

TDET  
Strategic  
Plan  
2023-26



## Contents

Page 3	Introduction and Background
Page 5	Strategic intent 1
Page 6	Strategic intent 2
Page 7	Strategic intent 3
Page 8	Monitoring and Evaluation
Page 9	Our approach to growth





# Introduction and Background

Thomas Deacon Education Trust (TDET), founded in 2016 out of Thomas Deacon Academy, is a thriving Trust educating over 5,000 pupils ranging from birth to age 19 in its seven academies across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.

Children have always been at the heart of everything the Trust has done, and we are a Trust that unites and empowers like-minded academies to achieve the very best for our learners and at the heart of our vision is a profound belief that the Trust as a whole is more than the sum of its parts. All of our academies are equally valued and contribute to the development and direction of the Trust as we grow together.

All members of our Trust – our academies, members of staff, learners, and communities – are united in purpose through a set of shared common values and expectations:

 **Trust** – we rely on honesty as the basis for developing meaningful relationships

 **Diversity** – we embrace individual differences


 **Excellence** – we want the very best and never give up on doing what is right

 **Transformation** – we work together to make a positive impact

In the summer of 2022, I was appointed as Chief Executive and set out an ambitious vision for TDET to be a highly successful Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and charitable organisation that aims to positively affect the life chances of our learners by being one of the leading MATs in the country, dedicated to providing a truly world-class education for our communities in Peterborough and the surrounding area.

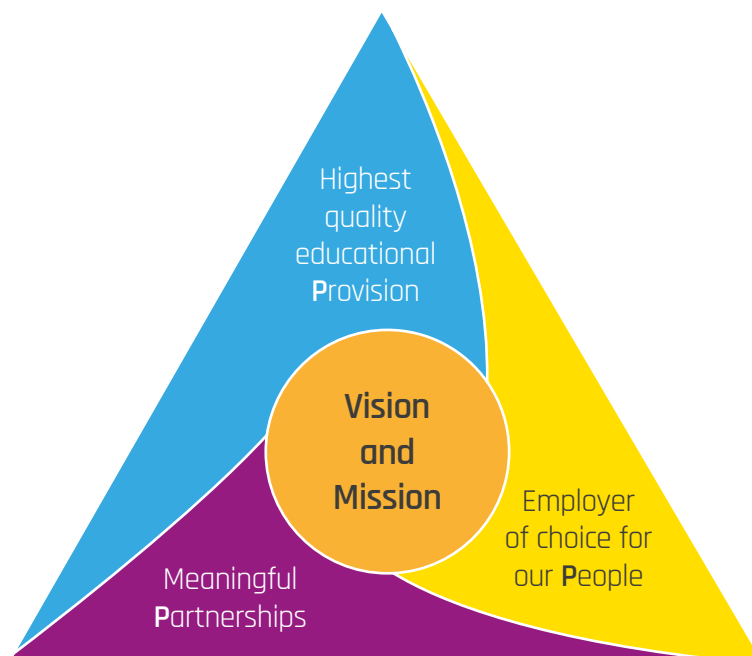
At the heart of this vision was the absolute intention that our academies work closely together, taking part in real and meaningful collaborations between teachers, learners and other key partners including parents, business, and other education providers. We must value our local communities and actively encourage our schools and staff to share best practice to benefit all learners within each local area.

The vision comprises of 3 strategic intents – **our 3 Ps**:

 A world class education **Provision** gives the environment and conditions for all (TDET) learners (regardless of starting point) to be the best they can be and offer choice for the future. A world class education empowers children to change the(ir) future, to shape society and benefit the world.

 We develop meaningful and high-leverage **Partnerships** that actively and directly support our goals as a strong Multi Academy Trust.

 We attract, engage and enable **People** through inspirational leadership which facilitates a positive, ambitious, and supportive culture and supports TDET in becoming an 'Employer of Choice'.



These strategic intents are not mutually exclusive but rather fully integrated and work together to deliver the overarching vision and mission.

Through experience, we know that there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to education. Our academies are individual members of the Trust community and are empowered to innovate and adapt to the needs of their learners and the local community.

We firmly believe that the purpose of a Trust is to add more value than the sum of the parts and to provide better support to academies than before they were part of our Trust. This additional value is our **Trust Dividend**:

“ A significant and persistent level of performance that is contingent on the existence of the Trust and enables schools to work in a higher performance space over time, above that which would have been achieved without the Trust.

*(Nicholls, 2023)*

Our work over the next 3 years is to embed these strategic intents and deliver a meaningful and demonstrable dividend as we begin to look forward to the next decade for TDET.



**Scott Hudson**

Chief Executive

Thomas Deacon Education Trust



# Strategic Intent [1]

A world class education **Provision** gives the environment and conditions for all (TDET) learners (regardless of starting point) to be the best they can be and offer choice for the future. A world class education empowers children to change the(ir) future, to shape society and benefit the world.







## Introduction

We firmly believe that all of our pupils deserve the very best quality of education and to that end our number one priority is to ensure that our academies provide the highest quality of pastoral care alongside the best teaching and learning which enables them to thrive as global citizens.






## What we will do

At the heart of our provision is our research and evidence informed education improvement strategy. This consists of 5 focus areas – behaviour, curriculum, reading, SEND and ambition - which articulate what success for our learners and academies looks like. Aligned to our focus areas, our education frameworks provide a set of elements which allow us to enhance key aspects of provision and to codify our shared language and systems as the 'TDET way'.

Our systems and processes for educational improvement enable us to have:

-  A deep understanding of our academy's strengths and needs.
-  An adaptation of approach to individual academy context reflected in the individual 3-year strategic plan and Framework Response Plan (FRP).
-  Collaborative practice (within and beyond the Trust) to develop and utilise expertise and capacity (encompassing our Trust wide Partnership and People strategies).
-  Strategic and responsive development and deployment of expertise.
-  Impactful Governance.
-  Evaluation of impact.

## 2026 Milestones

-  TDET recognised nationally for excellence and has influence beyond TDET
-  All academies at capacity - school of choice
-  TDET is the employer of choice for the city and attracts employees from beyond the local area.
-  Collaboration between TDET staff is part of their every-day experience of working for our Trust.
-  All pupils receive the TDET Experience entitlement





## Strategic Intent [2]

We develop a meaningful and high-leverage **Partnerships** that actively and directly support our goals as a strong Multi Academy Trust.

### Introduction

We know that working in partnership both within and beyond the Trust brings about a range of benefits for our learners and staff from increased opportunities through to access to additional knowledge and expertise and more efficient use of resource. We are committed to ensuring meaningful, mutually beneficial and high impact partnerships are established with other organisations both within and beyond the education sector.

### What we will do

Any partnership will come at a cost, whether this is in actual financial terms or as a cost in kind e.g. staff time. A range of partnerships already exist at Trust level as well as within our individual academies and it is important that we evaluate these to ensure that they deliver good 'value for money' alongside exploring new partnerships that will meet the new goals we have set ourselves.

### 2026 Milestones

- 🔗 Grown further from our current size in line with our growth principles (see below)
- 🔗 Governance is recognised as a model of best practice
- 🔗 MAT dividend is quantifiable and demonstrable
- 🔗 Meaningful external partnerships have significant impact
- 🔗 TDET influences national practice and provision



## Strategic Intent [3]

We attract, engage and enable **People** through inspirational leadership which facilitates a positive, ambitious and supportive culture and supports TDET in becoming an 'Employer of Choice'.

### Introduction

We know that the quality of an organisation cannot exceed the quality of the people working in the organisation and are fully committed to ensure that we recruit and retain high quality staff through the development of our inclusive and collaborative culture that is very mindful of staff well-being and development.

### What we will do

At the heart of our people strategy is the concept of Continuous Development which is a person centred approach where employees take ownership of their own development. We will invest in people and encourage open and honest communication. Employees will be motivated to achieve the best outcomes for themselves, the teams they work in and the young people around them. We will provide employees with learning and development opportunities to be creative and dynamic professionals in their fields so that we will have the right people with the right skills, knowledge and experience who are effectively led and organised to deliver TDET's strategy, both now and in the future.

Alongside our approach to continuous development is a desire to ensure that our leaders and potential leaders are empowered at all levels. We will develop the leadership skills of current leaders, identify and develop new leaders, and equip them with the skills and knowledge to be effective in their roles.

We want our recruitment processes to be among the very best in the sector, giving candidates at all levels a positive experience in their interactions with our Trust and to effectively recruit the right quantity and quality of staff needed to support the achievement of our strategic objectives

### 2026 Milestones

- 🌀 Leadership - Wider recognition of the leadership pipeline across the industry
- 🌀 Professional learning - All employees fully engaged in professional learning
- 🌀 Coaching culture recognised industry wide
- 🌀 Culture & Wellbeing - Trust wide professional accreditation achieved representing people excellence e.g. Investors in People
- 🌀 Recruitment & Retention - Employee brand recognised industry wide



# Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust fully understands the importance of monitoring and evaluation as part of an overall improvement strategy. The Trust uses the recently released Trust Quality Descriptors as a basis for overall self-evaluation and forms the basis of identifying priorities in our Trust development plan, which has key actions identified on an annual basis.

This wider self-evaluation is supported by monitoring and evaluating our strategy based on the 3 Ps. We will measure the success of this strategy by using a range of qualitative and quantitative data at individual academy and trust level and reporting performance in various ways to key stakeholders. A number of key performance indicators have been identified against each strand of the strategy and include specific areas as listed below:

## Strategic intent 1

Pupil outcome data, attendance, Behaviour, destinations, numbers on roll

## Strategic intent 2

Governance, central education team, business services, finance, parents, external partners

## Strategic intent 3

Recruitment, retention, probation, absence, case work, staff perception





## Our approach to growth









Since the inception of the Trust in 2016, growth has been an ambition and indeed in the early years, the Trust grew relatively quickly. However, this growth – as with many Trusts – was relatively ad hoc and there has never been a formalised approach to constructing an agreed strategy for growth.

Growth in and of itself is not necessarily beneficial. The rationale for growth should focus on providing a demonstrable MAT dividend:

“ A significant and persistent level of performance that is contingent on the existence of the Trust and enables schools to work in a higher performance space over time, above that which would have been achieved without the Trust.

*(Nicholls, 2023)*

We believe this dividend to be manifest through:

-  Pupil experience, opportunity and outcomes
-  Staff opportunity and support
-  Access to greater range of expertise and practice
-  Workload management
-  Community impact and wider influence
-  Economies of scale and financial efficiencies which could provide greater local resource
-  Managing against volatility and risk mitigation
-  Civic benefit to the wider local community



TDET currently believes that an optimal size of Trust, allowing it to deliver a significant MAT dividend, is somewhere around 12,000 pupils. Our approach to growth is founded on an agreed set of 5 principles upon which our strategy will be based:

1

### Values

All members of our Trust – our academies, members of staff, learners and communities – are united in our purpose to provide a world class education. We have a clear set of shared common values; Trust, Diversity, Excellence and Transformation and these values drive our behaviours and form the basis of our organisation. Schools or Trusts joining us will be aligned with our inclusive comprehensive principles.

2

### Type of school/Trust

TDET is already a diverse community of academies and any further growth would consider a broad profile of schools, covering the 2-18 age range and spectrum of inspection grades.

3

### Location

TDET academies will be geographically located to enable meaningful collaboration and support and be located such that no individual academy is isolated. Whilst the focus for growth is within the immediate surroundings of Peterborough (1 hour radius), consideration would be given to a geographical cluster of schools further afield.

4

### Capacity

Prior to any growth, the Trust will confirm it has the capacity to take on new schools/Trusts in order to enable all learners to thrive. This capacity applies to both the Trust's education and business support services. Additional capacity can be sought through the use of the Trust capacity fund and/or the Trust establishment and growth fund.

5

### Finance

Any growth of the Trust must be sustainable and at no point will the Trust risk its entity as a going concern.









**Gladstone Primary**  
Academy



**Queen Katharine**  
Academy



**Richard Barnes**  
Academy



**Thomas Deacon**  
Academy



**Upwood Primary**  
Academy



**Warboys Primary**  
Academy



**Welbourne Primary**  
Academy



Thomas Deacon Education Trust

[www.tdet.education](http://www.tdet.education)

**#TDETOneTrust**



01733 426043



[info@tdet.education](mailto:info@tdet.education)

Central Office | Queen's Gardens  
Peterborough | PE1 2UW

Company Number: 05090788