



The Heath Family **Strategic** Overview **2023-24**

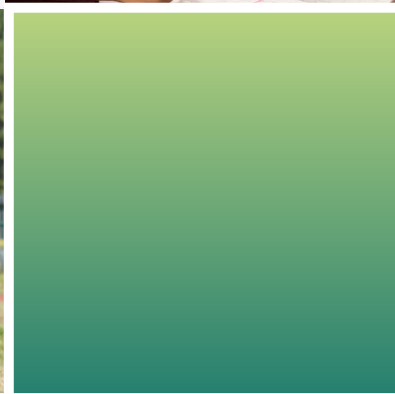
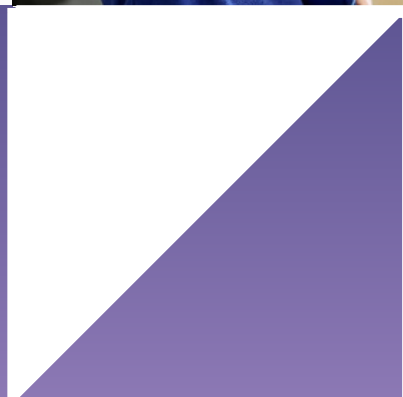
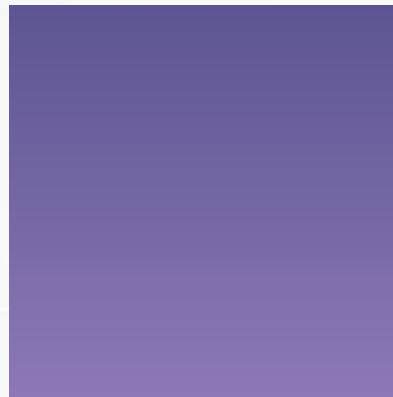


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Forward

Thank you for taking the time to look at our latest strategy document for the Heath Family.

We have taken the unusual step of only setting our strategy for one year, rather than the more common three or five years. This decision is based on our recognition that the Trust introduced considerable change over the last three years as we began to emerge from the effects of the financial restraints that faced the Trust and the impact on our community of Covid. We have been able to grow our central team, introduce a range of strategies and processes and have really focused on developing our collaborative practice. We now need to take a pause in introducing yet more change to thoroughly embed our approaches across all our schools, then review their impact before moving on again.

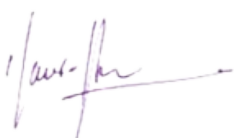
This approach does not diminish our ambition. Our schools have double the numbers of children from deprived backgrounds than the national average. Large numbers of our families face significant financial, social and health issues. Many of our families have not traditionally viewed education and school positively. These are not excuses – they are our context and that is why we have to be better; adequate is not good enough for our children and the issues they face.

We are passionate in our desire for outstanding education and care for every one of our children. However, we recognise the importance of building sustained improvements and the importance of developing consistency – being good enough for everyone and all the time.

We made significant progress in the last year:

- We have had Ofsted visits to seven of our eight schools, including five full inspections and two monitoring visits, and whilst all our schools are not yet good, every inspection has recognised the significant progress being made. We are confident that as a result of our collective work they can all be good by the end of this year.
- Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development are now good in seven of our schools –aspects that are vitally important to our children and their families.
- Both primary and secondary phases continue to improve outcomes year on year and our primary pupils have exceeded national standards for the first time, including children in receipt of pupil premium or with SEND.

Our approaches are working – we now need to ensure consistent implementation in every school, in every classroom, for every child, every day.



David Donnelly

Chief Executive Officer



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Who we are

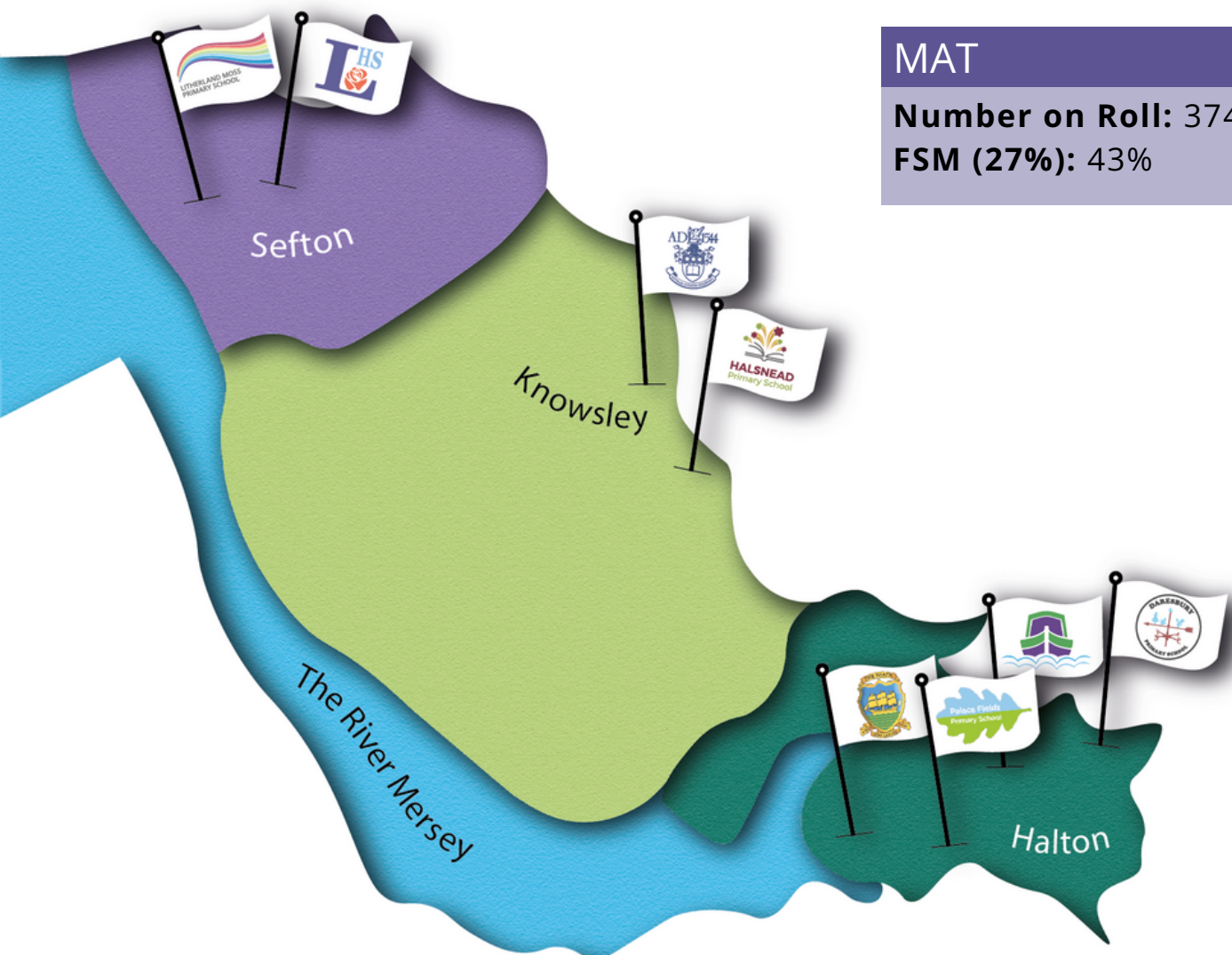
THE HEATH FAMILY TRUST

Our organisation is made up of 8 schools, over 80 Trustees and Local Governors, over 450 staff and over 3500 children. Together, we are The Heath Family Trust; working together to maximise attainment and nurture confident, resilient and compassionate individuals.

The Heath School converted to academy status in 2011 and became a Multi Academy Trust in 2013. Since then a further seven schools joined the Trust. This now means that the Trust consists of 8 schools spread across Halton, Sefton and Knowsley local authority areas.

We have a range of schools, both in location and phase. Many of our schools have rates of deprivation double or even treble the national levels, whilst one is substantially below.

The Trust is a not for profit charity that maintains its schools and is in receipt of public finance to do so. Our work is overseen by a Board of Trustees who act on a voluntary basis to shape the strategic direction of the Trust and to call the executive team to account. Schools in the Trust are subject to the accountability systems through Ofsted and nationally published performance measures. We are accountable to the Secretary of State for Education through the Regional Director's Office, who work closely with us to review performance. Each of our schools also has a Local Governing Body who call the school leadership to account and ensure the needs of our children are met.



MAT

Number on Roll: 3743

FSM (27%): 43%

The Heath School, Halton

Date Joined: 2011

Age Range: 11 - 16

Number on Roll: 1185

FSM: 38%



Bridgewater Park, Halton

Date Joined: 2014

Age Range: 3 - 11

Number on Roll: 110

FSM: 72%



Litherland High School, Sefton

Date Joined: 2015

Age Range: 11 - 16

Number on Roll: 695

FSM: 44%



The Prescott School, Knowsley

Date Joined: 2016

Age Range: 11 - 16

Number on Roll: 862

FSM: 55%



Palace Fields, Halton

Date Joined: 2016

Age Range: 3 - 11

Number on Roll: 167

FSM: 55%



Daresbury, Halton

Date Joined: 2016

Age Range: 4 - 11

Number on Roll: 194

FSM: 13%



Halsnead, Knowsley

Date Joined: 2017

Age Range: 3 - 11

Number on Roll: 318

FSM: 60%



Litherland Moss, Sefton

Date Joined: 2018

Age Range: 3 - 11

Number on Roll: 212

FSM: 60%



During 2022-23 Trust leaders worked with Dixons Academy Trust to review our core vision, values and principles. Through this work we agreed the following statements:

Why do we exist?

To empower our children to overcome barriers, be able to compete with the best, and shape the future.

How do we behave?

- With **kindness**: we look out for each other.
- With **integrity**: we do the right thing.
- With **tenacity**: we do what it takes.

How will we succeed?

Through clarity, collaboration, accountability, and academic rigour

Central to our work for this academic year is sharing these principles with all our stakeholders, including pupils, staff, governors, parents and partners. Together we will look how these principles currently shape our work and how they should do so in the future. We will do this through a range of publications, roadshows and meetings over the course of the year. Our aim is create a shared vision, with a clear and agreed focus on how we will continue to develop and improve our Trust. We welcome debate and challenge, as only through this can we develop understanding and move forward as a community, with clarity and rigour, dedicated to our core purpose:

To empower our children to overcome barriers, be able to compete with the best, and shape the future



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Our **key areas** of **focus** for the coming year

As stated above, we will succeed through clarity, collaboration, accountability, and academic rigour. Our focus for this year is therefore to define and create the conditions for these aspects, strengthening supportive mechanisms and removing barriers. We will be mindful at all times of our values of **kindness**, **integrity** and **tenacity**, using them as the lens through which we shape all our work.

3.1

Clarity

To be successful, any endeavour or organisation needs to have clarity – clarity of purpose and clarity of process. Therefore, for clarity, our immediate **purpose** is set out in our **strategic goals**:

- For all schools to be at least good in all aspects
- For all pupils to be making good progress and for all groups to be attaining at least in line with national standards
- **For more pupils, parents and staff to agree that we are becoming increasingly successful in empowering our children to overcome barriers, be able to compete with the best, and shape the future**

The second aspect of clarity is **clarity of process** – being absolutely clear on how we do things and defining what good looks like in our schools.

As a Trust we have significantly developed our thinking and practice in many areas through the process of collaborative alignment described below. Where we have agreed that we will have common process across our schools, for example in our approach to the curriculum, we will set the

processes out in our trust handbook. Those processes that we have decided will not be common across the Trust will be set out in individual school handbooks. Together, these handbooks will set out how we do things in our Trust. This approach is not intended to stifle creativity but to ensure that we have consistent, evidence based approaches that are based on the best there is to offer. They give guidance and, where necessary, direction to ensure all staff help us fulfill our mission and to reach our strategic goals.

Work on school handbooks has already begun and we expect that the first version of all handbooks will be in place by the end of this academic year.



Collaboration

“Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.”
 Ryunosuke Satoro

Creating great schools is not easy – if it was we would have twenty thousand outstanding schools, but we are passionate in our belief that the challenges we face are better faced together. Collaboration is not just a methodology - we believe it is the fundamental reason why the Trust exists. By working together we are better able to address our challenges through shared thought, leadership, resource and support for each other.

WE HAVE THEREFORE INVESTED CONSIDERABLE TIME AND ENERGY IN DEVELOPING OUR COLLABORATIVE PRACTITIONER AND LEADERSHIP NETWORKS TO:

- Research and share best practice
- Agree future direction for the area
- Coordinate professional development and support
- Shape our common approaches

Networks are led by nominated Trust leaders and have agreed foci and work plans. Schools commit to releasing colleagues to attend them, recognising the value they bring.

We seek to impose methodologies very sparingly but rather develop shared approaches through consensus. We recognise that central direction can often bring about faster immediate change but we fundamentally believe that it is through debate, research and dialogue that practitioners are fully engaged in developments and committed to the approaches we develop – this is the basis of long term, sustained improvement. We call this process **collaborative alignment**:

- **First we start with the why – why do we need to change our current approaches?**
- **Then we approach the how – what evidence do we have that certain practices work better than others?**
- **Finally we do the doing – consistently implementing the selected practices to ensure excellent provision across all our schools and then evaluating their impact.**

As we progressively develop our approaches, we commit as a group, to following them. They become part of our ‘backbone’ and are set out in our handbooks described above.

Accountability

The work we do is important. In taking on the responsibility for this vital work we therefore accept that we are accountable to our children; our families and communities; and to the government that funds our work. The work of the whole Trust is bound by the Nolan Principles for Public Life. Each of us commits to work within these principles; the values of the Trust; and to carry out the agreed processes and systems of the Trust. We also commit to do our best for our children: **empowering our children to overcome barriers; be able to compete with the best, and shape the future.**

We therefore have systems of accountability to check not only that we are all fulfilling our duty, but also, and equally importantly, to help each of us to identify where and how we can improve. Our approach also serves as an evaluative tool for our processes and systems, identifying where we might need to change and helping us refine and fine tune our existing methods. Crucially, they enable us to identify great practice that can be shared with others.



We want our accountability systems to be both efficient and effective, minimising the burden on everyone whilst maximising the impact. Through the process of **collaborative alignment** described above we will develop a leadership handbook that will set out, amongst other things, how leaders of all levels in the Trust will undertake processes to ensure accountability. We will also work with leaders to ensure they have the necessary understanding and skills to carry them out in the agreed manner.

During this year we will be strengthening our process for line management and ensuring greater consistency. We will ensure that every member of our staff will have regular one to one meetings focussing on welfare and wellbeing. We will also support all staff to further improve their performance using coaching methodologies and in particular Steplab to ensure short term, achievable targets are set and that staff receive appropriate support to accomplish them. By the end of the year we intend that this process is well embedded and having demonstrable impact. This will mean we can move away from the rigid annual performance management process to a more flexible and dynamic process designed to support continuous and sustainable improvement.

Academic Rigour

Over the past few years, we have undertaken significant work on improving our curriculum. We now have a well-established approach to curriculum thinking and design across our schools and this has been increasingly recognised in Ofsted visits. Our work now is to ensure this is consistent across all subjects and phases. We do not impose a common curriculum but in many areas schools have chosen to work together to develop an agreed curriculum, particularly in the primary phase. This obviously ensures shared expertise, efficient use of resource and the ability to share materials and planning.

We have used our principle of collaborative alignment to work with groups to develop and refine our approach to teaching across the Trust. This is not intended to be prescriptive, because we know that no single approach works across all subjects and ages. We are, however, committed to certain principles of evidence based practice such as metacognition. Our groups have therefore identified these approaches which will be rolled out in all schools over the course of the year. This is the key area of development for our Trust this year and is known as our 'Big Move'

Attendance remains an issue in many of our schools. Societal attitudes have changed since Covid and nationally attendance levels have been adversely impacted. Whilst, as a Trust, the impact on our schools has not been as severe, we are far from complacent. Delivering our ambition requires all pupils to be attending well. We will continue to develop and refine our approaches to attendance and will be relentless in ensuring high levels of attendance for all.

Whilst this document sets out how we will increasingly standardise and codify our approaches we remain very mindful that our role is to make our schools fit our children rather than making the children fit our schools. Every one of our children is an individual, many of them with complex needs and environments. Our job is therefore to ensure that we know every child well and find the right way to help them - **empowering our children to overcome barriers, be able to compete with the best, and shape the future.** We have strong pastoral and supportive systems in all our schools and we work well with external agencies. We will further develop the use of our systems such as the Matrix of Vulnerability and review the impact and range of therapeutic responses we offer.





In conclusion, we are seeing clear signs of improvement in provision and outcomes in our schools. The developments we have made and the strategies we have employed are working. Taking the time to further embed these approaches in a consistent manner will yield the further improvement we passionately desire. It is always tempting to want to move on to the next big initiative, but we must resist that urge – focussing on ensuring consistent implementation of our approaches in every school, in every classroom and for every child, every day. Then we go again.

The logo for The Heath Family Trust is a stylized, abstract shape composed of several concentric, curved bands of color. The outermost band is dark purple, followed by a lighter purple band, then a green band, and finally a dark green band. The text "THE Heath Family Trust" is written in white, sans-serif font within the dark purple band. The background of the image is a light gray with a subtle geometric pattern of overlapping squares and triangles in various shades of gray, green, and blue.

THE
Heath
Family
Trust