



Asset Strategy  
2020 - 2025

"Learning together, to be the best we can be"

# 1. Asset Vision

- 1.1. For the purposes of this document, assets are defined as (i) the land and buildings owned or leased by the Trust (ii) those resources on the fixed asset and ICT registers.
- 1.2. The vision for Nexus MAT is that we are “learning together, to be the best we can”. This applies to all aspects of our Trust, and for our assets this means that we are constantly seeking to make them the best they can be. In pursuit of this, the Trust has agreed the following strategic objectives:
  - 1.2.1. Our **estate and our asset infrastructure are compliant with the legal requirements** on the Trust and are maintained as well as possible;
  - 1.2.2. Grant funding – principally School Condition Allocation (SCA) - is secured and utilised strategically to support **improvement of our existing assets and estate**;
  - 1.2.3. **Growth and improvement of our assets and estate**, to ensure that we have the physical means and infrastructure to provide the best possible learning environment for our communities.

# 2. Asset Strategy Plan

- 2.1. Since the cessation of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme in 2010, there has been no system-wide school renovation and rebuild programme for the state education sector.
- 2.2. The Academies Act (2010) redirected all new school capital funding to the Free Schools programme, the ESFA’s CIF programme has come under increased demand since it was first introduced at the start of the last decade, and, for MATs that reach a certain size, this has been replaced by the introduction of Schools Condition Allocation.
- 2.3. Overall, there remains an absence of capital funding available to state schools to invest in improvements in their assets and estate, with devolved formula capital barely covering the annual costs of routine maintenance.

- 2.4. Given this, the strategic objectives above will ensure that Directors are clearly sighted on the expectations of Trust leaders and also the actions they are taking to maintain the best possible estate.

**Strategic Objective 1: Our estate and our asset infrastructure are compliant with the legal requirements on the Trust and are maintained as well as possible;**

Indicators of success	Responsible Officer	Governance board with oversight
a. Each academy has a local asset and ICT improvement plan linked to the annual budget planning process.	Headteacher	Local Governing Body
b. Each academy has regular site audits to review Health & Safety Compliance in line with the Competent Person duty.	Chief Executive	Trust Audit & Risk Committee
c. Each academy has a local improvement plan informed by regular Competent Person audits.	Headteacher	Local Governing Body
d. Implementation of the MAT Information Governance & ICT Framework ensures Directors are provided with systematic assurance of compliance with the legal on the Trust.	Chief Executive	Trust Audit & Risk Committee

**Strategic Objective 2: Grant funding - principally School Condition Allocation (SCA) - is secured and utilised strategically to support improvement of our existing assets and estate**

Indicators of success	Responsible Officer	Governance board with oversight
a. Funding is identified and secured, through bids or allocation, to address the needs identified in the local plans in line with the criteria set by the funding agency.	Chief Executive	Trust Board

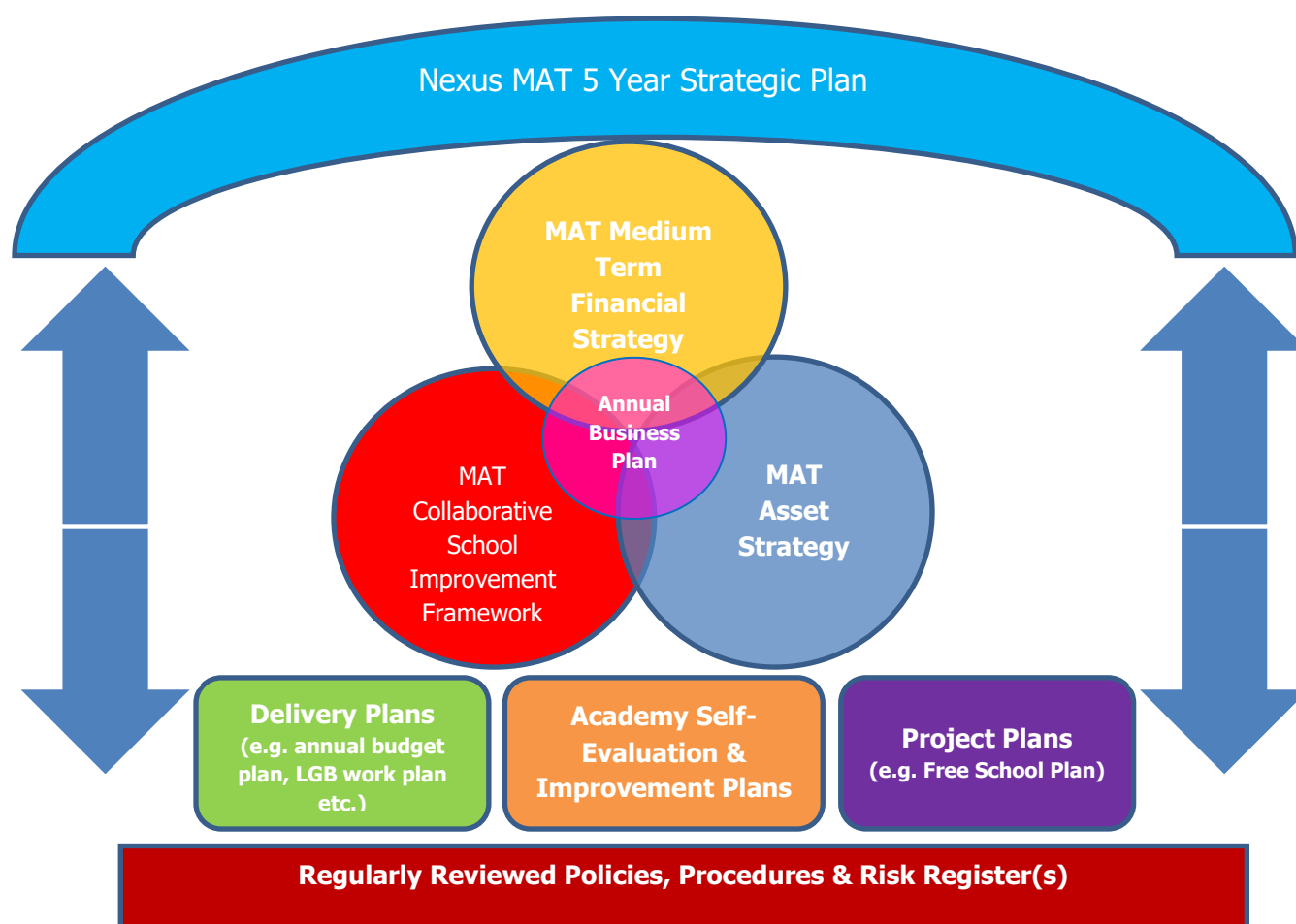
b. Funding bids/allocations are successful or maximised, in line with expectations.	Chief Executive	Trust Board
c. Projects completed on time, to budget, and to specification.	Chief Executive	Trust Board

**Strategic Objective 3: Growth and improvement of our assets and estate, to ensure that we have the physical means and infrastructure to provide the best possible learning environment for our communities**

Indicators of success	Responsible Officer	Governance board with oversight
a. A long-term asset plan is developed for all existing temporary or short term building arrangements	Chief Executive	Trust Audit & Risk Committee
b. All individual growth and improvement plans have a long-term asset plan that supports the Trust vision.	Chief Executive	Trust Audit & Risk Committee

## 3. Governance

3.1. This document is one of the 3 main delivery strategies for realising the Trust's 5 Year Strategic Plan:



3.2. The Trust Board retains responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the 5-year plan, agreeing the annual business plan and receiving bi-monthly updates on progress.

3.3. The Audit & Risk Committee has delegated responsibilities for overseeing delivery of the Trust's Asset Strategy.

# APPENDIX A: Schools Condition Allocation

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) with at least 5 academies and more than 3,000 students, receive a School Condition Allocation (SCA) to deploy strategically across their estate to address their priority maintenance needs. For special academies, a diseconomies-of-scale calculation is applied to the SCA to recognise their low pupil numbers compared to mainstream schools. At Nexus we use this funding to keep our buildings safe and in good working order by tackling poor building condition, building compliance, energy efficiency, and health and safety issues.
- 1.2. The ESFA allocates the SCA funding based on its understanding of size and building condition. Allocations cover the financial year April to March. The carry forward must never be more than the latest full year allocation without the permission of the ESFA.
- 1.3. This appendix describes how Nexus MAT will prioritise its SCA in line with the strategic needs of all schools and our wider objectives.

## 2. Understanding Priorities

- 2.1. In 2021/22 Nexus was confirmed as being in receipt of SCA funding, taking over from the Condition Improvement Fund process – a bid-based system for smaller MATs. We have commissioned full condition surveys across our estate to understand the overall needs and priorities. This gives us a baseline against which we will undertake an annual update and review, utilising the necessary professional skills and external agencies to ensure a full understanding of the health and safety, condition, and suitability needs of the estate.
- 2.2. The condition surveys and the updates through annual review form a live asset plan for each school. Priority will be given, taking into account:

- i. immediate/urgent condition requirements that pose a risk to the safe, warm, dry operation of the school and/or statutory/legal compliance
- ii. condition or health & safety requirements indicated through surveys as requiring action within 12 months
- iii. other condition or health & safety requirements identified through surveys
- iv. projects that improve safeguarding, or teaching and learning environments
- v. projects that align with medium/long-term strategic growth and development priorities
- vi. projects that align with the Trust's sustainability priorities and contribute to the aspiration to reach carbon net zero by 2030
- vii. projects that lever in funding from other sources

## 3. Funding Projects

3.1. The timeline, prioritisation, and funding is captured for each school and brought together across the Trust, with a starting principle that:

- Urgent needs posing an immediate risk to the safe, warm and dry operation of the school will be prioritised and funding agreed based on the circumstances of the school budget (see section 5 below);
- Funding for all other projects estimated at *less than £25k* will come from the school budget and their devolved formula capital allocation;
- Funding for all other projects estimated at *more than £25k* will come from SCA, with a contribution from school budget of 10%.

3.2. These are starting principles. Each project over £25k and in receipt of SCA funding will be determined on its own merits, utilising the Trust business case proforma.

## 4. Delivering Projects

4.1. On all projects above £25k, the Trust will support schools, through the commissioning of the relevant expertise at the right time, to ensure that projects are delivered to a high quality, on time, and within the identified budget.



## 5. Urgent or Out-of-Process Projects

5.1. For any projects that need to be considered outside of the normal cycle of prioritisation described above and/or those falling below the £25k but requesting use of SCA, we would expect evidence of some or all of the following:

- a significant health and safety risk in relation to the building condition;
- that the condition issue has already resulted in, or represents an imminent threat of school closure;
- that the condition issue has resulted in or risks imminent closure of a significant part of the school building which would prevent the curriculum from being delivered;

and in all cases, that

- the urgent works cannot be funded from the school budget (see 5.2) or other funding route.

5.2. Unless previously agreed for other urgent uses by the Trust, a school must use any revenue and/or devolved formula capital (DFC) funds it has to contribute to the works, up to the point where there is no more than a 2% surplus remaining in the school budget (i.e. the school must provide anything above 2% of equity funding for the most recent school year, from historical and in-year revenue carry forwards and DFC).

5.3. Any request under this section should come from the Headteacher to the CEO for approval. The request should either use the Trust business case proforma, or contain sufficient information to evidence the details outlined above, including the relevant financial information agreed by the school's linked Assistant Chief Finance Officer and/or the Chief Finance Officer.

5.4. In order that urgent works are not held up, retrospective allocations of SCA will be possible, where the potential for this is agreed in writing (by email) by the CEO prior to work being instructed. The business case process will then follow to ensure that the funding is allocated from the most appropriate source.