

EQUA

Multi Academy Trust

Every Child, Every Chance

Business Plan 2021-23



Foreword by Roger Townsend - chair of trustees

The six schools which came together in April 2019 to form Equa Multi Academy Trust all have excellent track records. The trust board, which I am privileged to chair, is dedicated to building on these excellent foundations to deliver an outstanding education for all the children and young people in our care.

This Business Plan sets out very clearly our plans and aspirations over the next three years. Our plans are ambitious, but the individual child or young person is at the heart of everything we do. Inspired by the Christian ethos of our church schools we want to create an environment where we can nurture and develop the special talents of each of these individuals, and enable them truly to fulfil their potential.

Roger Townsend Chair of Trustees

A welcome from CEO

Every Child, Every Chance

Welcome to the 2020-2023 Business Plan for Equa Multi Academy Trust.

Equa is now in its third year of operation and has achieved a great deal since its inauguration. The Trust was founded on a strong moral purpose to support others, so that young people are enabled to achieve their very best. Therefore, our success should always be measured against the positive impact we have had on the life of every pupil. The drive for high standards is embodied by the improvement in attainment that has been seen in all of our academies.

An outstanding Trust needs an outstanding workforce and this is central to our success. We will continue to invest in our staff, identify and promote talent and use the skills of individuals to make us stronger.

We have already achieved a great deal but are ready to go further. Through ongoing self-analysis, review and learning from others, we strive to be one of the best Trusts in the country and be renowned for excellent practice in all areas. Following a period of establishment, we are now ready to expand Equa, by inviting new partners to join us in this exciting phase of our development so that we work together to deliver excellence for our pupils.

This Business Plan provides a clear strategic direction for the coming years, which will enable the Trust to fulfil its ethos of giving 'Every Child, Every Chance'

Equa Multi Academy Trust is a group of high achieving schools providing excellence in education for 2 - 19 year olds. We are a family of five church primary schools, a nursery, and a secondary school, all based in rural Wiltshire.

At the heart of everything we do is the child. It is our mission to provide the very best education to all young people, whatever their age or stage, in our rural location. We know that education can transform lives, providing social mobility by tackling rural deprivation, and overcoming barriers.

Through fantastic teaching and learning, wrap around holistic care, and amazing enrichment and leadership opportunities, we ensure that all children thrive by developing self-esteem and high aspirations, to make sure no child is left behind.

Our values are at the core of all we do, and we cherish the faith foundation of our primary schools. We believe that each child is gifted and unique, and deserves to be nurtured in our schools, whatever their background.

Sarah Lowkis CEO

What drives us



EQUA

EQUA's ambition is to leave the world a better place than we found it.

We do this through our children. By enabling our pupils to find their place in the world, and by arming them with the tools to help to make the world a better place.

So, we give every child every chance of a great education, that way they have every chance of carving out their place in the world.

And we blend education with sustainability, environmentalism, adaptability and multi-culturalism – so that the world can be a slightly better place for having EQUA pupils in it.

Our Vision

EQUA pupils find their place in the world and leave the world a slightly better place.



EQUA
Multi Academy Trust



Our Ethos

Every child, every chance

We live by one word, equity – the inalienable right of every child to an education that will give them every chance in life. We invest in our children, so that they reap the return throughout their lives, and cumulatively, the world benefits.

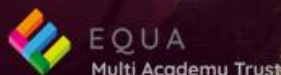
It demands EQUA provides the highest educational standards for every child – from 2 to 19 - through a progressive, challenging, aspirational and broad curriculum, excellent teaching, superb pastoral care, great facilities and exceptional opportunities, for all.

There is no one formula. We recognise the unique talents of every child, and help them to flourish as individuals. How? By building joined-up education around each pupil, from nursery to primary to secondary school - so we can build richness, diversity and deep understanding into each child's educational journey.

Our true success is not an exam result but a student's life lived and the world they help build. Christianity, multi-culturalism, sustainability and environment are as important as any subject. They are the keys to pupils becoming good local and global citizens.

Unless we continue to grow, our children can't. It is why EQUA is agile and progressive with education, technology & digital learning.

Our standards are high, but we never standardise. EQUA values and actively maintains the unique nature of all the schools within the Trust. As individual schools we are brilliant, but as a community of schools we will be exceptional.



Our Culture

Our culture is fuelled by EQUA's core beliefs:

The equal of everyone

A good education is a right not a privilege, and with the right education anything is possible for any child. EQUA does not just give every pupil an equal chance to learn, we go the extra mile for every pupil, so that they will have every chance in life.

A world of difference

Our strength lies in our differences not our similarities. EQUA creates the conditions where natural differences can flourish and individuality can grow. We prize diversity and recognise that we will all learn and grow when we acknowledge and harness our differences.

There's always better

No one ever advanced by standing still. That's why we push, question, are ceaselessly curious, constantly challenge and are comfortable to take risks. EQUA will always be the enemy of the average, never accept second best and tirelessly adapt to and adopt the future of education.

Rural village as global village

Local community and global perspective must seamlessly co-exist in life, and it starts at school. EQUA ensures our schools blend an awareness of the local environment with environmentalism and sustainability, they combine British values and global citizenship, and they unite Christian ethos as a CofE school with religious diversity and multi-culturalism.

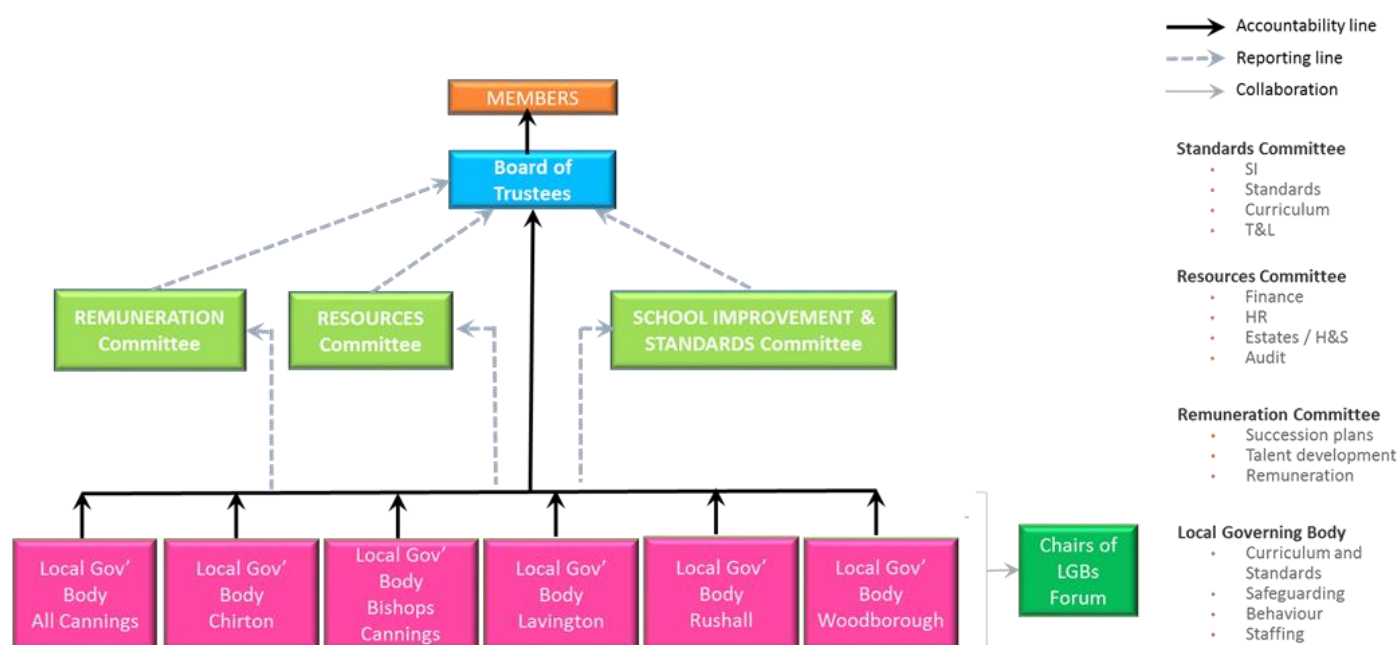


Leadership and Governance – Accountability Framework

A clear scheme of delegation clearly lays out the delegated authority through the MAT.

This works on a principle of earned autonomy with a high level of delegation to head teachers and local governing bodies. However, when there is an area of underperformance, which needs additional support from the trust to ensure rapid improvement, the level of autonomy is reduced. The intervention triggers are clearly laid out within the scheme of delegation and school improvement strategy.

Our Governance Model



Our Members and trustees

We are fortunate to have a very strong governance framework across all layers in the trust. Our board is made up of highly skilled individuals who work together as a high performing team. This is achieved through careful skills analysis, proactive recruitment, high quality induction, a schedule of training, and a combination of internal self-evaluation and external reviews.

Please click [here](#) for bios and [here](#) for the Articles of Association.

Local Governing Bodies

Local governing bodies are the guardians of their school's educational standards, ethos and culture. We have a clear emphasis on effective governance, and provide the processes and structures to further develop governor's skills to be strong in their roles. To support local governance Equa provides a recruitment and induction process (including foundation governors, linking with the Salisbury Board of Education (SDBE)), a comprehensive training programme, a link trustee to aid two way communication, support for clerks, a chairs' forum and an online sharing platform.

Please click [here](#) for terms of reference

Equa School improvement strategy

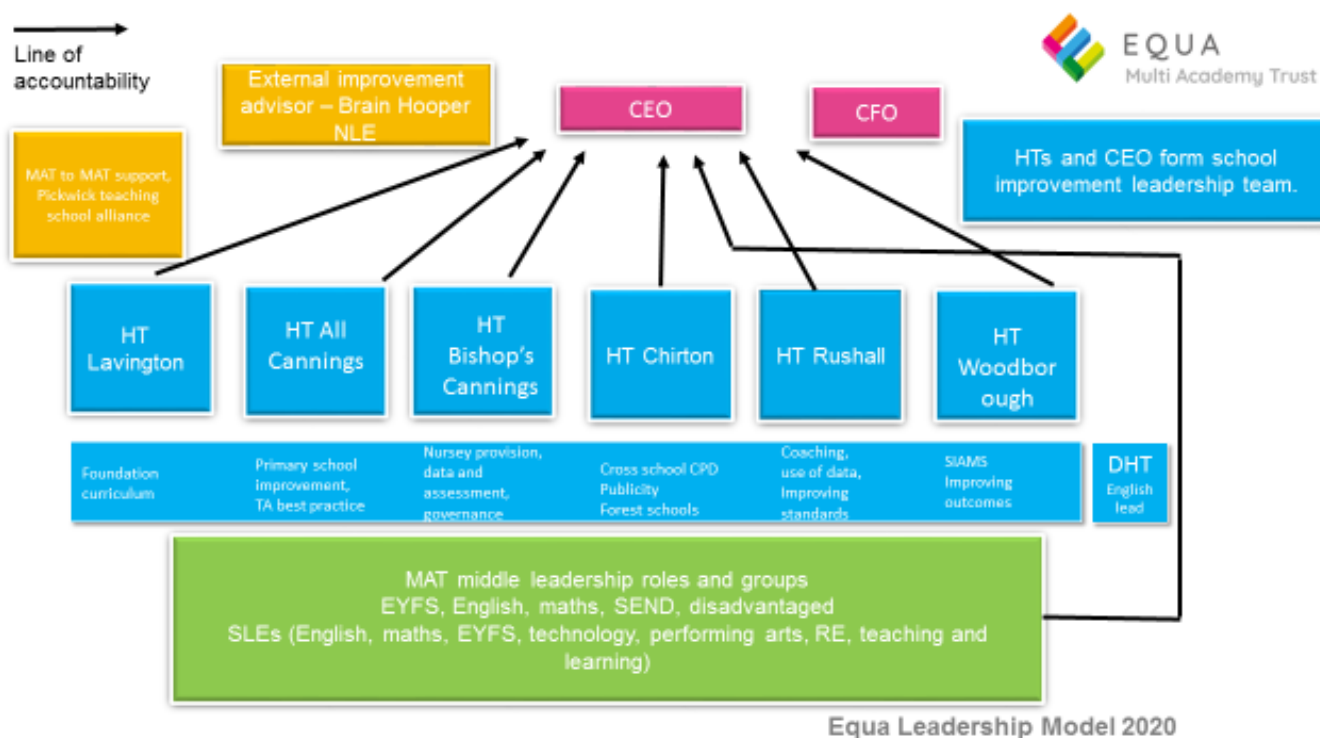
We have a central school improvement team of dedicated experts in primary and secondary education. At Equa, we put the child at the centre of all we do, to provide excellence in education across all of our schools, so that every child can fulfil their potential, whatever their background, age or stage.

By working across schools, the very best practice and research in education can be shared so that schools continue to grow and develop to meet the needs of every child.

All our headteachers form part of the school improvement team, with their particular strengths and experiences utilised to support all Equa schools.

External support and challenge is provided by Brian Hooper, OBE. Brian has an extensive track record of moving schools from inadequate to outstanding. In addition, he was the founding CEO of Ambitions Multi Academy Trust, a member of the Head Teacher Board for the South West, DFE education advisor, and facilitates the CEO induction programme for the region.

EQUA MAT is committed to high quality professional development, and career opportunities for all staff. We seek to develop the very best staff, and to ensure that they are fully supported, as we help them to further their own careers by developing middle leadership across schools. Our subject strategic leads form a high performing team, which leads school-to-school improvement in their specialist areas. We have a team of SLEs (specialist leaders in education), supporting colleagues across Equa in their areas of expertise.



Our model

Please click [here](#) for the full strategy.

Culture of Collaboration

At Equa we thrive on collaboration, and realise the importance of working with other MATs and schools, to both be supported and to provide support, and to ensure we are at the forefront of educational best practice.

We have many formal links and partnerships as well as informal ones. Examples of formal partnerships are with the West Wilts Alliance (secondary based), Pickwick Teaching School Alliance (primary support), WASSH and PHF (secondary and primary heads forums), and Devizes and Lavington School clusters. Through these forums, both formal and bespoke CPD programmes are accessed as well as the sharing of resources. We have a formal partnership with White Horse Federation, with shared sixth form provision across the two MATS.

The financial team

Our financial team is led by Sandra Reynolds, CFO. Sandra has over five years of leading financial services in another Multi Academy Trust, and so brings a wealth valuable experience and skills to Equa. Sandra provides and coordinates central services to ensure financial probity and efficiency across Equa Schools, thereby securing more funding directed towards the children, placing high quality resources at the point of delivery.

School business managers are accountable to the CFO and report directly to the CFO, whilst retaining day-to-day line management from the Headteacher.

Services

All schools are offered the following centralised services:

- Human Resources
- Payroll
- School Improvement
- Specific contracts: School Management Systems, insurance
- Financial management
- Asset management
- Estate management
- Compliance

This offer will be constantly reviewed and evaluated to ensure the most efficient and effective operation of Equa, and each and every school within the trust, ensuring schools get the best value and services from funding received.

Financial and Business Management

To ensure that the Trust has financial and business arrangements that are efficient and effective, and enable it to deliver on its commitments to grow and prosper and deliver value for money across all the Trust.

Delivering best practice, minimisation of risk, and for management of resources to be concentrated to the front line of our academies. This means that our Academies can focus on improving Teaching and Learning and delivering educational excellence.

A key strategy is to promote and develop the Trust and the services we offer to a wider cohort of schools. We are committed to strengthening the Trust and ensuring future sustainability, efficiency and growth.

Partnerships

At Equa we believe that strong and effective working partnerships are key to our continued success and growth.

The partners we work closely with include the Diocese of Salisbury Board of Education, Wiltshire council, the Regional Schools' Commissioners Office (RSC), the DFE and Bath Spa University.

Objectives 2021- 2023 Every Child, Every Chance

Objective 1

To deliver "Every child, Every chance" to ensure that every child in our schools is nurtured, supported and enabled to fulfil their potential. This is achieved through the highest standards of education, exceptional enrichment opportunities and superb pastoral care.

Measures

- All schools have their own clear vision and strategy, aligned to Equa's.
- All church schools have clear Christian values, which are fully lived out in everyday practice.
- All schools have a high-quality broad and challenging curriculum offer, which enables all children to make good progress by knowing and remembering more, [see](#) thus being able to do more.
- The enrichment offer is rich and diverse, and ensures all children gain cultural capital which broadens outlook, raises aspiration and self-esteem.
- Pastoral care is excellent, ensuring all children are nurtured and flourish.
- Every teacher is a good teacher, every lesson is a good lesson.
- Children make excellent progress in our schools, shown by positive progress scores, placing our high performing schools in the top 20% nationally, and strong attainment outcomes which are well above national benchmarks.
- All schools achieve at least 'Good' Ofsted ratings, with outstanding settings maintaining their status and all schools working towards this.
- All schools achieve at least 'Good' SIAMS judgments, with schools rated as excellent maintaining their status and all other schools working towards this.
- The gap for disadvantaged learners narrows, through helping every child to become a fluent reader with high level vocabulary acquisition, across the curriculum.
- There is a clear strategy for identifying pupils who have gaps in their learning, and their needs will be met through quality first teaching and bespoke interventions.
- Each school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities, and ensures individual's needs are met.
- Pupil voice is heard and used to inform individual school improvement plans, driving forward initiatives which are close to our children's hearts.
- All schools deploy the trust's technology strategy effectively to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School improvement plans, and the impact of actions taken, evidenced through LGBs monitoring and evaluation. ▪ External validations such as SIAMS self-evaluation, SIAMS inspection, Ofsted inspections. ▪ Peer review and self-evaluation processes such as pupil voice, work scrutiny, teacher voice, curriculum plans, lesson observations and follow up dialogue. ▪ Data analysis; ISDR, ASP, external performance measures, internal data analysis. ▪ Stakeholder voice.

Strategy 1

Achieve ambitious outcomes for every child

Tactics

- Develop the leadership of headteachers across the trust to build capacity.
- Ensure that every school has outstanding teachers, to model best practice to all.
- Deploy a thorough, evidence based, self-evaluation framework across all schools, which informs school improvement.
- Utilise strengths across the Trust, to develop our leaders at all levels – our ‘above the line’ people.
- Implement effective school and Equa improvement plans, to deliver against the measures set ensuring high impact.
- Ensure that every child is challenged to achieve the best possible outcomes, with more children achieving greater depth benchmarks in primary schools and more 7-9 grades /distinction* at KS4 and A* grades at A’ level.
- Deliver a robust appraisal process and framework which holds staff to account to deliver the school improvement plan.
- Develop leadership of teaching and learning across the trust, including the effective deployment of SLEs (specialist leaders in education).
- Establish review teams to determine the quality of subject leadership across schools, for both core and foundation subjects.
- Ensure the support, challenge and training provided by the external school improvement partner moves the trust forwards.
- Further develop MAT wide CPD, which is directly linked to the MAT improvement plan.
- Ensure all church schools are working towards or meeting the excellent level descriptors in the SIAMS self-evaluation framework.

Strategy 2

Ensure strong wider educational outcomes for all children, including disadvantaged, SEND and vulnerable learners

Tactics

- Ensure the MAT improvement plan is robust and centred on improving the curriculum in each school, and the quality of teaching improves to ensure all children make good progress.
- Further develop links with teaching school alliances to support any needs which cannot be met at MAT level.

- Ensure data is secure, through clear moderation and standardisation processes across schools.
- Deploy intervention strategies to address underperformance by class or child.
- Implement strategies to improve reading and writing in all schools, and vocabulary acquisition, ensuring disadvantaged learners do not fall behind.
- Use best practice strategies to support disadvantaged learners and their families.
- Implement formal support procedures for any teacher falling below expected standards in any area of their practice.
- Ensure robust attendance strategies are used to secure high levels of attendance throughout the age ranges.

Strategy 3

Nurture a trust-wide culture of school participation and high aspirations to deliver Every Child Every Chance

Tactics

- Ensure schools work together to foster a culture of collaborative working on enrichment programmes to extend opportunities to all children.
- Develop outdoor learning spaces in schools and adopt forest school principles.
- Lead practitioners for spirituality within each school further develop planned and unplanned opportunities.
- Further develop the AG and T_able, gifted and talented) programme which is open to children from all schools.
- Ensure vulnerable and disadvantaged learners are supported to access enrichment opportunities and programmes.
- Maintain Breakfast Clubs and after school provision in every primary school.
- Provide wider opportunities for the enrichment and leadership curriculum across all schools and for all children.
- Put high quality pastoral care in place for all children, with additional support for those who most need it.
- Actively solicit input from Pupil voice, and use it to shape the school improvement plan.
- Set up an Equa school council across schools and other action projects, developing courageous advocacy.

Current provision

School	Pre-school or nursery	Breakfast clubs	After school care
All Cannings	No – one in the village not attached to the school	Yes 7.45 – school start	Yes until 6 pm
Bishop's Cannings	Pre-school as part of the school	Yes 7.45 – school start	Yes until 6pm
Chirton	Chirton Pips pre-school 9 am – 3pm	Yes 8.00 –school start	Yes until 5 pm

Rushall	Nursery as part of EYFS provision	Yes 7.50 – school start	Yes until 6pm
Woodborough	No	Yes 7.45- school start	Yes until 6 pm
Secondary Schools			
Lavington	No	Premises open from 7.50 am with breakfast available.	Clubs

Strategy 4

Deploy an effective technology strategy across all schools which enhances the quality of teaching and learning and pupil engagement.

Tactics

- Support all children have good access to technology in their homes.
- Provide access to outstanding technology in all schools.
- Ensure blended learning is of a high standard in all schools so all children make excellent progress if studying at home.
- Develop lead practitioners within each school to implement an outstanding technology strategy.
- Use pupil voice to provide immediate feedback to evolve virtual classrooms.
- Ensure teaching staff are connected across schools using G suite/Teams and use it as a tool to improve practice, jointly plan resources and to reduce teacher workload.
- Embed excellent use of virtual platforms to effectively engage children in projects within and across schools and for staff training delivered across schools.
- Use G suite to set up a virtual Equa office for managing resources.

Objective 2

Develop our culture, brand and communication channels to engage and inform the Equa community and the wider communities we serve so all share our vision.

Measures

- Equa's distinctiveness is visible in communications, websites, use of social media, press releases etc. Specific skills of trustees are tapped into to ensure there is an effective marketing strategy.
- Schools and Equa have a highly visible and positive profile in the communities they serve.
- Strong external partnerships are created.
- Equa brand becomes well developed.
- Church schools continue to foster, enhance and nurture Christian values, with judgments of 'excellence' against the SIAMS framework.
- Staff retention and recruitment is high (against measures set out in the recruitment and retention policy)
- Staff wellbeing is at the forefront of planning and this is enhanced through the impact of Equa.
- Equa builds a reputation as employer of choice.

Evidence

- Equa newsletter,
- Social media activity,
- review of school and Equa websites,
- SIAMS inspections and self-evaluation,
- feedback from annual meeting with SDBE and MAT review meeting with RSC,
- stakeholder feedback,
- Christian distinctiveness and spirituality are promoted well, the profile of Equa on social media is high, feedback from annual meeting with SDBE and MAT review meeting with RSC and DFE, engagement with the LA, staff feedback is positive towards the impact of Equa on their wellbeing

Strategy 1

Raise the profile of Equa through active promotion of the trust and schools

Tactics

- Ensure that the Equa brand is consistently presented in all communications and staff / governors act as brand ambassadors.
- Maintain and enhance the Trust website to ensure relevance and topicality, and alignment to 'Every Child, Every Chance'.
- Articulate what makes Equa special, and demonstrate that this is lived out through our schools' vision and values.
- Develop the marketing strategy, including enhanced use of social media as a promotional tool.
- Encourage schools to proactively seek ways to support and engage with their local communities
- Embed the recruitment and retention strategy to ensure Equa is an employer of choice.
- Ensure the Equa newsletter and stakeholder events are celebrating success and highlight the opportunities being part of Equa brings.
- Ensure individual school websites reflect Equa.
- Engage pupils in news stories, to share those things they value and are most proud of in relation to their school to a Trust wide audience.
- Conduct an annual survey of key stakeholders – governors, parents, staff, pupils.

Strategy 2

Enhance staff wellbeing, and the recruitment and retention of staff

Tactics

- Conduct annual staff wellbeing surveys and use responses to shape strategy.
- Produce a people plan which sets out the offer for all Equa staff, including career progression routes.
- Embed the Equa recruitment and retention strategy, including the benefits of being an Equa employee.

Strategy 3

Foster, enhance and nurture the Christian values for Church schools

Tactics:

- Ensure all church schools achieve or are working towards excellence when benchmarked against the SIAMS framework.
- Continue to promote active dialogue, and engagement with SDBE to build Equa's profile as an active promoter of the church school ethos, and to gain from their expertise.

Objective 3

Growth without compromise

To grow, without compromising our values, ethos and quality of delivery for our children, recognising the challenges facing individual schools.

Measures

- The numbers on roll across the trust increase in relation to capacity (currently 1534 against capacity of 1524 – due to oversubscription at Lavington and All Cannings)
- The number of pupils / children in nursery, sixth form and wrap around care increase (if not at a maximum)
- Traded services increase as shown by increased annual turnover and savings made.
- The number of schools increase towards the target size of 15-20 schools within 5 years.
- Teaching and learning is of a high standard across all schools, securing high outcomes (cross over with objective 1)
- Post 18 outcomes are high with evidence of aspirational destinations.
- Equa's vision is well expressed vision and secures buy in from potential joiners.

Evidence

- NOR analysis,
- growth of the trust,
- staff wellbeing surveys,
- data analysis,
- recruitment and retention analysis
- Ofsted and SIAMS outcomes

Strategy 1

Embed a growth strategy which is well executed

Tactics:

- Deliver a clear growth strategy, which is understood by all.
- Become a sponsor MAT.
- Set up the communications and marketing committee, with clear TOR.
- Create influence/syndicating campaign to target schools and develop relevant promotion and process materials.
- Further develop strong links with the RSC, LA and SDBE to increase the Equa profile.
- Ensure school and trust leaders maximise networking opportunities to increase Equa profile.
- Further develop working links and support for identified schools.
- Establish a proven track record of improving outcomes in schools.
- Ensure schools have the leadership and school improvement capacity to immediately support another school.
- Attract at least one additional secondary school into Equa.

Strategy 2

Further develop traded services

Tactics:

- Track the financial benefit of the traded services, and develop strategy to maximise opportunities.
- Develop and train back office staff to work at the centre in a proactive, innovative and efficient way.
- Once capacity is there, increase traded services by selling services to other schools

Strategy 3

Maximise growth opportunities for existing schools

Tactics:

- Grow existing schools towards capacity where schools are not at PAN (through effective school leadership, improved pupil outcomes, wider opportunities, wrap around care, nursery provision etc. and promotion of these factors).
- Maximise opportunities for setting up nursery provision, wrap around care et

