



### **Our Vision:**

Educational excellence with a strong Christian ethos where every pupil is able to realise their full potential and is prepared for life.

### **Our Mission is:**

To support and encourage the work of academies in our Trust promoting Christian distinctiveness through excellent education of children and young people.

### **Our Values:**

- To develop a strong culture of professional development amongst our teaching staff as the quality of education in our academies can never exceed the quality of its teachers.
- To ensure that our academies are centres of excellence with a focus on the nurture and achievement of all their members.
- To promote high quality professional development and encourage mutual support in the pursuit of effective teaching and good student progress.

- To develop future and aspirational thinking based on our educational heritage and to make use of the latest research in pedagogy and child development.
- To foster, maintain and celebrate Christian distinctiveness in our schools.
- To recognise and enable those who often remain invisible, through ethnic or cultural disadvantage, or through disability or poverty.
- To ensure our academies have a particular vocation to the least advantaged to enable them through education to change their lives.

### **Purpose of the Trust:**

The purpose of the Trust is to maintain good and outstanding schools and ensure the rapid improvement of Church schools which need support now (and in the future) and to act as a vehicle for enabling the sharing of best practice and economies of scale to be achieved across the group of academies.

The Trust will act as the lead sponsor for any Church school within the Diocese of Rochester who wishes to become an academy or for Church schools which are being directed to become sponsored academies by the Department for Education.

### **As a Trust, the behaviours we expect to see:**

- We encourage strong and capable leaders
- We enable our people to excel to provide outstanding education
- We build trust and respect across our academies

### **As a Trust, the way we wish to grow is to develop:**

- Long term relationships in which there is an opportunity for continuous improvement

### **The principles by which we will manage the organisation:**

- Openness to build trust, be transparent, sharpen accountability and drive improvement
- We will operate a simple efficient low cost organisation
- We operate an effective & strong governance framework
- Tight control of our resources to achieve economies, efficiencies and effectiveness across our operations

### **What changes will there be to West Kingsdown once the school converts:**

On a day to day level, the Head Teacher will continue to lead the school and build on the good progress made to improve pupil outcomes. In addition, there would be benefits that would flow in from the increased funds which the school would receive. At present, the money that the school receives goes first to the local authority, which carries out a process known as 'top-slicing', in which it reserves for itself funds for the services it provides (such services include legal and human resources advice) before passing the funds on to the schools. When West Kingsdown becomes an academy, this money would come directly to the school. This would bring two advantages:

1. Even after the allocation of funds for the services it would buy in through the Trust, the school would be left with more money to invest directly in the education of its pupils.
2. Since the funding is coming direct from central government without reference to local authority priorities which might have been different from the West Kingsdown this would allow more informed financial planning for the long-term.

In addition to the above, as the school is currently a fully sponsored academy, this would bring in additional funds of £40k (not an inconsiderable amount for a small primary school) to assist West Kingsdown to help fund improvements to the internal fabric of the school as identified by the Head Teacher.

The following table details the difference for West Kingsdown from being part of Kent County Council to an academy under the Rochester Diocesan Multi Academy Trust as well as the benefits that would be realised from day one of the conversion.

Area	Maintained schools	RDAT & its Academies	What West Kingsdown will receive from the Trust
<b>Budget</b>	Financial responsibility and autonomy through the Local Authority	Full financial responsibility and autonomy managing a budget locally with a scheme of delegation through the Trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RDAT will provide the school £40k via an Environmental Improvement Grant to address areas such as internal redecoration and repair as identified by the Head Teacher.</li> <li>2. RDAT has purchased for all schools, PS Financial management software and licences. This comes with free support both on line and on site for the school and their staff.</li> <li>3. RDAT will have in place from day one of the conversion HR &amp; payroll services for the school.</li> <li>4. Through the Trust the school will procure services that the school wants. Not those dictated by the local authority.</li> </ol>
	Not allowed to run “excessive” surplus	Any surplus invested back into front line services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The school budget remains the school budget and RDAT commits that any surplus generated through efficient and effective procuring of services will be reinvested into front line service.</li> </ol>
	Local authority “top-slice” to provide central services	Receive Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. RDAT agrees with the school a top slice that is proportionate to the services it provides to the school. This is significantly smaller than the figure the school currently pays to KCC. The balance remains within the school budget. To see a list of the services that the Trust currently provides please click on the link below:  <a href="http://www.rdat.org.uk/ethos/our-services">http://www.rdat.org.uk/ethos/our-services</a> </li> </ol>
<b>Teaching &amp; learning</b>	Must conform to National Curriculum	Must offer “balanced and broadly based” curriculum but can deviate from National Curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. A school review commissioned by RDAT carried out via Cambridge Education to determine the schools exact improvement needs, in conjunction with the Head Teacher. Funded by the Trust and report made available to the GB.</li> <li>8. RDAT will fund school improvement services and</li> </ol>

			<p>CPD identified through the school improvement plan in particular a focus on improving Teaching &amp; Learning</p> <p>9. RDAT will ensure that the Academy Challenge Partner visits the school prior to conversion to help plan the CPD and identified school improvement support.</p> <p>10. RDAT will support the Head Teacher to obtain balanced and clear curriculum. Clear benefit to pupils from day one of the conversion.</p>
<b>Appointment of teachers</b>	Must have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent; <sup>74</sup> head appointed in conjunction with the local authority <sup>75</sup>	<p>Head Teacher and Deputy appointments approved by the Trust Board.</p> <p>Teaching &amp; non-teaching staff the responsibility of the Head &amp; LGB</p>	11. RDAT will support the Head Teacher and LGB to recruit staff with the right skills.
<b>Staff pay and conditions</b>	Must adhere to nationally-agreed pay and conditions	Full freedom over pay and conditions governed by the Trust Board	12. The Trust has not yet developed a policy in this respect so all staff will transfer and remain on their existing terms and conditions. This is protected by law through TUPE. Any changes will be conducted through an open and transparent process involving consultation and input with Union representation
<b>Admissions</b>	Required to follow the School Admissions Code; <sup>77</sup> local authority acts as admissions authority <sup>78</sup>	Required to follow the School Admissions Code; academy acts as admissions authority and determines own admissions criteria	13. RDAT will support the school in developing its admission code
<b>Governance</b>	Governing body comprised of community, parent, local authority, staff and foundation governors, appointed by governing body, local authority, election and sponsoring body	Governing body appointed by the academy trust must include two parent governors	<p>14. Trust Board approves all appointments and ensures that individuals with the right skills are appointed. The Trust will delegate day to day management of West Kingsdown a to the local governing body</p> <p>15. The Trust will honour the existing terms of appointments for members of the current governing body</p>

			16. A detailed Scheme of Delegation is to be put in place so there is clarity as to the responsibilities of the local governing body and how it is to be constituted. Whilst in practice those serving on the local governing body will be known as “Governors”, legally they are not the equivalent of governors of a maintained school and they do not have trustee responsibilities.
<b>Accountability</b>	Financially accountable to the local authority, which remains the owner of all funds until spent and is responsible for audit procedures	Responsible for own financial performance, with delegated authority from the Trust Board and expected to operate a balanced budget and required to adhere to the Academies Financial Handbook	17. Trust Directors are ultimately responsible in law for fiduciary duties. There will be a scheme of delegation in place to ensure that the Local Governing Body has delegated authority and spending limits. For information on the RDAT Scheme of Delegation please click on the link below: <a href="http://www.rdat.org.uk/ethos/trust-documents/">http://www.rdat.org.uk/ethos/trust-documents/</a>
	Must adhere to local authority accounting procedures	Trust must publish an annual financial self-assessment and independently-audited accounts	18. Accounts will be published on our website at <a href="http://www.rdat.org.uk">www.rdat.org.uk</a>
	Subject to Ofsted inspections and statutory performance data reporting requirements	Subject to Ofsted inspections and statutory performance data reporting requirements	19. Academy Challenge Partner in place to support and challenge the Head Teacher on school improvement.  20. School improvement services funded and can be purchased through a range of organisations including good and outstanding schools that deliver school to school support for our academies.  21. For information on the Trust’s School Improvement Strategy please click on the link below:  <a href="http://www.rdat.org.uk/ethos/ethos-2">http://www.rdat.org.uk/ethos/ethos-2</a>