



*Learning together to be the best we can be*

**INTERIM STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2025—2027**



**Caring**  
**Nurturing**  
**Child-Centred Family-Focused**  
**Encouraging Enriching**  
**Empowering Passionate**  
**Inclusive**

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Nexus Multi Academy Trust was founded in 2016 and has the highest of ambitions for anyone and everyone we work with - our pupils, families, workforce and partners. Since our creation, the Trust has been on a journey of continual growth and improvement.

Founded by three special schools in the borough of Rotherham, Nexus MAT now operates across the Yorkshire and East Midlands regions, with a mix of special and mainstream academies.

Since creating the MAT, our growth and developments have been underpinned by the resonance of our values with those schools who have sought to join our family. Our values have remained at the heart of all the decisions we've taken, as we have maintained a relentless focus on being:

**Inclusive; Child Centred; Family Focused; Caring; Passionate; Nurturing; Encouraging; Enriching and Empowering.**

We bring these high expectations to everything we do, they are embedded in our culture and our delivery and we are really excited to work with partners who share this ethos.

In September 2024, the Trust began exploring a merger with another Trust, and therefore this plan has been put in place for an interim two-year period, whilst merger is explored further and negotiations are concluded.

By 2027, either a new five year strategic plan will be published by and for Nexus MAT, or a new Trust will develop and publish its own plan on behalf of our schools. Either way, the future is bright and filled with opportunity.

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**Nexus MAT Board of Directors**



# Vision & Values

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

Underpinning our vision and mission statement are our **core values**:



Given the growth of the Trust - since the vision, values and mission statement were first formulated and introduced in 2016 - the Trust utilises a biennial Employee Opinion Survey to consult with our workforce and ensure we are adhering to our values. This is summarised in our annual workforce engagement statement.



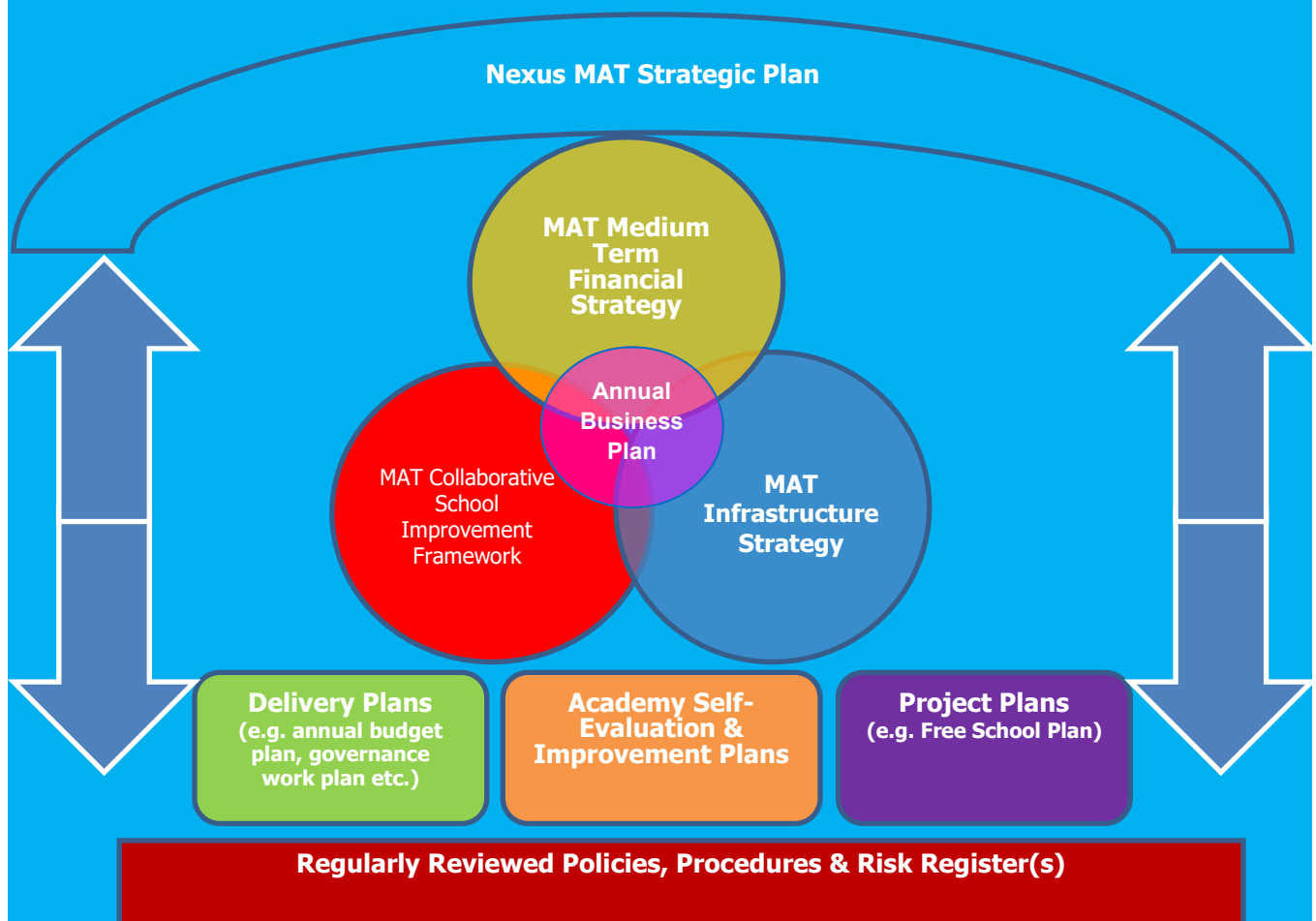
We will continually and systematically engage with our school communities and with our workforce - through the work of our academies, central Team and external audit -so that we can measure our effectiveness at "walking the talk" of our vision, values and mission statement.

# Strategic Objectives

The Nexus MAT Board have agreed three key strategic business objectives for Nexus which will steer our growth and development over the next 2 years. These are:

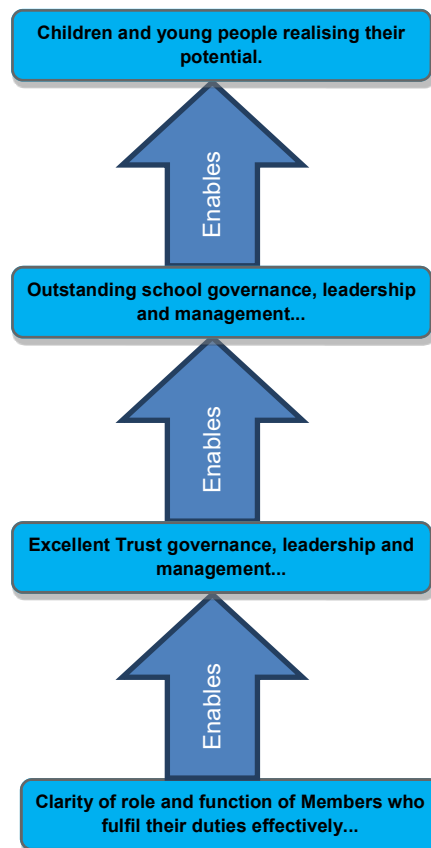
- **Increasing quality of provision in our education system;**
- **Developing partnerships to better meet need;**
- **Maintaining a financially viable, sustainable and ethically driven Multi Academy Trust.**

We have a range of strategies which link to our Strategic Plan, as per the following:



## Leading Continual Improvement

Nexus MAT was founded on the belief that our academies should be focused on supporting a child and families as best they can, with the Trust adopting an ethical leadership philosophy to enable this.



Whilst leaders embody the principles of ethical leadership in their behaviour and decision making, we also recognise that there are a range of non negotiables that we must meet as minimum standards. Be these defined by the Government or by ourselves, we have the highest standards for the outcomes we will achieve, and we remain restless in our pursuit of excellence for our pupils, our staff and the communities we serve.

The Trust has made a strategic commitment through the first 10 years of its existence to invest in creating the capacity to meet the high standards we set for ourselves whilst meeting the increased demands generated by growth.

External scrutiny and review reflects the positive impact the Trust has made in all its academies, and in conjunction with the publication of this third strategic plan the Trust has made further strategic investment to frontload capacity at Trust and individual academy level, to both drive improvements in our own schools and ensure we have the means to support others - be that through school to school support, engagement in strategic partnerships and networks, or through further growth in and of our Trust.

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**Enriching**

# Strategic Objective 1: Increasing quality of provision in our education system

Why is it important?	
<p>The purpose of any MAT is to improve the quality of children’s education. We welcome 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.</p>	
How will we meet this objective?	
<p>The Trust Collaborative School Improvement Framework details how we will meet the central aims of this objective. We will work in open partnership with our academies and our partners to ensure we never compromise on our ‘quality first’ commitment, drawing on clear evidence and being appreciative in our enquiry.</p>	
Success Criteria Short Term	Success Criteria Medium Term
Successful delivery of the MAT Improvement Plan, which is developed annually in line with the Collaborative School Improvement Framework.	MAT Collaborative School Improvement Framework connects - and adds value - to all Academies’ School Improvement plans.
The Trust has an accurate means of self-assessing its overall effectiveness and the effectiveness of its constituent academies against clearly defined Key Performance Indicators, in the performance dashboards.	Key Performance Indicators evolve over time to reflect the changing nature of the external regulatory environment and the changed priorities of the Trust.
The Trust has sponsored at least one school within an 18 month period, where the opportunity arises.	<p>The Trust continues to sponsor schools in an 18 month period, where the opportunity arises.</p> <p>The Trust has improved provision in sponsored academies by the point of the first inspection and self assessment is demonstrating upward trajectory against the Ofsted framework grades.</p>
The Trust has an Infrastructure Strategy in place which details how the estate will be developed and improved.	The Infrastructure Strategy is delivered successfully.
The Trust works in partnership with other schools, Trusts and local authorities to establish new models of supporting learners to be the best the can be.	Existing satellites/hubs grow safely and securely to meet emergent need, with further hubs created in line with increased demand.
There is a reduction on financial and competent person audit recommendations year-on-year, with more rapid compliance from newly converting academies within their first 12 months of conversion.	There is consistency of practice across all academies in the MAT with audit improvements fully embedded and systematically adopted where new areas for improvement emerge.

## Strategic Objective 2: Developing partnerships to better meet need

<b>Why is it important?</b>	
<p>As a clear sighted values driven MAT, the growth of the Trust can only be affected by aligning with schools and other Trusts 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 join us. Our focus is therefore on a broader horizon than merely developing partnerships to increase the number of academies in our MAT. In this regard, we believe we are actively seeking to fulfil the moral and legal obligations on us as per the Objects in our Articles of Association.</p>	
<b>How will we meet this objective?</b>	
<p>The Trust will build on the existing partnerships already established to widen our participation in sector improvement activity. We will continue to engage in strategic board and partnership forums to identify opportunities for co-production and growth. Our existing and new academies will continue to place a high value in developing their own partnerships which further their local improvement objectives, connecting into the work of the wider MAT wherever a mutually beneficial outcome can be secured.</p>	
<b>Success Criteria Short Term</b>	<b>Success Criteria Medium Term</b>
<p>The Trust is working with a range of other MATs and maintained schools to establish partnerships which lead to demonstrable changes in provision, and has incorporated a further 2 schools into the MAT.</p>	<p>Clear terms of engagement with other MATs and maintained schools are in place and, where possible, partnerships have extended beyond their original configuration to widen the scope of networks and impact positively on more communities. Further 2 schools have joined the MAT.</p>
<p>The Trust is an established strategic partner of a Teaching School Hub in the region and is actively engaged in strategic developments to affect the wider education landscape.</p>	<p>The Trust is working with Teaching School Hub networks outside of the immediate region and is actively contributing to region wide school improvement initiatives.</p>
<p>The Trust has secured a continuation of its current extended schools contract and has continued its upward trajectory of user engagement.</p>	<p>The Trust has developed a sustainable extended schools offer and has a remit to meet the needs of those children and families most in need, in the Yorkshire and East Midlands regions, as defined by the Trust and its commissioners.</p>
<p>The Trust is actively engaged in the strategic planning for improved provision with our partner local authorities to better meet local need, with new provision being actively opened.</p>	<p>The Trust is actively delivering a differentiated model of direct provision and/or satellite support for schools across the region, and more new provision is being opened or is in the pre-opening process.</p>
<p>The Trust is delivering services to other schools and MATs, utilising the trading subsidiary to optimise efficiencies and donating all profits to the MAT.</p>	<p>The number of schools and Trusts commissioning support has increased, with a sustainable business model in place to bend and flex around changes to demand.</p>



## Strategic Objective 3: Maintaining a financially viable, sustainable and ethically driven Multi Academy Trust

Why is it important?	
<p>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 - and a legal requirement - 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.</p>	
How will we meet this objective?	
<p>The Trust's Medium Term Financial Strategy will be the guiding document for ensuring compliance with DfE requirements and driving the scrutiny, challenge and support that will deliver value for money and liquidity across the MAT. The Collaborative School Improvement Framework will in turn inform the creation of greater efficiencies in practice, whilst the MAT's Infrastructure Strategy will ensure we optimise opportunities to improve the value of our assets and estate.</p>	
Success Criteria Short Term	Success Criteria Medium Term
<p>The Trust forecasts financial health in the Medium Term Financial Strategy with a cash reserves level within the % thresholds set.</p>	<p>The Trust is utilising retained revenue on invest-to-grow projects with our academies, enriching the educational offer in a financial sustainable way.</p>
<p>High cost service areas have been subject to a Trust wide procurement review to test value for money in light of increased economies of scale as a consequence of Trust growth.</p>	<p>All areas of procurement have been reviewed with clear Trust-led value for money assessments in place.</p>
<p>DfE toolkits such as ICFP and SRMSA are systematically utilised to inform academy budget planning and re-profiling.</p>	<p>DfE toolkits such as ICFP and SRMSA have led to cross-Trust workforce and business process redesign to drive down costs and secure greater economies of scale, in line with Trust growth.</p>
<p>The Trust has maintained a secure level of reserves that underpin viability in response to short term uncertainty.</p>	<p>The Trust reserve is able to support "invest to save/generate" initiatives for our schools, contributing to the overall ambitions of the Infrastructure Strategy.</p>



The Academy Trust Handbook is published by the Department for Education (DfE) to outline the legal duties on all Academy Trusts. The Handbook also details the legal duties on the statutory roles required in every MAT: the Chief Executive Officer (“accounting officer”) and the Chief Finance Officer. The standards expected of all public services are set out in the Treasury’s ‘Managing Public Money’ document.

These standards are: honesty, impartiality, openness, accountability, accuracy, fairness, integrity, transparency, objectivity and reliability carried out in the spirit of, as well as to the letter of, the law in the public interest to high ethical standards achieving value for money.

The Chief Executive Officer must be able to assure Parliament, and the public, of high standards of probity in the management of public funds, particularly:

- **Value for money**
- **Regularity**
- **Propriety**

The Chief Executive Officer must complete and sign a statement of compliance in these 3 areas each year and submit this to the DfE with the audited accounts of the Trust.

Value for money is a key concept. It means securing the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay over the period of use of the goods or services bought. It is not about minimising up front prices. Whether in conventional procurement, market testing, private finance or some other form of public private partnership, finding value for money involves an appropriate allocation of risk.

As we continue to grow, we will adapt our financial planning to ensure we continue to use our expanding resources in an affordable and sustainable manner, and we will carry out procurement and project appraisal objectively and fairly, using cost benefit analysis and generally seeking good value for the Exchequer as a whole.

We will use management information systems to provide assurance about value for money and the quality of delivery in conjunction with DfE guidance such as the Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning toolkit.

Openness and transparency are at the heart of effective governance and the Trust has a clear standard of expectation for the reporting from officers to Directors and local governance. More details can be found in our published Scheme of Delegation.



## Audit, Plan, Do, Review

Our strategic plan will be translated on an annual basis into our annual strategic business plan, which will be approved by the Board of Directors.

Within the annual strategic business plan, we will map how our vision, mission statement and values are informing the priorities in our Collaborative School Improvement Framework. We will then outline our aspirations for each academic year, as we seek to realise the:

- Three aims of our mission statement;
- Three strategic objectives for our Trust
- Three priorities within our Collaborative School Improvement Framework;



We will draw on the principles of strategic commissioning in our management of Trust business: having a clear understanding of the need we're meeting; consulting in the development of our business plans; reaching the point of delivery as soon as is reasonably possible; and learning from both our success and our mistakes.

## Managing Risk, Opportunities & Business Continuity

Risk is an every day part of life: it cannot be avoided entirely, only mitigated. Having effective governance in place at all levels in our Trust will ensure that we have clear insight of - and mitigation steps to address - the risks and opportunities we face.

Effective governance is systemic in Nexus MAT. The standards we measure ourselves against are informed by the statutory guidance we must comply with, and outlined in our policies and procedures. We have forward plans which structure the governance work of our Members, Directors and local governors. Expertise is sourced to enhance our capacity to analyse and understand risk. Executive and senior leaders adopt behaviours which create an atmosphere of openness and transparency with our workforce and the families we serve.

All of these are levers in how we recognise, analyse and mitigate risks. Our risk register therefore reflects this strategic, mature understanding of risk management.

# Our Partnerships

No school can exist in isolation, and no Multi Academy Trust can thrive without having a wide range of partners.

Families; social care and other children’s and adult services; statutory agencies; employers and other schools and settings: our partnerships help us improve ourselves as much as they can allow us to influence others and help secure the best offer for children.

As the Trust grows and develops further, so our partnerships will expand.

We are a Trust that values partnerships, something that requires balance between, and empowerment of, all parties.

Our partnerships aren’t conditional on being a part of our Trust; the only condition is that partnership work has a positive impact on the lives of children and families. In this spirit, we are open to any and all conversations with schools, organisations and individuals who want to work with us. Whether that’s about a school joining the Trust; working with us collectively; or working with a school or a child individually.



Department for Education

Other MATs

National agencies

Our communities



Local public sector partners

Ofsted

Other Schools

Commercial partners

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## Equality & Diversity

Since the Equality Act 2010 came into effect in April 2011 it is good practice for each school to make a statement about the principles according to which it reviews the impact on equalities of its policies and practices, and according to which it fulfils the specific duties to publish information and evidence, and to decide on specific and measurable objectives.

As a Trust we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.



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[www.NexusMAT.org](http://www.NexusMAT.org)