

Welcome

When you look back over the last 12 months, it is easy to miss what a significant period of time it has been for our academies. A new government has come in, there have been changes in organisations like Ofsted, and the issue of school funding has never been far from the headlines.

Yet, it is not these structural changes that have had the biggest impact. Our communities and broader society have seen riots and unrest. The financial pressures that many families are facing remain evident and are having a lasting impact on our children. The Children's Society even referred to our nation's young people as being in a "happiness recession" because of the amount that they are coping with both inside and outside of school.

On one level, it would be easy to feel disheartened, even depressed, by the reports and surveys that have been published.

However, in every challenge there is opportunity. As you read through the pages of this report we hope that you share in our pride about the impact that we have had and the progress that has been made. At nearly every level our family of schools is stronger and achieving

But what this report doesn't show is some of the things that can never be measured. For many of our children, and their families, we are not just a provider of education – but also a place of sanctuary, support and comfort.

Our work goes far beyond what happens in the classroom, and it is hugely important that we acknowledge that. We may not be able to put into a graph the importance of providing food parcels, the difference that helping families with Christmas presents makes, or how even something as simple as having teeth brushing as part of a daily school routine can improve children's long term health - but that impact is real and it is tangible.

For that reason, it is right that we use this as an opportunity to say thank you. Our staff are magnificent and go above and beyond every day. Our communities, including our churches, come together around our academies to help us provide services that extend beyond the norm. Our families have been hugely supportive at every step of the way.

It is because of this sense of community and collective effort that our schools are places where children are thriving. One of the most heartening sentences we have ever read in a report is that "this is a school where lives are transformed" — and whichever Infinity academy you look at, that is what we are seeking to achieve.

That being said, we know there is always more that we can, and could, be doing – and that is what makes our work exciting. Who knows what the next 12 months will bring.

Warm regards,

Gavin Booth CEO

Sir Steve Lancashire



Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

To create a community where everyone is ready to learn and prepared to flourish.

Our Mission

Infinity Academies Trust exists to improve the outcomes and opportunities of every pupil and every colleague working in our academies.

As a deeply Christian Church Trust aiming to serve the common good, we enable both Church and Community schools to flourish.

All our children need and deserve schools with loving cultures, aspirational curriculums and inspiring provision. We provide children with the skills, knowledge and experiences to thrive academically, socially and spiritually so that they are prepared for a future full of opportunity.

With Jesus' promise of life in all its fullness, we strive every day to ensure our children know they are valued, understood, supported and loved. We share their hopes and aspirations and provide a well-rounded education that celebrates success.

The future our children are going into is increasingly uncertain, and we need to enable them to become adaptable, resilient, confident, tolerant and highly literate individuals both for their lives today and tomorrow.

We won't do this in isolation. We know that, "We are strongest working together in Unity" (1 Corinthians 12:12) therefore we will work beyond our Trust with local schools, the community and the Church. In addition, we will work more broadly across the region and system, so that we can learn from each other, harness best practice, access the latest research, and secure the expertise of those beyond the school system who share our moral purpose for children.

We want our children to flourish across their lives.

Our Values







"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

1 John 3:18

"Let all that you do be done with love."

Corinthians 16:14

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

John 1:5



"Call to me and I will answer "There is you and will tell you great Greek, sand hidden things that you male nor fe

Jeremiah 33:3

have not known."



"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 3:28

Our Academies

In 2024, we reached a point where all schools that had been part of the Trust for longer than a year were rated Good or better by Ofsted.

This has been further supported by the fact that we were delighted to welcome three new academies to the Infinity family – Haxey CE Primary Academy, St Martin's CE Primary Academy and West Butterwick CE Primary Academy.

This means that we are now reaching new parts of the county and unlocking even more opportunities for more young people.







Our Context

So, we are now proud to support:



13
Academies







We are now in a position to be able to move to a new strategic hub model. This was an important step as we need to:

- Be in the strongest position to support the county's smaller schools
- Create the framework from which we can improve schools joining us in a category of concern
- Have a structure to underpin our move to GAG pooling, known as the Infinity Equity Fund
- Unlock efficiencies through staffing/leadership structures

We have developed four strategic hubs to give us the strongest platform to respond to need. These are the:

- 1. Boston Hub
- 2. East Lindsey Hub
- 3. Kesteven Hub
- 4. North Lincs Hub

Working with Church Schools

Infinity Academies Trust is very proud to work in partnership with the Diocese of Lincoln.

We believe whole-heartedly that working with both Church of England and Community schools enhances our Trust and our ability to meet the needs of all our communities.

Highlights from our recent Diocese of Lincoln MAT Summary Report

The impact of our work to support and develop the values and ethos that underpin a Christian education was reviewed and evaluated in Summer 2024 by the Diocese.

Through the review process, the Diocese noted and recognised that:

- "The priority that the Trust places on its own vision and those of its schools has a highly positive impact...It is clear to see that schools not only live out their own visions but that they are welcomed as part of a much larger organisation which shares a commitment to ensure that each unique school community can flourish."
- "Throughout this year there has been much evidence of positive Trust support in all schools. The central team clearly play a significant part in driving developments including in improving the learning environments of academies and in particular supporting and developing academy leaders."
- "The well-being of staff and pupils is given high priority in Infinity Academies Trust...Leaders go the extra mile to work with vulnerable groups

 this is part of the ethos of the Trust and the academies within it."
- "Collective worship is a strength... It is clear that collective worship is central to school life and often a driving force for change. There are



some common features of practice which are developing e.g. use of Picture News and the place of music and song."

- "The trust prioritises support for its school leaders...The support for school leaders helps them to flourish and enables them to be present for their staff teams and tenacious when dealing with complex issues."
- "In all academies, inclusion and support for the most vulnerable pupils including those with special educational needs is at the forefront of leaders' work."

Academy in Focus

St Nicholas CE Primary Academy SIAMS Inspection

When St Nicholas CE Primary became part of the Infinity family in 2019 it had undergone a challenging period of academic and Ofsted performance. The school joined Infinity as a sponsored academy.

The last 12 months has marked a milestone year when Ofsted rated the academy as 'Good' across every category. In 2024, St Nicholas CE Primary continued to go from strength to strength, receiving glowing praise as part of the academy's SIAMS inspection:

"Leaders and academy champions are committed to the school. They are motivated by the vision and go to exceptional lengths to create an inspirational place where all are welcome to thrive, 'shine' and learn." "This is a school where lives are transformed. Parents who were fearful of the school, are now employed staff completing teaching assistant qualifications. Leaders know what creates and hinders their pupils from shining. They are driven by the vision to meet and respond to the needs of the community it serves."

"Pupils and adults are treated well.
They flourish because they are encouraged to use their talents and gifts. Showing love and compassion is strikingly normal. Adults and pupils are welcomed and encouraged to thrive in a nurturing, accepting culture.
The vision prepares pupils well for the future."

"The school is well supported by the diocese and trust...Academy champions and the trust live out the school's Christian vision in their actions and decision-making processes. Decisions made by school leaders promote academic and personal flourishing. Working closely with the trust and diocese ensures the school is challenged to improve, its successes celebrated, and good practice is shared."



Our Strategic Priorities for 2023 – 24

Across our Trust everything we do is focussed on providing the best for our children, so in order to enable them to flourish we prioritise supporting our colleagues to thrive in their work, and ensure that our buildings are safe and inspiring places to learn.



Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Pupils



Outcomes and Opportunities: For our People



Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Academies





Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Pupils

Children are at the heart of everything we do, so we ensure that at the centre of our Trust's academy improvement approach is the pupils' learning.

Academy Improvement

As our Trust has grown, we have focussed on staying true to our academy improvement ethos throughout 2024. This includes deliberately not adhering to a one-size fits all curriculum across our Trust. Instead, we have been united by our focus on delivering the very best learning experiences for all our children, ensuring that the curriculum was suited to each academy community's individual contexts.

Underpinning this has been Infinity's Academy Improvement Model, ensuring that all our learning opportunities have been rooted in the 'Infinity Principles', these include shared Teaching & Learning, Curriculum, Leadership and Safeguarding Principles. It is a shared expectation that all staff will know, recognise and use them in their interactions with children every single day.

Alongside the CEO, the Trust's Education Directors and Education Advisor have worked closely with school leaders to implement the academy improvement actions, with an emphasis on improving the provision, outcomes and opportunities for pupils across the Trust.



Outcomes

"Given the nature of some of the communities we serve, there may be some that say that even reaching national averages for the outcomes our children achieve is good.

"It is fair to say, however, that good should never be good enough, and it is pleasing that our Trust averages, particularly at KS1, are starting to exceed national averages and the targets that are being set. This shows that we are moving into the next stage of our educational journey and we can further focus on how we take our outcomes to the next exciting level."

Gavin Booth

CEO

Key highlights



For the first time ever. The Trust's academies exceeded the national average for the percentage of pupils achieving Good Levels of Development at Key Stage 1. Spilsby Primary Academy, for example, moved from being 20 percentage points below averages in 2021/22 to being five percentage points above national in the last academic year.



In addition, the Trust's average phonics outcomes have increased from 63% two years ago to 81% in the last academic year. Gipsey Bridge Academy has moved from being 19 percentage points below national averages to 11 percentage points above - as 90% of children now meet phonics targets.



Our KS2 writing data is on a three year positive trend, with more children than ever before reaching the required standards. Schools like Wyberton Primary Academy and Long Bennington CE Primary Academy are exceeding national outcomes in every measure at KS2.

Ofsted outcomes in 2024

The Trust welcomed Ofsted into four of our academies in 2024. All inspections praised the progress that was being made with no outcome being less than 'Good'.



Gipsey Bridge Academy

Good

Inspectors visiting Gipsey Bridge Academy in June 2024 were full of praise for the academy as it was once again rated 'Good'.

Inspectors found that:

- "Gipsey Bridge is a warm and welcoming school with a family feel. Pupils behave very well...They feel safe. They attend school well and are eager to learn."
- "Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations. They know that the school is trying to help them develop as rounded individuals."
- "Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value what the school offers and the wider community events."
- "Leaders, including trustees, fulfil their responsibilities well. Staff value the training opportunities available. They work well together and support each other. They are proud to work at the school."





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Long Bennington CE Primary Academy

Good

During their visit to Long Bennington CE Primary Academy in April 2024, Ofsted inspectors highlighted the 'Good' quality of education on offer at the large village primary school.

Inspectors found that:

- "Pupils enjoy coming to this happy and caring school...
 Pupils behave well in lessons. Relationships are respectful and positive. Pupils hold staff in high regard."
- "Pupils receive a good quality of education [here]...Staff have high expectations of pupils.

 They encourage pupils to use precise vocabulary to express themselves and explain their thinking."
- "Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils enjoy reading. They speak enthusiastically about their favourite books and a wide range of authors."

Undness, Joy and Integri

• "Governors and members of the trust check on the work of the school, visiting often to provide challenge and support...Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel valued and supported."





Ofsted outcomes in 2024



Pinchbeck East CE Primary Academy

Good with Outstanding Features

When Pinchbeck East CE Primary joined Infinity, it had recently received a Requires Improvement rating from Ofsted. Fast forward to February 2024 and through the support of the Trust, the academy was judged to be 'Good' with Outstanding features.



Inspectors found that:

- "The school has an ambitious curriculum...The early reading curriculum is a particular strength of the school. All adults are expertly trained to teach reading."
- "Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations. They know that the school is trying to help them develop as rounded individuals."
- "Children in the early years are exceptionally well supported and are very well prepared for the next phase of education."
- "Trustees, trust executives and the academy monitoring committee undertake their well-defined roles diligently... Staff appreciate how well leaders consider their workload and well-being as they implement change to make the school even better. "





Spalding Primary Academy

Good

Ofsted inspectors were impressed by the 'friendly, nurturing and welcoming' atmosphere at Spalding Primary Academy when they visited in February 2024. The school was rated Good across every area.

Inspectors found that:

- "Pupils know the school values well and demonstrate these in their interactions. There is a culture of support and kindness to others, which all the school models well."
- "The school has high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations and understand, appreciate and respect difference."
- "The school places pupils' wider development at the heart of what it does. The curriculum, along with wider opportunities, supports pupils to develop a strong moral code."
- "The trust knows the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. It provides a wealth of effective support and challenge to the school. The trust and the school continue to drive improvements with great determination."





Enhancing curriculum and providing inspiring opportunities

We believe it is incredibly important to provide inspiring opportunities and experiences for our pupils throughout their time with us.

During the last academic year, our children have benefited from whole-school trips, theatre productions, author visits, debating workshops, young enterprise initiatives, eco clubs, and community events that have enriched learning and encouraged our pupils to shine.









Marking Remembrance







Theatrical Performances



Inspiring Young Artists



Careers and Money Week







SEND, safeguarding and data strategy

SEND

During 2024, LEARN SEND Hub reviewed SEND provision across the Trust through a peer review model. One SEND specialist from the hub worked with two SENCOs to review provision in each academy.



The review found that SEND is a high priority across Infinity. Strengths that were highlighted included leadership of SEND, quality of SEND provision; working with pupils and parents of pupils with SEND; access to CPD through National College and whole school SEND; and adaptations of planned curriculum within curriculum.

Following the review, it is now the intention to provide a professional development pathway of training for all school staff specifically focusing on SEND.

During recent Ofsted inspections, SEND provision was praised across our academies:

"The school quickly identifies the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work with parents and carers and external agencies to secure appropriate support for pupils. Pupils with SEND are supported well to learn and progress through the curriculum alongside their peers."

Ofsted

"The school has a clear understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff ensure that pupils with SEND receive the extra help that they need so that they can learn the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND are well supported to succeed in school."

Ofsted

"The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn well...
The school has designed a broad, ambitious and well-ordered curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND."

Ofsted

Providing safeguarding support

This year, work was undertaken to review and enhance the Trust's safeguarding strategic plan, with the addition of an annual safeguarding conference led by members of the National Association of Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Designated Safeguarding Leads from across the Trust attended the inaugural conference in Sheffield with a focus on 'developing a culture of safeguarding', giving colleagues invaluable opportunities to learn alongside their counterparts from a wide range of MATs.

Alongside regular Trust-wide staff safeguarding training, our Academy Monitoring Champions

(Local governors) also received termly training and a proforma for monitoring safeguarding across all academies.

Ofsted inspections throughout the year continued to verify that safeguarding is effective across our academies, with recognition of the positive culture, well trained staff and multi-agency working highlighted as strengths across the Trust.

Our shared data strategy

In 2024, Infinity's shared data strategy continued to be an integral part of the Trust's collaborative approach.

This included using pupil performance data as one of a range of useful tools to enable class teachers, senior leaders, governors and trustees to monitor pupil progress over time.

Staff across the academies have had access to the Insight Tracking data package to enable all stakeholders to quickly and easily input and analyse data at a pupil, class, cohort and whole school level. In addition, the standardised tests and assessment points have continued to provide support for benchmarking and analysis.

With this information readily available, the Trust has also been well placed to provide additional support with preparations for forthcoming inspections.



Outcomes and Opportunities: For our People

We firmly believe in the importance of doing all we can to support our people to be the best they can be, in order to fulfil their potential and inspire our pupils.

How staff feel about working for the Trust

More staff than ever before completed our annual staff survey this year, with results showing that we are outperforming comparisons with other Trusts at nearly every level:



The percentage of staff who feel like part of our Trust's community is over 50% higher than the national average



67% of staff regularly feel excited by the work that they do – which is 10 percentage points higher than the average at other Trusts



94% of staff feel the Trust's vision and values are clear to them



The percentage of people who feel that being part of our Trust is beneficial is a third higher than national averages



We exceed the national average for the percentage of people who feel that their workplace is a good place to work

Celebrating success across the Trust

Our colleagues and our academy communities do incredible things that make us proud.

While we don't do what we do for accolades, it is always heartening when members of our community nominate us for awards. This year here are just a few of the ways our colleagues and academies have been recognised:

- An inspirational teacher from St Thomas' CE Primary Academy received a National Silver Pearson Teaching Award
- Two members of the PTA at Spilsby Primary Academy received the 'People's Choice Award' at The Spilsby Town Council Recognition Awards
- St Nicholas' CE Primary Academy and Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy have received United Against Bullying Gold and Silver Award status respectively from the Anti-Bullying Alliance
- St Nicholas CE Primary Academy was selected for the Edurio Staff Workload Balance Award
- Infinity Academies Trust was ranked one of the top 10 performing trusts in the country for the Edurio Trust Value Award







Continuing Professional Development

The Trust's annual all-staff conference continued to be a notable highlight in our professional development calendar – supporting colleagues in every role, at every level.

For the second year running, we also held a Teaching Assistants Conference, bringing together these valued colleagues from across the Trust, unlocking training and collaboration opportunities as well as a providing a place to say thank you for all the work that they do.

Termly writing moderation events, annual development sessions for year group teachers and all subject leads, also remain staples of the Trust's professional development approach.

Across the Trust, further opportunities for staff to access support with external CPD have also continued to develop including ECF and ECT programmes as well as a Trust-wide focus on providing access to National Professional Qualifications.

Collaboration across the Trust

Our professional networks continue to have a central role in bringing colleagues across the Trust together to communicate, collaborate, share ideas and support each other.

Alongside regular Headteacher and 'Deputies' meetings, there are also working groups for EYFS, Reading, Writing, Maths, SENDCos and Learning Mentors which meet three times a year.

In addition, collaboration projects have been flourishing across the academies, with colleagues working together on solutions to enhance their provision, with examples including reviews of curriculum and the teaching of current affairs.

Working with external partners

The Trust is proud of its relationships with external partners, in 2024 colleagues benefited from our partnerships with the Diocese of Lincoln, Learn SEND Hub, LEAD Teaching School Hub, the National College and National Online Safety.



National Professional Qualifications

With the wide range of National Professional Qualifications available, we have been able to support colleagues across the Trust in preparing for the next stage of their career within the Infinity family.

Through the NPQML and NPQSL, we now have a number of colleagues who are ready for subject and senior leadership roles. With the NPQH and NPQEL programmes, we have also sought to develop the headteachers of tomorrow from within our current staffing and ensure that our experienced leaders are well placed to become executive headteachers if, and when required.

In addition, one of the Trust's Education Directors became a coach for the NPQEL programme and was deployed to support external colleagues.

Joanne Sharples, Headteacher at St Thomas CE Primary Academy, commented on the NPQEL:

"It has been interesting to have the opportunity to reflect and u tilise my expertise in a different way, responding to challenges in a range of contexts, as well as being able to identify and address persistent and common school leadership challenges."

Teeny Vayro, Head of School at Pinchbeck East CE Primary Academy, said:

"The NPQH was an opportunity for me to update my knowledge and skills as a leader, deeply embedded in research. I am loving it – the opportunity to study again, to implement learning and network as part of a wider leadership community."



Workload and wellbeing

Making employee wellbeing a priority

Each year Infinity Academies Trust actively looks for ways in which it can support colleagues with managing their workload through the streamlining of systems and processes, the removal of unnecessary bureaucracy and avoiding replication.

This year we have maintained our commitment to keeping the number of pupil data collection points to a minimum, a simplified approach to marking and feedback policies, as well as building upon the centrally managed services designed to unburden academy leaders and managers.

The Trust also has a dedicated Employee Assistance Programme delivered by Education Support, a resource that can help manage and navigate personal and professional pressures, helping to achieve a successful work-life balance and providing 24/7 counselling, financial guidance, money management and support for managers.

In our recent staff survey we found that:



The percentage of staff members who feel able to stay on top of their workload is **32% higher** than the national average

1/3

Compared to other Trusts, **a third more** of our staff feel that they have the ability to plan their day in a way that works for them





Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Academies

The Infinity Equity Fund

2024 saw the launch of the new Infinity Equity Fund, bringing together the Trust's finances and support structures centrally, in order to allow our school leaders to focus on the educational provision.

Initially trialled for four Trust academies, the approach was consulted upon and has now been rolled out across Infinity. Utilising the skills of our team of talented Business Managers and Bursars, they were able to take up roles in their preferred field of work.

Finance

Since its implementation, the Infinity Equity Fund has proved to be an effective and efficient way of supporting schools with budgeting, procurement, income management and reporting.

In addition, it is expected that it will allow us to further maximise our resources so we can continue to invest in the education that our children receive, development opportunities for all staff and our buildings and infrastructure.

HR

As part of the Infinity Equity Fund, a review of HR processes was also successfully trialled centrally, leading to the Trust-wide centralisation of this invaluable support service.

These changes have brought many benefits, including making strategic HR decisions including talent management and succession planning) more feasible when handled centrally. It has also allowed the further standardisation of processes and thinking to improve the quality of services provided.



"Following a great deal of discussion and exploration, it became increasingly clear that as our Trust grew, our previous model for supporting our academies did not use our resources in the best possible way.

"As a result, we sought to bring together our finances and support structures to free up our school leaders to do what they do best — supporting our brilliant children. This has also allowed us to further maximise our resources so we can continue to invest in the education that our children receive, development opportunities for all staff and our buildings and infrastructure."

Gavin Booth, CEO

Managing our Estates

As many of our schools are based in the heart of Lincolnshire we continue to juggle the challenges of rural locations and ageing school buildings.

After introducing Trust-wide compliance systems previously, the Trust has been in a strong position to strategically align investment with need and also act quickly to respond to unforeseen challenges as they arise.

In addition to the day-to-day management of estates, maintenance and upgrade projects, the core team also undertakes Mechanical & Electrical Surveys, Condition Surveys, RAAC surveys, Asbestos Surveys and Heat Decarbonisation Plans as part of the Trust's Estates Strategy.





Improving our buildings and estates

Through Condition
Improvement Fund bids and investment from the Trust reserves, over £1.2 million pounds has been invested in making our schools safe and secure for our brilliant pupils.



The most significant of these are:

- St Nicholas CE Primary Academy and Wyberton Primary Academy have both had significant roofing works
- Wyberton Primary Academy and Long Bennington CE Primary Academy have seen a complete upgrade to their fire safety works with new emergency lighting, fire detectors and fire doors

Yet, schools need to be more than places of safety, they need to be places of inspiration. That is why we have invested significant extra resources to improve the environments that our children learn in and our staff work in. Recent projects have included the opening of a brand-new nursery building at Spalding Primary Academy and the installation of inspiring outdoor learning and play spaces at Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy.

Sustainability

We take our commitment to sustainability seriously, as we want our children to have the best possible world awaiting them. We have worked tirelessly to reduce emissions over the last two years through strategic investment and shifts in cultures and practices.

Comparing 2021/22 data with 2023/24 data, we are proud that:

Our **total energy consumption** has gone from

Our total gross emissions has reduced from

1,931,197 kWh

1,527,067 kWh

A decrease of 21% in just two years.

2021/22

2023/24

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