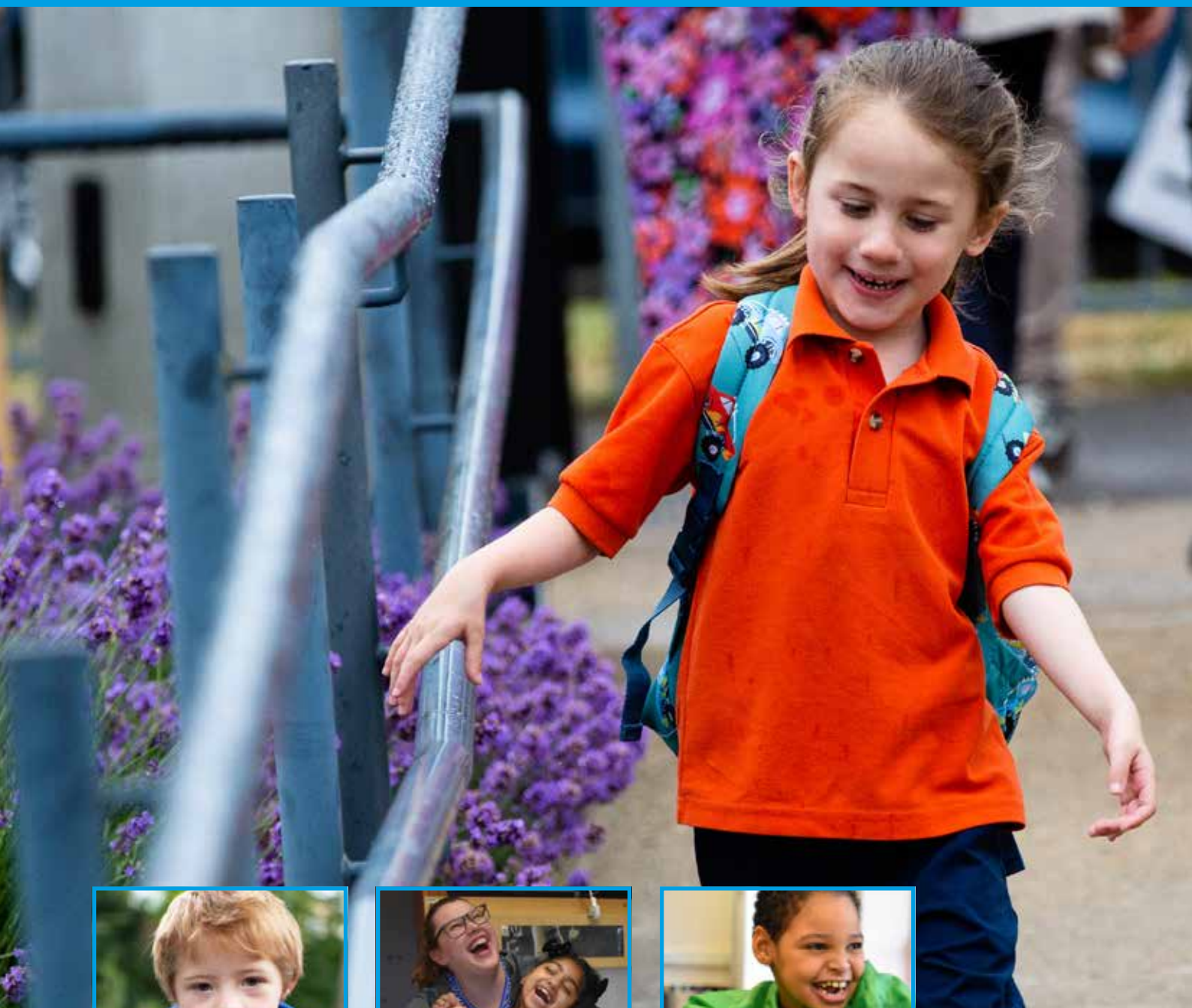


# Three Year Strategy 2024–2027<sup>1</sup>





# Introductory message

## Eden Academy Trust: Three Year Strategy 2024–2027<sup>1</sup>

**It gives me great pleasure to introduce our latest three-year strategy. We published the first of these in 2018, renewing and updating it for the years from 2021, given the profound impact of Covid. This new 2024–2027 strategy is the product of a more fundamental process of reflection and consultation, undertaken between January and June 2024.**

The Trust's purpose is unchanged. We exist to create centres of educational excellence where young people achieve exceptional outcomes. We do this in our own schools and settings, but also by striving to become a national voice, demonstrating, and advocating more widely on excellence in special education.

This document is for internal use, and like its predecessors, is organised using five overlapping lenses. We have included detailed sections for each of these, starting with a review of the past period, before setting out our main ambitions for the coming period. These reflect the consultations we held with colleagues and are intended as a starting point for as we plan for the coming three years.

A team of three Trustees led this work, soliciting views from across the organisation. A list of those involved is available in the Annex. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I'd like to thank everyone who contributed, with a special mention of Gabriella Taylor for her invaluable support.

I hope you find this an accessible and informative overview.



**Barry Nolan MBE**  
**Chair of Board of Trustees**

Eden Academy Trust • 1 September 2024

**Our Outcomes:** Ensuring we deliver the best possible learning outcomes for every child and young person we work with, as they are the reason we exist. We therefore start from this perspective.

**Our Team:** Our workforce, teaching, specialist, administrative, and our wider governance family, is the lifeblood of the Trust. We need their expertise and commitment to deliver for pupils, and therefore turn next to this aspect.

**Our Culture:** We recognise that fostering a culture of openness and trust, where diverse perspectives and experiences are given equal weight is vital for the wellbeing of our team. We turn therefore to Trust culture third in our strategy.

**Our Reputation:** Our reputation as a national leader is built on the quality of our outcomes, team, and culture. We include this here as an important part of our broader mission to influence the quality of special education beyond our own operations.

**Our Future:** We turn to the future in the last section. Our aim is to balance the moral imperative to meet growing needs for high quality special education, with ensuring the growth of the Trust is managed in a prudent, sustainable way.

<sup>1</sup> This document refers throughout to 2024–27. By this, we mean the three academic years starting in September 2024, 2025, and 2026, respectively.



## Board of Trustees' Vision

for 2024–2027

**We have developed this strategy against a backdrop of rising demand for special education, combined with a tight public sector financing climate affecting education as well as health and social care.**

Respondents to the questionnaire that started the consultation said securing financial stability was the primary priority for the coming period. At the same time, there was recognition of growing demand for special education. Those consulted linked this to our moral purpose of ensuring every child and young person with disabilities can access excellent, personalised learning.

It is clear the Trust has been able to deliver well on the aims of previous strategies, despite the challenges of Covid and the constraints of the operating environment. Those consulted were notably positive about the quality of teaching and learning in all our schools and settings, and in particular the strength of links between curriculum, teaching, and outcomes. At the same time, there was concern about the future of our pupils post-19, and a sense that Eden could do more to advocate for and support excellence across the sector.

Nurturing and supporting every part of our team remains one of the most challenging and important aspects of running the Trust. Growing and leading relies strongly on our ability to do so. As we grow, new opportunities for professional development and career progression open for many teaching and non-teaching staff, but at the same time the organisation becomes more complex. Not only does this impact on some roles, particularly administrative ones, but it also has implications for the way we organise and communicate, internally and with the broader community.

With these factors in mind, we have identified five strategic aims for the Trust to pursue in the coming three years. These map against each of the five lenses that we consider in later sections of this document, but there are overlaps, reflecting the interconnected nature of our work. In September 2024 we will publish internally how we intend to measure progress against each of these.

### Objective 1: **Outcomes First**

**We will continue to develop the quality of learning we provide, emphasising consistently high expectations in a supportive environment.**

Working through our established Hubs, we will approach this through opportunities for sharing practice and peer review between schools, as well as external challenge. We will build our growing expertise in school improvement and consider how we could contribute to the Post-19 SEND landscape.

We will ensure we always strike a constructive balance between Trust-wide practice and the individual cultures and cohorts in schools.

### Objective 2: **A Community of Professionals**

**We will improve retention rates and staff readiness to perform at the highest levels across the Trust by investing consistently in professional development and career planning for all employees.**

Using our People Strategy as a guide, we will take a range of approaches. These will include professionalising the teaching assistant role and pathways beyond this, as well as looking at opportunities to move between schools and settings.

We will ensure this work thinks about how we support administrators and other specialists, as well as those in front line roles.

### Objective 3: **Embedded in the Community**

**We will strengthen our relationship with the communities where we work by ensuring we model and live our values to the full in every aspect of the Trust's interactions within school and beyond.**

Approaches will include work to ensure our staffing and governance, including LABs, better reflects the communities we serve. We will also focus on communicating our mission as educators of children and young people, while continuing to support families at the intersection of other services.

We will ensure our approach is tailored to each community where we work and that we understand them well.

### Objective 4: **Champions for SEND**

**We will be an effective influence on how special education provision develops in the UK, putting the Trust's growing reputation for excellence nationally and in our local communities to good use.**

Approaches will include building the (social) media and research presence of the Trust, working through a diverse group of staff voices. Advocacy will also include working directly with local authorities as they develop new approaches to planning for SEND provision.

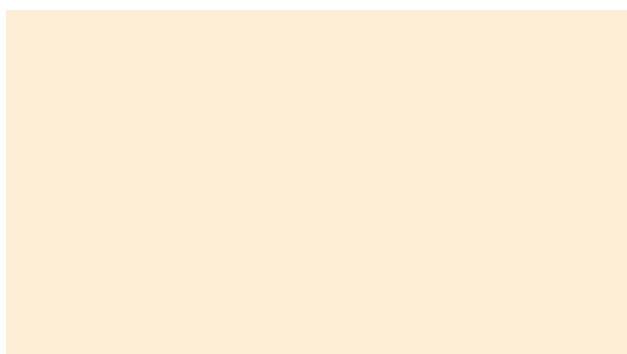
We will ensure our primary focus is always on championing the interests of the children and young people we serve.

### Objective 5: **Creative, Responsible Growth**

**We will increase the number of children and young people with special needs and disabilities that the Trust serves by growing our provision creatively and responsibly, with a focus on financial stability.**

Using our Growth Strategy as a guiding document, we will take a range of approaches. These could include opening new free schools, and admitting more schools to the Trust, as well as advising others on issues such as school improvement or SEND provision in mainstream settings.

We will ensure this does not compromise our capacity to keep delivering excellent education in our existing schools and settings.





# One: Our Outcomes

## A: Review of past period

The 2021–24 refresh of our strategy identified four priorities for Our Outcomes:

- **Staff and parents should be confident** about how we set targets and track progress and their contribution to helping pupils achieve these;
- Robust and effective central services will contribute to consistently great learning across the whole Trust;
- **All young people will be transferring successfully post 19** into appropriate education settings, employment, and/or independent living;
- **Excellent outcomes** in relation to pupil progress in all 7<sup>2</sup> schools.

The evidence is that we have made excellent progress in this dimension, including three of these specific priorities. The establishment of Trust-wide hubs on outcomes, curriculum, safeguarding, and social and emotional learning have been particularly important in our approach to strengthening target setting and tracking, as well as learning and pupil progress in every school and setting. The recent consultation found that the wider Trust team believes strongly that our outcomes are improving consistently across our portfolio of schools and settings, and that staff have a clear understanding of the intent of the curriculum, what this means for their implementation role, and how it links to the impact we wish to see.

The priority where progress has been most constrained is the third. Successful transfer post 19 for all our pupils remains challenging, given limited options for many. However, schools are working hard to identify and nurture opportunities for employment and further learning locally. We also consider this issue below.

Importantly, convincing external corroboration of this view exists. Inspection teams have been consistently enthusiastic about outcomes. For example:

*Pupils receive individualised support in all subjects to help them meet their targets. They achieve well. They are attentive and settled.*

Alexandra School, November 2019

*Staff, including the school's team of therapists, do whatever it takes to enable each pupil to flourish and succeed. These high expectations allow pupils to make great strides in achieving their individual goals.*

Pentland Field School, October 2023

## B: Areas of focus for 2024–27

Supporting every pupil to achieve excellent learning outcomes is the core purpose of the Trust. Over the last period, all our schools and settings have built on a solid foundation to improve on our collective approaches, tools, and aspirations.

**Nurturing and investing in our existing commitment to continuous improvement** is our primary aim for our outcomes in the 2024–27 strategy. This work must remain the primary focus even as the Trust grows and develops. Maintaining and strengthening the quality of our outcomes benefits our pupils but is also intrinsic to our culture (Section Three) and an important aspect of our reputation (Section Four). Trustees will continue to review progress on strengthening outcomes each time they meet.

We have identified four others connected to our outcomes for the coming period, each of which will support this primary ambition:

The Trust should **develop its growing capacity to work to support special schools seeking to make a change and transform learning outcomes** for their pupils. The admission in 2023 of Cumbria Academy for Autism to the Trust and subsequent improvement is a good recent example.

Approaches to meeting this aim could also include consultancy with other special schools and trusts and embedding SEND approaches in mainstream settings, as well as via admission to Eden. This work is linked to our approach on growth, discussed in Section Five. It is also connected to the way our senior leaders contribute to national debate and policymaking on special education, discussed in Section Four.

The Trust should have a special focus on **building and strengthening home understanding of pupils' learning outcomes and targets** in the next period.

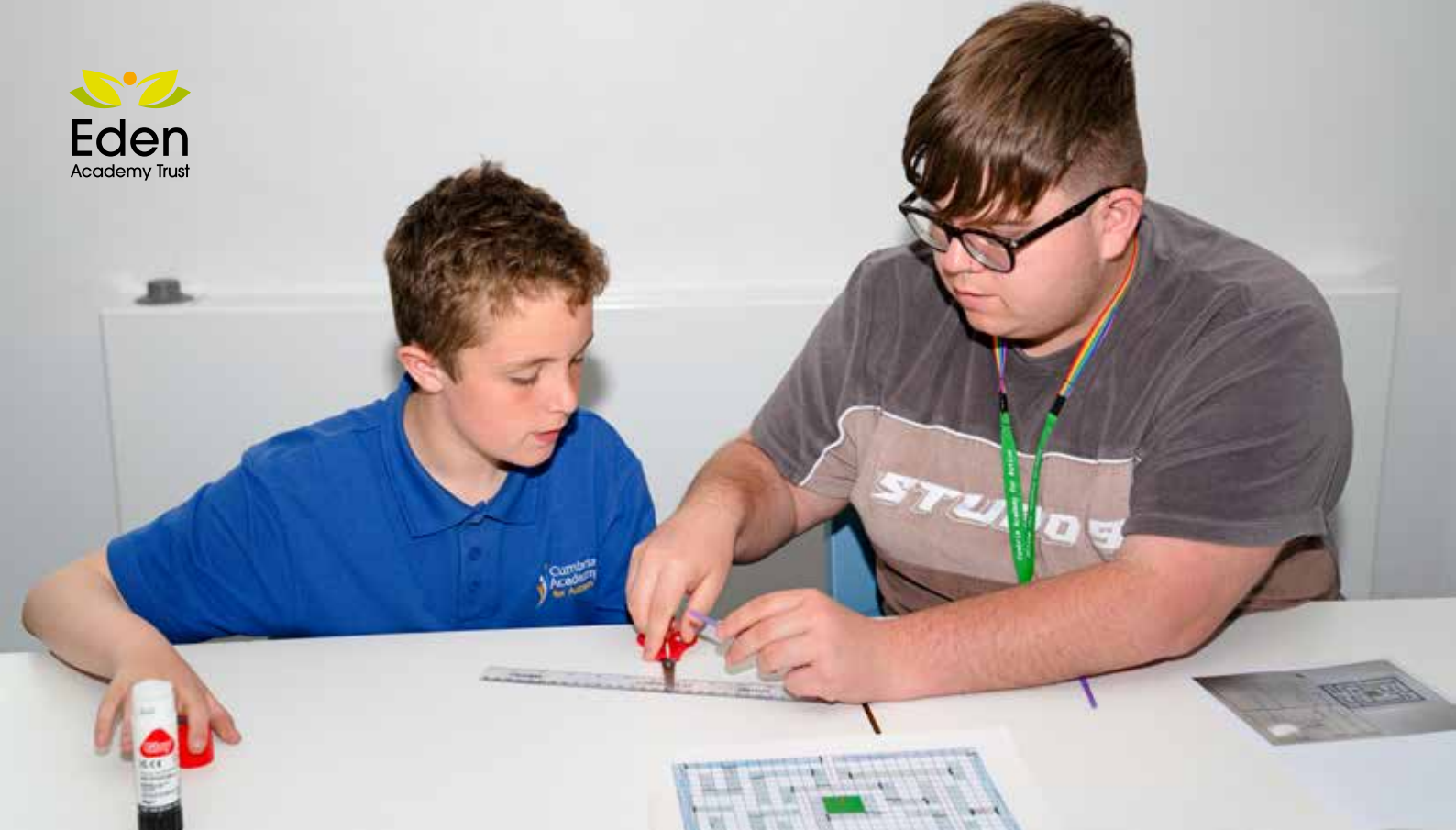
We made significant progress on this across our schools and teams in the last period, and it is now important to ensure every parent or guardian also shares and supports learning ambitions for the child or young adult in their care. Approaches to meeting this aim could include building on current work on issues such as pupil attendance and on encouraging more parents and guardians to get involved in all aspects of school life. This work is linked to our firm focus on the education mission of the Trust, discussed in Section Three.

The Trust should **continue to invest in therapies and family services as a way of supporting the best possible learning environment** for every pupil. This work has been a cornerstone of our approach since the Trust was formed and remains essential. Issues such as the economic climate and its impact on families as well as the effects of Covid have led to growing demand for support. At the same time, linked public services in health and social care are under pressure. The Trust will therefore need to innovate in this area, reviewing and adapting current delivery models as required. It will also be important to draw clearer boundaries between what the Trust can and cannot provide directly within its remit as an educational organisation.

The Trust should **make progress on shaping its contribution to post-19 provision and support.**

Post-19 provision emerged as a particular concern during consultation, given pathways for many of our pupils after school remain uncertain. We note that our progress on successful transfers post-19 is weaker than for other strategic aims set for 2021–24, in part because this is not within the direct control of the Trust. Work in this area could take many forms, ranging from continued work at school level to strengthen pathways, to focused advocacy work, to entering direct delivery of services. In the short term, we would like to see more discussion of this issue at Trust as well as school level.





## Two: Our Team

### A: Review of past period

The 2021–24 refresh of our strategy identified three priorities for Our Team:

- **Establish a strong leadership pipeline** both externally and internally ensuring that there is an appropriate level of competition for progression into senior leadership roles across the Trust;
- **Ensure healthy retention rates** across all staff groups because people feel there is the potential for career progression and a wide range of opportunities open to them;
- **Identify a clear set of development priorities** for the following mid-term period 2024–27 based on increased capacity at all levels.

The evidence is that we have made substantial progress in this dimension against all three priorities. The last period has been characterised by considerable growth and additional complexity for the Trust, with changes to our organisational structure. This has included significant internal recruitment and promotion, creating meaningful professional development opportunities for staff at multiple levels. For example, our Regional Directors are both former Trust Head Teachers, while new settings at Pinkwell and James Rennie’s sixth form are led by internally appointed professionals. At the same time, we have made some highly successful external Head Teacher appointments.

Our focus has not been confined to leadership pipeline and roles. Our CEO conducted a significant piece of research among learning support staff as part of her own professional development, identifying important lessons and opportunities for us. Several learning support assistants are being supported to enter teaching, and we have recently recruited the Trust’s first Workforce Development Manager.

Recent Ofsted inspections also suggest strengths in the approach to this lens:

*Staff across the school deliver the curriculum consistently well. Leaders provide staff with important training, enabling them to develop strong subject knowledge.*

James Rennie School, January 2023

*Leaders know that some teachers still need time to develop their skills and subject knowledge. Leaders have begun to train and support these teachers so that they can help pupils to learn more.*

Grangewood School, May 2020

More broadly, an independent review conducted in 2023 found that our approach to governance and the involvement of non-executive individuals and groups in the Trust was very strong.

## B: Areas of focus for 2024–27

Aside from financing, a well-supported and appropriately skilled team is the single most important component of the Trust's ability to deliver on its educational purpose. While two thirds of those consulted in the preparation of this strategy say our approach to succession planning and recruitment is strong, we also believe as a group that this needs a renewed focus in the coming period.

**Strengthening our investment in all our people, their professional and career development** is our primary aim for our team in the 2024–27 strategy. The key to achieving this will be adoption and delivery of our first comprehensive workforce strategy under the leadership of the Workforce Development Manager. We welcome this appointment at a critical time in the Trust's development. Investing well in our people has implications for the quality of our culture (Section Three), as well as for our preparedness for growth and development (Section Five).



We have identified three others connected to our team for the coming period, each of which will support this primary ambition:

The Trust should put special emphasis on **supporting and developing the professional skills and career progression of administrative and operational team members** in the coming period. Consultations leading up to this strategy suggest this is an area some feel is currently weaker than our offer for teaching staff and Trust leadership. At the same time, investing in our operational capacity is increasingly important as the Trust grows and changes as an organisation. Adding schools and settings, or even Hubs, to the Trust produces non-linear increases in operational complexity. Addressing this through new appointments and structures in functions like HR and finance is important, but so is developing the existing team.

The Trust should **invest further in its existing commitment on equality, diversity, and inclusion**. Approaches to this should include every school in the Trust achieving the anti-racist award already identified as an appropriate tool, as well as work to encourage more diversity in leadership roles at school and Trust level. The Trust should also work to ensure the composition of Local Advisory Boards, the Board of Trustees, and the Members more effectively reflects pupil and staff populations in the range of schools.

The Trust should **make progress on formalising and communicating internally its thinking on a range of issues related to organisational structures and planning**. We note past structural changes (e.g. introduction of Hubs) have been made organically, as the Trust has grown from being a small organisation. Work in this area could include issues like defining the maximum viable size for a Hub (number of schools and settings), developing criteria for creating a new geographical Hub (for example, characteristics sought in a prospective Local Authority partner), or considering whether there are other criteria (for example, special needs designations) that might be useful in shaping a Hub in the future. Feedback from the consultation suggests that more intentional internal communication about changes as well as other issues is becoming increasingly important. We discuss this further in Section Three on culture.





# Three: Our Culture

## A: Review of past period

The 2021–24 refresh of our strategy identified two priorities for Our Culture:

- **Ensure every individual** within or associated with the Trust understands how it works and the benefits that are associated with it.
- **Establish clear, consistent pathways** for every group, including all staff members, non-executive officers, and parents to access structured sessions on the wider Trust on at least an annual basis (a current example of this would be the annual Governance Conference).

The evidence is that we have made substantial progress in this dimension against both priorities. Nine in ten of those consulted believe that everyone associated with the Trust has a good understanding of its values and culture. However, not everyone is convinced that every school and setting yet sees itself as part of a bigger whole.

This is inevitable work in progress in a situation where the Trust is growing and evolving so rapidly. Since the strategy was refreshed in 2021, we have added Cumbria Academy for Autism to the Trust, as well as opening new settings at Pinkwell and in the form of the James Rennie sixth form. Meanwhile, former Grangewood pupils are currently housed at Grand Union Village until the Pinn River build is complete, and Sunshine House has also changed its status.

That said, the Trust was in a comparable position in 2018 when we published the first strategy in which integration of the new Northern Hub was a priority.

Much work has been done on governance and communicating how the Trust works in the last period. The annual leadership and governance conferences have evolved into more inclusive and focused events, and the biennial Academy Day strengthens this. Meanwhile the termly governance briefing, and staff newsletter are good tools for ensuring the wider community is aware of what is happening around the Trust.

Recent Ofsted inspections also suggest strengths in the approach to this lens:

*Trustees are highly skilled and provide excellent strategic direction for the school. The local advisory body offers school leaders guidance that contributes to school improvement.*

Moorcroft School, May 2019

*Useful networks across the multi-academy trust's schools enable staff to discuss specific special educational needs issues.*

Hexham Priory School, February 2023

## B: Areas of focus for 2024-27

Trust culture is a complex issue. On the one hand it is important that each school and setting in the Trust is free to develop its own culture. For pupils and families especially, it is the school that is their primary concern and interface with us. On the other, as the Trust becomes larger and more complex, it is also important to keep working on the broader values and culture of the whole organisation for staff, and for institutional partners such as the Department for Education and local authorities. These Trust level values should in turn influence aspects of school level culture.

**Striking the right balance between Trust and school level considerations and communicating them effectively**, with adjustments as the organisation develops, is our primary aim for our culture in the 2024-27 strategy. Approaches to this could be spearheaded by marcomms and governance teams, as well as at school and Trust leadership levels. Ensuring those whose primary focus is at school level, and those who work on a trust-wide basis spend time together considering one another's perspectives will remain important. Trustees who consult regularly with those working at school or setting level, via portfolios or as part of a Local Advisory Board have a particular responsibility in this area.

We have identified three others connected to our culture for the coming period, each of which will support this primary ambition:

The Trust should continue to **emphasise its mission as an educator of children and young people** among the workforce, families, and the wider community. This is important to embedding further the work done on curriculum and pupil outcomes, particularly among families. As the Trust continues to grow, our expectations for all pupils and their learning outcomes must remain undiluted. This is also crucial at a time when constrained public sector spending may contribute to a blurring of lines between special education, health, and social care responsibilities.

The Trust should take action to **involve more members of its local communities in the life and culture of its schools** and settings. Work in this area could include encouraging more active and representative participation in governance structures. It might also incorporate school and Trust level efforts to build a pipeline of future opportunities for school leavers post-19, encouraging more businesses and organisations to consider the potential of our young people as valued, active, and productive members of society.

The Trust should **make progress on advising local authority partners as they begin the process of more systematic planning for SEND provision.**

We note requirements in this area have changed recently and believe the Trust has specific expertise that would be useful to partners, and important as advocacy for children and young people with special needs and disabilities.





# Four: Our Reputation

## A: Review of past period

The 2021–24 refresh of our strategy identified three priorities for Our Reputation:

- **Consolidate EAT's reputation** in London, and build a profile in the north of England, as a leading provider of excellent SEND provision, and a source of collaboration, support, and inspiration for others.
- **Build a reputation for EAT** across England as a premier provider of SEND education. This should reach professionals and the wider public, as well as those who plan provision, to support other focus areas for this mid-term strategy. One result of this work should be to strengthen the pipeline of teachers and others wishing to work within EAT, and to create informed demand from parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Identify a clear set of development priorities** for the following mid-term period 2023–2026 by participating regularly in opportunities for external collaboration, showcasing and consultancy. This could include a wide range of areas from further geographic expansion in England, to delivery of SEND education in mainstream schools, to offering coaching and expertise in other education systems seeking to develop their provision.

The evidence is that we have made excellent progress in this dimension against the first two priorities. In London over the last period the Trust has been successful in establishing a new setting at Pinkwell, coming close to completion of a complex two free school project in Hillingdon, and

winning a bid to create a third in the same borough. Progress in the north of England has exceeded all expectations. On the strength of operating two Hub outstanding schools, leaders were asked to step in to work with Cumbria Academy for Autism, admitting it to the Trust in 2023. Similar work is now ongoing with George Hastwell School, while we have also opened a new sixth form for James Rennie School. The Trust's profile in its existing two Hubs has gone from strength to strength.

Meanwhile, the Trust, notably the CEO, has also been influential in national SEND policy and planning, particularly throughout the COVID pandemic. Both CEO and the Chair of Trustees have been publicly recognised for their contributions in the 2021 Queen's and 2023 King's Birthday Honours lists, respectively. Leaders have also published their thinking periodically. For example, the co-leaders of our anti-racism working group authored a popular op-ed in Schools Week in 2022. More than 80% of those consulted during the preparation of this strategy believe the Trust is well known and respected for its work nationally.

Less progress has been made to date on a clear set of development priorities. This is reflective of the fiscal and related uncertainties of the past period rather than of a failure of planning. The Trust has grown and developed over the period, but in an opportunistic way. We discuss this further in Section Five on Our Future.

## B: Areas of focus for 2024–27

We have identified four aims for the coming period on our reputation:

The Trust should take steps to **build the public profile of a range of individuals to help consolidate our reputation as an organisation with consistently useful contributions** to make on special education.

This should include the incoming Deputy CEO and Regional Directors, as well as senior members of staff working on issues of broad interest such as professional development, free school development, SEND financing, or anti-racism. The Trust should also consider making use of Trustees with relevant experience in the sector as spokespeople on occasion. Broadening the range of people taking part in public debate has a range of benefits for individuals as well as the Trust as a whole.

The Trust should take steps to **document and share publicly its successes with those who might benefit from the lessons and ideas they include.**

Marcomms colleagues will be critical to delivering and disseminating this kind of work, in collaboration with Trust leaders spearheading our work. Relevant current examples might include the ongoing improvement of Cumbria Academy for Autism, the experience of managing a complex project like the Grand Union Village/Pinn River free schools, or the development of common outcomes metrics in a complex environment through the work of the Hub.

The Trust should take steps to **establish partnerships with academics working in special education, taking part in national research** where the opportunity presents itself. Candidate partners might include organisations like the Education Endowment Fund or the National Foundation for Education Research, as well as academics working in the field (for example at the Faculty of Education at Cambridge, or the Institute of Education at UCL). The Trust should also continue to offer overseas delegations the opportunity to look at its work as they consider their own approaches to special education and engage in policy dialogues where appropriate.

The Trust should make **progress on a proactive involvement in discussions at local authority and national levels on SEND funding models and viability, as well as on managing expanded demand** for special education provision. It should also work towards making its voice heard on post-19 provision, and the potential of people with disabilities throughout their lives.





## Five: Our Future

### A: Review of past period

The 2021–24 refresh of our strategy identified three priorities for Our Future:

- **Creation of a stronger northern hub** and prove the concept of a hub structure with a shared Board of Trustees and senior leadership team, and strong inter and intra hub collaboration as an operational model for further development.
- **Open Pinn River and Grand Union Village Schools in Hillingdon** and transfer pupils and staff from Grangewood and Sunshine House Schools successfully, via an interim residency.
- **Use the experience of 2020–22** to identify a set of relevant new development projects for the next mid-term period.

The evidence is that we have made excellent progress in this dimension against the first priority, partial progress against the second, and satisfactory progress against the third.

As discussed in Section Four (Reputation), establishment of the Trust's Hub in the north of England has exceeded expectations, growing to include three schools and a sixth form, with a fourth school to be admitted in 2024. Considerable progress has been made on integrating leadership teams, with the Regional Director and Cluster Lead structure working well, smoother integration on finance, ICT, HR and other functions, and

better knowledge of all schools across the Board of Trustees. The establishment of trust-wide outcomes, SEL, and safeguarding hubs has also transformed opportunities for collaboration and learning school to school.

At the time of writing, the opening of Pinn River and Grand Union Village schools, and final transfer of former Grangewood and Sunshine House pupils and staff to permanent locations, remains a work in progress. Delays beyond the Trust's control have slowed progress on this, but in the process many lessons have been learned, and will be applied to future projects.

The Trust is actively discussing a range of new development projects. These take multiple forms, including new free school projects and admitting existing schools and academies to the Trust, as well as possibilities such as provision of special education in mainstream settings, or provision of specific expertise, such as family services, in consultancy form to others. There is work to do to prioritise and manage the pipeline of opportunities more systematically, to ensure managed as well as opportunistic growth.

## B: Areas of focus for 2024–27

The question of Trust growth is a difficult one. A significant minority of those involved in the consultation said they did not believe further growth should be a priority for the coming period. Many of these respondents linked this view to serious concerns about the viability of the current funding model for schools in general and SEND in particular. At the same time, the evidence is that Multi Academy Trusts increasingly need to grow, to benefit from economies of scale. This is particularly important in SEND.

At the same time, there has always been a moral purpose at the heart of the Trust's approach. Since its formation, Eden has said consistently that its primary purpose is to tackle unmet need for special education where this exists. Growing demand for places is a factor in all locations where the Trust currently operates.

Work in this area will be guided by annual growth strategies, drafted by the Executive, and ratified by the Board of Trustees. The current iteration of this document states clearly that the Trust will continue to grow in the current geographies where it operates.

Our primary aim for our future in the 2024–27 strategy is therefore to **agree and communicate internally, and to partners, a clear balance between continuing to grow reactively as demand presents itself and developing a more structured approach** to development. Approaches to this should be linked explicitly to work discussed in Sections Four and Three on inputs into national and local policymaking and should consider relevant research and the experiences of other Trusts. They should also avoid discounting the organisational development demands made on the Trust each time we add a school or setting. Recent experience has taught us that these are non-linear, and we should be alert to the need to make further changes to our structure in the coming period

We have identified three others connected to our future for the coming period, each of which will support this primary ambition:

The Trust should take steps to **develop evidence-based policy on a range of growth-related issues**. This would include work on the range of approaches to growth that are feasible (including free school projects and admission of academies or grant maintained schools into the Trust, as well as other approaches such as provision in mainstream settings, consultancy, or marketing of specialist services). It would also involve work on how we might structure development of one or more new hubs, including assessment of potential local authority partners. While much of this work is likely to be done by the senior leadership team and specialists in finance, capital projects etc, it is a project that might also benefit from the involvement of a group of trustees.

The Trust should take steps to **assess the current and future extent of its financial risk as a key input into other work on growth**. The funding position is a consistent and growing concern, for Trustees and others. It will therefore be vital to understand the likely financial implications of any growth plan put forth for the coming period to enable those responsible to balance risks.

The Trust should **make progress on thinking about the case for non-traditional growth approaches such as marketing CPD approaches, or even therapies, family services and other supporting services**. This could also include marketing of core collateral such as curricula and courses, and provision of expert time in the form of consultancy. This may produce a modest unrestricted income stream that could be used to balance budgets, as well as contributing in the process to the Trust's commitment to building excellence in SEND provision as widely as it can.





# Annex 1

List of people who were consulted on the strategy

## Trustees

Emily Ellington  
Jane Inglese  
Mari Ladu  
John Moffat  
Barry Nolan

## Senior Leads

Kris Williams  
Andrew Sanders  
Susan Douglas  
Sudhi Pathak  
Keith Holroyd

## Heads of schools, satellites and settings

Perdy Buchanan-Barrow  
Alastair Warner  
Ivan Talbott  
Catherine Holdsworth  
Kara Smallman  
Kerry Dunbobbin  
Louise Burns  
Mark Fuell  
Oliver Wilson  
Toni Edmonds-Smith

## Members

Hardip Begol  
Judith Hemery  
Karen Deacon  
Mark Lemon  
Pam Stentiford

## LAB Chairs

David Hamilton  
Gill Kennedy  
Chris Rule  
Jackie Seaman



## Annex 2

Questions asked in the EAT Strategy questionnaire

### Overview

- 1. Please read through the following five statements and put them in order, where 1 is the one you associate most strongly and 5 is the one you associate least strongly with EAT.**
  - The Eden Academy Trust is seen as a national leader in SEND education
  - All Eden pupils can expect to achieve excellent learning outcomes during their time at school
  - Family support services are readily available for all pupils, and are relevant and well-tailored
  - Staff and parents understand each pupil's targets and their own role in supporting learning
  - The Eden Academy Trust is considered a great place to work, internally and externally
- 2. Is there anything you'd like to add about this question? If so, please use this space.**
- 3. Please read through the following five statements and put them in order, where 1 is the one you think is the most important and 5 the least important priority for EAT in the coming three years.**
  - Growing to include more schools and settings using approaches tried in recent years
  - Developing a strong pipeline of middle and senior leaders in the Trust
  - Advocating for more sustainable funding of SEND education and associated social services
  - Creating a clear pathway to support Learning Support Assistants into teaching
  - Providing a broader range of SEND provision in our schools and settings
- 4. Is there anything you'd like to add about this question? If so, please use this space.**



**5. Please read through the following five statements and put them in order, where 1 is the one you think is the most concerning and 5 the least concerning threat to EAT in the coming three years**

- Pressure on school funding leads to an unsustainable financial position for the Trust
- Growing pupil numbers affect the quality of education Trust schools are able to offer
- Recruiting and retaining staff becomes more difficult due to economic and other factors
- The Trust expands too fast, affecting staffing, learning or the financial position
- A change in government policy makes running a MAT more difficult or untenable

**6. Is there anything you'd like to add about this question? If so, please use this space:**

**7. In our last strategy, we said we wanted to use the three years to consolidate our position in delivering excellent SEND education within a culture of continuous improvement. To what extent do you think we have achieved this aim?**

- Completely achieved
- Mostly achieved
- Partially achieved
- Not achieved much
- Not achieved

**8. Is there anything you'd like to add about this question? If so, please use this space:**

## Our team

**9. The Trust has a strong, proactive leadership team and a group of developing leaders**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**10. Every staff member has the chance to take part in career and professional development**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**11. The Trust has a strong approach to succession planning and managing recruitment pipelines**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**12. Is there anything you'd like to add about this question? If so, please use this space:**

## Our outcomes

**13. Learning outcomes are improving consistently across the Trust's portfolio of schools and settings**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**14. All staff have a clear understanding of the intent of the curriculum, what this means for their implementation role, and how it links to the impact we wish to see**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**15. Trust students are transferring successfully into further education, work and/or independent living post-19**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**16. Is there anything you'd like to add about any of these questions? If so, please use this space.**

## Our culture

**17. Everyone associated with the Trust has a good understanding of its values and culture**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**18. Members of staff have plenty of opportunities to work with one another across school/setting and hub lines**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**19. Every school or setting in the Trust sees itself as part of a bigger whole**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**20. Is there anything you'd like to add about any of these questions? If so, please use this space.**

## Our future

### 21. Further expansion should be a strategic priority for the Trust

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### 22. The Trust should extend its reach by developing its therapy and family services offers to sell to other organisations

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### 23. The Trust should seek to do more work providing SEND education in mainstream settings

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### 24. Is there anything you'd like to add about any of these questions? If so, please use this space.

## Our reputation

### 25. The Trust is well known and respected for its work on a national basis

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### 26. The Trust should get involved in academic research that furthers understanding of and improves practice in SEND education

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### 27. Our schools are well known, respected and supported in their local communities

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

### 28. Is there anything you'd like to add about any of these questions? If so, please use this space.

## Three little words

### 29. How would you describe Eden as it is today?

### 30. How would you describe Eden in 3 years' time?

