



WEST SOMERSET ACADEMIES TRUST  
COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE COLLABORATION



# WEST SOMERSET ACADEMIES TRUST

**JANUARY 2022**

Latest information for prospective schools

**CEO: Robert Lakin**

**WEST SOMERSET ACADEMIES TRUST**

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# WELCOME TO OUR TRUST

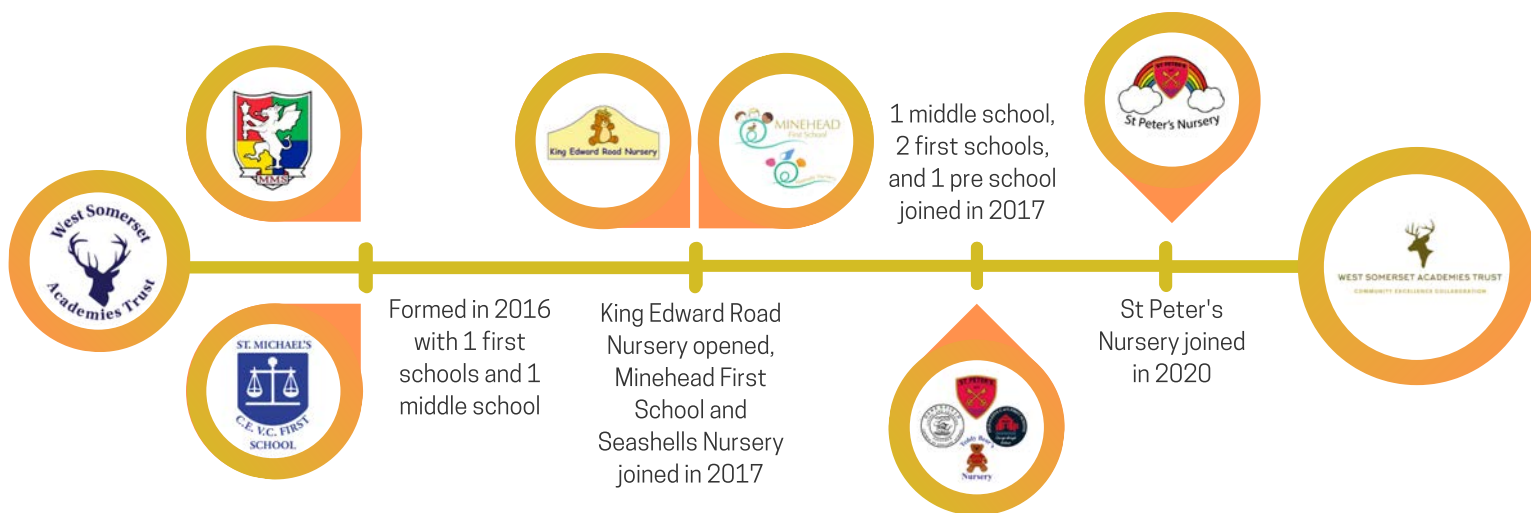
The West Somerset Academies Trust (WSAT) is currently serving a mixture of nurseries and small and large schools throughout the West Somerset coastline and hinterland. As a multi-academy trust (MAT) we are a key partner in the West Somerset Partnership Board, the Somerset Association of Secondary Heads (SASH), The Somerset Association of Primary Heads (SASH), The Rural Teaching Alliance, and TeachFirst.

Instinctively collaborative and ambitious, our Trust supports more than 1,600 diverse children from birth to thirteen. Please have a look through the following pages which will hopefully give you a sense of what our Trust and schools vision, values, and aspirations are for the future. Most of all, we hope you are left with a feeling that the education of the young people in our schools is in safe hands.

We look forward to discussing the future of your school and opportunities within the WSAT family.



**"The potential to enrich and create opportunities for success in all young people we support across rural and coastal areas was an overriding factor for me to join the Trust." - David McGrath, Headteacher at Danesfield Middle School**



**"It's an exciting time to be part of the West Somerset Academies Trust. To be a part of true collaboration across our area nurturing and supporting the children in our care and to realise their true potential." - Trudy Danby, Chief Operations Officer**

# WELCOME FROM THE CEO



**"Working within the Trust allows me to be a part of my community's bigger picture to provide opportunities and establish core values with the children I teach." - Ruth Bulpin, Teacher at Minehead Middle School**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the West Somerset Academies Trust (WSAT). We are proud to deliver a comprehensive educational offer and we understand and embrace the responsibility that is given to all members of the Trust team to deliver an enriched high-quality education that will enhance life opportunities for all of our children.

Our two nurseries, two pre schools, four first and two middle schools have a shared commitment and vision; **respect, responsibility, and ambition** are promoted and **integrity** is treasured. We strive to make everyone feel valued and happy, and a place where achievements are celebrated. We are an inclusive, supportive, considerate community creating **lifelong learners**, who are self-aware and reflective of the thoughts and beliefs of others and who leave WSAT schools prepared to make a positive difference to the world in which they live.

Education is a powerful tool that drives social regeneration that changes lives for the better. It is essential to adapt and reform ensuring that, as educationalists, we embrace innovation and excellence. As an organisation we are reflective and recognise that our staff and pupils are our most precious asset. With this in mind, our expectation is **excellence** and our drive is to be better tomorrow than we are today; working in collaboration we can provide safe, caring, and stimulating environments.

The information will provide you with a sense of what the Trust is all about and what working within and alongside WSAT can offer. We hope that you share the sense of optimism for the future of education within our communities and we look forward to meeting you soon to continue the discussion.

Mr Robert Lakin





**"In a family of schools like ours, children benefit from the expertise of leaders and support from staff across the Trust." - Hayley Lake, Local School Councillor at St Peter's First School**



## OUR VISION

The West Somerset Academies Trust has a relentless focus on improving the quality of education for **every child in our care**. It is essential to raise the aspirations of children, providing them with the ambition to achieve more. Through the transformative value of education, our pupils are inspired to imagine and it is our goal to help them on their journey to **achieve** their dreams and aspirations.

Each of our educational establishments holds its own vision and ethos, underpinned by our Trust's core values of **'Collaboration, Excellence, and Community'**. We work together as a family of schools and we are able to share expertise and skills. We work hard to maintain collaborative relationships both within our Trust family and neighbouring schools and Trusts sharing best practice and innovation resulting in accelerated school improvement. Together we can create more ambition for the lifelong success of our pupils as they continue their learning journey.

Our **collaborative culture** is able to endure because of the shared **commitment** of the family we have created towards all of our pupils in our settings. Our Trust is **driven** to improve and safeguard the **life chances** of the children in our communities and to deliver diverse educational opportunities, now and in the future.

What makes WSAT **unique** is a combination of the rural nature of its localities, the **diversity** of the communities it serves, and the broad and **dedicated** support we receive from our Local Schools Councillors and our Trustees.

# GOVERNANCE

Trusts and academies are autonomous, which means there is a need for strong and effective teamwork fundamental to success.

Members, Directors and Trustees here at WSAT are **highly experienced** in their chosen career or profession, and bring unique skills and insight to meetings. They lead effectively to ensure that all those who are managing our academies feel that they are part of the transformation and evolution process.

The Trust Board is responsible for setting the **strategic direction** of our MAT. Their main aim is to raise the educational achievement and outcomes for our entire school community with a focus on four key areas:

- Providing a clear strategic direction for the Trust.
- Acting as a critical friend by providing support and advice to the academies.
- Holding the academies to account for the educational standards and outcomes achieved.
- Supporting, demonstrating and actively promoting the Trust's vision and values.

WSAT has an additional layer of governance – the Local School Councils (LSCs). Each local council works with their designated school, carrying the **school voice** to the Trust Board. Each LSC has a strong focus on localised school issues, school improvement, staff, pupil health and well-being, and forging **strong links** with parent and local communities.



**"The Trust is moving forward, not only strengthening and improving what is here, but pushing the boundaries to create future opportunities." - Jane Bellamy, Trustee**





# BECOMING PART OF THE WSAT FAMILY

Collaboration and partnerships are integral to ensure that WSAT is well placed to **flourish**. What we are looking for in prospective schools is that they will have the skills and expertise to ensure that our **collaborative** approach to the development of our children is ensured. This will enable us to support our **vision** to provide the children and staff of the Trust with fresh and valued **knowledge** and **talent**, and in turn your staff and children will enjoy the same achievement. Our Trust invests in these strengths, harnessed and embraced through a range of collaborative working groups adapting our ongoing offer to the communities we serve, striving for **excellence** as the expectation.

It is essential that schools maintain their identity, vision, and values. These are inextricably linked to the children, staff, and the community it serves. This **inclusive** and supportive approach to teaching and learning sustains attainment resulting in improved outcomes and a culture to develop **lifelong learners**.



**"The drive and direction of change is exciting and inspiring. It is allowing me to support my team to aim high."**

**- Emma Murch,  
Headteacher at Old  
Cleeve First School**

# THE BENEFITS

## Leadership Support

Executive and educational leadership, directly supporting Heads. **Approachable** Trust leaders experienced in school improvement improving Ofsted and SIAMS alongside ever improving standards. We are proud of developing **homegrown** leaders who have thrived within our settings to lead successfully within our Trust.

## School Improvement

All schools are supported by an external partner who is able to run school reviews with subject specific **scrutiny** and challenge. Collaborative groups and Trust 'Leaders of Learning' drive professional development, lead Trust initiatives, professional development, and support colleagues. Operating an open, **honest**, and **reflective** culture we embrace the belief that we are always learning.

## Education Network Support

Access to local, regional, and national networks **supporting development** in the education sector.




## Professional Service Support

Our leaders, teachers, and pupils are entirely **focused on teaching and learning** because the Trust is able to support with the responsibility of the following: governance; risk management; procurement; estates support; administration; project management; Health & Safety; recruitment; employee relations; communications; marketing; ICT; financial management; and staff wellbeing.

## Collaboration & Partnership

An ambitious outward facing approach for pupil development, embracing partnerships. Our Trust wide collaborative groups **nurture and develop** practice and pedagogy in core areas of Maths, English, teaching and learning, middle leadership, CPD offer, SEND, pupil premium, behaviour, and attendance.



The background of the image is a blurred classroom setting. Several children are seated at a table, their faces and hands out of focus. They appear to be engaged in an activity. In the foreground, a grey table surface is covered with various colorful building blocks, including yellow, green, purple, and blue ones, some of which are arranged in rows. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

**"Having a team of supportive colleagues within your school and across the Trust who you can talk to and collaborate with feels like you are never on your own." Colin Hiron, Teacher at St Michael's First School**



## NEXT STEPS

**Does your school share our vision for the future of the children in our care?** Then we'd be interested in hearing from you.

To join our Trust is to join our **family** where you will receive support, guidance, and access to our shared expertise and in return we will learn and grow from having you with us.

If you are a maintained school or stand alone academy supporting children from birth to nineteen, you would be very welcome to join us on this journey.

Please do contact Robert Lakin directly via email **RLakin@wsat.org.uk** where we can explore potential opportunities together in informal open discussion.

Please view our Trust website at **wsat.org.uk** for further information on our schools and the Trust.



**"There is a strong commitment to improving both the life experiences and the educational outcomes for our children, this all takes place within a supportive body of staff and is the best reason to work here." - Nicola Gibbs, Teacher at Minehead Middle School**

A photograph of three young children in school uniforms playing with wooden blocks outdoors. A girl on the left, with pigtails and a blue cardigan, is gesturing with her hands. A boy in the center, wearing a white shirt, is looking down at a block. A girl on the right, with a blue bow and a blue cardigan, is holding a large wooden block. They are standing in front of a blue fence and a brick wall. The text "Get in touch today" is overlaid in the top left, and "to start building their tomorrow" is overlaid at the bottom.

Get in touch **today**

to start building their  
**tomorrow**