

ESCAT Draft Development Plan for 26-27



1.0 Catholic Mission and Education	Development Objective	Success Measures (KPIs)	Key Activities	Lead Responsibility
1.1 Strengthen Catholic Life, Mission and inspection readiness	Ensure all schools, particularly Corpus Christi, are fully prepared for CSI inspection by summer 2027 through robust Catholic Life, Mission, chaplaincy and RE provision	- Corpus Christi judged inspection ready by Summer 2027 - All 3 schools complete annual CSI self-evaluation. - Evidence of CSI action plans monitored by LGB. - Positive external validation of inspection readiness.	- Directors review annual CSI readiness reports and agree any required actions. - Ensure key findings and best practice from CSI reviews are shared across the Trust through the School Improvement Coordinator. - Provide Directors with regular updates on chaplaincy provision and the effective coordination and deployment of chaplaincy resources.	CEO CEO CEO
1.2 Raise/maintain standards in RE	Ensure schools are focused on outcomes in RE so that all schools achieve at least national expectations, with teaching consistently judged good or better.	- All schools achieve agreed RE targets. - LGB reporting that 90%+ of RE teaching will result in high standard - All schools completing correct specification schemes and compliance with RECD - LGB at Oaklands Reporting compliance with GCSE requirements for all students	- Implement and maintain Trust-wide governance reporting systems to monitor performance, risks and key priorities. - Monitor school-to-school support and the sharing of best practice across the Trust. - Review curriculum to ensure compliance. - Monitoring leaders and governors and oversight of RE outcomes, ensuring appropriate challenge and accountability	CEO CEO CEO CEO
1.3 Develop catholic leadership and CST	Support every school to progress at least one level in the Oscar Romero Award and expand pupil leadership opportunities.	- All schools progress within the Oscar Romero Award. - All schools receive recognition for outstanding student leadership - Evidence of Increased pupil participation in CST - LGB's monitor evidence of Catholic Social Teaching embedded in curriculum.	- Develop chaplaincy resource across the Trust - Facilitate sharing of CST curriculum projects - Share best practice across Trust. - Appoint school improvement co-ordinator/CSI coordinator - LGBs monitor schools progress with student leadership	CEO CEO CEO CEO CEO
1.4 Invest in staff formation	Ensure all schools develop a programme of Catholic formation ensuring all staff engage in annual formation opportunities.	- All staff at start of employment with the trust receive input into catholic education. - All schools once every 3 years undertake day of formation for staff - LGBs report positive staff survey regarding Catholic mission.	- Director to receive information on formation programme delivered in schools - Support regular retreat opportunities to support spiritual development and wellbeing. - Production of website resources - Develop a Trust wide structured Catholic induction programme for new staff and leaders.	CEO CEO CEO CEO

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2.0 Governance and accountability	Development Objective	Success Measures (KPIs)	Key Activities	Lead Responsibility
2.1 Strengthen governance effectiveness and accountability	Fully implement the Governance Monitoring Framework across all Local Governing Bodies by Summer 2027.	- All LGBs adopt two-year monitoring cycle. - Monitoring reports completed termly. - Improved governor challenge evidenced in minutes.	- Launch monitoring framework. - Quality assurance reviews. - Annual governance evaluation.	CEO CEO CEO
2.2 Develop strategic governance capacity	Support all schools to establish dynamic governor development plans, ensuring clear links between governance reviews, identified priorities, skills development and ongoing governor training.	- All LGBs to produce a dynamic development plan for the next 12 months - Governor to undertake a skills audit. - Governance professionals to meet on a termly basis	- Directors to review/oversee governor development plans - Directors to ensure development plans reflect audit documents - Organise meetings for governance professionals	CEO/CHAIR CEO CEO/Clerk ESCAT
2.3 Embed clarity of governance roles and responsibilities	Ensure all LGBs have a strong understanding of the Scheme of Delegation and their responsibilities within the Trust's governance framework, enabling effective decision-making, oversight and challenge.	- Awareness and understanding improves - At least 95% of governors confirm, through evaluation or self-assessment, that they understand their delegated responsibilities. - Governing body agendas, minutes and decisions consistently demonstrate that matters are considered at the appropriate level of governance in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. - Annual governance compliance checks confirm that all LGBs are operating within the Trust's governance framework.	- Publish the new Scheme of Delegation for LGBs and Heads, break not usable sections on website - Revise the Policy ready reckoner to reflect the new Scheme of Delegation. - Author new policies - Develop Trust newsletter and use as vehicle to inform issues relate to roles and responsibility - Present the new Scheme of Delegation to LGB Chairs, providing training/overview of the changes, key implications, and implementation arrangements.	CEO CEO/ Clerk ESCAT CEO/CFO CEO CEO/Chair of board
2.4 Support effective leadership transitions and structures	Provide appropriate challenge, guidance and governance support as schools implement new leadership structures, ensuring that changes strengthen capacity, accountability and school improvement	New Corpus Christi leadership is supported in first year.	- Regular meeting with new head at Corpus - Appointment of mentor and ensure engagement - Arrangement of sharing best practice with St Peters	CEO CEO CEO

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2.5 Board compliance with governor handbook and scheme of delegation	Ensure effective governance across the Trust through full Board compliance with the Governor Handbook and Scheme of Delegation, supported by clear accountability, consistent oversight and effective challenge to secure strong governance and decision-making.	• Board has sufficient number of directors to fulfil its functions and obligations • The Governor Handbook and Scheme of Delegation are consistently applied across the Trust and its schools. • Trust policies reflect the scheme of delegation • Boards and committees provide robust scrutiny of performance, risk, finance and strategic priorities. • No evidence of conflicts of interest ensuring sufficient distance between school governance and directorship. • Leadership vacancies are filled	• Active process to recruit more Directors • Full compliance with the Trust Governor Handbook and Scheme of Delegation, with any exceptions identified, reported and addressed promptly. • Trust policies renewed • Trust sub committees formed in accordance with the scheme • LGBs to develop leadership succession plans	Chair Chair CEO/Chair Chair
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3.0 Trust organisation and development	Development Objective	Success Measures (KPIs)	Key Activities	Lead Responsibility
3.1 Deliver sustainable and mission-aligned trust growth	Develop and implement a sustainable growth strategy focused on a small number of carefully identified schools where there is strong alignment with ESCAT's mission, values, and the Trust's capacity to provide effective support.	- Partnership agreements signed with 3 schools - Activities associated with the agreement enacted	- Develop and maintain a clear Trust Growth Strategy with agreed criteria for expansion. - Identify and engage with schools that align with ESCAT's mission, values and strategic priorities. - Assess organisational capacity to ensure sustainable growth. - Monitor the impact of growth on school improvement, financial sustainability and organisational capacity, adapting the strategy where necessary.	CEO/Chair CEO CEO/Chair CEO/CFO
3.2 Strengthen ESCAT Collaboration and Shared Ownership	Develop a culture of collaboration and shared ownership across schools enabling LGBs to follow the Bishop's vision.	- Improved understanding of ESCAT and Diocese vision by schools. - Schools working together on shared projects and improvement work - Greater willingness of schools to engage in conversation related to academisation - More schools prepared to sign partnership agreements when capacity in ESCAT allows	- Organise and deliver Trust Vision Conference - Produce Trust newsletter for all schools in the south of the Diocese 5 times a year (see section 2) - Schools work together developing shared policies and resources	CEO CEO CEO
3.3 Trust support services	Clarify and Strengthen Trust Support Services ensuring schools have a shared understanding of the support available, service expectations and how these contribute to school improvement.	- Greater clarity of roles and responsibilities between trust and schools - Improved training of staff	Develop clear Service Level Agreements for core Trust services, focussing on - HR and employment - Payroll - OH - Finance and service	CEO/CFO
3.4 Develop leadership structures across schools.	Establish an effective structures that provides the appropriate level of strategic challenge, support and oversight required to enable all schools to thrive and deliver continuous improvement	- Supportive structures in place for Corpus Christi governing body - Governance self evaluation completed - Leadership vacancies filled - Support structures in place for new leaders	- Temp/perm new members for Corpus Christi LGB - Clarification of roles, responsibilities - Ensure schools have focus on developing leadership pathways particularly for potential Catholic leaders - Coaching and mentoring plans	CEO/Chair CEO CEO CEO

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4.0 Finance and operational Sustainability	Development Objective	Success Measures (KPIs)	Key Activities	Lead Responsibility
4.1 Embed Trust systems and operational integration	Ensure that St Peter's continues to develop and embed systems and processes that are fully aligned with ESCAT's operational framework, with particular focus on finance, compliance and core Trust functions.	• Successful audit in September 27 • Successful internal audit throughout 26-27 • Integration of accounting and payroll systems	• Review of st Peter's systems against trust procedures • Ensure all budgeting, procurement reporting and approval align with ESCAT processes • Fully adopt ESCAT systems , templates and procedures across HR • Periodic internal checks • Ensure training delivered for key staff	CFO CFO CFO/CEO CFO CFO
4.2 Strengthen financial leadership and oversight	Provide effective support and governance oversight during the temporary CFO arrangement, ensuring appropriate expertise and consultancy support is deployed to secure strong financial management and the best Secure Long-Term	• All financial decisions, risks and recommendations are appropriately documented, reviewed and escalated through agreed routes. • All critical CFO responsibilities have appropriate interim ownership • Monthly financial reporting delivered accurately and within agreed deadlines • All significant financial risks and control weaknesses identified, with agreed mitigation actions tracked to completion. • Clear, evidence-based recommendations and requirements established to support the selection and transition to the best long-term CFO arrangement	• Provide governance oversight of the temporary CFO arrangement • Assess and deploy specialist expertise where required including consultancy support. • Monitor financial performance and risks, ensuring robust reporting, forecasting, cash management, controls and compliance are maintained throughout the interim period.. • Develop the long-term CFO 'solution'.	CEO CEO CEO CEO/Chair
4.3 Financial sustainability outcomes for all schools.	Work collaboratively with schools to maintain financial sustainability across the budget cycle, ensuring that LGBs have effective oversight of financial plans, risks and actions required to secure future stability.	• All schools have a balanced or financially sustainable medium-term financial plan, with emerging pressures/risks identified and addressed early. • LGBs receive clear and timely financial information to support effective scrutiny of budgets, risks and recovery actions. • School budgets, forecasts and financial returns are completed accurately and within agreed deadlines.	• Work collaboratively with schools and LGBs to develop robust, realistic budgets and medium-term financial plans aligned to school priorities and available resources. • Provide regular financial analysis and challenge, highlighting variances, emerging pressures, key assumptions and sustainability risks throughout the budget cycle. • Strengthen LGB oversight by providing clear financial reporting, dashboards and briefings	CFO/CEO CFO CFO

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		Agreed actions to address budget pressures are tracked, with measurable progress and timely intervention where delivery is off track.	that enable effective challenge and informed decision-making. - Share good practice and build financial capability across schools and LGBs, supporting leaders and governors to understand financial risks, options and actions required to secure long-term stability. - Develop financial systems and structure to remove duplication and support schools	CFO CFO/CEO
4.4 Develop strategic estate planning	Support schools in effective estate management and long-term planning, with particular focus on successful CIF applications and progressing the rebuild programme at Corpus Christi.	- Agreement with KK on CIF application and priority - Schools have up-to-date estate condition information and clear, prioritised plans for addressing critical maintenance, compliance and capital needs. - The Corpus Christi rebuild programme progresses against agreed milestones - Schools have clear long-term estate and capital investment plans aligned to educational priorities, affordability and available funding opportunities.	- Support schools to develop effective estate strategies. - Coordinate CIF applications, working with KK to develop high-quality business cases that meets DfE requirements - Progress the Corpus Christi rebuild programme effective governance and reporting. - Identify and maximise funding opportunities, including CIF and other capital funding streams.	CFO/CEO CFO CEO CEO/CFO

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5.0 Continuous Improvement	Development Objective	Success Measures (KPIs)	Key Activities	Lead Responsibility
5.1 Embed an evidence-informed culture of Improvement	Continue to develop a culture where high-quality evidence and strategic intelligence inform decision-making, enabling leaders and governors to identify priorities, manage risk and secure the best possible outcomes for pupils.	- LGBs set challenging targets, including academic outcomes, attendance and behaviour that are substantially met. - Leadership produce reports that provide clear analysis, trends, risks and recommendations, enabling timely and informed challenge. - Leaders and governors demonstrate effective use of data and intelligence to scrutinise performance, challenge assumptions and agree appropriate actions. - Agreed actions arising from strategic intelligence are monitored, with measurable improvements in outcomes, risk management or organisational effectiveness.	- Provide practical support through the 1% contingency to schools to help meet improvement agenda. - Ensure Local Governing Bodies continue to provide effective challenge and support, with a particular focus on areas requiring improvement, including mathematics at Oaklands and Key Stage 2 outcomes at Corpus Christi. - CEO meets with leaders to develop and maintain high-quality intelligence and reporting, bringing together relevant educational, financial, operational and data to provide a clear view of performance and risk. - Directors monitor evidence-based decision-making by ensuring strategic proposals are supported by robust analysis, benchmarking and clear recommendations. - Directors to Monitor the impact of strategic decisions and actions for example curriculum changes in school to achieve best possible outcomes for pupils.	CEO
				CEO
5.2 Enhance the Trust wide school Improvement Offer	Strengthen ESCAT's school improvement capacity through effective collaboration, the development of strategic partnerships with HIAS, the exploration of additional external expertise, and the sharing of best practice to ensure all schools have access to high-quality support and challenge	- All ESCAT schools receive timely, proportionate and high-quality school improvement support based on their individual needs and priorities. - HIAS and other external providers provide effective challenge, expertise and capacity that complement and strengthen ESCAT's internal provision. - Schools demonstrate clear evidence that school improvement support and	- External partners appointed to provide effective challenge, expertise and capacity - School improvement Coordinator appointed - Best practice is systematically identified, shared and adopted across schools, leading to greater consistency and improved practice.	CEO CEO CEO

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		collaboration are contributing to stronger leadership, teaching and learning, and outcomes for pupils.		
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