



Grant Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 7HZ  
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www.corvuslearningtrust.co.uk



## Corvus Learning Trust

### One Year Update

11<sup>th</sup> February 2019

#### *.....now been in operation for just over one year*

Corvus Learning Trust was established as a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) on 1st January 2018 and has now been in operation for just over one year. We therefore wanted to inform you and share with you some of our successful developments and initiatives that we believe are of benefit to our schools, children and community.

Our **vision** is for the Trust to develop into a balanced portfolio of schools comprising of at least 5,000 pupils led and supported by a full-time central team. The Trust aims to deliver a consistently good education to all pupils, with a commitment to providing good quality, cost-effective central support services to all schools involved.

We have developed a Three Year Strategic Plan for the Trust supported by a number of short term development plans. This documentation recognises the need to focus on the process of setting up the charity trust, ensuring we are compliant and maintain financial stability as we develop consistency and excellence across all our schools.

Our **mission** is to work together in collaboration, whilst retaining the individuality of each school, to give every young person the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

#### *..... the role of our Central Team*

The Trust has a small Central Team of four part-time colleagues, led by our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Bob Elsey. The team consists of Rochelle Wilson our Financial Director, Janice Sizmur offering admin support and Sarah Bamford our Clerk. The role of this team and our Board of Trustees is to offer support and guidance to our schools' Local Governing Bodies, our Headteachers and their finance teams. Before Christmas, the Trust went through our first financial audit with a very positive endorsement and a few minor recommendations. Financial stability for any Trust is vitally important; we are therefore delighted with the outcome.

#### *..... awarded a Multi Academy Trust Development and Improvement Grant to help support school improvement*

Before the Trust was established, we successfully applied for, and were awarded a Multi Academy Trust Development and Improvement Grant to help support school improvement. The grant has recently been received and we have therefore just appointed Amy Chapman to lead our Primary Improvement Team and Suzanne Higgins as our Subject Expert Lead on English. These appointments involved collaboration and agreement between our primary schools. In the very near future we are hoping to appoint a Maths Subject Expert Lead to the Primary Improvement Team. The role of this team is to work with all of our schools both individually and collectively in order to improve outcomes for all our children. The focus of their work will be around reading, writing and maths. At Secondary level, we have asked Gareth Croxon (KS5) and Mark Burgess (KS4) to lead and drive school improvement through Edgbarrow School and other secondary schools should they join the Trust.

#### *..... informed and committed individuals*

We are fortunate to have appointed five informed and committed individuals to our Members group, chaired by Peter Floyd, an experienced school governor and local resident. The role of the Members is akin to that of the shareholders of a company (except that they do not receive dividends). They have ultimate control over the Trust, their main purpose is to uphold the Vision, Values and Ethos of our organisation.



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Our Board of Trustees is chaired by Steve James, another experienced school governor who has resided in Crowthorne for over 35 years. The Board of Trustees provides the strategic direction of the Trust and its schools, ensuring positive and successful outcomes. The Board of Trustees has two committees comprising of Education and Outcomes and Business and Assets. The two Board Committees take the lead in respective strategic initiatives on behalf of the Trust Board, consulting with others as appropriate. All schools have a voice and are represented on the Board of Trustees.

Further details on our Members and/or Trustees are available on the Trust website [www.corvuslearningtrust.co.uk](http://www.corvuslearningtrust.co.uk).

***..... collaboration is at the heart of what we do***

In accordance with our mission, collaboration is at the heart of what we do. Our Chairs of our Local Governing Bodies, Headteachers, Business Managers, SEND, Behaviour, Attendance and Facilities Teams meet on a regular basis to share information and best practice and agree how we can support each other and work together. We believe this has been a real success and we will continue to develop this working relationship for the benefit of our children, families and staff.

***..... support to schools, children and staff***

Presently we offer support to schools, children and staff in the four areas of SEND, behaviour, attendance and facilities, with each school requesting expert support and advice as and when they require it. This initiative offers prompt and personal support to staff and children. As a Trust we also continue to develop Trust-wide policies for school use.

In addition, we are delighted to have appointed three new Headteachers to join our existing team of experienced school leaders. Regular support is given to all Headteachers throughout the year by our CEO. The CEO is involved in senior appointments within the Trust, such as the appointment of the Headteacher at Hatch Ride School. His considerable experience and network has also facilitated the introduction to school improvement organisations to support senior staff.

***..... enabled us to source good quality services together***

Becoming a Trust has enabled us to source good quality services together to benefit our schools. Examples of this are:

- HR support for schools and staff including HR policies and payroll
- Governor training
- Legal advice and guidance
- Data Protection Training
- Audit and accountancy service
- School Admissions.



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***..... the growth of the Trust is important to our development and financial stability***

In accordance with our vision, the growth of the Trust is important to our development and financial stability and our ability to purchase services and support for our schools and our children using economies of scale. It is also important, however, that we do not grow too quickly without having the capacity to support our existing schools whilst finding the time and personnel to convert and induct new schools to the Trust. Therefore, the Trust is presently in conversations with one or two local schools but growth within the Trust is not imminent. In fact, in the short-term it is important that any new school joining the Trust has the necessary stability and the desire to support our ethos, share good practice and build successful working relationships with all of us for the benefit of all schools, staff and children. Longer-term, the Trust might feel able and capable of supporting less successful schools in more challenging circumstances and this would be part of our wider moral purpose of ensuring a great education to a greater number of children.

***..... ensure our schools deliver a consistently good education to all of our children***

In accordance with our vision, one of the main aims of the Trust is to ensure our schools deliver a consistently good education to all of our children. In order to monitor pupils' attainment and progress we have developed a consistent approach to pupil data, collection, presentation and agreed actions. Regular conversations are held with the Headteachers of each school to monitor this data and to raise standards for all our children.

We hope that you have found this update useful and informative. We understand that your relationship is with your schools but feel that it is important that you know how hard we are working behind the scenes to support all those within the Trust. It is not our intention to be highly visible but to work with the schools within the Trust for the benefit of our children.

As we move forward into our second year together, we will continue to embrace a positive spirit of collaboration and teamwork and enjoy the opportunity of working together.

Our very best wishes to all our schools and our children and we hope that they are enjoying learning and being a part of their school community.

If you have any queries or feedback on any aspect of the Trust please do not hesitate to contact me at [robertelsey@corvuslearningtrust.co.uk](mailto:robertelsey@corvuslearningtrust.co.uk).

Warmest regards.

Bob Elsey  
CEO

Steve James  
Chair of Trustees

