Fern Academy Trust : Strategic plan 2026-27

Our vision : *Achieving Success Together*

As a newly appointed Interim CEO, my initial focus is on six key strategic priorities: pupil recruitment and sustainability; behaviour, culture and inclusion; attendance and wellbeing; educational excellence; curriculum leadership and school improvement; and leadership, governance and financial sustainability. These priorities reflect both the current context of the Trust and the need to secure strong foundations for future development. They will form the basis of a revised one-year strategic plan for 2026-27, which will be developed during the Autumn Term and presented to the Trust Board for approval. The plan will be reviewed termly by the Trust Board and refined as necessary in response to emerging priorities, performance information and organisational need.

Pupil Recruitment and Trust Sustainability			
Objective 1	**Autumn 2026**	**Spring 2027 (Indicative)**	**Summer 2027 (Indicative)**
To secure the long-term sustainability of Fern Academy Trust by increasing pupil recruitment, strengthening community engagement and ensuring that school organisation and admissions arrangements reflect changing demographic trends and projected pupil numbers.	Particular focus will be given to increasing admissions at all schools and enhancing early years provision across the Trust. This objective responds to the challenges of falling birth rates and declining pupil numbers both locally and nationally, whilst ensuring that the Trust remains financially sustainable and well-positioned for the future. 1. Review current pupil number projections, admissions data and demographic trends across all schools. 2. Commence consultation and statutory processes to reduce Marlbrook PAN from 90 (three-form entry) to 60 (two-form entry) from September 2027. 3. Develop a Trust-wide marketing and communications strategy. 4. Create promotional videos and drone footage showcasing each school and celebrating the unique strengths of the Trust to entice prospective parents and families. 5. Review and enhance school websites and social media presence (Facebook pages at Marlbrook and St-Martins) to support pupil recruitment.	*1. Review impact of marketing and recruitment activities.* *2. Monitor nursery and Reception application numbers.* *3. Strengthen successful community engagement initiatives.* *4. Evaluate progress of Marlbrook PAN consultation and implementation planning.*	*1. Evaluate pupil recruitment outcomes across the Trust.* *2. Review effectiveness of PAN changes and admissions arrangements.* *3. Identify priorities for further growth and sustainability in 2027-28.* *4. Report impact and recommendations to the Trust Board.*

	6. Increase nursery and Reception marketing activities across the Trust. 7. Look at the possibility of expanding stay-and-play sessions at Marlbrook with HO and opportunities for families to engage with schools. 8. Strengthen relationships with local nurseries, pre-schools and community organisations. 9. Explore opportunities to further increase nursery provision and early years engagement across the Trust.		
Success Measures:	- ***Increased applications to Nursery and Reception across the Trust.*** - ***Improved visibility of Trust schools within their local communities.*** - ***Successful completion of PAN reduction process at Marlbrook (if approved).*** - ***Greater engagement with prospective families through marketing and community events.*** - ***Improved long-term financial sustainability through pupil number stabilisation.***		

Behaviour, Culture and Inclusion			
Objective 2	**Autumn 2026**	**Spring 2027 (Indicative)**	**Summer 2027 (Indicative)**
To ensure all schools provide calm, safe and purposeful learning environments where high expectations of behaviour are consistently applied.	Particular focus will be given to improving behaviour outcomes at Marlbrook Primary School through strengthened leadership oversight, rigorous self-evaluation, staff accountability and increased engagement with parents and carers. The Trust will continue to promote an inclusive approach which recognises the increasing complexity of pupil need, including SEND, SEMH, trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), whilst maintaining high expectations for all pupils and ensuring that behaviour, inclusion and restrictive intervention practices are safe, proportionate and understood by all stakeholders. The introduction of Trust-wide Self Evaluation Frameworks (SEFs) will support leaders in regularly reflecting upon behaviour, culture and inclusion within their schools and identifying priorities for improvement. 1. Implement Trust-wide Self Evaluation Frameworks (SEFs), ensuring behaviour and culture are rigorously evaluated by school leaders and reviewed regularly throughout the year. 2. Ensure behaviour remains a standing item within Executive Headteacher meetings (every 2-3 weeks), enabling leaders to review behaviour trends, share good practice and identify areas requiring support. 3. Support the Headteacher at Marlbrook in implementing behaviour as a key priority within the School Development Plan. 4. Review suspension, reflection and behaviour data regularly, with a particular focus on pupils demonstrating persistent or complex behavioural needs.	*1. Review behaviour, suspension and reflection data across all schools.* *2. Evaluate progress against behaviour priorities identified within SEFs and School Development Plans.* *3. Analyse staff survey findings and identify emerging themes.* *4. Review impact of behaviour-focused performance management targets at Marlbrook.* *5. Continue targeted support and challenge for Marlbrook.* *6. Evaluate parental engagement activities and their contribution to strengthening behaviour culture.*	*1. Evaluate behaviour outcomes across the Trust against baseline measures.* *2. Repeat staff survey and compare findings to Autumn Term results.* *3. Review suspension rates, behaviour incidents and pupil behaviour trends.* *4. Evaluate the impact of revised school values work and behaviour initiatives.* *5. Identify priorities for behaviour, culture and inclusion for 2027-28.*

	5. Strengthen leadership monitoring across the Trust through the implementation of a structured behaviour and classroom monitoring cycle, ensuring written feedback is provided and actions are followed through. 6. Introduce behaviour-focused performance management targets for all teaching and support staff at Marlbrook to promote collective responsibility and consistent expectations across the school. 7. Review and strengthen behaviour recording systems within Arbor to ensure reflections, sanctions and incidents are accurately recorded and analysed across all schools. 8. Develop and implement Trust-wide staff, pupil and parent surveys, establishing baseline measures around behaviour, school culture, staff confidence and consistency of expectations. 9. Repeat the surveys later in the academic year to evaluate progress and identify areas for further development. 10. Deliver parent workshops and information sessions across all schools to improve understanding of behaviour expectations and strengthen home-school partnerships. 11. Continue the re-imagining of Marlbrook's school values, ensuring meaningful pupil voice contributes to the development of a shared culture and sense of belonging. 12. Maintain and further strengthen positive behaviour cultures at Wellington and St Martin's through continued values-based work and a focus on behaviour during unstructured times of the school day. 13. Ensure all CEO walks include a specific focus on behaviour, learning behaviours, culture and inclusion, with written feedback and recommendations provided to Headteachers following each visit.		

	14. CA, AP and EK to review the effectiveness of current approaches for supporting pupils with SEND, SEMH needs, trauma and ACEs, ensuring that inclusion and high expectations remain closely aligned. 15. Review and update policies relating to behaviour, restrictive intervention and inclusion to ensure they reflect current guidance and best practice. 16. Ensure behaviour, personal development and inclusion remain key areas of focus within school self-evaluation and inspection readiness activity.		
Success Measures:	- ***Reduction in suspensions at Marlbrook.*** - ***Improved learning behaviours, particularly within Years 4, 5 and 6 at Marlbrook.*** - ***Behaviour established as a successful priority within Marlbrook's School Development Plan.*** - ***Leaders demonstrate accurate self-evaluation of behaviour through high-quality SEFs.*** - ***Increased consistency in the implementation of behaviour systems across all schools.*** - ***Accurate and reliable behaviour recording through Arbor.*** - ***Positive improvement in staff, pupil and parent survey results relating to behaviour and school culture.*** - ***Increased parental understanding and support of school behaviour expectations.*** - ***Calm, purposeful and inclusive learning environments maintained across the Trust.***		

Attendance, Inclusion and Wellbeing			
Objective 3	**Autumn 2026**	**Spring 2027 (Indicative)**	**Summer 2027 (Indicative)**
To improve attendance outcomes across the Trust, particularly for vulnerable groups and pupils at risk of persistent absence, whilst strengthening inclusive practice and ensuring that all pupils can access a high-quality education.	Current attendance stands at 95.03% at Wellington, 94.3% at St Martin's and 93.06% at Marlbrook, with persistent absence remaining a significant challenge at Marlbrook (approximately 20%) and St Martin's (13.9%). The Trust will work towards achieving attendance closer to and above national expectations, with an aspirational target of 96% attendance across all schools over time, whilst reducing persistent absence through proactive support and intervention. *(National figures: **State-funded primary schools: 5.31%** absence rate; 3.72% authorised, 1.59% unauthorised; 13.90% persistent absence).* The Trust will also develop and implement a consistent Inclusion Strategy across all schools, promoting high expectations, effective adaptive teaching and improved outcomes for pupils with SEND, SEMH needs and other identified vulnerabilities. The previous strategic plan identified both attendance and the development of an Inclusion Strategy as key priorities for future development. 1. Develop and implement a Trust-wide Inclusion Strategy, led by Anna Priday and Clare Adams, ensuring consistency of practice across all schools. 2. Ensure attendance remains a priority within School Development Plans and is reviewed regularly by leadership teams and governors. 3. Review attendance, persistent absence and vulnerable group attendance data through Executive Headteacher meetings. 4. Maintain attendance as a standing item within Trust leadership discussions.	*1. Review attendance trends across all schools and vulnerable groups.* *2. Evaluate implementation and impact of the Inclusion Strategy.* *3. Review findings from Inclusion Walks and identify common Trust priorities.* *4. Analyse SEND outcomes and the impact of adaptive teaching approaches.* *5. Continue targeted support for pupils and cohorts of concern.* *6. Share effective attendance and inclusion practice across schools.*	*1. Evaluate attendance outcomes against Trust and school targets.* *2. Review persistent absence trends across all schools.* *3. Assess the impact of the Inclusion Strategy on pupil outcomes, engagement and access to learning.* *4. Evaluate improvements in SEND provision and adaptive teaching.* *5. Identify priorities for attendance, inclusion and wellbeing for 2027-28.* *6. Report outcomes and recommendations to the Trust Board.*

	5. Strengthen early identification and intervention for pupils at risk of persistent absence or severe absence. 6. Monitor attendance of key groups, including pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those requiring additional pastoral support. 7. Promote consistent attendance messaging through newsletters, websites, school entrances and communication with families. 8. Continue to develop attendance reward systems and initiatives, including Attendopoly and other incentives, to encourage positive attendance habits. 9. Strengthen parental understanding of attendance expectations through clear, consistent communication and engagement opportunities. 10. Ensure attendance, safeguarding and pastoral systems work cohesively to remove barriers to attendance and engagement. 11. Develop a Trust-wide inclusion monitoring framework to be utilised consistently by Headteachers and SENDCos. Introduce Inclusion Walks across all schools, focusing on: • classroom environment and accessibility; • adaptive teaching; • provision for SEND pupils and vulnerable groups; • pupil participation and engagement; • behaviour, wellbeing and belonging. Share the Inclusion Walk framework developed at Wellington across the Trust to strengthen consistency of monitoring and evaluation. 12. Continue to support staff in developing confidence in the use of InPrint and other adaptive approaches to enable all pupils to access learning successfully.		

	13. Strengthen provision and staff understanding of supporting pupils accessing alternative and highly adapted curriculums. 14. Review outcomes and provision for pupils with SEND to identify strengths, gaps and priorities for development. 15. Promote participation, belonging and enrichment opportunities for vulnerable groups and underrepresented pupils. 16. Ensure attendance, inclusion and wellbeing feature within CEO walks and school improvement discussions.		
Success Measures:	- ***Whole-school attendance improves from current baselines:*** • ***Wellington: 95.03%*** • ***St Martin's: 94.3%*** • ***Marlbrook: 93.06%*** - ***Trust attendance moves towards an overall target of 96%.*** - ***Persistent absence at Marlbrook reduces from approximately 20%.*** - ***Persistent absence at St Martin's reduces from 13.9%.*** - ***Attendance of SEND and disadvantaged pupils improves.*** - ***Consistent implementation of attendance procedures across all schools.*** - ***Trust Inclusion Strategy embedded across all schools.*** - ***Improved outcomes for pupils with SEND.*** - ***Increased staff confidence in adaptive teaching and inclusive practice.*** - ***Greater pupil participation, engagement and sense of belonging.*** - ***Stronger evidence of inclusive practice through Inclusion Walks, SEFs and school improvement monitoring.***		

Educational Excellence, Standards and Strong Foundations			
Objective 4	**Autumn 2026**	**Spring 2027 (Indicative)**	**Summer 2027 (Indicative)**
To maintain and improve educational standards across the Trust through rigorous assessment, effective use of data and a relentless focus on securing strong foundations in English and Mathematics.	Leaders will use data intelligently to identify strengths, address underperformance and ensure all pupils make strong progress from their starting points. Particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring pupils develop the fundamental knowledge, skills and understanding required for future success through a carefully sequenced curriculum, high-quality teaching and consistent approaches across all schools. This builds upon the Trust's existing strategic focus on standards, assessment and pupil outcomes. **Standards, Assessment and Accountability:** 1. Ensure all attainment and progress data for Reading, Writing and Mathematics is collected and analysed termly across the Trust. 2. Continue a rigorous cycle of pupil progress meetings to identify pupils requiring support, challenge and intervention. 3. Strengthen leaders' use of assessment information to evaluate the impact of teaching, identify trends and accelerate progress. 4. Ensure SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable pupil outcomes are analysed and discussed regularly at leadership level. 5. Provide Trustees with clear, meaningful information regarding progress, attainment and key school improvement priorities. 6. Ensure schools remain inspection ready through accurate self-evaluation, robust monitoring and evidence of educational impact. **English, Writing and Handwriting:** 1. Embed a consistent Trust-wide approach to handwriting, including common expectations	*1. Review progress and attainment data across all schools.* *2. Evaluate the impact of the revised handwriting, writing and mathematics approaches.* *3. Analyse outcomes for SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.* *4. Review curriculum implementation and consistency across schools.* *5. Share effective practice and refine support where required.*	*1. Evaluate attainment and progress outcomes across the Trust.* *2. Review the impact of curriculum developments in writing, handwriting and mathematics.* *3. Analyse end-of-year outcomes against school and Trust expectations.* *4. Determine priorities for standards and achievement in 2027-28.* *5. Report outcomes and recommendations to the Trust Board.*

	regarding letter formation, font style, joins, presentation and progression across all schools. 2. Maximise the impact of the handwriting scheme purchased in 2026 through regular CPD, Trust-wide training, ongoing monitoring and consistent implementation. 3. Introduce rigorous handwriting monitoring through leadership monitoring cycles and external moderation opportunities. 4. Ensure high standards of handwriting and presentation are evident across all subjects rather than being confined to English lessons. 5. Embed the revised DfE's writing framework (July 2025) which places greater emphasis on securing firm foundations before composition. 6. Ensure staff understand the importance of developing transcription skills before expecting pupils to produce extended pieces of writing. 7. Increase opportunities for shared writing, modelled writing, oral rehearsal and vocabulary development. 8. Ensure writing activities in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are closely aligned to phonics knowledge, enabling children to practise and apply what they know successfully. 9. Develop and utilise knowledge organisers and supporting resources to strengthen teacher subject knowledge and improve consistency of delivery. 10. Support teachers in planning purposeful writing outcomes, recognising that pupils may demonstrate learning through words, phrases or sentences before progressing to longer compositions. 11. Ensure grammar, spelling and composition expectations are developmentally appropriate and carefully sequenced. **Mathematics:** 1. Implement the revised Key Stage 1 mathematics objective maps across the Trust made by EB.		

	2. Embed a curriculum model built upon small, carefully sequenced learning steps, ensuring pupils develop secure conceptual understanding before progressing. 3. Strengthen transition between Reception and Year 1 through curriculum alignment and shared pedagogical approaches. 4. Utilise expertise from Early Years leaders to improve continuity and progression in mathematical learning (e.g. Karen Wilding pedagogy). 5. Ensure teachers have clarity regarding when and how key mathematical concepts, representations and methods should be introduced. 6. Continue to promote a mastery approach through concrete, pictorial and abstract representations. 7. Ensure manipulatives are used consistently and purposefully across the Trust to support mathematical understanding. 8. Introduce weekly review opportunities, allowing pupils to revisit, consolidate and apply previously taught learning whilst providing teachers with valuable assessment opportunities. 9. Evaluate the impact of removing NFER testing within Key Stage 1, ensuring assessment is proportionate, meaningful and reflective of curriculum coverage. 10. Strengthen teacher assessment practices through observation, discussion, questioning, application activities and shared moderation opportunities across the Trust. 11. Monitor implementation of the revised curriculum through leadership monitoring, curriculum reviews and learning visits led by senior leaders and subject specialists.		
Success Measures:	- ***Improved attainment and progress in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.*** - ***Consistent handwriting expectations embedded across all schools.*** - ***Improved quality and presentation of pupils' written work across the curriculum.*** - ***Stronger foundations in writing, resulting in increased pupil confidence and improved outcomes.***		

	- ***Greater consistency in the teaching of mathematics across Key Stage 1.*** - ***Improved transition between Reception and Year 1.*** - ***Increased teacher confidence in assessment and curriculum delivery.*** - ***Improved outcomes for SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.*** - ***Leaders demonstrate accurate understanding of standards through effective use of assessment information and self-evaluation.*** - ***Schools remain inspection ready through strong educational outcomes and evidence of impact.***

Curriculum Leadership, Enrichment and School Improvement			
Objective 5	**Autumn 2026**	**Spring 2027 (Indicative)**	**Summer 2027 (Indicative)**
To maintain and further develop a high-quality, ambitious curriculum across the Trust through strong curriculum leadership, effective school improvement and meaningful enrichment opportunities for all pupils.	Building upon the successful implementation of the CUSP, NATRE and PE curriculums over the past two years, the Trust will strengthen leadership capacity by supporting Headteachers and Subject Leaders to take increasing ownership of curriculum monitoring, evaluation and development, whilst retaining strategic oversight at CEO level. Through robust monitoring, targeted professional development and a rich programme of curriculum enrichment, all pupils will be supported to develop the knowledge, skills and cultural capital required for future success. This builds upon significant curriculum development work already undertaken across the Trust. **Curriculum Leadership** 1. CEO to continue to provide strategic oversight of curriculum development across the Trust: 2. CEO to plan Trust-wide staff meetings in collaboration with Headteachers and Subject Leaders. 3. CEO to establish clear expectations regarding subject leadership, curriculum monitoring and accountability across all schools. 4. Support Headteachers in assuming greater responsibility for curriculum implementation, monitoring and quality assurance within their own schools. 5. Ensure curriculum leadership is distributed effectively across the Trust, developing leadership capacity and reducing reliance upon individual leaders.	*1. Review curriculum implementation across all schools.* *2. Evaluate the effectiveness of leadership handover arrangements and distributed curriculum leadership.* *3. Review curriculum monitoring findings and identify Trust-wide priorities.* *4. Evaluate the impact of curriculum enrichment opportunities on pupil engagement and participation.* *5. Share effective practice across schools and refine support where required.* *6. Continue development of Subject Leaders and middle leadership capacity.*	*1. Evaluate curriculum impact across the Trust.* *2. Review effectiveness of curriculum leadership structures and monitoring processes.* *3. Assess leadership capacity and future development needs.* *4. Evaluate the impact of curriculum enrichment on pupil outcomes and experiences.* *5. Identify curriculum priorities for 2027-28.* *6. Report outcomes and recommendations to the Trust Board.*

	6. Continue to develop the expertise and confidence of Subject Leaders through clear guidance, support and professional development. 7. Ensure curriculum remains a regular agenda item within Executive Headteacher meetings. **Curriculum Monitoring and School Improvement** 1. Headteachers will take primary responsibility for curriculum monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance within their schools. 2. Establish a clear Trust-wide monitoring framework to ensure consistency of approach whilst allowing Headteachers to address individual school priorities. 3. Ensure curriculum monitoring is planned systematically across the academic year and includes learning walks, book scrutiny, pupil voice and curriculum reviews. 4. Headteachers will produce termly evaluations of curriculum strengths, areas for development and agreed next steps through the Trust Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) process. 5. Curriculum monitoring findings will directly inform School Development Plan priorities, staff professional development and curriculum improvement actions. 6. CEO will retain strategic oversight of curriculum quality through regular dialogue with Headteachers, review of monitoring evidence and analysis of outcomes. 7. Introduce half-termly CEO Walks alongside Headteachers, focusing on agreed areas of curriculum, teaching,		

	behaviour and school culture. Written feedback from CEO Walks will identify strengths, recommendations and actions to support continuous improvement. 8. Curriculum implementation, strengths and priorities will remain a regular focus within Executive Headteacher meetings, enabling leaders to share effective practice and address common challenges. 9. Monitoring will place particular emphasis on the quality of curriculum delivery, adaptive teaching, pupil engagement, knowledge retention and the extent to which learning meets the needs of individual cohorts. 10. Ensure curriculum monitoring remains sufficiently rigorous to support accurate self-evaluation, sustained school improvement and inspection readiness. **Curriculum Enrichment** 1. Develop and implement a Trust-wide curriculum enrichment calendar. 2. Ensure all pupils have access to a rich programme of enrichment opportunities regardless of background or need. 3. Continue to develop themed weeks, curriculum celebration events, competitions, educational visits and enrichment experiences that promote curiosity, aspiration and enjoyment of learning. 4. Continue successful initiatives such as Indigenous Cultures Week, strengthening pupils' understanding of diversity, tolerance, respect and the wider world. 5. Increase opportunities for pupils to showcase their learning through		

	performances, exhibitions, competitions, parent workshops and community events. 6. Ensure enrichment opportunities complement and enhance curriculum learning across all subjects.		
Success Measures:	- ***Headteachers demonstrate increased ownership and accountability for curriculum leadership.*** - ***Subject Leaders have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and can evidence curriculum impact.*** - ***Curriculum monitoring is embedded and implemented consistently across all schools.*** - ***CUSP continues to be delivered effectively and consistently across the Trust.*** - ***Monitoring demonstrates that curriculum delivery is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of cohorts and individual pupils.*** - ***Pupils demonstrate strong knowledge retention, engagement and understanding across the curriculum.*** - ***Curriculum enrichment opportunities are accessed by pupils across all schools.*** - ***Leaders demonstrate accurate self-evaluation through monitoring, pupil voice and curriculum review.*** - ***Schools remain inspection ready with leaders able to confidently articulate curriculum intent, implementation and impact.***		

	Leadership, Governance and Financial Sustainability		
Objective 6	**Autumn 2026**	**Spring 2027 (Indicative)**	**Summer 2027 (Indicative)**
To secure the long-term sustainability of the Trust through effective financial planning, robust governance, strategic workforce management and strong leadership.	In the context of falling pupil numbers, increasing financial pressures and changing educational needs, the Trust will ensure that staffing structures, leadership capacity and financial resources remain aligned to need whilst maintaining high standards of education and support for all pupils. This aligns with priorities previously identified around financial sustainability, workforce planning, leadership structures and the future direction of the Trust. **Financial Sustainability and Workforce Planning:** 1. EB to work closely with Donna Wiles (CFO) to develop a secure understanding of Trust finances, budget forecasting, audit requirements, statutory returns and financial compliance expectations. 2. Develop an annual finance and compliance calendar to ensure key deadlines, audits and reporting requirements are understood and monitored effectively. 3. Review projected pupil numbers and demographic trends across the Trust, identifying potential implications for future budgets and staffing structures. 4. Continue to review staffing structures across all schools to ensure they remain sustainable and aligned with future pupil numbers. 5. Prioritise staff retention and wellbeing, recognising the value of retaining experienced and high-performing colleagues within the Trust. 6. Utilise natural turnover and vacancy management wherever possible rather than automatically replacing staff who leave. 7. Carefully consider all recruitment decisions and use temporary contracts where necessary to maintain flexibility whilst pupil numbers remain uncertain.	*1. Review staffing structures against projected pupil numbers and budget forecasts.* *2. Evaluate staff retention, recruitment and workforce planning arrangements.* *3. Review opportunities for Trust-wide deployment of staff and shared expertise.* *4. Evaluate the effectiveness of Trustee monitoring arrangements and identify any further training or support requirements.* *5. Review progress against SEFs and School Development Plan priorities.* *6.Continue leadership development and succession planning discussions.* *7. Monitor financial performance and emerging risks through regular CFO reporting.*	1. *Evaluate the impact of workforce planning, staffing decisions and financial sustainability measures.* 2. *Review leadership capacity and succession planning across the Trust.* 3. *Review Trust finances and priorities for 2027-28.* 4. *Consider future organisational and leadership arrangements beyond September 2027.* 5. *Present recommendations and next steps to the Trust Board.*

	8. Explore opportunities to deploy staff across schools where vacancies arise, maximising expertise and retaining valued staff within the Trust. 9. Review leadership capacity and leadership structures across the Trust to ensure they remain effective, affordable and fit for purpose. 10. Review contracts, service level agreements and procurement arrangements to ensure value for money and effective use of resources. **Governance and Leadership:** 1. Strengthen Trustee visibility and understanding of school improvement priorities through an increased programme of school visits. 2. Explore a Trustee monitoring model whereby individual trustees take strategic oversight of a school's School Development Plan, providing both support and challenge to school leaders and reporting progress to the Board. 3. Embed Self Evaluation Frameworks (SEFs) across all schools to strengthen accountability, self-reflection and inspection readiness. 4. Continue to develop leadership capacity across the Trust through coaching, mentoring, professional development and collaborative working. 5. Ensure leaders at all levels have clear accountability for school improvement priorities and strategic objectives. 6. Review and update the Trust Risk Register, ensuring risks are identified, monitored and mitigated appropriately. 7. Strengthen succession planning at all levels to support long-term organisational stability. **Future Sustainability of the Trust:** 1. Continue to evaluate opportunities for partnership and collaborative working with other organisations		

	where these may benefit pupils, staff and the long-term sustainability of the Trust. 2. Support the Trust Board in considering future leadership, organisational and governance arrangements beyond 2027. 3. Ensure strategic decision-making remains focused on maintaining high-quality provision whilst securing the long-term future of the Trust.		
Success Measures:	• ***Staffing structures remain sustainable and aligned to pupil numbers.*** • ***Strong staff retention across all schools.*** • ***Vacancies managed strategically through workforce planning and internal deployment where appropriate.*** • ***Increased governor visibility and engagement across the Trust.*** • ***Governors demonstrate a secure understanding of school priorities and progress.*** • ***SEFs are embedded and support effective self-evaluation and improvement planning.*** • ***Financial risks are identified and mitigated effectively.*** • ***Trust leaders demonstrate increased confidence and understanding of financial management, compliance and governance requirements.*** • ***The Trust remains financially sustainable whilst continuing to deliver strong outcomes for pupils.***		

Areas for Strategic MAT development 2026 – 2028

- Inclusion Strategy and plan – statutory requirement from Sept 2026;
- Leadership restructure and staffing restructure in anticipation of falling rolls and subsequent reduction in budgets;
- Attendance – especially for vulnerable groups;
- School and Governing Board readiness for Ofsted inspection;
- Appointment of CFO for Sept 2027
- Appointment of CEO for Sept 2027
- Formalise arrangements with other MAT's to secure the future of Fern Academy Trust