



# Changing Lives Learning Trust

RESPECT · RESILIENCE · ACHIEVEMENT · OPPORTUNITY

## AN INTRODUCTION TO CHANGING LIVES LEARNING TRUST

Changing Lives Learning Trust is a sponsor-status Trust and is a not for profit charity which sponsors primary and secondary academies. Our sponsors, The University of Central Lancashire, The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Sellafield Ltd., are committed to a fully inclusive, aspirational, high-achieving Trust firmly rooted in the local communities its academies serve.

Our vision, our distinction, is to succeed in 'Changing Lives through Learning' by providing every child with an education that will give them a preparation for life that is excelled by no other. We focus on securing purposeful progress towards that distinction, continually developing a collaborative model of school improvement to have a transformational effect on children's life chances within very quick timescales. Our Trust will:

- Significantly raise educational standards above local and national levels.
- Raise student aspirations and launch them into their next stage of education or onto career paths that will exceed expectations.
- Promote and nurture community cohesion.
- Involve and work in collaboration with key stakeholders, partners and the community.
- Ensure that key stakeholder groups are represented on Local Governing Boards.
- Ensure that all employees contribute to academy activities by being positive role models for students.
- Provide high quality continual professional development and training for all colleagues to underpin and sustain improvements.

We centralise specialist services and deliver them to high standards, through an effective and cohesive business support model; providing better value for money, maximising economies of scale so that each £1 saved can be invested back into the education and opportunities for the children and those who work with them. This enables our school leaders to focus on the development of curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment by "keeping the main thing, *the main thing*" and is the bedrock of our strategy.



## OUR VISION, AIMS AND VALUES

**Our vision, our distinction, is to succeed in ‘Changing Lives through Learning’ by providing each child with an education that will give them a preparation for life that is excelled by no other.**

### Aim – Keep The Main Thing, *The Main Thing!*

- Curriculum – Working together to effectively broaden the minds and horizons of all our children.
- Teaching and Learning – Making our curriculum intent a reality every day for every child in every classroom.
- Using Assessment – Knowing that the children are learning and remembering more through the curriculum.

### Values

The Trust will seek to promote our values:

- Respect
- Resilience
- Achievement
- Opportunity



## MEET THE TEAM



### **Jonathan Johnson - Chief Executive Officer**

I live and breathe our Trust's vision and distinction; to succeed in 'Changing Lives Through Learning' by providing each child with an education that will give them a preparation for life that is excelled by no other. I am in no doubt that we can achieve this brave and ambitious aim with your help, your passion, and your expertise.

We welcome anyone who shares that vision and who subscribes to the multiplier effect of genuine partnership that enables continual improvement to teach children in a way that is relevant to the modern age; providing moments of awe and wonder, encouraging and enabling every child to aspire to a future that transcends the cultural and social limitations placed upon them.

We are characterised by autonomy within mutual, partnership-driven principles, aims and objectives, and within them, our individual and collective determination to accept nothing less than the pinnacle of educational provision. We have a shared professional dissatisfaction, that no matter how good we become we are utterly convinced we can be even better.

Our Trust specialises in celebrating, protecting and enhancing the uniqueness of each individual school. If we're all the same, our opportunities to learn will be limited. By remaining different, through everyone involved in our academies, rich collaboration, learning and life-long endeavours can begin.

Our highly experienced and skilled Executive Team support leaders to focus on contextual and localised leadership of curriculum, teaching, learning and the professional development and opportunities of their colleagues. Local governing boards are supported to thrive and contribute to the overall direction and decision making of our Trust.

It is a privilege to lead our Trust and the continual development, support and celebration of, hopefully, yours and our collective contributions and accomplishments. Weaving a fully inclusive, collaborative and purposeful focus on our ever-improving quality of education holds the promise of changing lives through learning; for the children and communities we serve and the adults who work with them.

I sincerely hope you will join us.



**Judith Schafer - Deputy Chief Executive Officer**

As Deputy CEO, I am part of a creative, strong and effective Executive Team which works tirelessly to safeguard the future of our Trust and everyone that works in it. As Director of One Cumbria Teaching School Hub, I am responsible for working with partners to secure and sustain exceptional training for teachers across Cumbria, at all stages of their careers.

Cumbria’s children need the best schools in their own communities. They need aspiring professionals to help them shape their world and our Trust’s vision to change lives through learning supports that noble ambition. It’s a great place to work; as a team, we have the creativity and desire to really make a difference to children everywhere.



**Laura Watson – Chief Finance Officer**

In my role, I work closely with the members of the central executive team and the senior leadership team of each academy to ensure we are financially efficient, leveraging our Trust’s economies of scale and increasing the money available for the benefit of improving teaching and learning.

I am a qualified chartered accountant and before joining Changing Lives Learning Trust, I gained experience with a local accountancy firm specialising in external audit.



**Tracey Shackley – Chief Operating Officer**

As Chief Operations Officer I provide strategic and operational leadership for support services of the Trust.

I play a lead role in designing and implementing new central shared services, structures and systems. I work with the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Chief Executive Officer to formulate the aims and objectives of our Trust and in establishing the policies, systems and procedures through which these can be achieved.

I provide operational leadership for specified support activities of our Trust, including Administration and Business Management, IT, Estates Management, Human Resources and PR and Marketing.



### **Lynette Knibb - Trust HR Manager**

My role within the Trust is to support our educational vision by developing and implementing HR strategy and practices that add value and align to our vision and objectives to develop a skilled and diverse workforce who will deliver the very best possible outcomes for our students and communities. We are committed to supporting our employees to perform at their very best and become an employer of choice within Cumbria. I have worked in various HR roles in the education sector for over fifteen years and am a Chartered Member of the CIPD.



### **Laura Lithgow - Trust PR and Marketing Manager**

In my role, I am responsible for publicity and communications for our Trust. I work to ensure that each academy maximises its publicity by overseeing the communication channels between each academy and the wider community including the Trust's websites and social media.

## OUR ACADEMIES

### Arlecdon Primary School



Arlecdon Primary School is a small village school which benefits greatly from being part of the Trust and working with other schools. We joined the trust in September 2019.

We have benefitted from a wealth of support and experience in relation to school governance, health and safety and systems and protocols. We are provided with access to experts in these areas and our school environment has benefited hugely in relation to this, particularly in relation to health and safety. This has enabled us to standardise our procedures and adopt best practice, which in turn provides support and reassurance to staff and reduces workload. Common hardware and software also makes technical support much easier, our IT-related problems are solved remotely and as shared earlier, we have access to IT experts.

[www.arlecdon.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.arlecdon.cumbria.sch.uk)

### Dearham Primary School



Dearham Primary School is an ever-changing village primary school on the edge of rural Cumbria. Children and staff benefit from the unique opportunities that being part of a MAT brings and we use these opportunities to develop well rounded, bright young people. We believe opportunities such as our annual German Exchange, trips to France, links with multi-cultural schools and opportunities for our children to express themselves through, dance, sport and song enrich our community school and provide inspiring platforms to prepare our children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Dearham Primary School became part of Changing Lives Learning Trust on September 1st 2020 and are proud to be a part of such an inspirational organisation. Although part of the Trust we maintain our own identity and autonomy. Through collaboration with our fellow schools we are developing a top class curriculum for all our children. Changing Lives Learning Trust is a team with each school being a key player. We all have our own skills and successes; we identify our own areas for development and recognise similarities in these areas; we all work together to improve our strategies and outcomes for our young people and ultimately we are all aiming to improve all our lives through learning

[www.dearham.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.dearham.cumbria.sch.uk)

## Flimby Primary School



Flimby Primary School is a vibrant village school at the heart of the community. Nestled by the sea and the railway, and once home to the many coal pits in the area, we are embedded in 150 years of village history. We pride ourselves in giving the children many opportunities above and beyond the classroom. We have had many successes at Rock Challenge with our KS2 children; our KS1 children have participated in the annual U-Dance, and every year the village is delighted with our carnival contribution for all ages. We have adopted Flimby Railway Station which enables us to take the children up and down the coast, supporting curricular activities and we have improved the environment of the platform to the delight of the village. We have an active PTA (FOFS - Friends of Flimby School) who also provide lots of social activities for the children - discos, movie nights, bingo nights and fayres.

Flimby Primary School enjoy the benefits of being part of the Trust and collaborating with our schools to work on our Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Review (CTLR) process. Through this, our subject leaders feel well supported, informed and have a deeper understanding and knowledge of their subjects and identifying next steps to further enhance teaching and learning in their subject. The opportunity for collaboration and development for all involved has been invaluable.

[www.flimby.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.flimby.cumbria.sch.uk)

## Thornhill Primary School



Thornhill Primary school became part of Changing Lives Learning Trust in September 2019 and we could share endless benefits. We benefit from a wealth of support and the sharing of good practice, which benefits our staff and ultimately our young people. We feel as if we benefit from all the positives of a large school whilst keeping all the benefits of being a small primary school. One example is our increased access to professional development opportunities such as online courses and common staff training where all schools join together, a specific example of this is Team Teach training for identified staff.

[www.thornhill.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.thornhill.cumbria.sch.uk)

## West Lakes Academy



West Lakes Academy in Egremont provides education to children from 11 to 18 years old. We opened in September 2008 and moved into our new building in March 2012. As an academy, we have the freedoms of being independently governed while state funded and free to all children. Like other schools, we are subject to normal OFSTED inspections and work with the Local Authority in relation to issues such as admissions. West Lakes Academy formed The Trust in May 2018.

Being part of Changing Lives Learning Trust means being part of a team working together and driven to provide the best possible education to the children we serve. Since its inception, we have benefitted hugely from the cross-phase and inter-disciplinary expertise of the staff and trustees that form The Trust. Working collaboratively, we are able to identify common development priorities, but still have the freedom to choose how to best respond to these priorities, whilst also having the autonomy to identify our academy's development priorities and the support needed to achieve these. Our academy is richer for this collaboration. Together, we change lives through learning.

[www.westlakesacademy.org.uk](http://www.westlakesacademy.org.uk)

## One Cumbria Teaching School Hub



One Cumbria Teaching School Hub is the sixth 'school' in the Trust. One of 87 TSHs across the country, One Cumbria is building a network to support our clearly articulated all-through career framework that understands and provides for the individual development needs of everyone working in our schools, and which will in turn lead to providing all of Cumbria's children with an excellent education that will help them learn the powerful knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they need to thrive and shape their world.

We are working with partner schools, curriculum hubs and stakeholder groups, bringing strategic thinking together to build simplicity in recruitment, capacity ahead of need and a collaborative model of outstanding professional development. We run the Early Career Framework for ECTs and coordinate NPQs across Cumbria.

### **Our aims are simple but ambitious. We will:**

- Give all schools access to high quality support, when and where they need it.
- Connect schools together to build a sustainable, self-improving network.
- Signpost teachers to quality-assured best practice from within Cumbria and beyond.
- Recruit the best aspiring teachers, train and retain existing practitioners and leaders and make the Cumbrian teaching profession the most respected in the country.
- Contribute to the economic prosperity of Cumbria by supporting a thriving education sector.
- Never take our focus away from the outcomes and future of all Cumbria's children, providing them with a preparation for life that is excelled by no other.

[www.onecumbria.education](http://www.onecumbria.education)

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF JOINING?

There are many advantages to joining and being part of a MAT. By far the most important is that by working in partnership with each other, the academies within a MAT can share ideas, curriculum expertise and effective teaching practices, and work together to deliver exceptional outcomes for all children. Delivering teaching and learning of the highest quality is the business of all our schools: we enjoy shared and inter-accountability for standards across The Trust. All schools within our Trust support each other and The Trust is accountable for them all.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

We don't advocate a set methodology of teaching and learning. We focus on a dialogue across the trust on research evidence-informed practice, trialling it, learning from it, improving it and sharing it...together. We are open to debating the efficacy of approaches and want to work with people who enjoy that same debate for the benefit of our professional practice and the children in our care.

Together, through this approach, we develop great teachers and allow our academies to focus on what really matters – teaching, learning and a curriculum that is based on what works. Our Trust has the capacity to provide the best training and evidence-based curriculum support for teachers, freeing them to focus on what they do best – teaching.

We exist to 'Changing Lives through Learning' and all we ask is that every one of us continues to develop our own practice so that in changing our own lives through learning, we do so for the children and communities we serve.

How does this resonate with your school's vision?

## CURRICULUM

Our curriculum intent is simple; by the end of their school-based education, we want our students to understand the world, their place in it, who they are, and who they can be. The curricula of all the academies in our Trust will change lives through learning by all students having equal access to, and a thirst to acquire, powerful knowledge. Equipped with the skills to apply this knowledge they will be able to take their place in society.

This informs our key curriculum decisions at all key stages.

Is this a good strategic fit with your school? What is your curriculum intent? What do you base your key curriculum decisions on?

Although our academies share the same underpinning values, they each maintain their own integrity and identity and bring different things to our Trust. This also underpins our approach to curriculum design. We have key curriculum principles, agreed by all our Head Teachers and Principals, which are congruent with our vision and leadership – that we will provide exceptional education for all children in all types of settings. This in turn leads to rich collaboration between academies. Each school's curriculum is localised and context-specific, and the bar of expectation for the quality of each individual school's curriculum is exceptionally high. We assess the quality of education the curriculum provides through Curriculum Teaching and Learning Reviews (CTLRs). Subject and school leaders are provided with the time and support to develop the tools to question the efficacy of curriculum intent, implementation and impact. The support enables them to follow an in-depth process to ensure a robust and thorough analysis of their subject. They collaborate with the other subject leads in their school and the trust who also follow the same process to ensure a rigorous review leading to accurate assessment. A moderation by subject leads also feeds in to an action

plan for each school that enhances teaching and learning for our children. Driven by peer review, CTLRs are used as a collaborative tool by our schools to bring genuine school to school improvement to be front and centre of everything we do.

We are working to provide a coherent, well sequenced curriculum for all our students, with key leaders working together between academies. No one academy dominates – we genuinely work together from Early Years to post 16. If it meets the needs of all our students, we need to ensure that those mutually agreed guiding principles are localised and made context-specific.

We're really keen to learn about your curriculum, its founding principles, its sequencing, how it all threads together.

## DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Our Academy Development Planning (ADP) process is central to our entire trust year. It links to performance management by weaving our professional and personal goals to those of each academy and the trust in a way that keeps them constantly in view rather than twice a year (see Performance Management).

The process of planning for the following academic year begins at the start of the current year. The executive team agree evidence-informed core themes for improvement, phrased as questions. How each academy addresses those questions is localised and context-specific to them and so there is autonomy here. If we were all the same, with the same plan, we wouldn't learn anything whereas this process allows for rich collaboration. We review each ADP each half term with quick analysis and report progress to Local Governors and Trustees together with emerging issues/themes that inform potential action the following year if they can't be solved immediately. We also review each plan to check that it's aspirational enough or whether it correctly identifies the issues that need addressing.

The half-termly review keeps personal and professional goals in view because they're linked to the stated aims and objectives of the ADP. This reduces the burden of appraisal meetings and reduces workload associated with large-scale reviews of documentation.

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

We don't have numerical targets. We place importance on evidence-informed Academy Development Plans that pull together all the issues and actions for each academy and therefore our first target is to fulfil the stated aims and objectives of the ADP. If one achieves this then the outcomes will be as desired within the plan.

A second target is linked to professional goals that will support the fulfilment of the first target.

A third target is linked to personal and professional growth.

Since the ADP is reviewed each half term, so too are our own targets which allows for a much more agile approach to our personal and professional fulfilment because both systems are aligned.

## GOVERNANCE

We place a lot of emphasis on the importance of local governance and actively involve them in the decision-making of the trust within our new NGA-endorsed governance structure.

Our Governors:

- NGA endorsed structure of involved strategic decision making – you have a voice, it's heard, it's valued and it shapes the direction of your school and the Trust.
- Governor training and support for clerking.
- Governor working groups.
- Ofsted preparation and support.
- Self-evaluation and development planning through peer review.

## COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Being part of a MAT brings many opportunities to work together and our Head Teachers/Principals find this beneficial in moderating practice, learning from each other, seeking advice, challenging each other's thoughts and opinions and being able to offer trust wide CPD opportunities. Some of the examples of collaborative working can be seen in curriculum, teaching and learning reviews in each other's schools, sharing CPD opportunities, curriculum development work, moderation, shared pupil experiences, staff opportunities to gain experience in other schools and opportunities to work with different phases to your own.

Our Central Executive Team visit our academies each week so they aren't faceless but rather everyone gets to know who they are and also so discussions can take place around issues or advice can be sought.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

A strength of being a Trust is that we can offer enhanced opportunities for all stakeholders.

The children:

- The education of all our children is improved as we work together to effectively broaden the minds and horizons of all our children. Our curriculum intent is a reality every day for every child in every classroom.
- Shared assessment across all our academies informs teaching that fills gaps and addresses misconceptions.
- We all benefit from synergy across transition points, especially around SEND.
- We all share our strategies for engaging parents in their children's learning and future at every stage.
- We all share our strategies for tackling social injustice, lifting the lid on barriers to learning.

Our colleagues:

- We build on the collective professionalism of our colleagues who are proud of what they are doing.
- We have a bespoke pathway for support staff similar to the ECF and NPQ.
- Shared INSET allows staff to lead sessions in their areas of expertise.
- We have access to national leaders in the field of education best practice.
- One Cumbria Teaching School Hub ensures that ITT, ECF and NPQs are central to all our academies; we offer free NPQs up to NPQEL and beyond, and access to a bespoke Masters qualification as part of the ECF.
- We encourage creativity and innovation.
- Our CTRLR reviews are excellent, as are our qualitative and quantitative data and information

- analysis.
- We run international teacher exchanges.
- Across our Trust there are many opportunities and clear career pathways.
- We are a DfE lead school for the North of England for the Teacher Workload Reduction Toolkit, and are working to implement the staff wellbeing charter – we enable a manageable work life balance.
- We run professional learning communities and cross-trust projects.

Our leaders:

- Have autonomy – we build consistency but not conformity.
- Are encouraged to take on extended leadership opportunities across the Trust and beyond Cumbria.
- Are encouraged to become facilitators for One Cumbria TSH's offer.

The Headteacher: is exactly that. The head teacher. If you have an issue with a flat roof, call the Central Exec – we sort it. No fuss, no hassle – leaving you free to do your job.

Complete autonomy can, at times, leave Head-teachers exposed and vulnerable, but our environment provides guaranteed support, professional and personal generosity and back up from experienced peers and colleagues. There is no imposition, we support and celebrate the individuality, uniqueness and culture of our schools while providing the structure and frameworks within which all our staff can operate freely, knowing that structure props them up and breaks their fall.

## CONSISTENCY NOT CONFORMITY

We draw on exceptional activity in tackling context-specific issues; we share it across the Trust to provide consistent foundations which each school then uses to inform localised and context-specific strategies to tackle their own issues...and the cycle starts again.

We work on the basis we have the same shared values set; we work alongside each other, and spend our time removing barriers so that teachers and pupils can succeed.

You can mould our shared curriculum and values to your community, your history, your prior knowledge.

Is this something you would like to be part of? What opportunities would your school add to the mix?

The Central Executive Team work hard to see the Trust as a whole as well as individual schools and if one school is struggling, the others recognise the need to support them. Every school is a giver and receiver of support. We work to find ways to enable the opportunities you want for your school. A shared philosophy drives a shared vision, shared policy based upon shared principles.

Teaching and learning is our core business. You need to decide if this is the MAT for you, and vice versa. This is curriculum due diligence. If you think our vision and values resonate with yours, and that you would like to be part of this and in addition bring your own opportunities to the Trust, there are back room services that the Trust provides to all our schools that bring advantages in financial and operational terms. This also involves due diligence of a practical and systems nature.

## CENTRAL SERVICES

The Trust has an established central executive team, which manages the services that are undertaken centrally:

Data and Governance

Estates

Finance (including payroll)

HR

IT

We understand that every school is different. Our highly qualified and experienced Executive and Central Teams will work with leaders, trustees and governors to assess every aspect of need and form a complete picture of how we can best support you. The Executive and Central Teams provide the background operations and ensure they benefit and meet the needs of all our schools. By centralising the key services the Trust can not only realise benefits in terms of economies of scale, but also free up leaders' capacity to focus on teaching and learning.

The school budget is held centrally by the Trust with a (current) 6% top slice to cover central team. This is called GAG-pooling (the budget we receive from the ESFA is called the General Annual Grant) and we 'pool' all the money together to make most efficient use of each £1.

### Data, Risk and Governance

The Director of Governance, Risk Assurance oversees the IT support systems on our sites, and is the Trust Data Protection Officer (DPO) as well as Company Secretary. If schools require guidance in relation to data or Governance then the Director will offer facilitated support. This area also covers meeting risk management measurement including reporting to the local governing boards and trust board and overseeing the Trust's risk register with the Executive Team and Headteachers/Principals.

### Estates

The Operations Director works closely with schools to ensure senior leaders and their estate teams are confident in managing risk, both short and long term, developing their premises and encouraging behaviours that keep our schools safe and well maintained. Health and Safety and Estate related policies and procedures underpin this work and ensure our schools meet legal and statutory requirements. The Trust works with schools to consider larger project development alongside maintenance needed week by week.

Our current catering provider is Caterlink and they provide a school meals service across all the schools in our Trust.

### Finance

The central finance team consists of our Finance Director and her team of highly skilled staff. The central team consists of financial and payroll staff who deliver the full financial and payroll service to schools. They work together with the leaders of our schools to ensure that they have the financial information they need to make decisions, and that they are financially compliant. They are contactable via a dedicated email address. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure all legal requirements are met and these provide easy reference points. The finance team work closely with HR to ensure that any maternity, sick pay, or unpaid leave queries can be dealt with. The finance provision includes a comprehensive programme of financial management and monthly reporting, budgeting and forecasting.

## **HR**

The HR team includes a qualified HR Manager. The team work closely with schools to ensure that senior leaders feel confident in dealing with HR issues and will support on a one to one basis where necessary. Their work covers a wide range of HR issues including recruitment, selection, job evaluation, health and well-being, staff engagement and training and development. A range of policies and procedures are in place across the Trust to support the implementation of HR work.

## **Network**

Our Network support service provides an infrastructure for all schools to have an effective IT system supporting teaching and learning and administration procedures. They work with a wide range of IT including networking, hardware, software, licencing renewals, security and a dedicated helpdesk is in place so any user, in any school can access appropriate support should they need it. Our IT staff work with students, staff, governors/Trustees, and parents for a wide variety of issues. Our IT systems continue to be developed for uniformity and consistency across all our sites and we are currently developing the Trust's Wide Area Network.