



School Improvement in our Trust

September 2020



RKLT School Improvement

“The Trust aspires to the highest standards of academic achievement. It is also passionate that its young people develop values and inter-personal skills so that they can contribute positively to local and global communities.” Red Kite Learning Trust aims and values.

School improvement is at the core of our work as a Trust working with our schools to deliver on our aims and values. We see ‘school improvement’ as a wholistic process that has as much to do with effective staff recruitment and resource management as it does with pedagogy. Our Central Team delivers centralised services covering finance, HR, facilities management, catering and IT, each of which plays a part in developing and nurturing successful schools. The majority of the capacity for improving our schools however lies in the institutions themselves. Our job is to tap into that knowledge, talent and expertise and make sure it is distributed well enough to ensure every child benefits from it.

We respect the unique nature of each school and its place within its own community, Headteachers and Local Governing Bodies lead monitoring and improvement work at individual school level. Our Scheme of Delegation (SoD) sets out clearly the responsibility of the schools and the role of the Trust in working with them to ensure that no Trust school lets down its pupils but continues to strive for excellence. We believe that empowering school leaders to develop and deliver the precise vision for excellence within their own school is motivating for them and leads to better outcomes overall. The scheme of delegation for schools within the Trust that are judged as outstanding, good and/or improving rapidly allows a high level of autonomy for Heads and LGB’s but working within a strong monitoring and evaluation framework. School leaders will however increasingly develop and adopt shared systems that ensure the benefits of the best systems are felt by all our schools. The Executive Group, consisting of the Heads from all the Trust schools and chaired by the CEO, meets monthly and is a key component of our work on school improvement.

An Ethical Approach

The Trust is committed to always working with integrity in an open and honest way and fully exemplifying the Nolan Principles in its work and behaviours. This means that we would never adopt ‘quick fix’ solutions to school improvement that would have a negative impact in the longer term or create problems for neighbouring schools.

We expect our Heads/Principals to ensure excellence for all through the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all learners. The National Curriculum provides a baseline for schools to work from, but we would expect every school to be even more ambitious for the learning of their children. The Trust provides a set of guiding principles (DNA diagram) that help ensure that each school develops their curriculum offer in line with the aims and values that the Trustees have set out. Decisions regarding what children learn and experience will be made with a focus on improving children’s welfare and life chances rather than chasing a particular statistical measure. Each school will take a slightly different approach based on their context but must be able to explain this to the Trust and Ofsted when required. The September 2019 Ofsted framework provides a positive framework to work within and we would encourage judgement of our schools based on the wholistic view that Ofsted inspectors are trained to provide.

Being ethical does not mean being 'soft', we expect governors, school leaders and Trust leaders to be prepared to take difficult decisions if they are in the best interest of our young people. When our decisions have a direct impact on people, including staff and students, we would expect leaders to behave in a humane way that reflects our principles as a Trust. Ensuring excellence for all should be at the heart of all we do.

Schools at Risk

Schools that are judged to be 'at risk' will have their scheme of delegation adjusted in a proportionate way depending on the circumstances and context. This, for schools in a high-risk situation, can include the deployment of an executive leader, de-delegation of responsibilities away from the LGB and removal of local financial controls. Where there is evidence that the leadership of the school, including the LGB, is a barrier to progress an Interim Executive Board can be put in place. The details of this process are described within the Scheme of Delegation. Such a serious response should not usually be required. The Trust would expect support to be available, and have the impact necessary, to avoid removal of delegated powers.

The decision to put a Trust school into an 'at risk' category or introduce an IEB would usually be as a response to:

- Significant negative trends revealed by the data review
- A pattern of parental complaints
- An Ofsted judgement
- Significant leadership challenges e.g. absence of Headteacher
- Serious safeguarding concerns
- Loss of trust and confidence in the leadership of the school with parents and/or the staff

Following being placed into an 'at risk' category the CEO will:

1. Review the Scheme of Delegation and gain approval for variation from the Trustees
2. Take a lead on the improvement strategy for the school and co-ordinate actions
3. Allocate an Executive Leader from within the Trust to work with the school to produce a recovery plan that is approved and monitored at Trust level
4. Identify capacity from across the Alliance to support where required
5. Set up monthly reporting back to CEO and Trust on progress with recovery plan
6. Institute a review of the LGB and appoint additional members if required or move to an IEB

The Red Kite Teaching School Alliance

The Trust is built on the extensive collaborative school improvement capacity that has been developed in the Red Kite Alliance. All schools in the Trust are members of the Alliance and benefit from the wide range of opportunities this provides. Diagram A shows clearly the relationship between the Trust, the Teaching School Alliance, Red Kite Teacher Training, the Yorkshire Leadership Community, the Computing Hub and the Maths Hub. Being a member of the Trust ensures that a school is 'plugged into' a rich network of support through these institutions, each one of which has the RKLTL as the lead body. The collaborative network across the Alliance provides a rich web of support for schools at both primary and secondary level. Regular reviews of all the schools in the Alliance and data sharing at a granular level allow appropriate expertise to be identified and targeted when needed or accessed upon request. There are established protocols for sharing capacity across the Alliance and a high trust environment that allows freedom of knowledge movement which is crucial to continuous improvement.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Diagram B shows how the Trust operates its monitoring and evaluation cycle that is the basis for the risk management process which is a fundamental part of the Trust's work. The introduction of a Trust-wide Management Information System, ARBOR, allows real-time monitoring of key data at school and Trust level. Reviewing key metrics around progress, attainment, attendance and behaviour will be only part of a more holistic methodology based on the school's own self-evaluation process. Each school will carry out a range of evidence gathering and monitoring, led by the Headteacher and quality assured by the Trust. Using a standardised 'Report Card' all the requirements of the current Ofsted framework will be reviewed over time. The aim is to ensure that every Trust school has a clear view of its own strengths and areas for improvement. The cycle is timed to allow information to be collated and examined at LGB level before then being used to inform discussions and risk management activities at Trust level.

School Improvement capacity and leadership

As previously stated, leadership of school improvement should predominantly come from school leaders working with their LGB. The Trust has retained the 'Headteacher' model in its schools rather than introduce 'Heads of School' under a more centralised delivery regime. This is both in keeping with the values of the Trust but also reflects what we think is most effective. Strong, evidence informed, ambitious and dynamic leadership at school level is fundamental to improving our schools. There is however a need to co-ordinate, quality assure and support our school leadership as well have capacity to step in when things are not going to plan or in a crisis situation.

The CEO has a lead role in all school improvement activities and this is signified by their dual title of 'Executive Headteacher'. The CEO will work directly with Headteachers and other school leaders as required and use their experience as a National Leader of Education and former Ofsted Inspector to drive the Trusts mission for all children.

The Director of Primary operates as Deputy to the CEO in school improvement matters with specific responsibility for children aged 3-11 across the schools. The Director of Primary has significant school improvement experience as a primary Headteacher but also working across LA's in an advisory role.

The Trust will identify leaders to move into 'pan-Trust' executive leadership roles to provide additional capacity as required. Currently the Trust has appointed an Executive Headteacher for Primary and an Executive Headteacher for Secondary. Both retain leadership of their own schools but with the introduction of 'Associate Headteachers' who have been appointed from their existing leadership teams. This provides continuity but also opportunity to develop talent within our schools and strengthen our succession planning. The Executive Leaders have the benefit of being active at the 'front line' as well as being trained Ofsted Inspectors.

This team is supplemented by experienced consultant 'Red Kite Improvement Partners' that the Trust is able to call on as is required. Their work will include providing externality to quality assurance work across the Trust as well as providing individualised intervention, support and coaching as required.

The Trust Core Team

Many school improvement issues require expert and urgent HR support for Headteachers and LGBs, the Trust has its own team that provides this and an ongoing service to schools. This is just one component of the Central Team that is detailed in diagram C which gives an overview of the Trust's staffing structure. Close financial monitoring using a central finance system with the opportunity for rapid benchmarking and analysis is another aspect of this capacity that has a direct impact on school improvement. Our aim is to provide the support to heads that allows them to focus on teaching and learning, progress and the welfare of the children in their care.

Governance

Weaknesses in governance can quickly manifest themselves in failures in school leadership and the accumulation of risk that can lead to school failures. The Trust takes governance very seriously and the Chair of the Trust will work with the CEO take a proactive role in the development of governance arrangements across our schools. The Trust has specific capacity to ensure that there is a consistent, high quality approach to governance in all Red Kite schools. The RKLIT governance handbook supports this and governor training events and conferences are part of the calendar. The Trust is also taking an active role in governor recruitment, working with local employers and other agencies to bring talented and skilled individuals into our governing bodies.

Support for Headteachers

Our Headteachers are the people who will really make the schools successful, we need their inspiration, dedication and energy to drive up standards in all our schools. The Trust makes sure that Heads are part of the development of the Trust and are 'solution focused' through working together on the Executive Group. Supporting our Heads on a daily basis with issues to do with site, HR, compliance etc is part of the fundamental work of the Trust and empowers our Heads to deliver on our vision of excellence for all. We plan to do more to help support and nurture our Heads and aspirant Heads across the Trust through further developing coaching and giving regular access to continuing professional development opportunities that have impact. Part of this will be encouraging and enabling enquiry visits to schools in contrasting contexts that are delivering excellent outcomes for young people. We want all our Heads to feel they are part of a dynamic, supportive learning community that celebrates excellence and rewards achievement. We promote a collegiate and open approach to leadership that also gives the opportunity for Heads/Principals to take a lead role in an aspect of the Trust's development.

R Sheriff
CEO

Red Kite Learning Trust School Improvement Capacity Framework

Red Kite Learning Trust

All RKLTL schools are partners of the RKA
HGS is the RKA Teaching School Lead
HGS is the Yorkshire Ridings Maths Hub Lead
Trust Central Services

- Governance
- Finance
- HR/Payroll
- Network Services
- Catering
- Site & Facilities
- Alternative Provision

RKA Team

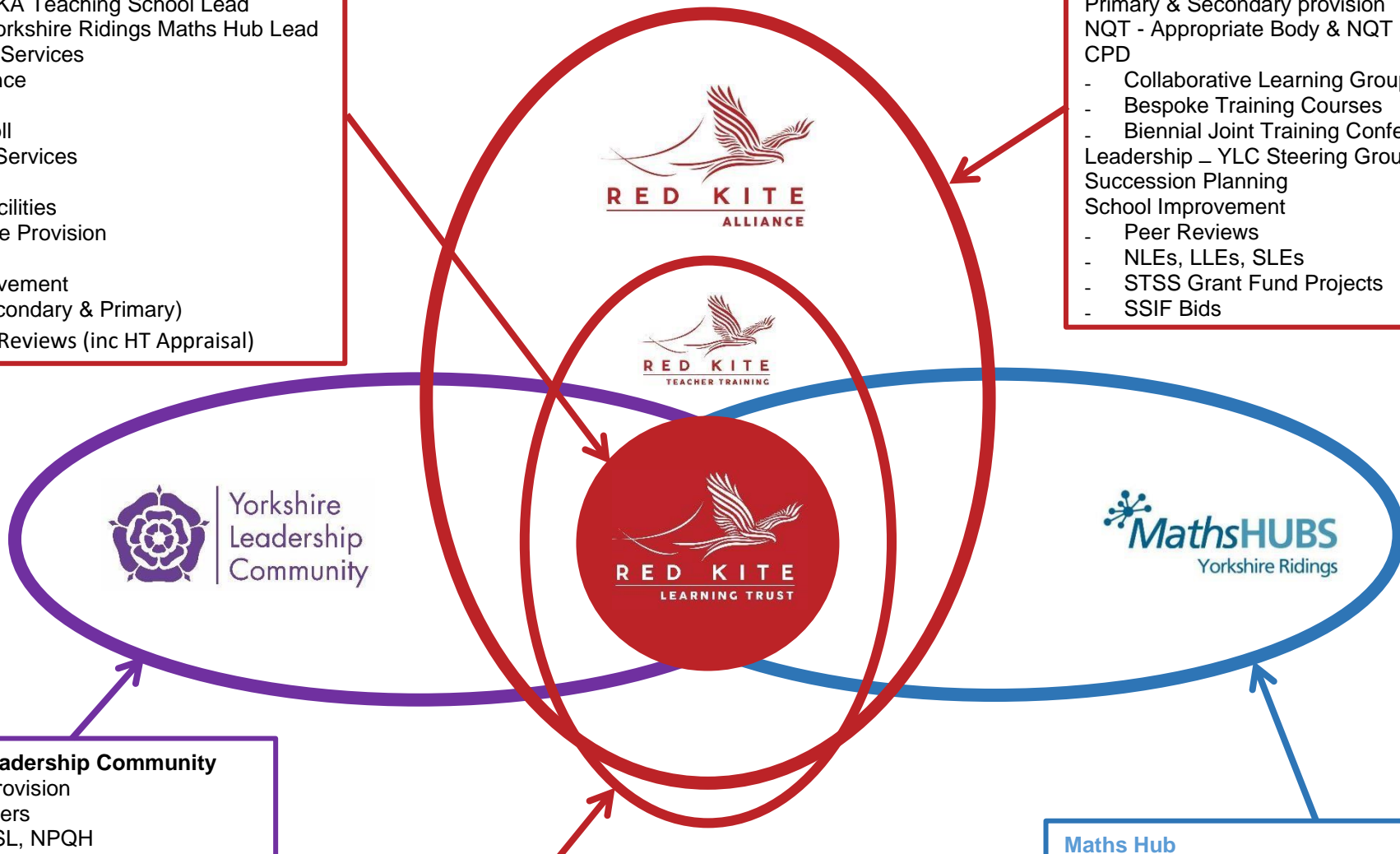
School Improvement

- SIDs (Secondary & Primary)
- 3 x Trust Reviews (inc HT Appraisal)

Red Kite Alliance

RKTT/SCITT Teacher Training Supply
Primary & Secondary provision
NQT - Appropriate Body & NQT Induction
CPD

- Collaborative Learning Groups
- Bespoke Training Courses
- Biennial Joint Training Conferences
- Leadership – YLC Steering Group Member
- Succession Planning
- School Improvement
- Peer Reviews
- NLEs, LLEs, SLEs
- STSS Grant Fund Projects
- SSIF Bids



Yorkshire
Leadership
Community

Yorkshire Leadership Community

Leadership Provision
Aspiring Leaders
NPQs – ML, SL, NPQH
NPQEL – partnered with ASCL
Governor Programmes
Equality & Diversity Leadership
Women Leading in Education Networks

Red Kite Teacher Training

RKTT– SCITT Teacher Training Supply
QTS & PCGE with University of Leeds

Primary Trainees

3-7, 7-11, General (5-11 age range) with Mathematics

Secondary Trainees

Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Mathematics,
MFL (Fr + Sp, Sp + Fr), PE, PE with EBacc Subjects, Physics, RE



Maths Hub

Yorkshire Ridings Maths Hub

- Problem solving in maths from Primary to Post 16
- Maths Mastery
- Shanghai Exchange
- Future Teaching Scholars
- TSST (Teacher Subject Specialism Training)

Red Kite Learning Trust

Monitoring & Evaluation Cycle

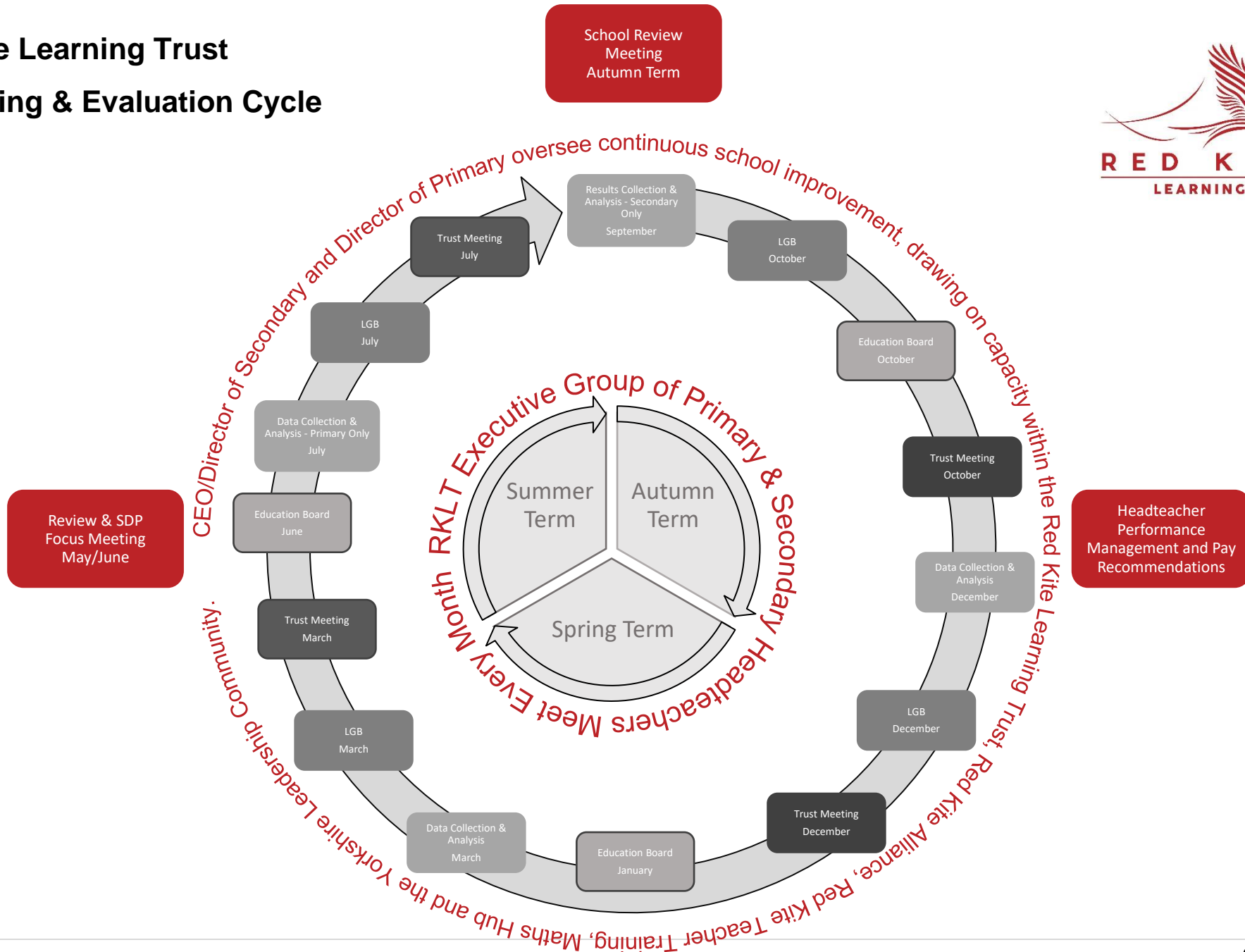


Diagram B

School Review Meeting Spring Term



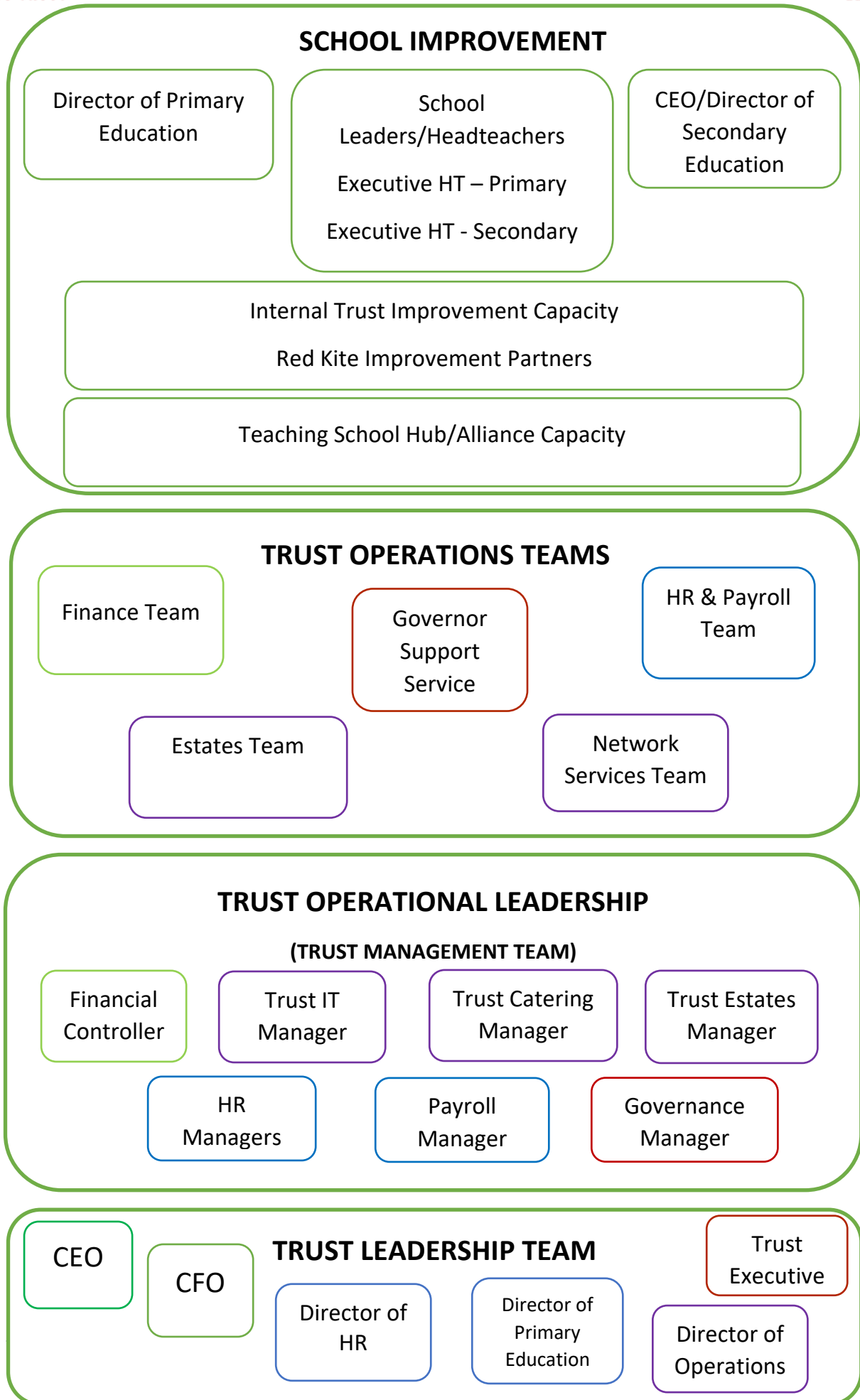


Diagram C