nexus Multi Academy Trust

Learning together to be the best we can be

2025 - 2026

PROSPECTUS

Published September 2025

Some of the information published may be subject to change throughout the course of the academic year, and is only accurate at the time of publication.

Welcome...

Nexus Multi Academy Trust was founded in 2016 and has the highest ambitions possible for everyone we work with.

The vision for our trust and schools is that we are constantly "**Learning together, to be the best we can be.**"

This vision is what we aspire to and is as relatable to every employee and partner of our trust as it is to our children, young adults and their families.

In order to achieve our vision, we have the following mission statement:

- **Our employees and partners are passionate about being the best that they can be**;
- **Our learners and their families are at the centre of what we do**;
- **Our Trust is relentlessly focused on improvement.**

Underpinning our vision and mission statement are our core values. These have been defined by our workforce and governors and resonate with the values that all partners hold. We routinely consult on these values in our biennial employee opinion survey.

We believe it is really important and that we are, in all the things that we plan and do: **Inclusive; Child Centered; Family Focused; Caring; Passionate; Nurturing; Encouraging; Enriching and Empowering**.

This prospectus holds introductory information about the trust, our academies and settings. It can be read alongside our annual reports and our workforce engagement statement.

More information is available on our website www.NexusMAT.org.

Please feel free to explore our web pages and learn more about us, or get in touch directly via our enquiries form.

Warren Carratt

Chief Executive Officer

Rachel Potts

Chair of Nexus MAT Board of Directors

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Our academies...

Abbey School is a special academy for pupils with moderate learning difficulties aged 5-19, in Kimberworth, Rotherham. Abbey has two sites, with a number of pupils based at the integrated provision we have at the Horizon Community College, Barnsley.

Bader Academy is a "free" special academy which opened on 1 September 2020 in Edenthorpe, Doncaster, for pupils with communication and interaction difficulties aged 7-16.

Beech Academy is a special academy for pupils with autism and/or moderate learning difficulties aged 11-19 in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. Beech has two sites, with a number of pupils based at the Westfield campus.

Bents Green School is a special academy for pupils with autism and/or moderate learning difficulties aged 11-19 in Sheffield. The school has a number of sites, with the majority of pupils based in either Gleadless or Ringinglow, Sheffield.

Coppice School is a special academy in Hatfield. Doncaster, for pupils with severe learning difficulties aged 2-19. Coppice has two sites, with a number of sixth form pupils based at The Bridge, a shared learning campus.

Crags Community School is a mainstream primary academy for children aged 2 - 11, in Maltby, Rotherham. Crags has a Planned Admission Number of 45 per year group. The school also has a nursery offer.

Discovery Academy is a "free" special academy which opened on 1 September 2022 for pupils with autism and associated social, emotional and mental health needs aged 7-16, near Norfolk Park in Sheffield.

Endeavour Academy a special academy for pupils with social emotional and mental health needs aged 3-19 in Arnold, Nottinghamshire. Endeavour was formerly called Derrymount School and has two sites, with lower school at Churchmoor Lane, Arnold and upper school at Sherbrook Road, Daybrook.

Fountaindale School is a special academy for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties aged 2-19, in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. Fountaindale was previously part of another the Evolve Trust, and was called Harlow Academy before joining Nexus MAT on 1 September 2022.

Heatherwood School a special academy for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties aged 2-19 in central Doncaster. Heatherwood has two sites, with a number of sixth form pupils based at The Bridge, a shared learning campus.

Hilltop School is a special academy for pupils with severe learning difficulties aged 2-19 in Maltby, Rotherham. Hilltop has two sites, with the main school site in Maltby and a number of pupils aged 14-19 based at Forest View, Rawmarsh.

Kelford School is a special academy for pupils with severe learning difficulties aged 2-19 in Kimberworth, Rotherham. Kelford has three sites, with the main school site in Kimberworth, bespoke provision offered at The View, Rotherham town centre, and some early years pupils based at Kimberworth Primary School.

Hallamshire Academy is an independent special school in Sheffield, for pupils aged 7-19 with a diagnosis of communication & interaction and social, emotional & mental health. The school is scheduled to open by October half term 2025.

Break Out Club

In addition to overseeing the running of our academies, Nexus MAT also provides other services.

We are commissioned by a number of local authorities to deliver extended schools provision (e.g. after school and holiday clubs) for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

We deliver this through our Break Out Club team, which coordinates our offer within the central Trust team in partnership with our schools and families.

In most instances, activities are delivered in our academies and by our staff.

More information can be accessed at **breakoutclub.co.uk**

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Our academies...

Kenwood Academy opened on 1 January 2023 following de-amalgamation from Becton School, and is a special academy for pupils with autism and associated social, emotional and mental health needs aged 11-19 in Sheffield. Kenwood has 5 sites across Sheffield, as well as its West Riding campus in Barnsley.

Kingfisher Academy (neé Becton School) is a hospital special academy for pupils aged 5-19, in Sheffield . In addition to the children on roll who are patients at two of the Sheffield Children's Hospital sites, the school also operates a medical outreach service from the Chapel House campus and has an integrated resource for sixth form pupils at Silverdale secondary school.

Lotus Academy is a special academy for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs aged 6-16 in Parson's Cross, Sheffield. Lotus was formerly called Holgate Meadows, and joined the Trust as a sponsored school on 1 September 2024.

North Ridge Community School is a special academy for pupils with severe learning difficulties aged 2-19 in Adwick-Le-Street, Doncaster. North Ridge has two sites with a number of sixth form pupils based at The Bridge, a shared learning campus.

Nottingham HOPE Academy is a hospital alternative provision academy for pupils aged 2-19 based in Nottingham City, with sites at the Nottingham Children's Hospital, the Adolescent Unit at Hopewood, the Sherwood Education Centre and on Castle Road, Nottingham.

Pennine View School is a special academy for pupils with moderate learning difficulties aged 7-16 in Conisbrough, Doncaster. Pennine View has two sites, with the main site in Conisbrough and an integrated resource for 12 pupils aged 11-16 at The McAuley Catholic High School, Doncaster.

The Willows School is a special academy for pupils with moderate learning difficulties aged 7-19 in Thurcroft, Rotherham.

Timeline of our growth

- **1 June 2016** Nexus MAT is founded by Abbey, Hilltop and Kelford Schools
- **1 April 2017** Pennine View School is sponsored and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 October 2019** Crags Community School converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 November 2019** Heatherwood School converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 December 2019** Coppice School converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 April 2020** Becton School converts and join Nexus MAT
- **1 April 2020** North Ridge Schools converts and join Nexus MAT
- **1 September 2020** Bader Academy opens
- **1 September 2022** Discovery Academy opens
- **1 September 20222** Beech Academy converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 September 2022** Fountaindale School is sponsored and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 January 2023** Kenwood Academy opens
- **1 September 2023** The Willows School converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 September 2024** Lotus Academy is sponsored and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 October 2024** Endeavour Academy is sponsored and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 September 2025** Coppice School converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **1 September 2025** Nottingham HOPE Academy converts and joins Nexus MAT
- **October 2025** Hallamshire Academy opens

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Strategic Objectives

We have a published strategic plan which outlines how we anticipate our Trust will grow and develop over the period 2020-2027. In developing this plan, the Trust has identified 3 key objectives which we will drive our growth and development:

1. Increasing quality of provision; The purpose of any MAT is to improve the quality of children's education. Since its creation, the academies system has been through many changes in terms of regulation and scrutiny, and since 2019 there has been an emerging trend of MATs taking on a more clearly defined role as a new civic structure . We welcome this thinking and see this strategic objective as one not solely limited to the academies in our Trust, but to the education system as a whole—locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

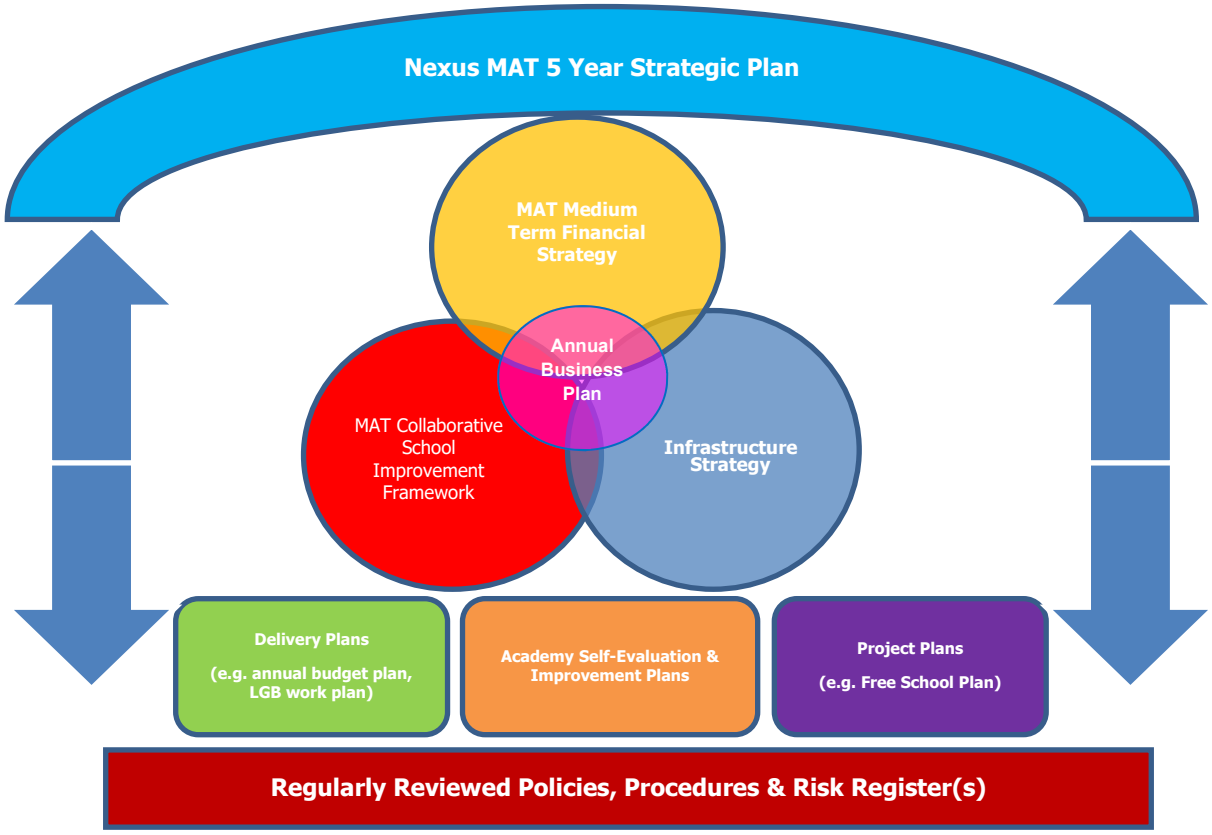
2. Developing partnerships to better meet need; As a values driven MAT, the growth of the Trust can only be affected by aligning with schools that have the same values and ethos we have. This comes from working in open, collaborative partnership with others first, with conversion coming as a natural progression of this way of working.

Equally, our capacity to better meet need cannot and should not be defined solely by the growth of the Trust, as we believe it is essential to work with others - regardless of whether they choose, or can choose, to academise.

3. Maintaining a financially viable, sustainable and ethically driven Multi Academy Trust; Strategy, governance and resource management are the cornerstones of a high functioning organisation. As a public authority which is a private limited company with exempt charity status, it is essential that a Multi Academy Trust can demonstrate value for money, regularity and propriety.

However, it is equally important that every decision we take is ethical, so that we never deviate from the values we espouse.

Our **strategic planning framework** is as follows:



Raising a concern

As a public funded organisation, governors and employees of Nexus MAT must ensure that they operate in an open, honest and transparent manner at all times.

Where anyone suspects this is not the case, then the Chief Executive Officer must be informed and has a duty to respond.

Where there is a concern about the conduct of the Chief Executive Officer, this should be referred to the Chair of the Trust Board.

Where there are concerns about systemic failings across the Trust, concerns should be referred directly the Department for Education.

More guidance can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complain-about-an-academy/complain-about-an-academy

MAT Collaborative School Improvement Framework

The vision for Nexus Multi Academy Trust is to be constantly improving as an organisation; celebrating success and "**Learning together, to be the best we can be**". We aspire to have a learning culture - built on the principles of appreciative enquiry - which promotes creativity and innovation across our workforce.

To bring cogency and coherence to our pursuit of ever improving provision, we have published our Collaborative Schools Improvement Framework which details how we will be "relentless in our pursuit of ever improving outcomes for all children".

Our Quality Assurance & Improvement Policy outlines how the Trust discharges its legal duties for school improvement, and where and how management oversight connects into governance.

We also have a published Academies of Concern Policy, which provides clarity and transparency for how we work with our schools to define the level of support they need.

Every academy in Nexus MAT has its own self-evaluation and school improvement plan, which provides detailed information on the profile of the school and the improvement priorities which are moving the school forward.

Self-evaluation informed our Schools Performance Dashboard which is moderated by the Schools Performance Scrutiny Board and provides Directors with termly updates on our defined key performance indicators, allowing scrutiny to generate lines of enquiry for further research, development, improvement and assurance.

The expectation for all schools in Nexus MAT is that provision is at least "Good", and is constantly moving forward to be the best it can be.

The BIG 3

At Multi Academy Trust level, we have agreed our "**Big 3**" outcomes which drive our collaborative school improvement activity. These are:

- **All our children and young people enjoy their learning and make at least good progress.**
- **All our children and young people are responsible citizens who actively contribute to society.**
- **All our academies are continually improving the quality of our provision.**

The Standards Committee of the Trust Board oversees progress made within our Collaborative School Improvement Framework, alongside the scrutiny and challenge provided by individual academy local governance.

Our Pupil Cabinet and our Staff Parliament also provide a systematic means of capturing pupils and staff voice, respectively, linked in to our school parliament and local governance models.

Trust Leadership

The Trust has a Board of Directors and each academy has its own local governance board, either a local governing body or an academy council.

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for the Trust and its constituent academies. However, some of these responsibilities are delegated to local governors, as per the Nexus Scheme of Delegation.

The Trust employs a central team, which is responsible for supporting the Chief Executive Officer in ensuring the MAT fulfils all of its legal and moral obligations .

Each academy employs a Headteacher who is line managed by the Trust executive team.

Each academy has its own "Senior Leadership Team" which typically includes Headteachers, Deputy Heads and Assistant Heads.

MAT Governance

Schools which convert to Academies under the Academies Act are run by companies limited by guarantee called 'Academy Trusts'. Where more than one school is part of an Academy chain, this is termed a "Multi Academy Trust" or MAT for short. Like any other company, a MAT is registered with Companies House. The MAT is also an exempt charity, which means that it is not registered with the Charity Commission but must abide by charitable law.

When a school joins a MAT all employees transfer over to the employment of the Trust (not the individual school), with every constituent school in a Trust being is own legal "department". In the same way that local authorities have responsibility for state schools the MAT is the "parent" employer for all employees in any academies which are part of a MAT and is ultimately accountable for the performance of each school.

Like all companies, the MAT has 'Articles of Association' ('Articles') which are the rules that govern the running of the company. The Articles set out the Objects (or purpose) of the company. All MATs have at least one Object, which is:

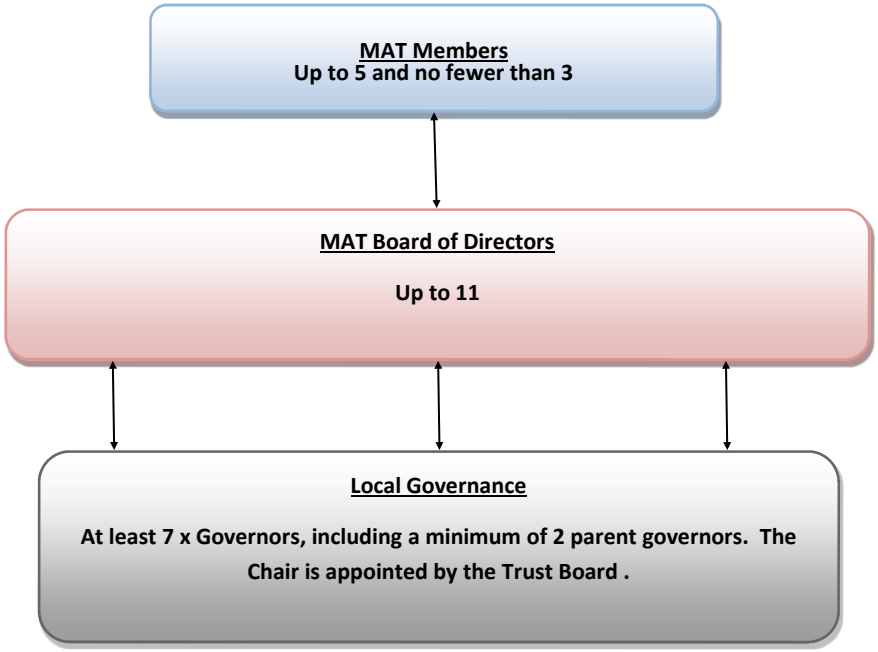
To advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing a school(s) which shall offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

Members are the equivalent of shareholders in a company limited by shares. They are the 'guarantors' of the company and promise to pay £10 towards the debts of the company in the event that the MAT is wound up.

The members of the MAT have a different status from the directors. The members are the subscribers to the trust's memorandum of association, as are any other individuals permitted to become members under its Articles of Association. Members have an overview of the governance arrangements of the Trust and have the power to appoint directors (who are also trustees) and remove them.

Members should not interfere with the day to day operation of the Trust or approach Directors or the Headteacher, on an individual basis, in their role as a Member outside of formal meeting settings. The Chair of the Trust Board of Directors must also be a Member.

Nexus MAT Governance Structure



Trust Board of Directors (TBoD)**:** In all Academy Trusts, the individuals appointed to challenge and scrutinise the strategic direction and day to day running of the company by the Chief Executive Officer, have three functions:

- They are Directors - because the MAT is a company, and;
- They are Trustees - because the MAT is a charity, and;
- They are Governors - because the MAT is responsible for running the schools

This can be very confusing as the documentation used to set up the Academy Trust and the Department for Education guidance for Academies uses these three titles interchangeably, depending on the context. In Nexus, this role is simply called '**Director**'. Directors are made up of a diverse range of individuals. The Members will always appoint Directors.

Declaration of Interests

All governors (and staff) should promptly declare any business interest and these declarations should be included in the Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests.

This register should be referred to prior to the commencement of contracting procedures for all contracts and/or tenders. All potential conflicts of interests should be identified and any governor or employee with any potential conflict should distance themselves from any decisions.

The award of any contract that may benefit staff, governors, or their immediate family should be formally minuted by governors to ensure transparency.

All Members, Directors and senior leaders must also declare any close family connections with senior employees in other organisations e.g. if their spouse is a Director of a building company.

Nexus MAT Board of Directors

Rachel Potts is a **Member** & **Director** of Nexus MAT and **Chair of the Board of Directors.** Rachel had a 36-year career in the NHS, working in both operational management and senior leadership roles. Rachel was Chief Operating Officer and more recently Executive Director of Planning & Governance at York CCG and has a wealth of relevant experience in all aspects of strategic planning, performance delivery, governance and leadership.

Sue Shelley is a **Director** of Nexus MAT and **Vice Chair of the Board of Directors**. Sue has extensive experience of school governance in primary, special and secondary schools. Sue has taught in secondary schools, 6th form and the prison service as well as leading Extended Services and Adult and Family Learning or Community Learning. Latterly, Sue working in local government strategic housing.

Gillian Askew is a **Director** of Nexus MAT and **Chair of Finance & Infrastructure Committee**. She is also a long standing volunteer for Inspiring the Future, regularly attending employability events in both primary and secondary schools in our region. Gillian has worked within the public sector, with close links to Education, since 2013 and has worked closely with Educational bodies in recent years such as DfE and The National Governance Association.

Colin Bradley is a **Director** of Nexus MAT. Colin currently works as a programme manager for Derbyshire County Council Children's Services. Colin was a founding member of Stone Soup Learns Academy Trust, one of the country's first Alternative Provision Free Schools, and has acted as governor and chair for the trust. Colin has a strong background in business management and development, and has recently completed a Masters in Business Administration.

Phil Bradley is a **Director** of Nexus MAT, and the **named Director for Safeguarding**. Phil is a registered social work professional who has worked across the various disciplines of children's social work for over 40 years, as a practitioner, Team and Service Manager and latterly as Head of Service.

Naomi Copper is a **Director** of Nexus MAT and **Chair of the Standards Committee**. Naomi is a principle lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University, specialising in early years and primary education. With over 30 years' experience teaching in schools and Higher Education, Naomi remains as passionate as ever about the powerful impact that education has on the lives of children, young people and those teaching them.

Mark Greenwood is a **Director** of Nexus MAT. Mark is a Procurement professional, and is a highly driven strategic thinker who excels at transformation and change management. Mark particularly enjoys developing staff through training, mentoring and coaching and supporting the adaptability of teams through a constantly changing business landscape. Mark has worked across the public, third and private sectors.

Tina Havenhand is a **Director** of Nexus MAT and **Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.** Tina is also Director at MGRW+ and has over 25 years' experience in the audit and accountancy sector. She has worked with SMEs, Charities and Academy Trusts during her career; advising on statutory compliance work, business growth & development, due diligence and training / mentoring.

James Hutchinson is a **Director** of Nexus MAT. James is a serving Headteacher, working in a special school (that is not part of Nexus MAT) in Nottinghamshire. James has extensive experience as a school leader and governor in the specialist sector.

Ray Palmer is a **Director** of Nexus MAT. Ray is a health and safety consultant with a wide range of experience gained whilst working in a variety of work environments. When appointed as a Magistrate in March 1998, Ray was the youngest Justice of the Peace in the Sheffield area. Ray has extensive experience of working in the public and the private sector and is a Registered Chartered Safety and Health Practitioner with Institute of Occupational Health (IOSH).

Safeguarding

Nexus Multi Academy Trust and all our schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

When we recruit staff and volunteers we follow safer recruitment processes.

Our safeguarding procedures and practice mean that we can provide a safe place for children and young people to engage with us. We want the public to have confidence in the work we do for the most vulnerable children and young people in our society. Ensuring safeguarding runs as a golden thread through all that we do is part of building that confidence with the public.

7 Principles of Public Life

The 7 principles of public life apply to anyone who holds public office. This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, including anyone involved in a school or MAT governance role: Members, Directors and Governors. They were first set out by Lord Nolan in 1995 and are sometimes referred to as the "Nolan Principles". They are as follows:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try, inappropriately, to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

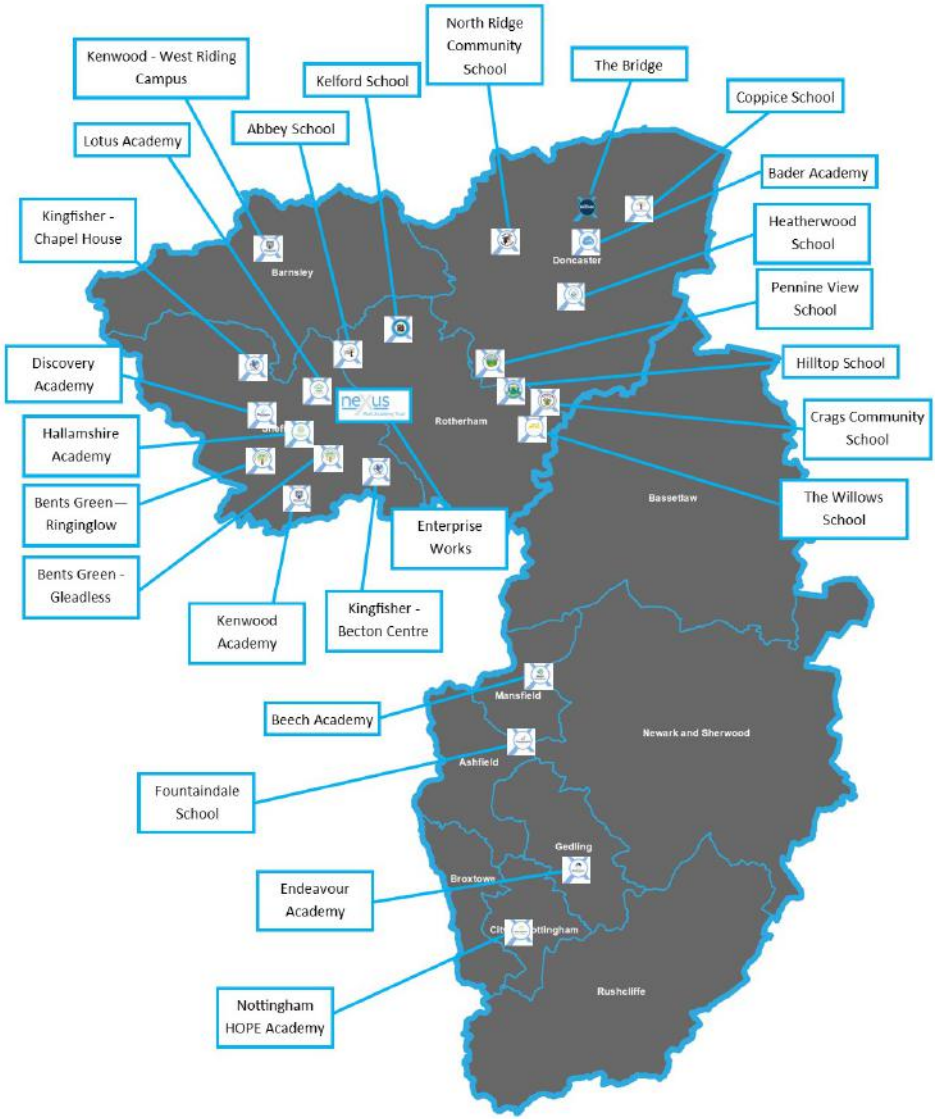
Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Our Geography

Here is where our schools' **main sites** are located, across South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.



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