

# Collaboration



**QUEST TRUST**  
Supporting Young People from  
Early Years to Employment





Photo of St. Peter's C. of E. Primary School Pupils

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# Why Join Us?

QUEST Academy Trust is a successful and vibrant organisation that provides a caring and thoughtful quality of education across our family of schools within the Northwest region. As an academy trust, we are dedicated to supporting Young People from Early Years to Employment and preparing them for a lifelong quest for knowledge, character, and service.

We understand that joining a Multi Academy Trust can be a daunting prospect for any school and we usually find that there are many questions and queries such as:

- Will we lose our autonomy?
- Will the MAT create a 'one size fits all' template for education and enforce it on the school?
- What will happen to our Governing Body?



## The Reality

The reality is that QUEST is interested in working with like-minded schools and thinkers. If you are interested in joining a MAT that assimilates schools to replicate a specific model then we are the wrong option for you. We want schools and their leaders to hold onto their individuality, develop expertise, innovate and share effective practice and pedagogy across the MAT. We believe that the key to success is strength in-depth and working as a collaborative force.



## Our Vision

Our vision for QUEST is that each school which joins us brings something unique to the trust over time and develops a Unique Selling Point which benefits all the other schools within the MAT. In following this principle, we aim to ensure that all young people within the trust are exposed to learning opportunities within their school and at other trust schools that few other educational establishments can offer them.

## Central Services

When schools join our trust, they can expect a seamless transition with minimum disruption. Our central services, including governance, school improvement, finance, HR, estates, compliance and policy, communication and marketing, CPD and IT support, will continue to be funded by the trust through our GAG pooling framework.

We understand the importance of maintaining each school's unique identity, so the name and uniform will remain largely unchanged, with the addition of the QUEST brand. Staff will also transfer on their current terms and conditions, and pension arrangements will be preserved.

## Joining the QUEST Family

By joining the QUEST Academy Trust, schools can benefit from our professional and compassionate, responsible and respectful, loyal and kind values, which guide our decision-making and actions. Together, we can continue to provide a high-quality education that empowers and motivates our pupils to achieve their full potential.

If your school is interested in joining our trust, we encourage you to reach out to our team to discuss the process and explore how we can support your educational journey.



# Finances & GAG Pooling

The Trust has a centralised finance team. One of the major benefits to schools is that finances, budgets and accounts are managed by a specialist team offering extensive experience in the charity and education sector. We believe this approach leads to financial gains, improved economies of scale and a reduction of finance administration.

At QUEST, we recognise the importance of financial sustainability and the need to ensure that all our schools have the resources they require to thrive. As an academy trust, we have the ability to pool our General Annual Grant (GAG) funding, which allows us to direct funds to where they are most needed and support the delivery of our vision and strategy.

There is a comprehensive Financial Operations Handbook including a Schedule of Financial Delegation which ensures that the Trust adheres to the Academy Trust Handbook and has robust financial management.

We will:

- 1 work with you to review and assess all existing contracts. MAT wide contracts, such as catering and IT provision as well as group purchasing often mean a reduction to costs
- 2 appoint an Internal Assurance Officer to carry out termly financial checks liaise with external organisations including lawyers and auditors support payroll systems.
- 3 support you with processing financial transactions, complete month end processes and the production of monthly management accounts
- 4 provide training and support for headteachers, school business, finance and administrative staff

- 5 support you and your staff through all financial aspects of the academy conversion process
- 6 work with you to look at gaining grants and additional income streams
- 7 support you to access funding not available to maintained schools
- 8 support with the budget planning and monitoring process
- 9 complete all statutory returns and reports to the ESFA

## Funding Allocation

The Academies within the Trust will have a range of Local Authority base funding, which can vary significantly. The Trustees are committed to ensuring that the funding for each school is relative to other adjacent schools, so that there are no significant disparities in Age Weighted Student Unit (AWPU) and other rates across the Trust.

All funds from the DfE are paid into the central MAT account, from where they are distributed to each Academy in relation to its approved budget. The Trustees maintain sub-accounts for each Academy, enabling them to identify the budget and the extent to which it has been spent.

# Human Resources Support

The Trust has a People Strategy which supports our Trust plan and ensures we have the right people achieving their best, in the right roles to deliver the best possible outcomes for our pupils. Our aim through this strategy is to make sure our staff continue to feel valued and have fulfilling and rewarding careers. We want staff feedback to directly influence the strategic direction of the Trust whilst being part of the decisions we take that affect our staff, our children and their families. Our Trust workforce accounts for around 80%

of our budgets and are considered our greatest asset. At QUEST, we understand the importance of having a strong and dedicated team of professionals to deliver our vision. That's why we offer comprehensive Human Resources (HR) support to schools interested in joining our trust.

Our experienced HR and legal team are here to assist you with a range of HR-related matters, including:



## Recruitment & Retention

We can help you attract and retain the best talent, ensuring your school has the right people in the right roles.



## Health & Wellbeing

We prioritise the well-being of our staff and can provide guidance on promoting a healthy work environment.



## Culture

Develop a culture, in which staff in all schools see themselves working as part of a wider Trust where the value of Trust collaboration is clearly recognised.



## Sickness Management

Our team can support you in managing sickness and absence, ensuring your school operates smoothly is clearly recognised.



## Difficult Conversations

We can offer advice and support when navigating challenging HR situations, such as performance management or disciplinary procedures.



## Casework

Our experts can provide guidance and support on a variety of HR-related casework, helping you navigate complex issues.



## Measuring Success

We can help you develop effective strategies for measuring the success of your HR initiatives and identifying areas for improvement.

By joining the QUEST Academy Trust, your school will benefit from our professional and compassionate approach to HR, ensuring your staff are responsible and respectful, and your school remains loyal and kind to its community.

We believe in the unique value of every individual in our diverse communities, including our colleagues. We aim to continually develop our promotion of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion by learning from the best practice that exists in and outside of education, embedding a culture where difference is embraced, where we learn from each other, and where every individual is empowered to be themselves.

We recognise that the most valuable CPD can be high-quality line management. We invest in the development of consistently high-quality line management across the Trust through training, guidance, and support. We aim to promote the important role that line management plays in enabling colleagues to provide excellent education to our students.

Our focus on professional development supports us in developing talent, where colleagues are supported and encouraged to progress within their existing school and the wider Trust.

Our approach to Professional Development Review ensures we have a clear understanding of the aspirations of our people.

We will continue to develop our employee offer which is centred around the wellbeing of staff, ensuring that they have access to services that promote physical and mental health, as well as providing appropriate reward.

Photo of Hindley Green Community Primary Pupils



# Governance

QUEST Academy Trust is a successful and vibrant multi-academy trust (MAT) that provides a caring and thoughtful quality of education across our family of schools in the Northwest region. As an academy trust, we are committed to supporting schools in our local community and welcoming new members to join our collaborative network.

## Experienced Governance and Support

At the heart of our trust is a highly strategic governance structure, ensuring that the business functions of school life are supported by skilled professionals and community-minded boards. Our extremely experienced MAT Board and trustees provide invaluable support, advice, and guidance, ensuring that we meet all our legal obligations and work towards our shared vision.

Photo of St. John's Hindley Green Pupil



## Our Vision and Values

Our vision is to ensure that all our children and young people are prepared to learn for life by equipping them with the skills, experiences, and a high-quality education, empowering and motivating them to achieve their full potential now and in the future. This vision is underpinned by our core values:

**Professional and Compassionate:** We are dedicated to providing the highest standards of education and care, with a genuine commitment to the wellbeing of our pupils, staff, and communities.

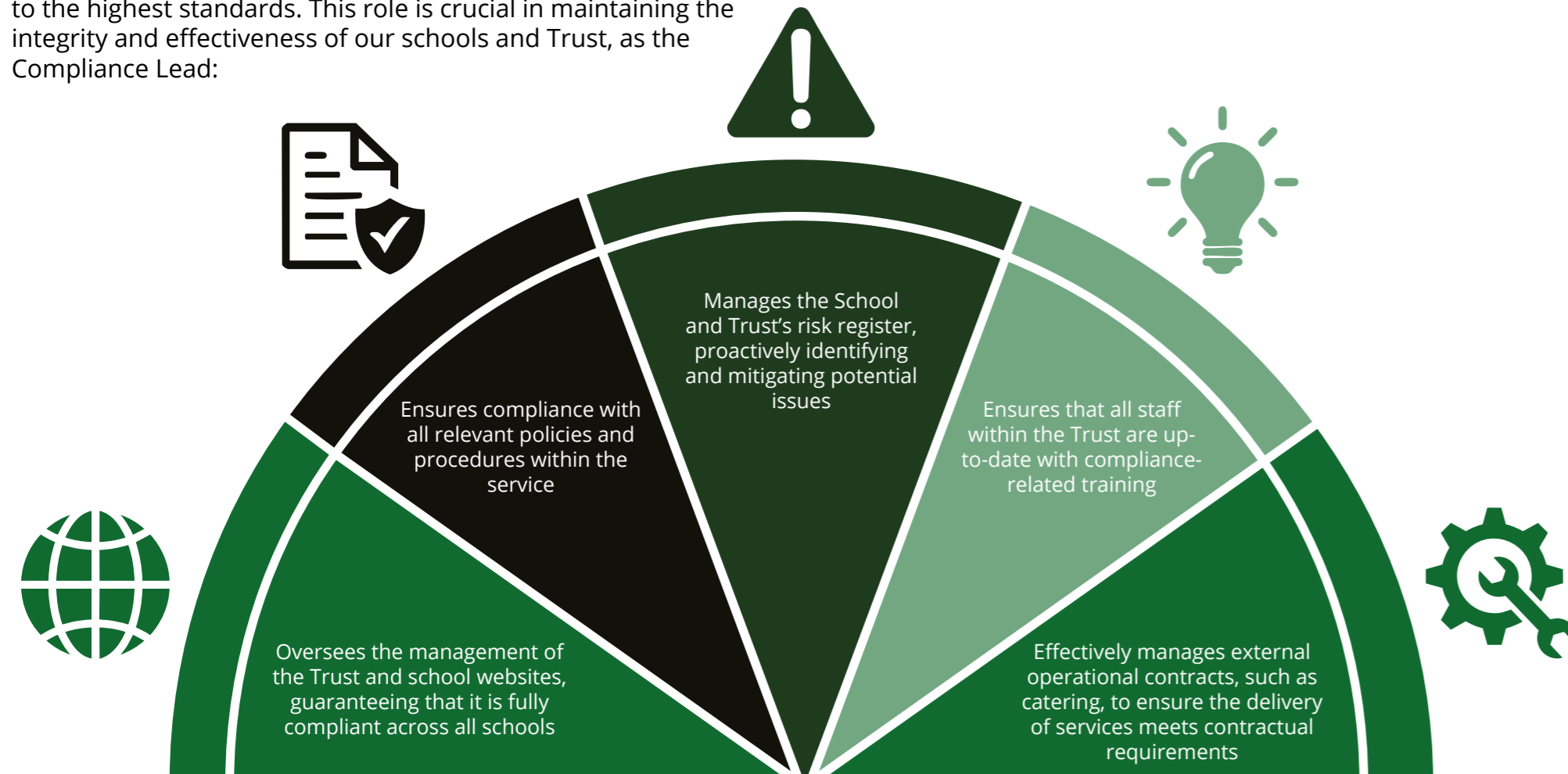
**Responsible and Respectful:** We take ownership of our actions and decisions, always striving to be accountable and considerate in our approach.

**Loyal and Kind:** We foster a culture of loyalty and kindness, working collaboratively to support one another and create a nurturing environment for all.



# Compliance & Policy

At the heart of our Trust's operations is the Compliance Lead, who is responsible for developing and implementing policies, processes, and procedures to ensure all our schools adhere to the highest standards. This role is crucial in maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of our schools and Trust, as the Compliance Lead:



## Governance

Strong governance is a cornerstone of our Trust's success. The Compliance Lead works closely with our Trustees and clerk to maintain robust processes and procedures that support our schools in delivering the best possible education for our pupils.

This includes:

- Developing and implementing policies that align with our Schools and Trust's vision and values of being Professional and Compassionate, Responsible and Respectful, and Loyal and Kind
- Providing guidance and support to our school leaders, empowering them to make informed decisions that benefit our pupils and communities

By joining the QUEST Academy Trust, schools can be confident that they are part of a well-governed, compliant, and forward-thinking organisation that is dedicated to supporting young

people from Early Years to Employment. Our commitment to professional and compassionate leadership, coupled with our robust compliance and governance practises, ensures that our pupils are prepared to learn for life, equipped with the skills, experiences, and high-quality education they need to achieve their full potential.

Photo of UCS Pupils



# Estates Management

At QUEST, we understand the importance of maintaining safe and well-equipped learning environments for our young people. Our dedicated Estates Management team oversees the efficient and responsible management of our school buildings, facilities, and assets.

## Health & Safety

The health, safety, and well-being of our young people, staff, and visitors are of paramount importance to us. Our Trust-wide Health and Safety policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to comply with the latest regulations and best practises. We work closely with our schools to implement robust safety measures, conduct thorough risk assessments, and provide comprehensive training to all our employees.

## Asset Management System

To ensure the effective management of our school assets, we have implemented a comprehensive Asset Management System across the Trust. This system allows us to track the condition, maintenance, and replacement of our equipment, furniture, and other resources. By proactively monitoring and maintaining our assets, we can optimise their lifespan, reduce costs, and ensure that our schools are equipped with the necessary tools to support high-quality teaching and learning.

We strive to ensure that each of our schools within the Trust benefits from a high-quality, well-maintained infrastructure that supports the delivery of our exceptional educational programmes.



Photo of UCS Building

# IT Support

## Comprehensive IT Support for Your School

Joining QUEST Academy Trust means your school will benefit from our comprehensive IT support services, designed to meet the unique needs of each educational setting. Our dedicated IT provider will work closely with your school to deliver:

- Managed IT Support
- First-Line Support
- Dedicated Support Time

## Cutting-Edge Technology for Teaching and Learning

As part of QUEST Academy Trust, your school will have access to the latest educational technology tools and platforms, including:

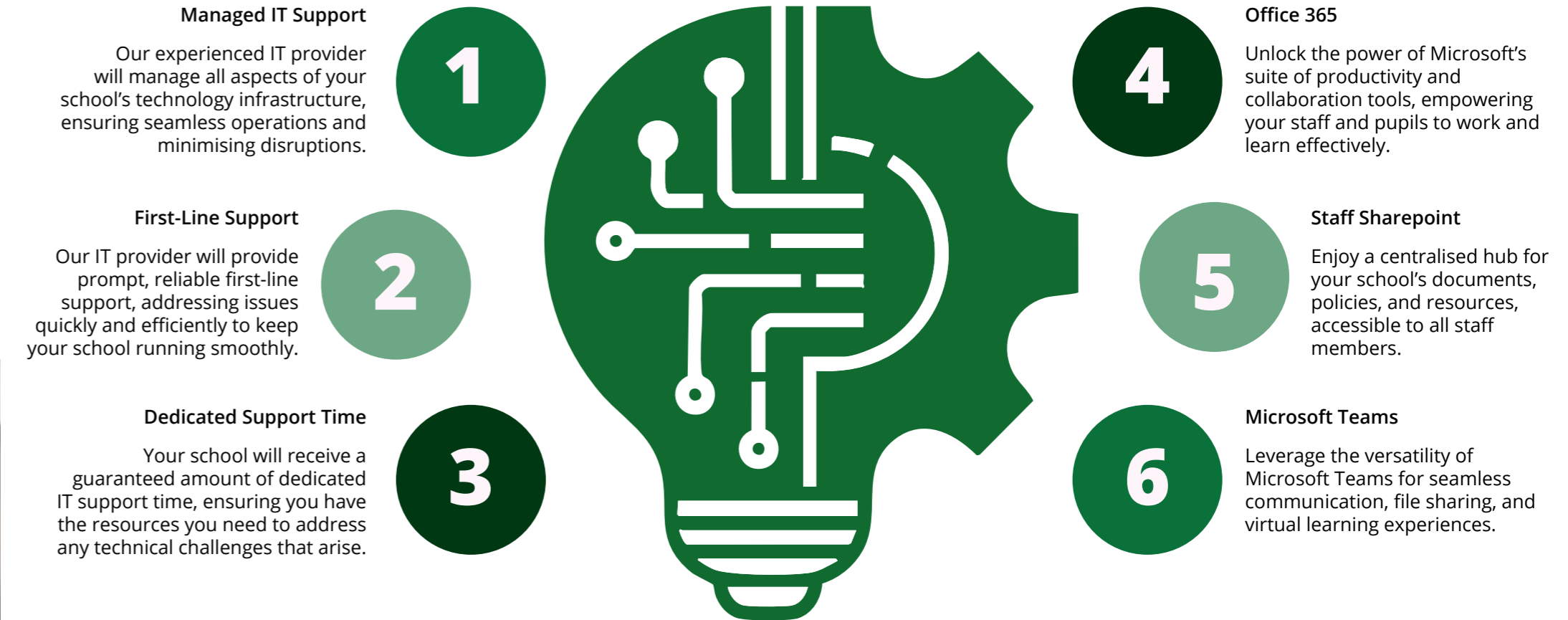
- Office 365
- Microsoft Teams
- Staff Sharepoint

## Aligning with Our Vision and Values

At the heart of QUEST Academy Trust's mission is our commitment to supporting young people from Early Years to Employment. By joining our Trust, your school will become part of a network that shares our vision of preparing children and young people for a lifelong quest to knowledge, character, and service.

Our core values of being Professional and Compassionate, Responsible and Respectful, and Loyal and Kind are woven into every aspect of our work, ensuring that your school and community will benefit from a supportive, nurturing, and collaborative environment.

Photo of UCS Sixth Form Student



# Continous Professional Development (CPD)

At QUEST, we believe that investing in the professional development of our staff is crucial to providing the highest quality education for our pupils. Our highly effective Trust-wide CPD programme offers a range of opportunities to support the growth and advancement of all our employees, from early career teachers to experienced school leaders.

## Tailored Training and Development



**Specific training needs:**  
We work closely with each member of our team to identify their unique professional development requirements and design tailored training plans to address them.



**CPD pathways:**  
Our CPD pathways provide structured training and career development opportunities to support staff at every stage of their career, from newly qualified teachers to aspiring senior leaders.



**Training for all sectors**  
Our comprehensive CPD caters to the diverse needs of all staff within our Trust, including teachers, support staff, Estates and administrative personnel.

## Collaborative Learning

**Across Trust training:**  
Our Trust-wide approach to CPD enables staff to learn from and collaborate with colleagues across our family of schools, fostering a culture of shared best practice and continuous improvement.



**Opportunities to work across the trust:**  
Our teachers and support staff have the unique opportunity to work with specialists from other schools within the Trust, broadening their expertise and exposure to different educational contexts.



By joining the QUEST Academy Trust, schools can access our highly effective and tailored CPD programme, ensuring that their staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and support they need to deliver exceptional educational experiences for their pupils.

# Communication and Marketing

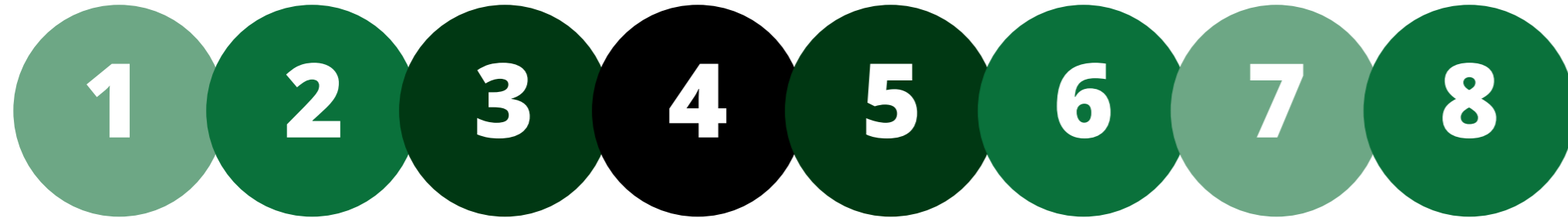
We offer strategic marketing support and guidance to raise the profile of the school and Trust. Our objective is to showcase your school at its very best to your wider community and in turn increase pupil numbers.

Our Marketing support will include:

**Content Creation**  
creation of content for websites, newsletters and prospectuses

**Grants & Funding**  
identifying and providing opportunities for schools to access grants and funding  
creation of content for websites, newsletters and prospectuses

**Communications**  
the delivery of timely and effective communications via multiple channels with a clear shared communication strategy



**Marketing Plan**  
delivering an established marketing plan with a shared vision and culture aligned to the Trust principles

**Brand Creation**  
creating and delivering a brand identity for your school both internally and externally

**Social Media**  
supporting with building and growing the school online presence to include social media channels, Google/Facebook advertising, SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)

**Promotion**  
developing a robust admissions plan to promote the school to prospective parents through communications and school tours, with the objective to maintain and increase pupil numbers

**Websites**  
strategic input into the structure and content of the school website



Photo of Hindley Green Community Primary School Pupil

# Further Information

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For any enquiries or support please contact QUEST Trust:



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