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**DIOCESE OF  
BRISTOL  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST**



*'Let your light shine' (Matt 5:15)*



*'Let your light shine' (Matthew 5:15)*

**VISION 2027**

**LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE**



Wisdom Hope Community Dignity





# CEO'S WELCOME

**It is my honour and privilege to be the CEO of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust. Our journey began in 2012. In that time, we have grown and developed, and achieved many great things to become a wonderful and diverse family of schools – a mixture of small, rural village schools, large inner-city schools, and new free schools placed into growing communities across Bristol, North Wiltshire and Swindon... and with more to come.**

We are a changing, growing and flourishing Trust, and I am excited about the opportunities that this affords us, particularly developing inclusive provision, skills and opportunities for life-long learning – from 2-19 provision and beyond; as we embed our CPD and research community programmes for all staff and those that work with us; and, as we seek ways to support and develop adult learning in our communities.

We have achieved a great deal over a relatively short amount of time; creating a centralised, and purposely aligned organisation upon which our leaders can rely – enabling them to have the freedom and confidence to focus on educational development that not only impacts on the school of which they are custodians and the pupils they directly serve; but also impacts on the opportunities and life-chances for all pupils across the Trust.

We are a Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust, and all 15 of our schools are Church of England Schools whose core purpose is to provide a Christian education for all children; however our purpose and our vision is to serve **all** communities.

We are at our core a values-led, family organisation; and it is our intention and aim to become a mixed-MAT in the foreseeable future because we know that our values of Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity; and our fully inclusive approach to learning will resonate with all schools – and we want to share in the experience of wider communities, as well as to share the amazing practice and opportunity that has grown and developed across our Trust.

Our schools are characterised by their focus on **abundant Life, Learning, Love and Light**, which is rooted in our Christian faith.

We strive for each school to be a place where every single child will flourish, develop and thrive; where all are included and valued; and, where equity, equality and justice are intrinsic to all we do. Our vision is to continue to push the boundaries of how we best serve our children now, and the children who are the future of our schools: to go beyond the expected; to innovate and to challenge the system so that we aim to give support, provide opportunities and hope for every single child regardless of age, ability, need, disability, race, gender, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We strive for our Trust family to model our vision in practice, ensuring that every person is included; valued; serve one another; and, is served.

By **2027** it is our vision to have grown to **7000 pupils**; to be a **mixed-MAT of both Primary and Secondary Church and Community Schools**; to have opened or converted at least one **Special School** and opened a **New School**; to have extended our **Special Needs Resource and Nurture Bases** in all our Local Authority areas; to provide **services and support** to schools both within and outside of the Trust; to provide the highest quality education and learning opportunities in all of our schools, underpinned by our collaborative and innovative approach to school improvement.

**Vision 2027** empowers us all to play a significant part in our purpose; and it is my hope that you will join with us on our journey to work with us and to **'let your light shine'** as an intrinsic part of our work together.

*Jez Piper, Chief Executive Officer*

# CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

In 2016 the Church of England developed a Vision for Education which it hopes will inspire all schools, whether they were founded by the Church or not. While deeply rooted in the beliefs and values of the Christian faith, it is a vision that seeks to “serve the common good” by encouraging and equipping all those who learn and work in schools to embrace as full a life now and in the future as they are able.

The Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust has wholeheartedly adopted this vision and wants to go on developing it with the schools who are already part of the DBAT family and to offer it to more schools whom we invite to consider joining us. For those already committed to a Christian distinctive interpretation of the vision, they are encouraged to pursue that pathway. Others are invited to espouse the vision and values in their own way but always recognising that there is much more to life than a bundle of skills and competencies. Appreciating a painting is as important as being able to draw; enjoying a piece of music is as important as being able to play it; seeing the wonder in Maths and Science is as important as being able to manipulate the symbols!

**Wisdom** for living life well is at the heart of our approaches to and desired outcomes for learning. The economist, E.F. Schumacher remarked that the world longs for wise men and women but that it requires doing some inner work and we hardly know any more what is meant by the words. We seek in DBAT to do some “inner” work with our staff and students.

**Hope** also appears to be in short supply now. In DBAT we seek to go beyond mere aspiration and optimism to a sense of hope that is rooted in finding a meaning and purpose in life, often by serving others as well as finding self-fulfilment.

**Community** is what we want to establish in and between our schools through deep collaboration with one another and the neighbourhoods in which we serve.

**Dignity** is fundamental to the way we want to treat each other however difficult life may be at times.

These four values from the C of E Vision, which we believe are appreciated by many but also strengthened and empowered by the Christian Faith, imbue our understanding of what Education is about.

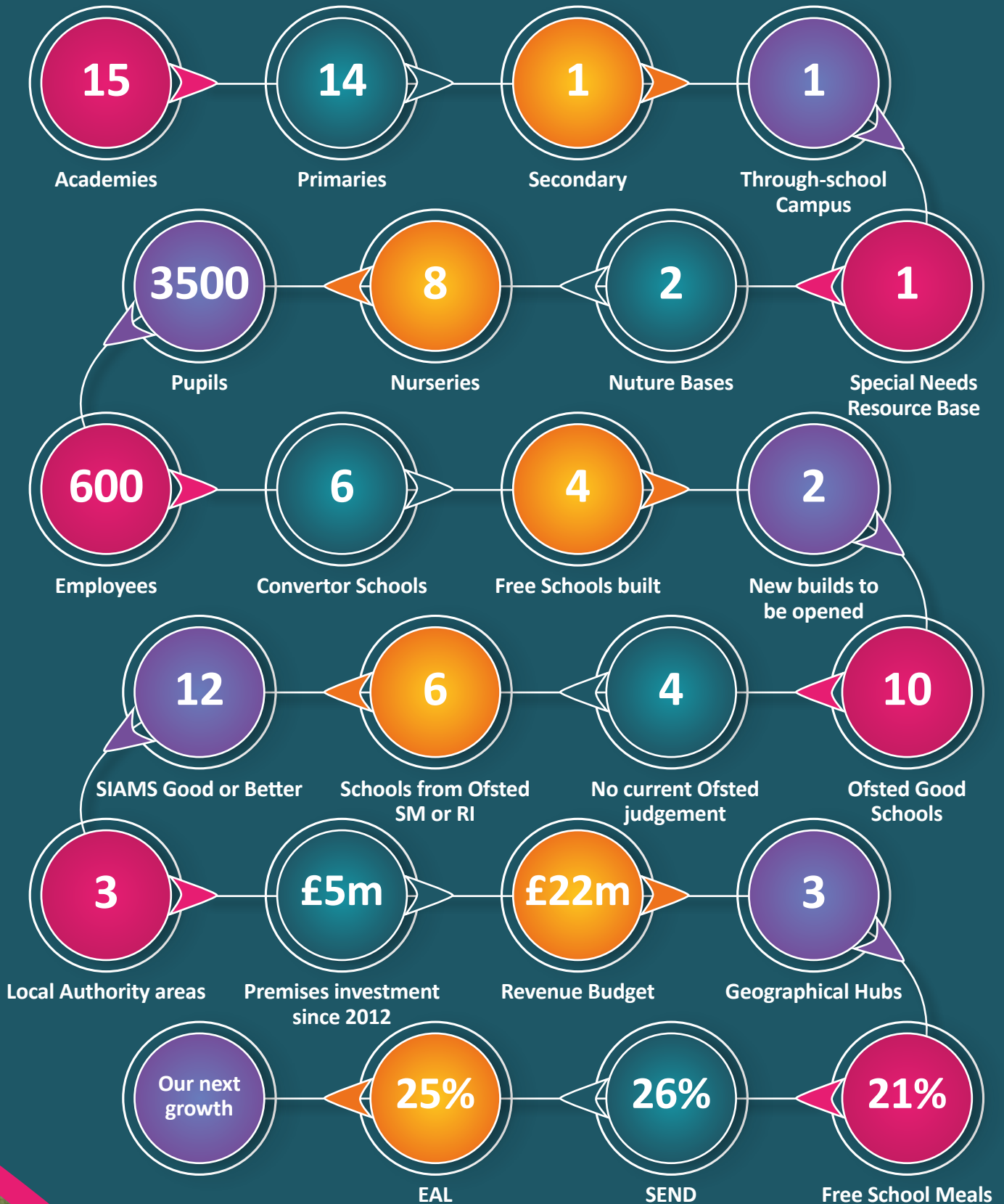
We want the **Learning** that goes on in our Trust to enable everyone's **Light** to shine so that they are enjoying **Life** to the full, knowing that it is **Love** for the world that motivates and feeds the inner life of those who are part of DBAT.

*Ann Holt  
Chair of DBAT*



# OUR TRUST CONTEXT IN NUMBERS

To provide an excellent education for every pupil, inspiring all to flourish and grow spiritually in love and understanding.



# OUR PURPOSE

CALLED

CONNECTED

COMMITTED

To provide an excellent education for every pupil, inspiring all to flourish and grow spiritually in love and understanding.

Our strapline states 'Let your light shine', and that is what we constantly seek for all of our children, young people, our families, our staff and volunteers, our leaders, and everyone who partners and works with us. We seek to live out our values as a shining light because, no matter the role, the size of the contribution – everyone has an impact on and plays a part in the opportunities and outcomes of all the children and young people in our family. So how do we collectively do this?

## OUR VALUES

We act through; and hold one another in our core values of

**HOPE, WISDOM, DIGNITY  
AND COMMUNITY**

## OUR CULTURE

We strive for an inclusive culture of equity and equality; a culture that recognises the right of every pupil to an exciting and fulfilling education that takes account of their individual needs, their personality and talents, their cultural background and the community in which they live.

**We are CALLED to our collective purpose –**  
*We shine as a light through our knowledge, skills and gifts, and the impact that these have on one another as we learn, collaborate and grow together.*

**We are CONNECTED to one another and to our communities –**  
*We shine as a light through how we live our lives; how we interact with each other; and, through how we model our aspirations for everyone.*

**We are COMMITTED to ensuring our purpose is real and impactful –**  
*Our active service is a shining light to one another, supporting the development of life in all its fullness and the nurturing of excellence in our schools and school communities.*

Our values are shared with the Church of England's Vision for Education 2016, "Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good", and underpinned by visionary framework engaging everyone in the Trust to be **Called, Connected, Committed.**

### **Our Trust is:**

- A family in which everyone is valued and treated with kindness.
- A team which supports and champions all to improved life-chances and individual success;
- An organisation which is collaborative, innovative and outward-looking

We are committed to bringing our purpose, skills, and experience together, in service and advocacy of our communities.



# VISION 2027 – AT A GLANCE

We know that School Improvement goes beyond education. School Improvement is our *collective endeavour to drive aspirations*; and our purpose is to enable everyone to shine, through providing an excellent education for every pupil, inspiring all to flourish and grow spiritually in love and understanding.

We are delighted to introduce our new **Strategic Approaches** which underpin our vision for the Trust for the next 5 years.

**Vision 2027** sets out our collective ambition and aim for our Trust family. The vision sets out the framework for our growth and development; and the strategy comes from the engagement of our key stakeholders as ‘agents of change’

– collaborating to ensure that, as our vision becomes reality over the next 5 years, there is a tangible and positive impact on our pupils, staff, those who work with our Trust, and in our communities both locally and globally.

It is a bold statement for the future, and a hugely exciting one for everyone on this journey with us.



# VISION 2027: BELIEVING



## Believing

Embed a culture of service, advocacy and innovation at the heart of all we do

...a Christian and values-driven education for all pupils and all communities, underpinned by equity and equality in action

Our foundation, as a Church of England Trust, is to provide to the best educational opportunities for our pupils and our communities, underpinned by our strong Christian and values-based ethos which adds value to all that we do and provide. But there is something more. Our vision is for our schools to be characterised by (abundant) Life, Learning, Love and Light which is rooted in our faith. We are CALLED to our service to one another.

At the heart of all that we do, our values must have an impact on the pupils, staff, partners, and our communities. Service to one another is easy to say, but hard to do and so we have set ourselves the challenge of serving one another authentically – to make a real, tangible difference.

Our vision and our culture enable us to be advocates for good practice, for one another, and for those who are marginalised, vulnerable and in need of care and support. We are compelled to innovate and to collaborate in order that we can move away from 'the way it has always been' to find what is best for the needs of our pupils, staff and our communities.

We can do this because we have purposefully aligned key elements of our **school improvement** priorities enabling us to focus on **service, advocacy** and **innovation** together as an

organisation; whilst having the responsibility and devolved decision-making to address these in each individual context to meet the needs of the pupils, staff and the community.

We are champions of **diversity, equality** and **inclusion** and strive for **equity and justice** in our practice, relationships; and in our vision for all.

## Strategic Aims

1. To put God's love into action through our inclusive culture so that all may flourish
2. Ensure the Christian Distinctiveness of all our Church schools
3. Support all Church schools to have a good or better SIAMS judgement
4. Ensure strong ethos and values that serve the school, local and global communities in all our schools
5. Deliver excellent, high quality and inclusive religious education
6. Build community, strengthen relationships, serve one another, and advocate for diversity, equality, equity, justice and inclusion



# VISION 2027: ASPIRING



## Aspiring

Provide an excellent education for all

...aspirational, inspirational and which prepares all pupils to be active global citizens within a global community

**Our aim is to enhance the life chances of the pupils we serve. We care passionately about the education and welfare of our pupils. We believe that all young people, irrespective of background or ability will be successful in our Trust. We are always inclusive. We support the most vulnerable pupil to succeed and overcome barriers to learning are a key aspect of our work.**

**Our approach to education recognises that outcomes are important and also allows pupils to gain experiences and values which prepare them fully for life in modern Britain.**

**We work both regionally and nationally to develop approaches to MAT improvement that influence the wider school-led system.**

**We will enable schools to:**

- Provide learning that is based on **values, knowledge, skills and attitudes** for each individual, shining a light to their future, through **inclusive and diverse experiences**.
- Provide opportunities to develop gifts and talents so that everyone may flourish.
- Recognise the steps in each individual's journey to success to lead a life in all its fullness.
- Ensure there is the breadth and flexibility to respond to each individual's needs so that they can contribute positively to their community and the wider world.
- Inspire curious individuals who love learning.

**We will support pupils to be:**

- Confident, self-aware and resilient.
- Active and responsible citizens who can take their place in their communities as well as the wider world.
- Ambitious and equipped for life-long learning.
- Rich in knowledge and understanding of themselves as well as others and the world in which they live.
- Able to live with wisdom, hope and dignity.

## Strategic Aims

1. Enhance life-chances for all through delivery of high-quality, excellent education
2. All schools to have a good or better Ofsted judgement
3. Develop a research informed approach and a professional learning community
4. Develop a coaching culture to improve teaching, learning and leadership
5. Provide inclusive education for all pupils through access to specialist and non-specialist provision
6. Ensure an inspiring and innovative curriculum in every school and partnership

# VISION 2027: CREATING



## Creating

Create inspirational and dynamic learning and working environments

...that enable effective collaboration, a flow of creativity and unconstrained innovation

**We believe that a school environment is at the heart of education outcomes. It is a given that a school must be warm, safe, dry, and able to function effectively as a working and learning space.**

**They are also places where imaginations are given free rein, learning is impactful, and they must engender confidence and assurance. Spaces must be well-kept and feel cared for so that those who work and learn within can shine their light. School leaders must be able to innovate and be supported to do so, underpinned by a drive to find ways to overcome the challenges of constrained resources and competing demands.**

We continue to invest significantly in our buildings, our learning environments, and our online presence but we strive to do more. We are seeking to ensure that we innovate to provide high-quality learning and working environments that are well-resourced, technologically enhanced and which embody a love of learning and our collective endeavour to provide the very best for our pupils and our staff and volunteer teams across the Trust. Innovative creation will enable us to be more connected and to collaborate more effectively.

We work with partners who are supporting us in our drive for change. We want over 90% of our pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals to

be eating them regularly. We will be moving the Trust to a Cloud First IT structure, for resilience, efficiency, and better ways of working. We are taking active strides towards energy self-sufficiency.

Using data is enabling us to focus resources so that they are as impactful as possible. We believe – passionately – in driving out waste and profligacy so that we can do more for the pupils in our family.

### Strategic Aims

- Ensure that our learning environments meet the needs of pupils, staff, and community
- Ensuring tech supports education and ways of working
- To develop environments to enable equitable educational provision
- The estate, services, and infrastructure to maximise opportunities for every pupil in every way

# VISION 2027: EMPOWERING



## Empowering

Grow the Trust family

...enhancing opportunities, skills, capacity and widening our family, our offer and our support of communities

**Empowering our leaders and our staff to have the greatest possible impact is key to our growth and development as a Trust. Developing and sharing best practice in all aspects of our work; enhancing local, regional and national collaboration through networks and relationship sends expertise out into the wider educational landscape, and brings back new skills and a view of us through a different lens.**

**Being CONNECTED empowers all involved in the Trust to play an active role both in our growth and in what we can offer to others in service as an organisation.**

Governance underpins how we work as a Trust. The enhancement of our already strong governance through **enhanced training, bespoke forums and strategic working parties, guidance and specialist support** from a skilled and professional team of Trust Clerks under the guidance of our **Governance Officer** ensures we are best placed to grow.

Our vision for growth doesn't just centre on bringing more schools and pupils into the Trust – though that remains important. Our focus is also on how we can make a difference through supporting others – a way of working that brings back skills, expertise and financial resource into the Trust so that we can enhance and extend our own provision.

We have had some great success in our ability to support pupils with a range of needs, and to make a difference for our most vulnerable pupils... but we are striving to do more by focusing on **specialist provision and services** which will provide better, more effective training and resources to empower our teams to meet the needs of all the pupils in our schools.

## Strategic Aims

- Strengthen and enhance governance as the underpinning of our organisation
- Grow to 7000+ pupils by
  - o Conversion and Sponsorship of Schools
  - o New Free Schools and Special Schools
  - o Commercial and Partnership opportunities to send out expertise and to bring resource into the Trust
- Collaborate and innovate with internal and external partners
- Have a credible local and national sector presence
- Empower all leaders to have an active voice in Trust development



# VISION 2027: SUSTAINING



## Sustaining

Resource and invest  
intelligently and  
responsibly

...ensuring a sustainable,  
developing and resilient  
Trust that takes  
responsibility for the world  
in which we live

**We have a responsibility to resource and invest intelligently and responsibly across our family of schools. Our investment in renewable energy provision in schools, and sustainable practices – working towards an aim of being carbon neutral by 2030 – are part of our intention to take better care of our world, whilst also ensuring that resource is always pointed towards the most effective opportunities for pupils.**

**We strive to ensure that our practices are equitable and equal, and that our growth and development not only ensures the sustainability of the Trust, but also the provision that we can offer to our communities in service and partnership. It is our responsibility to ensure that the impact of our Trust family enhances learning and education for future generations.**

The Diocese has a target of 2030 to reach carbon net zero. We are challenged by inefficient buildings and high levels of energy consumption. In undertaking our programme of projects, networks, and initiatives, we look to take this opportunity to educate the next generation and have our pupils rightly hold us to account for our response to the climate emergency. We are committing to solar on our roofs, LED lighting throughout our schools, and visibility on our energy consumption so that we can see the impact of improving behaviours.

Finance activity will therefore link explicitly to the Trust strategic approaches, spanning school improvement and wider Trust growth and development, whilst continuing to meet statutory obligations.

The effective management of resources across the Trust is essential to our vision and values. We ensure we work in line with the Academy Trust Handbook and the Academy Accounts Direction.

Our vision is to continually seek to improve our systems and processes; to drive efficiencies throughout the Trust; and to invest both for now and the future, to ensure that support for education is maximised.

### Strategic Aims

- Transparent resource allocation that supports equity for all pupils
- Embed value for money as a key consideration in decision making
- Ensure long term financial sustainability of the Trust
- Generate income
- Confident and courageous investment
- Protect and ensure the long-term future of our infrastructure
- Efficient energy consumption
- Transition to renewable energies
- Educate staff, pupils and community about climate change and sustainability

# VISION 2027: NURTURING



## Nurturing

Nuture individual talent to deliver collective excellence

...to continually improve opportunities, to enable personal growth; and share expertise with external partners

School improvement is led by excellent people, and this is our driving force. We strive to be an Employer of Choice so that talented individuals, who are passionate about education, seek to join our family.

We maximise opportunities for professional learning and collaboration, both internally and externally, to ensure that our employees are empowered to innovate and grow. We will invest in the development of our talent and provide the environment in which this talent can thrive.

Leaders are equipped with the tools and confidence to instil high standards and expectations within their teams. High expectations are complemented by proactively supporting individuals to be resilient and to be happy, fulfilled, and successful at work.

We model fairness, consistency and inclusivity in our working practices and underpin this with professionalism, understanding and kindness.

Our workforce is one team, and we recognise that everyone within this team has a different skill set, different challenges and different aspirations. All of which are valid and valued.



## Strategic Aims

- Be an 'employer of choice' to attract and retain talented people
- Grow our skills and knowledge to maximise impact and confidence
- Use our collective wisdom to problem solve
- Embed our culture of high expectation and high support
- Develop our staff to be specialists and sector experts, empowered to strengthen our Trust and collaborate externally
- Manage talent to meet organisational need, both current and future
- Integrate a culture of respect, kindness and wellbeing

# VISION 2027 PRIORITIES INTO ACTION

## In 2023/24 it is our aim to:

- Work with all key stakeholders in the development of these strategic approaches; to provide training; discussion forums; and working parties/networks to ensure that we can collectively achieve our aims
- Prepare for the expansion of South Marston CE Primary School – opening in 2024
- Complete the strategic planning for our new 2-form entry Primary Free School and Nursery in the New Eastern Villages development, Swindon. Due to open in September 2024
- Bid for 6 new Free Schools in the South-West – Primary, Secondary and a Through-School (2 – 18yrs)
- Bid for 2 Free Special Schools and to develop our whole Trust offer for Inclusion and SEND
- To undertake a Trustwide Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) audit, and training for leaders in order to ensure that we live up to our values and hold a shared recognition of the needs across our whole Trust
- To become a mixed-MAT with Church and Community Schools working together in synergy
- To engage with a minimum of 3 schools (Primary, Secondary and Special) in relation to conversion to joining the Trust
- To establish the start of our commercial ‘offer’ to support schools, Trusts and educational

partners through access to our strong skills and expertise, and to bring resource back into the Trust to support our Educational Offer

- To further develop and extend our offer to staff and the people who work with us as an organisation
- To reduce our energy consumption, and our carbon footprint further to ensure costs go back into education, and that we take more responsibility for our environment and the planet

These aims set out a number of key areas that we will be addressing over the forthcoming year, and beyond. We will regularly report on these, and on other areas, through our brilliant Trust magazine – Connected; and through our Connected websites for each key area of our work.

This marks a hugely exciting next step in our journey of development as a Trust, and we hope that you will not only come on that journey with us, but that you will also play an active part in us aspiring together for the future.

**Let your light shine.**





# OUR FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

**DIOCESE OF  
BRISTOL  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST**  
*'Let your light shine' (Matt 5:15)*

## OUR WILTSHIRE SCHOOLS

## OUR BRISTOL SCHOOLS

## OUR SWINDON SCHOOLS



To set up a conversation, or to find out more about how to get involved with us please contact us at [bettertogether@dbat.org.uk](mailto:bettertogether@dbat.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.



**DIOCESE OF  
BRISTOL  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST**

*'Let your light shine' (Matt 5:15)*

Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust

Kingfisher CE Academy  
Peglars Way  
Wichelstowe  
Swindon  
SN1 7DA

**Tel:** 01793 236611

**Email:** [bettertogether@dbat.org.uk](mailto:bettertogether@dbat.org.uk)

Find out more about how we shine at  
[www.dbat.org.uk](http://www.dbat.org.uk)