

THE TAPSCOTT LEARNING TRUST AIMS AND VISIONS

Introduction

Following exploration and assessment over the past two years, it is believed that the creation of 'The Tapscott Learning Trust' represents the nationally preferred model. The reduction in LA services and role becoming more of a commissioning arm puts significant threat to service delivery to schools. Therefore, it is seen as the best structure for delivering effective school improvement and that this in turn, will move schools of all abilities forward.

To date, Curwen and Kensington Primary Schools have been working extremely successfully in partnership as a soft federation, and latterly have been joined by Ranelagh Primary School and Rebecca Cheetham Nursery and Children Centre. This work has provided us with a blue print of how we can work in partnership between schools, sharing and developing practice and experiences with children but also providing opportunities to reduce cost and retain staff across the group. This has also led with our vision of working as a collective but keeping unique characteristics and adaptations needed to allow the schools to meet the needs of their local and wider communities.

Set out below is the rationale and vision for the Trust: based on founding principles that underpin the design of the new organisation. The aims, vision, beliefs and rationale for 'The Tapscott Learning Trust' will underpin the design of a new organisation and its change in status from a group of community schools to a group of academies associated through a charitable trust.

Aims

- Our aim is to create a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) that will ensure delivery of: the best possible quality education, learning and development of basic skills; knowledge and understanding that ensures ALL our pupils receive the best start in life and are successful in moving through their education; leaving them well prepared for their futures.
- To create a platform for other schools with similar visions and ethos to join us for the mutual improvement of outcomes for all pupils and to support other schools in reaching these.
- To create a MAT that is based on the nationally recognised structures for outstanding schools to work collaboratively and share best practice.
- Offer a broad and balanced curriculum encompassing the arts and sport; as well as offering a vast array of experiences that will allow our pupils to access opportunities that may not always be available to them.
- To create a financially and operationally more robust structure for all pupils, staff and our communities.
- To build on the successful working relationship between our founding schools; where benefits of shared practice, CPD and resourcing have seen the outcomes within these schools continue to improve.

Vision

Our initial vision is a Trust with three primary schools and working in partnership with Rebecca Cheetham and Nursery Centre ; with a medium term aim to attract more like-minded schools and early years providers within a 90 minute radius (from Newham). This would ultimately provide us with a twenty Trust MAT. We also aim to offer support to other schools in London and the South East. Our vision for the longer term is based on these core principles:

- All pupils within the Trust will have the right to an outstanding education irrespective of social, economic or demographic factors.

- The Trust will be a beacon employer for teaching professionals at all stages of their career and we will therefore look at obtaining teaching school status.
- The Trust will provide a consistent experience of high expectations.
- The Trust will be large enough to remain wholly self-sufficient and operationally secure: with clear community-led focus; retaining local accessibility and transparency.
- The Trust will use the Outstanding Ofsted statuses at Curwen and Kensington Schools' to work collaboratively and to share best practice to support raising standards.

Beliefs

Our pupils are at the cornerstone of this Trust. The Trust Executive and all the parties associated with the Trust will ensure that the best possible education is at our core rather than those of financial profitability. We therefore believe in the following:

- A policy of inclusive education where all children's needs can be met and further developed by an extended schools offer
- A policy of inclusivity, when settings are appropriate, that can broaden a child's horizons across our individual communities.
- An ethos to enable pupils to become tolerant and well prepared citizens for life in modern Britain.
- An ethos that produces citizens that adds value to the communities in which they live.
- Excellence in partnerships based on mutual understanding and respect between the Trust, its providers and related stakeholders.
- A climate that's allowing our schools the freedom to be able to focus on the child as a whole and to work with parents, staff, governors and local authorities as partners.
- A fundamental belief that our pupils are placed in settings that best meet their needs rather than those of budgetary motives.
- A belief that pupils should have a say in their education and should feel empowered to be able to vocalise their ideas as well as be able to work collaboratively
- A place where pupils will have a voice through their school council structure that will feed into the advisory body to the Trust
- A belief that allows pupils to make their local and wider communities a better place.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and the wellbeing of all pupils is a fundamental requirement for the Trust and it will ensure the following:-

- That our stringent guidelines are followed by all schools in the Trust.
- That all schools promote equality and understanding for all.
- All schools meet the statutory requirement contained within "***Working Together to Safeguard Children 2016¹***" and any subsequently updated documents.
- The Trust will ensure that Safeguarding is non-negotiable and consistently applied in all academies and settings.

Staff

We believe that we are all learners and will create a setting which will allow people to develop across the different settings in the Trust; as well as producing staff that are able support other schools outside of it.

The Trust will be an employer that is able to offer equal opportunities, HR/career pathway support and job satisfaction to our staff.

The Trust will be an employer that:

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf

- Will attract the best teachers to become part of the success story of the Trust
- Will continue to develop and support all staff in the development of their practice.
- Will support and develop outstanding teachers and staff in an approach that offers everyone opportunities
- Will be supportive to ALL staff and will recognise staff for their excellence and talents; not only in academic areas but in the development of the whole child and wider communities.
- Will protect our staff: ensuring that they have the agreed terms and conditions, effective working relationships with professional bodies - ensuring a quality and fairness for all.
- Will continue to develop an effective leadership programme for ALL stakeholders.

Local Authorities, Councils and Other Elected Bodies

The London Borough of Newham has always had a close relationship with its school and we wish to continue this. We intend to remain an active and dynamic partner in the local families of schools. Where the role of a local authority has caused some provisions and services to become untenable: it is our intention that the Tapscott Learning MAT will have the freedom to commission and deliver services based on best value principles and quality service delivery.

Finance

The Trust recognises the obligations and requirements set out in the ***Academies Financial Handbook***².

We will appoint our own financial officers; also our own external accountancy and audit support who will carry out both internal and external audits.

The Trust will adhere to the principles set out by the Nolan Report - which include implementing rigorous controls of finance; which in turn, will best support our ability to provide an outstanding education for our pupils.

We intend to develop and improve standards by looking at the wider market place; enabling us to reduce costs collaboratively; offering greater leverage Trust-wide and reducing economies of scale. Part of this remit will be to ensure that our schools are fit for purpose for modern learning and use modern technology to support the attainment and achievement of our pupils.

Governance

The Trust intends to:

- Adopt the standard Memorandum and Articles of Association prescribed by the Department of Education; and to establish both the Trust and the operating principles of the organisation.
- Include the mandated separation of executive roles.
- Have clear and agreed principles enshrined by its members who will hold the schools' to account.
- Recruit individuals who have an excellent understanding and skill set for meeting the needs of holding the schools to account.
- Recruit individuals who believe that pupils must be given the best life chances.
- Develop effective management structures of governance.
- Create capacity and sustainability that encompasses growth.
- Use a scheme of delegation document as a subset of the articles to clearly and transparently set out the flow of authority; in terms of how decision making will work through recognised committee structures.
- Establish a Local Advisory Body at each academy.

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469495/Academies_Financial_Handbook2015.pdf

Quality Assurance and Accreditations

The Tapscott Learning Trust is starting from a very strong position with two schools with an Ofsted status of Outstanding and the other deemed to be Good. We are proud that our founding schools have been accredited with numerous awards and achievements both nationally and locally. We are supported through the excellent work of Andi Smith our National Leader of Governance; who, in turn, has also supported many other schools. Our nominated Chief Executive Officer is Paul Harris, current Executive Head Teacher of Curwen and Kensington Primary Schools' and Interim Executive Head Teacher at Ranelagh Primary School. He is a National Leader of Education and is nationally recognised as being a visionary in education. He was awarded by TES 'Head Teacher of the Year' 2015/16. He is also an Ofsted registered inspector.

Paul has vast experience in supporting many other schools which has led to those settings seeing standards rapidly improve. He has the clarity of vision in terms of how schools need to strategically move forward and federate to become more effective learning organizations. This will be the blue print for the formation of the Tapscott Learning MAT.

The Trust will prize collaboration with other schools and local groups and will continue to do so with organisations. Our current schools have led on numerous aspects of school development and improvements. Through this, we will continue to work successfully as a MAT to work with a wide range of partners to develop and enhance learning, improve standards and raise attainment for ALL our pupils.