

Leeds Learning Alliance

Partner

Memorandum of Understanding

INTRODUCTION

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) explains how

Partners

Leeds Trinity University
Leeds College of Building
Leeds Rhinos Foundation
Leeds City Council
Bankside Primary School
Carr Manor Community School
Wetherby High School
White Rose Academies Trust
Leeds City College

Associate Partners

Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College
Chapel Allerton Primary School

will work together to improve and expand educational provision in Leeds. The institutions will be collectively referred to as Partners.

The signatories to this Memorandum will work in partnership to develop proposals that will establish a Charitable Trust to be called the Leeds Learning Alliance with the intention of raising educational standards in the schools within the Alliance and also supporting broad and shared community aims. The Alliance will also provide development opportunities for staff and clients of the Partners. Partners will be open and transparent about such arrangements

It is the intention that, in parallel to proposals for establishing a Trust the Partners would also investigate how the Trust might apply to sponsor a Free School in an area of need in Leeds.

The MOU is **not** intended to be a legally binding agreement and will be reviewed annually.

The Partners do **not** undertake any liability for the affairs of Partner institutions.

The LLA will act as the legal entity for schools that become foundation schools as part of the process of joining the Trust. Some schools, however, are already in a legal foundation ie church schools, MATs. The LLA does not want this to be a barrier to opportunities for partnership working. Where a school is already part of a legal foundation, but all parties see the benefits of them joining the LLA, there will be an expectation that they will agree to all other conditions determined in this MOU to become a partner in the LLA. The LLA Board will ultimately decide the level of

partnership for organisations that are not part of the Trust's legal foundation and as such can invite schools/organisations to become a partner/associate partner.

This MOU does not preclude Partners from continuing or developing other collaborative work with other institutions.

OUR VISION

Inclusive, Collaborative, Ambitious

We are a community of Leeds-based learning organisations, with a common ethos and set of values, which shares a vision of supporting our children, young people and families to be successful, healthy and confident learners at all stages of their lives.

We believe in respectful collaboration, restorative practice and inclusive education. We will use the resources of all the partners in the Alliance to promote the very best outcomes for the children, young people and adults in our organisations, ensuring:

- aspirational learning
- high achievement
- empowering relationships
- equality of access

OUR VALUES

The Leeds Learning Alliance is founded on the common values of:

- A community of learning partnerships which promotes all children and young people equally; that promotes inclusive and restorative education and is committed to keeping them happy, safe and healthy in school and to work with their families to achieve this.
- A community of learning partnerships which promotes high quality learning that values and respects individual needs and backgrounds of all our children and young people and the families whom the partnership serves.
- A community of learning partnerships which delivers a wide and enriching curriculum for all our children and young people and actively seeks opportunities to provide engaging and purposeful learning.
- A community of learning partnerships which respects the faiths and ethical values of all our children, young people and families whom the partnership serves.
- A community of learning partnerships which is committed to high quality professional development for all staff, to ensure the best education for all our children and young people.
- A community of learning partnerships that values the role of parents and carers in developing effective learners and is committed to supporting their contribution to creating strong educational partnership between home and school.
- A community of learning partnerships which actively works to promote a collaborative approach to sharing resources and the development of joint ventures.
- A community of learning partnerships which encourages professional collaboration and shared good practice to create self-motivated and engaged staff, dedicated to developing the best education for all our children and young people.
- A community of learning partnerships which values and respects the retention of organizational identities and autonomy.

OUR KEY AIMS

The Leeds Learning Alliance is a partnership of ambitious organisations who are committed to inclusive practice and who prioritise collaboration.

The Alliance will focus on raising outcomes for all learners regardless of levels of need and background.

The Alliance will use and further develop restorative approaches to leadership, management and professional practice in order to secure inclusion, achievement and destinations.

The Alliance will explore the development of Peace Education in order to further develop an inclusive, equitable and effective culture of learning and wellbeing. A relationship led approach to organisational development and to improving outcomes for all will include the following areas of focus:

- Sharing skills, methods and strategies to develop high quality teaching and learning
- High quality, relevant and as needed targeted professional development
- Rigorous quality assurance and collaboration to support improvement
- Promotion and education for health and well-being
- Securing appropriate destinations and pathways for all learners
- Partnership to maximizing resources and opportunities across the Alliance and with other organisations

OUR ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

MEMBERS

Partners for whom the LLA acts as Foundation

All the Governing Boards of the Founding Partners are Members of the LLA. The Governing Boards will appoint someone to be their Authorised Representative who will attend Members' meetings. These will be held twice a year.

Partners who are already part of a legal foundation

Where the organisation is already part of a legal foundation, they will be permitted to be Members of the LLA. The governing board of this organisation will appoint someone to be their Authorised Representative who will attend Members' meetings and who will similarly represent the LLA at the organisation's own meetings as appropriate. The LLA will not however be entitled to appoint Foundation Governors to the organisation's Board.

Should a Member wish to resign from the role it is expected that they will give 6 months-notice in order to appoint someone else from within their organisation.

ALLIANCE BOARD

All partners will be checked to ensure that they comply with DfE legislation. This screening will include a DBS check.

The Alliance will work with other people and organisations, as appropriate, in order to carry out its work.

The Alliance Board will meet a minimum of three times a year. In signing this MOU, Directors of the Alliance are committed to making these meetings a high priority. A Chair from Directors within Board will be elected annually at the AGM. The Board will appoint administrative support to undertake the necessary paperwork associated with the Board's work and report directly to the Chair.

We hope to work together in a manner which means that voting is a rare event but on such occasions each Director has one vote and the Chair has a casting vote should a tie exist

Should a new Partner be appointed after due consultation, including meeting the ethos and expectations of the Alliance, then they will be entitled to nominate one Director.

The Alliance will fund these meetings so no one partner is financially responsible. All partners will have an equal voice. There will be no dominant partner. Meetings will be open and honest to build up trust between partners and confidentiality respected throughout.

All Partners should commit to attend meetings. Decisions can only be taken if 10 or more partners are in attendance (two thirds of the total number of Directors)

We will hold an Annual General Meeting of the partnership in September each year to which other key stakeholders should be invited ie governors, school improvement consultant, other partners. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the Alliance's aims and set the specific areas of work for the coming academic year.

STRATEGY GROUP

The Strategy group will be responsible for driving the action plans forward for the Alliance and ensuring the operational and organisation aspects of the Alliance function effectively. In the first instance this group will meet monthly.

WORKSHOPS, TASK GROUPS, PROJECTS

These will be established as required in order to meet the priorities set by the Alliance. Membership will be determined by the needs of the priority.

For each Alliance priority there will be regular reporting to the Alliance Board through the Strategy Group

GOVERNANCE

Where the Leeds Learning Alliance acts as the Foundation for the schools involved in the LLA the Alliance Board will appoint two Foundation Governors (a minority of governors) onto the Board of any school that joins the LLA and becomes a Foundation school (former community schools), having regard for the specific needs and requirements of each school. The term of office for such Governors will normally be four years.

The Governing Board continues to be responsible for all aspects of their school.

This does not apply where a school or organisation is already part of a legal foundation

The Alliance Board is responsible for the actions of the Leeds Learning Alliance.

Each partner school/organisation will appoint two Directors to the LLA and their details will be registered at Companies House.

School governors and other governing boards will be kept up to date with developments through a standing item on their agenda for governors' and organisations' board meetings.

As signatories to the MOU, Governors/Trustees/Directors should support the Alliance and the aspirations to work together for mutual gain.

OUR CONTRIBUTION

The Leeds Learning Alliance recognises that investment from individual school/organisation budgets is essential in developing partnership working and will establish a central resource through which collaboration can proceed and impact created.

Specifically, resources will be used to:

1. Support the leadership, management and administration of the Alliance
2. Fund additional running costs including venues and professional fees
3. Support the targeted learning opportunities generated by the Alliance's priorities

All allocated funds will be managed centrally and allocated in accordance with the action plans and by mutual agreement.

All schools and organisations that form the LLA will be expected to contribute equally to the financial arrangements of the LLA. This will be agreed annually by the Board. For 2019 this contribution is £500. This will give a total central fund of £3500. The charge to schools/organisations will be made in April each year and should a partner decide to withdraw from the Alliance the funding will be retained for the remainder of that financial year to enable budgets to be adapted accordingly.

The Alliance will ensure that fair and transparent funding arrangements are in place. Where funding is required to support Alliance activities the cost-benefits will be discussed and put to partners. Costs will be divided across the Alliance in either equal or proportionate terms depending on the activity.

Carr Manor Community School is the named fund holding organisation. Clear financial records will be kept and presented regularly to the Board.

It should be noted that the Alliance is a financially discrete organisation and Directors have limited liability, usually to a maximum of £10. Schools/organisations within the Alliance have separate and allocated budgets.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Alliance will establish a set of benchmarks from which progress will be measured together with milestones within the action plans to support and monitor developments. This will be reported regularly to the full board and governors.

The Alliance will establish a collaborative self-evaluation process and identify areas where joint processes and policies will support the vision and aims of the Alliance. Clear protocols will be developed for sharing staff. This is both for existing staff and any joint appointments made for the Alliance. We will ensure that all staff understand the Alliance, its key aims and provide support to those working across the schools/organisations.

RESIGNATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM THE LLA

Should any Partner decide they wish to withdraw from the LLA, 6 months-notice must be given to enable the Members and the LLA Board to develop contingency plans. This will also give time for information to be presented to the other Partners' Governing Boards so they can discuss if this has any implications for their organisation.

In order to be compliant, the LLA will require, as a minimum, 2 Members to be in situ. Should the resignation mean that this would make the LLA non-compliant then the resignation will not be accepted until alternative arrangements have been made.

Should any school wish to withdraw they will have to go through a formal consultation process and would then become a foundation school without a foundation.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

This MOU is intended to strengthen existing relationships between all partners and conflicts are not anticipated; however, should the need arise, a neutral facilitator, agreeable to all parties involved, will be appointed by the Alliance to resolve any disputes.

If any partner breaks the terms of this MOU the Directors will consult together with the object of remedying that breach, but if they cannot agree any party may terminate this agreement by notice.

This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed annually.

Signed:
