

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 50-60 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.

1. 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.

2. School Improvement and Inclusion

Principles

- School improvement is a school responsibility
- Inclusion is a school responsibility, and it starts with the universal offer in the classroom – i.e. it is part of school improvement.

Role of trust is to:

1. Create frameworks for best practice by drawing on the expertise in our schools: what a good one looks like, and how to develop that (our ‘Playbook’).

2. Identify and develop the expertise in trust schools; create systems to promote implementation through collaboration.
3. Add capacity to leadership teams where additional experience / expertise / coaching may be needed.
4. Ensure supportive and knowledgeable independent school improvement advisers, and external coaching reviews for expert feedback.
5. Develop the culture and expertise for peer review.

The amount of support / intervention is proportionate to need. A strong school, where all indicators are very positive, has full agency to develop and help raise the bar for everyone.

3 Business Policy & Support

CET has a small central team of executive specialist leaders led by the Deputy CEO (Business Strategy) in:

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

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

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 centralized, but are implemented in schools by school staff with trust guidance and support.

4. Governance Support

This is centrally managed. Our schools have local governing committees appointed by the trust board which have delegated responsibility for oversight of the quality of education in its broadest sense on behalf of the community the school serves. They also fulfil statutory governance roles in the oversight of safeguarding, SEND, Health & Safety and exclusions. Governance agendas and minutes are managed centrally. The format of the headteacher's report is agreed collectively by heads at strategic leadership group. Top level reporting of data on attendance, PA, outcomes and progress is collected from schools and presented in standardized reports.