



EBOR ACADEMY TRUST



A guide for school leaders

Understanding our Trust

The Ebor Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust serving children aged 2 to 16.

It is our aspiration to develop geographical hubs of schools in York, Selby, the East Riding and the Yorkshire Coast. We're looking for schools that share our values and can work collaboratively with us for the benefit of the communities we serve.

We now accept Church of England schools, as well as community schools, into our trust – see our structure chart on the back cover.

Our belief is that all children should be given the opportunity to achieve their best within a safe and caring school community. When young people leave

the academies in our group, we want to ensure that they have developed a range of qualities, attitudes and skills that will prepare them effectively for their future.

Ebor Academy Trust was established in 2013 with a commitment to four pillars to develop sustainable excellence in education:

Quality of teaching and learning: We believe that involving the teachers in our group fosters new thinking. We encourage innovation whilst ensuring appropriate levels of consistency.

Closing the attainment gap: Our successful school-to-school support teams work with our academies, and other schools, towards closing

the attainment gap. This school-led approach is driven by our teaching school accreditation – we are a founding member of the Ebor Teaching Schools Alliance.

Recruitment: As School Direct providers, we have operational experience of the process designed to create a pipeline of new recruits through the allocation of training places.

Collaboration: By working together we are able to draw on a wide set of skills, offering opportunities to both teachers and future leaders.



Our vision

At Ebor Academy Trust we passionately believe that collaborative working brings mutual benefit. For staff it presents greater opportunities and personal fulfilment. For our children and young people, it adds new dimensions as best practice is shared and new thinking is introduced, improving the learning experience.

Schools get out of Ebor what they put in. We are unashamedly a primary led multi-academy trust which itself sets us apart from others. We find cross-phase working requires the same attitude towards teaching and learning and we are building success in secondaries in part through nurturing relationships with primaries.

Our expertise in school-to-school support, delivered by colleagues both within and from outside our group, provides a glimpse of the joined-up thinking we are constantly developing.

Our academy specialists are skilled practitioners who understand that challenge and support can make such a difference to pupils' education outcomes.

It is our vision to set up geographically based hubs of schools, providing peer support and a commitment to excellence with input from our academy specialists.

We want to establish hubs within an hour's drive of our York base who can be part of the Ebor family, each around 2,000 to 2,500 pupils' strong from perhaps eight to ten schools.

A valuable benefit of being part of our group is access to high quality services provided by our Corporate Services Team: finance, marketing and communications, human resources, IT, estates and facilities, and admin.

Our values, which spell out EBOR, are excellence, belonging, opportunity and respect. Four simple words to sum us up but representing a powerful force for all that's good in education during changing times.



Richard Ludlow, Chief Executive/
Executive Headteacher, Ebor Academy Trust



Benefits of bring part of the Ebor Academy Trust

Teaching and Learning

Being part of a wider school community we are best placed to improve practice through sharing our expertise. We are able to invest in our workforce and provide professional development across the whole academy group.

At Ebor Academy Trust we take responsibility for each other. As well as informal support, we have strategy groups who work on specific elements of provision, such as early years and well-being.

Outstanding practitioners are identified and deployed as **Academy Specialists**, providing support across our schools for different curriculum areas. The academy specialists can provide bespoke support for individual staff through coaching and modelling approaches. They also provide additional capacity for our school-to-school support teams, working with the wider education community.



Leadership development

We are keen to develop our leaders for the future. We provide leadership training opportunities and experiences through nationally recognised programmes including NPQML, NPQSL and NPQH. We also provide additional opportunities through the

Ebor Aspiring Leadership Programme.

Staff are encouraged to apply for this programme which involves leading a project during the year. Through developing an awareness of themselves, they are able to experience whether the leadership route is one they wish to pursue.

Leadership opportunities

Being part of a growing academy group results in greater opportunities for staff. Retaining outstanding teachers and leaders within the group creates sustainability and stability within schools. The organisation is able to

One of our teachers says: *'In a day and age where the only constant in education is change, I find working within Ebor means I am constantly challenged and exposed to new ways of working, cutting-edge practice and different systems and styles. This is **not** a one-size-fits-all model.'*

Working across a number of schools allows you to always reflect and feel inspired by the different settings, spreading best practice from within.

*Having worked for a local authority where you don't always feel like you can make an impact because of its size, the beauty of this small, but rapidly-evolving academy group, is that your views, voice and skills **do** matter and wherever you sit in the structure you have a very real chance to effect change on a child's life. Job satisfaction doesn't come much greater than that!'*

strategically plan and invest in our future leaders, preparing individuals for their next professional step.

The **Academy Specialist** role is an example of creating additional opportunities for staff. As a values-driven organisation, we are keen to share our expertise and to support other schools. **The Ebor School Support Team** provides further opportunities for staff to share their skills.

The Ebor School Support Service

Being part of an academy group creates further career opportunities for staff, retaining their skills within our schools whilst giving them further challenge and experience. Staff have the opportunity of being selected for **The Ebor School Support Team**. This support model involves a group of exceptional practitioners working under the direction of a senior leader. We have proven that this team approach is an effective method for delivering accelerated whole school improvement. So far, our teams have been deployed in North Yorkshire and the East Riding.

Career Pathways

Within the Ebor Academy Trust we can provide three career pathways; Master Teacher, Leadership and Specialist. We have a **Professional Development**

Director who strategically supports the development of our workforce. As well as a comprehensive NQT development programme, we have established an RQT (recently qualified teacher) programme and are developing an entitlement model for staff at different stages of their career.

Specialist opportunities

Many of our schools take advantage of our four specialist areas; **Music, MFL, Sport** and the **Visual Arts**. We employ a number of specialist teachers who can work directly in schools, either where they are short of expertise or to provide assistance through training opportunities, coaching and school based support.

Collaboration

We believe in a strong collaborative approach with local authorities, governing bodies and school leaders. Schools should be passionate advocates for their community, proud to be local and fully engaged with what is going on around them. We encourage all our schools to participate in local networks such as local school partnerships or cluster arrangements. As an outward-facing organisation we also provide opportunities for our staff to experience and learn from others in a range of settings. For example, our NQT programme includes

visiting other successful schools in a variety of challenging areas; and our leadership programme includes visiting contrasting schools who are developing or have implemented innovative strategies to improve outcomes for children.

As well as continually building local and national links, the Ebor Academy Trust is keen to learn from successful education practice in international schools. We have long-standing international links with schools in Europe and Asia. These involve staff and student contact and exchange programmes.

Excellent Corporate Services

Our Corporate Services Team, led by James Perry, Finance Director, is the engine room of the operation. Effective and efficient use of resources supports teaching and learning across all Ebor academies. The key functions of the Corporate Services Team ensure both the long-term viability of individual academies and the sustainable growth and strategic direction of the Trust.

Supporting the future workforce

As a founding member of the Ebor Teaching School Alliance we develop our future workforce through our close involvement in initial teacher training.

The Ebor Academy Trust works with a number of partnership schools to provide the School Direct programme. Many of the schools in this wider collaboration have appointed newly-qualified teachers who have participated in this programme. The training is provided by expert teachers across the Ebor schools and their wider School Direct partnership schools. This has provided many further opportunities for staff to be able to share their expertise, whilst developing their own skills in delivering training to adults.



Corporate Services Team

Ebor's Corporate Services Team provides specialist in-house services to actively support teaching and learning at all academies within our group. It is a key benefit of being part of Ebor Academy Trust – professional support, when you need it.

Finance

The finance function manages processes and provides relevant financial acumen.

Good financial management is essential. The finance team gives senior staff and governors the information they need to be able to make informed decisions.

Strategic advice, clear processes and technical financial knowledge mean that complex financial scenarios are fully understood.

Marketing and Communications

Marketing and communications champions the Ebor brand and we make sure the correct messages are effectively communicated to parents and the wider school community.

Its primary function is to ensure Ebor's academies are go-to destinations – places that parents want their children to attend.

From producing prospectuses through signage, stationery, website management and press liaison, our marketing and communications team protect and enhance schools' reputations.

Human Resources

In our academy group we recognise the staff as our most valued resource and as such, staff well-being is of high importance. Our HR function delivers specialist support to each academy for recruitment, employment law, compliance, training and development, and employee relations to ensure staff are well managed and looked after.

We actively engage senior staff and governors in effective staff management.

IT

Ebor is accredited by Google and our schools use technology in new and exciting ways.

IT is no longer just the place to get the printer fixed – it is an enabler, meeting the challenge of finding new ways to engage with young people. This part of the Corporate Services Team is outsourced to providers familiar with technological advances in schools so we remain at the forefront of innovation.

Administration

At Ebor we recognise the positive impact that an effective administrative function at a school can have on teaching and learning. Each school has their own administration team that is in turn supported by the Corporate Services Team to ensure compliance, value for money, sound management and consistency across the group.

Estates and facilities

We provide support to schools, with expert estates and buildings management colleagues, reacting to issues with buildings to ensure a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning. We can also develop effective capital investment programmes, with management oversight of larger projects.



Newsletters, websites and press articles help convey the right image

Questions and answers

If the government now says schools do not need to become an academy why should we still do it?

Diminishing local authority budgets and the knock-on effect of less LA support is one reason, but so is peer-to-peer support and the idea of collaborating with other schools so as to share best practice. Many examples of close co-operation between schools exist currently in the clusters, but this is heavily dependent on goodwill and is un-enforceable. In a multi-academy trust environment, the support structure is more formalised. We have no political leanings and have no comment to make on others' ideologies. We believe in just dealing with the situation as it stands. There are good and bad academies just as there are good and bad schools.

Could the school field be sold?

School land is leased to the academy trust for 125 years and it cannot be sold.

Will I get the opportunity to work in a different school/Will I have to work in a different school?

Opportunities may come up but there is no compulsion to move. However we encourage collaboration and so experience of working in other schools is seen as a career development opportunity.

Will I get the same pay/rights if I go on maternity or sick?

Yes.

Will we employ non-qualified teachers?

There are no plans to employ non-qualified teachers.

Will we move up the pay scale in the same way our current appraisal works?

The ultimate decision lies with the trust board but it will accept recommendations from the local governing body.

Will we still keep our own core values or are there academy ones?

The school's own core values will not change unless the local governing body wants to change them.

Do academies get inspected by Ofsted?

There is no difference in Ofsted's inspection regime.

Do we recruit our own staff if vacancies occur?

Ebor's Corporate Services Team support all schools with their recruitment, this can include job evaluation, advertising and interviewing.

Do academies still do all the statutory assessments?

Yes.

Will my contract be the same in terms of meeting teaching standards and workload?

Yes.

Will we be changing term dates?

No

Will children have to wear a different uniform? Will our logo change?

There will be no changes to the school's policy on uniform and there is no requirement to change the logo. Some schools, however, see this as an opportunity to refresh their brand but this would be a decision of the local governing body. Information on the letterhead will change to comply with Companies House regulations.

Will rates of pay be different?

No.

Will other people be coming in to observe us?

Providing standards are maintained, there will be minimal intervention from Ebor.

Will job descriptions/roles change?

No.

Will all staff be kept on in employment?

All contracted staff will be transferred to Ebor under TUPE regulations

Will the name of the school change?

It is up to the local governing body if they want to change the word 'school' in the title to 'academy'.

Can we set our own policies for subjects?

Policies remain as at present.

Does becoming an academy change the way in which exclusions are dealt with?

No.

Who takes responsibility for the pension arrangements of staff?

All pension rights of employees are protected as part of the TUPE process. This means that Ebor Academy Trust would assume the pension obligations following conversion.

What happens if staff leave – will they be replaced like for like or will a new structure be imposed?

As at present, when staff leave it is an opportunity for the headteacher/local governing body to assess and make a decision on the best way to handle the imminent vacancy.

Will the PTA still fundraise just for the school or for the academy chain?

They would fundraise for the school, as at present.

What would happen if the school got an RI Ofsted judgement? What would the academy trust do?

If this were to happen following conversion, the trust would intervene to ensure that improvements were made. However, it is highly unlikely as monitoring by the school SLT and other senior leaders within Ebor would ensure problems are addressed well before an Ofsted inspection.