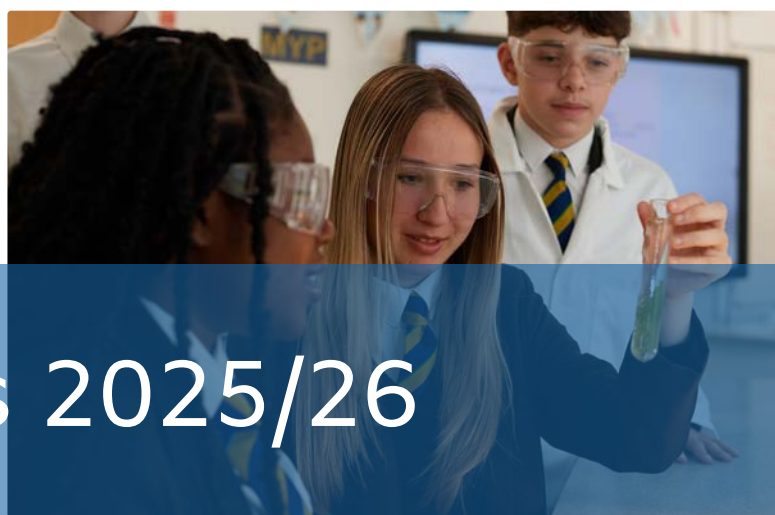




LEIGH

Academies Trust



Prospectus 2025/26

Education for a better world



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Welcome



Education for a better world

Welcome to our Trust Prospectus for 2025/26. Please take time to browse through it, as it will give you a sense of what Leigh Academies Trust does. We are already one of the country's most successful multi-academy trusts. We are incredibly proud of our achievements – we hope you will see why.

We are developing 'clusters' of academies along the South Thames Corridor, an area of significant industrial and residential development in the South-East of England. All of our current academies can be accessed within a one-hour drive of one another. Geography is important to ensure strong collaboration. So too is our continuous planned and measured approach to further growth.

Our clusters contain all phases of education, from nursery to post-16, to apprenticeships. Each has a passionate commitment to inclusion. For example, Leigh Academy Milestone, in our Central Cluster, is one of the region's largest special schools. Across many of our mainstream academies, both primary and secondary, we have designated centres for children with special educational needs.

Our academies are like siblings, not clones. We believe that innovation, creativity and empowerment are vital. These qualities cannot thrive in an environment where everyone is forced to do the same thing. However, like all siblings, our academies share certain core values and ways of operating. Through this prospectus you can learn more about the things our academies share in common.

More than anything, we are about shaping children's lives for the better through high-quality education and care. In doing so, we aim to make the world a better place so that the life chances of future generations are enhanced by a strong legacy handed down from those who have gone before them.

If you are interested to find out more about us, please do get in contact. Whether you are a current or prospective parent of a child in one of our academies, an employer keen to forge links with schools, a member of the community interested in becoming a governor, a potential employee or an educational establishment interested in partnership with an already-successful multi-academy trust, we would like to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Beamish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Simon Beamish
Chief Executive

Vision 2030

Our Values

We care -

about our pupils and their families through our human scale approach to education, our staff and their well-being and the world around us, driven by our high ideals and strong moral values.

We have boundless ambition -

to achieve excellence for all and create confident young adults with high levels of resilience and integrity.

We work together -

as one team because we are greater than the sum of our parts. We foster an enterprising culture through global collaboration with partners in business and education.

We keep getting better -

using our 'can-do' attitude and research informed approach to continuous improvement and innovation.

Our Mission

Education for a better world

1

Excellent teaching so that young people achieve their ambitions.

2

Outstanding leadership to drive improvement in our own academies and across the sector.

3

An exceptional **IB curriculum**.

4

A world class **digital strategy** for education.

5

A highly **developed and engaged workforce** who make a difference.

6

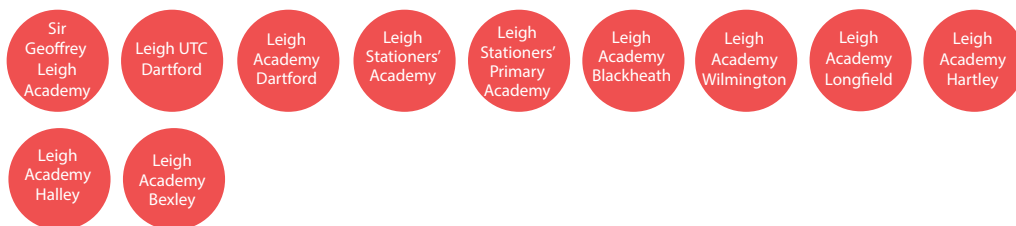
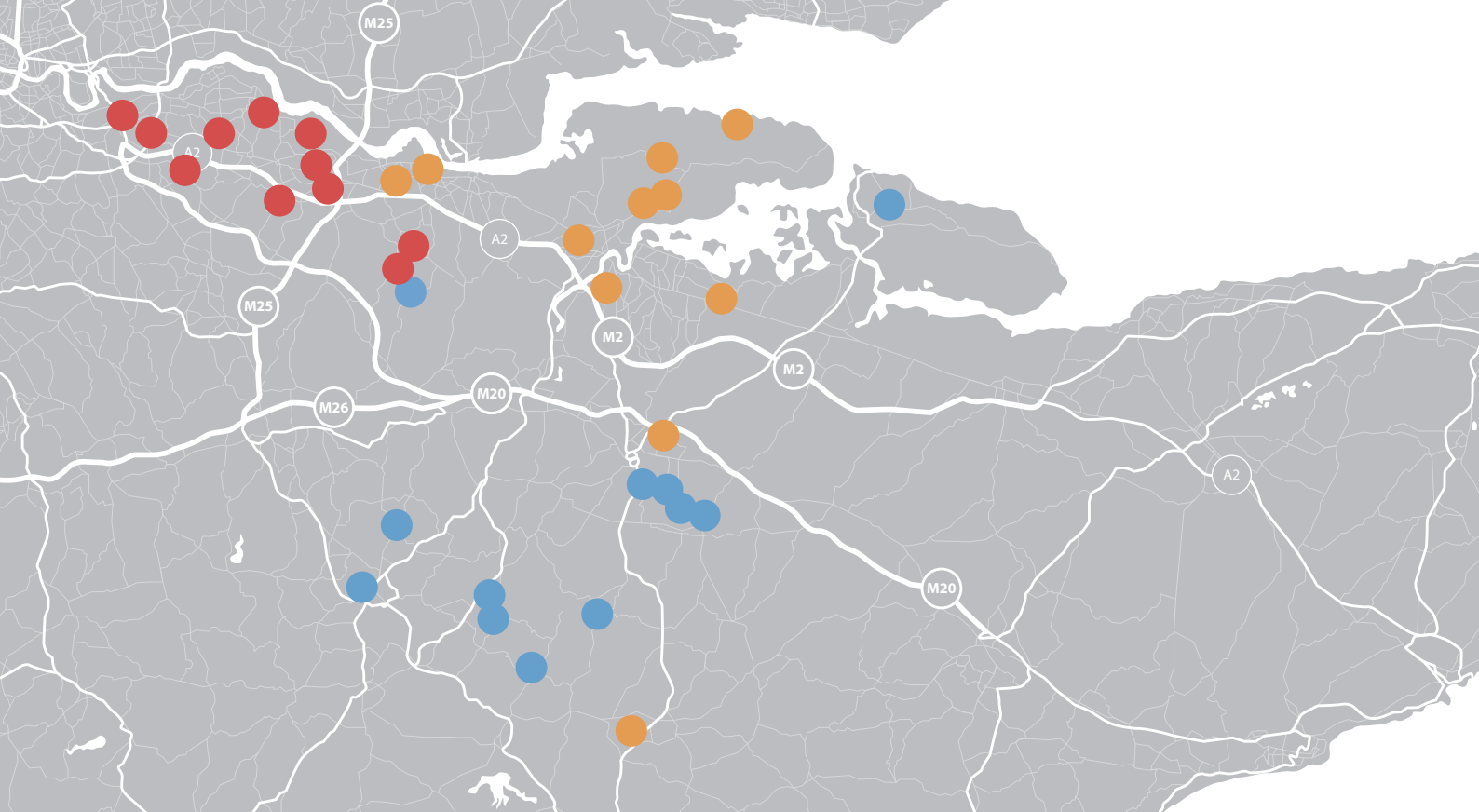
A **small school model** of education that delivers high quality pastoral care.

7

Disruption-free learning and a wide personal development programme.

8

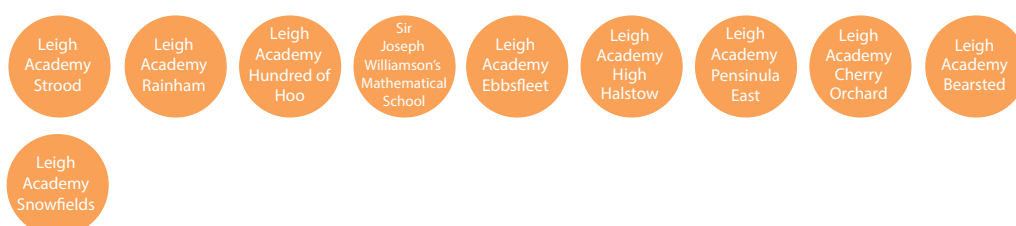
Targeted support for those who need it so that they too can succeed.



LAT West



LAT Central



LAT North

Our academies

All of our current academies can be accessed within a one-hour drive of one another. We want to keep it this way by developing self-improving 'clusters' of academies across the south-east.

The first cluster was in North Kent, centred around Dartford. The other two existing clusters are in Central Kent (between Maidstone and Tonbridge) and Medway.



A history of the Trust

The Trust was formed in 2008, when The Leigh Technology Academy and Longfield Academy were linked under one governing body. It currently encompasses more than 20,000 students, between the ages of 2 months and 19 years, in 33 primary, secondary and special academies.

The Trust has chosen to remain local and to grow in a measured way across neighbouring boroughs and county boundaries. We believe that managerial freedom for effective leaders produces innovation and creativity. We offer our best leaders the chance to improve the lives of even more children, or what we call 'earned opportunity'.

When this project is at maturity, each cluster will include around ten schools, serving approximately 6,000 students from ages 2-19, all with a highly-inclusive approach to education. They will be strong and confident groupings with their own identities, but which subscribe to the core values and distinctive features of the Trust. Each cluster has its own Academies Director and team of Principals who report to the Chief Executive.

- 2007/08**
 - LAT is Inaugurated, Frank Green, CEO
 - University of Greenwich (sponsor)
- 2008/09**
 - The Leigh Technology Academy opens its brand-new building
 - Longfield Academy joins LAT
 - University of Kent (sponsor)
- 2010/11**
 - Wilmington Academy joins LAT
 - Longfield Academy moves into brand- new building
- 2011/12**
 - Longfield Academy wins national academy awards
 - Milestone Academy joins LAT
 - York Road Junior Academy joins LAT
 - First Trust conference
- 2012/13**
 - Hartley Primary Academy joins LAT
 - LAT Enterprise company initiated
- 2013/14**
 - Simon Beamish appointed CEO
 - LAT signs agreement with The Stationers' Company to sponsor a South-East London secondary academy
 - Wilmington Academy opens new building
- 2014/15**
 - Stationers' Crown Woods Academy joins LAT, the first in the South-East London cluster of academies
 - The Leigh UTC opens in a brand-new building, specialising in engineering and computing
 - Molehill, Tree Tops and Oaks Primary Academies join the Trust
 - St Albans Infant School merges with York Road Junior School to become Dartford Primary Academy
 - First secondary sports day
- 2015/16**
 - Mascalls Academy joins LAT
 - Eastcote Primary Academy joins LAT
 - Hartley Primary Academy designated National Support School
- 2016/17**
 - Strood Academy joins LAT
 - LAT opens Langley Park Primary Academy
 - First primary sports day
 - First staff LAT Awards ceremony

- 2017/18**
 - LAT opens Cherry Orchard Primary Academy (1st new school, Ebbsfleet Garden City)
 - The Halley Academy joins LAT
 - Inspiration Academy opens as the UK's first KS3 UTC annex
 - LAT Careers Service launched
- 2018/19**
 - LAT opens Leigh Academy Blackheath
 - Roundash Nursery joins LAT, merging with Hartley Primary Academy
 - The Williamson Trust, comprising Sir Joseph Williamson Mathematical School, The Hundred of Hoo Academy, High Halstow Primary Academy, Stoke Primary Academy and Allhallows Primary Academy, merges with LAT
 - The Hundred of Hoo Nursery and Kids Club join LAT
 - IB Primary Years Programme introduced into all primary academies
 - IB Middle Years Programme introduced into secondary academies
- 2019/20**
 - Paddock Wood Primary Academy and Horsmonden Primary Academy join LAT
 - LAT receives accreditation to deliver apprenticeships
 - The Leigh UTC is nominated to undertake national pilot of 'T' Levels
 - Milestone Academy rated as 'Outstanding' for the third time by Ofsted
- 2020/21**
 - Bearsted Primary Academy and Snowfields Academy, two new free schools, open
 - Marden Primary Academy joins LAT
- 2021/22**
 - LAT opens Leigh Academy Rainham
 - Ebbsfleet, Hayesbrook and High Weald Academies join LAT
- 2022/23**
 - Leigh Academy Bexley joins LAT
 - Leigh Academy Tonbridge opens as a new co-ed secondary
 - Snowfields Academy at Cranbrook opens
- 2023/24**
 - Leigh Academy Hugh Christie joins LAT
 - LAT agrees to open Leigh Academy Minster from September 2024
 - Creation of The Leigh Institute
- 2024/25**
 - A year of consolidation



Our Education

Primary

The Trust is strongly committed to primary education. A successful primary education generally leads to a successful life afterwards. If things go wrong in primary school, some children never recover.

Within every primary academy the curriculum is shaped through the IB Primary Years Programme (IBPYP). Through this, each pupil is encouraged to develop a love of learning and excel in core literacy and numeracy skills.

Our aim is for all our primaries to be linked to a nearby secondary academy. Strong collaboration is encouraged from the outset to provide additional opportunities for staff and students. These links help to break down the artificial divide between the primary and secondary phases, so that students' transition is as smooth as possible. Our secondary academies often allow preferential access under their admissions arrangements for students attending our primary academies.

Our governing bodies are also linked. Whilst primary academies all have their own governors, they are governed by a Community Board, which brings together primary and secondary governors around one table. This enables governors to understand the process of education from age 2 through to 19 and is a powerful driver of collaboration between phases.

Wherever possible, our primary academies have their own nurseries. Currently, the Trust has 13 nurseries in total. This helps us to get children's development off to a successful start from the moment they enter formal education.



Secondary

The Trust has 18 secondary academies, one of which is a University Technical College (UTC) and another is an all-through academy. Most of its schools have benefitted from significant rebuilding programmes over the last decade and enjoy splendid, new, state-of-the-art facilities for learning. Each academy is organised around a 'human-scale' education model, in environments that are technology-rich, flexible and welcoming. Academy staff take a business-like, yet caring, approach to achieve successful outcomes for young people.

Our secondary academies have adopted the IB Middle Years Programme (IBMYP) which we believe allows an exciting and innovative KS3 curriculum to be implemented. This builds on work in primary academies and creates a firm foundation for KS4 and beyond.

We believe in fostering entrepreneurship in our students. That is why we have developed initiatives to link our schools firmly into the world of work. Our secondary-age students enjoy a business-mentoring scheme and work placements and we now run advanced apprenticeship qualifications and T-Levels.

We have enjoyed much academic success at secondary level. Despite the fact that most of our secondaries are high schools which operate in selective areas, our results are above national averages. This is in no small part due to the hard work and dedication of our talented team of well-trained staff. Our students leave school well qualified, ready to take their next steps into work, training or further study.



Special

The Trust is committed to inclusion and to creating opportunities for all students, regardless of their circumstances. In fact, one of our core values is to remove barriers to success, whatever they might be.

Our Education

The Trust is passionate about special education and has considerable experience through its special academies and diverse range of designated specialist provisions. All academies ensure that expertise and opportunities are shared for the benefit of pupils. This enables each to be equipped for the next steps in their learning so that they may contribute to life in modern Britain.

Leigh Academy Milestone, with nearly 400 pupils from ages 2-19, is one of the largest special schools in the region. Educating pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, it prides itself in its personalised approach as the key for each pupil's development. Leigh Academy Milestone has four satellite provisions; it has been rated as Outstanding by Ofsted on three consecutive occasions.

Leigh Academy Snowfields, opened in September 2020, is for secondary age pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. It is located over three campuses in Bearsted, Cranbrook and Minster. Snowfields was judged Outstanding by Ofsted in June 2023.


Both academies benefit hugely from interaction with the Trust's mainstream academies. They give much in return through highly-talented staff teams.

Leigh Academies Trust also has designated special provisions within existing mainstream academies for students with Education and Health Care Plans. The Trust therefore has considerable expertise in special educational needs, including speech, communication and language needs; hearing impairment; autistic-spectrum disorders; visual impairment; and moderate learning difficulties.



‘Leaders and staff have the highest ambitions for what pupils can achieve. The content pupils learn is considered carefully and organised meticulously. Teachers are highly skilled in delivering their subjects.’

Leigh Academy Snowfields Ofsted, June 2023



‘Trainees choose KMT because of its commitment to ensuring that trainees emerge fully prepared for the profession and equipped to continue to develop and thrive.’

KMT, Ofsted May 2022



Professional learning and development opportunities

Training with LAT

We are committed to high-quality training for all teachers, from the very start of their careers, across every step of their professional journey. The Leigh Institute ties together the world-class training we provide through our four partner organisations, all of which are led by LAT. Kent and Medway Training, Thames Gateway TSH, the Kent and Medway Maths Hub and ConnectED Hub Apprenticeships each bring their own contribution to The Leigh Institute’s comprehensive offer.

KMT is an established school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provider of 30 years. LAT is the single legal entity for KMT, which works with a large consortium of secondary, primary and SEN schools within Kent, Medway and South-East London. LAT has played an integral role in the rapid and sustained growth of KMT. It consistently outperforms the national trends for training the future generation of teachers.

In the current year KMT will be training in excess of 220 new teachers across primary, secondary and special phases, and working with ConnectED Hub Apprenticeships to continue to offer the teacher apprenticeship.

KMT trainee teachers are highly qualified, dedicated, enthusiastic, creative, resilient and motivated to succeed and make a difference.

LAT academies benefit greatly from the routes into teaching offered by KMT, whose aim is to recruit, train, employ and retain outstanding teachers for partnership schools and the surrounding area.

KMT is committed to not only training outstanding teachers, but retaining them in the profession. Many of them choose to start their careers in LAT academies.

The Thames Gateway TSH is one of the DfE’s 87 Teaching School Hubs. These have a mandate to provide high-quality professional development to teachers at all stages of their careers.

The Thames Gateway TSH supports new teachers through delivery of Appropriate Body services and the Early Career Teacher, ECF Full Induction Programme. We deliver the full suite of National Professional Qualifications to all colleagues at all stages in their career, and work in partnership with several other organisations to ensure that excellent professional development is available for all. Our ambition is to provide excellent professional development opportunities to support educators as they shape the lives of every child in our region.

The Kent and Medway Maths Hub, also led by LAT, is a designated Maths Hub, working across the entire Kent and Medway region. Our core purpose is to help MATs and schools to lead improvement in maths education. We work by bringing together mathematical education professionals through collaborative networks, to ensure that best practice is developed and shared, supporting the maths education of all learners.

Overarching this delivery, The Leigh Institute ensures a comprehensive offer of training and development, putting quality and collaboration at the heart of our array of training opportunities.



ConnectED Hub Apprenticeships continue to go from strength to strength, building on its strong 'Good' Ofsted outcome in 2023.

ConnectED Hub Apprenticeships specialises in offering apprenticeships for education settings, delivering our flagship L3 Teaching Assistant qualification and L6 Teacher standard. Our L3 Business Administrator offers support for colleagues within and outside education.

These programmes provide an excellent entry route into paid employment and are made possible by the excellent links the Trust has with businesses that are local to its academies. With the introduction of our educationally-focused offer, ConnectED Hub Apprenticeships is heading towards significant future growth with a focus of delivering quality apprenticeships that help bridge the current skills gap, and serve colleagues across the educational landscape.

For more information and details of the apprenticeships currently offered, please contact info@connectedhub.co.uk.

'Leaders have a strong commitment to apprenticeships as a gateway into fulfilling successful careers.

They work closely with employers to understand local and regional skills needs well, and they plan a curriculum that provides apprentices with substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours.'

ConnectED Apprenticeships (formerly LAT Apprenticeships) Ofsted, May 2023

LAT Enterprises is a community interest company which exists to generate income for the benefit of the young people within our care. Through its strategic partnership with Vivify venues, LAT Enterprises is able to offer for hire by community groups, corporate clients and other external users a variety of venues including lecture theatres, theatrical spaces, meeting spaces, halls, swimming pools, sports halls, classrooms, fields, floodlit artificial playing surfaces, tennis courts and much more.

Each building is unique, offering different opportunities and our services range from simple space hirings for meetings or sports to fully-serviced events.



The company operates across each academy within Leigh Academies Trust under the direction of the Estates Director.

To find out more about LAT Enterprises, see our 'Further Information' page towards the back of this prospectus.

Opportunities for our staff

It is quite normal for staff to be promoted between our academies as they develop their careers and take on new challenges.

Through the year the Trust offers a wide range of development opportunities, particularly each Wednesday afternoon. This utilises the considerable knowledge and experience from a wide range of settings to enhance individual, team and academy practice. The Trust also offers apprenticeship opportunities across a range of areas.

In recent years, LAT has developed training to enhance digital engagement with every academy through a range of Google accreditations. To support high quality professional and personal development, all LAT academies have access to Thrive, our learning experience platform as well as access to external content producers such as The National College, TES Develop and The Chartered College of Teaching.

Leigh Academies Trust has its own pay scales for teachers and support staff, which are more beneficial than national scales with a simple approach to annual progression. Activity and development allowances enable academy leaders to recognise the best teachers and to provide enhanced responsibilities and salaries.

‘School leaders are highly ambitious for pupils’ education. The Principal is inspiring, passionate and determined.’

Leigh Academy Wilmington Ofsted, May 2023

Leaders

The Trust holds Principal and Senior Leadership Forums six times per year, bringing together all key leaders from across the Trust to share best practice, address challenges and contribute to Trust development.

Delivered through the Thames Gateway TSH, the full range of National Professional Qualifications are offered. These opportunities are enhanced by further Trust development opportunities for aspiring leaders, new principals and governors. In every case leaders are encouraged to collaborate strongly across our academies, with regular opportunities to meet and share good ideas with like minded colleagues.

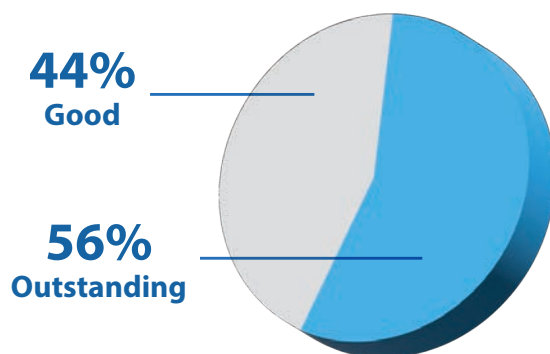
We are fortunate to have a large number of highly-talented staff and work hard to create opportunities for career progression within and across our academies. Retention rates amongst leaders are very high, typically above 95% annually.

‘Pupils know the school’s values. These permeate everything they do. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other’s differences.’







Leigh Academy Blackheath Ofsted, December 2022

Ofsted ratings

We are proud to state that 100% of academies inspected as part of LAT are "Good" or better. Below is a breakdown of each academy and its individual Ofsted ratings across all categories.



Primary academies

							
	Last inspected	Quality of Education	Behaviour & Attitudes	Leadership & Management	Personal Development	Early Years	Overall Evaluation
Leigh Academy Dartford	July 2025	1	1	1	1	1	
Leigh Academy Hartley	Nov 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Stationers' Primary Academy	Nov 2024	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Academy High Halstow	Sep 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Academy Hundred of Hoo	May 2024	Converted to graded inspection for probable Outstanding					
Leigh Academy Peninsula East	Jun 2024	2	1	1	1	1	2
Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard	Dec 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Academy Oaks	Nov 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Academy Molehill	Jan 2025	1	1	1	1	1	
Leigh Academy Tree Tops	Dec 2024	Converted to graded inspection for probable Outstanding					
Leigh Academy Langley Park	May 2025	Converted to graded inspection for probable Outstanding					
Leigh Academy Marden	Jan 2024	2	1	1	1	2	2
Leigh Academy Horsmonden	Nov 2023	2	2	1	1	2	2
Leigh Academy Paddock Wood	Dec 2023	2	1	2	1	2	2
Leigh Academy Bearsted	Mar 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1

Special academies

								
	Last inspected	Quality of Education	Behaviour & Attitudes	Leadership & Management	Personal Development	Early Years	Sixth Form	Overall Evaluation
Leigh Academy Milestone	Jul 2025	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Academy Snowfields	Sep 2023	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	1

Secondary academies



	Last inspected	Quality of Education	Behaviour & Attitudes	Leadership & Management	Personal Development	Sixth Form	Overall Evaluation
Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy	Jun 2023	2	2	2	2	2	2
Leigh Academy Longfield	Sep 2023	2	2	2	2	1	2
Leigh Academy Wilmington	Jun 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh UTC Dartford	May 2022	2	2	2	2	1	2
Leigh Stationers' Academy	Mar 2023	2	2	2	2	2	2
Leigh Academy Blackheath	Feb 2023	1	1	1	1	N/A	1
Leigh Academy Halley	Aug 2022	2	2	1	1	1	2
Leigh Academy Mascalls	Jan 2022	2	2	2	2	2	2
Leigh Academy Ebbsfleet	Jan 2025	Converted to graded inspection for probable Outstanding					
Leigh Academy Tonbridge	Jan 2023	2	1	2	2	2	2
Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School	May 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1
Leigh Academy Hundred of Hoo	May 2024	Converted to graded inspection for probable Outstanding					
Leigh Academy Strood	Jan 2022	2	2	2	2	2	2
Leigh Academy Rainham	Apr 2024	2	1	1	1	N/A	2
Leigh Academy Hugh Christie	Not yet inspected as part of Leigh Academies Trust						
Leigh Academy Bexley	Not yet inspected as part of Leigh Academies Trust						
Leigh Academy Minster	Not yet inspected as part of Leigh Academies Trust						

Other

KMT	GOOD
ConnectED Apprenticeships	GOOD



Governance

High-quality governance is central to the success of LAT. Governors at all levels work in partnership, as critical friends with Trust and academy leaders, continuously enhancing the standards of achievement, progress and welfare provision for all pupils.

Our governors are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, bringing with them a diverse set of skills and knowledge that enriches and strengthens the work of each governance team.

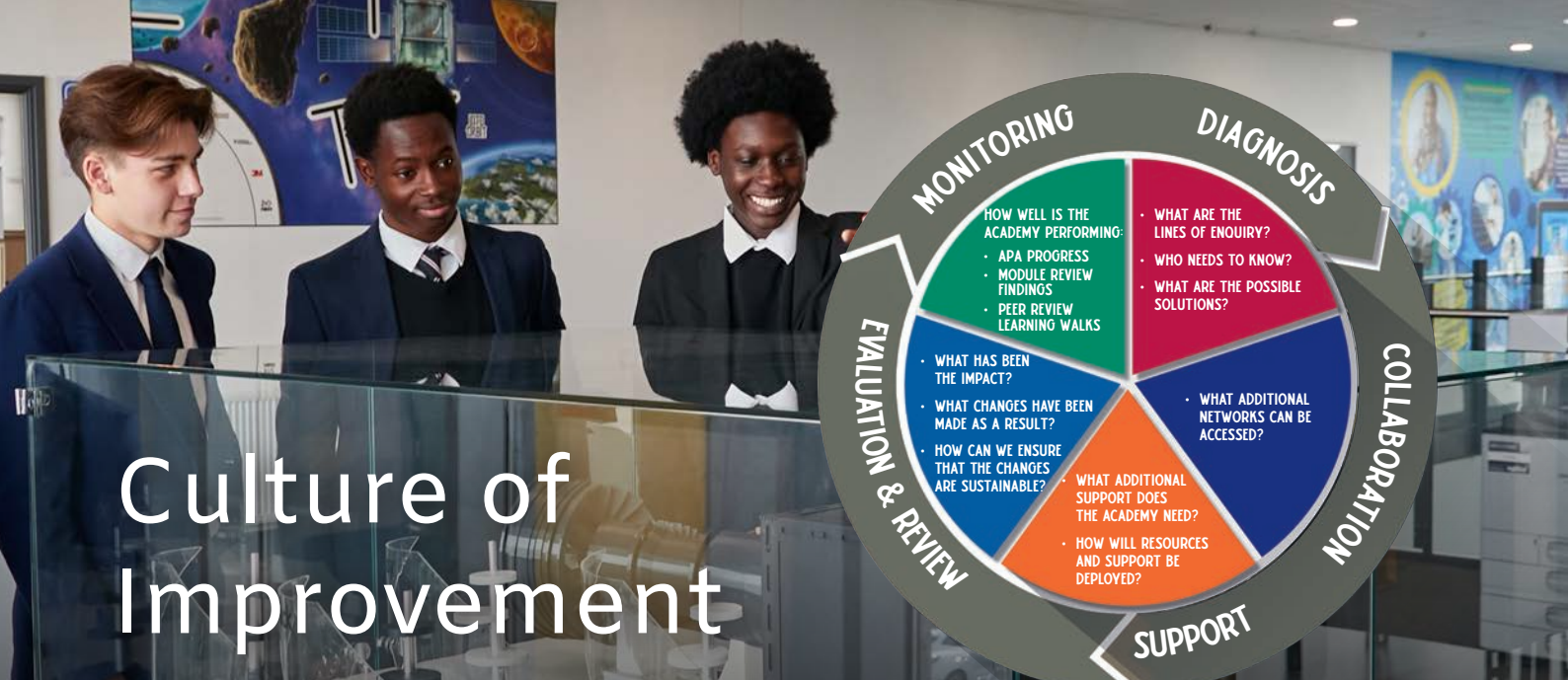
Each new governor is provided with an induction to ensure they are equipped to contribute fully to their board. Information, training and support is provided throughout the year so that every governor is aware of the latest initiatives, policy and news.

The Trust Board considers the vision of the Trust, as well as strategy and policy, enabling it to deliver its key objectives. Trust Committees ensure a close link between the Board's work and that of the academies. This has also been enhanced by designated Directors providing Trust Board oversight of specific clusters of academies, as well as central Trust services.

Community Boards meet three times per year and are responsible for the day-to-day governance of academies. Where appropriate, this may cover two or more academies to ensure that the Trust's vision for seamless 'all-through' education is realised.

We encourage our governors to become involved in the wider life of the academies and to challenge and support them to reach new heights. In their role governors take responsibility for monitoring a key aspect of the work of the academy such as safeguarding, SEND and academic progress, visiting their academies between meetings.

If you are interested in becoming a governor at LAT, please see our 'Further Information' page towards the back of this prospectus.



Culture of Improvement

All Trust academies enjoy high-quality support in a range of educational and 'back-office' services. This includes people services, recruitment, marketing, finance, IT, estates management and procurement and support is highly responsive and tailored to the needs of individual academies. It allows the Trust to access best value and more efficient ways of supporting academies to deliver these services to the standard they demand.

In addition, the Trust has developed a range of educational support services for its academies. This includes a highly-skilled and experienced team of Curriculum Advisors, primary, secondary and SEN, who provide support and challenge across a range of subjects and phases.

The Trust also recognises the importance of a range of other educational services to support academies to meet the needs of their young people. That is why we have developed our own inclusive service network, who work across the Trust, by providing safeguarding, SEN and attendance services.

All academies within the Trust experience regular modular reviews with an Academies Director. This enables full discussion and accountability in all educational improvement matters at least six times per year.

The Trust has an effective programme of biennial peer review for its academies with Challenge Partners. This brings together trained external inspectors and academy senior staff and provides excellent training for our leaders, as well as robust challenge for our academies.

'Discussions with pupils revealed that they are equally proud of their school and of their work.'

Leigh Academy Bearsted Ofsted, January 2023

Academy improvement strategy

Academies that are open and honest about their strengths and weaknesses have the best chance of further improvement because their self-evaluations are accurate, evidence-based and forward-thinking.

The principal goal of the Academy Improvement Strategy is to achieve better outcomes and more consistent achievement for the maximum number of pupils. It is underpinned by the following principles:

1. We recognise the important role of Principals in their own academy and in shaping Trust policy to drive new educational practices that raise standards and challenge educational orthodoxy;
2. We recognise academies with a strong track record and do not force them to do the same as everyone else, unless it is in the best interest of the whole Trust;
3. We expect all leaders to build and sustain the Academy Improvement Strategy;
4. We do not standardise educational practices to the detriment of excellence, collaboration and innovation. We encourage leaders to allow staff to take calculated risks in a 'no blame' culture; and
5. We afford a level of earned autonomy and management freedom to effective leaders, fostering a culture where leaders support others to improve.

The LAT Academy Improvement Strategy identifies a set of agreed educational practices adopted by all to ensure that no academy ever falls below an acceptable minimum standard, as defined by the LAT Excellence Charter and as Ofsted Good. Beyond a full adoption of these agreed educational practices, LAT academies are free to innovate in order to achieve the higher standard of Ofsted 'outstanding'.



International Baccalaureate (IB) at LAT

LAT is committed to providing all of its pupils with an outstanding educational experience that gives them the knowledge, skills and personal attributes they need to be successful lifelong learners.

It is for this reason that LAT took the groundbreaking decision to introduce International Baccalaureate programmes across all phases of education in its academies.

IB programmes are delivered in 150 countries worldwide in international, independent and grammar schools. All programmes are underpinned by the IB Learner Profile which consists of ten highly desirable characteristics that will pave the way to success for all learners:

IB Learner Profiles

- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-minded
- Caring
- Risk-takers
- Balanced
- Reflective

International Dimension

Participation in the development of the IB programmes has given our staff the opportunity to attend international conferences and engage with the best research and training from around the world.

IB Diploma Programme



Leigh Academy Blackheath was authorised to deliver the Diploma Programme and welcomed its first cohort in September 2023.

IB Career-related Programme



Six secondary academies are now IB World Schools, authorised to deliver this prestigious programme of study that prepares young people for university, apprenticeships and the world of work. It is a unique blend of academic, vocational and personal development encompassing service learning, language development and a reflective project designed to develop the whole student beyond the individual qualifications.

IB Middle Years Programme



So far, 12 secondary academies are IB World schools for the MYP. They are working together to build an exciting and innovative curriculum that ignites curiosity and develops the knowledge and skills that students need to succeed in later life in a wide range of disciplines. Leigh Academy Snowfields, a special school, is accredited for the MYP, a groundbreaking world first.

IB Primary Years Programme



All our primary academies are candidate schools and are using the PYP framework alongside the National Curriculum to encourage a thirst for knowledge, awe and wonder, whilst achieving excellence in the core skills of reading, writing and maths. Leigh Academy Milestone, a special school, is accredited for the PYP, a groundbreaking world first.

Seven academies are in the candidacy phase to deliver the IB Diploma, Career and MYP Programmes this year.



© International Baccalaureate Organization 2018

Executive Team



Simon Beamish | Chief Executive, Leigh Academies Trust

In 2013, Simon was appointed CEO of Leigh Academies Trust, now one of the country's largest and most-established, highly inclusive and successful multi-academy trusts operating across Kent, Medway and South East London, containing 33 primary, secondary and special academies. Before that he was Principal of two secondary academies in the Trust. He studied at York, Durham and London universities. Simon is a trained Ofsted inspector, National Leader of Education and Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching.



Richard Taylor | Deputy CEO (Operations)

Richard joined Leigh Academies Trust in 2014 to develop the Trust's HR strategy and drive improvements in its people practices. After a decade with the Trust, he was appointed Deputy CEO (Operations), leading central services to deliver high-quality support that enables academies to thrive.

Richard is a chartered member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and has built a career focused on driving operational excellence. With leadership experience across HR and broader operational functions, he brings a commercial, pragmatic, and human-centred approach to service delivery. Before joining the Trust, he held senior HR roles in engineering, construction, facilities management, and oil and gas. His focus at LAT is on ensuring that central services work seamlessly to support staff and students, fostering a culture of collaboration, efficiency, and continuous improvement.



Faye Reizopoulou | Chief Financial Officer

Faye is an affiliate of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and joined Leigh Academies Trust as Deputy Finance Director in September 2017. As an accomplished Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with a distinguished background in audit from KPMG and over 12 years of progressive experience in senior finance positions within the education sector, she is dedicated to driving financial success and organisational growth. Faye's expertise lies in financial management, strategic planning, and fostering a culture of financial excellence, making her a valuable asset in navigating complex financial landscapes.

Faye has one daughter and lives in Ashford, Kent.



Phil Whittall | Chief Infrastructure Officer

Having previously held senior leadership positions for the Ministry of Defence and University of Kent, Phil joined Leigh Academies Trust in 2020 and was appointed as Chief Infrastructure Officer in 2025. Phil holds a B.Eng. in Computer Systems and Software Engineering from the University of Greenwich and a M.Sc. in Building Services Engineering and Management at Brunel University.

Phil leads a team of experienced professionals who provide support to the Trust and its academies in estate management, IT systems, health and safety and data compliance. A man of Kent, Phil lives in Maidstone with his wife, Claire, a teacher by profession, and their three children.



Lorraine Mottram | People Director

Lorraine joined Leigh Academies Trust in 2019 following its merger with The Williamson Trust, where she was Head of HR. With a background in both education and the private sector, she brings extensive experience in people strategy, employee engagement, and organisational development.

She is committed to fostering a supportive and dynamic workplace where staff feel valued and have opportunities to grow. Working closely with leaders across the Trust, she ensures that people strategy aligns with organisational goals and enhances the overall employee experience. A Chartered Member of the CIPD with an MA in Strategic Human Resource Management, Lorraine is dedicated to building a people-centred culture that attracts, develops, and retains talent.



Tracey Trusler | Academies Director (South East London and North West Kent)

Tracey graduated from Leicester University with a BA (Hons) in French and German and worked for ten years in the property industry, achieving a post-graduate diploma in estate management before retraining as a language teacher in 1997. She taught in schools in inner and outer London, joining Dartford Grammar School for Boys on the senior leadership team before being seconded to Wilmington Enterprise College in 2009.

When Wilmington Academy joined Leigh Academies Trust in 2010 Tracey was promoted to Principal and, by 2013, it had become the top-performing non-selective school in Kent. Ofsted graded the academy 'good' with 'outstanding leadership and management' in 2013 and again in 2017. During this time, Tracey completed her NPQH and oversaw a £14 million rebuilding programme.



Debbie Biggenden | Academies Director (Central Kent)

Debbie was awarded a Bachelor of Education (Hons) from Greenwich University in 1995, having studied secondary physical and health education. She then completed her post-graduate qualification in education leadership and her NPQH in 2006. Debbie started her teaching career as a PE teacher and worked in a number of secondary leadership roles in schools in both Croydon and Kent.

In 2009, Debbie moved from the secondary to the primary phase as Headteacher of Oaks Primary Academy in Maidstone. Leigh Academies Trust appointed her as Executive Principal of four primary academies in the area before she assumed her current role as Academies Director.



Emma Elwin | Academies Director (Medway, Ebbsfleet and North Maidstone)

Emma graduated from the University of Kent with an LLB Law degree in 2001. After spending time in the legal insurance industry, she went on to complete a PGCE in English and Media at Canterbury Christ Church University. After teaching in schools across Medway, Emma joined The Hundred of Hoo Academy and progressed swiftly into middle and senior leadership positions. She held key responsibility for raising standards, with those for English and maths rising significantly. Emma became Principal of The Hundred of Hoo Academy in 2016. Her exceptional knowledge, experience and skills across the full age range has been integral to the leadership of the first all-through school in Medway. In 2019 outcomes at the Academy represented some of the strongest in its history. Emma became Academies Director for Medway and Ebbsfleet in September 2020.

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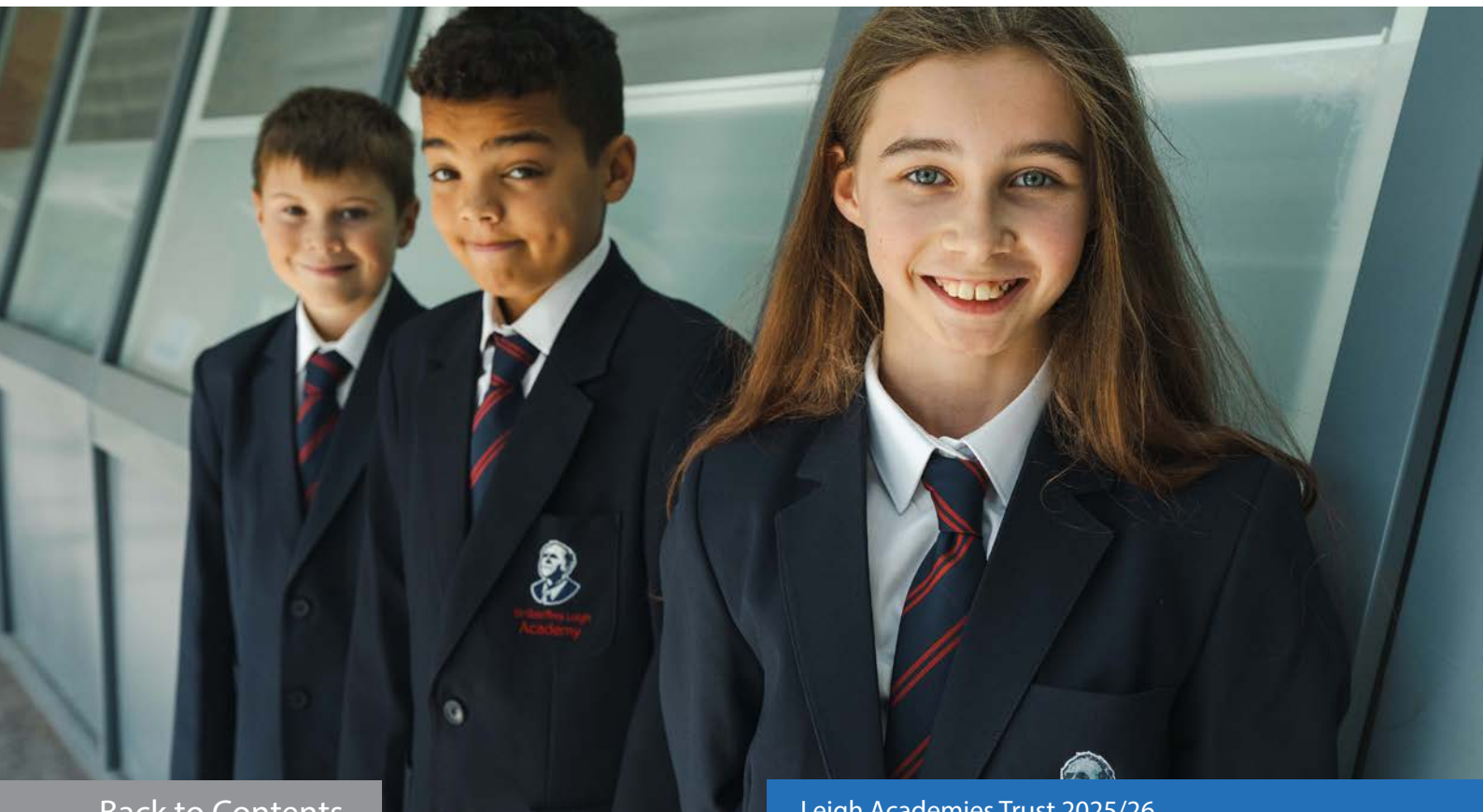
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