



River Learning Trust

A Multi-Academy Trust responsible for schools  
and a School-Centred Initial Teacher Training provider

# Information Booklet for Staff, Pupils and Families





*'This is a partnership which we all feel best meets our core purpose of excellence, aspiration and working effectively to improve the life chances of all of our pupils. All of the schools within the Trust share this common ethos and vision for excellence in education and can benefit from support and challenge from each other as well as share best practice from wider networks.'*

*Tracey Smith, Headteacher, Tower Hill School*

## Our Vision

Education has the power to change lives, communities and society for the better. At the River Learning Trust we believe that we can achieve more for our pupils, trainees, staff and communities by working together rather than alone.

All of the schools in the River Learning Trust are united by a common belief in the benefits of working together, and by our commitment to a series of three principles:



### Commitment to Excellence

We aim for our schools to have the highest standards of behaviour, academic work, extra-curricular provision and teaching, and for our SCITT to excel in the quality of training and outcomes of trainees.

We will support our pupils, trainees and our staff to be highly successful, recognising that success comes in a wide variety of ways, growing a culture of continual improvement where we look to provide the best possible educational experience.

Working together across the schools and SCITT within the trust we will expect high standards from ourselves and each other.

### Everyone Learning

Schools are learning communities for pupils and for staff; we will develop a culture that builds a thirst and excitement for learning where our pupils and our staff make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Pupils, students, trainees and staff will benefit from the principles of a ‘Growth Mindset’; they will develop resilience, be willing to take risks and develop new knowledge skills and understanding. They will understand that their abilities are not fixed, and this will ensure that they seek new challenges.

Our pupils, students and trainees will learn with excellent teachers and our teachers will have excellent professional learning behaviours and opportunities.

Schools in the Trust will work together to support and challenge each other, to share what is best and learn from what is working well; we will seek to direct resources and learning to secure the best education possible for our pupils, students and staff.

We will be truly inclusive for all pupils, students and trainees, offering a rich and excellent educational experience whatever their academic ability, social background or special educational need. We aim to ensure that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives, celebrating the differences within our communities and seeking to learn from this diversity.

Our pupils, students and trainees will learn to create, lead and support diverse communities, bringing out the best in everyone.

## Respectful Relationships

Acting with care, integrity, and fairness will be demonstrated within schools, the SCITT, and across the trust as we work together to achieve our aims.

We will create a culture which places strong emphasis on trust and openness which encourages all to seek shared solutions, acting in the best interests of young people.

We will continue to grow school communities where character matters for pupils, students, trainees and staff; how we treat other people and our responsibilities to ourselves, others and our communities will be at the heart of our schools.

Not only will our pupils and students leave our schools with academic attainment to ensure success at the next stage of their lives, they will also have developed the social and interpersonal skills and qualities which will see them be successful throughout their lives; we will provide opportunities which develop character and confidence so that our young people leave school with strong academic attainment alongside personal resilience, clear values and leadership abilities.

## Within our vision:

- Each school has its own unique character and ethos, reflecting local communities and their needs and priorities
- The Trust establishes collective and collaborative autonomy where the drive for excellence comes from within the schools, to the benefit of all schools in the Trust
- The relationships within the Trust ensure genuine and impactful joint accountability – the outcomes for all of the pupils in all of the schools matter to everyone
- Schools continue to take responsibility for their own performance and character within a Trust context which provides both support and challenge

## Our Schools

The following schools are in the River Learning Trust. Click on each name to link to their website for more information about individual schools.

### *Secondaries*

[The Cherwell School](#)

[Wheatley Park School](#)

[The Swan School](#) (in pre-opening)

### *School Centred Initial Teacher Training*

[The Cherwell OTSA SCITT](#)

### *Primaries*

[Cutteslowe Primary School](#)

[Tower Hill Primary School](#)

[Wolvercote Primary School](#)



## Local Hubs

The River Learning Trust is developing what is recognised as a highly effective way of organising a multi-academy trust, with the growth of inter-connected local hubs. These hubs ensure that some elements of collaborative work, such as staff training, knowledge sharing and support can be carried out with the benefits of reduced travel time, local knowledge and relationships. The wider connections and wider activities of the Trust ensure that all schools within each hub are able to benefit from ‘being part of something bigger’ with associated benefits of increased professional knowledge and expertise and other material resources.

The Trust and individual schools also work within wider networks such as local partnerships of schools, the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance, Local Authorities and local businesses and community partnerships in order to support our culture of continuous learning and improvement, as well as providing the best possible opportunities for our staff and pupils.



## Governance

The River Learning Trust is an exempt charity and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with a registered company number 7966500.

**Members** monitor the work of our Trust Board to ensure that it is upholding our vision and values. You can find out more about their roles and responsibilities by clicking [here](#) to view the [Trust Constitution](#) and clicking [here](#) to read biographies of our current Members.

**Trustees** are responsible for the strategic oversight, administration and management of the Trust and all its schools and entities to develop and achieve the Trust's vision, and to ensure compliance with government and EFA requirements, company law and charity law. They have legal obligations through the Articles and Memorandum of Association of the Trust, and also under company law as directors and under charity law as trustees, for the proper conduct of the business of the Trust. They ensure the quality of education provision and oversee standards and outcomes across the Trust. You can find out more about our Trustees by clicking [here](#).

The members of the **Governance Board** are the Chairs of Governors of each school and the Chair and Chief Executive of the Trust. This Board has responsibility for identifying and sharing excellent governance practice; providing support and challenge on effective school governance to the Chair of each Local Governing Body; providing support and challenge on effective Trust governance to the Chair of the Trust Board and on effective strategic school improvement to the CEO; supporting the governance and financial aspects of due diligence for schools seeking to join the Trust and for schools that the Trust may sponsor; and identifying and organising training and development opportunities for Chairs, governors and trustees.

The members of the **Education Board** are the Headteachers of each school and the CEO of the Trust. This Board has responsibility for driving improvement in achievement, attainment and performance of every school; identifying and sharing excellent pedagogy and teaching practice; identifying and sharing curriculum developments that will enhance educational opportunities and performance for children in the Trust; creating opportunities for staff development to improve performance, achieve CPLD and maximise the retention of excellent teachers; conducting the educational aspects of due diligence for schools seeking to join the Trust and for schools that the Trust may sponsor.

Each School within the Trust has their own **Local Governing Bodies**. The core functions of each LGB are as follows: setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction within the principles of the Trust; maintaining the effective operation and membership of the LGB; overseeing the educational performance of the school: overseeing the financial performance of the school; ensuring pupil wellbeing including safeguarding, school safety and security; appointment of the Headteacher and carrying out their annual performance appraisal.



## Support structures and services

In order to ensure real delivery and impact from our collaborative activity, the Trust has a range of support structures and services which are continually being shaped and developed. These include:

### School Improvement

- Membership of the Education Board
- Peer Reviews
- Preparation for Inspection
- Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- Learning between and within phases
- Benchmarking
- Professional Development
- Recruitment and Succession Planning
- Research and Development
- Initial Teacher Training

## **Governance**

- Membership of the Governance Board
- Governor training
- Schemes of Delegation, Terms of Reference, Standard Operating procedures and Policy Development
- Recruitment and Succession Planning

## **Finance, HR and Operations**

- Financial management, compliance, advice, procurement and efficiency
- Conversion Support
- Premises and Asset management
- Payroll and HR Service
- Budget modelling and preparation
- Budget monitoring
- Health and Safety, risk management and compliance

