



The recently expanded Learning Trust for Excellence, comprises a group of eleven high achieving schools in and around Sutton Coldfield. The experienced Headteachers work collaboratively to learn from the strengths of each other, share excellent practice and work together to be the best they can be in order to provide the best possible life chances and education across the Trust. The involvement of key partners to support the achievement of the vision is crucial, offering mutually beneficial opportunities in the pursuit of excellence in education and high aspirations for the whole learning community. The original 7 primary schools; Coppice, Four Oaks, Langley School, Little Sutton, Hollyfield, Moor Hall and Whitehouse Common have been joined by Court Farm, Deanery Church of England, Holland House and Town Junior. They work together with the partners; King Edwards Schools, Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, Beaufort Special School, BCU, UCB, the Co-operative College and Rotary. The collaboration is a proactive response to the changing educational landscape, inspiring excellence and furthering opportunity for all.

The core co-operative values underpinning the partnership are fundamental to the success - self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity. These Trust values are central to all involved in the collaboration and are a high priority for the children. They visit other Trust schools taking part in working days exploring the values with others in their year group. The children have also been involved in dedicated collaborative activities including raising money for the Rotary campaign against polio.

Working together has made a real difference, continually improving the quality of teaching and learning as well as the management of schools. Both teaching and non-teaching staff at all levels, as well as Governors within the schools, are encouraged to work together to share excellent practice, support development and tackle new agendas introduced by both local and national government. Representatives across the schools and partners work together to develop curriculum, share expertise and learning from one another, devise common policies and take ideas and best practice to suit the individual needs of each school. Working groups tackle topics including maths, literacy, the early years programme, special education needs, Year 6 work and developing a strategic approach to the use, management, teaching and assessment of ICT across the schools. There is also a focus on school procurement and achieving economies of scale. The Trust schools collectively commission high quality training to address the shared priorities. For example, staff from across the schools have attended joint INSET with training from leading national specialists in reading, maths and history. The Trust works with schools across the city, sharing the outcomes of their work and helping them raise their standards.

Stronger Together – utilising the power of collaboration to deliver excellence in safeguarding.

Safeguarding is of paramount importance to schools and runs across all aspects of school life. The LTE was awarded a Leading Aspect Award for its collaborative approach to delivering excellence in safeguarding. The work recognised by the Leading Aspect Award arose as a result of the complex, sensitive and ever changing requirements of safeguarding practice in

schools. All schools were working to address common challenges and issues and decided to come together to develop a coherent and comprehensive approach to ensure schools are addressing all current safeguarding requirements and demonstrating excellent practice in this area.

The collaboration established a partnership with the local authority and the DfE in 2015 contributing to the work reflected in the Leading Aspect Award.

The Leading Aspect Award verifier commented that “There was a clear message in all discussions that the ethos and culture of the Trust as a whole, and of each individual school, is underpinned by a belief that safeguarding is key to success - personally and academically.”

She went on to acknowledge the power of the collaboration. “The impact of the LTE Trust model is that school leaders can work together at a strategic level as well as supporting each other on a very practical level to advise how to respond to particular situations. One governor described the positive impact of the Trust as being the power that a mix of personalities brings, some are visionaries and strategic, others are realistic and practical, with all having a shared commitment to safeguarding. These outcomes wouldn’t be possible, financially or practically, by just one school working alone.”

If you would like more information about the LTE or have ideas for developing new areas of work please contact Richard Green at r.green@coppice.bham.sch.uk.

