INCLUSIVE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS



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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for showing an interest in the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust. Working with or joining our Trust gives you an opportunity to come together with a family of like-minded schools to best serve the needs of our collective children, staff and communities. Whilst our schools work very closely together, each school in the Trust has its own personality, character and individual strengths. Nurturing and promoting that individual identity is central to the Trust.

Times have been tough in education lately, but through close collaborative working, our children thrive pastorally and academically, our staff develop professionally, our families blossom and our communities unite. By collaborating with or joining the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust, we will all benefit from a dynamic and creative partnership which will ensure the very best outcomes for all. We look forward to working with you.



WHO WE ARE

The Inclusive Multi Academy Trust was formed in November 2016 and is currently made up of three primary schools: Beechfield School, Cherry Tree Primary School and Laurance Haines School. Our Trust name 'inclusive' originates from the driving belief that many different types of people form our community and every single one of them should be treated fairly and equally so that they and their families can access a great education.

Our schools work together with shared leadership, expertise, resources and efficiencies. We deliver an excellent education within a caring and nurturing environment. We see ourselves as a central community hub and strive to provide equal access to education, opportunities and support for all.

There is no insistence on one "top down" model that is applied to every school. Each of our schools has its own unique characteristics, communities and needs, and the Trust encourages each school to retain and nurture that individuality. Our talented and inspirational Headteachers are responsible for the day to day leadership, management and organisation of the schools and ensure that this individuality is celebrated.

There is no blueprint for a school in the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust, instead we are a family of schools that share a philosophy. A family of schools that share a wealth of expertise - trustees, governors, teachers and support staff. A family of schools that work together for the benefit of all children across the Trust. A family of schools that together are stronger than the sum of our individual parts.



OUR BELIEFS AND PROMISES

We believe that:

- happy children learn
- happy staff thrive
- happy parents build a community

We promise that children in the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust will:

- feel welcome, valued and safe
- develop outstanding academic and social skills
- have fun whilst fostering an intrinsic love of learning
- respect and celebrate everyone's similarities and differences
- build lasting, healthy <u>relationships</u> and support networks
- engage with and contribute substantially to their local community



"So impressed with the ability to keep adapting to deliver ever-improving and increasingly excellent provision, but also offering incredible pastoral support." -Parent

"We are proud to be part of the Trust whose vision and ethos reflect our own. Their drive and commitment to supporting all children to achieve their best is rigorous and constant. We value the collaborative sharing of skills and knowledge that being part of this MAT allows." Chair of Governors

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

"They always listen to parents and make sure your children are safe, happy and ready to learn." Parent

"I am so impressed by how quickly you have got Google classrooms up and running. I can't believe how many children were attending in my son's class. The class teachers

- thank you!" Parent

were great in engaging the children

"We all feel a sense of love and togetherness." Parent

"Our children have grown in confidence and developed really well academically, we have been really impressed with how the staff have helped them." Parent

"As a maintained school we seemed very much alone. Joining the Trust has brought us together with likeminded schools, and given us real benefits from collaboration. We no longer do things in isolation but have colleagues with which to share and compare at all levels across the school.

As a Trustee I have seen the relationships grow, and how our staff value the opportunity to work together for example whether moderating work or working on the latest curriculum development." Trustee and former local governor

OUR OFFER

- A family of schools working collaboratively to ensure the very best outcomes for all
- A promise to deliver the best academic and social learning experiences for all of our children
- Nationally accredited pastoral approach which places nurture at the heart of everything we do
- CPD pathways providing training and career opportunity to support all staff at each stage of their career
- A dedicated central team which takes on many of the more time consuming school leadership and business activities such as policy writing, to enable Headteachers to focus on what really matters - teaching and learning in their schools
- School improvement support, objective assessment of educational standards, training and strategic planning expertise
- An SEND team who are passionate about supporting children who require additional support to reach their potential and have a strong track record of achieving EHCPs and additional exceptional needs funding
- A central finance team who provide budget support, day to day finance and ensure best value in procurement
- An extremely experienced MAT Board whose members' and trustees provide support, advice and guidance ensuring that we meet our legal obligations
- Access to private HR support which focuses on securing the best outcome for you as an employer
- Opportunity to collaborate with us on any aspect of school life without the need to formally join the Trust.



EDUCATION PROVISION

The Inclusive Multi Academy Trust is child centred, continually working to meet the needs of all our children regardless of background or ability. We have high expectations for all and set ambitious goals. These support our commitment to ensuring that our children experience fun, interesting and exciting learning, focused around a variety of practical activities with tangible outcomes. Such experiences will prepare children for life in a rapidly developing world. Our schools set their own curriculums based on their individual identity and the specific needs of their communities. With so many changes to educational policy, the Trust looks to reduce the workload and burden on staff by careful evaluation of new initiatives. We make well-considered strategic approaches, which provide best practice and best value to the implementation of any necessary change. Our central team ensures that each school has a sound understanding of areas of strength and development, through termly reviews. Where areas of support are identified, the strongest staff in those areas from across the Trust are then identified to provide collaborative support.



PASTORAL SUPPORT

The nurture of our children, parents and staff underpins all we do in the Trust. All of our schools currently hold the National Nurturing School Award and we are the first Trust in the country to do so. The result of our approach and achievements is that our schools are successful nurturing hubs for the wonderfully diverse community that we serve.

Each school has a team of professionals to support the mental health, well-being and pastoral needs of our children so that they can learn and engage well with life inside and outside of school. Our pastoral teams provide:

- therapeutic and counselling interventions
- safeguarding children with support from qualified Designated Senior Leads
- · individual conversations and support to resolve issues and address concerns
- · support for specific pastoral needs with children
- care for the wider staff making sure they are well informed about children's needs and how they can support them
- training to provide high quality provision
- · liaison with parents/carers and outside agencies to best meet student needs
- support for good behaviour in school
- recognition of achievements and celebration of success



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITY (SEND)

The provision for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are served by a dedicated team shared across the Trust. Children and young people with special educational needs may get extra help if they find learning more difficult than their classmates.

All staff support children with SEND and have a responsibility for their learning and progress. We believe strongly in an inclusive education and ensure that all children have access to all opportunities in school. Teachers are responsible for the learning and progress of all children in their class. The school strongly prioritises the provision of high-quality, whole-class teaching. The team consists of:

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Coordinator (SENDCo) Strategic lead for SEND across the Trust. Provides mentoring, coaching and guidance to support trustees, governors and school leadership. Accountable for applying, managing and maintaining all EHCP and exceptional need funding cases

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Teacher (SENDIT)

Works directly with children and teachers to develop and support SEND in practice. Provides mentoring, coaching and guidance to support teaching staff to deliver consistently good or outstanding learning, assessment and quality first teaching.

SEND Teaching Assistants (SEN TAs)

Works with teachers in school to support teaching and learning for SEND pupils. Providing learning support to pupils who need particular help to overcome barriers to learning.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

MEMBERS

Are responsible for the Trust's Charitable and Educational objectives. They appoint and remove trustees.

TRUSTEES

Hold the legal responsibilities and powers of the Trust and are accountable to the Department of Education. The Trust Board sets the overall strategy, they scrutinise, support and challenge the educational and operational performance, data, risks and opportunities. They also appoint members of the Trust Leadership and Headteachers. The Board delegate certain responsibilities to Committees as detailed in the Governance Framework.

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Responsible for audit, internal scrutiny, risk management and finance – this includes recommending and monitoring the budget, effective procurement, use of estate and HR resources and preparation and approval of relevant governance policies.

COMMUNITY AND STANDARDS COMMITEE

Responsible for the review and monitoring of educational performance and community relationships throughout the Trust. Supporting both the local community, children and staff within and associated with our schools.

LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEES

Responsible for providing scrutiny, support and challenge to the school leadership as they implement policies and school improvement plan priorities. Provide assurance to the Trust Board that the standards set are being met and resources used effectively to give every child the best possible education. Responsible for overseeing parent and community liaison and relations.

TRUST LEADERSHIP

Responsible for delivering the strategic priorities of the Trust, for translating the beliefs and promises into actions, ensuring values are upheld and overseeing implementation of the Trust's strategic direction.

SCHOOL SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Responsible for the performance and management of the schools.

VISION FOR GOVERNANCE

The Trust is established in line with Department for Education requirements and consists of Members and Trustees. The board has two committees, and each school has a Local Governing Committee (LGC).

At the heart of our approach to governance is a values driven commitment to our children and their communities. We base the delivery of our vision on the 7 principles of public life (Nolan principles):

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Our <u>Governance Framework</u> has been created to ensure a clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction at both Trust and local governance levels. It includes a clear system of delegation which outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Trust Board and committees and has evolved to reflect best practice as the Trust has matured.

Our highly experienced Board and Executive Team concentrate on strategic governance including financial planning, policy management, statutory business compliance, and the legal and employment requirements needed to ensure we meet the ESFAs rules and regulations. This frees up time for headteachers and Local Governing Committees to focus on the core business of teaching and learning in their schools. Collaboration between the Trust Board and Local Governing Committees is strong, with regular chairs' meetings and shared training opportunities.



FINANCE

The Trust has a centralised finance team. One of the major benefits to schools is that finances, budgets and accounts are managed by a specialist team offering extensive experience in the charity and education sector. We believe this approach leads to financial gains, improved economies of scale and a reduction of finance administration.

There is a comprehensive Financial Operations Handbook including a Schedule of Financial Delegation which ensures that the Trust adheres to the Academy Trust Handbook and has robust financial management.

We will:

- provide training and support for headteachers, school business, finance and administrative staff
- support you to access funding not available to maintained schools
- work with you to review and assess all existing contracts. MAT wide contracts, such as catering and IT provision as well as group purchasing often mean a reduction to costs
- · work with you to look at gaining grants and additional income streams
- support you and your staff through all financial aspects of the academy conversion process
- support you with processing financial transactions, complete month end processes and the production of monthly management accounts
- support with the budget planning and monitoring process
- · complete all statutory returns and reports to the ESFA
- · appoint an Internal Assurance Officer to carry out termly financial checks
- liaise with external organisations including lawyers and auditors
- support payroll systems.





ESTATES PLANNING

The Trust's Chief Operating Officer has a wealth of experience in managing premises projects. As a Trust we have received over $\pounds4,000,000$ in Condition Improvement Fund grant funding (central grant available to academies) and over $\pounds100,000$ in additional grants.

We have a comprehensive estates strategy which ensures robust accountability and planning for all aspects of estates management in line with the Governments 'Good Estate Management for schools.' Recently conducted independent Health and Safety surveys show good processes and systems are in place to ensure that our estates are safe and secure for all.

We will support you to:

- make best use of available grants and budgets
- · use land and buildings efficiently, driving value from your estate
- · keep the estate safe and secure for everyone
- · get best value through procurement
- · be aware of what investment is needed in the estate
- · plan for longer term needs as well as the short term
- · allocate resources in line with strategic priorities
- · look for opportunities to work with others to be more efficient
- prepare for an estate related incident or failure.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Trust has a People Strategy which supports our Trust plan and ensures we have the right people achieving their best, in the right roles to deliver the best possible outcomes for our pupils. Our aim through this strategy is to make sure our staff continue to feel valued and have fulfilling and rewarding careers. We want staff feedback to directly influence the strategic direction of the Trust whilst being part of the decisions we take that affect our staff, our children and their families. Our Trust workforce accounts for around 80% of our budgets and are considered our greatest asset.

We will support you to:

- ensure staff wellbeing is at the heart of the Trust. Staff will feel valued, listened to and well informed
- strengthen processes which attract, select, develop and retain the most talented staff who represent the diversity of our Trust
- develop a culture, in which staff in all schools see themselves working as part of a wider Trust where the value of Trust collaboration is clearly recognised
- enable our staff to be the best they can be by making maximum use of existing skills and capabilities and providing strong professional development opportunities
- develop and embed a staff culture that encourages and values equality, diversity and inclusion across our workforce enabling all staff to achieve their very best.

We work with Judicium HR who support us to comply with the legal requirements imposed upon us as employers under the numerous sources of laws and regulations and in dealing with any workplace issues that arise in the running of the Trust.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The professional development of staff across the Trust takes a high priority. The reach and impact of this provision is ever evolving to meet changing government guidance, school priorities and the individual needs of our staff.

Our Senior Leadership Teams are dedicated to developing and mentoring teachers. The Trust has a rigorous training and support programme for Early Career Teachers.

Our career pathways programme allows staff to plan the next steps in their career. We have many examples of staff who have moved through the career ladder at our schools in teaching and non-teaching roles. The capacity to spot, support, nurture, develop and provide experience and job opportunities for the talented staff in our Trust is a huge benefit of being in a MAT.

"I have been given several opportunities to work with the other EYFS Leads in the Trust. We discuss our visions and how we can offer each other support to ensure we are providing the best Early Years environments for future generations. We attend training courses together and are in regular contact. I feel incredibly proud to be part of such a fantastic school community and always feel fully supported in everything I do." - EYFS Leader

"Putting the children at the centre of all we do, means we know a lot of children and their families. We are often the first place a family comes to for advice and support and that important cup of tea and listening ear. Our support includes a friendly face for staff too, there is always an open door and a dedication to being there to listen and help them problem solve." - Pastoral Team "Working in the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust provides opportunities for easily accessible unlimited support and collaboration at all levels. Everyone has the opportunity to talk and learn from others, and there is always someone to help and offer personal and professional advice should you need it." - Headteacher

STAFF FEEDBACK

"We have grown as a leadership team and as individuals through the collaborative and competitive work across the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust. Being able to lean on a wider team of school leaders has supported some truly innovative school improvement initiatives whilst dealing with external pressures - there has been a real sense of togetherness." - Headteacher "As the newest Headteacher to join the Trust, I've found it truly refreshing to work alongside such a strong, passionate, knowledgeable team. We work together to solve problems whilst also having the autonomy to lead our own schools in our own way, reflecting the communities of which we serve. As a new Head, it was also the perfect start for me knowing that I'd have the guidance I needed, when I needed it." - Headteacher

"When I signed up to the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust NQT evening, little did I know I would become part of the family just a couple of months later. The event gave prospective NQTs an insight into all three schools in the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust: I learnt how each sister school has its unique qualities, but that a nurturing ethos brings them all together. For me, it was a focus on children and teacher wellbeing which made the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust the right place to start my teaching career." - NQT

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

We offer strategic marketing support and guidance to raise the profile of the school and Trust. Our objective is to showcase your school at its very best to your wider community.

Our Marketing support will include:

- delivering an established marketing plan with a shared vision and culture aligned to the Trust principles
- creating and delivering a brand identity for your school both internally and externally
- supporting with building and growing the school online presence to include social media channels, Google/Facebook advertising, SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)
- · creation of content for websites, newsletters and prospectuses
- developing a robust admissions plan to promote the school to prospective parents through communications and school tours, with the objective to maintain and increase pupil numbers
- · identifying and providing opportunities for schools to access grants and funding
- strategic input into the structure and content of the school website
- the delivery of timely and effective communications via multiple channels with a clear shared communication strategy
- supporting schools with fundraising, events and volunteering opportunities.



COLLABORATION



Our three schools are truly individual and have their own curriculums, procedures and personalities, all tailored to suit their unique communities. This individualism is supported by strong collaborative networks across all aspects of the Trust. We work with, learn from and support one another to develop localised solutions to the challenges we face in order to achieve the highest outcomes, aspirations and opportunities for our children, parents, staff and wider community. We work to achieve the following:

- To identify and share expertise, strengths and resources to improve our provision together and raise educational standards
- To promote collaboration amongst all staff and learners across the Trust to reduce workload and get best value when sourcing supplies and services.
- To provide support to individual headteachers to free them up to focus on the curriculum and community
- To identify collaborative projects that impact upon the children's learning and give them opportunities to meet before transition to the next stage of their education.

Examples of collaboration across the last year include:

- During the pandemic the central team led on implementing covid safe systems, risk assessments, policy writing, health and safety resources and catering, to enable the headteachers to focus on developing and implementing a Trust remote learning curriculum. This was followed by a Trust recovery and wellbeing curriculum enabling children to return after lockdown
- Highly effective Trust wide CPD programme
- Monthly clusters with thorough and diverse action driven agendas are held for Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Pastoral leads, Subject leader, Business Officers and Chairs of Governance
- Supportive, constructive and non-threatening peer to peer reviews at whole school and subject level. Staff get to review and be reviewed by their peers
- Ongoing focus on staff wellbeing and mental health with in-school wellbeing champions, social events and access to private medical care
- People strategy and EDI forum established across the Trust to give a range of voices to influence Trust and school strategic planning
- Shared recruitment opportunities where we collaborate to find the best candidates for a range of jobs across the Trust. Our NQT event saw us recruit 9 NQTS across the three schools
- Trust training day where all staff across the three schools and central team benefit from high quality speakers and time to collaborate face to face with colleagues across the Trust.

OUR LATEST ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-21



2 PROMS IN THE PLAYGROUND CONCERTS

3 WATFORD HERO AWARDS

1 CHARITY

SKYDIVE

DS TRUST COMPETITIONS



CEO JAMES ROACH

James has extensive experience in education, working in Watford schools since 2001. His previous roles include two primary headships in Hertfordshire where he demonstrated a track record of rapid school improvement. He led the academisation of Laurance Haines in November 2016 and set up the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust, which includes a further two schools – Beechfield and Cherry Tree.

James is a keen advocate for disadvantaged children and established the Trust in order to ensure children in the most disadvantaged areas of Watford are given the same life chances as their peers throughout Hertfordshire.

James recently worked as a Hertfordshire Improvement Partner where he was part of a team monitoring and supporting primary schools across Hertfordshire.

James has vast experience of MAT and school governance. He currently sits on various boards outside of the Trust at member, trustee and governor level.

James' passion for curriculum development with a family-centred, nurturing approach to learning is central to the Trust ethos. His role is one of overall strategic leadership and accountability for the schools in the Trust. James supports operationally in schools on a day to day basis, with much of his focus providing coaching and mentoring for Headteachers, school leaders, governors and staff at all levels.

COO SHARON CARLYON

Sharon is a nationally recognised School Business Leader with 15 years' experience in the education sector with a strong demonstrable track record in all aspects of business operations. She has completed the suite of School Business Leadership qualifications including Level 6 and recently completed a Level 7 in Strategic Leadership qualification with Chester University. She is a fellow of the Institute of School Business Leaders. Being recognised as an ISBL Fellow demonstrates leadership within the profession. She is a member of the Fellows Forum steering committee as well as a member of the ISBL National Advisory Board. In 2019, she was part of the School Resources Management Advisor pilot for the Department for Education supporting schools on strategic financial planning and financial efficiency



She has also worked as a seconded business consultant for Herts for Learning where she was part of a team supporting primary schools across Hertfordshire. Part of this role involves mentoring, coaching and teaching, aspiring and new business leaders. She has also worked with headteachers to broaden their understanding of the Business leader's role.

Sharon currently manages all business aspects of the Trust and will be able to offer sound support and advice on all business matters to schools within the Trust. Sharon was recently awarded the ISBL CEO Award for Exceptional Contribution to school leadership.

SEND Lead ELISABETH BUTLER



Elisabeth has been working in primary schools since 1998 when she qualified as a primary school teacher. She has been a class teacher of all groups from Year 1 to Year 6. She has been a senior leader since September 2004 and has held several leadership roles including Key Stage Two Leader, SENDCo and Deputy Head.

Elisabeth has over 15 years of experience of being a SENDCo and has held this role in four different primary schools. She has a breadth of experience and knowledge with supporting children and their families with a range of needs and backgrounds. Elisabeth holds the OCR Level 5 qualification in teaching and assessing learners with specific learning difficulties in addition to her degree and PGCE.

Elisabeth believes in lifting the cloud of limitation for all children and having high expectations for all. She has a strong working knowledge of a range of interventions and provisions which are proven to bring rapid progress and improvement.

FINANCE MANAGER SARAH HAMILTON



Sarah joined the Trust in March 2020 following over ten years' experience in the notfor-profit sector. As Trust Finance Manager, Sarah works in conjunction with the School Business Officers to provide support and guidance with budget setting, management, and payroll.

Sarah prepares consolidated management accounts for the board of Trustees and manages the statutory audit. The central finance team supports schools within the Trust with day-to-day finances including purchase ordering, invoice processing and payment.

NEXT STEPS

We have spent the last five years establishing the foundations of our Trust and developing our three schools, so that we are all Good or better. We are now looking to grow with the right schools, either through informal collaboration or through formally joining the Trust. There is much said about multi academy growth, but one thing is clear, we do not want to "take over" any school. We are seeking a like-minded setting, that values truly collaborative, partnership working. A school that is filled with and wants to work with professionals who are passionate about children and schools. Our staff and children place no limits on learning, and our schools are inspiring places to learn.

Joining a Multi Academy Trust is a big step. Daunting even. It needn't be. Our role is to make the process simple, clear and transparent. No two conversions are the same, but likely timeframes are chiefly governed by legal procedures surrounding property, employment (TUPE) and the commercial transfer of pre-existing contracts. Add in due diligence and stakeholder communications and the process normally takes between six to nine months.

Whilst our three schools are all two form entry primaries in Watford, we are not limited to finding a school that exactly fits that demographic. So, if you are a one, two or three form entry primary school in Central, South or West Herts, Buckinghamshire or North London, with any Ofsted rating, then please do contact us. We want to support you to provide the best for your children, families and staff, to make the money and resources go as far as they can and to remove much of the bureaucracy from the Headteacher and Governing Body so you can all focus on the children.

We recognise that schools and individuals will want to engage at different levels. With this in mind, we offer a range of solutions to suit your school's particular needs. Should we find a suitable basis to move forward, the pace of development is then entirely down to you, be it through school visits, presentations to governors, staff and parents, or wider consultation with the school community. Together we agree the road map, set the milestones, timelines and deliverables, and then the best bit - start building an exciting new partnership together.

CONTACT US

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INCLUSIVE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST





