



## **Being the BEST**

**Year Nine: 2024-25<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> To be reviewed, RAG rated and submitted to Trustees in January 2024, by the CEO. Key: **Green** – achieved; **Amber** – should be achieved within time period; **Red** – unlikely to be achieved.

## BEST: Mission, Vision and Values

### **BEST Mission Statement**

**- to grow the BEST in everyone -**

We believe in the importance of high expectations, hard work and the development of a community of academies where each of us strive to **'be the best that we can be'**.

### **BEST Vision Statement**

#### **BEST aims to:**

1. Grow to comprise fifteen academies (12500 pupils) and five nurseries. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure will be in place
2. Ensure all schools achieve a minimum Ofsted inspection Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile
3. Secure financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year and a minimum 5% of GAG in reserves.

### **BEST Values – We will:**

#### **Always put Children first**

Our reference point question is 'how will this improve outcomes for children and enable them to go on and succeed in life?'

#### **Collaborate to support and compete to challenge**

Our academies work together to add value and compete to improve continually

#### **Provide community-based education**

Our academies form a coherent learning community at the heart of the Bedfordshire community

#### **Have the courage to be compassionate**

Our community treats all with trust, kindness and honesty

## BEST Strategic Plan:

2016-2020
Phase One – Delivering Clarity
BEMAT to BEST: Mission Vision Values
2020-2024
Phase Two – Delivering Connection
Three to two tier: Uniting BEST Deepening values Defining Culture Belonging
2024-2028
<b>Phase Three – Delivering Excellence</b>
Being the BEST: Growth beyond CBC Outstanding Provision Financial Sustainability

## BEST 2016-2028

Year	Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction	Holding executive leaders to account for educational performance	Overseeing financial performance and making sure money is well spent
<b>Phase One - Delivering Clarity (BEMAT to BEST: mission, vision, values and operating principles)</b>			
2016-17	BEMAT becomes BEST. Etonbury Academy Phase 1 new build is completed <sup>2</sup> .	2 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 academy gained R/I inspection. <b>34 of 40 50<sup>th</sup> percentile targets achieved</b>	Support from reserves required, in response to significant funding cuts. Curriculum and staffing efficiencies. Curriculum reviews, financial planning metrics and benchmarking.
2017-18	ETA new build is completed Arlesey Nursery is opened. SCA joins BEST. Central Services Review, greater focus on SI.	3 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 RI inspection. <b>46 of 49 50<sup>th</sup> percentile targets achieved.</b> 2 successful Ofsted inspection.	Reserves used to support ETA staff expansion and first year of SCA deficit recovery plan. All academies ended the year with better balances than budgeted. Reserves increased slightly. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust/Nursery accounts brought up to the required standard. School Condition and Devolved Formula Capital allocations methodology implemented
2018-19	ETA becomes a fully extended-Secondary academy. LA joins BEST. 45% of central funds allocated for school improvement. Bedfordshire East Schools Trust fully integrated into BEST. Embed Compliance activity/QA calendar. First Governor Conference and concept of 'governance roles' developed. Gain National Governance Mark. ICT contract renewal reduced cost to all academies. Other contracts and SLAs reviewed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. <b>All 50<sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies.</b> Re-designation of BEST Teaching School. BEST TS gains Appropriate Body status.	Academies set balanced budgets except for SCA but their deficit recovery is underway. Central finance team covered for absent local finance staff. Finance function strengthened further by 4 new qualified/skilled finance assistants. Ongoing training for all finance staff in place. Further optimisation of systems and processes. Continue to build up reserves to improve resilience against further funding cuts.
2019-20	PBA opens. Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. <b>All 50<sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies.</b>	Financial modelling to establish level of risk and potential mitigation in plan for 2 tier move. SCA deficit recovery plan complete. Pix Brook financial planning for the DfE. Additional work from LVA absorbed at no extra cost by finance team. Nursery systems updated to accommodate growth, improve accuracy, reduce processing time and provide more professional interface with customers. Build reserves further.
Summary Achievements 2016-20	BEST comprises: 9 academies; 2 nurseries; 1 teaching school; 1 SCITT; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision.	All Ofsted inspections since joining BEST achieved a Good grade.	Financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year.
	All our academies remained open throughout the national COVID pandemic lockdown (Inc.: Bank Holidays) for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.		

<sup>2</sup> Targets shaded grey have been achieved. Targets in black are to be achieved.

**Phase Two - Delivering connection  
(Three to two tier: uniting BEST, defining culture and laying foundations)**

<b>2020-21</b>	<b>Preparing for and successfully opening all our Academies to all our children, in the face of the national COVID pandemic.</b>		
	Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move. Another Academy joins BEST. Final year of 3 year Capital and Estates SCA programme – new Conditions Surveys and review of onward priorities.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies.	All academies working toward contributing at least 5% of their GAG income to the pooled reserves. Review and benchmark auditor services. Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 academy to estimate the extent of the restructuring required. Set LVA 2021/22 budget for primary structure. Incorporate Campton Lower academy and LVA nursery into trust systems and procedures.
<b>2021-22</b>	Intensify change to 2 tier preparations. Details to be confirmed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies.	Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 school fine-tuned to clarify restructuring plan. All academies continue to increase to 5% of GAG reserves target. Review systems to ensure compatibility with the 2 tier structure. Create designated revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier.
<b>2022-23</b>	Gain DfE approval for PAN and age range changes. Work with CBC to progress and complete feasibility studies. Align nursery strategy, with 2 tier change.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies.	Establish process for managing revenue/pupil flow challenge – internally and with CBC. Work with schools to prepare for budget implications of two tier transition. Ensure capital funding plans reflect two tier conversion process to avoid duplication or wasted spend. Ensure HR implications are understood by all.
<b>2023-24</b>	Begin capital works, including two new builds (Campton Academy and Gothic Mede Academy). Lawnside ready to open as a full Primary school. Open 6 <sup>th</sup> Form provision at Etonbury Academy. Ensure nursery provision is in place.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies/nurseries.	Model flows of pupil numbers and monitor potential revenue and expenditure impact through budget forecast. Devise and begin implementation of HR Strategy Plan, with staff wellbeing as a primary focus. Designate revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier in place. Review and update budget forecasts as more accurate information becomes available. Strategically release funds to facilitate transition.
<b>Summary Targets 2020-24</b>	<b>BEST comprises: 10 academies (7500 students); 5 nurseries; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.</b>	<b>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50<sup>th</sup> percentile targets hit, in all academies/nurseries.</b>	Financial sustainability, maintaining a minimum of 5% of GAG in free reserves, while strategically using designated reserves to support academies through the negative effects of transition.

**Phase Three - Delivering excellence**  
**(Being the BEST: growth beyond Bedfordshire, Outstanding inspections and financial sustainability)**

<b>2024-25</b>	BEST expands into Bedford Borough (BB) <sup>3</sup> and grows to comprise: 12 schools (9000 students); 5 nurseries; a charity. Etonbury Academy expands into Y13. Pix Brook Academy expands into Y10. Work continues on Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – with the expansion of Lawnside Academy into Y5.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile.	Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.
<b>2025-26</b>	BEST continues to expand into Bedford Borough (BB) and grows to comprise: 13 schools (10 000 students); 5 nurseries; a charity. Pix Brook Academy expands into Y11. Work continues on Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – Lawnside Academy becomes a full Primary welcoming pupils into Y6.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile.	Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 school fine-tuned to clarify restructuring plan. All academies continue to increase to 5% of GAG reserves target. Review systems to ensure compatibility with the 2 tier structure. Create designated revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier.
<b>2026-27</b>	BEST continues to expand into Bedford Borough (BB) and grows to comprise: 14 schools (11 000 students); 5 nurseries; a charity. Gain DfE approval for PAN and age range changes. Work with CBC to progress and complete feasibility studies. Align nursery strategy, with 2 tier change.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile.	Establish process for managing revenue/pupil flow challenge – internally and with CBC. Work with schools to prepare for budget implications of two tier transition. Ensure capital funding plans reflect two tier conversion process to avoid duplication or wasted spend. Ensure HR implications are understood by all.
<b>2027-28</b>	BEST continues to expand into Bedford Borough (BB) and grows to comprise: 15 schools (12 500 students); 5 nurseries; a charity. Begin capital works, including two new builds (Campton Academy and Gothic Mede Academy).	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile.	Model flows of pupil numbers and monitor potential revenue and expenditure impact through budget forecast. Devise and begin implementation of HR Strategy Plan, with staff wellbeing as a primary focus. Designate revenue and capital funds as a contingency for transition to 2 tier in place. Review and update budget forecasts as more accurate information becomes available. Strategically release funds to facilitate transition.
<b>Summary Targets 2024-28</b>	<b>BEST comprises: 15 schools (12500 students); 5 nurseries; a charity. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.</b>	<b>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile.</b>	<b>Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.</b>

<sup>3</sup> See: School Improvement Plan for Castle Newnham School (CNS).

## BEST Summary of 2024-25<sup>4</sup>

	Aim	Lead	Ref	Objective	Achieved Fully/Partially/Not
1.	High quality and inclusive education	ELT	1.1	Culture	
		AW	1.2	Curriculum	
		AW	1.3	Student outcomes	
		AW	1.4	Accessible to all	
		AW	1.5	Inclusive pastoral support	
		AW	1.6	Enrichment	
		AW	1.7	Behaviour and attendance	
		AW	1.8	Destinations	
		AW	1.9	Collaboration	
2.	School Improvement	AW	2.1	Culture	
		AW	2.2	School improvement model	
		AW	2.3	Transformation	
		AW	2.4	System-led improvement	
3.	Workforce	ELT	3.1	Culture	
		AW	3.2	Workload	
		CS	3.3	Retention	
		CS	3.4	Working environment	
		AW	3.5	Developing new and early career teachers	
		AW	3.6	Continuing Professional Development	
		AW	3.7	Collaboration	
		CS	3.8	Line management and career progression	
		CS	3.9	Equality, diversity and inclusion	
4.	Finance and Operations	ELT	4.1	Culture	
		KR	4.2	Financial strategy	
		CS	4.3	Resource allocation	
		CS	4.4	Capital strategy	
		KR	4.5	Reserves	
		KR	4.6	Financial information management	

<sup>4</sup> Taken from: Annex A – Trust Quality Descriptions (July, 2023)

<b>5.</b>	<b>Governance and Leadership</b>	ELT	5.1	Culture	
		AL	5.2	Governance of the trust	
		AL	5.3	Strategy	
		AL	5.4	Executive Leadership	
		AL	5.5	Accountability	
		AL	5.6	Non-executive leadership	
		CS	5.7	Engagement	



## BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2024-25 – Lead: [Alison Wilshaw](#)

1. High quality and inclusive education			
Ref	Objectives	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1.1	<b>Culture</b>	Creates a culture in all its schools that is motivating and ambitious for all, including disadvantaged children and children with SEND, so that students can achieve their full potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELT focus and shared responsibility of all</li> <li>• BEST Director of SEND in place. Lead practitioners in school</li> <li>• High quality CPD and coaching</li> <li>• Outcomes and experience forensically monitored, with targeted intervention as required</li> </ul>
1.2	<b>Curriculum</b>	Oversees the design and implementation of ambitious, broad, well-sequenced and knowledge-rich curricula in all of its schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with the planning, reviewing and adaptations of curriculums to ensure they are ambitious for all pupils and support pupils to develop their knowledge and skills over time</li> <li>• Ensure curriculum maps are available and posted on websites</li> <li>• Sample the placing of modules at certain points in the curriculum – growth through a year and growth through the years</li> <li>• Work with outside agencies and Curriculum Hubs to develop products and schemes of learning to be used – examples of this seen in Nursery curriculum and Fluency schemes as well as the Literacy Hub Phonics work, further enhancing the curriculum offer</li> <li>• Ensure all cohorts are catered for by any necessary adaptations</li> </ul>
1.3	<b>Student outcomes</b>	Achieves good outcomes for all its students by delivering education that is both high-quality and inclusive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of bespoke interventions both in school and in holiday time</li> <li>• Scrutiny of data early in the Key Stage Phase</li> <li>• Adapted curriculums so that access for all is enabled</li> <li>• High quality CPD for staff on pedagogy</li> </ul>
1.4	<b>Accessible to all</b>	Operates fair access. Welcomes and effectively teaches disadvantaged children and children with SEND from their local areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of SEND and Safeguarding appointed</li> <li>• Small-Group Instruction</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct small-group sessions for pupils struggling with curriculum</li> <li>• Differentiated Instruction</li> <li>• Adaptive teaching in order to modify the curriculum to suit the needs of disadvantaged and SEND pupils</li> <li>• Regular Assessment and Feedback to ensure we know where all pupils are</li> <li>• Use of Manipulatives: Incorporate hands-on materials and manipulatives to make abstract math concepts more concrete for disadvantaged and SEND pupils</li> <li>• Extended Learning Opportunities: Provide additional after-school clubs to offer extra support and practice. Examples range from curriculum support, coding, F1 clubs, breakout mastery or greater depth groups</li> </ul>
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Inclusive pastoral support</b>	Supports students and schools to address issues so students can stay in mainstream school where possible. Supports students to re-join mainstream education when they have spent time in Alternative Provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academies have in-school units to support SEND and Behavioural Needs</li> <li>• Director of SEND and Safeguarding to support in-school provision and research best AP available for the specific needs of the students</li> <li>• Re-integration programmes are tightly monitored</li> <li>• Close ties with Alternative Provision are maintained</li> </ul>
<b>1.6</b>	<b>Enrichment</b>	Enables children to take part in sport, music and cultural opportunities that enrich the curricula and support children's wider development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust wide competitions for English, Maths and Science</li> <li>• SI Bid for laptops in smaller school</li> <li>• Science Fair for pupils across the trust to attend</li> <li>• Curriculum days provided for pupils by SI Directors e.g. writing days</li> <li>• Authors visits organised for trust schools</li> <li>• SI team supports schools financially with extra-curricular activities such as Rock Steady to allow more pupils to access this popular activity, and Music activities</li> <li>• All academies offer a rich array of lunch and after school clubs – some are sponsored by National Sports Clubs</li> </ul>

1.7	<b>Behaviour and attendance</b>	Ensures its schools are places where all students attend regularly, are kept safe, feel calm and supported, and are able to actively participate and progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student voice collated at appropriate intervals</li> <li>• Attendance conference organised for all BEST School to ensure schools have access to the latest research and improve attendance in their settings</li> <li>• Attendance Leads group runs, as does DSL Group</li> <li>• Behaviour conference organised for September 2024 for all staff across BEST to leaders and staff to ensure behaviour for learning is at least good across all settings</li> </ul>
1.8	<b>Destinations</b>	Ensures all children leave its schools well prepared for the next stage of education, employment or training and prepared to become confident citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build engaging and aspirational curriculums and Personal Development Curriculums</li> <li>• Gadsby Frameworks followed</li> <li>• External Professionals to conduct assemblies, show career pathways, and academies to promote pathways to work or university or training</li> <li>• Engage in community events</li> <li>• BEST offers Internships</li> <li>• Records of destinations are kept and analysed by academies</li> </ul>
1.9	<b>Collaboration</b>	Works collaboratively with schools, trusts, local authorities, dioceses, parents and other civic partners to ensure the delivery of statutory functions and acts in the wider interests of the local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with Teaching School Hub and deliver Programmes for our geographic area</li> <li>• Members of SI Team sit on Key Local Boards such as: Chair of Enigma Maths Hub, NPQ DFE Advisory Board, Lead ECT person for Teaching School Hub, SI Partners for CBC, training Partners for CBC, Bedford EIGG, Bedford BBLE</li> <li>• Collation of Parent Voice annually</li> <li>• Curriculum groups set up across the trust</li> <li>• CPD delivered across schools in Trust and beyond</li> <li>• Schools collaborate and liaise effectively with one another for CPD and development opportunities</li> <li>• Trust writing moderations take place annually</li> <li>• Working closely with NCETM and maths hubs to ensure the best quality CPD and training is delivered to BEST staff. This has led to mastery specialists delivering working groups to other BEST schools</li> </ul>

## BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2024-25 – Lead: [Alison Wilshaw](#)

2. School Improvement			
Ref	Objectives	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
2.1	<b>Culture</b>	Creates a culture of continuous improvement in its schools through self-evaluation, challenge, support and appropriate action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular monitoring, with planned actions and support following</li> <li>• A cycle of School Improvement in place</li> <li>• Agreed help via Provision Statements with all Principals</li> <li>• Working closely with Principals and Lead Teachers in school on cited need</li> </ul>
2.2	<b>School improvement model</b>	Has a clearly defined and effective strategy to improve and maintain the performance of schools that are already part of the trust, as well as those that join.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with schools and individual leaders on a Review, Analysis, Action model</li> <li>• Clear benchmarking to take place</li> <li>• Internal and external help garnered if necessary</li> <li>• External Partners evaluate our work and set actions for next steps</li> <li>• Robust data – analysed by externally commissioned Data Manager</li> </ul>
2.3	<b>Transformation</b>	Takes on challenging schools and transforms previously underperforming schools by delivering broad and sustainable improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent School joined as RI – we gained first Good it had ever achieved</li> <li>• Coaching of staff to raise performance levels in pedagogy and outcomes</li> <li>• Provides extra leadership capacity where required to support schools to improve</li> <li>• Working through a Systems Leadership way and coaching for sustainability</li> </ul>
2.4	<b>System-led improveemnt</b>	Supports the wider system in sharing best practice; helps underperforming schools to improve; and contributes to building a trust-led system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National SI work undertaken for DFE</li> <li>• 2 NLEs in the trust who actively share best practice at conferences, SI work across CBC, Bedford, Northants and MK</li> <li>• Numerous support groups and curriculum groups run in the Trust, where others schools are invited to join</li> </ul>

## BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2024-25– Lead: [Craig Smith/Alison Wilshaw](#)

3. Workforce			
Ref	Objectives	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
3.1	<b>Culture</b>	Creates a high-performing working culture for all staff that promotes collaboration, aspiration and support. Uses the flexibilities of the trust structure to create opportunities for staff. Recognises the critical value of high-quality teaching and champions the profession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELT focus and shared responsibility of all</li> <li>• Mission: 'to grow the BEST in everyone'</li> <li>• Comprehensive training and wellbeing programmes in place. BEST Training Officer and Mindfulness Coach in place</li> <li>• Numerous expert and lead groups to facilitate collaboration and support.</li> </ul>
3.2	<b>Workload</b>	Fosters a supportive working environment by managing workload, prioritising wellbeing and taking action to support all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All academies have a Wellbeing Lead</li> <li>• Trust has a school level and Trust Level Wellbeing Charter</li> <li>• D of Educ sits on DFE Workload reduction Working Group and implements learnings within the schools in Trust</li> <li>• Trust commissions a Mindfulness Coach three days a week</li> <li>• Trust subsidises and promotes Mindfulness courses</li> <li>• SI team provide extra leadership capacity for SLT and middle leaders in schools</li> </ul>
3.3	<b>Retention</b>	Supports the retention of great staff both within the individual trust and across the school system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote well being and minfulness offer to staff</li> <li>• Promote advantages of being part of BEST</li> <li>• Review findings of school staff surveys to address any key emrerging issues</li> </ul>
3.4	<b>Working environment</b>	Prioritises effective behaviour and attendance policies to create a safe environment in which to work and learn. Utilises the trust structure so that staff are empowered to deliver their best.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed outcomes of review of staff absences to ensure support is available to staff and reduce levels of absence</li> </ul>
3.5	<b>Developing new and early career teachers</b>	Makes a positive contribution to the wider system by delivering high-quality training and/or placements for trainee teachers. Supports early career teachers through the Early Career Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of training available to RQTs such as Leaders of the Future and the RQT programme to enable recently qualified staff to develop their leadership capabilities</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SI team run all NPQs and ECT Programmes of training</li> <li>• SI team member leads on ECT programme across the trust, providing support to schools, ECTs, ECMs and induction tutors as required</li> </ul>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Continuing Professional Developmet</b>	Encourages and enables all staff to build their expertise through evidence-based professional development and mentoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shadowing programme available to all staff to ensure they are able to develop a learning and development path for themselves</li> <li>• New HOD/Subject Leaders course for those new to these areas to support in their transition from class teacher to leader</li> <li>• Range of NPQs which look at the most up to date research delivered and attended by BEST staff ensuring all school have access to this research</li> </ul>
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Collaboration</b>	Builds an innovative and vibrant community of professionals, collaborating across schools and other trusts to develop and share expertise and evidence-based practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration across schools and subjects through the use of lead teachers and SLEs – for example RE Lead Teacher worked with staff from other school to enable them to develop their own plans</li> <li>• Collaboration amongst subject specialists in all areas to support the development of new subject leaders and share ideas</li> <li>• Collaboration across English departments through sharing of planning and resources, observing lessons in other schools and whole trust writing moderations</li> </ul>
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Line management and career progression</b>	Ensures every member of staff is effectively line managed to maintain high performance. Actively encourages career progression opportunities across the trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review line management support across the trust to ensure effective practice is embedded throughout</li> </ul>
<b>3.9</b>	<b>Equality, diversity and inclusion</b>	Ensures inclusive working environments, supports flexible working and takes action to promote equality and diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support schools with EDI statutory requirements</li> <li>• Ensure HR policies reflect commitment to EDI</li> <li>• Track recruitment and retention by EDI factors to ensure EBST remains employer of choice</li> </ul>

## BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2024-25 – Lead: [Craig Smith/Kim Rowe](#)

4. Finance and Operations			
Ref	Objectives	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
4.1	<b>Culture</b>	Recognises the importance of effective and efficient use of resources for the benefit of all schools in the trust and the wider education system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELT focus and shared responsibility of all</li> <li>• Only trusted suppliers are used.</li> <li>• All relevant frameworks and processes are strictly adhered to</li> <li>• Comprehensive QA System and Risk Registers in place.</li> </ul>
4.2	<b>Financial Strategy</b>	Uses financial data and intelligence to set a stable, accurate and sustainable long-term financial strategy for the trust. Has a clear approach to delivering value for money through effective budgeting and risk management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget assumptions are monitored and updated to reflect national context and economic trends.</li> <li>• Pupil number flow and budget impact are monitored and action taken where there are</li> <li>• Financial risks are included in the BEST Risk Register and reviewed termly.</li> </ul>
4.3	<b>Resource allocation</b>	Demonstrates efficient and effective use of resources, for example through school and trust resource management benchmarking tools and Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue cycle of contract reviews across all key third party activity</li> <li>• Review and utilise DfE/ESFA benchmarking tools to ensure optimal use of resources</li> </ul>
4.4	<b>Capital Strategy</b>	Maintains and invests sustainably in the trust’s capital infrastructure, including buildings, digital infrastructure and technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use DfE GEMS framework to ensure a continuation of robust and effective capital strategy</li> <li>• Refresh school ICT strategies to ensure VFM across ICT investment and maintenance</li> </ul>
4.5	<b>Reserves</b>	Operates a well-planned reserves policy that provides sufficient contingency for cashflow and any unplanned, urgent expenditure and aligns resources to expenditure priorities across all its schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total reserves held by the Trust are maintained at an appropriate level, schools hold the required minimum of 5% of their GAG income in reserves or have a financial recovery plan in place to achieve this.</li> <li>• Reserves policy in place and reviewed annually</li> </ul>
4.6	<b>Financial information management</b>	Has strong financial and information management systems with effective oversight, for example ensuring data compliance and having policies and processes in place to minimise risk of fraud, data breaches and financial mismanagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly management monitoring of financial forecasts.</li> <li>• Internal controls with segregation of duty</li> <li>• Regular and timely reconciliations</li> <li>• Robust financial policies and procedures including Anti-Bribery</li> <li>• Internal and External Audits</li> </ul>

## BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2024-25 – Lead: [Alan Lee/Craig Smith](#)

5. Governance and Leadership			
Ref	Objectives	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
5.1	<b>Culture</b>	The board and executive leadership team anchor the trust’s strategy in the needs of its schools, the communities they serve and the wider educational system in line with its charitable objects. The Accounting Officer, board and leadership team create a culture of ethical leadership, including the Seven Principles of Public Life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELT focus and shared responsibility of all</li> <li>• Trust established through a meeting of initial school 6 founding schools</li> <li>• All Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) possess central team members and direct line to CEO and COO</li> <li>• Ethical standards clearly referenced in BEST Handbook and closely monitored in practice</li> <li>• National Lead for Compassionate Leadership.</li> </ul>
5.2	<b>Governance of the Trust</b>	Members ensure that the board is made up of trustees with the necessary expertise to fulfil its functions effectively, and that the board acts in accordance with the trust’s charitable objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board membership</li> <li>• Annual Skills + Diversity Audits</li> </ul>
5.3	<b>Strategy</b>	<p>Chair leads the board to set and champion a clear strategy for the trust, which aligns with the trust’s charitable objects, covers all pillars of trust quality and, where applicable, sets out its aspirations for growth over time.</p> <p>CEO leads the trust executive leadership team to create and implement an effective trust operating model with clarity about the delivery of trust-level and school-level activities, that aligns with the strategy.</p> <p>Chair/CEO review progress rigorously to ensure strategic alignment and effective implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEST Governance Handbook – led by CEO, completed by ELT, monitored by Chair, reviewed by Board</li> <li>• BEST Growth Strategy – led by COO, completed by ELT, monitored by Chair, reviewed by Board</li> <li>• BEST Strategic Plan – led by CEO, completed by ELT, monitored by Chair, reviewed by Board</li> <li>• BEST Operating Model – led by COO, completed by ELT, monitored by Chair/CEO, reviewed by Board</li> </ul>
5.4	<b>Executive Leadership</b>	<p>Board ensures high-quality executive leadership through appointing its CEO and providing effective support and challenge to the CEO and executive leadership team.</p> <p>Board maintains sufficient independence from the executive leadership team to allow scrutiny of both their performance and organisational performance overall.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board appoints CEO. Appropriate CPD provided. External partner part of rigorous Appraisal process</li> <li>• CEO appoints COO, DirOfEd + CFO with the support of Board. Appropriate CPB provided. Chair+CEO lead appraisal process</li> <li>• Reports to the Board are triangulated by external experts</li> <li>• Objectives are outcomes-driven. Remuneration includes performance-related pay element</li> </ul>



		<p>Board sets clear objectives and effectively manages the CEO to ensure high performance. Secures appropriate levels of remuneration for the CEO and executive leadership team.</p> <p>CEO leads a high-performing executive leadership team. Ensures that the executive leadership team acts within the levels of authority delegated by the board.</p> <p>CEO ensures that the executive leadership team (ELT) acts within the levels of authority delegated by the Board.</p> <p>Chair/CEO work in partnership to ensure effective relationships between the ELT and the Board.</p> <p>Chair/CEO ensure the ELT has the expertise needed to fulfil functions delegated by the Board.</p> <p>Chair/CEO support effective succession planning by building a leadership pipeline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEO has regular line management meetings with ELT and wider central team</li> <li>• Chair + CEO meet regularly to discuss + monitor progress. ELT members convene ctes of Board + regularly report to the Board</li> <li>• ELT members are recruited for their complementary skill sets + are provided with high quality CPD</li> <li>• Recruitment to the Board is skilled-based + training (external+internal) is provided</li> <li>• An effective leadership pipeline is in place.</li> </ul>
5.5	Accountability	<p>Board holds the ELT to account for the effective implementation of the trust strategy and operating plan.</p> <p>Board assures itself of the integrity of financial information.</p> <p>Board assures itself that there are robust risk controls and risk management systems.</p> <p>Board assures itself there is compliance with regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements, including safeguarding.</p> <p>CEO sets annual operating plan, budget, and implements effective operational systems to deliver on the trust's strategy.</p> <p>CEO delivers effective risk management across the key functions of the trust.</p> <p>CEO ensures compliance with regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements including those within the Academy Trust Handbook.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans are approved and monitored by the Board</li> <li>• Financial information is interrogated by the Finance + Audit Cte of the Board + external auditors</li> <li>• A BEST Director of Safeguarding + a BEST Compliance Officer are in place. External reports are produced + submitted to the Board on both issues</li> <li>• COO sets + monitors operational systems + reports to the CEO + Board. Comprehensive QA system is in place</li> <li>• BEST Risk Register (RR) is in place. COO leads on RR, reporting to Board. RR is also split between each cte for in-depth interrogation</li> <li>• CEO leads on the BGHB which sets out regulatory, contractual and statutory requirements for the Trust/academies</li> </ul>

		<p>CEO safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and has regard to any guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Chair/CEO agree annual operating plan and budget for the trust, that deliver on the trust strategy.</p> <p>Chair/CEO agree metrics and process by which progress will be assessed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive system in place, inc: Director of Safeguarding, Academy Safeguarding Leads, regular monitoring + CPD</li> <li>• COO prepares the Operating Plan, supported by the ELT. Budgets are agreed with the CEO</li> <li>• A comprehensive QA process is in place, reported on to the Board by the COO.</li> </ul>
5.6	<b>Non-Executive Leadership</b>	<p>Board ensures a high performing governance structure where trustees and other nonexecutive leaders have the expertise to fulfil their functions effectively, with representation that reduces biases in decisionmaking.</p> <p>Board accesses independent insight from internal and external audits, reviews of governance arrangements and other forms of expert advice.</p> <p>Board provides induction, training and review.</p> <p>Board support effective succession planning by building a pipeline of future trustees and committee members, with a focus on promoting diversity of thought and experience.</p> <p>CEO supports the trustees and other non-executive leaders to meet their duties, working to ensure operational compliance and fulfilment of all statutory responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Skills and Diversity Audits in place to focus action</li> <li>• Range of internal and external audits in place Internal inc: BEST QA Cycle, Operations Manager, Compliance Officer and School Improvement Team. External inc: School Improvement Advisors, Safeguarding Advisor, Finance</li> <li>• BEST Governance Training programme in place, bespoke training offered and Bi-Annual Governance Conference</li> <li>• COO leads on governance, ensuring operational compliance and fulfilment of all statutory responsibilities.</li> </ul>
5.7	<b>Engagement</b>	<p>Board oversees strategic relationships with external stakeholders.</p> <p>CEO communicates trust's strategy, plans and achievements to stakeholders.</p> <p>Chair/CEO involve parents, schools, communities and, where appropriate, dioceses and other religious authorities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed new DfE Governance Guides requirements especially in relation to stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Regular support and training for governance<sup>3</sup> at all levels</li> <li>• Work with LCBs (LGBs) to ensure all key requirements are delivered and voice of the community is reflected in activity and decision making</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1: Schools for the Future – BEST School Plans

School/Nursery	Future Structure	FUTURE PLAN	TIMESCALE	Current Capacity	Post Two Tier
Samuel Whitbread Academy	Secondary + Sixth Form	7FE (PAN: 210) Secondary School plus 650 place Sixth Form	?	1650	1700
Etonbury Academy	Secondary + Sixth Form	6FE (PAN: 180) Secondary School plus 200 place Sixth Form	?	1360	1100
Castle Newnham School	All Through	Primary (PAN: 90) plus Secondary (PAN: 150) All Through	N/A	*	1380
Pix Brook Academy	Secondary	6FE (PAN: 180) Secondary School	?	810	900
Robert Bloomfield Academy	Secondary	5FE (PAN: 150) Secondary School	?	960	750
St Christophers Academy	Primary	2FE (PAN: 60) Primary School	N/A	420	420
Langford Village Academy	Primary	1.5FE (PAN: 45) Primary School	N/A	210	315
Lawnside Academy	Primary	2FE (PAN: 60) Primary School	2024	300	420
Gothic Mede Academy	Primary	2FE (PAN: 60) Primary School **	?	300	420
Campton Academy	Primary	2FE (PAN: 60) Primary School – Relocated new build	?	130	420
Gravenhurst Academy	Primary	0.5FE (PAN: 15) Primary School	?	75	105
Shefford Nursery	Nursery	55	Current	n/a	n/a
Arlesey Nursery	Nursery	95 + 50 WAC	Current	n/a	n/a
Langford Nursery	Nursery	40 + 70 WAC	Current	n/a	n/a

**Total** (Current) Capacity = 6225

**Total** (Post 2 tier) Capacity = 7930 (plus PANs at ETA and PBA expected to rise to 210/240 = up to additional 600 = 8530)

\*not currently in BEST so not included in current capacity

\*\* current uncertainty around CBC proposals for GMA

## Appendix 2: Bedfordshire Schools Trust: Ofsted Inspections

Academy Name	Opening date as an academy	Date joined BEMAT/BEST	Date of Previous Inspection	Previous Inspection Judgement	Most Recent Inspection Date	Most Recent Inspection Grade	Next Inspection Due (approximate)
Campton Academy	1 Nov 2020	1 Nov 2020	Academy converter	n/a	21 - 22 Nov 2023 (graded)	Good	By Nov 2027 <sup>5</sup>
Castle Newnham Primary	1 Sept 2024 (TBC)	1 Sept 2024 (TBC)	3 - 4 Oct 2013	Outstanding	12 Nov 2020 (remote monitoring visit during Covid suspension of inspections)	Outstanding	By Sept 2025 - <b>latest</b> by Sept 2027 <sup>6</sup> (graded)
Castle Newnham Secondary	1 Sept 2024 (TBC)	1 Sept 2024 (TBC)	25 – 26 Sept 2018	Good	23 – 24 April 2024 (ungraded)	Good	April'25 - Sept'25 <sup>7</sup> (graded)
Etonbury Academy	1 Nov 2011	1 Nov 2011	16 Nov 2017	Requires Improvement	11 - 12 Feb 2020	Good	By Sept 2025 (graded)
Gothic Mede Academy	1 Nov 2013	1 Nov 2013	27 - 28 June 2017	Good	21 - 22 Mar 2023 (ungraded)	Good	By March 2027
Gravenhurst Academy	1 Sept 2013	1 Sept 2013	7 - 8 Mar 2011	Outstanding	5 - 6 Mar 2024 (graded)	Outstanding	By March 2028
Langford Village Academy	1 June 2014	1 June 2014	22 & 23 Nov 2022 (ungraded)	Good	24 & 25 April 2024 (graded)	Good	By April 2028
Lawnside Academy	1 Jan 2019	1 Jan 2019	28 - 29 June 2017	Requires Improvement	28 & 29 Mar 2023 (graded)	Good	By March 2027
Pix Brook Academy	1 Sept 2019	1 Sept 2019	New Free School	n/a	24 – 25 Jan 2024 (graded)	Good	By Jan 2028
Robert Bloomfield Academy	1 May 2011	1 May 2011	15 May 2008	Outstanding	25 - 26 June 2014	Outstanding	By Sept 2025 (graded)
Samuel Whitbread Academy	1 Mar 2012	1 Mar 2012	31 Oct – 1 Nov 2017	Good	2 -3 Mar 2023 (ungraded)	Good	By March 2027
St Christophers Academy	1 April 2012	1 Sept 2017	9 Feb 2016	Good	26 - 27 Sept 2019 (Section 8 Inspection)	Good	By Sept 2025
BEST Nursery – Shefford	n/a	n/a	16 Feb 2022	Requires Improvement	12 Dec 2022	Good	By Dec 2028 <sup>8</sup>
BEST Nursery – Arlesey	n/a	n/a	27 June 2018	Good	21 May 2024	Good	By May 2030
BEST Nursery – Langford	Opened April 2021	n/a	8 Mar 2023	Requires Improvement	27 Feb 2024	Good	By Feb 2030

<sup>5</sup> Ofsted will inspect a school around 4 years after their last inspection if they received a good or outstanding judgement (School Inspection Handbook, updated April 2024)

<sup>6</sup> Previously exempt Outstanding school (visits by Sept '25), remote Covid visits (no published reinspection timeframes), academy converter (Ofsted do not normally inspect earlier than 1 year after new academy opens – usual timeframe for academy converter is by their third academic year) – School Inspection Handbook (updated April 2024)

<sup>7</sup> Academy converter with predecessor school that was judged good with recommendation of follow up inspection – inspection timeframes remain post conversion but will be no earlier than 1 year after new academy opens (School Inspection Handbook, April 2024)

<sup>8</sup> Ofsted must inspect each provider within 6 years form the date of its last inspection (Early Years Inspection Handbook, updated January 2024)

