PLYMOUTH SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS
SINGLE ACADEMY TRUST
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Plymouth School of Creative Arts Single Academy Trust

No.1 - Vision

We are a single academy trust sponsored by Plymouth College of Art.

Plymouth College of Art was itself founded in 1856 and has a long history as an independent specialist in arts, craft, design and media education in Plymouth and the South West. Our vision for a MAT grows out of an established art college ethos where making and creativity is at the core of all we do.

In 2013 we opened Plymouth School of Creative Arts, a 4-16 mainstream, city centre all-through school sponsored by Plymouth College of Art. The school has had a successful first Ofsted and is oversubscribed. It is establishing a new Pedagogical model and with the College of Art forms a Continuum of Creative Learning for students from Preschool to Master Level.

We seek to create a Multi Academy Trust where there is both innovation and diversity. Our Pedagogy is based on making. A place of creative learning in all subjects. We look at the studio and the relationship between learners in a distinctive manner. As such we are looking to create a Multi Academy Trust based on these principles in a manner which looks to the horizon searching for difference as a route to future development.

Our purpose is personal, professional and cultural transformation through creativity, making and high quality education.

Purpose

Our schools will each be a unique Centre of excellence for learning, living well and creativity. They are made with, and not for, our community and are for children from all walks of life.

Our students will match the achievements of the best and student outcomes will be at the forefront of all our teaching and policy development. We have high aspirations for outcomes throughout the school and at 16 we expect that 100% of our students will go on to Further or Higher Education with a profile of wide ranging qualifications. Our goal is to secure academic excellence and our learners’ ambitions through structure with a purpose. This will be aided by a range of partnership from the creative, industrial and business sectors.

We believe that through experiencing a curriculum rich in creativity and purpose academic progress will be increased. Research indicates that learning ability is enhanced when creativity is engaged and the mind is freed up to new experiences. Studying creatively and using the vehicle of the making is not a soft or easy option – it’s about rigour and
perseverance, it’s about finding new ways, it’s about communication and discovery, it’s about confidence and performance, it’s about learning from failures and becoming even better. Creativity is fundamental for our vision of great learning in all subjects.

Our MAT will support familiarity blended with specialism and expertise. The schools will be organised so that each child really is known for who they are and what they might become. As such they will have provision that reflects real life purpose and the needs of the learners and community.

Plymouth College of Art MAT will be successful when it realises our own vision of outstanding practice that is co-constructed as a community. This will result in excellent outcomes as defined by others such as Ofsted, Examination boards etc.

We are forward thinking, innovative and creative school group, committed to achieving excellence within meaningful and empowering contexts for learning. Fundamental to our ethos is an understanding that the way we organize our schools for learning is key to educating children for the world we would wish them develop and thrive in. We have a growth mindset and we champion the message that ‘everyone can’.

In moving to a MAT Structure, the partnership of schools aims to retain its identity as a group whilst still protecting the unique characters of each of the schools. We firmly believe that collaboration does not equate to ‘sameness’. We celebrate diversity in all its forms, and while we have clear consistencies across the schools, these do not undermine individuality. We are clear thought and are unwavering about quality and integrity.

As the Trust evolves and expands, we aim to ensure that our articles and constitution frame our collective aspirations for our future. We want to ensure that we centre our values around the heart of our communities and focus on providing an integral part of education provision for students locally.

Values

Our School shares the core values of Plymouth College of Art:

- we believe in the centrality of creativity to individual and social value, identity, culture, community, welfare, and prosperity;
- we uphold the primary significance of learning through making, practice and participation for individual development, transformation and fulfilment
- we see our Schools as a laboratory for innovation, and for new thinking, in the service of our wider communities;
- we value and invite purposeful, mutual partnership;
- we celebrate social and cultural diversity, and encourage engagement with the community and cross-cultural dimensions of learning in local, regional, national and international contexts;
- we respect our environment, and have a strong commitment to sustainable practice;
- we aspire to the highest standards of educational achievement.

**Pedagogical Principles**

The School’s pedagogical principles are listed below and look to create the listed attributes in our learners:

1. Learning, through making, provides experience and has a real context wherever possible
2. To take account of individual needs we check for understanding and scaffold for difference
3. It takes a village to raise a child and we work as a team with parents, staff and wider community
4. Intrinsic Motivation of learners is facilitated by interest, challenge and an awareness of my horizon
5. We work rigorously and assess to inform future development whilst tracking the impact of our work

The MAT will enable transformation of our learners who will possess the following attributes:

1. **Thinking for myself** supporting each of us to develop a confidence in ourselves and in our diverse community
2. **Learning together** in mutual partnership to broaden our horizons
3. **Embracing uncertainty** is essential in an ever-changing world and it’s at the core of the creative process
4. **Play and experimentation** are two side of the same coin and are essential ingredients for learning and development
5. **Purposeful practice** is based on our individual aspirations and is required to develop excellence

There is an overarching expectation that, if you are a member of a school within the MAT, you accept responsibility for your own learning and engagement in creating the success of the school. As such we are making a school with you not for you.

**Strategic objectives**

The School has the following strategic objectives:

1. to enable the transformation of our communities through the process of making;
2. to provide new models of education where curriculum, space and pedagogy are profoundly informed by human development, making and creativity;

3. Increased life chances through the achievement of life skills, vocational expertise and academic excellence.

4. Commitment to achieving the highest standards of inclusive provision and outcomes for children

5. To agree on jointly approved operating procedures and policies

6. To share staff expertise, responding to the needs of the Trust and jointly finding solutions.

7. To commit to working with schools and establishments beyond those of the Trust.

8. To commit to trust branding to ensure consistency, whilst protecting our individuality and school identity.
The Principles that support our Learners

- **Innovative pedagogy** focused on making and underpinned by inquiry and research
- **Continuing Professional Learning**
- **Focussed and ambitious leadership**
- **Unwavering commitment to achieving the highest-quality inclusive provision**
- **A belief in the significance of personal purpose and intrinsic motivation**
- **Exacting standards, collectively understood and evident in everything we do**
- **Understanding that context, relationships and environment drive are critical for outcomes**

**The Learner**
No.2 - Roles & Responsibilities - Diagram

To achieve our vision, the Plymouth School of Creative Arts team will work together, in different roles, in a manner that always looks to place the student at the centre of our approach. The diagram below shows the accountabilities of our team and the roles within the company. This Handbook goes on to explain the roles of different directors in detail and how these functions will be executed to improve outcomes for students and the community that we serve.
No.3 Governance Terms of Reference – Portfolios

Curriculum and Achievement

Governors will be responsible for providing support and challenge in the following areas:

1. Support developments linking pedagogy, curriculum experience, studio ecology and assessment into something coherent that realizes the school’s vision.

2. Approve policy associated with the above and advise the Governing Body accordingly.

3. Receive information from staff and take part in learning walks to ensure a clear understanding about how the curriculum is taught, evaluated and resourced and how it might be improved.

4. Agree the policies for collective worship, religious education and sex education.

5. Ensure the governing body’s duties on pupil record keeping, disclosure of pupil information and pupil reports are fulfilled.

6. Review the information and data about school performance and how this will inform future improvements. Set and agree targets for pupil achievement.

7. Ensure that the schools studio ecology promotes the highest standards of learning and behaviour.

8. Review and evaluate the success of the School Improvement Plan and to plan for next steps.

9. Actively seek opportunities for innovation linked to the breadth of the curriculum. Ensure opportunities for further funding linked to innovation is obtained.

10. Support in the accessing of research to gather evidence of impact relating to the school as it develops both generally and in terms of our Creative Arts specialism.

11. Look to profile our growing evidence base on local, national and international scales.
Finance

1. In consultation with the Headteacher, and taking into consideration available resources, sustainability of commitments, the School Learning Plan (SLP), forecast pupil numbers, anticipated contractual liabilities and other relevant factors, scrutinise and agree the formal budget plan(s) for the financial year and make recommendations to the Governing Body for its approval.

2. Ensure the establishment and maintenance of an up to date 3-year financial plan, based on the most recent data available.

3. Monitor budgets for all funds under the Governing Body’s control, including virement decisions, at least termly and to report significant variances from the anticipated position to the Governing Body, in line with the Finance Policy.

4. Establish and recommend appropriate policies (to include recommended levels of delegation) to the governing body. This will include a – Finance Policy, Budget Monitoring Policy, Procurement Policy, Charging and Remissions Policy, Lettings Policy and Governor Expenses Policy. Review these policies and levels of charges annually and recommend changes.

5. Ensure that the school operates within the Minimum Standards and is supported through the audit process, accessing the necessary paid expertise.

6. Monitor expenditure of all voluntary funds kept on behalf of the governing body and ensures the annual audit of these funds.

7. Make decisions in respect of service level agreements.

8. Approve non-routine expenditure (not provided within the School Improvement Plan) in accordance with the Finance Policy including recommendations from other Governors.

9. Ensure the principles of Best Value are followed when making decisions and within the School.

10. Monitor statistics, performance indicators and key ratios and other non-financial data affecting budgets, directing action as appropriate.

11. Receive audit reports and refer key issues to the governing body. Direct the response to such reports and ensure such reports are appropriately acted upon.
12. Approve the costs and arrangements for maintenance, repairs and redecoration within the budget allocation.

13. Oversee the preparation and implementation of contracts, ensuring best value principles are adhered to.

14. Ensure that the school is compliant when procuring.

15. Agree a pay policy for all members of staff.

16. In consultation with the Headteacher and giving consideration to the School Improvement Plan, to review the staffing structure annually and whenever a vacancy occurs.

17. Ensure the school meets the Minimum Standards and Financial Regulations to maintain effective arrangements for the efficient deployment of school resources.

18. Take lead responsibility for ensuring the conditions in the Trust’s Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State are met.
Student Welfare and Individual Need

1. Ensure that standards of behaviour in the school support the outcomes that we aim for, including great progress in learning. Monitor positive behaviour and outcomes of negative behaviour including consequences.

2. Develop policy and practice relating to improving behaviour linked to coaching and other interventions.

3. Develop policy relating to safeguarding, pupil welfare, including anti-bullying. Monitor all areas relating safeguarding including CRB, safer recruitment, CPD, prevent, online safety etc.

4. Monitor and evaluate the above policies ensuring that any issues are discussed with the Governing Body.

5. Monitor pupil attendance and agree targets.

6. Ensure that all Governors have relevant training in the areas of safeguarding, behaviour and anti-bullying.

7. Ensure that the schools’ curriculum promotes the skills, knowledge and understanding to be safe.

8. Be involved in the long term tracking of students thriving and reaching their dreams.

9. Ensure that the requirements of children with specific and additional needs, disability and vulnerability are met through the development of and subsequent monitoring of school policy.

10. Yearly review with SENCo and other staff as required that systems relating to SEND, EAL, Pupil Premium, LAC are effective in improving outcomes?

11. Work alongside SLT and teachers to evaluate the impact of our approach on vulnerable groups each term as part of studio and subject analysis.

12. Share key data and feedback in a folio report to governors.

13. Keep abreast of the extended schools agenda and to consider any local implications in respect of extending the school’s opening hours and offering other services on the school’s premises.
14. Assist in the evaluation of links with other agencies and the LA.

15. Link to parents around this area to gain feedback based on ILP’s and Annual Reviews.

16. Work with SENCo / BLC team to look at the impact of funding in this area. Reports to be shared with governors and placed on web site.

17. Ensure that the school fulfils its statutory functions around SEND and LAC.
Staff Welfare and Performance

1. Approve and review a performance management policy.

2. Ensure that staff are consulted on changes to policies whenever necessary.

3. Make arrangements for interviewing and appointing staff, including agreeing governor involvement in different types of appointments.

4. Approve procedures for dealing with discipline, conduct, grievance and redundancy and ensure that staff are informed of these.

5. Ensure work/life balance issues for all staff are given proper consideration when making decisions and that the working conditions and wellbeing of the staff are kept under review.
Community

1. Assist the Headteacher in promoting good relationships and communication with the community.

2. Ensure innovation, linked to working with the wider community and with parents, is developed to create the school as a community hub for learning.

3. Monitor links to groups in our community are used to support the quality of the curriculum, including the arts and culture.

4. Encourage wider networking with other schools in our community.

5. Oversee the wider networking with schools in the MAT as it develops.

6. Oversee the development of actively building the idea of community through links to business, third sector and other groups including opportunities for mentoring of students and volunteering.

7. Provide a link to any groups such as friends of the school etc.

8. Keep abreast of the extended schools agenda and to consider any local implications in respect of extending the school’s opening hours and offering other services on the school’s premises

9. To look at the effectiveness of the school’s ability to promote the school as a venue for community activity

10. Evaluate the schools impact on the community by working with the Headteacher to produce a joint report
Premises and Environment

1. Provide support and guidance for the Headteacher on all matters relating to the school premises and grounds, security, health and safety and environmental issues.

2. Carry out an annual inspection of the premises and grounds and prepare a statement of priorities for maintenance and improvement (with potential reference to the Asset Management Plan).

3. Establish and keep under review an access action plan linked to the school's disability equality scheme.

4. Agree a Health and Safety Policy appropriate to the needs of the school, and review this on an annual basis.

5. Ensure that the school complies with health and safety regulations, taking advice when necessary.

6. Assist the governing body and the Headteacher to discharge their responsibilities under relevant legislation.

7. Monitor the effectiveness of the school's health and safety arrangements including policy.

8. Work with the finance portfolio holder to ensure best value in this area.

College School Continuum

1. Produce a folio report that highlights the development and impact of the continuum

2. Ensure that the continuum element becomes increasingly automatic rather than additional

3. Support in the development of an archive and research linked to the continuum

4. Ensure that the continuum is profiled locally, nationally and internationally

5. Speak to students about the impact of the continuum on them

6. Working with SLT map future possibilities including joint venture company, symposium, research etc. using the continuum as a laboratory for creative learning

7. Connecting the school to the support of a range of academics

8. Create strategic connection between the boards of the MAT and the College.
**Business and Enterprise**

1. Provide folio reports that show how business and industry are linked to the learning experience and improving quality

2. Promote schools in the MAT to local and national businesses and organisations developing long term partnerships with this community

3. Link Make Discover Perform (MDP) into the local business community

4. Provide a link between MDP and the school governors enabling profit to be redirected back to MAT schools

5. Assist the SLT in recruiting the support and involvement of business and industry

6. Show how enterprise in the curriculum supports the development of ‘soft skills’ to ensure our students are ready for the world of work?
**Parents**

1. Support the development of a coherent strategy regarding the engagement of parents.

2. Connect the governing body to the PTFA of each school

3. Produce a folio report that highlights:
   a. How parental expertise utilised?
   b. How effectively are we communicating to parents?
   c. What is the impact of communication home?
   d. How parents are included in their child’s education through actual activity, being informed and listened to

4. Assist the Headteacher in promoting good relationships and communication with parents.

5. Provide analysis alongside SLT of data from parental questionnaire and from annual review process re: statement of special needs.

6. Ensure that parental voice impacts on school improvement.

7. Monitor how the school provides and signposts support structures for parents including holiday club, respite care etc.
School Improvement Overview - Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors co-ordinates the governing body, with the Headteacher, in the following key areas.

1. School Improvement

2. Oversee the Self-Evaluation Framework - designed to address five key questions:
   • How well are we progressing? – using our own starting points as the comparator
   • How well are we doing? – using similar schools and pupil profiles as the comparator
   • How well are we doing? – using absolute (national) standards as the comparator
   • How can we get even better? - what is the evidence telling us we need to do to help students become even more successful
   • Given the innovative nature of the MAT - what evidence do we need to collect/publish to share our practice in education more widely?

3. Developing our own version of outstanding and Ofsted readiness

4. Performance Management of Headteacher to deliver against the vision and outcome aspirations

5. Profile and partnerships