



Nurturing agents of change

# **Strategic Plan 2022-2027**

A Pathway to Excellence

## Vision

We will work together as one Trust, one family of schools, one community inspired by a vision for excellence. We commit ourselves to deepen our mission and raise standards in order to provide an excellent Catholic education for every child in our care.

## CAST Strategic Aims

1. To ensure that every pupil is educated in a safe and stimulating environment, inspired by the Gospel, leaving us with a vision of service for humanity, especially the vulnerable.
2. To ensure that every pupil receives an excellent education, which fulfils their academic potential, and provides each with the qualifications, skills and qualities that will help them to thrive in adult life.
3. To ensure that CAST is a sustainable Trust with well-developed leadership at all levels, providing the necessary resources and equipment to fulfill its educational ambitions.
4. To ensure that all schools share a unified vision of a single family of schools, with a deeper sense of unity and alignment across the Trust.

## Strategic Goals:

**Goal 1. CAST will become a centre of excellence for Catholic education, deepening the mission and ethos of our schools. All schools will be assessed consistently 'Good' or better against Canonical Inspection criteria.**

CAST will become a centre of excellence for Catholic Education. Through our Catholic faith, we will promote the academic, spiritual, emotional, and social growth of the individual child and young person whilst developing our staff to be beacons of excellence.

As a Trust of Catholic schools, we are committed to working together in a trusting and collaborative manner, with integrity and transparency. We will model the leadership in the Trust and in our schools on the example of Jesus Christ, "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4.

We recognise the strength of our Catholic identity and how the CAST Gospel Values support our behaviours and mindset when making difficult decisions for the common good.

Our school communities will be distinguished by an atmosphere “permeated” with the Gospel Values of humility, compassion, kindness, justice, forgiveness, integrity, peace and courage. Our pupils will experience these values in action in the way that they are loved, encouraged, accompanied, challenged and celebrated on their journey through school.

**Goal 2. Through strategic development and open collaboration, CAST will ensure that all our schools provide the very best leadership and teaching, and in doing so, provide the highest quality learning for all pupils, as evidenced by our schools being ‘Good’ or better against Ofsted criteria.**

In CAST, our philosophy is that everyone is a leader. Our leaders are developed and empowered to nurture a positive and aspirational culture where everyone flourishes.

As a Trust we consistently strive for effective leadership which ensures that accountability is clear and effective at all levels in the Trust. We uphold high standards of behavior and a ‘no excuses’ culture – where no cohort, family or pupil is left behind.

Our ambition extends across our CAST family. Our systems develop the talent and expertise of our staff, Governors and pupils. We aim to empower the next generation of leaders at all levels to become Agents of Change. Through strategic development and open collaboration, CAST will ensure that all our schools provide the very best teaching, thus providing the highest quality learning for all our pupils.

CAST schools will explore new and creative methods of teaching, evaluating and improving impact, whilst holding on to the best of our traditions.

We aim to be a centre of excellence at the forefront of educational thinking, researching, and sharing the most innovative practice nationally to develop all aspects of CAST and its schools.

Our portal will continue to be developed to become an effective tool to support teaching and learning through the development of high-quality shared resources that aim to reduce workload and disseminate best practice. This will include a professional development library underpinned by evidence-based practice and in support of deepening a common approach to pedagogy and a common language for learning across all CAST schools. This will also support the mantra of ‘everyone a leader’.

**Goal 3. A learning environment is provided that enables all pupils to achieve their potential, with a focus on support for pupils who have additional needs and a commitment to closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils.**

With Christ at the centre of our hearts and of our schools, we are committed to the flourishing of our children and young people, so that they might grow in excellence and learn how to use their skills and knowledge for the common good, especially the poor and marginalised.

We believe that every pupil is made in the image of God, with God-given gifts and God-given dignity. We believe that no pupil's background or start in life should determine their future. Our belief in the dignity of the person will be expressed in a commitment to promoting social justice.

We recognise that resources need to be distributed equitably but the most disadvantaged should be a priority in the allocation of time and professional attention.

We aspire, through collaboration and shared practice, to provide a consistent standard of education, care, and opportunity across all CAST schools and for all groups of learners.

**Goal 4. The Trust promotes a shared organisational culture that provides opportunities for all staff and pupils to develop, learn and grow in an environment where every individual is respected, disadvantage is challenged, and diversity is celebrated.**

In CAST we recognise that we are one family of Catholic schools, one organisation, inspired by a collective vision for excellence. We are committed to developing a deeper sense of unity and alignment across the Trust.

At CAST we place a high value on our relationships. We maximise opportunities for collaboration and co-operation. We forge strong links between our schools and local parish communities, to share areas of strength and support and we build partnerships with the wider educational community to secure improvement and recruitment.

We live out the understanding that we are all made in the image and likeness of God by celebrating the diversity of our school communities and fostering an inclusive environment that teaches us all to "love one another as I have loved you".

Our emphasis is on the dignity of the other rather than 'my' dignity, especially the dignity of the child or young person. Adults in our community share the same dignity, of course, but our schools are 'child-centered' – our primary reason for being is to provide a holistic education of the highest quality.

We seek to continue developing a network of CAST-wide experts by coordinating staff expertise, creating teams to build learning communities of adults to improve subject knowledge and the impact of classroom practice, and to develop a common language of learning. Aligned methods and practices of effective, evidence-based learning will be consistently applied across the Trust, leading to excellent outcomes.

Innovation viewed as part of evolving practice and improving systems across the CAST family leads to greater progress for all. We will seek to draw upon the skills and talents of our CAST wide team, providing opportunities for middle leaders and senior leaders to hone their skills and add capacity to a model of sustainable school improvement.

At CAST we are committed to promoting equity of access and equality of opportunity through alignment in terms of practice and policies. There are some areas where this is statutory. One employer means one pay policy, one finance system, one HR function and so on. We will allow for local policy variations where it is desirable.

At CAST we demonstrate a culture of vigilance where safeguarding and health and safety are seen as everyone's responsibility. We aim to build a culture of aspiration and excellence so that it becomes the norm.

CAST's strategy is dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances but remains true to its vision and mission. Working collaboratively, all schools within the Trust have a voice. Their contributions and feedback are not only welcomed but expected. This strategy will be implemented through policy and practice.

**Goal 5. The Trust is financially secure and ensures that sufficient funds are reinvested each year to meet the needs of our schools. The reinvestment target will be reviewed annually.**

Within CAST we nurture a culture of good stewardship which strives for viability and sustainability. Our Trust is funded by the state, sponsored by the Church, and our challenge is to provide an excellent Catholic education for our pupils while delivering value for money for the state and the Church.

Good stewardship means that we challenge inefficiencies. Viability of finances, pupil numbers, pupil outcomes and Catholic leadership are factors in considerations of stewardship across the Trust estate. At CAST we aspire for sustainable excellence by underpinning our operations with robust and equitable systems. Our modus operandi and curriculum are inspired by Gospel Values and care of our common home.

**Goal 6. The Trust will provide a high-quality central service offer to enable school leaders to increasingly focus on their core educational purpose.**

CAST will enable school leaders to increasingly focus on their core educational purpose by delivering outstanding central services, with an aspirational aim to free up as much of their time as possible to devote solely to teaching and learning.

Our schools have committed staff, led by effective leaders, and supported by dedicated teams of governors. Our schools' benefit from a strong professional team at the centre and are well supported in all areas of school life from education and safeguarding to finance, premises, and HR. There is a mutually supportive and collegiate style of working within CAST and a growing sense of unity between our schools, providing mutual support.

A systematic approach to sharing expertise within the Trust will be facilitated by the school improvement and central teams with access to phase and subject expertise. Developing a sustained and robust cross-phase, peer-to-

peer review process, which is externally validated, will be integral to maintaining high standards and in support of open, honest and supportive professional challenge.

As a Trust, we will aim to provide challenge and support to the Headteachers of our schools within the constantly shifting demands of education. We will share resources and skills for the benefit of all our schools as they continue their journey towards providing an outstanding Catholic education.

As CAST schools we celebrate the unique nature and individuality of each school, whilst understanding that through collaboration and alignment, where it makes sense to do so, our schools are stronger. We are absolutely determined to set our sights high and aim for sustained improvements on behalf of the children and young people we are proud to serve.

**Goal 7. To further strengthen the Trust as a strong, resilient organisation by meeting planned admission numbers (PAN) and maximising the benefit of partnerships with external schools and Trusts.**

We are committed to growing our partnerships to enhance the sustainability of the Trust and our ability to add value to the schools within our family. We recognise that each school has its own unique context and will at times also need to access local partnerships and networks as well as those offered or promoted by the Trust.

The Trust currently engages in a wide range of professional partnerships that both give and provide support locally, this includes working with other Multi-Academy Trusts and schools. CAST has a wide ecumenical vision for partnership working with other faith schools, where there is natural spiritual and moral alignment.

The Trust will work with and support its most vulnerable schools to engage in clear strategies that support growth through pupil recruitment, in areas where this is demographically viable. This is critical to the ongoing success and viability of the Trust.

To ensure ongoing organisational resilience the Trust will adapt and evolve according to the needs of its schools and their communities. This will necessitate the creation of regional hubs that share a common approach and access to specialist resources and expertise, this will include access to an inclusion hub of experts (EP, Behaviour Support, SEND support) as well as internally developed curricular specialists, offering support to other schools in their hub. This model will enable all schools equal and fair access to 'educational specialists'.

Succession planning for tomorrow's leaders is a core part of our organisational development, we will seek to create a strong and resilient workforce, supported by high quality professional development.

We will ensure that high quality Catholic education is invitational and accessible to all, meaning that our schools have the ability to thrive as an educator and employer of choice.

We will ensure our work is underpinned and supported by robust systems that drive our vision for aspiration and excellence, enabling us to adapt in response to new and emerging priorities.

**Goal 8. Effective and efficient governance structures will be refined to provide a robust framework to ensure that expectations of governance are aligned across central and local CAST boards**

Through our central governance support we will continue to refine our comprehensive governance framework, setting out clear roles and responsibilities. Having a robust framework, governors will be able to continue to work strategically towards the school and Trust's objectives.

CAST will work, in conjunction with its Local Governing Boards, to ensure that the Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA) is well understood and followed, ensuring that standards and expectations of governance are aligned in all CAST schools.

We will develop a training programme that develops the skills and experience of our Directors and Governors, encouraging local networks between LGBs and peer to peer review between Multi-Academy Trusts.

We will work in partnership with the Diocese of Plymouth to support the recruitment of skilled and committed foundation governors on our LGBs, and in doing so, we will continue to review our progress in this regard, whilst also exploring other viable models of local governance.

We will ensure that the Nolan Principles of Public Life are applied at all levels of governance and understand that we are collectively responsible for all children in our CAST family; we view good education as a child's entitlement, therefore we share our time, expertise and resources for the good of all.

**Goal 9. Minimise the Trust's impact on the environment through year-on-year reductions in its carbon footprint towards net zero by 2030, and to implement sustainability within the curriculum through the embedding of Laudato Si.**

In CAST we appreciate that sustainability must inform all decisions we make in every area of our organisation. We will encourage a commitment in our schools to the stewardship of the earth, our common home and invite our pupils to be good citizens, agents of change in the world, supported by the teachings from Pope Francis in his Laudato Si.

We recognise the importance of sustainability in making informed decisions and understanding the impact on our economy, the environment and society.

Our models of school improvement will invest in the leaders of tomorrow and add capacity to the system. The models we use will be both flexible and responsive to need, working towards our aim of sustainability.

## Being part of the CAST family of schools

Schools in CAST have the ability to retain autonomy in many areas of school life, whilst at the same time aligning with Trust policies and expectations. We encourage our schools to be both 'unique' and 'within' our family of schools at the same time. It is our intention to empower and encourage our leaders, through support and challenge, to bring even greater success to our schools and communities.

The Trust dividend demonstrates the difference CAST makes to its schools and the benefits of belonging to the CAST family of schools:

### **Trust Dividend**

- With our shared vision in mind, our schools operate within the unifying parameters set by the Trust that epitomise our collective moral purpose and responsibility
- Our schools benefit from the strategic leadership of a highly experienced Senior Executive Leadership Team comprising the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Finance Officer (CFO), Chief Operating Officer (COO), and Director of Education (DoE).
- Our Catholic identity is widely known, understood, and celebrated through our Gospel Values. Our Gospel Values underpin our mission and desire to provide an authentic Catholic education for all pupils in our care.
- Our schools benefit from a Trust-wide service level agreement with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth that provides bespoke support in the areas of RE and Catholic Life.
- Our schools benefit from high-calibre and responsive support from a dedicated Trust School Improvement Officer (SIO) offering both support and challenge. This support is needs-led and highly responsive in nature. Support is offered right through the school holidays and shut down periods.
- Our schools offer a broad and balanced curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of the pupils they serve and aligned with the Trust's curriculum design principles, to ensure a common approach.
- Our schools use a common pedagogical platform based on Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, this is endorsed Trust wide and provides school leaders with the confidence to build a bespoke curriculum that is focused on pedagogy and outstanding teaching and learning
- Our schools work dynamically across the Trust to develop school improvement plans which reflect the individual needs of each school and link specifically to the Trust's Strategic Goals. Improvement is therefore both bottom up and top down, with funds and resources directed to areas of priority both collectively as well as individually.
- Our schools receive a robust offer of centralised services including HR support, premises and operational support, business and finance support and safeguarding. These services give school leaders the confidence that they have a consistent team of dedicated experts working to support them. This support ensures that they are able to focus the majority of their efforts on school improvement and teaching and learning matters.
- Our schools are served by a dedicated and highly skilled School Business Management professional partner, managed by the Trust.
- Our schools all benefit from Trust-wide procurement and contract management operations including premises, finance, and school improvement packages, therefore saving precious time, ensuring a consistent service, and best value.

- Our schools benefit from the Trust’s internal and external audit functions being fully centralised.
- Our schools enjoy opportunities to be a part of Trust wide networks and professional development activities including peer review, SEND networks, DSL, and safeguarding networks, EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage), Maths, Teaching and Learning and leadership networks and Headteacher briefing sessions and updates. This approach provides valuable ongoing professional development and support to our schools.
- Our schools’ benefit from the specific expertise and experience of Lead Practitioners in the areas of SEND, IXL, EYFS. This expertise is shared across the Trust for the benefit of all, in a needs-led approach.
- Our schools receive cyclical review in the areas of safeguarding, Health & Safety, SEND, Teaching and Learning and budget setting. This ensure that they have regular and precise feedback about areas of educational, operational, and business compliance, along with the necessary support and guidance to keep up to date and to make improvements.
- Our colleagues are afforded access to bespoke CPD pathways, developed by the Trust, to strengthen professional development across the workforce, through effective use of the Apprenticeship Levy, National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) and coaching programmes. All staff across the Trust may benefit from the apprenticeship opportunities that being part of a large Multi-Academy Trust affords.
- Our Local CAST Boards have access to regular training and briefing sessions that help them to understand the role they play within the Trust and the connection between local governance and strategic Board governance, this is underpinned by a clear and robust scheme of delegation and a suite of documents, including the Schedule of Accountability, which informs and supports all layers of governance across the Trust.
- Our schools have access to high quality governance professionals including NLGs (National Leaders of Governance) and governance consultants that provide support and advice.
- Our newly launched ‘Trust Portal’ enables consistent communication with all our colleagues and is a window for collaboration and celebration across the Trust.

## Partnership Working

Our moral purpose, at the heart of our identity, centres around supporting an extraordinary experience of Catholic education. In order to safeguard and enhance our moral purpose, we believe that it is vital that schools work in partnership. CAST will promote local hubs of schools working together in specific areas. These hubs will benefit from both their local relationships and inter-cluster relationships across all schools in the CAST family.

We have an established system of local governing boards, known as local CAST boards, that will continue to lead strategically in the development of individual schools. This work is underpinned by the principles of the Trust, supported by the Board of Directors. Where school leadership structures are shared across two or more schools, we remain open either creating an Executive Local CAST Board or retaining individual Local CAST Boards; our main driver is effective governance which demonstrates appropriate levels of challenge and support.

Local CAST Boards retain a significant role in the direction of their school, working within, and as part of the Trust governance structures. They remain responsible for a slimmer but deeper portfolio of responsibilities, as outlined in the comprehensive Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA).

Working in partnership develops the skills and professionalism of all staff. It provides staff within our schools, both large and small, the development opportunities that will help them retain the expertise that they already have at teaching, administrative, support and leadership level. This means CAST will ensure that focus is always on investment in high quality professional development across the Trust.

The educational landscape is ever changing. More than ever, educational establishments will benefit from working in partnership with CAST with a view to joining a community of like-minded schools.

## Catholic Life

The strategic intent at the core of the formation of CAST was to create a family of remarkable, authentically Catholic centres of learning.

It is fundamental to the purpose of CAST, that our faith informs all aspects of our life as we walk in the footsteps of Christ together. Thus, the key values and beliefs of our faith should always permeate our day-to-day lives and interactions.

We expect the young people in our schools to be encouraged to explore, develop and affirm their own faith. Our schools strive to provide an environment in which the young people in our care can strengthen their knowledge and understanding of their own faith, developing their own relationship with Jesus, and a respect for the faith, belief, and the values of others. We will provide a holistic education focusing on developing the whole person.

We aim to give our pupils leadership and ownership of their faith, guiding and supporting them in an environment where they can understand the meaning of the sacraments and frequently engage with them.

As inclusive schools we will always make provision for people of other faiths also encouraging them to have pride in their own faith.

We embrace colleagues who are of other faiths or none and we will ensure that they have support to understand the ethos of a Catholic school. In partnership with the Diocese, we offer formation programmes to support non-Catholic teachers in our schools.

The quality of Catholic life across all our schools must reach the highest expectations. To this end, all pupils must have opportunities to contribute to a wide range of activities that promote and embody Catholic social teaching. All school leaders promote, monitor, and evaluate the effectiveness of current provision and address shortcomings, with the aim of being excellent Catholic schools as recognised by the Diocese and Ofsted.

Everyone in our schools must have the opportunity to witness and participate in meaningful and engaging collective worship and through wider parish participation.

## CAST - Model for school improvement

As a Trust our driving ambition is to support our schools in making the biggest difference to the life chances of our pupils and to strengthen Catholic Education.

This model is used to drive continual improvement accepting that school improvement is the responsibility of us all. Each school and each region will have their own identity but will work for the 'greater good' of all the pupils we serve. This means resources need to be flexible and deployed across all schools where necessary.

This model will clarify what 'makes the difference' and act as a benchmark to measure progress. It will provide 'guidance' for the School Improvement Team, who, as a result, will have greater capacity to direct school improvement.

Our school leaders, School Improvement Team, Director for Education, and Executive Team, will consider the quality of education (Intent, Implementation, and Impact) through a review of the following:

### Leadership and Vision

Ethical, determined, and passionate leadership, underpinned by a clear vision, is found at the core of any successful and improving school. We expect our schools to be rooted in Gospel Values and a relentless drive to always seek to provide our young people with the opportunities to be happy and successful in life.

### Curriculum (in and outside the classroom)

The quality and execution of the curriculum is key to our success as places of learning and development.

A core aim of all schools should be to drive social mobility and improve life chances, especially for the most vulnerable, and so, the curriculum is the essential overarching framework of a successful school which is focused on improving the life chances of all its pupils. The curriculum obviously refers to the core subjects, and foundation subjects, but also includes Formation, Personal Development, PSHE, Careers Education Information and Guidance (CEIAG) (in Key stage 4 and 6<sup>th</sup> form) safeguarding and enrichment as part of the core offer.

A quality curriculum considers what skills and knowledge are needed, what and how they are taught. Understanding the best forms of progression and cohesion, and how they are assessed will ensure that pupils are taught to know more and remember more. The curriculum in our schools will be purposefully enriched for all children. Pupils who become immersed in wider opportunities will be furnished with meaningful experiences beyond the taught curriculum.

In all our schools, the design of the curriculum, based on the CAST Curriculum Design Principles and the Principles for Teaching and Learning, will be a shared expectation that reflects the context of the school. Through staff discussing and planning together, subject leaders will get to know their curriculum inside and out. They will secure improved understanding of standards, be able to guard against pupil misconceptions through careful planning and support the ongoing training needs of staff.

Clear planning of the details of the curriculum, should ensure that pupils have repeated exposure to abstract concepts in different contexts to help ensure long-term remembering.

Curriculum design principles must be built on solid foundations in learning that are established from the very start of a child's education journey. This learning journey starts in the EYFS by providing a stimulating and rich environment in which play-based learning is supported with sensitive and informed adult interactions. As children progress through Key Stage 1, excellent teaching in core and non-core subjects is enhanced by an enriched curriculum to engage and enthuse. Key skills and deepening knowledge are developed in Key Stage 2 so that all children are ready and well equipped for the next stage in their education.

At Key Stage 3, our secondary schools will teach the full range of national curriculum subjects. Subject leaders will know their curriculum overview and the finer detail of its component parts, which will contribute to ambitious end goals. Leaders will carefully have considered the prerequisite learning so that pupils can tackle the new learning to come. There is an expectation that leaders insist that our pupils experience quality resourcing throughout their curriculum.

At Key Stage 4 all pupils will study for GCSEs in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (combined science or separate sciences), and Religious Education. PE, and PSHE/RSE will also be taught to all students.

In addition, pupils will be encouraged to attain a modern foreign language, history, geography, and computer science (in some combination). The arts, vocational subjects, sciences, and technology qualifications are valuable subjects and will be encouraged by the schools and offered as options in order to provide the broadest curriculum offer.

Post-16 education is offered through the shared sixth form provision between St Boniface College and Notre Dame. Sixth form education will be tailored to the local context and offer, ensuring our pupils progress onto the most appropriate courses and post-16 level of study.

Outcomes for pupils constantly improve when teaching is consistently strong and effective, so pupils learn well. The work on vision, leadership and behaviour are all about setting a context in which teaching is effective and pupils learn and achieve. We acknowledge that "Good" teaching is not one approach or another; it is a craft where a variety of tools are used to 'educate' the individual.

Effective teaching is all about engaging with the individual as a learner. Their experience of learning should be stimulating, motivating, and interesting. Students should understand that the knowledge and attributes they are equipped with through teachers are valuable for the next chapter of their life journey. Techniques and style of teaching will change depending on context and the needs of learners.

Schools need to be confident that they know how to develop effective teaching. They must also be able to identify how they know that pupils are learning and making progress. For this to be the case, there needs to be open and honest dialogue between teachers about recognising strengths and areas for development. Evaluations of teaching quality need to take account of the progress that pupils are making.

To judge the quality of teaching, schools will use a wide range of sources at teacher and class level including pupil progress reviews, developmental drop-ins, learning walks, peer assessment, pupil voice and assessment outcomes. These should all contribute to a wider discussion between teachers and their line managers about their strengths and development needs. A clear and open approach to improving the quality of teaching will help ensure that improvements made in one area can be developed elsewhere.

**The quality of teaching makes the biggest difference to pupils' learning outcomes.**

## Professional development

Effective Continuing Professional Development (CPD) should be at the heart of our work to engage, develop and retain talented staff in the schools within our Trust. Our CPD should adhere to the following key principles:

- Built around participants needs.
- Subject specific content.
- A clear, logical thread.
- Involves explicit discussion, reflection, and active research.
- External input from areas of expertise.
- Collaborative learning.
- Transformational leadership.

Within each school, CPD programmes will vary according to the needs of a particular context. At CAST we offer an extensive CPD pathway across the Trust, to ensure a fully skilled and resilient workforce. Over time, the Trust will develop its own leadership development programme in order to train, grow, and retain its own future leaders. The Trust will seek to 'train its own' but continue to be outward looking and connect deeply with the Diocese of Plymouth, as well as with providers from the wider system.

Our CPD pathway is underpinned by a suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) as well as apprenticeship opportunities for our support staff, teachers, and leaders. The CPD pathway is designed to build internal capacity and share best practice between different groups of staff across the Trust.

The opportunity of subject leaders to come together to share best practice will be offered through engagement in the CAST teaching and learning network, as well as other curricular networks such as English, Maths and Early Years. RE leaders also routinely work together and with our Diocesan colleagues, sharing best practice and striving for improvement

## Personal development, behaviour attendance and systems

Pupils need to attend school and behave well if they are to learn and make progress. Staff must communicate clear expectations of behaviour and attendance, reflective of the school's vision, culture, and ethos.

Consistency is key to improving behaviour, and in line with the school's behaviour and attendance policy, this requires the school to have a clear, unwavering, and known position on what is acceptable and what is not, allowing for reasonable adjustments to be made for pupils with SEND. This should be evident in the way staff guide and respond to pupils at all times of the school day.

Senior leadership is crucial in this area. Senior leaders need to be highly visible (e.g., welcoming pupils and families at the start of the school day, during transition points, and during the lunch period). Ultimately, pupils should be encouraged to ‘self-regulate’ and take a proactive role in maintaining and developing standards of excellence. Middle leaders must take responsibility for their areas and not pass on responsibility to others. In the same way, class teachers also need to take responsibility for their lessons and not pass on responsibility to others.

All staff must know and implement any reasonable adjustments to the behaviour policy that are necessary for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Attending school and reducing persistent absence for all groups is essential. Schools need to be relentless in their approach especially with the most vulnerable. Any form of unofficial exclusions, off rolling or encouraging elective home education are not appropriate and have no place in CAST schools.

Class teachers need to be proactive in engaging with pupils and parents at the earliest opportunity where there are emerging patterns of poor attendance. All schools will be advocates of the Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) approach and will engage in positive and relational teaching approaches.

All Plymouth CAST teachers and support staff in pastoral roles are encouraged to undertake the CofE NPQ in Leading Behaviour and Culture (NPQLBC) as a core part of their professional development and in support of maintaining a positive school culture and learning environment.

## Intervention strategies and provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Quality first teaching in wave one across all years and all groups is the key to quality outcomes and improving life chances. Every teacher is a leader of SEND and should be familiar with the SEND specific strategies in the Code of Practice, designed to support pupils with specific needs. Resources should be targeted to the classroom. However, at points, it is necessary to intervene in order to accelerate progress.

Intervention may be used to support a wide range of additional needs or where pupils need to catch up. Intervention should not be used to replace quality first teaching and should be precise in meeting the needs of pupils. Clear entry and exit data will be collated to demonstrate impact of learning at the start and end of each intervention programme.

Schools will have a clear monitoring, evaluation, and review cycle to check progress. Leaders will rigorously monitor and use data to improve progress. Communication to engage parents in the progress of their child is crucial. Post-Covid, ensuring that social and emotional competencies and resilience are nurtured are also fundamental to the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils.

Where interventions are undertaken, schools will ensure

- That they target the right groups of pupils.
- That there is clear accountability for the intervention strategy and clear entry and exit data to demonstrate impact.
- School leaders and SENDCO staff will facilitate departments working together to coordinate pupil support.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities will be supported through targeted classroom provision in the first instance. Where appropriate, pupils will be provided with the opportunity for withdrawal to support specific interventions for that individual child to succeed and thrive. Our schools will all benefit from the opportunity to regularly engage in the CAST SEND networks. Bespoke support will be offered from the CAST SEND lead.

## Self-evaluation and development planning

Self-evaluation as a crucial part of our schools' ongoing cycle of review and improvement planning. Self-evaluation should be completed annually as a minimum requirement and in line with the CAST Scheme of Delegated Authority (SODA).

The Trust requires schools to produce a School Improvement Plan (SIP) and review and refresh this annually. These documents directly reflect the work that will need to be done to achieve targets set and serve as a live and ongoing record of progress towards achieving targets and other school improvement priorities. The plan should be a 'live' document, frequently considered and evaluated over the course of an academic year by middle and senior leaders in the schools. The SIP needs to be well-organised, succinct, unambiguous, data-driven, and well presented, such that it can be presented to and understood by all stakeholders at any given moment throughout the course of the academic year.

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) will be quality assured by the school's School Improvement Officer (SIO) and the plan should also reflect the Board's strategic goals. The governing board of the school will also have oversight of the SIP in line with the mandatory requirements in the SODA.

## Initial Teaching Training (ITT)

Teachers are our biggest asset. The key to success is high quality teachers in our schools. Our approach to teacher development will be led by our engagement with regional providers and through partnerships with Teaching School Hubs as the appropriate body. This will be developed in partnership with other accredited providers.

## Early Career Teacher Training (ECT)

We work with our regional Teaching School Hubs to secure comprehensive Early Career Training packages that schools can use.

## Research

We are committed to basing our work on evidence and work with different partners to develop best practice. This is through the networks and through our involvement with both local and national organisations.

## School Support

In schools, one of the elements that leads to sustained improvement is reducing in-school variation.

As a Trust, we also need to reduce inter-school variation. As a result, we have differing degrees of support we give to schools based on need and not entitlement. Support and challenge are provided by our School Improvement Officers and Quality Assured by our Director of Education.

All of our schools are carefully monitored on a Trust-wide Heat Map that not only gives an indication of the school's current progress but also includes a forecast trajectory towards meeting the Board's Strategic Goals. The Heat Map also documents areas where future challenge and support are needed.

Trust data will be used to determine a risk assessment process for our schools. Schools will be internally risk assessed and categorised by the School Improvement Team as:

- High risk
- Medium risk
- Low risk

Example criteria for risk assessment:

- Progress – looking at all academic progress indicators relevant to the phase
- Attainment – ability on intake is taken into account
- Attendance and exclusions
- Leadership capacity/capability
- The culture of safeguarding in the school
- Low level concerns or any whistleblowing raised
- Previous inspection judgement
- Inspection window

The Director of Education and Chief Financial Officer will work collaboratively to release resources where necessary/possible in support of school improvement.

### High risk schools:

- Tailored action plans will be produced with the school to drive rapid improvement
- Schools report impact regularly to SIO
- Director of Education / School Improvement Officer (SIO) / Consultant visit the school each half term to evaluate progress
- All feedback reviewed at SELT meetings with the wider team
- There is potential for additional capacity to be provided by the centre where required
- Where appropriate, Subject Leaders will be used to support across all subject areas
- Leadership expertise and subject leadership support can be drawn upon from other CAST schools

## Medium risk schools:

- Tailored action plans are produced by the Headteacher and SIO to drive developments
- Package of support identified to increase capacity for change providing support based on the specific or leadership needs of the school
- Headteacher reports

## Low risk schools:

- Schools take part in normal procedures for school improvement and development. Governance is reviewed through the mandatory cycle given to LGBs through the SODA, Schedule of Accountability and the CAST Governance Handbook.

## Monitoring

School leaders are supported by the School Improvement Team and Director of Education in the monitoring and evaluation of school progress. The mechanisms for monitoring schools are through the LGB and also the Education and Standards Committee of the Board which will meet on a cyclic basis in line with the Board's cycle of business.

Each year, school leaders are supported and challenged to review their SIP and to set suitably challenging targets, these are monitored throughout the year by the SIOs, DOE and LGB. It is the role of the Link Director to hold the LGB Chair to account.

At these meetings, both individual school targets and key lines of enquiry will be reviewed.

## Reviews and Audits

There are three forms of reviews / audits that are planned across all schools.

### Whole School Reviews

A school review is focused on the 'CAST School Improvement Model.' The review identifies areas of strength as well as areas for development (linked to the school's SEF) and suggestions as to where support could be sought. It can be led by an independent, external school improvement consultant working with the SIO and DOE or internally by the SIO and/or DoE. It is a collaborative and open exercise between the review team and the school. This enables an honest and open conversation about where the school is and where it is going, to the benefit of all concerned.

Each CAST school will receive a review every two years. However, schools with overall effectiveness judged to be less than Good in their latest Ofsted inspection will be reviewed annually.

Aims of a Whole School Review:

- Audit, challenge, and support for the school being reviewed, providing a plan of action.
- Identify what is best within the school so others can learn from them.
- Provide a point of reference for subsequent monitoring and evaluation by the school and School Improvement Officer (SIO).
- CPD for reviewers (by visiting other schools – sharing ideas).

The review team consists of:

- Lead Reviewer – Independent external school improvement consultant or Director of Education.
- SIO.

The review report identifies strengths, areas for development and recommendations within the strands of the CAST School Improvement model.

- Leadership - including self-evaluation, and development planning.
- Curriculum.
- Classroom Provision - including outcomes.
- Professional Development.
- Behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Personal Development – wider curriculum including PSHE and enrichment.

The DoE/ SIO uses this review to monitor progress and drive improvement.

## SEND Reviews

These are carried out every two to three years by a Trust brokered SEND specialist,

These reviews look at:

- Leadership of SEND
- Outcomes for SEND pupils
- Teaching and learning experience of SEND pupils
- Professional Development of staff to support SEND pupils
- Behaviour, attendance, and pastoral support for SEND pupils
- How the school works with pupils and parents
- Assessment and identification of need
- Monitoring and tracking
- Transition
- The learning environment

The report identifies strengths and development areas. An action plan is produced which signposts support.

## Peer Reviews

These are centered around a focused area that the Headteacher identifies for improvement. The area of focus is preset and agreed before the review, with the review testing a hypothesis or following a key line of enquiry to deep dive into the area of focus. A formal report is completed at the end of the process and shared with the Headteacher, SIO and DoE, for monitoring priorities. The peer reviews are designed to be developmental in process.

## Safeguarding Audits

These audits, based on Section 175 of the Education Act, evaluate a school's processes and procedures around safeguarding. They are carried out biannually, looking at:

- Governance and Leadership
- Policies
- School Environment
- SCR & Recruitment
- Referrals, reporting and recording

In addition to the formal biannual audits, schools also complete three separate safeguarding returns each year. These returns cover different areas of safeguarding practice and compliance in order to provide assurance.

The audit identifies areas of strength and concern as suggests training when required.

## Catholic Life and Mission Reviews

These are carried out every three years by the Diocese of Plymouth Education Service (DES) and will review the leadership, pupil outcomes and provision of:

- Catholic Life and Mission
- Religious Education
- Collective Worship

## Health and Safety Audits

Full Health & Safety are commissioned from our external Health & Safety Consultants, Devon Health and Safety Service, and are undertaken on a rolling programme, every three years. An annual compliance check is managed by the Trust Operations Team.

# School Improvement

## How will CAST sustainably improve its schools?

The School Improvement Team and SELT at CAST will focus on identifying and addressing any underperformance in specific schools; improving the quality of leadership in all schools; meeting the needs of disadvantaged children; and fostering collaboration between schools. There will also be support provided for governance and finance where required.

### SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

#### Vision, values, strategy & culture

An ambitious vision underpinned by shared Catholic values and a high-trust culture.

A coherent but responsive strategy with clarity on core team and school-based roles and systems.

Alignment around shared practices which support improvement.

#### People, learning & capacity

An effective approach to recruiting, developing & retaining high quality staff.

Systems to identify and deploy leadership expertise across schools.

Systematic ways of moving knowledge and evidence within and between schools.

#### Curriculum, assessment & pedagogy

Shared principles for curriculum which aligns with the wider school vision.

Shared age related expectations and a consistent approach to assessment across schools.

Shared principles for quality teaching, learning.

#### Quality assurance & accountability

Fit for purpose data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Use of quantitative & qualitative data to evaluate school performance and inform next steps.

Appropriate challenge and evidence informed support for all schools.

#### A sustainable learning organisation

Effective governance. Effective back-office systems to support school improvement.

Focused innovation and development - research, evaluation and learning from/with the wider system

Feedback based learning - adapting your approach over time and in response to feedback.

# School - Reviews and Audits Whole School Review



Each CAST school will receive a full review at least every two years. If a school is judged to be less than 'Good' or there are identified concerns, then a review will be undertaken annually.

1  
To provide audit challenge and support for the school and provide a plan and support for improvement

2  
Identify examples of best practice within the school so others can learn from them

3  
Provide a point of reference for subsequent monitoring and evaluation by the school, SIO, and Director of Education

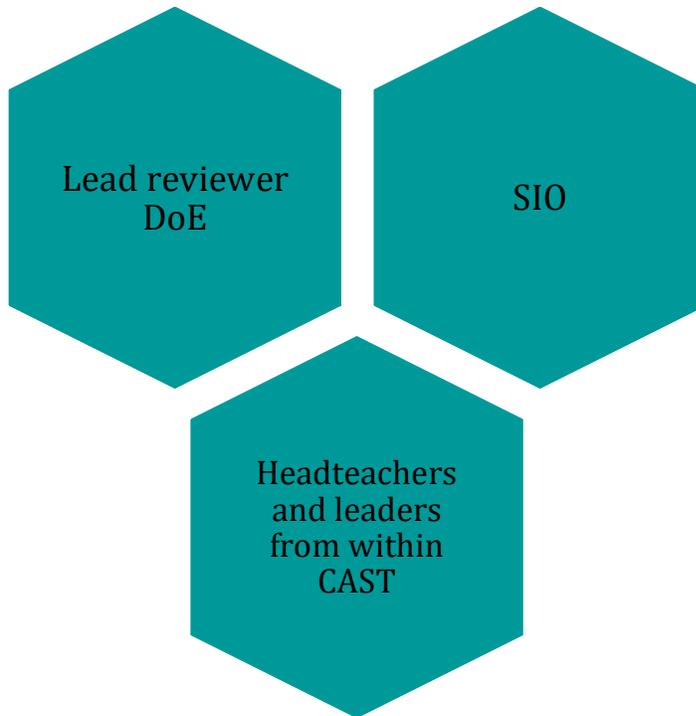
4  
To provide CPD for senior staff to develop as reviewers (by visiting other schools - sharing ideas)

# School - Reviews and Audits

## Whole School Review



### THE REVIEW TEAM CONSISTS OF



### THE REVIEW REPORT IDENTIFIES STRENGTHS, AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN THE STRANDS OF THE CAST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MODEL

Leadership

Quality of Education  
Intent/Implementation/Impact

6<sup>th</sup> form or EYFS provision

Professional Development

Behaviour and attitudes, attendance  
and safeguarding

Personal and spiritual development

# School - Reviews and Audits

## SAFEGUARDING AUDIT



This audit reviews:



The audit identifies areas of strength and concern and suggests training when required.

# School - Reviews and Audits

## HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDITS



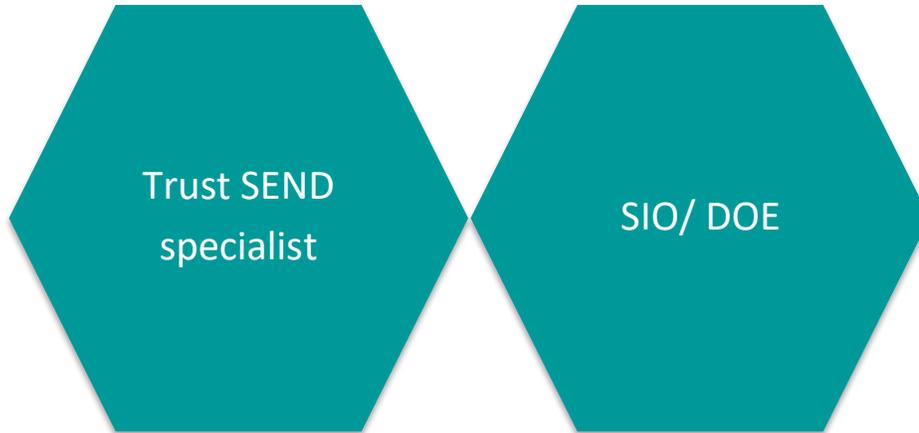
These look at:



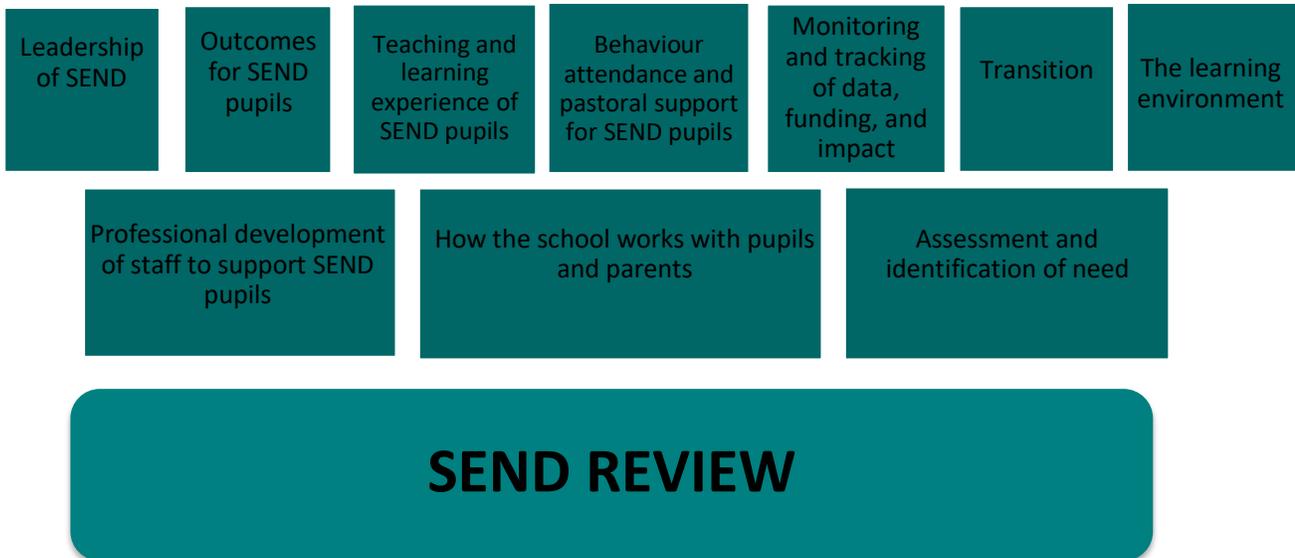
The audit identifies areas of strength and concern and suggests training when required.

# School - Reviews and Audits

## SEND REVIEW



These reviews look at:



The report identifies strengths and development areas with supported signposting. An action plan is produced.

# School - Reviews and Audits



## CATHOLIC LIFE AND MISSION REVIEW



These look at the leadership, pupil outcomes and provision of;

