Kent County Council
Proposer Application Template
Proposed New Paddock Wood Primary School

Proposer Details

Please complete the forms below using the boxes provided and return via email to the school.consultations@kent.gov.uk by no later than midnight on 19 October 2026 for the attention of Nick Abrahams Assistant Director Education (West Kent).

(Personal information will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR)

Main contact for this application	
1	**Name:** [redacted]
2.	**Address:** [redacted]
3.	**Email address:** [redacted]
4.	**Telephone number:** [redacted]
About your organisation	
5.	**How would you describe your organisation or group?** Aletheia Academies Trust became a multi-academy trust in late 2014, founded by Saint George's Church of England School, Shorne Church of England Primary School and St Botolph's Church of England Primary School. Today we are a family of 19 academies across Kent and Medway serving children from age 3 to 18: nurseries, primary, junior, secondary and grammar schools and two all-through schools. Two schools have a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP), with a further three planned to open in September 2027. We are a mixed trust: our Church of England academies sit alongside schools with no religious designation, including two secondary schools. Each keeps its own identity and roots in its community, we describe ourselves as a family of schools that are 'siblings, not clones', and all welcome families of all faiths and none. Our vision is to improve the life chances of local children in the communities we serve, through schools that are highly aspirational, inclusive, creative, collegiate and safe. Improvement is school-led and trust-enabled. Our 'Adapt and Adopt' framework sets out clearly where schools follow statutory requirements, where they adopt common trust systems for coherence and quality, and where headteachers adapt to their context. Leaders and teachers work together in Best Practice Teams and Subject Development Networks, supported by a central team covering school improvement, inclusion, finance, people and culture, estates, IT and digital infrastructure,

	governance, data, safeguarding, marketing and attendance. We train our own teachers and leaders through our own school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) provision, early career support and NPQs. We have recent, direct experience of opening and growing new provision with Kent County Council (KCC): we opened the permanent facilities at Alkerden Church of England Academy in Ebbsfleet in September 2026 and have expanded and relocated Rosherville Church of England Academy into a new building funded through KCC's Basic Need programme and the DfE's Rebuilding Schools Programme, which also opened to pupils in September 2026. We are also currently working with the KCC team to deliver a brand-new SRP at Knole Academy for September 2027. Indeed, we have long enjoyed a positive and collegiate relationship with KCC. Schools that have joined us describe Aletheia as an ethically motivated trust, and that is how we work. We take on schools because we believe we can improve the life chances of the children in them, whatever the school's starting point, and several of our schools joined us when they were in very difficult circumstances. The Department for Education has entrusted us with supporting schools through its school improvement offer for trusts, and every school we were asked to support improved its Ofsted outcome.
7.	**Tell us about schools you are currently working with:** **a) Please provide details of the schools you are currently running/sponsoring including the most recent OFSTED outcomes and the latest published assessment data.** We run 19 academies. Ofsted outcomes and headline published measures for each school, with brief context and improvement plans where needed, are set out in table 2 of the Supporting Information section. Kent – Gravesham, Dartford and Ebbsfleet: Saint George's CofE School (all-through); Alkerden CofE Academy (all-through, opened September 2026); Gravesend Grammar School; Shorne CofE Primary; St Botolph's CofE Primary; Holy Trinity CofE Primary and Nursery; Rosherville CofE Academy; Whitehill Primary and Nursery; Sedley's CofE Primary; Stone St Mary's CofE Primary; Horton Kirby CofE Primary; Sutton-at-Hone CofE Primary. Kent – West Kent and the Medway Valley: Ditton CofE Junior School, Aylesford; Knole Academy, Sevenoaks. Medway: Halling Primary; Cliffe Woods Primary; Rainham Mark Grammar School; Riverside Primary and Nursery; Twydall Primary and Nursery. Ofsted: 16 of our 18 inspected schools are Good, or, where no overall grade was given, Good or better in every judgement. The 2 currently not holding Good judgements were last inspected prior to joining AAT. Six schools hold Outstanding judgements: behaviour and attitudes and personal development at Cliffe Woods Primary, Gravesend Grammar School and Riverside Primary; personal development and early years at Saint George's; personal development at Halling Primary; and early years at Horton Kirby. Alkerden opened in September 2026 and has not yet been inspected. None of our schools has yet been inspected under the renewed framework. Outcomes, 2026 (provisional; trust figures for qualifying schools, compared with 2026 national figures at Key Stage 2 and the latest (2025) national figures for GLD and phonics, as 2026 figures for these are not yet published): the trust is at or above national on all nine measures in its statutory assessment report. 77.1% of children

	reached a good level of development (national 68.3%) and 84.0% met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check (national 80.0%). At Key Stage 2, results were above national in reading (76.4%; national 75.0%), writing (76.2%; national 73.0%), mathematics (75.5%; national 75.0%) and grammar, punctuation and spelling (78.1%; national 74.0%). 63.6% of pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined (national 63.0%), and 39.7% of pupils scored full marks in the Multiplication Tables Check (national 37.0%). Secondary Outcomes 2026 (DfE provisional): Attainment 8 scores - 67.9 Gravesend Grammar, 41.3 Knole Academy, 42.1 St George's CE, and 63.1 RMGS, compared with a national figure of 46.2. Grade 4+ in English and maths was 99.5% Gravesend Grammar, 58.7% Knole Academy, 63.9% St George's CE, and 97.9% RMGS, compared with 64.8% nationally. At grade 5+, outcomes were 97.7%, 35.7%, 39.9% and 88.9% respectively, compared with 46.3% nationally. **b) To what extent are you supporting and/or working with other schools in their school improvement and what impact has this had, or is having?** Our School Improvement Team includes experienced senior and executive leaders and Ofsted inspectors, with primary, secondary and grammar school expertise. Support is matched to need: intensive support, diagnostic review and executive leadership where a school faces serious challenge, and collaborative, peer-led improvement where a school is strong. Every school has a 180-Day Improvement Plan. Through the Department for Education's Trust School Improvement Offer (TSIO), we have supported several schools in recent years. Each one improved and secured a positive, improved Ofsted outcome. The schools and the DfE both provided very positive feedback on the quality and impact of that support. Within the trust, schools in serious difficulty have been stabilised and then improved. Rosherville CofE Academy joined us in 2018 after a Requires Improvement judgement, at a time when its culture and leadership were in serious difficulty. It was judged Good in 2022. In 2026, 81.8% of its pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined (national 63%), and 72.7% scored full marks in the Multiplication Tables Check, the highest in the trust. The school has now moved into a new DfE/KCC-funded building with a PAN of 60, so it can grow to two forms of entry. When Halling Primary joined us in 2022, it was going through a period of genuine difficulty after a breakdown in leadership that had affected staff, families and the wider community. The trust restored stable leadership quickly; in 2023 Ofsted judged the school Good, with personal development Outstanding, and in 2026 its early years (89.1%) and phonics (93.2%) results were among the best in the trust. Beyond our own academies, members of our central team have led improvement in Medway schools as headteachers, executive headteachers and a Local Leader of Education, and our teacher training provision trains new teachers for schools across the area.

8.	**How many schools do you have DfE approval to open in the next 2 years?** None. We have no other new schools in the pipeline.	
9.	**Did you put together this application with support from another company or organisation?**	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
10.	**If yes, please list the name(s) of the organisation(s) and clearly describe the role they played in developing your application. Please also describe the role (if any) you envisage for them in setting up and/or running the Academy if your application is successful:** Not applicable.	
11.	**Through its members, directors or otherwise, does the company limited by guarantee have any formal or informal links (e.g., financial, philosophical, or ideological) with any other organisations within the UK or overseas? These may include other Academy or Free School groups; other institutions; charitable bodies; and/or commercial or non-commercial organisations.** ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**	
12.	**If yes, please provide details**. Aletheia Academies Trust has a formal relationship with the Church of England, principally through the Diocese of Rochester and the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education. This relationship is reflected in the Trust's Articles of Association and supports the preservation and development of the Christian ethos and character of its Church of England academies. Under the Trust's Articles of Association, its five Members comprise: • The Rochester Diocesan Board of Education (as the Diocesan Corporate Member); • The Bishop of Rochester; • The Archdeacon of Rochester; • The Area Dean of Gravesend; and	

	• The Chair of the Trust Board. The Members have responsibility for appointing Trustees to the Trust Board in accordance with the Articles of Association. The Trust works closely with the Diocese of Rochester to ensure that its Church of England academies maintain their distinctive Christian character and ethos, while recognising and supporting the individual ethos of all schools within the Trust, including those without a religious designation. The Trust has no declared formal financial, philosophical or ideological affiliations with organisations overseas.
13.	**Would your proposed school be designated as having a religious character or have a faith ethos? Please give details below.** We are open to discussion on whether the school should be designated with a religious character or have a faith ethos, and have not fixed a position at this stage. As a mixed trust, we run successful Church of England schools and successful schools with no religious character, so we are well placed to open and lead the school on either basis. Whichever model is chosen, the school would serve the whole of Paddock Wood and share the trust's inclusive values, welcoming families of all faiths and none. We would welcome discussion with KCC and the Diocese of Rochester to agree the arrangement that best meets the needs of the local community.

Section A: Essential Information

In this section, you should set out:

- Confirmation that the proposed school will meet each of the requirements set out in the essential information section of the specification published by the local authority, or an explanation of any deviations from the essential information section of the specification.

Aletheia Academies Trust proposes a new academy that will meet every requirement in the essential information section of KCC's specification. We confirm:

- Location: the school will operate from the new KCC-built school at Dumbrell Drive, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge TN12 6FR, and we will hold the site on the Department for Education's standard model academy lease.
- Type and age range: a mainstream, co-educational primary school and nursery for pupils aged 3 to 11, opening in September 2028.
- Capacity and pupil numbers: we will open with a PAN of 30 (1FE) and plan, staff and budget on exactly the pupil numbers in the specification – 60 pupils in 2028/29, rising to 210 in 2034/35. We will work with KCC on any future expansion as housing grows.
- Nursery: we will offer all 26 nursery places from the first year, including the funded early education entitlements.
- Specialist Resource Provision: we will run the 14-place SRP for children with ASD and SLCN as an integral part of the school, building up from the first expected placements in 2030/31, with places commissioned by KCC through statutory SEN arrangements.
- Admissions: as admission authority, we will adopt arrangements compliant with the School Admissions Code and take part in KCC's coordinated admissions scheme from the first admissions round. Proposed arrangements are summarised in the Inclusivity section.
- Community use and travel: the building will be available for appropriate community use outside school hours, managed via a Community Use Strategy, and we will produce a School Travel Plan that promotes walking and cycling, working with KCC's Traffic Impact Assessment.
- Funding: we accept the capital and revenue funding arrangements described in the specification, including KCC's Growth Funding Policy, the new-school start-up grant and the SRP start-up arrangements.
- Deviations: none from the essential information.

Section B: vision

In this section, you should set out your vision for the school, and how it will support every child to achieve and thrive. This should link clearly to the plan for education in Section C and be consistent with the other sections of the proposal. This should be no more than 2,000 words.

As well as meeting the expectations for this section, as set out in the model criteria (Annex F), if you wish to provide additional background information – for example about the demand for a school with a particular religious character, or additional evidence about the value of a particular educational philosophy – this should be included in the 'supporting information' section at the end of the proposal.

Our vision: a school at the heart of a growing town

Paddock Wood is changing fast. Its pre-school population grew by 43.9% between 2020 and 2025 as families moved into 464 new homes, and around 2,450 more homes are planned. Many children who join the new school will be new to the town. They need a school that is ready for them, and the town needs a school that helps new and established families become one community. Our vision is for Paddock Wood's new primary school to be that place: an ambitious, inclusive school where every child is known, valued and supported, every child learns to read, write, speak and calculate with confidence, and every child leaves for secondary school ready to thrive.

This is the purpose that unites all Aletheia academies: improving the life chances of local children. We are known as an ethical trust that supports schools and children whatever their background, barriers or starting point, and we judge ourselves by how well the children who find learning hardest do, not only by averages.

Our vision is deliverable: it is what our schools already do

The new school's strongest years will be its first ones, when every pupil is in the early years or Key Stage 1. That is where our trust excels. In 2026, 77.1% of children in our schools reached a good level of development by the end of Reception, against 68.3% nationally, and 84.0% met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check, against 80.0% nationally (provisional figures, qualifying schools, compared with 2026 national figures at Key Stage 2 and the latest (2025) national figures for GLD and phonics). Our Key Stage 2 results were above national in every subject. Small schools and small cohorts do well with us: Rosherville, with 23 pupils in Year 6, achieved 81.8% in reading, writing and mathematics combined, and every Year 6 pupil at Sedley's met the expected standard in mathematics. That matters for a school that opens with 60 pupils.

What every child will experience

- Inclusion as the organising principle of the school: barriers to learning and participation identified early and removed, Kent's Mainstream Core Standards met in every classroom, and a Specialist Resource Provision whose pupils belong fully to their classes.
- Excellent early foundations: a nursery and Reception that prioritise language, communication and early reading, with language screening from entry, so gaps are closed before they widen.

- Rapid help for pupils who need extra support with literacy and numeracy, including pupils at the early stages of learning English: daily phonics keep-up, small-group catch-up in reading and mathematics, and targeted language support so that every child can access the full curriculum.
- High-quality teaching for every child, guided by our Teaching and Learning Model, which combines explicit instruction with Kagan cooperative learning, with a strong emphasis on oracy and the foundational skills of phonics, handwriting and number.
- A broad, rich curriculum taught in sequence, planned from Nursery to Year 6 and adapted carefully while the school grows.
- Wider opportunities from the first term, including trust-wide events such as our Speaking Competition, music concerts, sports festivals and STEM events, with costs removed for disadvantaged pupils.
- Care for wellbeing and attendance through strong relationships with families, so children attend well, feel safe and are ready to learn.

Ambitious standards for every child

We expect pupils' attainment and progress to be above national expectations at every assessment point, and disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and children in care to achieve as well as other children. Our measures and targets are set out in Section C. Ambition is matched by realism: our curriculum, staffing and finances are planned around the actual pupil numbers in KCC's specification.

Responding to Paddock Wood's needs

KCC's data shows that, compared with other local wards, Paddock Wood's primary-aged children have the highest rates of EHCPs (5.0%) and early help support (9.8%) in the borough, and relatively high levels of free school meal eligibility, persistent absence and suspensions. The town is semi-rural, and specialist and family services can be hard to reach without transport. Our vision responds directly: early identification and support for SEND and speech and language needs; daily attendance monitoring and early help; a relational approach to behaviour that reduces suspensions; and families treated as partners from the start.

Families and the community as partners

Before opening, we will engage with families moving into the new developments, Paddock Wood Town Council, early years settings, health and family hub services, local churches and community groups, through open events, information in community spaces in the town, a school website and translated materials. From November 2026 we are commencing a South East pilot programme exploring enhanced family and community engagement with Exeter University, led by the former CEO of the Sutton Trust, a leading UK academic in social equity. Paddock Wood will be shaped by it from the start. After opening we will offer wraparound childcare, community use of the building, and a clear, welcoming route for families to raise concerns.

A hub for the community

We believe a school should be a hub for its community. Our schools respond constantly to what their communities need: food banks and uniform swaps, translators for letters and parent meetings, SEND workshops and parent support groups, and family learning in phonics, mathematics and IT so that parents and carers can help their children at home.

At Riverside and Twydall in Medway, children's centres on site bring health, early years and family support together. Our buildings are used by sports clubs, community groups and local organisations, through a trust lettings platform or by schools directly, and we bring whole communities together for events such as firework displays and festivals.

Our pupils give back too: volunteering, litter picks, campaigns for safer parking outside school, visits to care homes, community choirs and charity fundraising. In Paddock Wood, we would welcome partnerships with organisations such as the Paddock Wood Town Council, the Children's Centre and the Paddock Wood Community Centre, among others. The school's community offer will be shaped with these partners and with local families, so it meets the town's needs as it grows.

Working with other schools

The new school will strengthen local provision. We already participate actively in Kent's Community of Schools and district-based working, plan transition and training jointly with neighbouring schools including Paddock Wood Primary Academy, and work with local secondary schools, including Mascalls Academy, on transition to Year 7. Beyond Paddock Wood, we will share effective practice through local networks and the DfE's Regional Improvement in Standards and Excellence (RISE) programme, contributing particularly from our strengths in early years and early reading.

Supporting the small schools around Paddock Wood

We understand why some local schools, and the Diocese of Rochester, asked about the effect of a new school on the small rural schools that surround the town. We share that concern, because several of our own schools are small village schools. Indeed, we believe we can add further support to these schools through partnership and our faith foundation. KCC's phased plan, opening with one form of entry and reviewing demand each quarter, is designed to protect neighbouring schools, and we support it fully. Our admissions will prioritise children by distance from the school, so places go first to families in Paddock Wood's new and existing homes. We will not market the school to families whose children are settled in other schools, and we will not seek to open additional classes or expand faster than KCC's reviews allow. This is practice evidenced in our opening of other schools previously mentioned. We will also offer neighbouring schools practical partnership: places on our training and Best Practice Teams, shared SEND and speech and language expertise as our SRP develops, and joint events for pupils.

Getting to school safely

Traffic and parking at drop-off and pick-up were the most common concern among residents who otherwise supported the new school. Most families will live within walking or cycling distance, and we will build that into the school's culture from the start. A School Travel Plan will be in place before opening, developed with KCC and families, with safe walking and cycling routes, cycle and scooter storage, walking buses and park-and-stride arrangements with community venues. Breakfast and after-school provision will also spread arrivals and departures across a longer period. We will work with KCC's design team on the site, including its flood resilience and our emergency planning.

Why Aletheia Academies Trust

We have recent and successful experience of opening new schools successfully. We opened Alkerden CofE Academy in Ebbsfleet Garden City in September 2025 in temporary

accommodation to an initial Year 7 cohort, and more recently transferred into the permanent facilities from September 2026, welcoming new Year R, 1 and 7 cohorts. We worked closely with KCC, the developer (Henley Camland), their agents (Academy Consulting) and Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, and we have expanded and relocated Rosherville CofE Academy into a new Dfe/KCC-funded building. We know how to build a school from its first families, recruit a founding team and use the strength of a financially secure trust, shared leaders, specialist expertise and back-office services, to make a small, growing school both educationally excellent and financially sustainable. This was also exemplified in the opening of the primary phase at St George's Gravesend, another partnership project with KCC. We are also well versed in working with contractors to deliver new buildings.

Section C: plan for education

The plan for education must explain how the school will achieve your education vision. You should complete the following subsections:

Inclusivity

Proposals should demonstrate how the proposed school will be welcoming and inclusive of all pupils. Proposals should also show a clear plan for pupil integration and promoting community cohesion, with a view to ensuring all pupils can participate fully in life in modern Britain. This should be no more than 1,750 words.

Where the school is proposed to be designated as having a religious character, you should set out the role this will play in the school's operation. This should be no more than 500 words.

Inclusivity

Inclusion as the organising principle

We define inclusion as the deliberate design of equitable systems, high-quality teaching and targeted provision so that every learner, particularly the most vulnerable, experiences belonging, achieves strong outcomes and secures positive life chances. At Paddock Wood, inclusion would not be an add-on: it would shape the building, the curriculum, staffing and every relationship with families.

Trust leadership of inclusion

In 2026 the trust appointed a Director of Inclusion to its central executive team, placing inclusion at the heart of school improvement alongside curriculum, standards and finance. The Director of Inclusion brings relevant Kent experience, including advising on inclusion for newly arrived families and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. An established Inclusion Best Practice Team shares expertise across our schools. In most of our schools the SEND leader already sits on the senior leadership team; at Paddock Wood this would be a given from opening, with supervision from the Director of Inclusion. A trust safeguarding lead

supports audit and review so that policy and practice protect the most vulnerable children, including those with SEND and children in care.

Our Inclusion Strategy is closely aligned with the DfE's principles for SEND and inclusion and with Ambition 3 of the Kent SEND Strategy 2025–2028: needs identified early and met, wherever possible, in mainstream schools; high-quality adaptive teaching as the foundation; specialist expertise available inside mainstream schools; and families as partners in decisions about their children. From 2027 we will add a central trust speech and language therapist and a play therapist working at universal and targeted levels, and introduce early language screening across our schools, so communication needs are identified from nursery and Reception. This supports Kent's response to its local area SEND inspection and its commitment to early intervention and will strengthen early identification at Paddock Wood well before its SRP opens.

Understanding Paddock Wood

The school would open with a data-led understanding of the barriers its pupils and families may face. Compared with other local wards, Paddock Wood's primary-aged children have the highest rates of EHCPs (5.0%) and early help support (9.8%) in the borough, with free school meal eligibility of 24.6%, persistent absence of 13.9% and suspensions and exclusions of 1.4% (KCC specification, January 2025 census). The town is semi-rural and separate from Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, so specialist and family services can be harder to reach. The responsible Borough Council lists four Gypsy and Traveller sites in Paddock Wood, with further pitches planned in the growth area. Nationally, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils have among the highest suspension rates of any group, and more mobile lifestyles can mean interrupted schooling; flexible induction, attendance support and trusted relationships with families will therefore be priorities.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding arrangements will be in place before the first child arrives. The school will follow Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, with the headteacher as Designated Safeguarding Lead and a trained deputy, training for all staff on induction and every year, safer recruitment and a single central record, effective filtering and monitoring of online activity, and close work with Kent's safeguarding partners and Early Help. The trust safeguarding lead audits practice regularly, and a link governor would oversee safeguarding.

Attendance

We will follow the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance guidance: clear expectations shared with families before children start, first-day contact for every absence, early conversations and support plans as soon as attendance dips, and partnership with Kent's attendance and early help services. The Aletheia Hub shows attendance daily by pupil group, compared with national, Kent and Medway figures, and our Trust Attendance Lead supports the school. For families with more mobile lifestyles, we will work flexibly to keep places open and maintain continuity of learning.

Behaviour and bullying

Expectations of behaviour will be high, taught explicitly and applied consistently through a relational approach: clear routines, praise, restorative conversations and adjusted support where a child's needs require it; expectations are adapted where appropriate but never

lowered. Bullying, including prejudice-based and online bullying, will be recorded, dealt with quickly and reviewed by governors. Suspension is a last resort: pastoral support, early help and specialist advice come first, so pupils can stay in mainstream education. Any pupil who spends time in alternative provision will return with a planned, supported reintegration and a key adult.

A welcoming school from opening

Admissions will comply with the School Admissions Code and KCC's coordinated scheme from the first round. Children whose EHCP names the school will be admitted first. Our proposed oversubscription criteria, based on the arrangements at our primary schools, are: (1) looked after and previously looked after children; (2) children with a specific medical or social need, supported by professional evidence, that means they need to attend this school; (3) siblings; and (4) distance from home to school. Some of our Church of England schools, such as Saint George's, give priority to families who worship regularly. For Paddock Wood, whichever model is agreed, we propose open admissions with no faith-based oversubscription criteria, because the school is commissioned to serve the whole of a growing town, welcoming families of all faiths and none, and should not draw families away from surrounding church schools. SRP places will be commissioned by KCC, and nursery admissions will follow separate arrangements. EHCP consultations will be answered promptly, starting from how a child's needs can be met. Every class will have adaptive teaching and a published offer of ordinarily available provision in line with Kent's Mainstream Core Standards, and teaching assistants will be trained and deployed as skilled practitioners in learning and co-regulation. The SEND leader will hold or be working towards the NPQ for SENCos. KCC's District Dashboard will be used alongside trust data to check how well the full range of needs is met. A designated teacher will work with the Virtual School for children in care, and pupil premium will target the barriers described above.

We will make the school accessible to whole families: a named contact and early, clear communication for families whose experience of the SEND system has been difficult, and translated information, interpreting and help to access local services for newly arrived families. The building will meet BB103 guidelines, with acoustics, lighting and resource spaces designed for pupils with SEND, and an accessibility plan and equality objectives will be published before opening.

We will recruit staff on merit through open, safer recruitment, advertising widely to attract applicants from different communities and backgrounds, including people of all faiths and none. Uniform will be affordable, with options that accommodate religious dress. School meals will cater for religious, cultural and medical dietary needs.

Plan for pupil integration

Before opening: community information events on site and in local community spaces; joint planning with local schools, early years settings, the Community of Schools and KCC's SEND team; and home visits or visits to current settings for every child. On entry: stay-and-play sessions, careful transfer of records, enhanced transition for children with SEND or social care involvement, a staggered start, a key adult for each child, and early screening of language, communication and wellbeing. As the school grows, founding pupils will welcome each new cohort, the nursery will provide a natural route into Reception, and pupil and parent feedback will shape induction. In-year arrivals will have a planned induction

with a buddy, a needs check and targeted support for pupils new to English. SRP pupils will have a phased, personalised start planned with families and KCC.

Families and community cohesion

The trust's 2026–27 social equity programme will establish a trust-wide framework for engaging families, especially those less likely to engage with school, with practical two-way communication. At Paddock Wood this would include family forums, use of community spaces such as Paddock Wood Community Centre, and close links with Kent's Family Hub, health visiting and early help services. Our curriculum will reflect Paddock Wood's heritage and the diversity of modern Britain, teaching democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance explicitly through PSHE, RSHE, RE and history. Pupils will have a voice through a school council and leadership roles, and work with peers across Aletheia schools through joint projects, sport and leadership events. Participation in clubs, trips and the arts will be monitored by pupil group, with cost barriers removed. Prejudice-related incidents will be recorded, addressed and reviewed by governors, and staff will be trained to support discussion of difficult issues and to fulfil the Prevent duty.

Accountability and measures of success

The Headteacher will be accountable for outcomes and inclusion, with oversight from the Director of Inclusion and the Director of Education, a link governor for inclusion and SEND on the local governing body, and trustee oversight across the trust. Success will be judged first by outcomes: every pupil building secure foundational knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics, and being ready for the next step in their education, whether that is Year 1, Key Stage 2 or secondary school. As each stage is reached, we will measure this through the Good Level of Development, the Phonics Screening Check, the Multiplication Tables Check and Key Stage 2 results, aiming to be above national averages, with disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and children in care achieving well and gaps narrowing year on year. Alongside outcomes, we will track: a roll that broadly reflects the local community, including pupils with SEND, EAL or disadvantage; attendance gaps between groups narrowing year on year; suspensions below local and national averages, including for over-represented groups; and high and improving belonging and participation in pupil and parent surveys, alongside the DfE's enrichment framework. Progress against these measures and KCC's District Dashboard will be reported to governors each term.

Religious character

As set out in our answer to Q13, we have not fixed a position on religious character and would agree the arrangement with KCC and if appropriate the Diocese of Rochester. The trust already runs successful secular and faith schools, and under either model admissions would be open, with no faith-based oversubscription criteria, and the school would welcome families of all faiths and none.

Without a religious character, religious education would follow the Kent Agreed Syllabus, and collective worship would be broadly Christian, inclusive and invitational, with daily reflection time that pupils of all faiths and none can take part in. With a Church of England character, the school would have a Christian vision expressed through inclusive values that every family can share; collective worship would remain invitational and inclusive, and religious education would follow the Church of England Statement of Entitlement, at about

5% of curriculum time. In either case, the Local Governing Board would include governors of different faiths and of none, and we would engage with local churches, other faith groups and community organisations before opening.

Curriculum and teaching

The proposal should set out a broad and balanced, deliverable curriculum plan for a high-quality core curriculum that is consistent with the vision and pupil intake, alongside a coherent approach to teaching. This should be no more than 3,500 words.

You should also include an indicative list of subjects to be offered for each key stage, including early years foundation stage (EYFS) where applicable, with the number of hours spent per week on each. This is not included in the word count.

A school-based nursery and Specialist Resource Provision is included as part of the school; therefore, you should include details of these provisions and how they will be integrated within the wider school. This should be no more than 1500 words.

Curriculum and teaching

Principles

Our curriculum will be broad, balanced and ambitious for every pupil. It will cover the full National Curriculum, the Early Years Foundation Stage and religious education, sequenced from Nursery to Year 6 so that knowledge builds over time and pupils remember more of what they learn. Above all, it will belong to Paddock Wood. Pupils will learn about the town's hop-growing heritage and the farms around it, how the railway shaped its growth, the River Medway and the flooding that affects the area, and how the new housing developments are changing the town they live in.

Autonomy with alignment

Our schools have real ownership of their curriculum content, because leaders know their pupils and communities best. That autonomy sits within clear trust alignment where consistency makes the biggest difference for children. Every primary school teaches mathematics through White Rose Maths and early reading and handwriting through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds, a DfE-validated systematic synthetic phonics programme. All schools use PiXL for assessment, so we can compare, moderate and act on information across the trust. The rest of Paddock Wood's curriculum will be developed by its leaders with the School Improvement Team, so that it is local, engaging and inclusive, and removes barriers for every learner.

Curriculum decisions are made collaboratively. Subject leaders and senior leaders from every school meet in our Best Practice Teams and Subject Development Networks, where they share what is working, review curriculum sequencing and resources together, and agree trust-wide priorities. A new teacher leading a subject at Paddock Wood will be part of that network from their first term, working alongside experienced subject leaders from across the trust.

Building the curriculum as the school grows

We have done this successfully before. At Saint George's we built the primary phase up year by year, from Reception and Year 1 to a full school with Year 6, and Paddock Wood will follow the same proven approach. Each year group's curriculum will be written and quality assured a full year before those pupils reach it: Reception and Key Stage 1 plans before opening; the Key Stage 2 curriculum year by year from 2028 onwards; and the Year 6 curriculum in place well before the first cohort in 2032/33. The School Improvement Team will review each stage, so pupils always meet a well-planned, well-resourced curriculum.

The Aletheia Teaching and Learning Model

Teaching across the trust is guided by our Teaching and Learning Model, which is firmly rooted in research: Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance, John Hattie's studies of what makes the greatest difference to learning, and the work of Goddard, Hoy and Hoy on collective teacher efficacy. Lessons are built on clear explanations, modelling, checking for understanding and frequent retrieval practice. Alongside this, teachers use of cooperative learning structures which give every pupil a defined role and an equal voice, so that all children think, explain and contribute, not only those who put their hands up.

The impact in our schools has been striking. Children become confident communicators, and that confidence shows in their engagement, their behaviour and their outcomes. It carries into the rest of the curriculum: pupils who can explain an idea aloud write about it more fluently, and talking through new learning helps them embed knowledge so it stays with them. Structured talk is especially powerful for children with speech, language and communication needs, children new to English and those with low language on entry. The wider evidence agrees: the Education Endowment Foundation finds that well-structured collaborative learning adds around five months' progress.

Our commitment to oracy reaches beyond the classroom. The Trust Speaking Competition has run for many years and is one of the highlights of the trust calendar: pupils from every school prepare and deliver speeches, and the finalists are invited to visit the Houses of Parliament.

Reading, writing and language

Reading is the first priority, and early reading is one of the trust's clearest strengths. In 2026, 84.0% of Year 1 pupils in our schools met the expected standard in the phonics check, against 80.0% nationally, with Horton Kirby at 96.4% and Halling at 93.2% (provisional). Children will be taught Little Wandle Letters and Sounds daily from Reception, with fully decodable books matched to the sounds taught and same-day keep-up sessions for any child at risk of falling behind. Pupils will read every day, hear high-quality stories read aloud, and develop fluency and comprehension through Key Stage 2. Writing is taught through explicit grammar and sentence work, modelled and shared writing, and daily handwriting practice until handwriting is fluent. Grammar, punctuation and spelling is our strongest Key Stage 2 subject, with 78.1% of pupils meeting the expected standard in 2026, against 74% nationally.

We want every child to love reading. Each class will follow a reading spine of high-quality books, read aloud daily, alongside a well-stocked library, author visits and time to read for pleasure. Our texts are chosen so that children see themselves in the books they read and also meet lives and places different from their own. When a child finds a character who

shares their family, background, culture or experience, it tells them they belong, in their school and in the world of books. This matters for every child, and especially for those who are new to the town, new to English or who too rarely see their lives reflected in stories. Vocabulary is taught explicitly in every subject, which supports children with speech and language needs and those learning English.

Mathematics

We teach mathematics for mastery: whole-class teaching in small steps, concrete and pictorial representations, frequent fluency practice and same-day support for pupils who need it. Rapid recall of number bonds and multiplication facts is a trust-wide priority, with a daily times tables programme from Year 3; in 2026, 39.7% of our pupils scored full marks in the Multiplication Tables Check, against 37.0% nationally. Reasoning and problem solving are taught explicitly so that fluency turns into strong attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.

Stretching the most able

We have ambition for every child, including those capable of working at greater depth. Greater depth is already a trust strength: in 2026, Horton Kirby was 25.7 points above national in reading at greater depth, and Rosherville achieved double the national figure in mathematics at greater depth (provisional). We track pupils working at greater depth closely, provide enrichment that deepens their knowledge, and keep greater depth as a standing focus on the agendas of our Subject Development Networks, so that effective challenge is shared across every school.

Assessment that leads to action

PiXL assessments give teachers a precise picture of what each pupil knows. After every assessment point, short, sharp interventions are put in place straight away. They follow a 'do, rest, revisit' model: pupils learn and practise, the learning is left to settle, and it is then revisited so it sticks. This has shown great success for the children taking part. Since every school uses the same approach, leaders can compare results, moderate together and share the interventions that work best, so every child reaches their potential.

The wider curriculum

Science, history, geography, art and design, design and technology, computing, music, physical education, PSHE and relationships and health education, and religious education are taught as separate subjects with clearly sequenced knowledge. French is taught in Key Stage 2. Each class has a weekly music lesson following the Model Music Curriculum and two hours of PE. Computing develops essential digital skills, including using technology safely and responsibly, programming and creating digital content, supported by the trust's AI and Digital Lead. Art, design, music and drama develop creative skills, and every pupil will perform and exhibit their work during the year.

Our schools draw on strong external partners: the English and Maths Hubs, the Geographical Association, the Historical Association and the Design and Technology Association. Many of our pupils have also taken part in the Lower Thames Crossing engineering project, seeing how the science and mathematics they learn are used to build one of the country's biggest pieces of infrastructure.

Being a trust with primary, secondary and all-through schools gives our primary pupils something few small schools can offer. Secondary specialists teach languages in our

primary schools, music specialists lead music training for primary staff, and secondary sports leaders help to plan and run primary sports days. Specialists from both secondary and primary shape the curriculum to ensure consistency.

Music is a particular joy across the trust. Our schools work with Kent Music and the Medway music offer to provide instrumental lessons, every school has its own choir, and the trust choir performs at Young Voices and at our trust music festivals. In PE, pupils take part in local sports events, trust sports days and trust-organised competitions in specific sports.

Swimming will be taught at a local pool, with transport planned and budgeted. We will arrange this well in advance, so that lessons are in place long before pupils reach Key Stage 2 and every child can meet the national curriculum swimming requirements.

Learning outdoors

Forest School is an established and highly valued part of the curriculum across the trust's schools, and pupils engage with it enthusiastically. Regular sessions outdoors build confidence, resilience and independence as children manage their own risks, solve problems and work as a team. They develop language through shared, real experiences, improve physical health and wellbeing, and give children a lasting connection with nature. Forest School is especially valuable for children who find the classroom harder, including some pupils with SEND and those who need help to regulate their emotions, who often discover strengths outdoors that build their confidence back indoors. Paddock Wood's semi-rural setting is well suited to this provision.

We would also introduce OPAL, the Outdoor Play and Learning programme, to transform playtimes with rich, varied play. Playtimes make up a significant part of every school day, and in our schools that use OPAL the difference has been clear: fewer playground incidents, better behaviour and attendance, and a real step forward in how well children collaborate and work as a team, which they then carry back into the classroom.

The trust's digital strategy and its AI policy, now being developed, will keep every learner up to date in a fast-changing digital world, using technology confidently, safely and responsibly.

Teaching a mixed Year 1/2 class, then Year 2/3

KCC's specification asks for a Year 1/2 class at opening, which then crosses Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2029/30. We have done this before. Whitehill Primary currently teaches some year groups in split classes, and Rosherville taught mixed-age classes for several years before growing to single-age classes as its numbers rose. We have moved schools from mixed to single-age classes smoothly as they have grown, and small cohorts do well with us: in 2026 every Year 6 pupil at Sedley's (16 pupils) met the expected standard in mathematics, and Rosherville (23 pupils) achieved 81.8% in reading, writing and mathematics combined. In practice:

- Foundation subjects follow a two-year rolling programme, so no content is repeated or missed as pupils move through the school.
- Phonics, reading, writing and mathematics are taught at each pupil's year-group stage, with the class teacher and a teaching assistant teaching separate groups for core sessions, and Year 2 pupils taking the phonics re-check where needed.
- In 2029/30, when the class becomes Year 2/3, a part-time teacher will teach core subjects in the mornings, so the Year 3 pupils follow the Key Stage 2 programme in English and mathematics.

- We will work with KCC through its quarterly reviews to move to single-age classes as soon as demand allows.

Enrichment, wraparound and extended services

From the first term, families will have breakfast club from 8am and after-school care until 6pm. Our breakfast clubs make a real difference: children arrive calm, fed and ready to learn, start the day more regulated, and attend more regularly. We will look carefully at both running wraparound care ourselves and working with a trusted local provider, and choose whichever gives children and families the best offer, taking parents' and pupils' views into account. We would also look to establish holiday clubs as the school grows, working with local partners where that gives families the best offer, so that working families have reliable childcare and children enjoy active, sociable days with familiar adults.

Enrichment is planned, not left to chance. A dedicated member of our School Improvement Team leads enrichment across the trust and is implementing the DfE's enrichment benchmarks in every school. Participation is tracked for every vulnerable group, including pupil premium pupils, pupils with SEND and children in care, so leaders can see exactly who is taking part in clubs, trips and wider opportunities and act quickly where any group or individual is missing out. Paddock Wood will use the same approach from its first term.

Through theatre trips, music concerts, museum visits, residentials and visits from authors and speakers, pupils build cultural capital: the knowledge, experiences and confidence that open doors in later life. Every pupil premium child in our schools has the opportunity to take part in every trip and activity, and where money is the barrier, the school pays. A weekly programme of clubs, including sport, music, art and reading, will grow as the school grows, alongside trust-wide events such as the Speaking Competition, music festivals, sports festivals and STEM events.

The school will also be a hub for its community, as set out in Section B.

The school day

The school day will run from 8:45am to 3:15pm (indicative) giving 32.5 hours a week, all of which is compulsory, including registration, collective worship or assemblies, breaks and lunch. Breakfast club from 8am and after-school clubs and care until 6pm are voluntary.

Personal development and pupil voice

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned through religious education, PSHE, assemblies, the arts and the wider curriculum. Relationships and health education follows the statutory guidance, and parents will be consulted on the policy. Every pupil will take part in the trust's Young Leaders Programme, our own trust-wide programme that develops the character and leadership qualities children need to thrive: perseverance and resilience when learning is hard, confidence in speaking and listening, teamwork, responsibility for others and pride in their community. Pupils put these qualities into practice through real roles, from school council and play leaders to reading buddies and ambassadors who welcome new families. Pupils' voices reach beyond their own school: the Trust School Council brings pupils together from across the trust, gives every child a say in decisions, and chooses a trust charity to support each year. Pupils and parents will also have a genuine voice in school life, through the school council and a parents' forum, on decisions such as clubs, wraparound care, lunchtimes, the playground and the school's charity and community projects.

Careers education starts in primary school. Children's ideas about the jobs they could do form early and can be narrowed by stereotypes and background. Our primary careers days introduce pupils to people from a wide range of jobs, link what they learn in class to real working lives and help every child, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to aim high.

Transition into and out of the school

Transition into the school is described in the Inclusivity section. Transition to Year 7 will be planned with Mascalls Academy and other local secondary schools, with enhanced transition, including extra visits, key adults and shared plans, for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and pupils known to children's social care.

Professional development that raises quality

High-quality professional development is one of the trust's strongest commitments. Trust development days each year are planned well in advance around shared priorities, never ad hoc. This year's theme is belonging: giving every school the knowledge and skills to make sure all pupils and adults feel they belong, from adaptive teaching and SEND to stretching pupils to work at greater depth. Schools also hold their own development days on local priorities, and every trust and school day has planned training for all staff. Support staff come together across the trust to train on shared systems and share best practice. This sits alongside Best Practice Teams, Subject Development Networks, coaching, early career support and NPQs, so that from day one every member of staff at a new, small school has access to the expertise of 19 schools.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants are central to the quality of education in our schools. Their training is built around their needs, identified by each school and by asking teaching assistants themselves, and on every trust development day they have their own bespoke programme. Recent training has focused on SEND, including meaningful interactions from valued professionals, so that every adult knows how to support pupils' learning, communication and regulation.

We deploy Teaching Assistants in line with the best evidence. They add to the teacher's work rather than replace it: they are briefed on each lesson's purpose, work alongside the teacher to support all pupils to learn independently, and lead short, structured interventions they have been trained to deliver. The teacher keeps responsibility for every pupil's learning, including those with the greatest needs. Training on Little Wandle means that whichever adult teaches a phonics group, the quality is the same, because teaching assistants and teachers are trained to the same high standard.

Teaching Assistants have the same appraisal and development cycle as all staff, and clear routes to progress: Level 3 qualifications, Higher Level Teaching Assistant status, apprenticeships and, through our own teacher training provision, qualified teacher status. Several of our teachers began as parent helpers in our schools, became teaching assistants and then trained to teach with us.

Quality assurance of teaching

The headteacher will check teaching through regular visits, looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils, with support from trust subject specialists, Best Practice Teams and Subject Development Networks. Feedback leads to coaching and agreed next steps.

Termly reviews by the trust's School Improvement Team check that the curriculum is taught as planned and that pupils are learning it.

Indicative curriculum: hours per week

Teaching time per week in the 32.5-hour school week (8:45am to 3:15pm); the remainder is registration, collective worship or assemblies, breaks and lunch. In EYFS, learning is organised by area of learning through play and adult-led sessions; figures are indicative.

Subject / area	EYFS (Nursery & Reception)	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English, phonics & reading	Communication & language, literacy: daily, ~6 hrs	8.0	7.0
Mathematics	Mathematics: daily, ~4 hrs	5.0	5.0
Science	Understanding the world: ~2 hrs (all three areas)	1.5	2.0
History and geography	Understanding the world (included above)	1.5	1.5
Religious education	Woven through areas of learning	1.0	1.25
Art & design / design & technology	Expressive arts & design: ~2 hrs	1.5	1.5
Music	Expressive arts & design (included above)	1.0	1.0
Physical education	Physical development: daily, ~3 hrs	2.0	2.0
Computing	–	0.5	1.0
PSHE, RSHE & citizenship	Personal, social & emotional development: daily	0.75	0.75
French	–	–	0.5
Total taught hours (approx.)	Full EYFS curriculum through play and adult-led learning	22.75	23.5

Nursery and Specialist Resource Provision

The nursery

The 26-place nursery will open in September 2028 for children aged three and four and will offer all places in the first year. It will be run by the school itself as part of its Early Years Foundation Stage, so that children move seamlessly into Reception. It will meet the statutory requirements of the EYFS and deliver the universal 15 hours for all three- and four-year-olds and the 30-hour entitlement for children of eligible working parents, with additional paid hours and wraparound care available for families who want them. The split between 30-hour and 15-hour places would be agreed with KCC in light of local demand; our initial planning assumes around 16 children taking 30 hours and 10 taking 15 hours. The nursery will not offer places for two-year-olds at opening, but we would consider extending provision to two-year-olds, including the 15-hour entitlement for eligible families and the working-parent entitlement, if local need were identified with KCC.

The nursery will be led by a teacher with Qualified Teacher Status or Early Years Teacher Status, allowing a ratio of one adult to 13 children, supported by practitioners qualified to at least Level 3. Nursery and Reception will form a single EYFS unit under the EYFS Lead, sharing planning, assessment and outdoor provision. Priorities are communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, physical development and early

number. Language screening on entry, home visits and stay-and-play sessions will help us identify needs early, including emerging SEN, and build partnerships with parents; the SEND leader and Director of Inclusion will support nursery staff so that every child, including those with SEND, is fully included.

Early years is a particular strength of the trust. In 2026, 77.1% of children in our schools reached a good level of development, against 68.3% nationally, with Halling at 89.1% and Cliffe Woods at 83.3% (provisional). The founding team will draw on our nursery provision at Whitehill, Holy Trinity, Riverside, Twydall, Rosherville and Alkerden.

The Specialist Resource Provision (ASD and SLCN)

The SRP will be part of the school, not a separate unit, drawing on the trust's Inclusion Base model. Pupils will belong to a mainstream class and learn alongside their peers wherever appropriate, with timetabled sessions in the SRP base for targeted teaching, speech and language work, social communication and regulation.

- 2028–2030, before placements begin: all staff trained in autism and SLCN practice and the Mainstream Core Standards; the base used for small-group interventions; calm, visual routines across the school; links with KCC's Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and, from 2027, the trust's own speech and language therapist and play therapist.
- One term before the first placements, funded by KCC's SRP start-up arrangements: an experienced SRP Lead teacher appointed to plan provision, meet families and prepare transition.
- From 2030/31: placements build gradually, each with an individual plan linked to the pupil's EHCP outcomes and reviewed termly with families and professionals.

The trust already runs established inclusive provision, including The Lodge, a SEND facility opened in Saint George's primary phase in 2026. We work closely with KCC on developing inclusion bases and belong to national networks on resourced provision, including NASEN, Whole Education and the University of Southampton, which support development and quality assurance. Outcomes for SRP pupils, including progress against EHCP outcomes, attendance, time in mainstream classes and successful transitions, will be reported to governors and trustees each term.

Measuring performance

The proposal should set out plans for how key metrics will be determined, assessed and communicated. This should be no more than 2,000 words.

What we will measure

We will measure what matters for pupils and for Paddock Wood: attainment and progress, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and children in care, attendance, behaviour and suspensions, wider development, and the views of parents, pupils and staff.

Area	Key metrics	Ambition
Early years	Language screening on entry; Reception Baseline; Good Level of Development	GLD well above national, in line with the trust's 2026 outcome of 77.1% (national 68.3%)

Reading	Phonics Screening Check (Y1) and re-check; termly reading fluency checks	Phonics above national, in line with the trust's 84.0% (national 80.0%)
Mathematics	Termly PiXL assessments; Multiplication Tables Check (Y4)	MTC full marks above national, in line with the trust's 39.7% (national 37.0%)
End of KS2 (first cohort 2032/33)	Reading, writing, mathematics (expected and higher standard); progress	Combined expected standard well above national; disadvantaged pupils in line with other pupils nationally
Attendance	Overall, persistent and severe absence by pupil group, daily	Above national; persistent absence below national and well below Paddock Wood's current 13.9%
Behaviour and inclusion	Suspensions, exclusions and behaviour incidents by group	No permanent exclusions; suspensions below local and national rates
SEND and SRP	Progress against EHCP and SEN support outcomes; time in mainstream classes; KCC District Dashboard indicators	Pupils meet their planned outcomes; Mainstream Core Standards met in full
Wider development	Participation in clubs, trust events and leadership roles by group	Equitable participation, measured against the DfE enrichment framework
Stakeholder views	Annual pupil, parent and staff surveys	High and improving belonging and satisfaction

How performance will be assessed

Teachers will use the trust's shared assessment framework, PiXL, so the new school's results can be compared from its first term with our other primary schools. Assessment combines frequent checks for understanding in lessons, termly standardised assessments in reading and mathematics, moderated writing assessment, and the statutory assessments: the Reception Baseline, Phonics Screening Check, Multiplication Tables Check and end of Key Stage 2 tests. Writing judgements will be moderated with other trust schools and through KCC moderation, and the trust compares every school's predicted outcomes with its actual results, so that teacher assessment stays accurate.

Setting challenging targets

Targets will be set from pupils' starting points and national and trust benchmarks, agreed with the Director of Education.

Attendance expectations will be high from the first day: we will aim for overall attendance of at least 96% and persistent absence below 10%, well below Paddock Wood's current persistent absence of 13.9%. The strategy is set out in the Inclusivity section.

Assessment will meet the expectations of Ofsted's inspection framework without creating unnecessary workload. Teachers will not be asked to collect or record data that is not used to help pupils learn, and formal data collection will be limited to three points a year.

Monitoring and communicating results

The trust has built its own data platform, the Aletheia Hub, which brings together live attendance, behaviour and suspension data from each school's management information system, school self-evaluation, termly Strategic Reviews, and published performance data for every school, compared with national, Kent and Medway figures. It produces termly Headteacher's Reports for governors and trust-wide reports for trustees, so leaders, governors, trustees and KCC can see how the school is doing at any point in the year.

- Weekly: attendance and behaviour reviewed by the headteacher, with follow-up for any child causing concern.
- Half-termly: pupil progress meetings for every class, with named actions for pupils not on track, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

- Termly: Strategic Review with the Director of Education; Headteacher's Report to the local governing body; outcomes reviewed by the trust's Educational Performance Committee, whose members include former headteachers of high-performing schools and a former HMI.
- Annually: statutory results analysed and published; pupil, parent and staff surveys; review of the 180-Day Plan; contribution to district-based working with KCC.
- Parents will receive termly progress information and an annual written report, with regular opportunities to meet staff. Parents of pupils with SEND will be involved in termly reviews.

Staffing

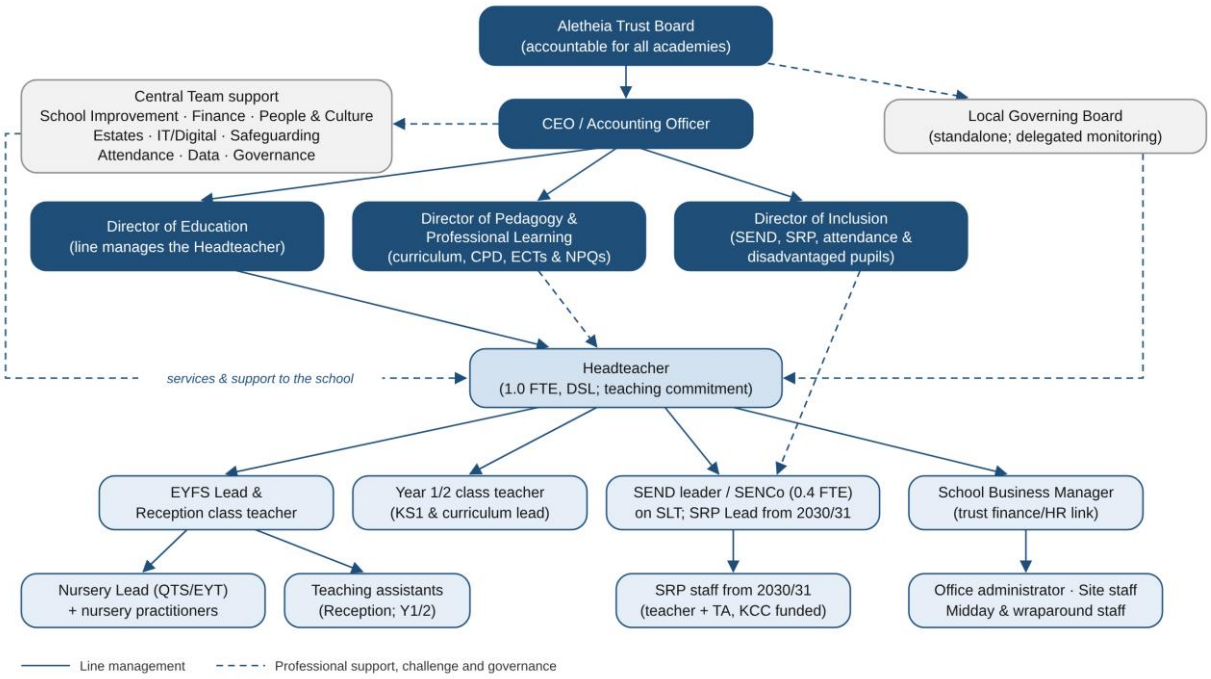
You should set out your strategy and plan for staffing the school. This should include an indicative staffing structure, using an organogram or similar diagram, which is accompanied by commentary explaining lines of accountability and how this matches the curriculum plan. This should be no more than 2,000 words.

Staffing strategy

Our staffing plan delivers the curriculum within the expected income at each stage of the school's growth. It uses the strength of the trust in three ways: direct line management and support from the Director of Education, central services that a small school could not afford alone, and the ability to recruit, train and deploy staff across our schools.

Structure at opening (2028/29)

The diagram below shows the indicative structure and lines of accountability at opening.



SRP Lead teacher
Teaching assistants (incL SRP) Nursery practitioners
Admin / school business
Site staff

The Headteacher leads the school day to day, acts as Designated Safeguarding Lead and teaches part of the week while the school is small. The Headteacher reports to the Director of Education, who is accountable to the CEO for standards. The SEND leader is a member of the senior leadership team from opening. Central team specialists in school improvement, inclusion, finance, people and culture, estates, IT, governance, safeguarding and attendance support the school directly. The local governing body monitors the school under the trust's scheme of delegation.

Staff build-up

Staff are added as pupil numbers grow. Figures are indicative full-time equivalents, matched to the pupil numbers in KCC's specification and to our budget.

Role (FTE)	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2034135
Pupils Y R-6 (plus 26 nursery)	60	90	120	150	180	210
Mainstream classes	2	3	4	5	6	7
Headteacher	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Class teachers	2.0	3.4	4.0	5.0	6.0	7.0
Nursery lead teacher /	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
EYT SEND leader	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6
(SENCo)	-	0.3•	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	2.0	3.0	4.0	4.5	5.0	6.0
	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.8
	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.0

*One term before the first SRP placements, funded by KCC's SRP start-up support. An additional 0.4 FTE teacher in 2029/30 supports the Year 2/3 class in core subjects. Wraparound and midday staff are not shown.

Recruitment

The Headteacher will be appointed two terms before opening to lead admissions, community engagement and recruitment. Founding teachers will be recruited by spring 2028, before the May resignation deadline, through the trust's recruitment channels and marketing team, with opportunities for strong staff from our existing schools to move to the new school through secondment or promotion. Our own initial teacher training provision gives us a pipeline of early career teachers already trained in our approach. All appointments follow safer recruitment, and the single central record will be in place before opening.

We recognise that recruiting to a small, semi-rural school can be harder than in a large town. We will advertise early, draw on our own teacher training pipeline and offer secondments and promotion from across the trust. We will not seek to recruit staff from Paddock Wood Primary Academy or other neighbouring schools, so that the new school adds to local capacity.

Performance management and development

Every member of staff will have annual appraisal through the trust-wide professional development cycle, linked to the school's 180-Day Plan and the Teachers' Standards, with coaching and development rather than one-off judgements. The cycle is applied consistently across the trust, while its delivery is shaped by each school. Staff will take part in trust-led and school-led INSET days, Best Practice Teams, Subject Development

Networks and trust-wide projects from their first day, so a small staff has access to the expertise of 19 schools. Formal development pathways run from initial teacher training and the Early Career Framework, with trained mentors, through to NPQs for middle and senior leaders, and secondments let staff gain new experience without leaving their substantive posts. Our Workplace Charter supports belonging and wellbeing from a colleague's first day, and workload and wellbeing are monitored through annual staff surveys.

Flexible working requests will be considered positively in line with the trust's policy, including part-time and job-share roles where they fit the timetable, which also helps us retain experienced staff.

Affordability and contingency

Each year, staffing and the timetable will be planned using integrated curriculum and financial planning metrics: teacher contact ratio, average class size and average teacher cost. If pupil numbers or income are lower than expected, we will adapt rather than cut quality: keeping mixed-age classes for longer, increasing the Headteacher's teaching commitment, sharing specialist and support roles with other trust schools, and delaying planned appointments until numbers are confirmed, while protecting the core curriculum, early years and SEND provision. Budgets are built with the ability to respond quickly to fluctuating pupil roll or other movements and our reserves policy ensures our schools benefit from belonging to a large MAT underpinned by healthy reserves.

Section D: Capacity and capability

Structures and personnel

In this section, you need to demonstrate that your organisation or group has the capability, capacity and expertise to set up and run the school being proposed, including in relation to finance and the provision of education, or that you have a plan to recruit people with the necessary capability, capacity and expertise.

Where your organisation or group has people with the relevant experience in place already, you should set out their role below and their anticipated time commitments to the proposed school during pre-opening. You should also set out your plans to fill any gaps that you have identified. In the supporting information section, you will need to include the roles, names, CVs and hometown/city of people who will provide the following expertise (this information on individual personnel will not be published):

- Leadership;
- Project management;
- Marketing;
- Human resources;
- Safeguarding;
- Health and safety.

In addition, you should set out details of the proposed governance arrangements for the new school, including a scheme of delegation.

Structures and personnel

Aletheia Academies Trust has the people, systems and experience to set up and run the new school. We opened the permanent facilities of a new all-through school in Ebbsfleet in September 2026 and have relocated and expanded Rosherville CofE Academy into a new building, both in close partnership with KCC. Our central operations team has dedicated finance, people and culture, estates, governance, IT and marketing departments, each leading best practice across the trust. Names, CVs and hometowns are given in the Supporting Information section.

Paddock Wood also fits the trust's geography well. It sits at the southern end of the Medway Valley, linked by the A228 and by the Medway Valley railway line, which runs from Paddock Wood through Aylesford to Halling. Ditton CofE Junior School in Aylesford is around 9 miles away, and Halling Primary and Knole Academy in Sevenoaks around 12 miles; Ditton and Halling are only about 3 miles apart. Together these schools form a natural West Kent and Medway Valley group that the new school would join from its first day, sharing leadership, training and specialist support. All 19 of our academies are within about 20 miles of the site, close enough for leaders, teachers and specialists to work together in person every week.

Expertise	Who holds responsibility	Pre-opening role and time
Leadership	CEO and Accounting Officer (CEO since 2014); Director of Education; Headteacher from appointment	CEO chairs the monthly project board; Director of Education leads pre-opening and recruitment
Project management	Director of Estates and Infrastructure, with support from Executive Assistant to CEO	Building handover, design input and programme with KCC, from decision to opening
Marketing	Trust marketing team, with the Headteacher designate	Website, social channels and community events ahead of the autumn 2027 admissions round
Finance	Chief Financial Officer and trust finance team	Budget model, funding agreement, start-up grant plan; ongoing financial oversight
Human resources	Director of People and Culture and the P&C team	Recruitment campaign, contracts and induction
Safeguarding	Trust safeguarding lead	Policies, single central record and DSL induction before opening
Health and safety	Director of Estates and Infrastructure; trust health and safety oversight	Building handover, statutory compliance, planned preventive maintenance and risk assessments
SEND and inclusion	Director of Inclusion	SRP planning, SEND leader appointment, links with KCC
Early years	An experienced trust EYFS leader, supported by the School Improvement Team	Nursery and Reception planning, EYFS staffing and admissions
IT and data	Head of IT Services; AI and Digital Lead (the trust is an Arbor-accredited support provider)	Network, devices, cyber security, MIS and Aletheia Hub set up before opening

The Headteacher, teachers and support staff will be recruited during 2027–28, as set out in the Staffing section. The project draws on existing central capacity; any short-term specialist support, for example during building handover, will be bought in through the trust's existing suppliers and frameworks.

Pre-opening plan

A summary project plan from decision to opening is in the Supporting Information section. A project board chaired by the CEO will meet monthly, with progress reported to the

Educational Performance Committee and the Trust Board. Lessons from opening Alkerden are built into the plan.

Governance and scheme of delegation

Governance arrangements

The new school would operate within Aletheia Academies Trust's established governance framework, providing clear lines of accountability, robust strategic oversight and meaningful local representation. The Trust's governance arrangements are defined in its Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation and the Academy Trust Handbook. A copy of the Trust's Scheme of Delegation is attached.

Members

The Trust has five Members, comprising the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education as the Diocesan Corporate Member, four ex officio Members as specified in the Articles of Association, and any additional Members appointed in accordance with those Articles. Members provide an important layer of oversight and accountability, with responsibilities including appointing Trustees, approving amendments to the Articles of Association and appointing the Trust's external auditors. In accordance with the Trust's Articles and the Academy Trust Handbook, a majority of Members must be independent of the Trust Board, and employees of the Trust cannot serve as Members.

Trust Board

The Trust Board comprises 13 Trustees who are collectively accountable for the strategic direction, educational performance, financial sustainability and effective governance of every academy within the Trust. The Board holds the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to account for the performance of the Trust and its schools.

Trustees bring a broad range of professional experience and expertise, including school leadership and inspection (including a former His Majesty's Inspector), finance, audit, taxation, human resources, estates management, equality and community cohesion, STEM education and the role of the Church of England in education.

The Trust Board meets four times annually and is supported by four committees, each with clearly defined responsibilities: Audit and Risk, Finance, Education Performance, and People and Culture. This structure enables detailed scrutiny, informed challenge and effective oversight of key areas of Trust activity. The Board also commissions an external review of governance at least every three years to support continuous improvement.

Chief Executive Officer and Executive Leadership

The CEO, who also serves as the Trust's Accounting Officer, is responsible for the executive leadership and operational management of the Trust and is accountable to the Trust Board.

The performance of Headteachers is managed by the CEO or Director of Education, working in partnership with the Chair of the relevant Local Governing Board. This approach

combines Trust-wide expectations and professional oversight with an informed understanding of each school's individual context, priorities and community.

Local Governing Board

Paddock Wood would have its own dedicated Local Governing Board (LGB), reflecting Aletheia's commitment to meaningful local governance. The Trust firmly believes that local governors play a vital role in understanding their school and its community, providing informed challenge, supporting school improvement and ensuring that local perspectives contribute to decision-making.

A shadow Local Governing Board would be established during the pre-opening year, with recruitment focused on securing an appropriate balance of skills and experience, particularly in early years education, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), safeguarding and community engagement. Following opening, the Board would be strengthened through the appointment of at least two parent governors, ensuring that parents have a direct voice in the school's governance.

The Headteacher would report formally to the Local Governing Board at six meetings each academic year, enabling governors to monitor educational performance, safeguarding, inclusion, attendance, school improvement priorities and the effectiveness of provision.

In addition, the Chairs of all Local Governing Boards meet with the CEO and Chair of Trustees three times annually. These meetings provide opportunities to share good practice, discuss emerging priorities, strengthen communication and ensure that local perspectives inform Trust-wide strategic thinking.

Every Local Governing Board is supported by the Trust's dedicated governance team, led by the Head of Governance and supported by trained governance professionals. This ensures consistent professional advice, effective administration and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Governor Recruitment, Induction and Development

The Trust operates a structured recruitment and appointment process to ensure that governors have the skills, experience and commitment required to discharge their responsibilities effectively. Prospective governors complete an application form and skills audit and participate in an interview before appointment. Appointments are subject to the necessary eligibility and safeguarding checks, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

All newly appointed Trustees and governors undertake an established induction programme, supported by an experienced mentor during their first year. This ensures that they understand their responsibilities, the Trust's governance framework and the expectations associated with their role.

Ongoing professional development is a priority. Training is delivered through the Trust's central team and supported by external providers, including The Key, National College, the National Governance Association and the Confederation of School Trusts.

Local Governing Boards undertake an annual review of their effectiveness, identifying strengths, areas for development and opportunities to strengthen their contribution to school improvement.

Conflicts of Interest and Transparency

The Trust maintains registers of interests for Members, Trustees, local governors and relevant senior employees, with statutory information published on the Trust's website.

Declarations of interest are a standing agenda item at governance meetings. Where an actual or potential conflict arises, it is considered and managed in accordance with the Trust's governance arrangements, including withdrawal from relevant discussions and decisions where required.

Related-party transactions are managed in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook and applicable regulatory requirements, ensuring transparency, propriety and appropriate financial oversight.

Overall Governance Assurance

This established framework would provide Paddock Wood with the benefits of strong Trust-wide leadership, professional governance support and robust accountability, while preserving a distinct local governing body with a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the school and its community.

Summary of delegated decision-making

Area	Trust Board	CEO / central team	Local Governing Board	Headteacher
Trust vision, strategy and key performance indicators	Approves	Consulted; implements	–	–
Academy vision, priorities and key performance indicators	Sets framework	Consulted; monitors	Approves	Implements
Academy budget	Approves (through the CFO)	Consulted	Consulted; monitors	Prepares and manages
Appointment of the headteacher	Informed	Approves and leads	Consulted	–
Headteacher performance management	–	Leads	Chair takes part	–
Trust-wide policies, including admissions	Approves	Consulted; monitors	Informed	Implements
Academy-level policies	–	Reviews (Director of Education)	Approves	Implements
Achievement and attendance targets	Monitors three times a year	Monitors	Agrees and monitors three times a year	Implements
Risk management	Trust risk register	Monitors	Academy risk register	Implements

Educational track record

In the ‘supporting information’ section, you should set out a table with the latest Ofsted inspection outcomes and publicly available headline accountability measures, including on attendance and for disadvantaged pupils, for any schools that you already run. Accompanying this should be a brief explanation for any schools that are not performing well, along with your plan to improve these schools. This supporting information will not be published.

See table 2 in the Supporting Information section, with our experience of opening new schools in section 3.

Section E: Finance

Different types of school and proposer groups or organisations will have different financial arrangements. Nonetheless, it is important that all new schools should be financially viable. You should set out a financial summary that explains how it will be ensured that the school will be financially viable once it opens, and the plan to achieve good value for money and ensure that financial decision-making is prudent. This should be no more than 1,500 words.

A financially strong trust

Aletheia Academies Trust is in a strong financial position. External reviews, including a School Resource Management Adviser visit and follow-up, peer review, a governance review and independent audit reports, all confirm sound financial management. Our three-to-five-year plans are prudent about pupil numbers and funding inflation and are supported by estates and ICT strategies that build in planned investment. The Trust consolidated turnover and closing reserve balance, as at the end of August 2026 (subject to audit) was £65.1m and £7.1m respectively, sitting comfortably between the DfES recommended reserve levels of between 5% and 20%. All schools, bar our newly opened site, have positive reserve balances and whilst the Trust offers support and intervention where required, all schools are expected to be financially viable as stand-alone cost centres, supported by a cost-efficient central services team, offering better value for money through diseconomies of scale and specialised support services.

Financial viability

The school's budget is planned on KCC's specified pupil numbers, not on hoped-for numbers: 60 pupils in 2028/29 rising to 210 in 2034/35, with the 26-place nursery full from year one, and SRP placements from 2030/31 only (none assumed in 2028–2030 and up to four in 2030/31, as the specification instructs). A five-year budget plan proves viability, and we have a track record and experience of running schools of this size fiscally well.

Attracting pupils

Demand is secure. KCC forecasts a deficit of Reception places in the Paddock Wood planning group in every year of its plan period, generally more than one form of entry, and

the pre-school population grew by 43.9% between 2020 and 2025. Our marketing and community engagement, timed for KCC's admissions round in autumn 2027, and an attractive offer, a nursery, wraparound care from 8am to 6pm and strong early years outcomes, will help fill places from the first year. Even so, the budget assumes only KCC's specified numbers.

Income

- Pupil-led funding through KCC's school funding formula and, because the school opens and grows incrementally, reorganisation funding through KCC's Growth Funding Policy to address lagged funding while the school builds year by year.
- New-school start-up funding of up to £76,195 for reasonable pre-opening revenue costs, supported by a detailed expenditure plan for KCC's approval; and up to £6,000 per new mainstream learning space (2026–27 policy) for furniture and equipment.
- Early years funding for the nursery, based on the funded entitlements.
- SRP start-up support for one teacher from one term before pupils are admitted, moving to place and top-up funding as placements grow.
- Self-funding wraparound care, and lettings income from community use of the building.

We understand all figures will be subject to the Growth Funding Policy and funding regulations in force when the school opens.

Expenditure and value for money

Staffing is the largest cost. Our plan keeps it affordable at each stage by drawing on the Director of Education's line management and support, giving the Headteacher a teaching commitment while the school is small, organising pupils into the minimum number of classes the specification allows, and adding staff only as pupil numbers grow. We will test the plan each year using integrated curriculum and financial planning metrics, pupil-to-teacher ratio, teacher contact ratio and average class size and compare spending with similar schools using the DfE's financial benchmarking tool.

Financial planning follows the education plan: early language, phonics resources, SEND training and attendance support are funded first. The pupil premium strategy will be set each year in line with the school's 180-Day Plan priorities, early language and reading, attendance, and access to enrichment, published as required, and reviewed for impact by governors.

The school will receive central services through the trust's top-slice, currently 5.75% of income for schools up to 1FE (6.25% at 2FE and above). This covers the CEO and CFO, financial support, the School Improvement Team, the People and Culture team, operations (estates, IT and marketing), governance and clerking, the data team, payroll administration, and trust-wide subscriptions, licences and professional development, far more than a single small school could buy for the same cost. Procurement uses trust wide contracts and DfE-approved frameworks to gain savings from bulk ordering and value-added services.

Managing risk

- Lower than expected pupil numbers: in line with DfE guidance, we will ask KCC to agree a minimum viable number and underwriting arrangements for the agreed pupil

forecasts, and review class organisation and staffing each spring before the next year's appointments.

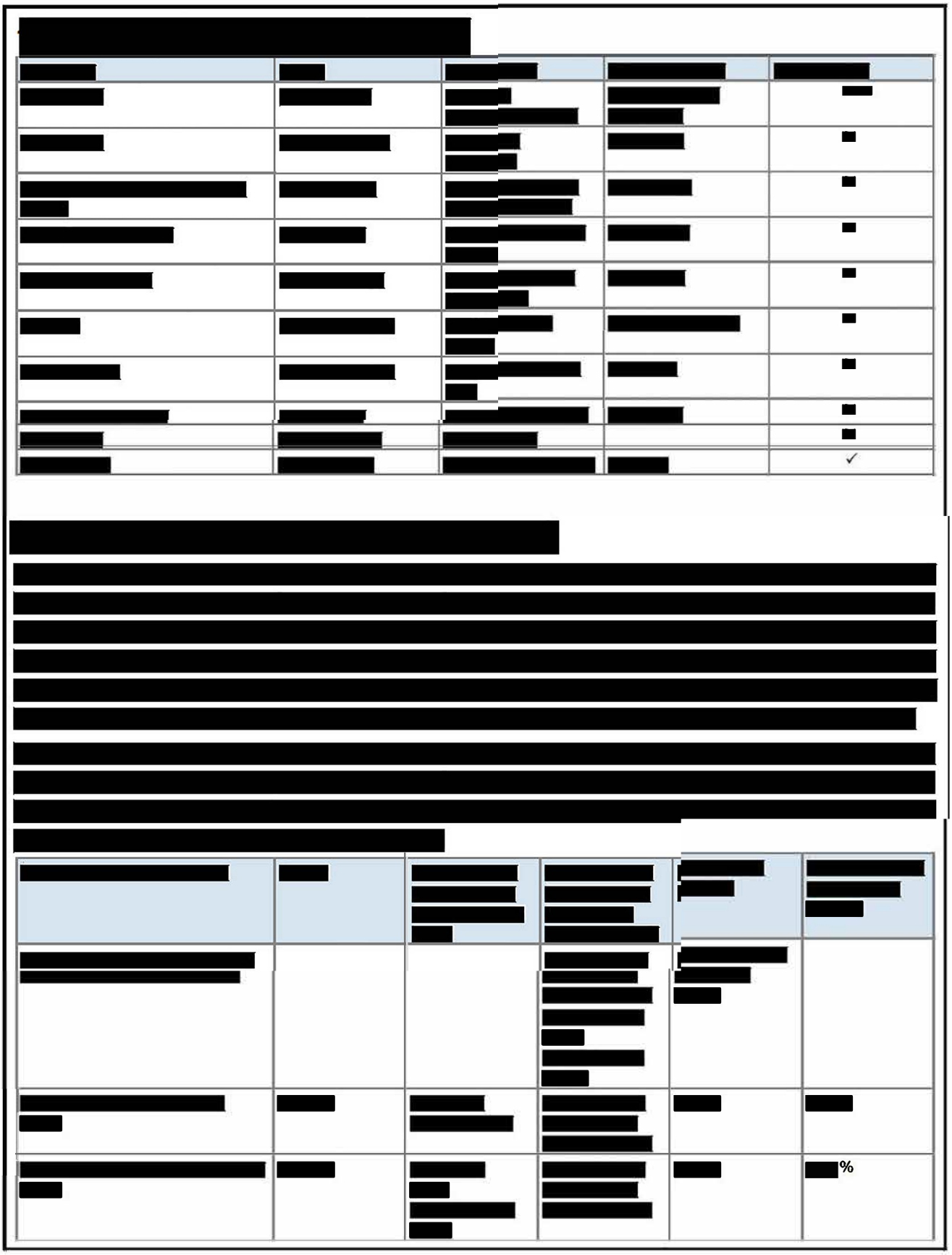
- The Year 1/2 and Year 2/3 mixed classes: costed explicitly, including the additional part-time teacher in 2029/30.
- SRP numbers: no SRP income is assumed until placements are confirmed, and SRP staff are recruited against commissioned places.
- A balanced budget from opening: in the first six years of opening, the school is able to balance the budget throughout, producing a small contingency fund to draw upon for any unplanned expenditure, supported by KCC's reorganisation funding to cover lagged pupil numbers during growth, with the staffing contingencies set out in Section C ready, if income falls short.

Prudent financial decision-making

The school's budget will be set and agreed with the Headteacher within the Trust led assumptions and approved by the Trust Board. Each school has a named Finance Business Partner who completes monthly monitoring and issues reports shared with the Local Governing Board and the Finance Committee each term. Headteachers and business managers also review budgets and benchmarking together across trust schools, giving peer challenge as well as central oversight. The Chief Financial Officer is held to account by the CEO and the Trust Board, with internal scrutiny and external audit of the accounts, overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee, in line with the Academy Trust Handbook.

Supporting information

Please include here any supporting information, as referenced in the main application form. This information will not be published.



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