



# School Improvement

February 2019



## **RKLT School Improvement**

*“The Trust aspires to the highest standards of academic achievement. It is also passionate that its young people develop values and inter-personal skills so that they can contribute positively to local and global communities.”* Red Kite Learning Trust aims and values.

School improvement is at the core of our work as a Trust working with our schools to deliver on our aims and values. We see ‘school improvement’ as a wholistic process that has as much to do with effective staff recruitment and resource management as it does with pedagogy. Our strong Core Team delivers centralised services covering finance, HR, facilities management, catering and IT each of which plays a part in developing and nurturing successful schools.

We respect the unique nature of each school and its place within its own community and we expect Headteachers and Local Governing Bodies to lead monitoring and improvement work at individual school level. Our Scheme of Delegation (SoD) sets out clearly the responsibility of the schools and the role of the Trust in working with them to ensure that no Trust school lets down its pupils but continues to strive for excellence. We believe that empowering school leaders to develop and deliver the precise vision for excellence within their own school is motivating for them and leads to better outcomes overall. The scheme of delegation for schools within the Trust that are judged as outstanding, good and/or improving rapidly allows a high level of autonomy for Heads and LGB’s but working within a strong monitoring and evaluation framework. School leaders will however increasingly develop and adopt shared systems that ensure the benefits of the best systems are felt by all our schools. The Executive Group, consisting of the Heads from all the Trust schools and chaired by the CEO, meets monthly and is a key component of our work on school improvement.

## **An Ethical Approach**

The Trust is committed to always working with integrity in an open and honest way and fully exemplifying the Nolan Principles in its work and behaviours. This means that we would never adopt ‘quick fix’ solutions to school improvement that would have a negative impact in the longer term or create problems for neighbouring schools. We expect our Heads/Principals to ensure excellence for all through the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all learners. Decisions regarding what children learn and experience will be made with a focus on the young peoples' experience and life chances rather than chasing a particular statistical measure. Each school will take a slightly different approach based on their context and must be in a position to explain this to the Trust and Ofsted when required. The current (2017) Ofsted framework provides a positive framework to work within and we would encourage judgement of our schools based on the wholistic that Ofsted inspectors are trained to provide.

Being ethical does not mean being ‘soft’, we expect governors, leaders and Trust school improvement staff to be prepared to take difficult decisions if they are in the best interest of our young people. When our decisions have a direct impact on people, including staff and students, we would expect leaders to behave in a humane way that reflects our principles as a Trust.

## **Schools at Risk**

Schools that are judged to be 'at risk' will have their scheme of delegation adjusted in a proportionate way depending on the circumstances and context. This, for schools in a high-risk situation, can include the imposition of an executive leader, de-delegation of responsibilities away from the LGB and removal of local financial controls. Such a serious response will not usually be required however and the Trust would expect support to be available, and have the impact necessary, to avoid this being necessary.

The decision to put a Trust school into an 'at risk' category and change the SoD would usually be as a response to:

- Significant negative trends revealed by the data review
- A pattern of parental complaints
- An Ofsted judgement
- Significant leadership challenges e.g. absence of Headteacher
- Serious safeguarding concerns

Following being placed into an 'at risk' category the CEO will:

1. Review the Scheme of Delegation and gain approval for variation from the Trustees
2. Allocate a School Improvement Director (SID) to lead on the improvement strategy for the school and co-ordinate actions
3. The SID will work with the school to produce a recovery plan that is approved and monitored at Trust level
4. Capacity identified from across the Alliance to support where required
5. An additional two data review points introduced into the monitoring and evaluation cycle
6. SID chairs monthly Task and Monitoring Group reporting back to CEO and Trust on progress
7. Trust institutes review of LGB and appoints additional members if required

## **The Red Kite Teaching School Alliance**

The Trust is built on the extensive collaborative school improvement capacity that has been developed in the Red Kite Alliance. All schools in the Trust are members of the Alliance and benefit from the wide range of opportunities this provides. Diagram A shows clearly the relationship between the Trust, the Teaching School Alliance, Red Kite Teacher Training, the Yorkshire Leadership Community and the Maths Hub. Being a member of the Trust ensures that a school is 'plugged into' a rich network of support through these institutions, each one of which has the RKL as the lead body. The collaborative network across the Alliance provides a rich web of support for schools at both primary and secondary level. Regular reviews of all the schools in the Alliance and data sharing at a granular level allow appropriate expertise to be identified and targeted when needed or accessed upon request. There are established protocols for sharing capacity across the Alliance and a high trust environment that allows freedom of knowledge movement which is crucial to continuous improvement.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Diagram B shows how the Trust operates its monitoring and evaluation cycle that is the basis for the risk management process which is a fundamental part of the Trust's work. Termly data returns are coordinated by the Trust data analyst who ensures that systems developed by the Trust in collaboration with headteachers are executed in a timely and accurate way. The data set is common for all schools within a phase and is reviewed on an annual basis to match external requirements and the need to measure progress towards the Trust's own objectives. The Trust's data analyst also ensures that each LGB is provided with the data set they need to ensure they are able to carry out their role to challenge and support the school leadership effectively. The cycle is timed to allow data to be collated and examined at LGB level before then being used to inform discussions and risk management activities at Trust level.

## **The Role of the SIDs**

The School Improvement Directors perform a key role within the Trust and have responsibility for ensuring all our schools continue to improve. SIDs are expected to have experience at Headteacher/NLE level or have worked as HMI and be either currently inspecting for Ofsted, in training to do so or bring other substantive wider school improvement experience. The full time SID role at primary and secondary level within the Trust may be carried out by more than one person working part time with another colleague(s), this is currently the case for our secondary SID position. The SIDs also contribute to the wider work of the TSA and in doing so are able to have an in-depth knowledge of the capacity, or lack of it, across the Trust. The SIDs are expected to have a detailed understanding of each Trust school and support the Headteacher in accessing the support they need to make further improvement. SIDs do have authority to direct Heads when it is appropriate to do so and can work directly with LGBs. The SID would only direct the Headteacher in this way when there was a significant concern with the leadership of the school which may impinge on school standards or the safety of young people. Although we see the SID working in partnership with Headteachers, it is important they have the authority for their advice to be listened to, respected and acted upon when it is in the best interest of the school. They are also responsible for producing accurate and timely reports to the CEO and Trustees regarding the progress of each of the schools. The SIDs are directly line-managed by the CEO and can also be called upon to carry out interim and executive Head functions as required. The Trust has a full time Primary SID, Amanda Thornton Jones, who has a proven track record of school improvement having worked as a Consultant for Leeds and Stockport Councils, and worked as an Associate Headteacher in Tameside. The Secondary SIDs are Dr Andrew Cummings NLE and Neil Clephan OBE and former NLE. Both have a long track record of running outstanding schools and have significant experience of school to school support. Dr Cummings is an Ofsted Inspector and Neil Clephan is a Pupil Premium Champion.

## **The Trust Core Team**

Many school improvement issues require expert and urgent HR support for Headteachers and LGBs, the Trust has its own team that provides this and an ongoing service to schools. This is just one component of the Core Team that is detailed in diagram C which gives an overview of the Trust's staffing structure. Close financial monitoring using a central finance system with the opportunity for rapid benchmarking and analysis is another aspect of this capacity that has a direct impact on school improvement. Our aim is to provide the support to heads that allows them to focus on teaching and learning, progress and the welfare of the children in their care.

## **Governance**

Weaknesses in governance can quickly manifest themselves in failures in school leadership and the accumulation of risk that can lead to school failures. The Trust takes governance very seriously and the Chair of the Trust, as a NLG, takes a proactive role in the development of governance arrangements across our schools. The Trust expects to employ a Governance Manager as part of the growth plan and will deploy this person to ensure that there is a consistent, high quality approach to governance in all Red Kite schools. The RKLK governance handbook supports this already and governor training events and conferences are already taking place. Planned growth in the Trust will allow our governor service to develop further including implementation of plans to provide an IT based Board management system. The Trust is also taking an active role in governor recruitment, working with local employers and other agencies to bring talented and skilled individuals into our governing bodies.

## **Support for Headteachers**

Our Headteachers are the people who will really make the schools successful, we need their inspiration, dedication and energy to drive up standards in all our schools. The Trust makes sure that Heads are part of the development of the Trust and are 'solution focused' through working together on the Executive Group. Supporting our Heads on a daily basis with issues to do with site, HR, compliance etc is part of the fundamental work of the Trust and empowers our Heads to deliver on our vision of excellence for all. We plan to do more to help support and nurture our Heads and aspirant Heads across the Trust through developing the coaching work our SIDs do and giving regular access to continuing professional development opportunities that have impact. Part of this will be encouraging and enabling enquiry visits to schools in contrasting contexts that are delivering excellent outcomes for young people. We want all our Heads to feel they are part of a dynamic, supportive learning community that celebrates excellence and rewards achievement. We promote a collegiate and open approach to leadership that also gives the opportunity for Heads/Principals to take a lead role in an aspect of the Trust's development.

**R Sheriff**  
**CEO**

# Red Kite Learning Trust School Improvement Capacity Framework

## Red Kite Learning Trust

All RKLТ schools are partners of the RKA  
HGS is the RKA Teaching School Lead  
HGS is the Yorkshire Ridings Maths Hub Lead  
Trust Central Services

- Governance
- Finance
- HR/Payroll
- Network Services
- Catering
- Site & Facilities
- Alternative Provision

RKA Team

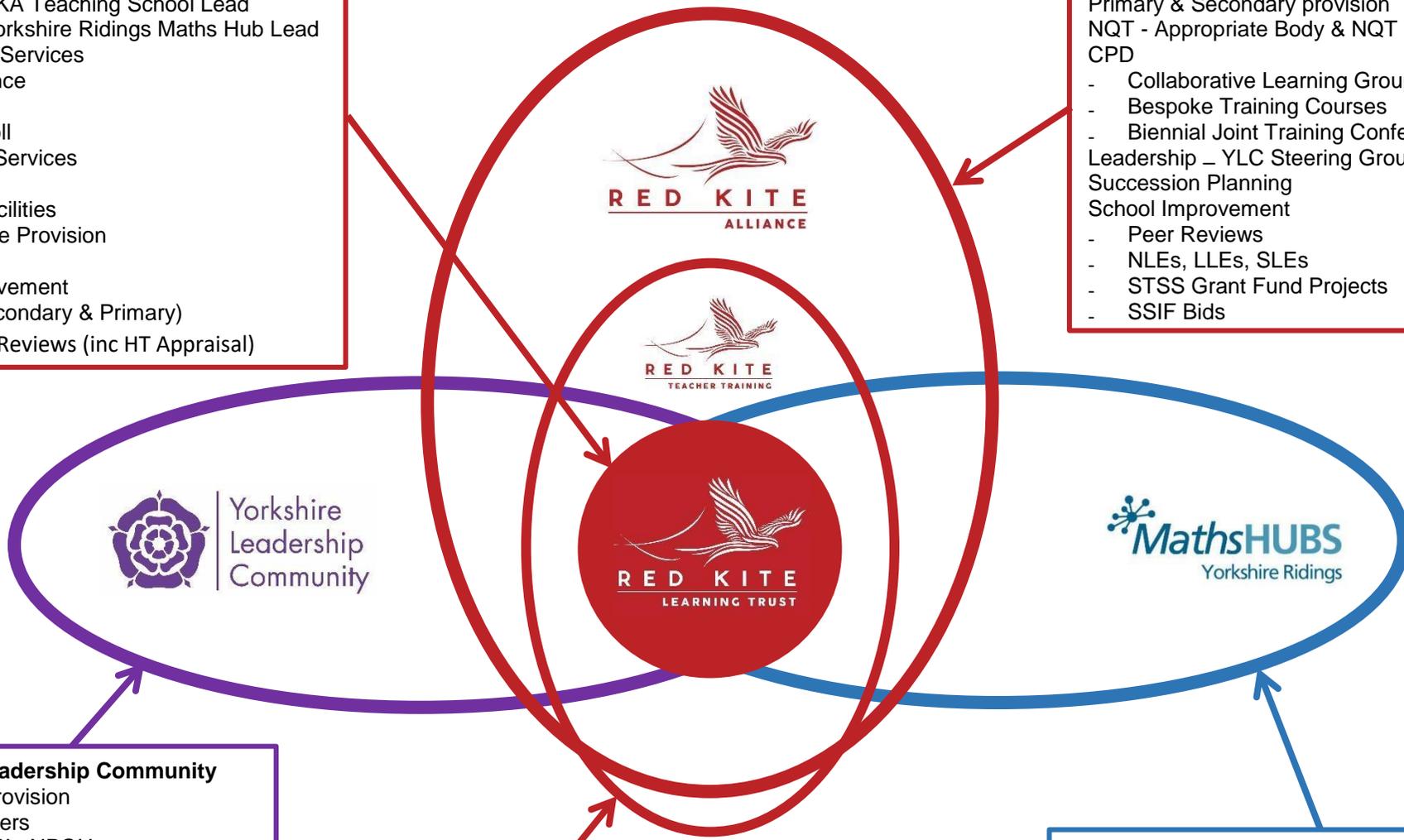
School Improvement

- SIDs (Secondary & Primary)
- 3 x Trust Reviews (inc HT Appraisal)

## Red Kite Alliance

RKTT/SCITT Teacher Training Supply  
Primary & Secondary provision  
NQT - Appropriate Body & NQT Induction  
CPD

- Collaborative Learning Groups
- Bespoke Training Courses
- Biennial Joint Training Conferences
- Leadership – YLC Steering Group Member
- Succession Planning
- School Improvement
- Peer Reviews
- NLEs, LLEs, SLEs
- STSS Grant Fund Projects
- SSIF Bids



Yorkshire  
Leadership  
Community

## Yorkshire Leadership Community

Leadership Provision  
Aspiring Leaders  
NPQs – ML, SL, NPQH  
NPQEL – partnered with ASCL  
Governor Programmes  
Equality & Diversity Leadership  
Women Leading in Education Networks

## Red Kite Teacher Training

RKTT– SCITT Teacher Training Supply  
QTS & PCGE with University of Leeds

### Primary Trainees

3-7, 7-11, General (5-11 age range) with Mathematics

### Secondary Trainees

Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Mathematics,  
MFL ( Fr + Sp, Sp + Fr), PE, PE with EBacc Subjects, Physics, RE



## Maths Hub

Yorkshire Ridings Maths Hub

- Problem solving in maths from Primary to Post 16
- Maths Mastery
- Shanghai Exchange
- Future Teaching Scholars
- TSST (Teacher Subject Specialism Training)

# Red Kite Learning Trust

## Monitoring & Evaluation Cycle

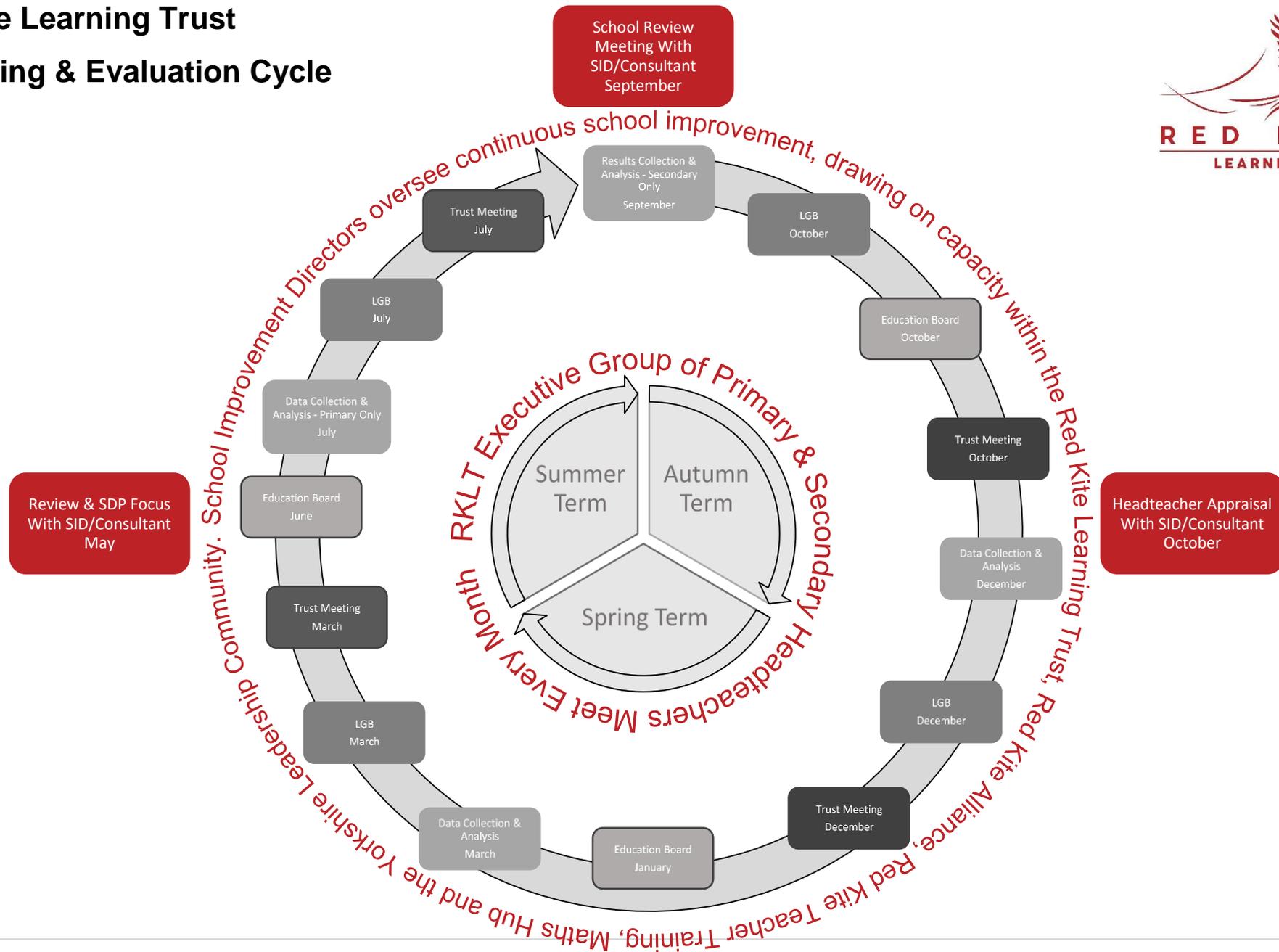


Diagram C

**TRUST CORE TEAM**

