

About the trust

The Cranmer Education Trust is a mixed trust including (currently) 5 secondary schools and 5 primary across Oldham and Rochdale. We also run Manchester Nexus SCITT which trains 50-66 new teachers per annum, mainly secondary. All our schools take ITT trainees, and use the SCITT as a valuable source for recruitment. In addition we run the East Manchester Teaching School Hub which provides the ECF and NPQs for Oldham and Tameside, and many schools in other LAs, for 2 main reasons – we are strategic partners with University College London, so our programmes are research led and academically grounded, and UCL allows strategic partners to customize for context, which gives us local ownership. We are not “delivering” a corporate powerpoint. Our schools provide facilitators for this work, which supports professional development. We also run our own Institute which provides bespoke CPD and school-to-school support led by SLEs from our schools and our wider hub network. All our schools are part of our curriculum networks.

How we work

Our ethos and culture is to grow and develop our people to become thinking leaders, now and for the future, to ensure a diversity of perspectives and experience within the Trust. It makes more demands on leaders, but professionally we believe it is more satisfying, and it supports continuous development grounded in the reality in schools. In some areas where compliance is crucial, we are quite centralized and prescriptive (see below) though always working through school leaders. In educational improvement there is more agency, and schools that are strong, secure and continually improving have complete agency to develop and help raise the bar for everyone.

Where we centralise and are more prescriptive

The trust central team is deliberately small to maximize the resource in our schools. The central team set the policies, systems and protocols for all business issues i.e.

- Finance
- HR
- IT, cyber
- Estates
- Operations and contracts
- Data Protection, GDPR, complaints management
- Marketing and communications

They work with business managers and relevant staff in our schools to ensure trust policy is implemented properly and risk is minimized: i.e. there is financial propriety, all employees have the same terms, conditions, policies and rights under a single employer; ICT is strategically developed and we are all on the same Microsoft tenant; our estates strategy identifies priorities and forward plans so that central funding is allocated to ensure every school has what they need for the young people. Senior executive officers also work directly with headteachers e.g. to strategically plan budgets and make informed decisions, to manage staffing issues such as staff conduct, capability, grievances, etc.

In this respect our business functions are very centralized, but are implemented in schools by school staff with trust guidance and support.

Where there is agency

All our schools are at different stages of improvement and there is no one size fits all.

We do not have single curriculums, though model curriculums developed by different schools are available as a basis for schools which need them. We are now introducing a common GCSE mock for Maths and English in Year 11 to support departmental leadership and knowledge of standards and gaps. The collaborative ethos of the trust enables leaders at all levels to contribute to system level working through networks or cross-trust teams which develop our shared frameworks and guides.

Saddleworth is RI and therefore currently has a Team Around the School (TAS) including 2 experienced executive headteachers who are working with our interim headteacher to ensure continuing progress and improvement.