

## **Vision and Values of BDAT**

The underpinning vision of the Birmingham Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT) is based on the following values.

**We are made in the image of God**, all people are of equal worth, to be treated with dignity, given hope and aspirations and to live in community

**We believe Jesus came to give life in all its fullness.** We aim to deliver excellence in education and want the very best outcomes for children and young people so that they can achieve their fullest potential. With many schools reporting that they feel under increasing pressure to make artificial choices between academic rigour and the wellbeing of their pupils, we are unequivocal in our message that there is no such distinction – a good education must promote life in *all* its fullness. It is about ‘educating the whole person’.

**We therefore wish to provide a school which is:**

### ***Educating for Dignity and Respect***

Human dignity, the ultimate worth of each person, is central to good education. The basic principle of respect for the value of each person involves continual discernment, deliberation and action, and schools are one of the main places where this happens, and where the understanding and practices it requires are learned. This includes vigilant safeguarding. It is especially important that the equal worth of those with and without special educational needs and disabilities is recognized in practice.

### ***Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills***

Good schools foster confidence, delight and discipline in seeking wisdom, knowledge, truth, understanding, know-how, and the skills needed to shape life well. They nurture academic habits and skills, emotional intelligence and creativity across the whole range of school subjects, including areas such as music, drama and the arts, information and other technologies, sustainable development, sport, and what one needs to understand and practise in order to be a good person, citizen, parent, employee, team or group member, or leader.

### ***Educating for Hope and Aspiration***

How we learn to approach the future is crucial. Good schools open up horizons of hope and aspiration, and guide pupils into ways of fulfilling them. They also cope wisely with things and people going wrong. Bad experiences and behaviour, wrongdoing and evil need not have the last word. There are resources for healing, repair and renewal; repentance, forgiveness, truth and reconciliation are possible; and meaning, trust, generosity, compassion and hope are more fundamental than meaninglessness, suspicion, selfishness, hardheartedness and despair.

### ***Educating for Community and Living Well Together***

Education needs to have a core focus on relationships and commitments, participation in communities and institutions, and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together. We believe our living is inextricably involved with others, sharing our humanity and life on a finite planet. If those others are of ultimate worth then we are each called to responsibility towards them and to contribute responsibly to our communities.

Given these basics focusing on the pursuit of wisdom, knowledge and skills, on trust and hope in the good as more fundamental than the bad, on the centrality of relationships and community, and on the dignity of each person, there is endless scope for deeper thinking and further applications, improvisations and creativity. This is what we mean by life in all its fullness.

# Birmingham Diocesan Academies Trust

## Christian distinctiveness underpins the principles about how we work

- When decisions are made at any level in the trust, they will be made with our values, as described above, clearly at the heart of the decision.
- Our values will be reflected in the way people are treated, whether children, families or employees of the trust. Jesus came to give fullness of life to all.
- There will be an expectation that all endeavour to live by the values whether students or employees.
- We will share responsibility for all of the children in all of the academies.
- Our trust is one with a generous heart. All will be both givers and receivers.

## Leadership-at MAT level and of our individual schools

Great leaders combine Humility with Will. (Jim Collins 'Good to great') We see this in the example of Jesus.

They are the nurturing leaders who do not want credit but want success to sustain over a longer period of time, long after they are gone.

- Leaders will identify and include people who share the vision and can contribute to the direction of the trust as well as having the skills and knowledge needed to meet the objectives.
- Our leaders will not shy away from facing and accepting brutal truths and realities of data, numbers and situations but at the same time they won't lose hope of a better future.
- We will encourage our leaders to practice and encourage a disciplined approach towards their work life, maintaining a positive work/life balance.

We recognise that our leaders may come from a variety of different faith backgrounds or have no faith themselves. Our priority is to employ leaders that share the same values regarding education provision:

- *Educating for Dignity and Respect*
- *Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills*
- *Educating for Hope and Aspiration*
- *Educating for Community and Living Well Together*

Whatever a leaders personal belief, we would be seeking to appoint leaders who up hold the ethos and values of the trust and the uniqueness of their individual school.

## The uniqueness of the Individual academy

The academies in the Trust will work collaboratively together on aspects of teaching and learning as appropriate and needed, but will still retain their individual character. Individual academies are responsible for deciding on and developing their own unique character/ethos, the way the teaching and learning is delivered and the curriculum it is delivered through, within the overarching value of providing 'Life in all its fullness.'

# Birmingham Diocesan Academies Trust

## Governance

*(See appendix 1: organogram)*

The BDAT will be managed on a day to day basis by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who will report to and be held accountable by a board of Directors (Trustees). The Board will operate with two main sub committees which will focus on standards and finance and resources. The CEO will attend all Board meetings and in line with the agreed model articles for CE schools will be also be a director. Standards and Resources Committee will meet termly preceding the full MAT board meetings. These meetings have clear agendas and will focus on each academy, individually scrutinising reports provided by the CEO (standards committee) and Finance (Finance Director), monitoring progress towards agreed outcomes, and budget monitoring

The BDAT is committed to maintaining strong local governance, and this will manifest itself through the Local Academy Boards (LAB's) which will replace the current school governing bodies. The responsibilities of the LAB's can be seen in the schemes of delegation. The BDAT consider it essential that Directors / Trustees maintain good communication with the academies and as such: there will be a forum for all chairs of LAB's, chaired by the CEO; and a head teachers forum, chaired by the CEO. All head teachers will be expected to participate in the forum, and their views will be sought and considered on any changes that will potentially affect the day to day running of their academy. These will meet termly and will aid the communication between the directors and the schools and Local academy bodies. These will have agendas which allow for discussion and information sharing. Each academy will receive at least an annual visit from a Director / Trustee. Initially each academy will receive a visit from the CEO on at least a termly basis

Clear terms of reference will be provided for all committees and local academy boards within the BDAT structure, including the BDAT main board and any sub-committees, and the LAB's and any sub-committees thereof. LAB's will have the opportunity to decide how they operate with sub-committees, in agreement with the CEO.

Every academy within BDAT will work with a named advisor who will report directly to the CEO.

As stated above, each academy within the BDAT will retain a Local Academy Board that will operate under the terms of a Scheme of Delegation. In order to provide high performing academies with autonomy, and in order to provide additional support to those academies that need it, levels of delegation will be varied.

The Scheme of Delegation for the BDAT, and the academies that are included within, (shown in a separate document). Each Local Academy Board (LAB) within the BDAT will operate under the terms of this Scheme of Delegation, which is subject to review by the Directors of the BDAT on an annual basis.

The BDAT will operate on the principle of "earned autonomy". The academies will be reviewed annually as part of the annual development plan process, and their level of autonomy will be considered at that point.

Generally all academies (Good/Outstanding) will have the standard scheme of delegation, whereas Requires Improvement schools will have a reduced level of delegation which will allow for the greater involvement of the CEO / advisor in the decision making of the academy and academies graded as inadequate will have an interim academy board put in place with a high level of involvement from the CEO / advisor.

## **Birmingham Diocesan Academies Trust**

The Scheme of delegation makes clear the roles and responsibilities of the MAT board, the CEO, the Head Teacher of the individual academy and the role of the Local Academy Board, for those schools which are supporting schools (good or better), Supported schools (RI/Inadequate)

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

The BDAT will operate a clear accountability framework All head teachers will be expected to submit a half termly report to the CEO, covering all key areas of the academy's performance. The report must be submitted using the standard BDAT template, but this same template will be used for reporting to the LAB's in order to minimise administrative burden.

### **Constitution of the Local Academy Board**

In terms of Foundation Governor representation, the Local Academy Board (LAB) composition shall remain as the predecessor school. Should an inspection report indicate that the school and governing body is not achieving as expected, BDAT reserves the right to intervene at the appropriate level, including as a last resort to replace the LGB.

In the event that the predecessor school has an interim executive board, the BDAT will appoint a committee consistent with the Articles to act as Local Academy Board of the Academy.

The Directors (all or any of them) shall also be entitled to attend any meetings of the LAB. Any Director attending a meeting of the LAB 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 LAB.

All persons appointed or elected to the LAB shall give a written undertaking to the Directors to uphold the objects, ethos and mission of the BDAT.

Any governor vacancies must be notified to the BDAT as soon as they arise and noted in LAB minutes.

Subject to the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the BDAT Articles of Association, every member of the LAB or other officer or auditor of the BDAT acting in relation to the Academy shall be indemnified out of the assets of the BDAT against any liability incurred by him/her in that capacity in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in favour or in which he 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 BDAT.

# **Birmingham Diocesan Academies Trust**

**See attached Appendix 1: MAT Structure for BDAT (Organogram)**

## **School Improvement Offer**

All BDAT academies will benefit from a school improvement service which will provide:

**1.1** Support and challenge through a minimum of six visits a year. This will be provided through quality assured, 'Challenge advisors' appointed/contracted to the trust, with a background in successful school improvement. The Challenge Advisors will be appointed through a selection process based on the impact they are able to demonstrate in previous school improvement work they have been involved with, and their understanding of the vision and values of the trust. The Challenge advisor visits will be quality assured by the CEO, consistent reporting, templates and training will be provided by the trust. All challenge advisors will be initially line managed by the CEO. As the trust grows this will be part of the Head of School effectiveness' remit.

**1.2** The visits will be based on a dialogue between the school leaders (Senior leaders and LAB) and the advisor, with a combination of a planned agenda for trust accountability purposes and a negotiated agenda according to the school's areas for further development.

**1.3** A tailored offer developed in conversation with school leaders, around the concepts of regular external review, monitoring and evaluation. Every school will be part of a review cycle. The reviews may be a 'peer to peer' model, a 'formal review' in Ofsted style (by an Ofsted qualified school leader), a focused 'aspect' review. This will be determined with the school leaders, and will take into consideration where the school is at in the Ofsted cycle, and the Schools individual development needs. The outcomes of the review will then determine the appropriate development and support needed.

**1.4** In-depth data analysis, carried out by the Diocesan Data Officer and shared with the schools assessment lead and senior leaders. This will include access to Fisher family trust Aspire, (FFT Aspire)

**1.5** Target setting support provided through FFT Aspire, challenge advisor.

**1.6** Capacity building within individual academies and between schools, through a quality assured leadership programme developed from NQT through to executive head. Providing across MAT CPD opportunities to develop and share leaders.

**1.7** Self-sustaining school improvement provided through training and appointment of area/subject specialists to work across the MAT beyond their own schools. Central MAT training in areas/ aspects. A network of good practice will be developed with all schools being willing to share and receive.

**1.8** System leadership. The MAT will seek to develop leaders to lead beyond their own school and where necessary influence and/or lead more than one school. Leaders will have the opportunity to be supported into new roles. Where there is weakness or lack of capacity an executive head teacher model may be employed.

**1.9** Opportunities to work in partnership with existing centres of educational excellence through developing a relationship with a local Higher education provider to give access to research and development and a master programmes

**1.10** Access to quality assured training and network opportunities (to include annual leadership conference, annual governors' conference, middle leader networks.

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**1.11** Decision about risk is based on an annual risk assessment that takes into account, 3 year data trend, predicted results for next two years, the most recent Ofsted report, the latest SIAMS report and other available intelligence e.g. new head in post

### **Additional offer\***

**2.0** The annual risk assessment process, will enable the Challenge advisor, the CEO and the school's leaders to identify what the school needs to move forward further towards outstanding, or to be 'inspirational'. There will be opportunity for schools to access exemplary practice through the MATS relationship with Birmingham Education Partnership, and the Teaching Schools. Staff in good or better schools will have the opportunity to develop their own skills as trainers and support and lead in other settings beyond their own school.

**2.1** The MAT recognises that all schools have something to learn and something to share and that some strong and experienced leaders chose to lead vulnerable schools. The support that any school receives will be brokered according to the need of the individual school and will recognise the capacity of the existing staff team.

**2.2** When a school has been identified by Ofsted as 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate', a 'bespoke' improvement plan will be agreed, led by the Academy Challenge advisor with the head teacher. A supporting headteacher from a MAT 'good' or 'outstanding' school will be assigned to work with the head teacher.

**2.3** Additional resources will be available to the advisor through the resources of other good or outstanding MAT schools. If appropriate additional support will be provided in terms of a partner head teacher.

**2.4** When a school is in crisis, a 'Team around the School Committee' (TASC), will be established consisting of Mat board representative, Chair of LAB, Head teacher, Challenge Advisor and supporting headteacher) which meets at least ½ termly to review the progress against the identified actions. Schools might also have their LAB completely withdrawn and an interim board put in place.

**2.5** The TASC group will have SLEs for literacy and numeracy (from MAT schools) allocated to support the school in these areas. Should the MAT not be able to resource support from its own schools, it will use the Birmingham Education Partnership as a resource and its contacts with local Teaching Schools to provide commissioned support.

**2.6** All schools will be held accountable through the governance structure. The MAT board will have two sub committees; standards and resources. These meetings will be held 3 times a year with a transparent agenda.

\*negotiated additional cost