

LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PEER REVIEW REPORT

The value of the trust peer review lies in collegiate and continuous conversation throughout the review process. This report provides a summary of the review as an aide-memoire for the host trust to use in ways that would most benefit their approach to school improvement.

TRUST Name	Lighthouse Schools Partnership
Review dates	10-12 January 2023
Chair of Trustees	Adele Haysom MBE
Chief Executive Officer	Gary Lewis
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead and Peer Reviewer Biographies 2. Schedule of activities 3. Details of the schools in the LSP (Proforma 2) 4. The LSP School Improvement strategy

1. Context and relevant information about the Trust

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) was founded in 2016 initially with 6 schools. In January 2023 the Trust is made up of 27 academies (24 Primary-phase schools and 3 Secondary schools.) By Easter 2023 a further 2 Primary schools and 1 secondary school will have joined LSP. The LSP Trust includes both community and Church of England schools and also has a DfE English Hub. The schools are based across North Somerset and Bath & North East Somerset. The Trust currently has 10,302 pupils and 1336 employees. This will increase to 12,123 pupils and 1632 employees when the additional schools join the Trust from Easter 2023.

Currently all LSP schools have good or outstanding Ofsted judgements, with one exception (Blagdon Primary School was sponsored under a Directed Order and awaits first inspection as an academy). The Trust has grown quite rapidly but successfully and with the support of the DfE Regional Director. The number of primary schools in the Trust is significantly more than the number of Secondary schools. However, with the addition of the 4th Secondary school there will be balance in terms of the number of pupils.

See appendix 3 for more details about the schools.

The Trust offices are based at Gordano School in Portishead. The schools are organised into four hubs but for school improvement purposes the Trust tends to operate as one organisation rather than separate hubs.

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership Vision is expressed as

'A deep partnership between our schools in which our children and young people flourish.'

The LSP mission is

- service to the community by providing an excellent all-through educational journey from nursery to sixth form.

The Trust's Values and Beliefs

- Belief in the transformational and life-enhancing power of education
- Service to the community
- Partnership and professional generosity
- Honesty and openness

The Trust's Aims are to deliver

- A rich and exciting curriculum where all pupils thrive and develop character
- Strong progress in outcomes, especially for disadvantaged children and young people
- Excellence in professional learning and development
- Strong and strategic leadership at all levels
- High quality and cost-effective central services

The Trust's Culture

- Significant delegated authority to each Headteacher and Governing Body
- That schools maintain their own character and distinctiveness.

The Trust has defined five tenets of the strategy to deliver its vision:

1. **Educational standards:** increasing the quality of provision in all Trust schools with a particular focus on provision and outcomes for SEND pupils and disadvantaged pupils.
2. **Leadership and governance:** providing outstanding governance, executive leadership and school leadership with clear succession planning.
3. **Being an excellent employer:** provide staff with excellent professional learning opportunities to support their career progression; attract, develop and retain talented and capable staff to posts in our schools and central team.
4. **Developing and growing our partnership:** strategic growth of our existing partnership to deliver the benefits of cross-phase education in defined geographical communities; and, where appropriate, sponsor existing schools or create new school provision to meet the needs of our geographical area and communities.
5. **Operational effectiveness:** ensuring a financially viable and sustainable multi-academy trust delivering high quality and cost-effective services to schools; enabling schools to maximise their resources to increase the quality of provision

These are more fully set out in the [Strategic Plan](#).

Trust Operating Model as stated in 2018

'Whilst guaranteeing meaningful freedoms for schools, the Trust ensures that its schools reap the benefits of being part of a large trust. The operating model is based on a devolved approach to school leadership and management with significant freedoms delegated to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers. Schools take advantage of best practice sharing; school improvement expertise; continuing professional development opportunities for all staff and the economies of scale that can be generated within an organisation with significant

central capacity. The Trust has its own HR and Finance teams and employs or retains its own experts in School Improvement, Special Educational Needs and Educational Welfare. All academies work with Teaching Schools to deliver a vibrant and current programme of professional development for staff. The Trust also has a governance development programme.’ An Introduction to LSP booklet

‘It is also the view of the Trust Board that ownership of their work is essential to attract, motivate and retain the best leaders. Where there are concerns about standards, performance, management, or safety the Trust will intervene immediately. LSP is a Partnership. The Trust’s Board and leaders regard that as both a key value and a meaningful advantage.’ An Introduction to LSP booklet

Trust School Improvement strategy

The LSP is committed to school improvement as a collaborative strategic enterprise. The LSP school improvement strategy is attached as appendix 4.

Key is the integration of the school improvement and professional development services. The Trust aims to apply the Confederation of School Trusts ‘Four propositions on School Improvement.’

1. The goal is for every teacher in every classroom to be as good as they can be in what they teach and how they teach.
2. For this to happen, we need to mobilise for every teacher the best evidence from research.
3. There is no improvement for pupils without improvement in teaching, and no improvement in teaching without the best professional development for teachers.
4. Strong structures can enable strong practice to exist in all schools.

The aim of the integrated service is to provide all schools in the Trust with strong structures to support staff to deliver the very best curriculum (what they teach) and pedagogy (how they teach) and also ensure the very best leadership in every school so that all schools have an excellent curriculum, excellent pedagogy, excellent inclusion and excellent leadership.

Each Primary School/Federation has:

- An allocated member of the team acting as School Improvement Adviser (SIA) who will work with the school on at least six days during the year.
- An allocated member of the team or the CEO acting as Partnership Link. The Partnership Link will meet with HTs for update meetings between 6-12 times per year to provide an opportunity to celebrate achievements and also to discuss any emerging issues.

Each secondary school has:

- a SIA for at least 4 days per year;
- A Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review (QAR) and access to the subject QAR programme;
- Participation in the programme of Challenge Partners Middle Leader QARs.

- The CEO as their Partnership Link. The Partnership Link will meet with HTs for update meetings up to 12 times per year to provide an opportunity to celebrate achievements and also to discuss any emerging issues.

The Trust puts a very strong emphasis on inclusion and engagement with families.

Governance

The LSP Articles of Association are those designed for use in a MAT containing both faith and community schools and the Diocese of Bath and Wells retains a number of powers and checks to ensure that the culture of the MAT remains supportive to schools with a faith character.

The Board of Trustees is the statutory Governing Body for all schools within the Trust. The Board oversees standards of education across the Trust and sets the strategic direction for the MAT. It closely monitors the performance of schools educationally, operationally, and financially. Each school has a Local Governing Body and the Scheme of delegation gives a good deal of autonomy to each school. However, the Trustees can withdraw this delegation or part of it if there is significant concern supported by robust data around the actual or predicted outcomes for pupils, the safety and welfare of pupils or the financial stability of the school.

Central team and services

The first six schools in the Trust were all in the Portishead area and central services were initially provided from Gordano School. The central services of the Trust are now almost completely independent of the schools. Central services include Finance, HR, Governance, Compliance and School Improvement. As well as the CEO there is a Director of Education, two Deputy Directors of Education, a School Improvement advisor, a Lead Teacher (SEND and pupil engagement) and a Secondary School Lead (currently a fixed term appointment).

Some areas the Trust executive are exploring and sought feedback from the TPR

1. Being a very different trust to primaries and secondary schools – is this, ok? Do the Primary experience the Trust differently to the Secondary schools. With a fourth secondary joining are changes needed?
2. Effectiveness of line management of Headteachers. Impact of CPD and appraisal.
3. Knowing whether our delegated culture (as we perceive it) has become a limiting factor. The Trust has a high degree of delegation/autonomy and is questioning if this is limiting the impact. How does the Trust culture support the delivery of the Trust vision and aims?
4. The overall effectiveness of the Trust education & School Improvement strategy to support improvements including the quality of education, curriculum, and pedagogy. Effectiveness of the strategies to support good schools and schools that are

experiencing challenges.

5. The effectiveness of support for Governance, SEND, disadvantaged pupils, safeguarding and attendance.

2. What the Trust is trying to achieve - its vision, values, ethos and culture and the extent to which academies understand and reflect these

Strengths

- Staff interviewed spoke about how they value collaboration and the culture of the Trust and how the central team lives and breathes the vision and values. They were positive about the positive impact of being part of the Trust.
- The Trust has already established a great deal of collaboration and networking which is valued by staff. There is good evidence of networking impacting on pupils. For example, the SENDCO network, where mentoring is provided for less experienced SENDCO's which has enabled an increased pace in implementation of processes. Writing moderation has provided ECTs with the opportunity to work with more experienced teachers.
- Staff said they feel listened to by Trust leaders, going so far as saying that "they are the real deal". An example of this is the moving of weekly bulletins to Tuesday afternoons rather than Fridays in order to consider workload.
- Primary heads said that what's right for their children is at the heart of every Trust decision.
- Many staff interviewed said they have great faith and trust in the central team ("They are credible leaders"). Many stated that they receive good advice and support.
- Primary and secondary heads particularly appreciate the inclusion strategy, and this has been a strong vehicle for Trust 'buy in'.
- School Business Managers see their roles as contributing to School Improvement. They are extremely positive about the Trust, its culture, and the benefits for schools and for the pupils and staff. They value the Central Team.
- Local governors have a clear understanding of the vision, values, ethos, and culture: they spoke about how these are lived through the Trust: "it's a real community", "we've been valued as a partner".
- Primary heads really value the weekly briefing which gives clear and relevant information with hyperlinks to relevant documents. They cited that this supported good workload habits and supports them in feeling like part of the 'LSP team'.

Suggested areas for development and recommendations for reflection by the Trust.

- Could the Trust raise awareness and understanding of the vision and values of the Trust by all stakeholders. (Many staff experience the vision and values through behaviours but cannot articulate them). This should involve clear messages to prospective schools about the non-negotiables and aligned areas and also formalised induction processes for key staff as school joins the Trust.
- The Trust could further develop a sense and belonging to the Trust by all staff, governors, and parents.

- Primary and secondary colleagues do not often work together - is this a missed opportunity? For example, involving secondary colleagues in writing moderation sessions and primary colleagues in safeguarding network?

3. The impact of the Trust on the quality of education, curriculum and pedagogy

Strengths

- The Primary curriculum is securely embedded and underpinned by solid principles of design established through reference to contemporary/current education research.
- Clear excellence in Primary Maths and Primary English Curriculum design and pedagogy as evidenced by the designation as a region English hub for the South West for example.
- Clear collaboration opportunities through well-established networks ensure the curriculum remains front and centre of the work of the Trust to achieve its ambition of “an excellent all through curriculum from nursery to 6th form”. Regular networks exist within the Primary and Secondary phase as well as some cross phase collaboration. For example, the LSP SENDCO network.
- Whilst the LSP Primary curriculum is well established, leaders appreciate the opportunity to be able to adapt and personalise the curriculum in line with their individual context. The Trust has strong processes in place to ensure that any adaptations continue to meet the LSP Curriculum Standards.
- Primary staff value the time to work with colleagues from across the Trust to develop curriculum and resources. The Trust inset day focusing on curriculum subjects being an example that was referenced.
- The CPD model that is co-ordinated by the Central Team benefits both the Trust and the wider system by supporting the development of teachers understanding of pedagogy and curriculum design.
- The Trust’s Primary Assessment Strategy and Framework is purposeful and well thought out. It is led by trained lead teachers who facilitate teachers from across the Trust to work together to moderate writing in each year group. As a result, there is confidence in standards across the Trust in writing. ‘We wouldn’t be able to work in such deep partnership without the Trust's framework.’
- Recently, SENCOs both in primary and secondary have met together to develop best practice and align systems such as Provision Map.

Suggested areas for development and recommendations for reflection by the Trust

- The Trust would benefit by taking urgent action to secure a consistent and ambitious approach to the strategic use of data and information, such as Target Setting and regular data analysis which underpins the wider work of the Trust and supports wholesome school improvement at all levels, particularly at secondary level improving outcomes for all, especially those who are disadvantaged and SEND.
- The Trust may benefit from systematising their approach to monitoring and evaluation of school action planning with sharply focussed review meetings, focussed on key

aspects of school priorities regularly scheduled across the academic year reviewing impact data and progress towards ambitious targets.

- Consider next steps in strengthening the continuum of the curriculum so that the overarching mission of 'an excellent all through curriculum' is achieved through greater connections between EYS and KS1 and KS2 and KS3, for example. This will provide greater opportunities for Primary and Secondary colleagues to collaborate with purpose.
- Complement the LSP Curriculum principles already in place with a co-constructed (cross phase) set of Pedogeological principles that provide all LSP schools with a framework for excellence including explicit reference to use of formative assessment that supports responsive teaching.
- Continue to develop the strategic approach to the deployment of identified specialist leaders and teachers across the Trust to support greater rapidity of improvement in identified actions, particularly around curriculum design and pedagogy to underpin your philosophy ensuring that 'every teacher can be as good as they can be in what and how they teach'
- To support the drive to close the disadvantage gap, the Trust could consider the creation of a Trust wide reading strategy at Secondary utilising the expertise and experience of colleagues from the Primary phase through Headteacher project work or wider Trust collaboration. (Consider Trust leadership to enable this to materialise)
- Develop greater opportunity for subject specific CPD across both phases but particularly secondary level focussing on subject knowledge enhancement at KS3. Whilst principles of assessment are well established in Primary there is an emerging opportunity to further develop a Trust Assessment Framework that encompasses the Secondary phase. This could provide an opportunity to determine the Trust's vision for excellence in assessment (both formative and summative) which would help underpin leaders' strategic actions to secure excellence in everyday experience and an improvement in standards for all, particularly for those who are disadvantaged.

4. How is the trust delivering multi-school improvement? How does the Trust know and demonstrate its impact on the improvement of its academies and outcomes for students, especially disadvantaged and pupils with SEND?

Strengths

School Improvement

- A yearly cycle of School Improvement Visits/Meetings has been designed which have a predetermined focus – clearly understood by Central Team and Senior Leaders.
- Small Central Team providing support and challenge for inclusion, curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and leadership.
- Categorisation system developing in order to ascertain the level of support and challenge required in a school.
- High quality CPD including national expertise in place to support the development of staff: Tom Sherrington, Mark Rowland, Claire Sealy, Christine Counsel.
- A menu of CPD opportunities offered in both maths and English: Phonics, Early Reading, Mastering Maths.

- Network meetings are welcomed by HTs, DHT, SENDCos, subject leaders, secondary safeguarding leads.
- Moderation meetings valued across schools to share good practice and to hold practitioners to account for standards.
- Establishing the use of lead and consultant teachers, from a range of schools, to support Central Team (English and maths).
- Developing strong DSL network across secondary schools with opportunities to use the Teams portal for sharing resources, case studies and best practice
- Emerging work on attendance – policy and procedures welcomed by schools and supportive in giving clear Trust message.

Disadvantage / SEND

- Inclusion (DA / SEND) is a focus of the Board of Trustees and Deputy Director of Education (Focus on Inclusion) appointed April 2022.
- The Trust Improvement Partners are prioritising inclusion of the visions and values.
- Recognition from the Trust that SEND provision needs to develop further to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils for whom mainstream education isn't accessible.
- Director of Inclusion has ensured all schools feel equally valued and part of the team for SEND. Previously, as local authorities worked in different ways, some schools felt outside of the loop. For example, an Educational Psychologist was invited from BANES to attend the SENDCO Network meeting.
- Support for new SENDCOs is valued and established meaning SENDCOs "hit the ground running".
- Nurture provision is emerging as a high priority in the Trust and bespoke development is taking place dependent on the needs and budget constraints of a school.
- Standards and outcomes for disadvantaged (DA) pupils, across the Trust, are significantly below their non-DA peers and sometimes not in line with National outcomes.
- CPD opportunities developing to support strategies to decrease the attainment gap for pupils. The focus is developing oracy and reducing vocabulary gaps; includes lowest 20% interventions, talk boost & talk through stories.
- SENDCOs have written and developed Universal Provision so that now identification of SEND is consistent.
- SEND systems and processes across the Trust are beginning to be aligned.
- The use of the Universal Provision has meant that learners needs are identified quickly and correctly; appropriate provision / support is being put in place.
- The Trust has ambitious plans to develop alternative provision to support children with more complex needs who might otherwise not access mainstream provision.
- Recent implementation of DA strategy has meant leads across schools have an understanding of priorities and have had the opportunity to share strategies on a platform - this has positively impacted on workload.
- Schools talked positively of the concept of the Learning Partner model to support children in their attitude to learning.

Suggested areas for development and recommendations for reflection by the Trust

School Improvement

- Consideration of increasing the Central Team to lead other school improvement activities / areas, a common example was EYFS.
- Support from the Central Team or Senior Leaders to enable staff members to understand the role of the Trust in school improvement. The Trust could consider an introduction at the beginning of the year.
- Refinement of the categorisation tool to sharpen the focus in the SIP meetings.
- Greater coherence around network / moderation meetings, examples cited included timetable clashes / workload before and after meetings / budgetary costs.
- Implement tools to moderate / quality assure the School Improvement process to ensure consistency in challenge and support across all SIPs.
- DHTs in primary and secondary commented that some of the processes can be onerous and time-consuming (not always adapted for their local needs). As a result, this can breed less 'buy-in' to the Trust.
- Consider the development of capacity of central roles in HR, finance and estate management in order for school-based leaders to focus on pedagogy, curriculum, teaching and learning.
- Develop networking group for Primary DSLs including share point for resources, to include reference to North Somerset LA provision, which is currently very good.
- The Trust could also consider the co-construction of the Trust's approach to school categorisation and collectively determine the 'excellence' that permeates all aspects of the Trust through the Trust's belief in deep partnership between Trust and school leaders and members of the wider Trust community.
- The Trust could consider adding reference to standards in the categorisation document for each core area of school improvement. This could focus on attainment and progress and support rapid intervention for schools not meeting the LSP view of excellence i.e., coasting schools or schools not meeting NA in RWM (primary).

DA/ SEND

- To review the vision and values to clarify that those children who are DA / SEND are included and reflect current practice.
- Recognising that the LA is unable to support schools in meeting the needs of children with significant, complex needs, the Trust should now consider developing own alternative provision.
- As Top Up funding is changing schools, led by the Director for Inclusion, should further develop strategies to remove the barriers to learning for these pupils and improve standards:
- Upskilling SENDCos and staff through courses and external experts to provide quality training
- Introduce a share point for resources to support curriculum areas, SEND, DA
- Consider the development of technology for learning across the trust to support the needs of all pupils, but particularly SEND / DA

- Raising the status of the SEND / Inclusion lead teachers to the level of the curriculum (maths / English) leads.

5. Developing staff to support school improvement across the Trust

Sources of CPD

- The Trust believes that CPD 'is at the heart of all we do.' The goal is for every teacher in every classroom to be as good as they can be in what they teach (curriculum) and how they teach (pedagogy).
- There is an immensely rich and diverse CPD offer which utilises the impressive range of accredited CPD providers that the Trust leads e.g Teaching school, Hubs (Maths and English etc) as well as providing access to professional experts in the educational field.
- There is a well-designed CPD programme for Primary and Secondary as well as cross phase INSET. The attendance and feedback from these sessions is very good especially at Primary level.
- At secondary, leaders value focused CPD (eg: CP programmes for senior and middle leaders). They feel this had made a difference and can cite a range of outcomes of that CPD. They would like more of this and less generic CPD.
- Senior Leaders recognise more opportunity to visit outside their schools and research-based CPD. They feel this is very meaningful CPD – they recognise the importance of wider perspective.

Recruitment, retention & career progression

- There is a developing focus on recruitment, retention and succession to give a structure for attracting and developing staff.
- Access and take up of NPQs is very good.

School Improvement & CPD interface

- SIP works best when consistent across groups of schools working in partnership and where there is a coherence between trust and school priorities
- Staff feel valued if highlighted as Leading/Consultant Teachers – and colleagues in schools feel their input is relevant (issue is time and cost of release for this work).
- Leaders feel that central support for policies is extremely helpful, and this contributes to standards etc.

Suggested areas for development and recommendations for reflection by the Trust

- Build the CPD foci and programme with the school leaders to maximise buy in including:
 - Utilise the expertise in schools even more across the Trust e.g., secondary school subject leads to run subject sessions for primary schools, (especially for foundation subjects) ensure EY expertise feeds into primary curriculum design.
 - Address the perception that the trust's expertise lies in just some schools e.g., develop a 'directory' of strong practice and utilise them more. These can include but go beyond Lead & Consultant Teachers.

- Continue the outward-facing culture (beyond the Trust) to ensure rigorous benchmarking, broad perspective and awareness of best practice.
- Maximise the take-up of the various CPD opportunities especially among secondaries e.g by building the offer with all headteachers.
- More transparent, forward planning and options linked with priorities (rather than mandatory sessions) might help.
- Be clearer what engagement (training/meetings) is mandatory and what is optional.
- Recruitment, retention & career progression
 - Have a road map for career progression to motivate staff to stay and/or move on in the trust.
 - Look to ways to increase movement of staff within and between schools as part of their development as well as improving the school (e.g.: as part of leadership programmes).
 - Continue to develop targeted training for key roles in schools e.g. SENCO and Headteachers (preparation for AND for those in post)
 - Marketing the Trust as a developer of experts
 - Systemise implementation and follow-up for CPD, networks etc so that responsibly can be delegated to school leaders – then trust staff in schools to do it.

6. Capacity and sustainability of the Trust to improve its schools

Strengths

- LSP has a clear vision and coherent strategic model for School Improvement and, at all levels of the Trust there is a belief and commitment to continuous School Improvement being the raison d'être of the Trust. Trustees, Governors and Central services as well as school SBMs all saw their roles as delivering School Improvement.
- Highly committed, aware and involved Trustees and Governors.
- There is strong evidence from outcomes at all phases and from Ofsted that nearly all of the schools are high performing and benefitting from being part of the Trust. From Governors, and school staff (teaching and non-teaching) there is a belief that their school is better because it is in the LSP Trust.
- The newly introduced school categorisation model provides the structure to target school improvement.
- Central team has grown, developed and strengthened both in terms of its educational and services provision.
- The Trust can demonstrate significant Impact on the improvement of Primary schools. Primary schools value and engage in the Trust School Improvement strategy.
- There is a very clear identification of the key priorities for improvement e.g. disadvantaged performance, SEND, attendance. Actions to progress these are clearly being progressed and are making impact in schools especially with SEND.
- The Central services team are highly valued and effective though seen to be overstretched.
- The Central services team create capacity in the schools for the Heads to focus more on T&L.

- There is a great deal of talent and willingness across the trust to support Trust wide School Improvement and this could be harnessed more. The Opportunity Register plays a role here.

HTs' summary of strengths of the trust

- Professional generosity – through CEO (eg: through COVID, during inspections, but also supporting with challenging parents, complaints etc)
 - Central Services, development of policies, statutory process etc
 - Specific support (eg: with staffing and leadership issues)
 - Informal support and guidance (picking up the phone to peers)
 - Collaborative projects (reasonable collaboration)
 - Access to programmes such as ML and SL Challenge Partners Programmes
 - Trust-level SEND/Inclusion leadership.
 - Distinctiveness of each school maintained – behaviours align to trust values.
 - Vision and values for leaders is seen in the trust work and strategies.
 - Menu of CPD, networks (eg: CIEAG in secondary, reading in primary)
 - Leaders feel their school is better as a result of being in a trust (eg: support through COVID, responding to DFE/Ofsted requirements)
 - Mitigation for LA weaknesses
 - SI impact on raising standards rapidly where necessary for weaker schools and support for new HTs
 - SIP relationship with HTs is very positive and their views and feedback are respected.
- HTs have a genuine appetite for more alignment (in targeted functions) as they can see where previously these have been beneficial.
- They are not naïve to the fact that so much existing autonomy can remain in place, not that it will cost money (but bringing economies of scale along the way)

There is a real opportunity for the trust to develop Headteachers as trust leaders in their own right (to add capacity and specialist expertise to the wider team, but also to ensure custodianship of the trust's values and vision throughout all levels of stakeholders

'As long as we are raising standards and all working to vision and values of the trust, then the mechanics and model doesn't matter.'

Suggested areas for development and recommendations for reflection by the Trust.

- The Trust recognises the need to improve its capacity for delivering school improvement, particularly at secondary schools.
- Does the Trust need a Director (or Directors) of Education focused on secondary as well as primary would address this, but be aware there is a danger that this could perpetuate the divide when there is an appetite that the trust takes a more all-through approach EY-Y13 and one where everyone is seen as a leader and member of the trust.
- Schools recognise that the trust will intervene in different ways to support schools in different places on the journey for improvement, but this could be more formalised

(linked to the categories). As a result, the trust does need to increase its capacity to improve schools at different points on their school improvement journey (with the required urgency) but also develop innovation.

- Do trust leaders have the time and capacity to evaluate the impact of their activity to further drive improvement?
- The Central Services also need to improve their capacity to provide a timely and quality service, with an emphasis on clear communication (eg SBMs referred to confidence in quality of central HR advice also in Estates management but not in timeliness).
- The Trust should review the level of central governance professional support – does this need to be increased to ensure effective governance support?
- The Trust should also consider how they finance increasing capacity/resources (e.g.; increased top slice, gag pooling etc). One solution could be to have one DoEducation and use the funding for a possible second post to support more formal deployment of Lead & Consultant Teachers in the trust.
- Review the 'line management' function for headteachers in supporting/managing their role in embedding and implementing the trust's vision, values and culture and also supporting them eg: if the role is more of a link role, then it could be shared and more experienced HTs could link with others. The PMgT function could be taken out of this role and kept with CEO and CoLGB.
- Looking at systems and processes which are used by all schools (not optional) – to support greater consistency and efficiency eg: SIP, SEF etc.
- The Trust should also determine what functions it will bring into the centre (eg: data management, SEND Admin etc) - HTs recognise this is necessary and will bring a cost, but they also recognise there are opportunities for efficiency also.
- Communication is a key area for development e.g.:
- The trust should also focus on permeating its vision and values throughout the organisation, developing a culture of 'we are all the trust' and providing a more consistent experience for all schools and staff.
- Language is important. What words do you want to use? Is everyone using them?
- The Trust should also focus on improving communication and collaboration between primary and secondary schools and ensure there is a shared understanding of school improvement throughout the organization.
- Greater communication and clarity around project management for change – more advance notice and explanation of what and why are we doing things. You can never repeat key messages enough (different media not different words).

7. The trust challenge (from the notes taken by the trust) - optional section if the trust requests a written summary

Brief summary of the Trust Challenge discussion

Three questions were posed by the Trust for consideration by the reviewers.

1. Being a different Trust to Primaries and Secondary schools -Does this matter?

The consensus was yes it did matter very much. Schools in all phases joined the LSP Trust with the clear commitments expressed in the Vision, Mission and Values statements.

'A deep partnership between our schools in which our children and young people flourish.'

The LSP Mission is service to the community by providing an excellent all-through educational journey from nurse to sixth form.

The Trust's Values and Beliefs are defined by:

- Collaboration between schools delivering excellence for children and young people.

As such it should be a non-negotiable for all schools to be active collaborators in delivering this vision. It also means adopting Trust policies and aligning with core systems. Project management of alignment in terms of timing and communication are essential.

Schools cannot be sleeping partners or associate members. The commitment to supporting all schools to deliver quality education for all of the children in the Trust requires schools to see LSP as 'their Trust' where we work in active partnership not 'the Trust'.

2. Line Management of Headteachers Is this strong enough?

Currently the CEO line manages some HTs and Central Team, colleagues line manage other HTs. The view of the review team is that it is not feasible for the CEO to LM all Heads and therefore except in exceptional cases (e.g. Heads new to the Trust or Schools in Ofsted category) the CEO should not line manage HTs.

It was felt the name of the meeting should be considered as the term line management does presume an authority line.

It was suggested that the focus of these meetings be reconsidered and clearly agreed with the HTs. The suggestion is that the key focus should be progress against the SDP and also current issues facing the school to explore where the Trust can provide support. There should be clarity between these meetings and SIP and PM meetings.

3. Knowing whether our delegated culture (as we perceive it) has become a cultural limiting factor.

The consensus was that the time has come to look at the language that best fits the future of the Trust. Alignment rather than autonomy should be the key principle of the Trust. Schools should retain their unique identity, but they should also have pride in being a part of the LSP Trust which means doing things the Lighthouse Way.

A clear list of areas that must be aligned should be drawn up with the Heads and a timeline for the alignment for each area drawn up. The alignment will be based on research, best practice and consultation though it is recognised that this may not always be universally agreed, and

compromise would be needed. The benefit of having a Trust wide approach or system needs to outweigh individual school preference.

Areas that could be aligned in the future should also be identified and finally areas that are the individual school's prerogative should be identified.