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## ***Communication & Engagement Strategy***

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1** The Communication and Engagement Strategy outlines how the Trust will build on its existing communications strengths, develop organisational messages and maximise the use of communication tools to ensure a cohesive narrative and engagement with stakeholders. We recognise the importance of listening, engaging and communicating as we seek to deliver our vision and priorities.
- 1.2** This Strategy is written primarily for Trustees, Governors and staff and should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Strategic Development Plan.
- 1.3** To ensure that the Trust and its academies continue to be successful, all internal stakeholders, staff, governors and Trustees alike, have a responsibility to engage, communicate and interact with a wide range of individuals, organisations and communities to further enhance the reputation of the Trust.

### **2 Aims & Objectives**

- 2.1** The Trust is committed to the promotion of effective communication between students, members of staff, parents/carers, stakeholders, governors, Trustees and all members of the Trust community and beyond.
- 2.2** Our objectives are to:
- Have a clear and professional communication strategy in place which will identify channels of communication and reporting. (Refer to Appendix 1 - Central Team structure').
  - Make written communications as accessible and inclusive as possible avoiding bias, stereotyping or any form of discrimination.
  - Be open, honest, ethical and professional.
  - Ensure that the Trust's communication and engagement activities align with its vision and values.
  - Recognise that monitoring and evaluation of communication issues through regular meetings and discussion with stakeholders is an on-going consideration. In the context of a growing organisation, it is particularly important to review systems and facilitate the best possible communication at all stages of the Trust's development.

- 2.3** The Communication and Engagement Strategy outlines the lines of communication and reporting within the Trust. It is also intended to outline key internal and external communication and engagement activities of the Trust and the frequency and intended audience of each.
- 2.4** The Strategy is intended to outline the key principles of the Trust's communication and engagement activities. Academies should ensure that communications with students, parents, staff, local governors and local external stakeholders align with the Trust's vision and values.

### **3 Communication of the Trust's Vision and Values**

- 3.1** To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the Trust's vision and values, communication and engagement will include:
- Maintaining frequently updated Trust and academy websites;
  - Producing a termly Trust Newsletter which is circulated to all stakeholders;
  - Featuring in regular local and national press articles;
  - Networking and facilitating visits to Trust Academies;
  - Local sponsorship opportunities as appropriate.

### **4 Communication between the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies**

- 4.1** Effective communication between the Board of Trustees and the Local Governing Bodies is vital so that:
- The Board of Trustees has an accurate, up-to-date picture of provision across the Trust and is able to take this into account in its strategic decision-making;
  - The views of member Academies, through their Local Governing Bodies, are appropriately represented at Trust Board level;
  - Local Governing Bodies are able to implement policies and decisions agreed by the Trust Board.
  - Any proposal to significantly amend the Trust's mission, values or strategic direction will involve consultation with the Chairs of the Local Governing Body Chairs who will be involved in the decision-making process.
- 4.2** In order to facilitate communication, the following systems are in place:
- A standing item is included on each Local Governing Body agenda to receive an update on Trust matters via a report from the Chief Executive Officer;
  - The Chief Executive Officer, Chair of Trustees or Vice Chair will attend a Local Governing Body meeting of each academy at least once per year;
  - Minutes of Trust Board meetings is routinely published on the Trust website;
  - A summary of all Local Governing Body minutes, prepared by academy Clerks, is

circulated to all Trustees;

- Decisions by the Trust Board that impact Local Governing Bodies and individual academies, e.g. approval of Trust policies, will be shared with governors by local academy clerks.

**4.3** On occasions it is necessary for the Chair of Trustees or the Chair of the Local Governing Body to take a Chair's action outside the meeting cycle. In these circumstances it is important to ensure that Chair's Actions are reported and ratified at the next available meeting.

Academy clerks are, therefore, to be copied into any email correspondence around such issues, to enable the addition of ratification of any Chair's action to the next agenda.

## **5 Communication between Trustees and Governors**

**5.1** To ensure efficient and effective communication between Trustees and academy Governors, there are key expectations of members of the Trust Board and members of the Local Governing Bodies as follows:

- To regularly attend Trust Board/Local Governing Body meetings;
- To prepare well for meetings by reading all communications and papers in advance;
- To respond in a timely manner to email correspondence from fellow Trustees or governors;
- To access relevant information on the designated IT systems as outlined by academy clerks;
- To immediately advise the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees of any issue which might affect the interests of the Trust.

## **6 Communication between Trust Academies**

**6.1** Close collaboration between our academies is an expectation of the Trust and Principals/Headteachers work closely with the Chief Executive Officer and other members of the Central Team to ensure that expertise is effectively shared across the Trust.

**6.2** Academies are also encouraged to celebrate the successes of other Trust members, publicising "good news" stories from across the Trust. Methods of communication include:

- Email
- Trust newsletters
- Trust Website

## **7 Communication with External Stakeholders**

**7.1** Communication and engagement activities with external stakeholders, including parents and students of the academies in the Trust, are intended to:

- Further improve relations and trust
- Build on established relationships to enhance the reputation of the Trust
- Continually improve our offer in terms of quality and relevance
- Anticipate and manage potential issues
- Identify opportunities

**7.2** Academies are responsible for their communication and engagement with students and parents but ensure that activities align with the Trust's vision and values.

**7.3** When considering stakeholder engagement, it is recommended that academies refer to the Power/Interest Matrix in Appendix 2.

## **8 Communication with Media and the Wider Public**

**8.1** When press coverage takes place, all parties who may be interested such as staff, Trustees and governors will be informed via email, the newsletter and the Academy/Trust website.

**8.2** All Trust and academy publications should be mindful of the equal opportunities policy, reflecting and celebrating the diversity of our Trust community.

**8.3** Principals/Headteachers are authorised to provide press releases to the local press on 'Good news' items relating to their academy.

**8.4** Any other contact with the Press, local or national, relating to the Trust more generally, should always be made via the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees unless authorised to do so by the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Trustees.

## **9 Communication of Recruitment Opportunities**

**9.1** The Trust takes a proactive approach to the recruitment of high quality leaders, teachers and support staff.

**9.2** Trust vacancies will be shared via email with all academy staff by academy HR colleagues and advertised externally where appropriate.

## **10 Responsibilities**

### **10.1 Academy responsibilities**

- To publish key policies, documents and procedures on the academy website and in other areas that maximise their accessibility and usefulness to the entire

community ensuring compliance with funding body requirements. (Refer to Appendix 3 – ‘Compliance Checklist’).

- To ensure that the academy website refers to being part of the Trust and links to the Trust website.
- To publish on the academy website key information about the composition and remit of the Local Governing Body, including a list of governors, their record of attendance at meetings during the previous 12 months, and a register of their business interests.
- To ensure that Trust and academy policies are clearly communicated with staff and other stakeholders as appropriate. (Refer to Appendix 4 – ‘Trust Policy Schedule’).
- To have clear communication and engagement strategies to keep staff, parents and students informed about news, events and key developments.
- To seek the views of the parents and students on their education and learning environment and ensure that their ideas and feedback are always treated with respect and built into planning and development, e.g. regular circulation of questionnaires.
- To seek creative ways of making key messages relevant to the communities served by each academy.
- To follow the Trust Brand Guidelines (Appendix 5) when using the Trust logos etc in any communication or engagement activities.
- To ensure that academy letterheaded paper contains the Trust logo and registered address. It is suggested that this forms part of the footer.

## 10.2 Staff members’ responsibilities

- To ensure that the principles and procedures of this policy are followed in communicating with all internal and external stakeholders.
- To ensure that relevant academy policies, e.g. acceptable use, staff conduct etc, are adhered to at all times when communicating with stakeholders.
- To follow Trust Brand Guidelines when using the Trust logo etc in any communications.

## 10.3 Trustee/Governor responsibilities

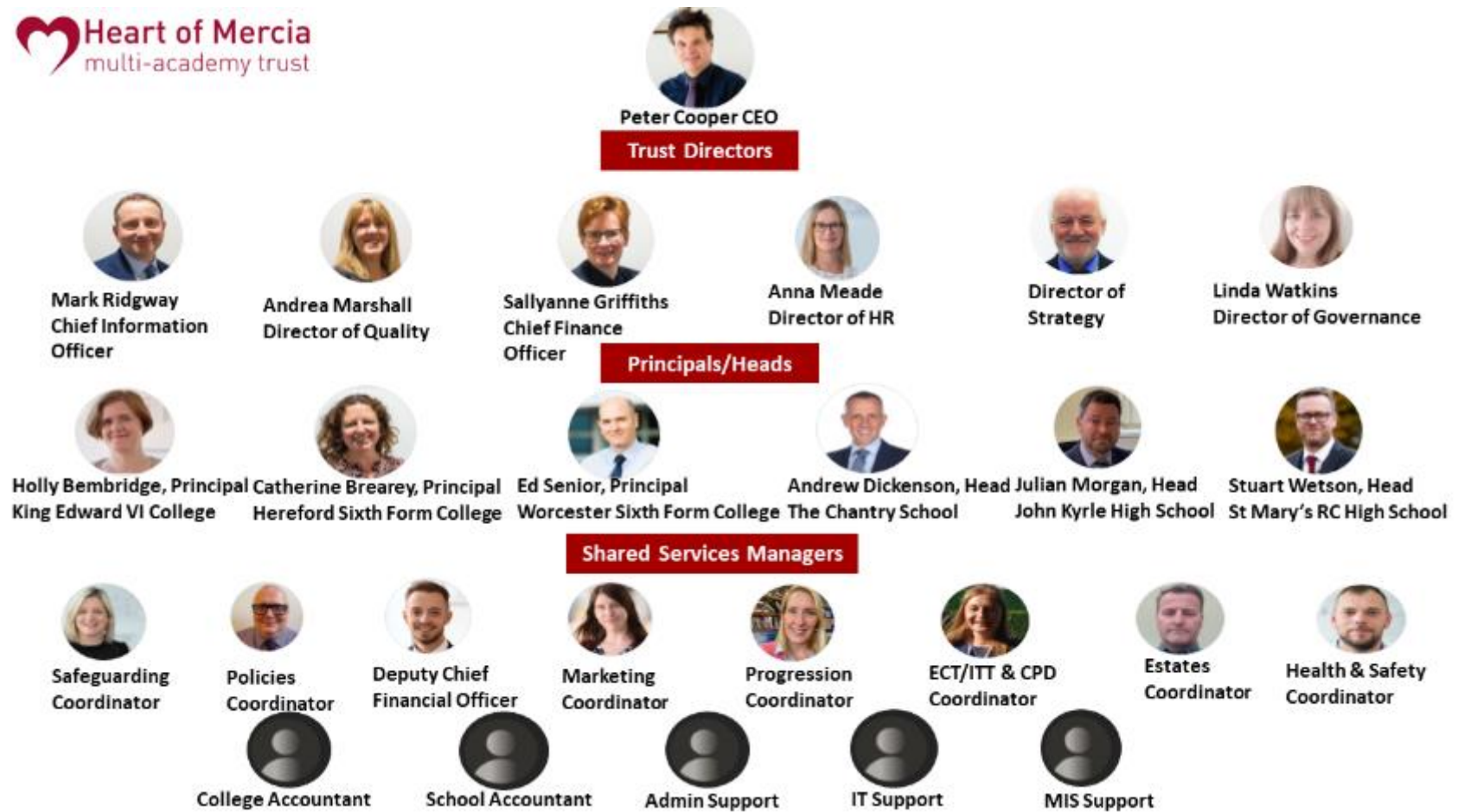
- To ensure that the principles and procedures of this policy are followed in communicating with all internal and external stakeholders.
- To ensure that relevant academy policies, e.g. acceptable use, conduct etc, are adhered to at all times when communicating with stakeholders.

# 11 Equality Impact

The Trust’s responsibilities towards promoting equality, diversity and inclusion have been considered when drafting this policy.

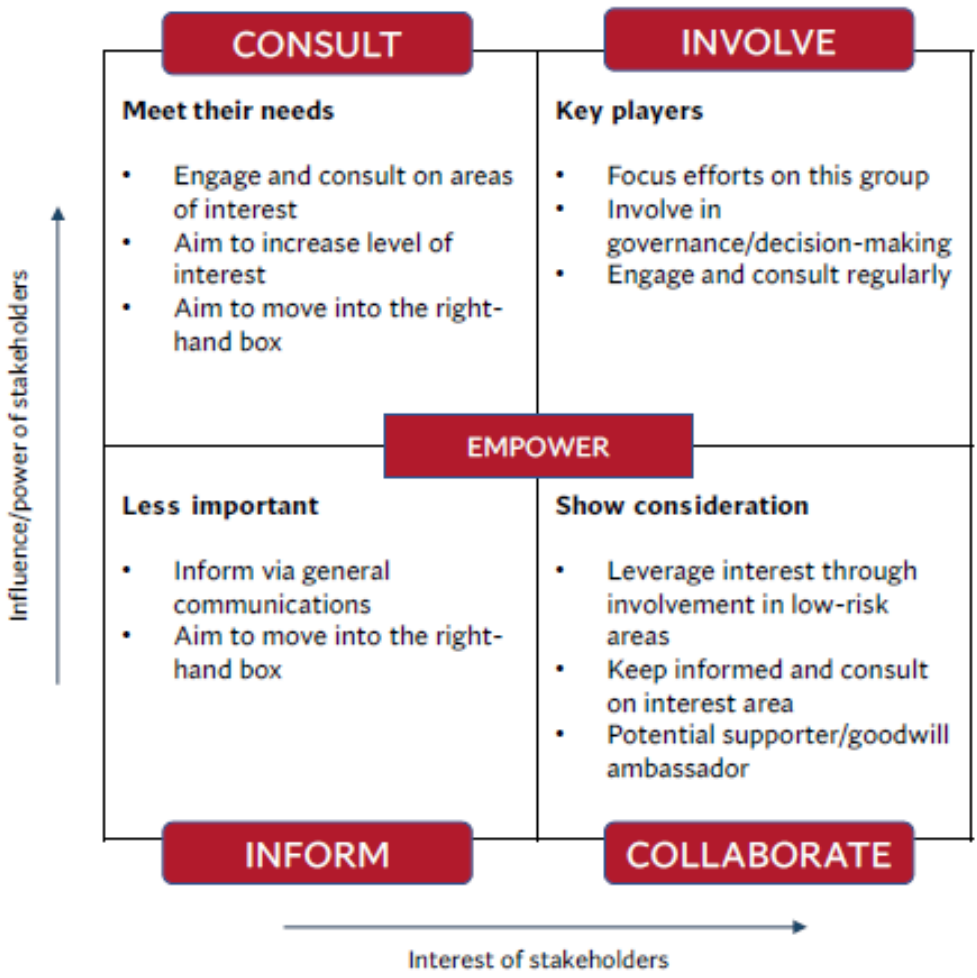
Date of review	Date agreed	LGBs	MAT Board	Review date	Comments
12/9/23	24/9/23		12/10/23	September 2024	

## Appendix 1



Appendix 2

# POWER/INTEREST MATRIX



## POWER/INTEREST MATRIX

The level of power/influence and interest which particular stakeholder groups have in the policies, services, or operation of the Trust will shape where they are located in the matrix.

It is also important to remember that although the matrix set out provides a framework to map the different stakeholder groups, even within the groups there can be different opinions on any given issue and shifting positions in terms of power and influence. As part of the Trust's Communication and Engagement strategy, we have developed a flexible approach and have capacity to engage in more long-term strategic positioning on certain policy issues to respond to ad hoc issues which arise, and to have an approach aimed at targeting information to particular groups.

### **1. Inform**

Information provisions – it can be proactive (dissemination) or responsive (responding to questions from stakeholders).

- Tools: emails, website, newsletters, presentation, press releases, etc.

### **2. Consult**

This level of engagement is used when the purpose is primarily to listen, gather information and garner feedback. It may also involve focused interaction with particular groups who have high levels of power/influence to have a better understanding of the issues which are important to the Trust and its academies. It can include responses which the Trust makes to external calls for consultation.

- Tools: key stakeholders interviews, Focus groups, surveys, public meetings/forums, and formal consultation responses.

### **3. Involve**

This level of engagement is used when two-way information exchange is required and where individuals and groups have an interest in the corporate/operating plan and are likely to be affected by the delivery of the objectives.

- Tools: one-on-one meetings, etc.

### **4. Collaborate**

Collaborative partnerships can range from loose affirmations through to establishing formal boards or committees.

- Tools: Partnership agreements, newsletters.

### **5. Empower**

This can be used when individuals and groups have accepted the challenge of being part of identifying the solutions themselves.

- Tools: Focus groups.



## Appendix 3

### Website Compliance

		Responsible Person
<b>College Contact Details</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name, postal address and telephone number</li> <li>Name of the member of staff who deals with queries from parents and other members of the public</li> <li>Name of Principal</li> <li>Name and address of Chair of the local governing body</li> <li>Name and details of SEN Co-ordinator</li> <li>Trust registered address and telephone number</li> </ul>		
<b>Admission Arrangements</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admissions arrangements of all mainstream academies and free schools must comply with the '<a href="#">School admissions code</a>' and the '<a href="#">School admissions appeals code</a>'</li> <li>Publish admissions arrangements</li> </ul>		
<b>Ofsted Reports</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish a copy of you're the academy's most recent Ofsted report</li> <li>Publish a link to the web-page where users can find your academy's most recent Ofsted report</li> </ul>		
<b>Exam and Assessment Results</b>		
<p>You <i>should</i> publish the following details from your school's most recent key stage 4 results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress 8 score</li> <li>Attainment 8 score</li> <li>Attainment in English and Maths – percentage achieving a grade 5 or above</li> <li>English Baccalaureate average point score</li> <li>Pupil destinations – percentage staying in education or employment after KS4</li> </ul>		

<p>You <i>should</i> publish the following details from your academy's most recent key stage 4 and/or 5 results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The progress your students have made compared with students across the country. (Shown separately for GCSE, A level, academic, applied general and tech level qualifications)</li> <li>• The average grade that students in your college get at KS4 and/or KS5 (shown separately for GCSE, A level, academic, applied general and tech level qualifications).</li> <li>• The progress students in the academy have made in English and maths</li> <li>• Retention (this is the proportion of students who get to the end of the main programme of study that they enrolled on at your institution) (Shown separately for GCSE, A level, academic, applied general and tech level qualifications)</li> <li>• Destinations (this is the percentage of students who continue in education or training, or move on to employment in the year after the end of key stage 4 and 5)</li> </ul>		
<b>Performance Tables</b>		
<p>You <u>must</u> include a link to the academy's performance tables and the academy's performance tables page.</p>		
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<p>The content of the curriculum the academy's follows in each academic year for every subject, including for mandatory subjects such as Religious Education even if it's taught as part of another subject or subjects or is called something else</p>		
<p>How parents or other member of the public can find out more about the curriculum the academy's is following</p>		
<p>A list of the course available to pupils at KS4 including GCSEs</p>		
<p>The 16 to 19 qualifications offered where applicable</p>		
<p>How the academy meets the 16 to 19 study programme requirements (where applicable)</p>		
<p>The academy's approach to the curriculum</p>		

(The approach to the curriculum should also include how the academy is complying with its duties in the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 about making the curriculum accessible for those with disabilities or special educational needs)		
<b>Behaviour Policy</b>		
The academy <i>should</i> publish details of its behaviour policy, including its anti-bullying strategy.		
<b>Pupil Premium</b>		
How much pupil premium funding you received for this academic year		
A summary of the main barriers to educational achievement that the disadvantaged children in your school face		
How you will spend your pupil premium funding to address these barriers and the reasons for the approach you have chosen		
How you will measure the effect of the pupil premium		
The date of the next pupil premium strategy review		
For the previous academic year how you spent your pupil premium		
For the previous academic year the effect of the expenditure on pupils		
<b>Year 7 Literacy and Numeracy Catch-Up Premium</b>		
Details of how you spent your allocation for the previous year		
How use of the allocation made a difference to the attainment of the pupils who benefitted from it		
<b>SEN and Disability Information</b>		
Special Education Needs (SEN) Report - The report must contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'SEN Information' specified in schedule 1 to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. (Statutory guidance on this is contained in section 6.79 to 6.82 of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years)</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils</li> <li>• The steps the academy has taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils</li> <li>• The facilities the academy provides to help disabled pupils to access the school</li> </ul>		
<p>Information as to the plan prepared by the local governing body or proprietor under paragraph 3 of schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the academy's curriculum</li> <li>• Improving the physical environment of the academy for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities and services provided or offered by the academy</li> <li>• Improving delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled</li> </ul>		
<b>Governors' Information and Duties</b>		
<p>The structure and remit of the members, board of trustees, its committees and local governing bodies, and the full names of the chair of each</p>		
<p>For each local governor who has served at any point over the past 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• full names, date of appointment, term of office, date they stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them, and relevant business and pecuniary interests including governance roles in other educational institutions, their attendance record at governing body and committee meetings over the last academic year</li> </ul>		
<b>Charging and Remission Policies</b>		
<p>The activities or cases for which the academy will charge pupils' parents</p>		
<p>The circumstances where the academy will make an exception on a payment you would normally expect to receive under your charging policy.</p>		

<b>Values and Ethos</b>		
Publish a statement of the academy's ethos and values		
<b>Request for copies</b>		
If a parent requests a paper copy of the information on the academy's website, you must provide this free of charge		
<b>Equality Objectives</b>		
Publish details of how the academy is complying with the public sector equality duty - you should update this every year		
Publish the academy's equality objectives - you should update this at least once every 4 years		
<p>You need to include details of how the academy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating discrimination (see the Equalities Act 2010)</li> <li>• Advancing equality of opportunity – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</li> <li>• Consulting and involving those affected by in-quality in the decisions your school or college takes to promote equality and eliminate discrimination (affected people could include parents, pupils, staff and members of the local community)</li> <li>• Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 organisations are required to publish information on its website about the gender pay gap in the academy</li> </ul>		
<b>Complaints</b>		
All academies should publish their complaints policy online		
Publish the Trust whistleblowing policy		
Publish any arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with special educational needs (SEN) about the support the academy provides.		
<b>Exclusion Arrangements</b>		
Publish details of the academy's policy for excluding pupils.		
<b>Annual Accounts</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Report</li> <li>• Annual audited accounts</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorandum of association</li> <li>• Articles of Association</li> <li>• Names of charity trustees and members</li> <li>• Funding agreement</li> </ul>		
<b>Careers</b>		
The name, email address and telephone number of the academy's Careers Leader		
A summary of the careers programme, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers may access information about the careers programme. In a way that enables pupils, parents, teachers and employers to access and understand it		
How the academy measures and assesses the impact of the careers programme on pupils		
The date of the academy's next review of the information published		
<p>Academies should review their arrangements for provider access and must set out those arrangements in a policy statement. The academy may revise the policy statement from time to time and we recommend that this is done annually. The policy statement must be published and should be made available on the academy website. The purpose of the statement is to set out opportunities for providers to visit and to explain how requests from providers will be handled. The policy statement must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any procedural requirements in relation to requests for access e.g. the main point of contact at the academy to whom requests should be directed;</li> <li>• Grounds for granting and refusing requests for access e.g. details of timetabled careers lessons, assemblies or careers events which providers may attend; and should include the safeguarding policy;</li> <li>• Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access e.g. rooms and resources to be made available in support of a provider visit.</li> </ul>		
<b>Financial Information</b>		
How many employees (if any) have a gross annual salary of £100,000 or more in increments of £10,000 - we recommend using a table to display this		

Link to webpage which is dedicated to the academy on the schools financial benchmarking service		
<b>Safeguarding</b>		
Include suitable safeguarding. The Safeguarding/child protection policy should describe procedures which are in accordance with government guidance and refer to locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the three safeguarding partners.		
Individual academies should ensure they have an effective Safeguarding/child protection policy. This should be updated annually (as a minimum), and be available publicly either via the academy website or by other means		
<b>COVID Catch-up premium</b>		
How it is intended that the grant will be spent		
How the effect of this expenditure on the educational attainment of those pupils at the academy will be assessed		
<b>Remote Education</b>		
Publish information about the academy's remote education provision on the website.		

## Appendix 4

### Policy Review Schedule

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Review Due</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>
Anti-Bullying and Harassment	March 2023	March 2024	Policy Co-ordinator/HR Director
Anti-Fraud Policy and Procedures	August 2022	August 2023	CEO/Policy Co-ordinator
Communication and Engagement Strategy	September 2022	September 2023	Marketing Co-ordinator
Complaints Policy	September 2022	September 2023	Policy Co-ordinator
Data Protection	September 2022	September 2023	DPO
Data Retention	September 2022	September 2023	DPO
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	June 2023	June 2024	CEO/Policy Co-ordinator
Financial Regulations	December 2021	September 2023	CFO
Freedom of Information and Publication Scheme	March 2023	March 2024	DPO/Policy Co-ordinator
Gender Pay Reporting	April 2022	April 2023	CFO
Governance Procedures		September 2023	Clerk to the Trust
Health and Safety	June 2023	June 2024	Health and Safety Co-ordinator/ Policy Co-ordinator
Information Security	June 2023	June 2024	Information Security Officer
Managing Allegations	November 2022	November 2023	CEO/Safeguarding Co-ordinator
Pay Policy and Procedures	November 2022	November 2023	CEO/Policy Co-ordinator



Recruitment & Selection	June 2023	June 2024	HR Director
Redundancy	June 2023	June 2024	HR Director
Safeguarding	November 2022	November 2023	Safeguarding Co-ordinator
Safeguarding Supervision	March 2023	March 2024	Safeguarding Co-ordinator
SPH Disciplinary	March 2023	March 2024	Policy Co-ordinator
SPH Grievance	November 2022	November 2023	Policy Co-ordinator
Staff Code of Conduct	November 2022	November 2023	Policy Co-ordinator
Staff Disciplinary	November 2022	November 2023	Policy Co-ordinator
Staff Grievance	November 2022	November 2023	Policy Co-ordinator
Support and Capability	June 2023	March 2024	HR Director/ Policy Co-ordinator
Whistleblowing	October 2021	October 2023	Policy Co-ordinator

## Appendix 5

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### *Branding Guidelines*

#### **1 Introduction**

Our brand represents the Heart of Mercia Multi-Academy Trust, so it is essential that there are no inconsistencies in how the Trust is visually represented ourselves in communications and engagements with all stakeholders.

#### **2 Principles**

- 2.1** All content for Trust promotional materials to be used in the public domain must be approved by the Trust's Marketing Co-ordinator (jo.payne@wsfc.ac.uk).
- 2.2** When using the Trust's logo in academy documentation, communications or on the website, do not:
  - Stretch graphics so they are distorted from their original sizing
  - Send anything out pixelated/fuzzy
- 2.3** Academy letterhead should include reference to the Trust's registered address, preferably including the Trust logo. A footer graphic can be provided on request.
- 2.4** The standard PowerPoint document should always be used for HOM presentations and can be provided by the Trust's Marketing Co-ordinator.

#### **3 Guidelines**

- 2.1** Information about the Trust's colour palette, typeface and logo assets can be found on the following pages of this guide.

## Colour palette

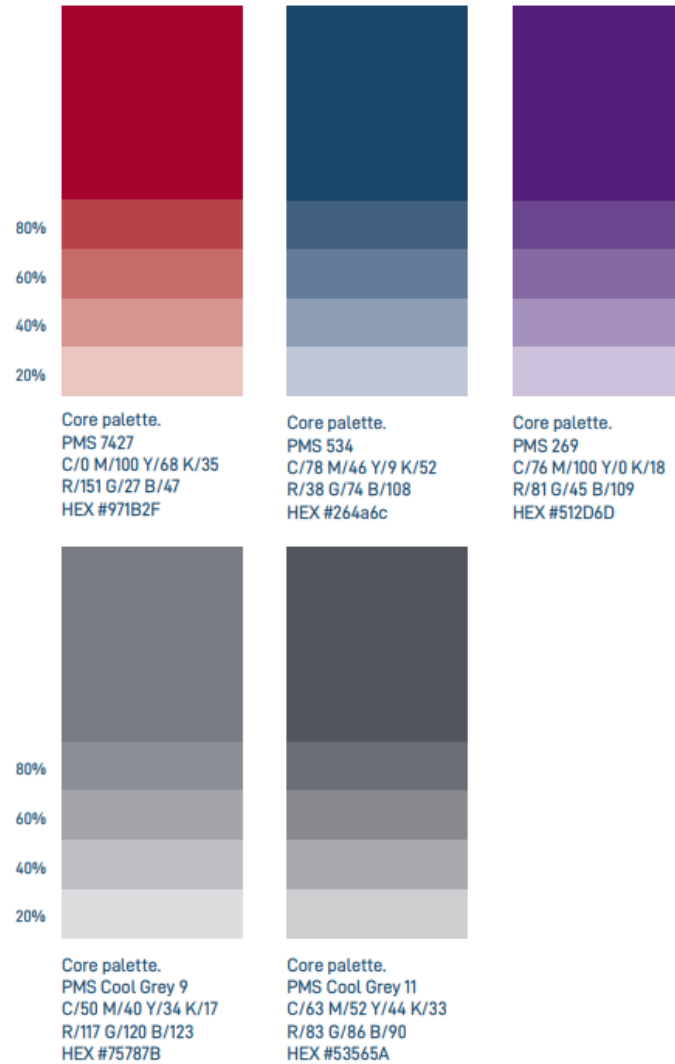
The brand colour palette is shown here, claret, navy, purple and grey.

The consistent and appropriate use of these colours will help to reinforce the Heart of Mercia brand.

Percentage tints can be used of any of these colours.

Colours can look different when used on screen so for digital use each colour is presented with web-safe hexadecimal values.

The colours were selected to bring partnership between all the colleges within the trust, but work together as a palette for the creation of corporate communications as and when required.



## Typeface

Headline and body copy should be presented in the typeface D-DIN which has eight weights, which can be used to add variation to typesetting.

D-DIN Pro is a well balanced sans serif typeface with open rounded letter forms and angled features to help communicate a clean, confident and contemporary brand style.

The typeface can be downloaded for free here:  
<https://fontesk.com/d-din-pro-typeface/>

For instances where this typeface can't be used such as internally produced Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint documents, please use Arial as a substitute.

**D-DIN Pro - bold**  
abcdefghijklmnop  
opqrstuvwxyz  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

D-DIN Pro - medium  
abcdefghijklmnop  
opqrstuvwxyz  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

**D-DIN Pro - heavy**  
abcdefghijklmnop  
opqrstuvwxyz  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

D-DIN Pro - regular  
abcdefghijklmnop  
opqrstuvwxyz  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

**D-DIN Pro - semi bold**  
abcdefghijklmnop  
opqrstuvwxyz  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

**D-DIN Pro - extra bold**  
abcdefghijklmnop  
opqrstuvwxyz  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMN  
OPQRSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

**Logo type**

Shown are the colourways to the logo types.

There is a colour, black and white versions in a variety of formats

.eps  
.ai  
.jpg  
.png



