



Deepening our Values

Year Six: 2021-22¹

¹ To be reviewed, RAG rated and submitted to Trustees in January 2021, by the CEO. Key: **Green** – achieved; **Amber** – should be achieved within time period; **Red** – unlikely to be achieved.

Strategic Objectives

2016-28²³

MISSION: to grow the best in everyone

1 VISION 2028:

- a. BEST comprises: 12 schools; 8 nurseries; 1 SCITT; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place
- b. All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25th percentile
- c. Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.

2 CAPACITY + COMMITMENT: to deliver our objectives on:

- ⇒ Outcomes
- ⇒ Opportunities
- ⇒ Talent
- ⇒ Autonomy and accountability
- ⇒ Leadership

3 IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY: to deliver outcomes in the top 20% nationally

4 SHARED SERVICES: to add value

5 QUALITY ASSURANCE: to ensure best value

² Delivered through a series of annual action plans; each being approved by Trustees

³ The 2016-28, extends the 2016-21 plan.

BEST Operational Model

Improvement at scale

- ⇒ Vision
- ⇒ Capacity and commitment
- ⇒ Improvement strategy
 - ⇒ Shared services
 - ⇒ Quality assurance

Sustainable improvement

- ⇒ Establish sufficient capacity
 - ⇒ Analysis of needs
- ⇒ Deploy and support leadership
- ⇒ Access to effective practice and expertise
- ⇒ Monitor improvements in outcomes.

Theoretical concepts provided by: *'The Seven Pillars of School Improvement at Scale.'* (Forum Strategy. 37: 2018) and *'Sustainable improvement in multi-groups schools.'* (Greany, T. p 12: 2018)

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 (2021-22)

defining culture

2024-2028

Phase Three – Delivering Excellence

Being the BEST: growth beyond Bedfordshire

Outstanding inspections

exceptional performance

BEST: Vision-Performance-Sustainability 2016-28

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
Phase One - Delivering Clarity (BEMAT to BEST: mission, vision, values and operating principles)			
2016-17	BEMAT becomes BEST. Etonbury Academy Phase 1 new build is completed.	2 successful Ofsted inspections; 1 school gained R/I inspection. 34 of 40 50 th percentile targets achieved	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. 46 of 49 50 th percentile targets achieved. 2 successful Ofsted inspection.	Reserves used to support ETA staff expansion and first year of SCA deficit recovery plan. All schools 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 school. 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 schools. Other contracts and SLAs reviewed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools. Re-designation of BEST Teaching School. BEST TS gains Appropriate Body status.	Schools 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. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	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 schools; 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 schools remained open throughout the national COVID pandemic lockdown (Inc: Bank Holidays) for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.			

<p align="center">Phase Two - Delivering connection (Three to two tier: uniting BEST, defining culture and laying foundations)</p>			
2020-21	<p align="center">Preparing for and successfully opening all our schools to all our children, in the face of the national COVID pandemic.</p>		
	<p>Langford Village Nursey (LVN) opens. Develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Comms. Plans in place for 2 tier move.</p> <p>Another school joins BEST. Final year of 3 year Capital and Estates SCA programme – new Conditions Surveys and review of onward priorities.</p>	<p>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools.</p>	<p>All schools 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 school to estimate the extent of the restructuring required. Set LVA 2021/22 budget for primary structure. Incorporate Campton Lower School and LVA nursery into trust systems and procedures.</p>
2021-22	<p>Intensify change to 2 tier preparations. Details to be confirmed. Another school joins BEST. Another Nursey is opened.</p>	<p>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools.</p>	<p>Modelling for 2 tier and 0-18 school fine-tuned to clarify restructuring plan. All schools continue to increase to 5% 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.</p>
2022-23	<p>State of readiness for 2 tier change. Details to be confirmed.</p>	<p>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools.</p>	<p>Support the schools with financial planning and set budgets in the spring term which are in line with 2 tier transition to their new primary/secondary structure. Restructuring to be completed. Add further to designated 2 tier contingency funds. Continue strengthening viability of individual schools.</p>
2023-24	<p>Implementation of 2 tier structure begins. Another school joins BEST.</p>	<p>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools.</p>	<p>Strategically employ contingency to ensure smooth, efficient transition to 2 tier. Continue to increase reserves to 5% target.</p>
<p>Summary Targets 2020-24</p>	<p>BEST comprises: 11 schools; 4 nurseries; 1 training school; 1 SCITT; a charity; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.</p>	<p>All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile.</p>	<p>Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.</p>

Phase Three - Delivering excellence (Being the BEST: growth beyond Bedfordshire, Outstanding inspections and exceptional performance)			
2024-25			
2025-26			
2026-27			
2027-28			
Summary Targets 2024-28	BEST comprises: 12 schools; 8 nurseries; 1 SCITT; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25th percentile.	Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves.

BEST Time Line

Academy Name	Phase	PAN	Year joined BEST
Robert Bloomfield	Middle	960	May 2011
Etonbury	Extended Secondary	1260	November 2011
Samuel Whitbread	Upper	1260	March 2012
Gravenhurst	Lower	105	September 2013
Gothic Mede	Lower	300	November 2013
Langford	Lower	225	June 2014
	Primary (2021)	210	
St Christophers	Primary	480	September 2017
Lawnside	Lower	300	January 2019
Pix Brook	Extended Secondary	1260	September 2019
Campton	Lower	130	November 2020

School/Nursery	Structure	PLAN	TIMESCALE	Total NOR
Samuel Whitbread Academy/ Robert Bloomfield Academy (Creation of a 0-18 All-Through School)	Secondary	Secondary school with a 210 pupil admission number, with capacity to expand to accommodate traditional RBA children	2023	1525
	Primary	Primary school with a 150 pupil admission number	2023	1050
	Nursery	Nursery provision based on identified needs	2023	Not known
Etonbury Academy	11-16 Secondary + Sixth Form	Increase in published admission number from 180 to 210 with subsequent increase to 240 through growth plus development of new sixth form provision	2023	1050-1200
Pix Brook Academy	11-16 Secondary	Increase in published admission number from 180 to 210 with subsequent increase to 240 through growth	2023	1050-1200
Gothic Mede Academy (Relocation to a new site east of Arlesey)	Primary	Increase in published admission number from 60 to 90. Relocation to new site but date yet to be confirmed	2023	630
Lawnside Academy	Primary	Convert to primary with published admission number of 60+ then move to new site (Edward Peake site) a year later	2024	420+
Langford Academy	Primary	Decrease in published admission number from 45 to 30	2021	210
Gravenhurst Academy	Primary	Remain at 15	2023	105
Campton Academy (Relocation to a new site on Hitchin Road, Shefford)	Primary	Increase in published admission number from 26 to 60	2023	420
St Christopher's Academy	Primary	60	Current	420
Shefford Nursery	Nursery	64	Current	N/A
Arlesey Nursery	Nursery	68 + 40 WAC	Current	N/A
Langford Nursery	Nursery	40 + 40 WAC	Current	N/A

Total NOR = minimum of **6790-7290** maximum **7950** (plus nurseries)

n.b. 2020-21 maximum NOR of **5950** (plus nurseries)

BEST Summary of 2021-22 Key Foci

Strategic Objectives	Key foci	Achieved Fully/Partially/Not
<p>VISION:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BEST comprises: 12 schools; 8 nurseries; 1 SCITT; high quality and efficient central service provision. A Primary-Secondary – 2 tier – structure is in place 2. All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding Grade. Outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile, with half of outcomes being above the 25th percentile 3. Financial sustainability, with 5% of GAG in reserves. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarify and further develop BEST’s role as a civic partner within our community 2. Locate BEST at the centre of emerging school improvement (SI) networks 3. Further develop BEST’s Growth Strategy to include: a vision for 2-tier transformation and detailed SWOT analysis for accelerated/geographically wider growth. 	
<p>CAPACITY + COMMITMENT: to deliver our objectives on: outcomes; opportunities; talent; autonomy and accountability; and, leadership</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Connect delivery groups and further embed BEST’s culture 5. Deepen our values, launching the: ‘to have the courage to be compassionate’ value 6. Deliver a BEST-wide ‘Recognition and Celebration’ Programme 	
<p>IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY: to deliver outcomes in the top 20% nationally</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Embed the role of the BEST Lead Teacher 8. Ensure all Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding grade. All 50th percentile targets are hit, in all schools 	
<p>SHARED SERVICES: to add value</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Conduct a full review in to BEST HR functions, creating + implementing a plan for improved effectiveness and efficiency 10. Develop + implement a Capital and Estates strategic plan 11. Ensure clear messaging about BEST to key stakeholders to improve standing 	
<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE: to ensure best value</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Produce an Appreciative Enquiry Report into the operations and key learnings from a range of identified MATs 	

1. Vision: to grow the BEST in everyone

Objectives:

- a) BEST’s vision (Inc.: key priorities), values and operating principles are owned by all
- b) Operate efficient + effective communications channels throughout + across all levels within BEST

2020-21 Foci:

- 1. Clarify and further develop BEST’s role as a civic partner within our community
- 2. Locate BEST at the centre of emerging school improvement (SI) networks
- 3. Further develop BEST’s Growth Strategy to include: a vision for 2-tier transformation and detailed SWOT analysis for accelerated/geographically wider growth.

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1	Clarify + further develop BEST’s role as a civic partner within our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create a framework to maximise civic impact (AL) - rise profile with: parents/carers, local community + other schools; local government partners; +, wider civic partners (Exec team) - report on attendance at various civic events, press + media activity (CS) 	
2	Locate BEST at the centre of emerging school improvement (SI) networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NLE, NLG, LLE, SLE and Lead Teacher (LT) deployment within + beyond BEST (Exec) - Centre of Excellence, to include: NPQs (AW), ECF (AW), ITT (AW), Business Managers (CS), Finance (NB) and Mindfulness (AL) - Full engagement with Confederation of School Trusts, Forum Strategy, National Governors Association and other Trusts (Exec) 	
3	Further develop BEST’s Growth Strategy to include: a vision for 2-tier transformation + detailed SWOT analysis for accelerated/geographically wider growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth Strategy (CS) - SWOT analysis (CS) 	

2. Capacity + Commitment: to deliver our objectives

Objectives:

- a) Create a MAT infrastructure to deliver an effective school improvement platform
- b) Build a team to add best value

2020-21 Foci:

- 4 Connect delivery groups and further embed BEST's culture
- 5 Deepen our values, launching the: 'to have the courage to be compassionate' value
- 6 Deliver a BEST-wide 'Recognition and Celebration' Programme

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
4	Connect delivery groups + further embed BEST's culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the work started in COVID year of 'what makes a BEST school?' (AW) - LT role to enhance provision across the Trust by capturing and sharing best practice across all subjects (AW) - Create a supportive platform across the Trust where curriculum areas can seek help in achieving best possible outcomes (AW) 	
5	Deepen our values, launching the: 'to have the courage to be compassionate' value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create a Trust-wide working party, complete with external input (AL) - launch value, providing inspirational examples from other sectors, identify LTs + provide opportunity for discussion (AL) - receive feedback on key areas of practice eg what does compassionate appraisal look like? Use feedback to explore new ways of working (AL) 	
6	Deliver a BEST-wide 'Recognition and Celebration' Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Trust to recognise achievements, capturing certain milestones: End of Training Year /ECT Framework; Internal Promotions; Retirement; Long Service. (AW) 	

BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

3. Improvement activity: to deliver outcomes in the top 20% nationally

Objectives:

- a) to deliver a BEST-wide effective school improvement strategy, focused on the needs of individual schools
- b) to build capacity through the TS to provide a systemic programme of school-to-school support beyond BEST

2021-22 Foci:

- 7. Embed the role of the BEST Lead Teacher
- 8. Ensure all Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding grade and all 50th percentile targets are hit, in all schools

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
7	Embed the role of the BEST Lead Teacher (LT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Induction + training offered to LTs (AW) - Focused meetings across the group to ensure clarity of purpose + to maximise impact (AW) - LTs upskill other members of the Trust, providing high quality CPD to develop Teaching + Learning (AW) - Succession Planning across the Trust from within, to ensure skilled people are nurtured through out BEST role (AW) - Roll out a second round of LTs (AW) 	
8	Ensure all Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade, with 30% achieving an Outstanding grade. All 50th percentile targets hit, in all schools (AW) 	

BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2021-22 – Lead: [Craig Smith](#)

4. Shared Services: to add value

Objectives:

- a) To deliver expert support
- b) To benefit from economies of scale and operational synergies

2021-22 Foci:

9. Conduct a full review in to BEST HR functions, creating + implementing a plan for improved effectiveness and efficiency			
10. Develop + implement a Capital and Estates strategic plan			
11. Ensure clear messaging about BEST to key stakeholders to improve standing			
Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
9	Conduct a full review in to BEST HR functions, creating + implementing a plan for improved effectiveness and efficiency	- Produce overview review with clear recommendations (CS) - Once approved, agree + implement plan (CS)	
10	Develop + implement a Capital and Estates strategic plan	- Develop plan for C+E using DfE guidelines /GEM as reference point (CS) - Implement plan across estate with due consideration of 2 tier implicaitons (CS)	
11	Ensure clear messaging about BEST to key stakeholders to improve standing	- Develop full database of stakeholders (CS) - Implement clear + impactful engagement strategy to inform, update + communicate with communities BEST serves and key influencers (CS)	

BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2021-22 – Lead: [Alan Lee](#)

5. Quality Assurance: to ensure best value

Objectives:

- a) To devise a structure to ensure best value
- b) To nurture a culture of evidence-based decision-making⁴

2021-22 Foci:

⁴ Adapted from: 'The 3 Challenges Every New CEO Faces.' (Kissel, NH and Foley, P 2019)

12. Produce an Appreciative Enquiry Report into the operations and key learnings from a range of identified MATs

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
12	Produce an Appreciative Enquiry Report into the operations + key learnings from a range of identified MATs	- Appreciative Enquiry Report (AL) - Discussion, dissemination + possible implementation of key findings (AL).	