



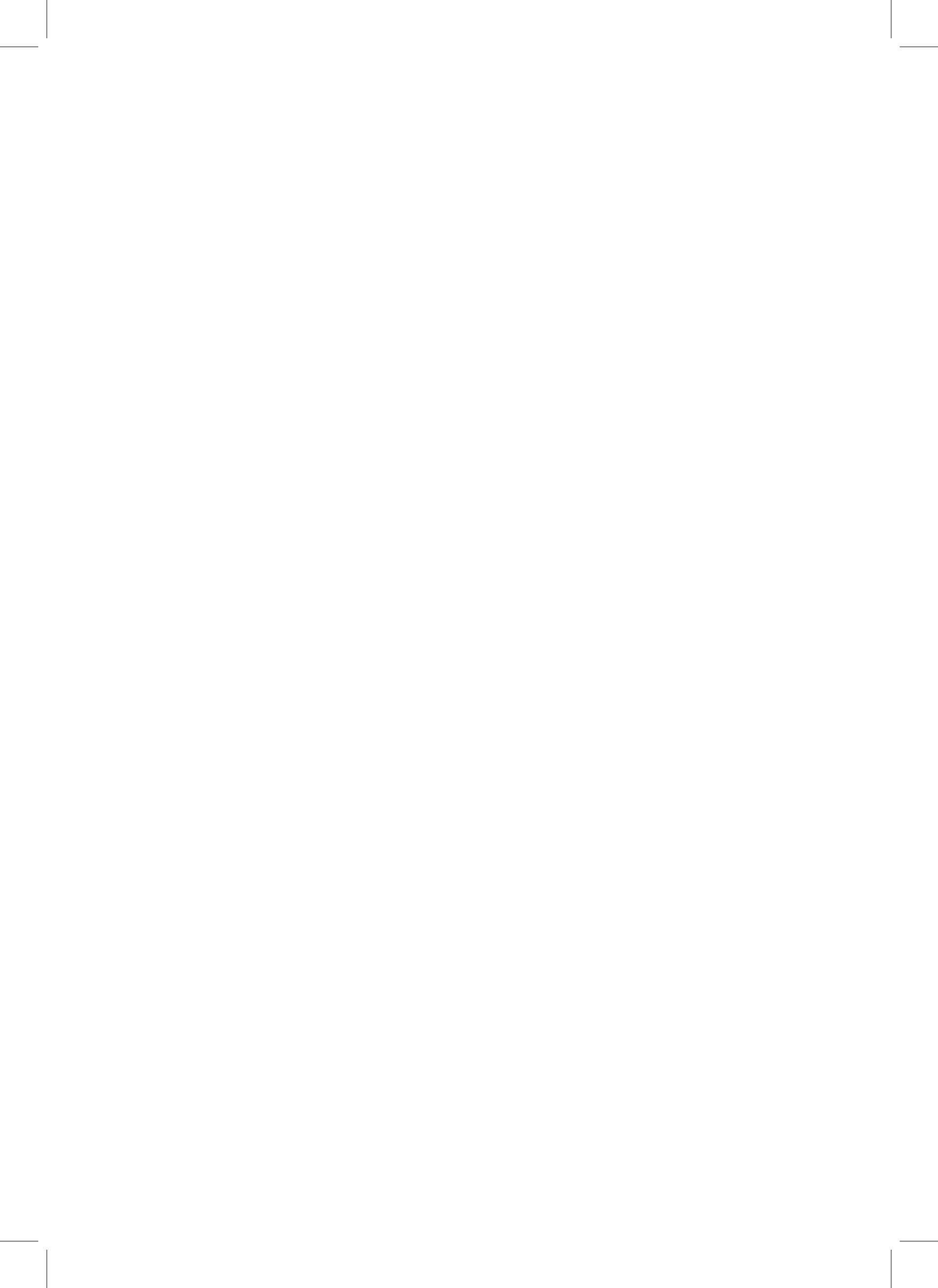
COMMUNITY ACADEMIES TRUST
Institute of Education



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LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT





'All members of our staff community see themselves as learners.'

The Leadership Toolkit is a framework to support school leaders' professional growth and development. Highly effective leadership requires a deep understanding of context, community and the people within the school, alongside expertise in key areas. Leaders must also master the approaches that drive school improvement, including fostering the school culture, professional development and effective implementation. This framework outlines the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours school leaders need to succeed. It is aligned with the Teachers' and Headteachers' Standards to ensure coherence and professionalism. The aim of the framework is to develop flexible, context-responsive leadership expertise that enables leaders to address persistent challenges, contribute to a thriving school culture and build a shared professional language and network. It should be used as a self-reflection tool to provide a starting point for Growing Great People goal setting. Overall, it supports the continuous development of all colleagues to ensure every child receives a world-class education.

The Leadership Toolkit is divided into four domains with subdomains to support personal reflection, which include further components. These components are the detail that is required for a concise focus on improving leadership effectiveness and its impact.

The domains are:

1. Professional Knowledge and Understanding
2. Shaping and Nurturing the Culture
3. Delivering Continuous Improvement
4. Leading People

The domains in the framework can be evaluated against three points of proficiency:

Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
<p>Leaders at this level will be developing their leadership practice and beginning to contribute to school improvement.</p> <p>A leader's impact will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positively influence their immediate team or area of responsibility. • implement initiatives with guidance and growing confidence. • start to build professional relationships and contribute to team effectiveness. • develop an understanding of whole-school priorities and how their role fits within them. 	<p>Leaders at this level will be consistently effective and drive improvement across a wider area of the school.</p> <p>A leader's impact will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify significant areas of school development with measurable outcomes. • collaborate effectively across teams, influencing practice and empowering colleagues beyond their own area. • use evidence to inform decisions, monitor progress and adapt strategies. • shape professional learning and contribute to a positive, improvement-focused culture. 	<p>Leaders at this level will have deep expertise and shape strategic direction, culture and system-wide improvement.</p> <p>A leader's impact will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drive whole school or multi-school improvement with sustainable outcomes. • exemplify behaviours that inspire colleagues through modelling, coaching, mentoring and strategic delegation. • influence the broader educational landscape through networks, innovation and strategic leadership. • embed a culture of excellence and continuous learning that enables pupils and colleagues to thrive.

*Where in this document the term 'Support staff' is used, it is inclusive of teaching assistants and other classroom practitioners.

Toolkit Smart Card

Domain 1 Professional Knowledge and Understanding

- 1a Understanding of statutory guidance and governance**
- Understand safeguarding and the duty of care to pupils and colleagues
 - Understand the responsibility to provide a safe environment
 - Understand the financial, human, digital and education resources management
 - Understand the contribution made to the school by governors/trustees
- 1b Understanding of behaviour, attitudes and culture**
- Understand how shared beliefs, values and behaviour shape culture
 - Model inclusivity with power and love
 - Developing positive attitudes to learning
- 1c Understanding of inclusive education**
- Meet SEND statutory requirements and inclusive practices
 - Identify needs, meet them and remove barriers
 - Support the progress of disadvantaged pupils
 - Support the progress of pupils with SEND
 - Support inclusive teaching
- 1d Understanding of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment**
- Ensure the curriculum sets out and meets the statutory requirements of knowledge, skills and values that pupils need
 - Ensure that the knowledge, skills and values in the curriculum are understood by teachers and support staff
 - Understand the quality of teaching
 - Ensure teachers and support staff know that teaching decisions affect pupils' understanding
 - Ensure teachers and support staff understand how pupils learn and that learning involves a lasting change in pupils' understanding
 - Ensure teachers and support staff understand that new information must connect to existing knowledge
 - Ensure that teachers and support staff check and respond to pupils' understanding
 - Understand the importance of assessment and achievement
- 1e Understanding professional development**
- Ensure that all colleagues engage in professional development
 - Ensure that all professional development is evidence-based to improve pupils' outcomes
 - Understand the importance of professional collaboration for growth

Domain 3 Delivering Continuous Improvement

- 3a Investigate**
- Identify a problem or situation with a clear purpose for improvement
 - Investigate evidence-based research that relates to the school context for the purpose of school improvement
 - Reflect on how research evidence relates to or fits the school context for the purpose of school improvement
 - Investigate the barriers and enablers in the school context
- 3b Prepare the plan**
- Define a problem and the cause
 - Specify the component parts to solve the problem and match the expertise
 - Develop a detailed and shared understanding of actions
 - Define the success criteria
 - Design a way of monitoring and evaluating
 - Prepare people, systems and structures for change
 - Provide initial high quality professional development
- 3c Implement the plan**
- Support and motivate colleagues when implementing change
 - Monitor data, feedback and behaviours to improve implementation
 - Adapt implementation in response to barriers and enablers
 - Provide ongoing professional development to support the plan
- 3d Sustain the improvement**
- Facilitate the long-term impact of entire plan
 - Review the outcomes
 - Decide on next steps
 - Build learning from experience into future plans

Domain 2 Shaping and Nurturing the Culture

- 2a Drive to achieve purpose**
- Set high expectations
 - Demonstrate impact with a relentless focus
 - Evaluate performance and sharing excellence
 - Challenge complacency and poor performance
 - Act with integrity
- 2b Drive to unify and influence**
- Demonstrate kindness and empathy
 - Build a sense of ownership and collective responsibility
 - Be immersed in the culture & aware of the emotions of the school
 - Be humble and be prepared to ask for help
 - Create long-term sustainable cultures

Domain 4 Leading People

- 4a Building and maintaining relationships**
- Listen to others and recognise different perspectives
 - Demonstrate emotional intelligence
 - Communicate with others and act as a positive role model
 - Gain and maintain the trust and support of others
- 4b Encouraging contribution**
- Provide encouragement and opportunity for colleagues to engage in decision-making
 - Value and acknowledge the roles, contributions and expertise of others
 - Employ strategies to manage conflicts of interest and differences of opinion
 - Keep the focus on providing high quality teaching, learning and relationships to improve outcomes for pupils
- 4c Working within teams**
- Create and sustain teams with expertise
 - Have a clear sense of their role, responsibilities and purpose within the team
 - Appreciate efforts, contributions and compromises within the team
- 4d Developing collaboration and networking**
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and networking
 - Create opportunities for collaboration and networking
 - Promote the sharing of information and resources
- 4e Developing people**
- Support colleagues to reflect on their professional growth
 - Support colleagues to achieve their professional growth
 - Review the growth of teams and colleagues
 - Celebrate success and take action to improve performance

Domain 1 Professional Knowledge and Understanding

School leaders at all levels require a broad and in-depth knowledge and skills to effectively lead and support their communities. Essential to their role is a strong understanding of statutory guidance and governance, which ensures that schools operate within legal and ethical boundaries, while maintaining accountability. Equally important is a deep understanding of behaviour, attitudes and culture, as these elements shape the overall climate of the school and impact both colleagues and pupil wellbeing. Leaders must also be well-versed in inclusive education, fostering environments where all learners, regardless of background or ability, are supported and valued. A secure grasp of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment is crucial for driving high-quality teaching and learning, enabling leaders to make informed decisions that enhance pupil outcomes. Finally, understanding professional development is key, as it empowers leaders to grow and nurture their colleagues' capabilities, ensuring continuous improvement across the school.

1a Understanding of statutory guidance and governance	Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
i. Understand safeguarding and the duty of care to pupils and colleagues	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and colleagues, demonstrating an awareness of the laws and guidance on safeguarding and health and safety. They will share information and support child protection efforts. A leader will understand alternative provision. They will manage systems for admissions, exclusions and appeals, ensuring all processes comply with legal requirements. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and colleagues, demonstrating knowledge of the laws and guidance on safeguarding as well as health and safety. They will work with external agencies to share information and support child protection work. A leader will understand and, if relevant, plan and oversee alternative provision. They will manage systems for admissions, exclusions and appeals, ensuring all processes comply with legal requirements. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and colleagues, demonstrating in-depth knowledge of laws and guidance on safeguarding as well as health and safety. They will work with agencies to share information and support wider child protection work. A leader will understand and, if relevant, plan, commission and monitor alternative provision. They will establish and oversee systems, processes and policies for managing admissions, exclusions and appeals by understanding and complying with legal requirements.
ii. Understand the responsibility to provide a safe environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support, provide and maintain a safe environment. They will implement policies, processes and systems that ensure school premises are secure, well-maintained and meet statutory requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide and maintain a safe and secure environment. They will develop and implement policies, processes and systems that ensure the school premises are secure, well-maintained and fully compliant with statutory requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide, maintain and evaluate systems to continuously ensure there is a safe and secure environment. They will apply expert knowledge to develop and implement policies, processes and systems that ensure the school premises are secure, well-maintained and fully compliant with statutory requirements.
iii. Understand the financial, human, digital and education resources management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support, manage financial, human and educational resources, oversee strategic planning and ensure compliance with regulations. They will maintain secure, cost-effective technology infrastructures, manage colleagues according to HR policies and employment laws and mitigate risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lead the strategic management of financial, human and educational resources to support the school's goals. They will oversee long-term planning, ensuring that resource allocation aligns with the vision and regulatory requirements. They will maintain secure, cost-effective technology infrastructures, manage colleagues in accordance with HR policies and employment law and mitigate risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expertly lead the strategic management of financial, human and educational resources to support the school's goals. They will oversee long-term planning, ensuring that resource allocation aligns with the vision and regulatory requirements. They will also develop and maintain secure, cost-effective technology infrastructures, manage colleagues in accordance with HR policies and employment law and mitigate risks.
iv. Understand the contribution made to the school by governors/trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain professional relationships with governors/trustees to implement policies and systems. With support, they will ensure colleagues' accountability for decisions and actions, recording and reporting requirements while upholding transparency and responsibility. A leader will ensure that governors understand the school's context, strengths and weaknesses, and that decisions are made in the best interests of pupils to improve or sustain standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish and maintain professional relationships to implement policies and systems. They will ensure colleagues' accountability for decisions and actions, meeting data, recording and reporting requirements while upholding transparency and responsibility. A leader will ensure that governors have an astute understanding of the school's context, strengths and weaknesses, and that decisions are made in the best interests of pupils, including disadvantaged and/or pupils with SEND to improve or sustain standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> build and sustain highly effective professional relationships to embed policies and systems. They will ensure colleagues' accountability for decisions and actions, meeting data, recording and reporting requirements while upholding transparency and responsibility is assured. A leader will ensure that governors have an astute understanding of the school's context, strengths and weaknesses, and that decisions are made in the best interests of pupils, including disadvantaged and/or pupils with SEND to improve or sustain standards. A leader will support governors to adjust and adapt rapidly to continuous school improvements.

1b Understanding of behaviour, attitudes and culture

Some impact

A leader will

- understand expectations and establish a strategic direction with shared values to enhance the school's culture and empower colleagues to influence pupils' attendance and behaviour. They will model practices that align with the culture, including managing bullying, ensuring every member of the school community contributes to its success.
- recognise the impact of a positive, inclusive and safe environment on pupil behaviour and attitudes. They will ensure all colleagues are trained and confident in implementing evidence-based behaviour management and make reasonable adjustments for context, needs and challenges. By integrating power and love, the leader will aim to encourage a culture of high expectations and care.
- with support, establish an approach to teaching pupils how to engage with their learning. They will foster a positive school culture where pupils develop confidence, enthusiasm and respect for learning. A leader will set expectations so that behaviour for learning is good. They will provide colleagues with the necessary support to maintain a focused and nurturing environment, leading to most pupils engaging well, whilst some may require additional support to develop independence in their learning.

A leader will

- understand the importance of clear expectations and high standards to build on the shared values that will enhance the school's culture, empowering colleagues to positively influence pupils' attendance and behaviour. They will model practices that align with the culture, including managing bullying, ensuring every member of the school community contributes to its success.
- create an inclusive, consistent and coherent approach towards pupil behaviour and attitudes. They will proactively ensure all colleagues are trained and confident in implementing evidence-based behaviour management. By integrating power and love, the leader will foster trust, promote a culture of high expectations and care, and create meaningful, lasting impact.
- establish a well-ordered approach to teaching pupils how to engage with their learning. They will create a positive school culture where pupils develop confidence, enthusiasm and respect for learning. A leader will model and set clear expectations so that behaviour for learning is excellent and will support colleagues to maintain a focused and supportive environment, leading to most pupils responding with positive attitudes to learning.

High impact

A leader will

- have an in-depth understanding of the importance of setting the highest expectations and standards to sustain the shared values that enhance the school's culture, empowering colleagues to positively influence pupils' attendance and behaviour. They will articulate, model and reinforce practices that align with the culture, including managing bullying, ensuring every member of the school community contributes to its development and success.
- build and sustain an inclusive, consistent and coherent approach to pupil behaviour and attitudes through comprehensive systems. They will ensure all colleagues are trained and confident in implementing a proactive approach and use evidence-based behaviour management. A leader will use power to drive change, set direction and ensure accountability, and harness love to inspire, support and nurture growth.
- build and sustain a comprehensive approach to teaching pupils how to engage with their learning. They will cultivate a positive school culture where pupils are motivated to do their best and demonstrate a deep respect for learning. A leader will model positive behaviours for learning and set challenging expectations so that learning is exemplary. They will provide strong support for colleagues to maintain a focused and nurturing environment, leading to pupils developing resilience, confidently overcoming setbacks and persevering in their learning.

Highest impact

1c Understanding of inclusive education

Some impact

- A leader will**
- with support, translate SEND policies, practices and guidance into clear, accessible information tailored to the needs of pupils and other stakeholders. They will communicate complex information simply and appropriately.
 - implement inclusive practices to identify and meet needs, ensuring pupils feel welcome and valued. With support, they will identify those facing barriers to learning or well-being and provide some support, with external specialists if needed, while ensuring any alternative provision is safe, suitable and in the pupils' best interests.
 - understand the needs of disadvantaged pupils and use evidence to guide their pupil premium strategy. They will secure improvement in progress for disadvantaged pupils. A leader will ensure its delivery through monitoring and colleagues' training, resulting in some improvement in pupils' progress and well-being.
 - with support, ensure a qualified SEND coordinator supports pupils with SEND. They will help train colleagues and check pupil progress to secure improvement. A leader will encourage working with local partners to provide extra support and specialist advice when needed.
 - with support, encourage colleagues to adapt lessons for pupils with SEND, retaining high expectations. They will encourage teachers to work with specialists to choose the best resources and activities.

High impact

- A leader will**
- interpret and review SEND policies, practices and guidance into clear, accessible information tailored to individual needs and effectively communicate complex information in an appropriate manner, adapting to different audiences.
 - implement and evaluate inclusive practices to identify and meet needs, ensuring every pupil feels welcome and valued. They will identify those facing barriers to learning or well-being and provide support, with external specialists if required, while ensuring any alternative provision is safe, suitable and in the pupils' best interests.
 - understand the needs of disadvantaged pupils and use evidence to guide their pupil premium strategy, making it a priority. They will ensure its effective delivery through ongoing monitoring and colleagues' training, resulting in improved pupil progress and well-being.
 - ensure a qualified SEND coordinator supports pupils with SEND through a graduated approach, working with others to adapt support based on changing needs. They will ensure colleagues are trained to apply a clear support framework: regularly reviewing progress and adjusting interventions to improve the progress of pupils with SEND so it is either comparable to or improving towards that of other pupils with similar starting points. A leader will also promote partnerships with external specialists.
 - empower teachers to adapt lessons effectively for pupils with SEND while maintaining high expectations. They will foster a culture of collaboration, encouraging teachers to engage with specialists to identify and implement the most effective resources and strategies. A leader will use this approach to ensure inclusive, high-quality teaching that meets diverse learning needs while promoting excellence for all pupils.

Highest impact

- A leader will**
- interpret, review and tailor SEND policies, practices and guidance into clear, accessible information to individual needs. A leader will effectively communicate complex and technical information in an appropriate manner, adapting to different audiences for maximum clarity and impact.
 - proactively promote, implement and evaluate inclusive practices to identify and meet needs, ensuring every pupil feels welcome and valued. They will promptly identify all those facing barriers to learning or well-being and provide effective support, with external specialists if needed, while ensuring any alternative provision is safe, suitable and in the pupils' best interests.
 - have an in-depth understanding of the needs of disadvantaged pupils and use evidence to guide their pupil premium strategy, making it central to their overall priorities. They will create an effective method of delivery, ongoing monitoring and colleagues' training, resulting in the progress of disadvantaged pupils matching or exceeding that of other pupils with similar starting points.
 - ensure a qualified SEND coordinator identifies changing needs quickly and delivers specialist-informed support through a structured, graduated approach. They will provide colleagues with thorough training to implement this effectively, with regular progress monitoring and adjustments to maintain high achievement and expectations. A leader will establish strong systems for delivery, training and review, ensuring pupils with SEND make progress that matches or exceeds peers with similar starting points. They will work actively with local partners, using specialist expertise and continuously refining practice to maintain excellence.
 - drive a culture of excellence by actively supporting the adaptation of lessons for pupils with SEND. They will ensure that high expectations are consistently upheld and will facilitate robust collaboration between teachers and specialists, ensuring that the selection and application of resources and strategies are both evidence-based and tailored to individual needs. A leader will facilitate ongoing professional development and reflective practice to ensure that teaching is continually refined to deliver highly effective, inclusive education that challenges and supports all pupils to achieve their fullest potential.

1d Understanding of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment

Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
<p>i. Ensure the curriculum sets out and meets the statutory requirements of knowledge, skills and values that pupils need</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement an inclusive curriculum that clearly defines the knowledge, skills and values to be taught. They will ensure that subjects are designed to master foundational concepts before progressing, while integrating reading, writing and oracy. A leader will be developing strong subject leadership and are connected to the Trust's Professional Networks. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> drive an ambitious, broad and inclusive curriculum that clearly defines the knowledge, skill and values to be taught. They will ensure that subjects are distinct disciplines, maintaining pupils' mastery of foundational concepts before progressing, while integrating reading, writing and oracy, securing the way for future learning. A leader will exemplify strong curricular leadership, with expert subject leaders connected to the Trust's Professional Networks, which is essential for ensuring effective teaching and pupil success.
<p>ii. Ensure that the knowledge, skills and values in the curriculum are understood by teachers and support staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that teachers and support staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They will ensure teachers and support staff demonstrate an understanding of the way that pupils think about subject content and 'identify pupils' common misconceptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that teachers and support staff demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They will ensure teachers and support staff are experts at demonstrating an understanding of the way that pupils think about subject content and identify pupils' common misconceptions.
<p>iii. Understand the quality of teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have a clear and informed understanding of the quality of teaching, including for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. They will have an overview of the quality of subject or phase teaching, as well as identifying the school's strengths and areas for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> possess a comprehensive understanding of teaching quality for all groups across subjects, phases and year groups, supported by external validation and regular evaluations. They will implement strategic actions, with clear milestones and expected outcomes, to continuously improve teaching quality and ensure ongoing evaluation.
<p>iv. Ensure teachers and support staff know that teaching decisions affect pupils' understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check that teaching decisions and learning activities are appropriate and consolidate learning. They will encourage teachers and support staff to recognise the importance of subject-specific language and vocabulary to develop pupils' understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drive excellence in teaching by ensuring that teaching decisions and learning activities are designed to deepen understanding, promote mastery and sustain long-term retention. They will cultivate a culture where teachers and support staff intentionally embed subject-specific language and vocabulary, empowering pupils to engage with complex ideas confidently and articulate their learning with precision.
<p>v. Ensure teachers and support staff understand how pupils learn and that learning involves a lasting change in pupils' understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check that teachers and support staff recognise pupils learn at different rates and require different types of support to succeed. They will encourage teachers and support staff to use small steps, scaffolds, models and questioning to support and reinforce learning effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> build and sustain teachers' and support staffs' deep understanding that pupils learn at different rates and require specific, individualised support to succeed. They will ensure teachers and support staff use small steps, craft adaptive scaffolding, dynamic modelling and intuitive questioning that foster deep comprehension and create enduring learning experiences.
<p>vi. Ensure teachers and support staff understand that new information must connect to existing knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check that teachers and support staff understand that learning is a process where pupils must retrieve prior knowledge, engage with new content and practice skills to build long-term memory. They will recognise the importance of retrieval practice. A leader will check that teachers and support staff present new content clearly, linking it to prior knowledge or introducing it in a meaningful context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> build and sustain teachers' and support staffs' expertise in translating curriculum content into explanations and learning activities that strengthen long-term memory. They will use this understanding to inform initiatives that integrate deliberate practice, cognitive load management and spaced retrieval, ensuring all pupils engage in meaningful, sustained learning that can be applied across various contexts.

<p>vii. Ensure that teachers and support staff check and respond to pupils' understanding</p> <p>viii. Understand the importance of assessment and achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that teachers and support staff check understanding, identifying and addressing gaps or misconceptions. They will ensure teachers and support staff understand the importance of providing clear, constructive feedback to help pupils improve. ensure that assessment should be valid and reliable to measure pupils' understanding. They will review why pupils make some progress over time and the progress will be rising across the curriculum. A leader will secure improvement in progress for all pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that teachers and support staff systematically check understanding, identifying and addressing gaps or misconceptions. They will ensure teachers and support staff review and respond in the moment to meet needs: the information received will inform next steps in learning whether by reteaching some material, tackling misconceptions or moving on to new material. ensure that assessment is valid, reliable and proportionate, accurately measuring pupils' understanding. They will ensure that, across nearly all year groups and a broad range of subjects, current pupils make consistently strong progress, developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills relative to their starting points. A leader will ensure that the progress of all pupils is either comparable to or improving towards that of other pupils with similar starting points nationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure teachers and support staff are experts at systematically assessing understanding, proactively identifying and addressing gaps or misconceptions. They will ensure there is a culture of responsive teaching, where teachers and support staff continually interpret real-time feedback and adjust teaching accordingly, whether by reteaching key concepts, resolving misunderstandings or introducing new material, ensuring learning is continually deepened and reinforced. maintain a rigorous assessment framework that is valid, reliable and proportionate, ensuring an accurate measure of pupils' understanding. They will ensure that all pupils make substantial and sustained progress across the curriculum, developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills relative to their starting points. A leader will ensure that the progress of all pupils matches or exceeds that of other pupils with similar starting points nationally.
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1e Understanding professional development				
		Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
<p>i. Ensure that all colleagues engage in professional development</p> <p>ii. Ensure that all professional development is evidence-based to improve pupils' outcomes</p> <p>iii. Understand the importance of professional collaboration for growth</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support, ensure professional development is influenced by most colleagues taking responsibility to continually improve, with a focus on desired outcomes and their impact on pupil success. They will ensure this includes leading GGP systems and practices with some support: evaluation of the impact of all professional learning is in the early stages of development. align some professional development priorities with broader school improvement goals, fostering shared responsibility for improving outcomes and building existing knowledge, skills and understanding. They will support colleagues to develop and improve the teaching of all pupils and narrow the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils. recognise the importance of collaboration to develop teacher expertise in subjects, phases and domains. With support, they will ensure that professional collaboration is meaningful and relevant to all colleagues, fostering a shared commitment to ongoing improvement. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure professional development is guided by all colleagues taking responsibility to continually improve, with a focus on desired outcomes and their impact on pupil success. They will be effective in this development, include leading GGP systems and practices with regular evaluation of the impact of all professional learning. align professional development priorities with broader school improvement goals, fostering shared responsibility for improving outcomes and building existing knowledge, skills and understanding. They will support colleagues to develop and improve using evidence-based resources that enhance the teaching of all pupils and narrow the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils. establish a culture where colleagues continuously develop expertise in their subjects, phases and domains through access to collaborative working. They will encourage participation in expert-led classroom practice discussions, innovation and targeted interventions. A leader will encourage professional collaboration that is meaningful and relevant to all colleagues, fostering a shared commitment to ongoing improvement. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure professional development is driven by all colleagues taking responsibility to continually improve, with a focus on desired outcomes and their impact on pupil success. They will be effective in this development, include leading GGP systems and improvements in colleagues' capabilities and understanding. A leader will regularly evaluate the impact of all professional development and adjust future learning opportunities accordingly. align professional development priorities with broader school improvement goals, fostering shared responsibility for improving outcomes and building existing knowledge, skills and understanding. They will support colleagues to continually improve their expertise, always drawing on the practice of others and high-quality evidence-based resources that enhance the teaching of all pupils and narrow the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils. maintain and enhance a culture where colleagues continuously develop expertise in their subjects, phases and domains through access to collaborative working. They will review, adapt and proactively encourage participation in expert-led discussions on classroom practice, innovation and targeted interventions. A leader will ensure that professional collaboration is meaningful and relevant to all colleagues, fostering a shared commitment to ongoing improvement. 	

Domain 2 Shaping and Nurturing the Culture

School leaders need a unique combination of skills, knowledge and personal qualities to lead the culture effectively and purposefully. Among these is the ability to harness both “power” and “love” in their leadership approach which resonates with our ethos and values outlined in *Ensuring Excellence*. Power refers to the capacity to influence, guide and drive others toward a shared vision, while love represents the care, empathy and respect that build strong, trusting relationships within the school community. A successful leader uses power to inspire and motivate, rather than control, and applies love to foster a positive, inclusive and supportive environment. This balance enables leaders to unify diverse individuals and the community around a common purpose, influence change and create a culture where everyone feels valued. Overall, this approach leads to better outcomes for pupils, colleagues and the school, driven by a deep commitment to achieving meaningful and lasting impact.

	Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
<p>2a Drive to achieve purpose</p> <p>i. Set high expectations</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support, set high expectations for themselves, colleagues and pupils. They will be developing the ability to motivate colleagues. A leader will be open to challenge and is learning to challenge colleagues to push beyond their comfort zones. They are learning to develop strategies to build accountability and confidence, resulting in increased optimism and credibility. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain high expectations for themselves, colleagues and pupils and begin to inspire through a clear vision and consistent effort. They will be more open to challenge, actively seeking opportunities to foster growth and pushing colleagues to step out of their comfort zones. A leader will be optimistic, encouraging colleagues and pupils to see setbacks as learning opportunities. They will demonstrate accountability by holding themselves and others responsible for achieving ambitious goals. A leader's credibility will be growing, as they consistently align their actions with their aspirations. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistently uphold and exceed the highest expectations for themselves, colleagues and pupils. They will be inspirational, creating a strong sense of purpose and motivation for all. A leader will always be open to challenge, not only accepting but actively encouraging colleagues to embrace difficult opportunities for growth. They will have optimism that will be contagious, even in difficult circumstances, and will foster a culture of resilience. A leader will hold everyone accountable for achieving ambitious goals and maintain a clear, aspirational vision. A leader's confidence and credibility will be strong and will consistently deliver and drive towards the highest potential.
<p>ii. Demonstrate impact with a relentless focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be committed to improvement and maintain a clear focus on growth. They will approach their work with determination, setting a steady pace to drive progress. A leader will embrace a dynamic mindset, seeking opportunities to enhance the learning environment and support their team. With a growing sense of resilience, they will navigate challenges with some confidence, ensuring that each step contributes to long-term success. A leader's impact will be beginning to take shape as they establish a strong foundation for future achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate a relentless commitment to progress, setting an ambitious yet sustainable pace. They will take a dynamic approach to leadership, adapting strategies to maximise effectiveness. A leader's determination and resilience will be evident in their ability to inspire colleagues and maintain a sharp focus on achieving meaningful outcomes. They will ensure that their efforts lead to measurable improvements. A leader's growing impact will be felt widely as they refine their approach and strengthen their influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustain impact through relentless focus on improvement, maintaining a determined and unwavering commitment to excellence. They will ensure that progress is both rapid and sustainable, driving meaningful change. An indomitable leader will navigate challenges, adapting strategies while staying focused on long-term goals. Through their uncompromising pursuit of success, they will create a lasting impact, shaping an environment where continuous improvement and high achievement are the norm.
<p>iii. Evaluate performance and sharing excellence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to create a culture of improvement by recognising success and encouraging colleagues and pupils to share good practice. They will set clear expectations and promote collaboration to enhance learning and performance. With support, a leader will foster an environment where colleagues feel motivated to grow and develop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively promote a culture of excellence by consistently recognising achievements and encouraging the exchange of best practice. They will challenge complacency with an assertive yet supportive approach, motivating colleagues and pupils to push beyond their comfort zones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate and foster a culture of excellence where success is celebrated and best practices are shared, ensuring continuous improvement. With an assertive yet constructive and supportive approach, they will challenge complacency. By creating an environment which normalises high levels of motivation and achievement, a leader will ensure that progress is both recognised and sustained and used as a foundation for further growth.
<p>iv. Challenge complacency and poor performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the growth of teams and colleagues, identifying areas for improvement. When complacency or poor performance is evident, they will have direct, honest conversations, set clear expectations and offer specific feedback. A leader will provide support through coaching and resources and follow up regularly to monitor progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the growth of teams and colleagues, identifying patterns of complacency or poor performance. They will address these issues directly, providing clear, evidence-based feedback and set measurable goals for improvement. A leader will collaborate on action plans, offer training and check in regularly to ensure progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate the growth of teams and colleagues, proactively addressing complacency or poor performance. They will foster a culture of accountability, providing data-driven feedback, both hard and soft data, with collaboration on action plans. A leader will offer tailored support, identify systemic

<p>v. Act with integrity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be committed to acting with integrity and setting a positive example for others. They will build clarity in their decision-making and communication, ensuring that their vision is understood. A leader will be developing self-awareness, regularly reflecting on their actions and seeking ways to improve. They will recognise the value of asking for help when needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lead by example, demonstrating integrity in their actions and decisions. They will communicate with greater clarity, ensuring their expectations and vision are well understood by colleagues and pupils. With strong self-awareness, a leader will actively seek feedback and refine their approach, confidently asking for help when needed, understanding that collaboration strengthens the school community and drives continuous improvement 	<p>barriers and ensure ongoing follow-up to sustain continuous improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> act consistently with integrity, leading by example and setting high ethical standards for colleagues and pupils. They will demonstrate clarity in their vision and decision-making, ensuring transparency and trust within the school community. A leader's self-awareness will allow them to reflect on their strengths and areas for growth, fostering continuous personal and professional development. Recognising that leadership is a collaborative effort, they will confidently ask for help when needed, valuing the expertise and support of colleagues to drive success.
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2b Drive to unify and influence

Some impact

<p>i. Demonstrate kindness and empathy</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate kindness and empathy in their leadership. They will become more aware of the emotional needs of colleagues and pupils. A leader will strive to create a positive environment, beginning to demonstrate compassion, recognising the importance of valuing and uplifting others. They will be learning to balance selflessness with their leadership responsibilities, ensuring that the well-being of the school community remains a priority. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate kindness and empathy by fostering a culture of respect and understanding with colleagues. They will consistently promote respect and emotional intelligence, ensuring that every individual in the school feels valued and supported. A leader will actively listen and respond with empathy, creating a school culture where positive relationships are embedded in daily interactions. A leader's courtesy and compassion are evident in their decision-making. They will balance selflessness by prioritising the collective success of the school, fostering an environment where collaboration and well-being drive progress. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exemplify kindness and empathy by cultivating a culture of respect and understanding among colleagues. They will lead with emotional intelligence, recognising and responding to the needs of colleagues and pupils with sensitivity and care. Through empathy, a leader will build positive relationships, ensuring that everyone feels valued and heard. A leader's courtesy and compassion create a supportive environment where colleagues are encouraged to grow and succeed. A leader will demonstrate selflessness through prioritising the well-being of others and a genuine commitment to the success of the entire school.
<p>ii. Build a sense of ownership and collective responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to build a sense of collective responsibility by modelling the behaviours and values they want to see in others. They will be working to communicate their vision clearly, helping the team understand their roles and responsibilities. A leader will be becoming more reflective on their actions and are learning to rely on inclusive collaboration to strengthen the team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively lead by example, consistently demonstrating the values and behaviours they expect from the team. They will provide greater clarity in their vision and expectations, ensuring that everyone understands their responsibilities in achieving common goals. As their self-awareness develops, a leader will start to reflect more regularly on their leadership and seek opportunities for improvement, recognising that inclusive collaboration is essential to building a stronger, more cohesive team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> foster a sense of collective responsibility and ownership through empowerment and by leading through example, consistently demonstrating the values and behaviours they expect from others. They will provide clear direction, ensuring that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in achieving the shared vision. A leader's self-awareness will enable ongoing reflection and personal growth, recognising that inclusive collaboration is key to strengthening their leadership and that of others.
<p>iii. Be immersed in the culture and aware of the emotions of the school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of the emotional climate, becoming more in tune with the feelings and needs of colleagues and pupils. They will work to maintain objectivity in their decisions but may still be developing the ability to assess situations both with humility and without bias. A leader will be learning to adjust their approach based on the feedback they receive and are working on creating a foundation for trust and transparency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively listen and respond to the needs of colleagues and pupils. They will objectively make fair decisions with humility and consideration of all perspectives. A leader's adaptive approach will enable them to adjust plans to better support the community. They will foster a culture of trust, encouraging transparent communication and creating an environment where everyone feels comfortable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be attuned to the climate and emotions within the organisation, ensuring they understand the needs and feelings of both colleagues and pupils. They will approach situations with humility and objectivity, assessing challenges and opportunities with a clear and unbiased perspective. A leader's adaptive nature will allow them to respond effectively to changing circumstances, adjusting strategies when necessary to support the well-being and growth of the school community. They will foster trust and transparency, encouraging honest communication and creating an environment where everyone feels heard and valued.
<p>iv. Be humble and be prepared to ask for help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise when help is needed and proactively ask for support from colleagues demonstrating humility and openness. By asking for help, they will build trust. A leader will empower themselves and others by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively seek help to refine their leadership approach, reaching out to colleagues or external experts, when necessary. By seeking guidance and reflecting on their own challenges, they will build trust, modelling humility and create an environment where collective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel secure in asking for help and seeking external expertise when facing complex challenges, reflecting on their practices whilst prioritising continuous learning. They will build trust by modelling openness,

High impact

Highest impact

v. Create long-term sustainable cultures

encouraging a collective responsibility for growth, where everyone feels safe to ask for help.

- with support, create a culture that values colleagues' wellbeing and professional learning as well as encouraging colleagues and pupils to focus on their growth and improvement. They will show openness to innovative ideas but are still developing the strategies to embed those ideas. A leader will recognise the importance of listening to colleagues and value their individual contributions. They will be dedicated to building a positive culture without impacting teacher workload.

responsibility is shared. A leader will empower themselves by openly acknowledging areas for growth and using feedback to improve.

- actively work to create a long-term sustainable culture by emphasising colleagues' wellbeing and professional learning as well as encouraging ongoing growth for both colleagues and pupils. They will promote innovation by encouraging new ideas and approaches. A leader will lead by example, recognising the value of individual input and creating a collaborative environment. They will focus on sustainability, as they make intentional efforts to ensure that personal growth and innovation are integral to the culture for the long term without impacting teacher workload.

humility and a willingness to learn from others. By fostering an environment where seeking help is valued, a leader will create a culture of collective responsibility, empowering colleagues and teams to ask for help and take ownership of shared success.

- foster long-term sustainable cultures by prioritising colleagues' wellbeing and personal development as well as fostering continuous growth within the organisation. They will encourage innovation, inspiring colleagues and pupils to explore new ideas and approaches to learning. A leader will recognise that progress comes from inclusive collaboration, valuing colleagues and collective efforts. They will lead with a commitment to professional growth, building an environment where innovation thrives and is sustainable; positive change becomes an integral part of the culture for the future maintaining a sustainable workload for colleagues.

Domain 3 Delivering Continuous Improvement

School leaders should take deliberate and strategic actions to ensure successful implementation of change and improvement. This begins with identifying key priorities for development, using evidence to explore what will make the greatest difference for pupils. The leader should then prepare thoroughly by creating a clear and focused plan, ensuring colleagues have the necessary understanding, resources and support to deliver it. Implementation should be staged and carefully monitored, allowing for adaptations based on feedback and emerging needs. Additionally, the leader must foster a supportive and positive school culture, securing colleagues buy-in and readiness for change through clear communication and meaningful professional development. As part of this process, the leader actively works to build capability and capacity across the school, empowering colleagues and strengthening systems to support sustainable change. Recognising that improvement is not a one-off event but an ongoing journey, the leader continuously iterates and refines plans as they are enacted, embedding effective practices into everyday routines and rigorously evaluating their impact to ensure long-term success.

	3a Investigate	Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
i.	Identify a problem or situation with a clear purpose for improvement.	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support, identify problems, gather data on pupil needs and begin to involve colleagues and stakeholders in the process. They will identify some of the visible challenges and start to explore the root causes, with room for growth in their ability to engage with the full range of data and perspectives. 	<p>A leader will</p> <p>identify and analyse problems, actively collect diverse data, reflect on it and engage all stakeholders to build a deeper understanding of pupil needs. They will assess current practices thoughtfully, recognising both strengths and areas for growth and use this information to make informed decisions that positively impact pupils' experiences.</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <p>fully embrace a holistic, data-informed approach to understanding pupil needs, drawing on a variety of data sources and collaborating with all stakeholders to identify and analyse a problem. They will thoroughly explore the root causes of challenges, considering the broader context and beliefs shaping current practices. With a clear, well-rounded understanding, they will lead with confidence, making decisions that foster continuous improvement, unity and a positive learning environment for all pupils.</p>
ii.	Investigate evidence-based research that relates to the school context for the purpose of improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the school's context in line with research evidence and give some thought to engaging colleagues to connect the evidence with practice. 	<p>actively engage with research, relevant to the context, to identify effective strategies and ensures colleagues understand the rationale behind interventions, promoting strong buy-in.</p>	<p>skilfully combine high-quality research with local knowledge to guide decisions. They will ensure colleagues are well-informed and fully engaged, leading to successful, evidence-based practices that are implemented with confidence and fidelity.</p>
iii.	Reflect on how research evidence relates to or fits the school context for the purpose of improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflect on the research evidence, focusing on how it can be applied in the school's context. They will start to assess the complexity, resources, and potential for success in implementing the approach. 	<p>evaluate how the research evidence aligns with pupil needs and the school context. They will carefully consider the approach's simplicity, clarity, resources and measurable outcomes, ensuring strong planning for successful implementation.</p>	<p>deeply analyse how research evidence fits with the school's needs and context. They will thoroughly assess the approach's features, ensuring it is simple, clear, well-resourced and measurable. A leader will proactively address potential challenges, leading to highly effective, well-supported and sustainable implementation.</p>
iv.	Investigate the barriers and enablers in the school context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify potential barriers and enablers to implementation and begin to assess whether the necessary systems, resources and colleagues' support are in place to move forward. They will begin gathering colleagues' feedback on challenges. 	<p>evaluate barriers and enablers, ensuring the right systems, resources and staff training are aligned for successful implementation. They will actively engage colleagues to identify challenges and provide targeted support to overcome them, setting the stage for smooth implementation.</p>	<p>thoroughly assess barriers and enablers, ensuring all systems, resources and support structures are fully in place and aligned with the new approach. They will proactively involve colleagues in planning and troubleshooting, continuously adapting to address any unexpected challenges, ensuring sustained and successful implementation.</p>

3b Prepare the plan

Some impact

High impact

Highest impact

	Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
i. Define a problem and the cause	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify pupil needs and practices that need to change, starting to describe the problem. They will collect evidence and insights from limited perspectives. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly define the problem by incorporating evidence from the investigating phase, including pupil needs, current practices and barriers. They will ensure the problem is viewed from different perspectives, such as those of pupils, teachers and leaders. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> define the problem with a comprehensive understanding, drawing from a wide range of evidence and insights. They will fully engage multiple perspectives, including pupils, teachers and leaders, ensuring the problem is clearly articulated and understood by all stakeholders as a foundation for effective implementation.
ii. Specify the component parts to solve the problem and match the expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to define and communicate the intervention, identifying some key components and expertise and are learning to have a shared understanding across all stakeholders. They will focus on clarifying what the intervention entails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure a clear and shared understanding of the intervention across all stakeholders. They will specify all key components and expertise, whether using an evidence-based programme or developing their own approach and begin to implement them consistently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a deep and consistent understanding of the intervention across the school, ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned with all key components and expertise. Whether using an established programme or a locally developed approach, a leader will ensure that the core components are clearly defined, well understood and applied consistently for maximum impact.
iii. Develop a detailed and shared understanding of actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to identify and select some strategies for implementing the intervention, recognising that multiple strategies are needed. They will have a focus on professional development and are in the early stages of considering other supporting strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> select all the strategies required, ensuring they align with identified barriers and enablers. They will implement strategies at different levels, supporting individual practitioners, departmental teams and school-wide change to reinforce the intervention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> design a comprehensive and dynamic package of implementation strategies that work together to support the intervention. They will continually adjust and refine strategies based on ongoing feedback, ensuring that all levels (individual, departmental and school-wide) are aligned and responsive to barriers and enablers throughout the implementation process.
iv. Define the success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify broad, general success criteria for the plan, focusing on basic outcomes such as improvements in pupil performance or the completion of specific tasks. They will use simple criteria and mainly reflect what needs to be achieved and will be learning to include detailed consideration of the specific indicators for success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> outline clear, measurable success criteria linked to specific outcomes with criteria based on evidence and tailored to the plan's objectives. They will consider both short-term and long-term milestones and ensure the criteria are realistic and aligned with the school's context and needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop comprehensive, detailed success criteria that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). They will engage stakeholders in refining these criteria to ensure alignment with the organisation's vision and priorities, tracking progress at multiple levels and informing ongoing adjustments to the plan, ensuring impact.
v. Design a way of monitoring and evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to establish a system for monitoring and evaluating implementation, focusing on collecting data to understand how the intervention should progress. They will collect some data and are learning to create a fully developed system for ongoing reflection and improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a clear system for monitoring and evaluating, gathering and interpreting data regularly. They will ensure that the information collected helps evaluate the impact and provides insights for targeted support and improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> design and implement a comprehensive, dynamic system for monitoring and evaluating the intervention. They will continually gather, analyse and act on data, using insights to adapt the approach as needed, ensuring that the intervention is delivered with fidelity and that ongoing improvements are made throughout the process.
vi. Prepare people, systems and structures for change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate the purpose and expectations of the intervention and create opportunities for colleagues to discuss the upcoming changes. They will begin to engage colleagues in supporting the change process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly communicate the purpose, expectations and core components, fostering ongoing discussions and collaboration. They will work together with colleagues to ensure alignment and empower champions to support and model the intervention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide clear direction, ensuring all colleagues understand the purpose, expectations and core components. Through ongoing collaboration, they will build a unified approach, empowering champions to drive enthusiasm and support for the intervention. A leader will demonstrate proactive problem-solving, enhancing trust and fostering a strong, collaborative change process.
vii. Provide initial high-quality professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise the value of professional development and will rely on front-loaded, broad approaches like workshops or coaching. With support, they will focus on the key mechanisms that drive meaningful behaviour and practice change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> design structured professional development that incorporates key mechanisms from the EEF's Effective Professional Development report. They will provide sustained, appropriate and targeted training to align colleagues' knowledge, skills and practices. A leader will focus on the key mechanisms that drive meaningful behaviour and practice change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> embed high-quality professional development as an ongoing process, ensuring sustained support throughout implementation. They will design training around evidence-based mechanisms, from EEF's Effective Professional Development report, enabling meaningful and lasting change in colleagues' practice. A leader will actively monitor and refine professional development efforts, ensuring alignment with implementation goals and colleagues' needs.

3c Implement the plan

Some impact

High impact

Highest impact

	Some impact	High impact	Highest impact	
i.	Support and motivate colleagues when implementing change	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide support, set clear expectations and reduce administrative burdens to help colleagues manage the initial implementation. They will offer time for collaboration and planning and colleagues' wellbeing is regularly checked, with immediate solutions to challenges. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide support, allocate time for collaboration and professional development ensuring it is integrated into the schedule. A leader will ensure that colleagues' wellbeing is continuously addressed with additional support and reduced administrative tasks. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that support strategies become embedded in the school culture, prioritising colleagues' wellbeing and shared responsibility for implementation. They will prioritise time for collaboration. A leader will ensure that professional growth will be ongoing, administrative tasks will be streamlined and will ensure long-term sustainability and colleagues' empowerment.
ii.	Monitor data, feedback and behaviours to improve implementation	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish basic implementation outcomes and begin to collect and analyse data; the use of data is limited and adjustments to implementation are reactive. They will focus on monitoring implementation fidelity, ensuring that the core components of the plan are followed and will identify some areas where support may be needed. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have a structured approach to collecting and analysing implementation data. They will actively identify barriers and facilitators, making targeted adjustments such as restructuring teams, adapting strategies or reallocating resources. A leader will engage colleagues to support wider implementation. They will ensure data is presented in accessible ways and is integrated into discussions. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistently use data-driven insights to refine strategies, optimise resource allocation and strengthen colleague support. They will proactively monitor progress and adjust implementation in real time. A leader will summarise data in clear, actionable formats, enabling colleagues to apply it effectively; review of implementation outcomes will be ongoing and continuous.
iii.	Adapt implementation in response to barriers and enablers	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on monitoring the implementation process to identify initial barriers and enablers. Through real-time data they will recognise the challenges and opportunities that may affect the success of the implementation, setting the stage for timely adjustments. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify barriers and enablers, acting by adapting the implementation strategy. They will, through leveraging the enablers within the organisation, facilitate progress. A leader will refine the plan to better align with the school's strengths and address challenges effectively. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the process of anticipating, identifying and responding to barriers and enablers is continuous. They will regularly use data to refine the implementation strategy, allowing the school to respond dynamically to new barriers while further utilising enablers to sustain and improve the implementation over time.
iv.	Provide ongoing professional development to support the plan	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise the importance of ongoing professional development, only relying on broad approaches like workshops or coaching. They will have some focus on the EEF key mechanisms that drive meaningful behaviour and practice change. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> design ongoing and structured professional development that incorporates many EEF key mechanisms. They will provide effective, continuous and targeted training to align colleagues' knowledge, skills and practices. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> embed high-quality professional development as an ongoing process, ensuring sustained support throughout implementation. They will ensure training is designed around all the EEF evidence-based mechanisms, enabling meaningful and lasting change in colleagues' practice. A leader will actively monitor and refine professional development efforts, ensuring alignment with implementation goals and colleagues' needs.

3d Sustain the improvement

Some impact

A leader will

- i. Facilitate the long-term impact of entire plan
 - provide initial support for the implementation effort, recognising potential dips in outcomes and taking steps to maintain focus. They will allow time for changes to settle in and begin considering the long-term impact.
 - assess the effectiveness of the approach by reviewing some evidence and considering how well the pupils' needs have been addressed. They will also review the suitability of the approach for the current context and evaluate any new barriers to implementation.
- ii. Review the outcomes
 - decide whether to sustain, scale or de-implement an approach. They will ensure that effective practices are maintained and they consider expanding successful strategies or discontinuing ineffective ones based on immediate needs and evidence.
- iii. Decide on next steps
 - ensure that both successes and challenges are used to help shape future strategies and plans. They will build in time to ensure past experiences are considered when making decisions and will discuss the impact of improvement within the school.
- iv. Build learning from experience into future plans

High impact

A leader will

- sustain the implementation effort over time by continuing to provide support, monitoring progress and addressing challenges. They will ensure that the focus is on long-term success, allowing the time needed for the new practices to take hold.
- conduct a thorough review of the implementation process, reassessing both pupils' needs and the suitability of the approach. They will gather data on the effectiveness of the approach, review the readiness for continued implementation and evaluate the success of the strategies used.
- evaluate whether to sustain, scale or de-implement an approach with a more strategic focus. They will assess whether to expand a successful initiative to a broader scope, refine it for better fit or discontinue ineffective practices. A leader will ensure decisions will be guided by evidence and a deeper understanding of the school's evolving needs.
- ensure that both successes and challenges are used to shape future strategies and plans within the Trust. They will actively build time for reflection on past experiences in decision-making and share insights to improve practices and outcomes.

Highest impact

A leader will

- foster a culture of sustained change by allowing adequate time for new practices to embed and considering success over time. They will continue to monitor and adjust the implementation strategies, ensuring that momentum is maintained and the long-term objectives are consistently met.
- consistently conduct in-depth reviews of the implementation, using local evidence and data to assess its effectiveness. They will take a proactive approach in evaluating and adapting strategies, ensuring alignment with evolving needs and context. A leader will ensure processes will inform strategic decisions.
- expertly decide between sustaining, scaling or de-implementing with a comprehensive, evidence-based approach. They will ensure successful practices are embedded across the school, thoughtfully scale them where needed and strategically de-implement practices that no longer align with long-term goals, ensuring the school remains focused on high-impact strategies.
- ensure that both successes and challenges are used to inform and shape strategies and plans at a systemic level, extending beyond the Trust. They will integrate lessons learned into decisions, collaborate with external networks, seek external validation and contribute to broader educational improvements, influencing practices beyond the Trust.

Domain 4 Leading People

School leaders need a strong foundation of skills and knowledge in building and maintaining relationships to lead effectively and create a thriving school environment. Central to this is the ability to encourage contribution, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued, fostering a culture of shared ownership and trust. Effective leaders understand the importance of working within teams, promoting collective responsibility and mutual support to achieve common goals. They also prioritise developing collaboration and networking, both within the school and with external partners, to share best practices and enhance opportunities for professional growth. Furthermore, highly effective leaders are committed to developing people, recognising and nurturing the potential of colleagues through mentoring, coaching and professional development. Together, these relational and collaborative skills form the backbone of resilient leadership that drives school improvement and supports the success and wellbeing of the whole school community.

4a Building and maintaining relationships		Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
i.	Listen to others and recognise different perspectives	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen to diverse perspectives, fostering understanding and inclusion. They will advocate for pupils across the school by demonstrating listening, feedback and communication skills. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively listen and acknowledge diverse perspectives, fostering understanding and inclusion. They will advocate for pupils across the school by demonstrating effective listening, feedback, record-keeping and communication skills, ensuring that pupils and other stakeholders are informed and supported. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively listen and acknowledge diverse perspectives, fostering understanding and inclusion. With highly effective listening, feedback, record-keeping and communication skills, they will advocate for pupils across the Trust, ensuring that pupils and other stakeholders are well-informed and supported.
ii.	Demonstrate emotional intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support consider the needs and feelings of others while adapting their approach. They will demonstrate some influence appropriately. By recognising cues and intervening, when necessary, a leader will ensure that practice, culture and performance are built on relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the needs and feelings of others while adapting the approach to individuals, situations and context. They will demonstrate influence appropriately. By recognising cues and intervening, when necessary, a leader will ensure that practice, culture and performance are built on strong relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider and respond to the needs and feelings of others while adapting the approach to individuals, situations and context. They will demonstrate considerable influence appropriately, using both verbal and non-verbal communication effectively. By recognising cues and intervening, when necessary, a leader will ensure that practice, culture and performance are built on strong relationships, enabling colleagues to achieve their goals.
iii.	Communicate with others and act as a positive role model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate appropriately with colleagues and groups, acting as a positive role model. They will engage in open, accurate and straightforward communication and will advocate for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate effectively with colleagues and groups, acting as a positive role model. They will confidentially engage in open, accurate and straightforward communication, using both verbal and non-verbal language appropriately. A leader will advocate for others by fostering a climate of effective communication within and beyond the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate effectively with colleagues and groups, acting as a positive role model. They will confidentially engage in open, accurate and straightforward communication, using both verbal and non-verbal language appropriately. A leader will advocate for others by fostering a climate of effective communication within and beyond the school. They will use their communication skills to influence at the highest level.
iv.	Gain and maintain the trust and support of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest time in building relationships and, when needed, will intervene to support others in achieving their goals. They will help create a culture based on strong, respectful relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest time in building and nurturing effective, respectful relationships and they will work in a way that values and promotes them. When needed, they will intervene to support others in achieving their goals. A leader will create and promote a culture based on strong, respectful relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dedicate time to cultivating and sustaining meaningful, respectful relationships, consistently operating in a manner that upholds and champions these connections. When needed, they will intervene to support others in achieving their goals. A leader will nurture a constructive, cooperative atmosphere where collaboration thrives.

4b Encouraging contribution

Some impact

High impact

Highest impact

	A leader will	A leader will	A leader will
i. Provide encouragement and opportunity for colleagues to engage in decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide some opportunities for colleagues to engage in decision-making. They will involve some colleagues in shaping the quality of learning, striving to create a culture of shared responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage and provide many opportunities for colleagues to engage in decision-making and challenge constructively. They will support colleagues to express their views and participate in joint decision-making, involving the whole school community in shaping the quality of learning. Through active efforts, a leader will create a culture of shared responsibility, support and Trust-wide participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively encourage colleagues to engage in decision-making and challenge constructively. By supporting colleagues to express their views and participating in joint decision-making, they will foster a culture of collaboration, involving the whole school community in shaping the quality of learning. A leader will embed a culture of shared responsibility, support and Trust-wide participation.
ii. Value and acknowledge the roles, contributions and expertise of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage colleagues to take an active role in school life and recognise individual strengths. They will model behaviours that foster a positive and supportive environment, creating an atmosphere where colleagues feel valued. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> empower colleagues to take an active role in school life by utilising their unique skills and recognising their strengths. They will engage with others positively, using this insight to enhance team dynamics. A leader will model behaviours that create a positive and supportive environment, encouraging ongoing contributions from the team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> empower colleagues to take an active role in school life by utilising their unique skills, consistently recognising strengths and addressing challenges. They will engage with others positively, using a deep understanding of individual contributions to foster an inclusive and supportive environment. A leader will model behaviours that not only support a positive atmosphere but also actively identify and address strengths, challenges and issues, ensuring that all contributions are acknowledged and valued.
iii. Employ strategies to manage conflicts of interest and differences of opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strive to create an inclusive environment where colleagues feel supported. With support, they will encourage open dialogue, respect and the use of basic conflict resolution techniques to ensure that colleagues feel heard; differences of opinion are addressed constructively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote an inclusive environment where colleagues feel supported. They will actively foster open dialogue, respect and understanding, using mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution techniques ensuring that all perspectives are heard, valued and addressed in a constructive manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustain and model an inclusive environment that acknowledges and respects the whole person, ensuring colleagues feel supported. They will embed a culture of open dialogue, respect and understanding, consistently utilising advanced mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution strategies ensuring that everyone feels heard, valued and empowered to thrive. A leader will have a focus on preventing and resolving conflicts proactively while maintaining team cohesion.
iv. Keep the focus on providing high quality teaching, learning and relationships to improve outcomes for pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> with support, ensure that decisions and actions align with the goal of enhancing the quality of education, creating an environment where pupils can reach their full potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that decisions and actions align with the goal of enhancing the quality of education, creating an environment where pupils can reach their full potential. They will evaluate and refine practices, resources and support systems to ensure consistent focus on diverse needs of pupils and drive positive academic, social and personal outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustain an environment where decisions and actions align with the goal of enhancing the quality of education, where pupils can reach their full potential. They will continuously evaluate and refine practices, resources and support systems to ensure that they meet the diverse needs of pupils. A leader will drive positive academic, social and personal outcomes, promoting an inclusive culture where everyone feels empowered, respected and equipped to succeed.

4c Working within teams

Some impact

High impact

Highest impact

	Some impact	High impact	Highest impact
i. Create and sustain teams with expertise	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and support colleagues in working toward a common goal. They will encourage colleagues to develop their expertise and contribute to the team while beginning to recognise and assess the unique strengths and potential of each team member, laying the foundation for effective collaboration. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> align colleagues' strengths, experience and expertise with their role within the team, ensuring that each person makes a positive contribution. They will actively facilitate the ongoing development of skills and expertise, strengthening the collective knowledge of the team and fostering an environment of continuous improvement. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> precisely align colleagues' skills, experience and potential with the demands of their role, positioning team members where they will leverage their strengths and expertise to drive success. They will anticipate future needs, proactively ensuring the team remains adaptable, resilient and continuously evolving to meet emerging challenges and opportunities.
ii. Have a clear sense of their role, responsibilities and purpose within the team	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> help colleagues understand their role and responsibilities within the team, ensuring they contribute to the overall priorities. By demonstrating a sense of ownership and accountability, they will provide direction, helping colleagues see how their work aligns with the team's purpose. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> foster an environment where colleagues clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, creating clarity around expectations. By encouraging open communication, idea sharing and collaboration, they will ensure each colleague feels empowered to contribute toward the priorities. A leader will model ownership and accountability, providing direction and clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that every colleague has a clear understanding and ownership of their role, responsibilities and purpose within the team. They will create an environment where each individual feels valued and aligned with the priorities. By fostering mutual respect, collaboration and open communication, they will help colleagues work cohesively toward success. A leader will demonstrate a strong sense of ownership and accountability, providing clear direction while empowering colleagues to take initiative and contribute fully.
iii. Appreciate efforts, contributions and compromises within the team	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise some efforts, contributions and compromises within the team that inspires collaboration. They will encourage diverse perspectives and foster open dialogue for shared success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise individual strengths and behaviours to create a cohesive, high-performing team. They will bring out the best in teams to inspire collaboration and champion a culture of inclusivity. By valuing each colleagues' contribution, a leader will foster a sense of ownership and accountability. They will encourage consideration of diverse perspectives and compromise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and value individual strengths and behaviours to create a cohesive, high-performing team. They will bring out the best in teams across the school, balancing empathy and clarity to inspire collaboration by valuing each colleagues' contribution. A leader will secure a sense of ownership and accountability. They will champion a culture of difference, mutuality and inclusivity, encouraging diverse perspectives, compromise and fostering open dialogue for shared success.

4d Developing collaboration and networking

Some impact

High impact

Highest impact

i. Identify opportunities for collaboration and networking

A leader will

- share ideas and start to build relationships with other organisations, enhancing strategic partnerships. They will seek to create positive internal and external connections, ensuring that key colleagues are informed.

A leader will

- share ideas, encourage innovation and best practice. They will build strong relationships with organisations, both within and beyond the school, enhancing strategic partnerships. A leader will ensure that key colleagues are well-informed and effectively linked to valuable groups which will strengthen individual efforts and amplify the collective impact.

A leader will

- disseminate ideas and approaches, fostering innovation and best practices. They will build strong relationships with business and educational organisations, both within and beyond the school, enhancing strategic partnerships. A leader will actively seek and maintain positive external connections and ensure that key colleagues are well-informed and effectively linked to valuable groups, strengthening individual efforts and amplifying the collective impact.

ii. Create opportunities for collaboration and networking

- recognise the power of teamwork and encourage open communication and the sharing of expertise through connecting with professional networks, bringing in new perspectives that contribute to achieving shared objectives.

- bring colleagues and groups together fostering collaboration and teamwork. They will encourage open communication and the sharing of expertise to ensure everyone is aligned with the school's, Trust's and pupils' needs through encouraging participation with professional networks, bringing in new perspectives that contribute to achieving shared objectives.

- foster collaboration and teamwork by encouraging open communication and the sharing of expertise to ensure everyone is aligned with the school's, Trust's and pupils' needs. They will engage in ongoing dialogue with both internal and external stakeholders, challenging them appropriately to meet high standards. A leader will ensure that efforts are enhanced through connecting with professional networks, bringing in diverse and new perspectives that contribute to achieving shared objectives.

iii. Promote the sharing of information and resources

- promote the sharing of information and resources by creating an environment that encourages open communication and collaboration where views are shared with integrity. They will encourage engagement with professional networks to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices, effectively building stronger relationships.

- share information and resources through promoting engagement with professional networks to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices, which can lead to new solutions and improved outcomes. By effectively sharing information and resources, they will build stronger relationships across the school and Trust.

- create and sustain an environment that encourages open communication and collaboration. They will ensure that views and approaches are shared with integrity, fostering trust and transparency. A leader will engage with professional networks to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices, leading to innovative solutions and improved outcomes. By effectively sharing information and resources, they will foster and model stronger relationships across the school and Trust.

4e Developing people

Some impact

High impact

Highest impact

<p>i. Support colleagues to reflect on their professional growth</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strive to create a culture where everyone can reflect, set and focus on achieving goals. They will start to build an ethos of continuous improvement and are aware of colleagues' engagement in the process of professional growth. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lead a culture where everyone is focused on reflecting, setting and achieving goals. They will be aware of engagement with the process of professional growth and understand the themes and priorities colleagues are working on. A leader will reinforce the importance of continuous improvement, by enabling check-ins, coaching conversations and opportunities for professional development. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sustain a culture where everyone is focused on reflecting, setting and achieving challenging goals. They will monitor and evaluate engagement and professional growth, strategically planning how themes and priorities can be addressed in the school. A leader will lead and reinforce a continuous improvement ethos, including check-ins, coaching conversations and opportunities for professional development. They will ensure that these processes are embedded as routine, where an environment of continuous improvement is the norm and everyone is motivated to strive for excellence.
<p>ii. Support colleagues to achieve their professional growth</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer guidance to colleagues by sharing knowledge and experiences when asked. They will begin to recognise and utilise the expertise within the school to support professional growth and will draw on coaching as part of professional learning. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively provide guidance and direction to colleagues by connecting them with relevant expertise within the school. They will contribute to a culture of professional growth by encouraging peer collaboration and applying coaching techniques to support continuous improvement. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strategically guide and empower colleagues by leveraging the collective expertise within the school to enhance professional growth. They will embed coaching as a key component of professional learning, fostering a highly effective culture of continuous improvement and shared leadership.
<p>iii. Review the growth of teams and colleagues</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the growth of teams and colleagues, identifying areas for development and supporting progress. They will be prepared to engage in conversations where growth may not be evident, offering guidance to help overcome challenges and encourage improvement. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the growth of teams and colleagues across the Trust, analysing development patterns and fostering growth through targeted support. When growth is not evident, they will be ready to address challenges constructively, engaging in difficult conversations and providing actionable insights to support continued development. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critically evaluate the growth of teams and colleagues at both a Trust-wide and external level, ensuring continuous development through reflection and support. They will proactively address challenges and engage in difficult conversations when growth is lacking, using a strategic approach to encourage resilience, learning and long-term success.
<p>iv. Celebrate success and take action to improve performance</p>	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider some information to determine effective performance and identify areas where performance can be improved. They will take steps to provide additional training, coaching, resources or support to create a positive environment where everyone is encouraged to celebrate success and continuously improve. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse a range of information to determine effective performance and identify areas where performance can be improved. They will have a comprehensive understanding of strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring high-quality education is provided. A leader will create a positive and dynamic environment through provision of additional training, coaching, resources or support and by balancing celebration with constructive action. 	<p>A leader will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse and evaluate a wide range of information to consistently acknowledge and celebrate effective performance to motivate and inspire others. They will identify areas where performance can be improved and take proactive steps to address them. Through provision of additional training, coaching, resources or support and by balancing celebration with constructive action, a leader will create a positive and dynamic environment where everyone is encouraged to continuously improve and excel.

