

GROWTH PAPER
March 2023

Governance Offer

School Improvement Offer

Operational Delivery Offer

Finance Delivery Offer

Why do we ensure Operational support and challenge?

GHAT schools have a continuous focus on operational delivery and all leaders have high aspirations and expectations for the smooth running of operations. Schools need to ensure high standards of operations and make sure that they're following not only regulatory best practices but ethical best practices as well.

[Headteachers Standards](#) Section 7: Organisational Management:

- ensure the protection/safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding as part of the duty of care
- prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk

[Academy Trusts Handbook 2022](#) Statutory Duties include:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its regulations. GHAT, as an employer, is responsible for the health and safety of its staff, pupils, and any visitors.
- The DfE expects academy trusts to manage their school estate strategically and maintain it in a safe working condition

We believe we are all on a continuous journey of evaluating risk with the ever-changing challenges we face. At the heart of all priorities is teaching and learning with the Trust's remit to guide and support schools through the operational aspects that run alongside to ensure safety and compliance in all areas. This will be achieved by:

- Working with schools, whether on a collective basis or a bespoke basis, to continuously quality improve understanding of risk management
- The Trust's central team working with internal teams
- The Trust keeping abreast with current legislation, cascading information to all
- providing tools and procedures to ensure smooth operations
- providing assurances through appropriate challenge via operational effectiveness meetings with Principals; regular meetings with operational leads in schools
- Named Central Team link acting as a helpdesk for support and guidance
- Annual audits and adhoc checks
- Creation of action plans for areas requiring improvement



Findings, next steps and celebrations of successes are reported to senior leaders at each academy who in turn share with their Local Governing Bodies for comment and are part of the CEO reporting to the trust board.

What is our operational support and challenge offer?

CQI – Continuous Quality Improvement:

- Understanding staffing needs, aligning with budgets and an integrated curriculum for financial planning.
- Ensuring organisation charts, staff roles and structures, salaries and benefits align across the Trust
- Providing bespoke HR advice for support leaders with performance management, absence management and all aspects of HR employment law
- Recognised risks are embedded within all school development plans and plans are in place to drive improvement
- Ensuring Trust Strategic Estate Plans are planned for and funding opportunities utilised

- Quality assurance of senior and middle leader accuracy of compliance through joint termly monitoring
- Providing a coaching and mentoring offer to senior leaders
- Supports academies in evaluating the impact of action plans
- Deployment of Central Team through MAT internal offer
- Analysis of Census data for continuous tracking and triggers
- Support internal teams and offer hybrid opportunities of support
- Support and guidance with grant funding
- Full conversion support for new academies.

Carlinghow Academy – Ofsted Good, May 2022. *Trustees perform the required statutory duties with care. They hold senior leaders to account. They express their gratitude at being part of this strong staff team.*

CQA – Continued Quality Assurance

- In depth understanding of individual academy operations
- Quality assuring the CQI processes
- Ensuring leadership through moral purpose
- Holding Senior Leaders to account
- Support, challenge and agreement with action and school improvement plans
- Ensuring Governance Structure and skills retain focus on statutory obligations.

West Vale Academy – Ofsted Good June 2022 *“The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all the necessary recruitment checks are made. All safeguarding policies are current and understood by staff”.*

Who provides our operational support and challenge offer?

We are uniquely placed with our own dedicated central teams who support our academies to ensure compliance and risk management is prioritised and non-negotiables are met. In summary:

- Chief Operations Officer (COO) ensures compliance in all areas of business operations across the Trust
- Expertise in the delivery of academy conversions and Grant Funding
- Business Support Officers linked to each setting
- A dedicated HR Manager and team providing full HR package/services
- Health and Wellbeing Champion providing confidential support for all Trust staff
- Central Site Manager to support with risk assessments; audits; record keeping and premises queries
- Central IT Infrastructure Manager to support with ICT strategy; cyber security; risk management; IT support
- Trust board with leadership experience in insurance, risk and lease agreements
- Dedicated finance and premises committee with oversight of school operations support and challenge
- Experienced Academy Leader & Senior Leadership Teams providing a network of support.

When is our operational support and challenge offer provided?

A calendar of events is designed annually with continuous support for CQI alongside termly operational effectiveness meetings including:

- Full on-site support during Ofsted Inspections
- Annual Health and Safety Audits
- Termly scrutiny and analysis of Census data
- Weekly monitoring of attendance and persistent absentees
- Spot checks during Exam weeks to ensure compliance with storage and administration of testing materials
- Annual Safeguarding audits and training
- Trust wide policies and procedures updates
- Internal staff resources web page with templates and guidance
- Ongoing review of contracts and SLAs to ensure value for money and benefits of bulk buying
- Monthly Leadership Newsletters with updates and actions required
- Continuous opportunities to be part of research trials and roll out of latest innovations
- Timetabled events to match governance reporting timelines and DfE expectations.

Where is our operational support and challenge offer provided?

We are able to support all our academies on their own sites as well as group attendance at our Trust offices.

The **impact** and **track record** of our statutory obligations is clear with all our schools as of the academic year 2022-23 at least Ofsted good or better.

The Greetland Academy –Ofsted Outstanding, October 2021 – *“Support from the trust has been highly effective. Trust leaders work closely with the leadership team to make the school even better. Staff told inspectors that leaders, including governors, are mindful of their well-being and workload. They feel well supported by leaders”*