



ACTION PLAN

Year Four: 2019-20¹

¹ To be reviewed, RAG rated and submitted to Trustees each term, by the CEO.

Strategic Objectives

2018-23²³

- 1 **VISION:** to grow the best in everyone
- 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 2018-23, updates the 2016-21 plan, with year three reverting to year one.

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
Vision-Performance-Sustainability
2016 – 2023

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
2016-17	BEMAT becomes BEST. Etonbury Academy Phase 1 new build is completed .	3 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.	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 50 th 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 50 th 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.
2020-21	AN Other school joins BEST. AN Other Nursey is opened. Final year of 3 year Capital and Estates SCA programme – new Conditions Surveys and review of	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all	Greater economies of scale realised from growth of BEST. Schools complete restructuring to ensure future sustainability. Reserves increased to a level that will provide a reservoir of funds for

	onward priorities. Plans in place for 2 tier move.	schools.	initiatives and projects. Review and benchmark auditor services. Produce more of the financial statements in house to keep audit costs down. Maintain balanced budgets with contingency line reinstated. Review central staffing levels and workflow to ensure quality of delivery is still high but also achieving better value as the trust grows.
2021-22	Intensify change to 2 tier preparations. Details to be confirmed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	Continue efficient budgeting and achieve target level of reserves set in policy. Review systems to ensure compatibility with the 2 tier structure. Create designated revenue and capital funds as a contingency in case of a shortfall in the local authority funds provided for transition to 2 tier. All schools contributing at least 5% of their GAG income to the pooled reserves.
2022-23	State of readiness for 2 tier change. Details to be confirmed.	All Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade. All 50 th percentile targets hit, in all schools.	Add further to designated 2 tier contingency funds. Support the schools with financial planning for budgeting and monitoring efficiently for their new primary/secondary structure. Continue strengthening viability of individual schools.
Summary 2018-23	BEST comprises: 10 schools; 4 nurseries; 1 teaching school; 1 SCITT, with 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 outcomes in every school/nursery above the 50th percentile.	Financial sustainability, with clean annual audits each year. Ensure accurate assumptions for budgeting to maximise funds for curriculum delivery. Sufficient reserves to support 2 tier changes and school improvement initiative/projects.

BEST 2018-23

School/Nursery	Structure	PAN	TIMESCALE
Samuel Whitbread Academy	11-18 Secondary	240	2023
Robert Bloomfield Academy	11-16 Secondary	180	2023
Etonbury Academy	11-16 Secondary ⁴	180	2023
Pix Brook Academy	11-16 Secondary	180	2023
Gothic Mede Academy	Primary	90	2023
Lawnside Academy	Primary	90	2023
Langford Academy	Primary	45	2023
Gravenhurst Academy	Primary	15	2023
St Christopher's Academy	Primary	60	Current
AN Other Academy	Primary	60	2022
Shefford Nursery	Nursery	64	Current
Arlesey Nursery	Nursery	68 + 40 WAC	Current
Langford Nursery	Nursery	40 + 40 WAC	2019
AN Other Nursery	Nursery	tbc	2022

⁴ ETA and PBA will have a shared 6th Form facility

BEST Strategic Objectives 2018-23⁵⁶

Strategic Objectives		Academic Year				
		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1	Vision	Implement	Refine	Improve	Re-visit/Plan	Implement
2	Capacity + Commitment	Implement	Refine	Improve	Re-visit/Plan	Implement
3	Improvement Strategy	Implement	Implement	Refine	Improve	Plan
4	Shared Services	Implement	Implement	Refine	Improve	Plan
5	Quality Assurance	Implement	Implement	Refine	Improve	Plan

⁵ Introduced 2018-19

⁶ Adapted from: '*Learning to Improve.*' (Bryk AS et al., 2015)

BEST Summary of 2019-20 Key Foci

Strategic Objectives	Key foci	Achieved Fully/Partially/Not
VISION: to grow the best in everyone	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate plans for a '2 tier' structure into the BEST Growth Strategy 2. Further develop BEST's identity and profile 3. Complete preparations to open PBA and LVAN 4. Further develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Communications. 	
CAPACITY + COMMITMENT: to deliver our objectives on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Outcomes ⇒ Opportunities ⇒ Talent ⇒ Autonomy and accountability ⇒ Leadership 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Improve alignment of practice 6. Deliver value through more effective monitoring 7. Improve effectiveness of SLEs 8. Improve alignment of vision, values and operating principles. 	
IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY: to deliver outcomes in the top 20% nationally	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Embed a robust SI programme 10. Ensure all Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade 11. Ensure all 50th percentile targets are hit, in all schools. 	
SHARED SERVICES: to add value	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Complete review of external contracts/providers inc HR/Capital 13. Review and benchmark existing auditors 14. Upgrade of some finance systems to add further capacity reducing the need to increase staff with growth of the trust 	
QUALITY ASSURANCE: to ensure best value	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. All areas (schools/nurseries) fully compliant 16. Ensure all areas of schools performance are at least 'Good'. 17. Ensure high quality shared services provision. 	

BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2019-20 – Lead: [Alan Lee](#)

1. Vision: to grow the BEST in everyone			
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 			
2019-20 Foci:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate plans for a ‘2 tier’ structure into the BEST Growth Strategy 2. Further develop BEST’s identity and profile 3. Complete preparations to open PBA and LVAN 4. Further develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Communications. 			
Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1	Develop and fully integrate plans for 2 tier change into BEST Growth Strategy	Growth Strategy in place, stage 1 feasibility completed, stakeholders enroled (AL/CS)	
2	Continue to nurture the single #BESTfamily identity, focusing on the strategic plan for BEST House and improving the profile of BEST within our schools and wider community	BEST House Strategic Plan in place (CS); Presence (all); stationery (CS); literature (CS); signage (CS)	
3	Complete preparations for PBA + LVAN to open	PBA + LVAN successfully open (CS)	
4	Further develop community engagement approach to Marketing and Communications.	Approach in place, stakeholders enroled, activities in place + reported to the Board (CS).	

BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

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

2019-20 Foci:

- 5. Improve alignment of practice
- 6. Deliver value through more effective monitoring
- 7. Improve effectiveness of SLEs
- 8. Improve alignment of vision, values and operating principles.

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1	Continue to nurture our (a) model of aligned autonomy; (b) team of external experts; (c) TS support; (d) practitioner forums	Model of aligned autonomy agreed by Executive team (AL); Curriculum, data and inspections experts employed and reports provided (AW); TS support and impact statements provided (AW); practitioner forums created and logged (AW)	
2	Ensure added and best value through the appointment and effective monitoring of trusted partners	Financial services – Mazaars Ltd (NB); Capital and estates – AMR (CS); Health and Safety – Cousins Ltd (CS); HR – Horizons HR (CS); IT – PEd (CS)	
3	Create infrastructure to facilitate SLE role, to include deployment, reporting and accountability	Timetabling allows for SLEs to work across the Trust; Impact Statements available – updated half termly; Sharper accountability framework (AW)	
4	Improved alignment of BEST and academies vision, values and operating principles (VVO).	All academies to consider their (VVO) and how they align to the BEST framework (CS/AL); representational overview document to be created (AL); facilitate ongoing discussions between stakeholder groups (AL).	

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

2019-20 Foci:

- 9. Embed a robust SI programme
- 10. Ensure all Ofsted inspections achieve a minimum Good grade
- 11. Ensure all 50th percentile targets are hit, in all schools.

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1	A robust SI programme is in place	Team of SLEs; School Improvement Advisor; access to national programmes is opened up via Lit and Maths Hubs; schools achieve in the top 50% nationally; NPQ projects are linked to school improvement projects agreed with the respective Principal (AW)	
2	Provide a full range of leadership courses - including NPQs – available to all staff	NPQ qualifications; Leadership Ladder offer; Leadership Matters (AW)	
3	Cost effective curriculums in place, offering the best opportunities for our schools' intakes	All curriculums offered are cost effective; a standardised curriculum across the secondary phase – with a cost effective Option Programme at GCSE and A level (AW)	
4	BEST-wide career opportunities, talent spotting programme and comprehensive CPD offer in place.	SCITT Programme (AL); NQT training programme (AW); SLE Cohort (AW); Run STEM Internships;; offers of shadow days in other BEST schools (AW); creating opportunities for SLEs to complete SI work beyond BEST (AW).	

BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2019-20 – 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

2019-20 Foci:

12. Complete review of external contracts/providers inc HR/Capital
13. Review and benchmark existing auditors
14. Upgrade of some finance systems to add further capacity reducing the need to increase staff with growth of the trust

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1	Ensure efficient deployment of resources, effective financial reporting and compliance	Balanced budgets (Principals/NB); including a review of BEST's approach to Reserves requiring minimum reserve levels per school to strengthen individual viability (NB); Benchmarking (NB); Risk Register (NB); Financial Audits (NB); Financial Accounts to be unqualified (NB); Good internal compliance across the trust (NB); all statutory financial returns submitted on time (NB).	
2	Further develop Governance across BEST, in response to the findings of the Governor Mark Report (GMR)	GMR Action Plan created, implemented and monitored (AL/CS)16/09/2019	
3	Capital and estates	Complete third year of SCA/PPM/Conditions Survey (CS); align to H&S action plan,(AA) engage and train key staff inc Site Agents,(AA) ensure improved VFM from SCA,(CS) support permanent PBA site developments,(CS) complete review of BEST House and implement changes(CS/AA), finalise SWA 4G pitch plan (CS/AA)	
4	Shared services (HR/IT/H+S).	Review HR provision across Trust;(AA) embed new ICT contract and service improvements;(CS) update H&S policy and implement H&S review actions(AA), review Apprenticeship levy spend (CS), undertake Absence Monitoring review (AA), ensure effective	

		finaince model for Pendleton in place(CS/NGB), review recruitment process (AA), standadardise HR practices (AA)	
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BEST Actions and Key Performance Indicators

2019-20 – Lead: [Alison Wilshaw + Craig Smith](#)

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-making⁷

2019-20 Foci:

- 15. All areas (schools/nurseries) fully compliant
- 16. Ensure all areas of schools performance are at least 'Good'
- 17. Ensure high quality shared services provision.

Ref	Actions	Key Performance Indicators/Impact	Evidence + Evaluation
1	Monitor all areas (schools/nurseries) to ensure compliance, disseminated good practice and supporting corrective action as appropriate	Further refine and embed the Quality Assurance Calendar (LL). All schools to show improvement in their annual Safeguarding Audits (LL). Explore making a submission for the Safeguarding Quality Mark (LL/CS/AL)	
2	Maintain, develop and triangulate meaningful intelligence on school/nursery performance	School on a Page (SOAPs) (AW); IDSRs on GovHub (LL); SIA Reports (AW): SEFs updated termly (AW); Summative document produced for Annual Accounts (AL). Each school to produce an annual Stakeholder Report (AW); School SEFs (Principals); SI Stakeholder surveys (AW); Inspection + external reports	
3	Collate, analyse and effectively employ data from stakeholders to drive improvements in performance.	Analyse stakeholder surveys – Finance (NB); Capital and Estates, Human Resources, IT (CS) – identifying areas of best practice for dissemination/area of development for improvement (NB/CS).	

⁷ Adapted from: 'The 3 Challenges Every New CEO Faces.' (Kissel, NH and Foley, P 2019)