

# OAK TREES MAT GROWTH STRATEGY 2024-26

## MAT Growth Aspirations

Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust was established in June 2017, with four schools joining initially, Church Drive Primary School joining later in March 2019 and Brackenwood Junior School in 2021. Greasby Juniors School joined Oak Trees in January 2023, Thingwall Primary in October 2023 and Heswall Primary in January 2024. We also have 2 secondary schools and 2 further primary schools joining us in 2024.

The Trust was set up to enhance the good working relationships and practices built up over a number of years between the schools, and all schools who have joined were judged at least to be 'good' in terms of OFSTED category at joining.

As a Trust, Oak Trees are now welcoming significant interest from other local primary and secondary schools in joining the Trust. We are open to further schools joining us, including secondary schools, with the premise that their values are in line with the Trust and that we increase capacity during periods of growth. Joining the Trust is based on extensive due diligence and consultation was carried out, considering a number of factors such as finance, performance, Governance and assets, including buildings.

## How Does Oak Trees MAT Wish to Grow in Future Years?

Oak Trees MAT believes firmly that growth is an important goal in future years for the Trust, but we recognize that we do not wish to grow as rapidly as we have done from 2022-2024. This goal is based on the following premises:

1. The Trust is stable financially and structurally in order to be able to assimilate new schools.
2. Growth is steady and right for the school and the MAT and not just for growth's sake.
3. New schools must be able to fit with the vision, values and culture of the MAT.
4. All schools within the MAT are performing well academically and financially or at least improving with the necessary capacity to improve in place.
5. Rigorous due diligence has taken place and been agreed by MAT Trustees. This would be in the areas of finance, buildings, teaching and learning, outcomes and legal aspects.
6. There is a clear plan in place to support the new school coming into the MAT dependent on need.
7. Growth will benefit the MAT, as it will allow us to expand our MAT infrastructure through key staffing appointments to support the CEO and COO and drive improvement in academic, operations and financial performance.

## How Will the Trust Proactively Promote Growth?

The key in the past 12 months has been that schools are actively approaching the Trust for discussions over joining Oak Trees, but in partnership with that strategy we will:

1. Continue to engage with local Headteachers and to requests to speak to the Trust.
2. Headteachers will continue to promote the Trust through their local clusters.
3. The MAT CEO will continue to promote the Trust through various channels including the Regional Director, DfE and Local Authority relationships.
4. Develop and implement positive PR strategy for the Trust to raise profile in the area.

## MAT Growth Plan 2018-24

### Achievements to date

September 2018:	4 schools in the Trust at inception
March 2019:	5 schools in the MAT after welcoming in Church Drive Primary School
January 2021:	Brackenwood Juniors joins the Trust – 6 schools in the Trust
January 2023:	Greasby Juniors joined the Trust – 7 schools in the Trust

October 2024	Thingwall Primary joined Oak Trees
January 2024	Heswall Primary joined Oak Trees
February 2024	Hilbre High and Ridgeway High likely to join Oak Trees
March 2024	Black Horse Hill Juniors and Irby Primary likely to join Oak Trees

### **Further Growth Projections**

2024 - 25	One/two further primary and one/two secondary schools to join the Trust
2025 - 26	One/two further primary and one/two secondary schools to join the Trust
2026 - 2028	We will look to grow slowly and steadily with the aim of adding up to 2 further primary and secondary schools over this period

Thus the aim is to have at least 15 schools in the Trust by September 2025, which would be an ideal model in terms of having the necessary finance, structure and capacity to optimise the effectiveness and sustainability of the Trust.

**NOTE: Trust growth must not have a negative impact on the success of the Trust and the services provided. It is vital that we grow in the right way, with rigorous due diligence and in a way which enhances rather than dilutes to Trust. Thus, the strategies we employ to recruit further schools will only be employed if we are not growing naturally to protect the structure and performance of the current schools. Our Trust is about quality, not quantity, and this is key for us when making decisions about growth.**