



Brent Specialist Academy Trust (BSAT) - Information for Prospective Partners and Schools

We are a small Multi Academy Trust based in London. Our trust has been set up by educationalists with a passion for ensuring high quality teaching and aspiration for all pupils.

Our underpinning motto is **'love, learn, laugh'**.

We know through experience and research that pupils do best when they are working and learning in a safe, supportive community, where there is a shared, clear belief that every child can make excellent progress and that creativity and enjoyment in learning will bring the best result for all involved.

Our Trust believes that everyone's a learner, everyone's a leader and this 'golden thread' is weaved into all that we do; when pupils and staff feel empowered, mentally stimulated, invested and believed in they will flourish and do their very best.

Our Trust operates as a 'family' to deliver school to school improvement, going the extra mile for all our children and young people. We are passionate about dispelling the myth that only certain children and young people are able to achieve.

Our Approach

Our Trust originates from an outstanding special school in NW London that has developed a highly regarded school improvement, training and partnership offer. Our original school is vastly oversubscribed and to meet demand for places we decided to open a free school and to develop our own Multi Academy Trust.

Our aim is not to grow an empire of schools, but rather our compulsion is to share our proven approach to sustained school improvement for the benefit of children, young people and their communities. We aim to grow into a well-rounded, self-determining, self-improving, family group of schools within 45 minutes travelling time from each other to provide excellent support mechanisms and sharing of expertise. All of our Trust schools will benefit from partnership working, supported by a network of quality assured services that keep them legal, financially robust, continually improving and enjoying the economies of scale that this will bring

Personalised and enriched learning experience

We believe in providing exceptional educational experiences for all, and our School Promise is part of how we provide this. Each pupil benefits from seminal experiences that help them to develop life experience, curiosity in the world around them, resilience and ambition as they move through the phases of their life.

We are passionate about system-led change – our Trust is built upon the principle of schools supporting schools; being open in their approach and readily sharing resources and thinking both within the family and with other schools.

Our staff and trustees are committed to leading by example and live by their unswerving commitment to integrity, transparency and excellence.

Our Trust proactively engages with our parents and the local communities and is continually seeking ways to improve and enhance our education and support service capabilities.

The Trust will work within a clear values framework with all their schools to ensure:

1. Excellent, creative, engaging teaching
2. High expectations
3. Positive behaviour for learning
4. Knowing every pupil
5. Depth and breadth
6. Effective use of data
7. Share excellent practice
8. Effective collaboration
9. Bespoke staff development plans
10. Ensure safeguarding is robust

Key Benefits of Joining Our Trust

EXCELLENT SUPPORT

Outstanding support from our highly experienced Executive Education Team, including;

- Curriculum and assessment expert
- Safeguarding expert
- Infrastructure and communications expert
- Therapy provision expert
- Behaviour and inclusion expert
- SEND experts

Regular support from our CEO, who is a current Lead Ofsted Inspector, to assist each school leaders and governors in quality assurance, strategic planning etc.

Support from our highly experience school finance and administration team; ensuring streamlining of finance and administration systems, financial standards quality assurance etc.

Access to therapy support, SEND specialist support and an outstanding behavioural support team

Access to shared services i.e. ICT support, GDPR advice, bulk buying to support cost reduction/value for money, HR expert etc.

Policy, procedural support and quality assurance

Expert site management support; including H&S checks and H&S training

Access to our parent support team

Access to high quality CPD programmes, induction support programmes, specialist training opportunities and bespoke staff support programmes

Governance

Governance of our multi-academy trust lies with the Trust Board, a group of professional volunteers who provide support and challenge to each school as required and hold each school to account for its financial effectiveness and for the standards in education.

Our Trustees are responsible to the government for the performance of all our schools, ensuring clarity of vision and strategic direction; hold each school to account for its educational performance; and make sure money is well spent.

Local governance is provided by each school's Local Academy Board. They also provide support and challenge to the school's leadership team

Our governance structure:

MEMBERS Supervisory role to hold the Board of Trustees to account	
TRUSTEES Overall strategic responsibility for the Trust. There are three board level sub groups: 1) Finance & Audit 2) Staffing and Remuneration 3) Strategic Development	
Executive Education Team The Executive team recommend strategic decision to the Trustees and quality assures and oversees standards and performance across the Trust.	
Head Teacher Ensures effective operations within the school, with strategic authority with their school context.	Local Academy Board Supports and challenges performance at the local level; including overseeing school standards

Working together, Local Academy Board members and the Trust Executive Education Team provide support and challenge to the head teachers and school leaders to promote the highest possible standards and continual improvement.

All of our schools have their own ethos, uniform and character. But they all share the same mission: to give all of our pupils an outstanding education which enables them to explore, think, discover, create and achieve and so realise their full potential in the context of our Vision.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many schools might we enable to join our Trust?

We will not allow the Trust to grow to a point beyond which its core values, nor the educational benefits that derive from them, are compromised. Our reason for wanting to grow our Trust is to ensure we have a family of schools to work in strong partnership with for the benefit of all; offering strength in numbers and economies of scale but enabling us to ensure each school is highly supported in every aspect of its work. We believe that a group of, around, 10 schools will enable us to do this.

How much autonomy do schools within our Trust retain?

Each Trust school is at the centre of their own local community. It is very important to us that each school has the opportunity and the freedom to respond to the needs of parents, children and young people to create their own local solutions. As a family of schools, we celebrate diversity and individuality. We recognise that no school or community is the same; however we have the same high expectations of everyone in our Trust and believe that, with the support of the Trust family, every school must provide a high quality, effective learning experience for their children and young people.

What are the criteria for schools joining our Trust?

Any school may apply but in order to protect the interests of the schools already in the Trust, the Board will make a decision to enable them to join the MAT where due diligence criteria are met.

Who pays the salaries for the Executive education Team?

The staff who work across all Trust schools i.e. the CEO (responsible for quality assurance), the Head of Finance and Administration, the Head of Communications and Infrastructure etc. are paid for from across the Trust schools.

Just how 'independent' is each academy?

Each academy has its own Local Academy Board to which full powers for day-to-day running are delegated by the Trust. This includes decisions on the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, local finance/resources and staffing. The Trust retains the right to

step in where necessary – for example if the quality of the teaching provision at the school is at risk. It may also step in at the point that a school chooses to join the Trust as part of an agreed support programme.

Will there be any common branding? Logos? Mottos? Uniform?

As a minimum there will be recognition and signage to state that each school is part of the Trust. There will be discussions with each school to determine what is most appropriate in the school's local circumstances.

What changes may occur to local governing bodies?

Each academy has a Local Academy Board (LAB) working to the published Scheme of Delegation. They are slim, focused and effective with nine governors in total. Membership comprises of the Head Ex-Officio, a staff governor elected by school staff, a parent elected by the school's parent body and a further seven appointed governors. In line with our Articles of Association we ask that the Chair of each LAB is a Trustee on the Trust board; this supports excellent Trust/LAB feedback and consistency. It is essential that each LAB has governors with expertise/knowledge in relation to finance, education and legal. Other governors will be appointed as they have specific skills that will be of benefit to the governance of each school.

Who agrees the priorities for each school?

The Head, in dialogue with the Trust's CEO, set the priorities for each academy each year. These are then monitored by the Local Academy Board and the Trust.

What audit arrangements will be in place?

A condition of the Funding Agreement is that our Trust appoints an Accounting Officer and undertakes an annual independent audit. In addition, the Trust appoints a Responsible Officer as per the requirements of the Academies financial handbook. The Responsible Officer ensures that independent oversight of the financial affairs of our academies takes place.