approach across all trust schools in both boroughs	Benefit staff across the trusts schools with a consistent and supportive staff absence policy and procedure	Complete- document completed and consultation phase completed in August 2024.

Standards and School Improvement

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2021-22	Formal Schedule of 'Joint Teaching and Learning School Reviews'	External reviews of teaching and learning across all schools, focussing on key improvements identified in 'supporting standards matrix'	Complete and ongoing
	Termly subject leader forum meetings for area leaders across the trust schools	Developing network of leaders to share and implement good practice across trust schools.	Complete and ongoing
	Programme of work for all Local Governing Committees (using the termly duties overview composed with HES clerking service in 2021)	Consistent LGC committee agendas and business are embedded and effective.	Complete and ongoing
2022-23	Further development of the subject leaders forum meetings	A clearer focus on practical joint work (moving beyond planning) which has a direct impact of school improvement practices in one or more schools	Complete and ongoing
	Plan for 'School Improvement Leads' in specific areas, based upon school strengths identified in school support matrix (Talent identification and development)	Career development opportunities for lead staff in key areas such as SEND, reading, writing, maths and EYFS leading to mor effective sharing of good practice through CPD across schools	In progress as part of '360' school visits

2023-24	Planning for lead roles in key areas with staff having impact and leadership beyond their own school	Increased support and capacity across the trust schools, leading to more effective school improvement. Linking to the development of the Subject Leaders Networks and lead roles for these.	In progress Lead roles for subject leader networks identified and being implemented for summer 2024.
	Trust '360' visits to support central trust knowledge and support for schools ahead of external inspection	360 visits to arrange and complete at OLOL, SJB, SSPP and St Teresa's	Complete – phase 2 in 2024-25

Buildings and Estate

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2021-22	Complete first annual 'Health and Safety' audit visits	RPA insurance provider completes autumn term 2021 school visits and provides summary reports on actions and developments	Completed
2022-23	CDC building survey reports are supported by external/objective site survey visits	All trust schools have a coherent and consistent site survey to help schedule work and maintenance over a 5-year period and which can be used to plan SCA allocations more effectively, in a proactive manner	Complete and ongoing
	Overhaul the Risk Register format and approach	Develop a Risk Register and Risk Management Policy which is more coherent, with significant risks	Complete and ongoing

		recorded more effectively at school level	
2023-24	5-year maintenance plan in place and guiding decisions on urgent and non-urgent work	Schedule work and maintenance over a 5-year period underway which can be used to plan SCA allocations more effectively, in a proactive manner.	Complete and ongoing Barkers report provided site priorities in categories. New SCA approach seeks to set funding allocations over 3-5 year period.

Finance and Central Services

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2021-22	Further central procurement opportunities, coordinated by the central trust team (Catering, Cleaning, IT, premises and maintenance)	Further services provided by central trust in agreement with schools and savings on shared services/procurement	Complete
	Budget planning and development supported by the CFOO and MA during the spring term	School BMs and ABMs supported in more effective budget planning ahead of the publication of the GAG allocations in April 2022	Complete (Rolled forward with the change from Management Accountant to Deputy CFO)
	Procurement process for internal and external audit providers 2022-23	Best value for all audits across the trust achieved	Completed

<p>2022-23</p>	<p>Induction and training for St Vincent's Catholic Primary School from 01.09.2022</p> <p>Trust uses the 'MAT Assurance Framework (2021)' as a self-assessment tool to judge effectiveness</p> <p>Finance Committee Chairs to form training/CPD group with the trust team.</p>	<p>Smooth transition in to the trust for the 8th school with support for the admin function as they move to financial accounting.</p> <p>Effective benchmarking of the trust's progress and actions, leading to an updated action plan.</p> <p>Network of LGC Finance Committee chairs to promote CPD, sharing of resources and consistency across local finance reporting.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Under review – New DfE Trust Quality Descriptors published as new tool</p> <p>Not achieved - due to level of interest</p>
<p>2023-24</p>	<p>Review central trust services and funding to ensure the trust is financially stable and sustainable.</p> <p>Ensure all meeting and training agendas are circulated 5-7 days before the relevant meetings.</p>	<p>Trust takes account of slower growth rate than planned and adapts its services accordingly based upon the current PC funding from schools.</p> <p>Allowing time for HTs, BMs, ABMs to review and plan for meetings.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Reduced central trust team and schools to take on Apprentice Levy costs.</p> <p>Completed and ongoing</p>

Catholic Ethos

Year	Action	Impact	Status
2021-22	Trust schools work on achieving initial levels of the 'Oscar Romero Award' following initial trust wide presentation	Trust wide focus on the development of 'Catholic Life' in all schools, to benefit our pupils and staff	Completed – ongoing engagement with Oscar Romero
2022-23	Trust advertises vacancies to support schools in filling vacancies with Catholic pupils within the parishes New CSI framework CPD and SEF reviews across the trust schools Re-start the annual calendar of joint liturgy and events which have been on trust website	Advertising strategies (traditional and multi-media) to help support schools in filling significant number of pupil vacancies at primary level. Trust work (subject leader network and Leadership Group) in the new Catholic Inspection Framework, including reviews and updates of Self Evaluation for Section 48 Inspections. Start of year mass and other joint liturgy opportunities to be organised trust wide and in 'hubs' for the two boroughs.	Complete and ongoing Complete and ongoing Complete and ongoing through the RE Leaders network
2023-24	Trust wide implementation of the new RED and Prayer Directory and other statutory changes	Consistent and shared approach to the Diocesan and national expectations. Phased roll out of the RED in EYFS initially is the focus of the RE Leaders Network.	In progress RED now rolled out to EYFS (and wider) in all trust schools.