



Penk Valley Academy Trust (PVAT) is a medium sized, multi academy trust in Staffordshire with four first schools, one middle school and two secondary schools covering the full age range of 2-19. The Trust was formed in 2018 after a long history of school collaboration, partnership and federation.

The key features of PVAT are outlined below. We are not complacent so this also provides the strategy framework for the further development of the Trust and all of our schools.

## 1 Culture

We have established and continue to develop a strong common culture and ethos across the Trust. This is encapsulated in our motto 'Learning Together'. We emphasise a mission of creating a community where both adults and children are focussed on learning, personal development and professional improvement. This is derived from our core values: -

- **Collaboration** – to work together to form a genuine learning community
- **Challenge** – to have the highest expectations and standards of ourselves and our pupils
- **Curiosity** – to appreciate learning and innovation
- **Care** -to look after our children and each other. Also to show professional diligence and the highest high ethical standards in delivering a public service.



**COLLABORATION**



**CHALLENGE**



**CURIOSITY**

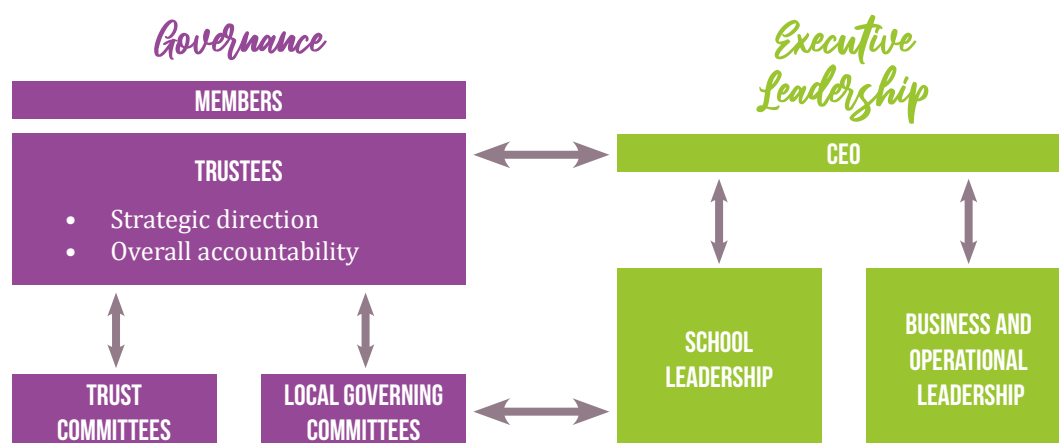


**CARE**

## 2 Leadership and management

We have established an ethos of strong, professional and ethical leadership allied with a drive to raise standards even higher for our pupils. We encourage the following features of leadership across the Trust and our schools. -

- A clear structure of leadership and management with well-defined roles at all levels
- A focus on a small number of improvement priorities rather than too many initiatives
- A continuous programme of training for leadership and management
- A system which emphasises trust leadership and local governance of schools
- A strong focus on staff and teacher workload and wellbeing



### 3 Curriculum (both academic and pastoral)

We are focussed on achieving high academic standards across all of our schools and have credible and effective strategies to do this. We have a firm commitment to common curriculum principles which encourage professional dialogue and expertise rather than imposing a rigid curriculum template on our schools. These include: -

- Training time is prioritised for teams of teachers to meet regularly (often weekly) to discuss, clarify and share good curriculum plans and practice in every subject. We call this 'subject mastery' and it is the cornerstone of our CPD programme and school improvement work.
- As an accredited 'Visible Learning' Trust we are focused on improving learning derived from a wide range of educational research and innovation.
- We learn from cognitive science to ensure that curriculum plans include essential knowledge, conceptual understanding, and independent skills. These need to be well sequenced and supported with deliberate practice. *This is summarised in our curriculum 'equation':*

$$\frac{(\text{KNOWLEDGE} + \text{CONCEPTS}) \times \text{PRACTICE}}{\text{SEQUENCE}} = \text{SKILLS}$$

- Our focus on the curriculum is not solely academic; it includes the planning and teaching of a coherent behaviour and personal development curriculum.
- Trust executive leaders provide curriculum training and support - both directly or via partnerships with outside agencies or schools.
- Regular assessment including low stakes questions, quizzes or tests are vital to check pupil learning.
- Information Technology is used to support effective pedagogies such as the modelling expected learning or reducing workload by delivering and 'marking' assessments and homework for teachers.

### 4 Business and operational systems

We have a strong belief that support staff and operational systems are the bedrock of school improvement. We pride ourselves in serving our schools with high quality business and operational services.

- We employ our own technical staff including an IT network manager, electrician and plumber to serve and maintain our schools
- We provide high quality central Trust services such as HR support, finance and estates management
- Our central support services are highly responsive to the needs and priorities of individual school and headteachers.

### 5 Partnerships

We have established extensive and effective partnerships both within the Trust and the wider community. These include: -

- Schools within the Trust working together both formally and informally
- Effective networks within the Trust, the local area and wider locations) focussed on developing the curriculum
- Work with schools and local authority to share good practice and support for SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.
- Links with national programmes which provide research and training on school improvement particularly with regards to the curriculum
- Links with Lichfield Diocese to support our Church schools

### IMPACT

- Financially stable and clean external audits
- Our two secondary schools show overall academic progress to be above average (2019)
- Favourable external reports on a range of operational issues including health and safety.
- Ofsted judges all schools to be currently 'good'.
- Staff, parent, and pupil surveys show high level of satisfaction.
- Locally, we are well thought of in the community as both employers and educational providers
- We are an expanding trust in terms of school size and pupils on roll.
- We have excellent relationships with a range of school partners and external agencies