

Staff and Governance Handbook 2026/2027



Symphony Learning
TRUST



20

Schools



6,011

Pupils



£34M

Total budget



873

Staff

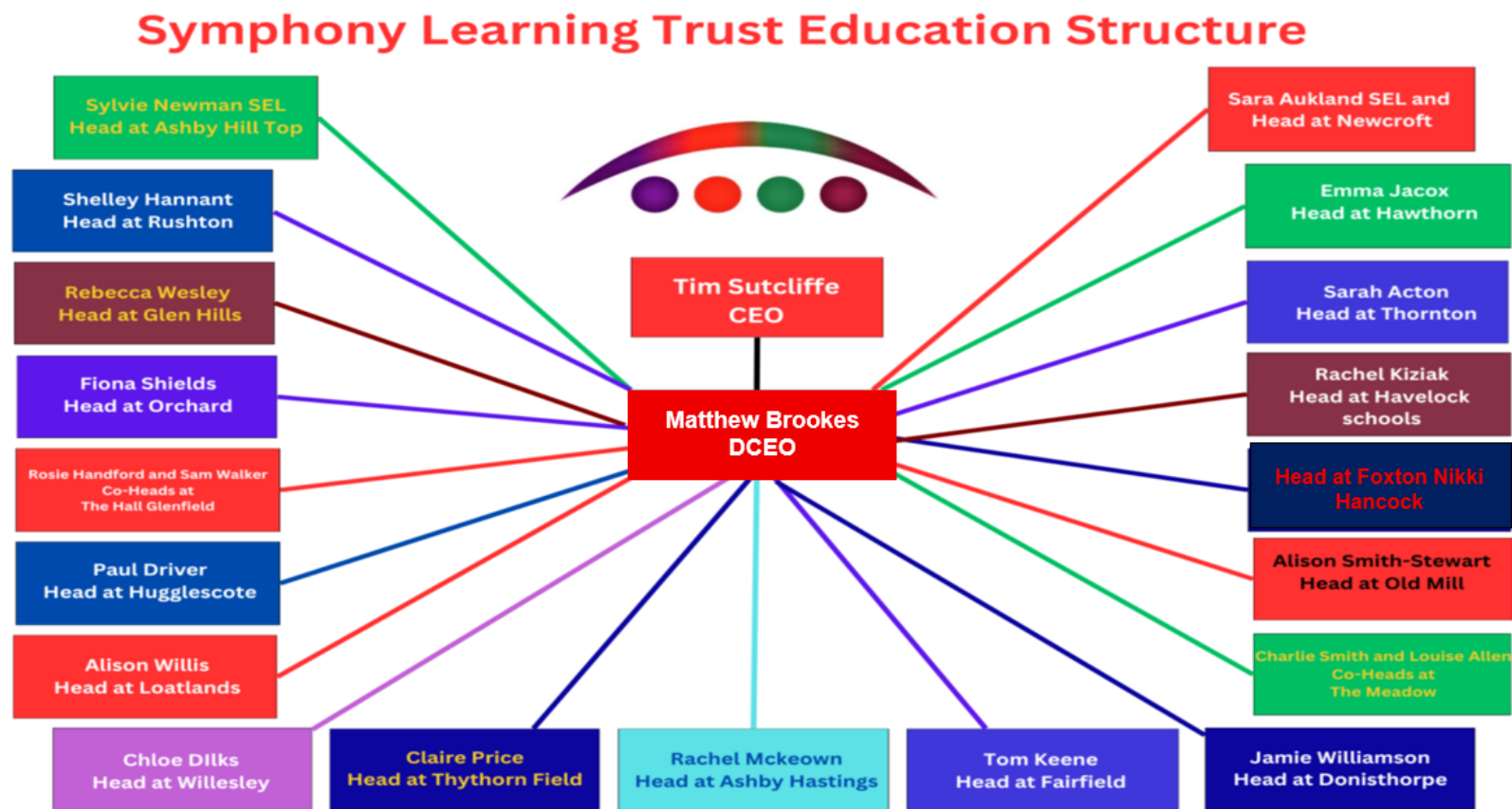
Contents	Page
Introduction	2
Structure – overview, committees, working groups	2
Objectives	10
Overview of our schools	11
Key policies and procedures - overviews	11
Safeguarding statement	11
Asbestos	11
Allegation of abuse against staff	11
Appeals	12
Attendance Management	12
Close Personal Relationship Policy	12
Confidentiality Policy	13
Dignity at Work	13
Disciplinary Policy	13
Equal Opportunities Policy	14
Expenses Policy	14
Family Leave and Pay	14
GDPR	15
Grievance Policy	15
IT Acceptable Use Policy	16
Leave of Absence Policy	16
Long Service Award	19
Probation Period Policy	19
Social Media Policy	19
Staff Code of Conduct Policy	20
Therapeutic Return to Work Policy	20
Travel information	20
Whistleblowing	21
Pension information for employees	21

Introduction

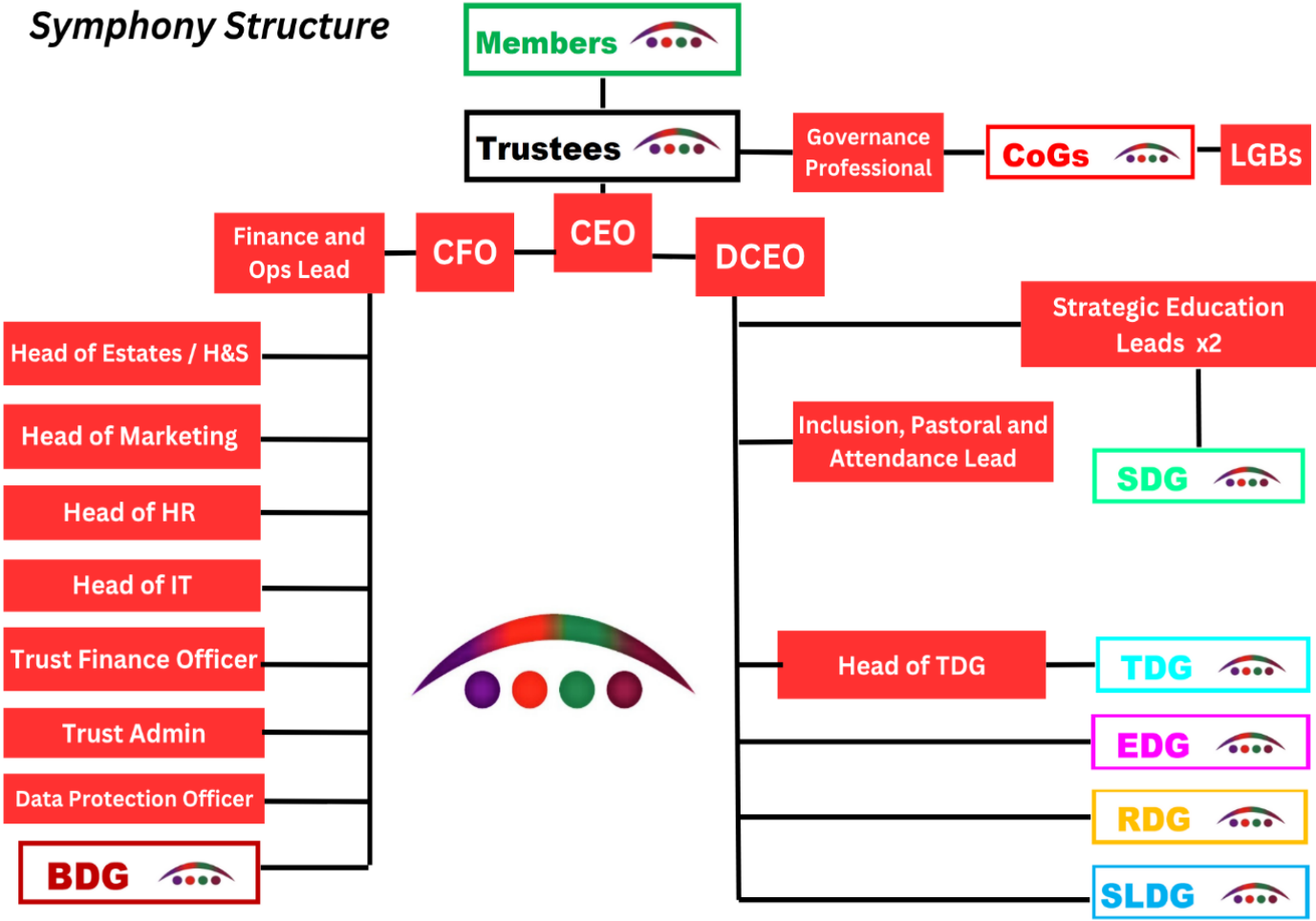
Symphony Learning Trust was formed on the 1st September 2016, by the following schools:- Ashby Willesley Primary School; Fairfield Primary School; Glen Hills Primary School; Newcroft Primary Academy; The Meadow Community Primary School and Pre-school; Thornton Primary School. In September 2017, Old Mill Primary also joined the Trust. In Autumn 2021, Ashby Hastings became the eighth Symphony school as a free school. Orchard Primary joined in April 2022 and Donisthorpe and Ashby Hill Top Primary Schools joined in September 2022 and Foxton Primary School joined in September 2024. In September 2025, The Hall Glenfield, Hugglescote Primary and Thythorn Field Primary joined Symphony. In March 2026, Loatlands Primary, Havelock Infants and Juniors, Hawthorn Primary and Rushton Primary joined the Trust.

As part of a coherent vision to act together in a deep partnership, the trust was formed with a Board of Members, Trustees (with a non- trustee CEO) and Local Governing Bodies. The Trust is open to other schools joining as determined and agreed by the Trustees.

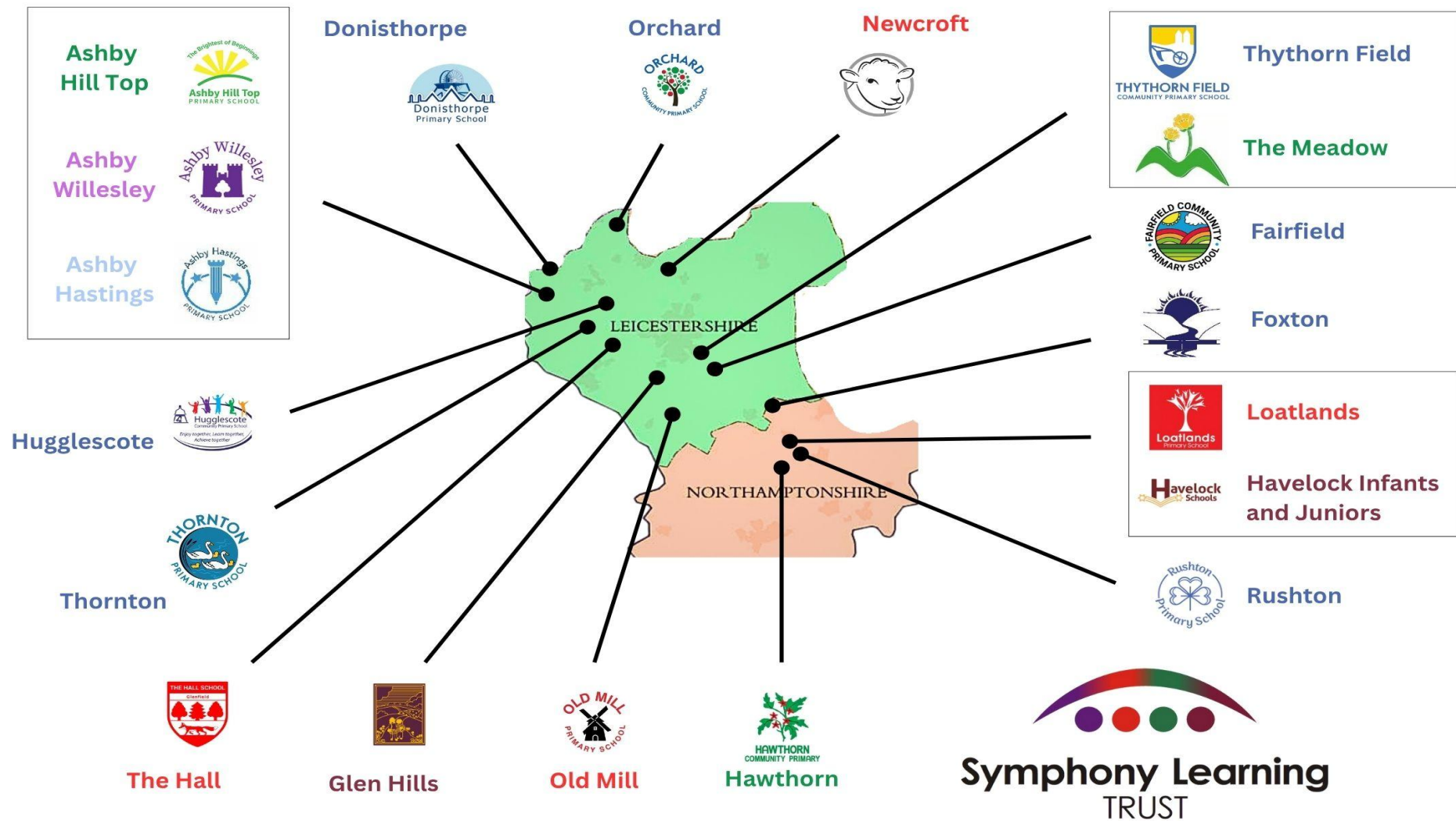
Education Leadership



Symphony Structure



The Symphony School Map



Members



Symphony Learning Trust has five “Members” who are best viewed as guardians of the constitution, changing the Articles if necessary and ensuring the charitable object is fulfilled. The Members appoint the Trustees and can exercise reserve powers to appoint and remove Trustees but it is anticipated that this power will be rarely exercised.

Trust Board - Trustees



The corporate management and trustee responsibility for the actions of the company is vested in the “Trustees” of the Academy Trust (together, referred to as “the Trust Board”), who are company directors registered with Companies House. The Trustees are personally responsible for the actions of the Academy Trust and the Academies and are accountable to the Members, to the Secretary of State for Education and to the wider community for the quality of the education received by all pupils of the Academies and for the expenditure of public money. The Trustees are required, as trustees and pursuant to the Funding Agreements, to have systems in place through which they can assure themselves of the quality, safety and good practice of the affairs of the Academy Trust.

The role of the Trust Board is to:-

- Set the vision, ethos and strategy for the Academy Trust and its academies over the next three to five years;
- Establish the governance structures for the Academy Trust, from Members to Academy level, in keeping with the Articles of Association;
- Providing clarity, through the published Terms of Reference and the Roles and Functions Matrix, of the level at which the following governance functions are exercised:
- Determining each individual Academy’s vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Recruiting each Academy’s Head teacher or Executive Head teacher
- Performance management of each Academy’s Head teacher
- Determining Human Resources policy and practice
- Oversight of each Academy’s budget
- Assessment of the risks for each Academy.
- Setting the level at which the LGBs will have authority and accountability through the scheme of delegation;
- Engaging with the Academies’ communities, parents, pupils and staff;
- Contributing to developing collaborative relationships beyond the Academy Trust;
- Ensuring that there is a strong and effective executive leadership structure and personnel in place across the Trust;
- Overview and scrutiny of Academies’ education performance data;
- Overview and scrutiny of the Academy Trust’s financial capability and management systems to ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook, and deliver best value for money;

- Ensuring senior leaders within Academies are challenged to improve the education of pupils;
- Developing the Trust Board to ensure that it has the capacity, skills and succession plans to have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. □ The Trust Board sets Trust-wide policy.

Trust Board Sub-Committees

Trust Board Sub-Committees will provide the overview and high-level scrutiny of the prioritised risks.

The Trust Board Sub-Committees are:

- Finance (this includes Risk and Audit)
- Local Governing Body Forum (tool for liaison between LGBs and the Board of Trustees)

Educational Development Group



The Symphony Learning Trust “Educational Development Group” is the management arm of the Academy Trust, focusing on operations and the educational performance of the Academies. They operate under the leadership and direction of the CEO, accountable to the board of Trustees. The EDG work directly with the staff in each Academy and the Local Governing Bodies to ensure that the required outcomes are achieved in accordance with the direction and vision of the Trust Board. The EDG focuses on ‘Educational Standards and Performance’. The EDG devise the strategy for intervention and school to school support as well as monitoring standards in all schools.

Business Development Group



The Symphony Learning Trust ‘Business Development Group’ is the team which manages the strategic aspects of finance and personnel across the Trust. They report to the Executive Team and to the Trust Finance Committee. The CFO is a member of this group.

Senior Leadership Development Group



This team consists of all Deputies and Assistant Heads and meets three times per year. It offers CPD and mutual support for senior leaders.

Teaching Development Group



This team consists of Maths leaders, English leaders, Phonics leaders, SEN leaders and EYFS leaders. These employees of the Trust, who all work for Symphony schools, are subject experts who offer specialist curriculum support where necessary.

Research Development Group



The Symphony Learning Trust “Research Development Group” is the team which meets to plan for improvements and innovation to Teaching and Learning across the Trust. It comprises of a fluid group of professionals with expertise in whichever particular area is a focus for the Trust.

Subject Development Groups



The Subject Development Groups are designed to share expertise and distribute knowledge of the most up to date local and national priorities. This group reports to the School Improvement Team. Each group comprises subject/area leaders from each school in the following categories:

English	Maths	Computing	EYFS	SEN	Science	ELSA	PSHE	PP
History	Geography	PE	RE	Music	Art	DT	French	Pre-School

Subject / Area leaders of new schools in the Trust automatically join these groups. Other groups are convened as and when deemed necessary by the Educational Development Group.

Local Governing Bodies (LGBs)

The role of a Local Governor within a Multi-Academy Trust is an important one. In developing our governance arrangements, the Trust Board has sought to ensure that the responsibility to govern is vested in those closest to the impact of decision making and that such responsibility matches the capacity of those assuming responsibility. The Trust Board establishes Local Governing Bodies for each of the Academies, for the most part made up of individuals drawn from the Academy’s community, both as elected and appointed members. The Local Governors are accountable to the Trust Board (who, in turn, are accountable to the Department for Education) as well as to the communities they serve.

The broad duties of the Local Governing Body are summarised as:

- To contribute to and fulfil the vision and ethos of Symphony Learning Trust in so far as it relates to the Academy, ensuring that the Academy achieves the aims and ambitions it has for its pupils, having regard in particular to the benefits of being part of a family of schools which stresses the importance of collaboration and mutual support;
- To implement and review from time to time the strategic plan for the Academy, focusing on the Academy’s performance and achieving sustained school improvement and having regard to any locally agreed priorities identified by the Trust Board and to the MAT Strategic Business Plan;
- To act as a critical friend to the Academy’s senior leadership team, being ready to challenge and hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the Academy’s performance;
- To oversee the management of the finances of the Academy, assessing the annual budget prepared by the Academy’s Head teacher or Executive Head teacher (with the support of the Academy’s senior leadership team) and submitting such for approval by the Regional Board and the Trust Board, ensuring that the Academy works within its budget and the Academy’s senior leadership team adopts and implements appropriate risk and financial management policies and practices;

- To support the Trust Board in ensuring that insurance or equivalent risk protection is put in place and maintained for all risk areas including damage to property, employer liability, public and third party liability and director liability in accordance with any policy issued by the Trust Board from time to time;
- To support the Academy's Head teacher or Executive Head teacher in the development and review (from time to time) of an appropriate staffing structure for the Academy, ensuring there is robust and accountable monitoring of the performance of staff and implementing all and any policies relating to staff adopted by the Trust Board;
- To support the Trust Board in its monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of any central services and functions provided or procured by the Academy Trust for the Academies, reporting any issues or concerns to the Executive Team (which includes the CEO) or the Chair of the Trust Board;
- To promote within the organisation and externally the benefits of collaboration with the other Academies and to actively seek opportunities to work together either with the aim of improving economic efficiencies within the Academies or identifying and implementing best practice;
- To develop effective links within the Academy's community, communicating openly and frequently as appropriate and ensuring that the Academy meets its responsibilities to the community and serves the community's needs in relation to the safeguarding and education of its pupils; and
- To engage fully and openly with any inspection of the Academy, whether by the Trust Board, the Executive Team, Ofsted or any other appropriate public body to whom the Academy is accountable.

Pupil, parent and staff voice

Accessing and responding to pupils' collective concerns is an important part of the operations and governance of Symphony Learning Trust academies. All schools have active School Councils with representatives from each year group. Each LGB is expected to give due regard to issues that are raised through the School Council and the management actions taken in response to the issues.

Parental voice is formally built into the governance structure with the election by parents of two parent Governors to each LGB.

Staff voice is similarly built into the governance structure with the election to each LGB of at least one employee of the Academy by employees of the Academy as well as the Head teacher / Executive Head teacher. As a Trust we will consider what further mechanisms for pupil, parent and staff representation at other governance levels may be appropriate.

Key Aims

- All schools have an OFSTED rating of at least Expected Standard with a number of Strong Standard outcomes.
- To have a robust school monitoring and support strategy to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children in Symphony Learning Trust;
- All schools (which have been in SLT for at least two years), achieve above the national expected average by the end of KS2;

The Symphony Learning Trust is seeking to further improve the quality of teaching and learning through developing a data and feedback informed approach to teaching and learning across its academies. All schools in the Multi-Academy Trust can use the ***Symphony On-track*** to ensure consistency for analysis of pupils' performance; this is supplemented by Symphony Learning Framework which provides support for teachers' planning in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. In order to continuously improve outcomes and opportunities for pupils in the MAT, all schools agree to:

- Share expertise to facilitate joint working
- Raise attainment and progress
- Improve teaching and learning

- Develop and Improve Leadership, Management and Governance at all levels
- Share expertise and knowledge
- Deliver a wide range collaborative events to inspire pupils' learning
- Moderate shared data

Schools in the Symphony Learning Trust each have a distinctive ethos according to the communities they serve. Planning schemes of learning is a complex task which benefits from the diversity that each Academy team brings. Each Academy's collaborative planning will be informed by experience, research and data, from the outcomes of pupil assessment and lesson study projects. We use subject leader network groups to help redefine and capture curriculum excellence and share it as widely as possible. Getting this right will mean that best practice becomes available to all staff in all Academies in the Trust so that all children may benefit from it.

Teachers will receive feedback on the quality of teaching and learning in their classes through formative and summative lesson observations, the outcome of pre-planned assessments and the use of lesson study, learning walks and book scrutiny. A range of professional development will be provided to assist teachers in their desire and efforts to improve. Teachers and Pupils will understand the next steps in their learning through high quality marking and feedback (both written and oral), formative, summative and diagnostic assessments. Time will be given, as appropriate, to reteach elements of the scheme of learning or for pupils to improve their work to a higher standard. Support for vulnerable groups, disadvantaged groups and for pupils with Special Educational needs will be planned and supported through the additional funding received for such purposes.



Objectives

Object Focus	Ref:	Outcomes	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
1. Leadership and Management	1a	Implement updated systems of due diligence as a framework for all schools in the MAT and a set of standards for schools to provide consistency in environment, communication, parental engagement, enrichment	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
	1b	Implement a recruitment & retention strategy based on a positive ethos, professional development and enhanced opportunities for all staff in order that SLT can become an 'employer of choice'	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
	1c	Implement a bespoke Quality Assurance Programme across the Trust with validation/peer review to continually challenge expectations in all schools	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2a	Implement a consistent and secure system of Assessment across the Trust to maximise pupil progress to drive standards forward	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
	2b	Develop projects to improve pedagogy across the MAT	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
	2c	Develop and implement systems of cross-MAT moderation and quality assurance	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
3. Behaviour, Safety and Welfare of Pupils (including mental health)	3a	Implement rigorous safeguarding processes in all schools to ensure the highest standards of safety in all schools	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
	3b	Implement the highest expectations of Behaviour for Learning in all classes	Embed	Embed	Embed
	3c	Embed a strong ethos in each school by promoting British Values and global citizenship	Embed	Embed	Embed
	3d	Develop systems for schools in supporting children's mental health and well-being	Review / Implement	Embed	Embed
4. Outcomes for Pupils and groups	4a	Year 6 – above national average for progress and for standards in all schools	Embed	Embed	Embed
	4b	Develop systems to ensure that all stakeholders uphold the values of Aspiration, Innovation and Excellence	Embed	Embed	Embed
	4c	Outcomes for disadvantaged groups above national to help close the gap	Review / Implement	Embed	Embed
5.Outward Looking and Growth	5a	To increase the number of schools and pupils within Symphony to ensure we continue our moral duty to provide high quality education to an increasing number of pupils	Review / Implement	Embed	Embed
	5b	Embed Initial Teacher Training in order to develop the next phase of outstanding teachers for the Trust	Embed	Embed	Review / Implement
	5c	Develop and Implement an appropriate professional development curriculum for staff	Embed	Embed	Embed
	5d	Implement Leadership Development programmes to enable staff to progress and to encourage retention within the profession (career pathways)	Review / Implement	Embed	Embed
	5e	Implement School to School Support where needed	Embed	Embed	Embed

Our schools

Please click on the school link below to go to their website and find out a little more about each individual, unique and successful school;



[Fairfield](#) [Havelock Schools](#) [Donisthorpe](#) [The Meadow](#) [Ashby Willeley](#) [Hawthorn](#) [Newcroft](#)
[Rushton](#) [Ashby Hastings](#) [Orchard](#) [Old Mill](#) [Foxton](#) [Hugglescote](#)
[Ashby Hill Top](#) [Glen Hills](#) [Thornton](#) [The Hall](#) [Thythorn Field](#) [Loatlands](#)

1

Key Policies

The information below includes a precis of all of the staff 'must know' policies in the Trust. There are other policies that your head teacher/ HoS may feel you also 'must know' in your school context, which may be a school based policy or a Trust policy. **All schools in the Trust will annually revisit the Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy in terms of staff training and policy review.**

All Symphony Learning Trust policies are available on the Trust's website.

Asbestos

Each school has its own policy – please check on your school's website to read your school's policy. The policy is a statement of the guidelines adopted by each school in order to comply with its legal responsibilities brought about by the Control of Asbestos

Regulations 2012 and to prevent the accidental release of asbestos. It must be adhered to by all employees, contractors and persons charged with the responsibility for the management of asbestos at each school. **All staff must sign to say they have read this policy and agree to it.**

Allegations of Abuse against Staff

This is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education. Schools, local authorities and FE colleges should have regard to it when carrying out duties relating to handling allegations against teachers and other staff. Employers have a duty of care to their employees. They should ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended.

The guidance is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in a school that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; • possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Appeals Policy (Staff)

This procedure should be followed where an employee indicates that they wish appeal against a decision to implement a sanction, such as a final written warning or a dismissal as a result of a formal HR process. This policy does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and therefore may be subject to change at the discretion of the Local Governing Body or Board of Trustees This policy does not include appeals that are made under the following policies:

- Pay Policy
- Right to Request Flexible Working

Appeals for the above are covered in their respective policies.

Attendance Management Policy

The purpose of the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure is to provide a supportive framework where a shortfall in attendance has been identified, in order to assist employees to improve, reach and maintain the standard of attendance expected within their area of work.

Close Personal Relationships Policy

This policy applies to all staff employed by the Symphony Learning Trust, including casual workers.

The Local Government Code of Conduct states:

“In order to avoid any possible accusations of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship outside work with him/her. Similarly, employees should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any other employee who is a relative, partner, etc.”

The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with the above provision and to prevent other problems which may arise from the employment of people in close personal relationships. The policy aims to promote an open and flexible approach to the management of such situations.

Any relationship which develops, during the course of employment, between an employee and his/her manager must be declared by both parties in writing to the Head Teacher and details recorded on their personal file. A pro-forma which must be used for such declaration can be found in Appendix A of the policy.

Confidentiality Policy

All schools within SLT are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues and it is important that all schools follow the same clear and explicit policy. Pupils, parents and carers should be made aware of this and how it works in practice.

- Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns, including sex and relationships.
- Everyone in the Symphony Learning Trust needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.
- Everyone in the SLT community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the SLT community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health or personal issue they want to discuss.
- The safety, wellbeing and protection of the child are the paramount considerations in all decisions staff at all the schools make about confidentiality.
- Appropriate sharing of information between school staff and SLT is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' wellbeing and safety.

The policy will:-

- Provide clear guidance about the boundaries of the legal and professional roles and responsibilities of all staff with regard to confidentiality.
- Ensure good practice throughout the SLT which both pupils and parents understand.
- Encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems.
- Give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues. Ground rules and distancing techniques should be used where sensitive issues are to be addressed. Staff should not put pressure on pupils to disclose personal information and should discourage fellow pupils from applying any such pressure.

Dignity at Work Policy

All staff employed by the Trust have a responsibility to treat colleagues with dignity and respect, irrespective of: sex; race; nationality; ethnic or national origin; marital status; age; disability; sexual orientation; political or religious belief; membership (or non-membership) of a trade union; real or suspected HIV/AIDS; their state of physical/mental health or perceived state of physical/mental health; appearance; unrelated criminal conviction; etc. The local governing body of each school within the trust will address and endeavour to eliminate harassment/bullying at work by:

- Promoting a positive working environment where everyone treats each other with respect;
- Ensuring allegations of harassment/bullying are fully investigated in a sympathetic and positive manner;
- Use of appropriate procedure(s), such as disciplinary;
- Providing access to confidential support and counselling services.

Disciplinary Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of conduct and behaviour. It also provides a fair and consistent method of dealing with alleged failures to observe these standards.

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

The Trust is firmly committed to the principle of equal opportunities in both the delivery of services and employment, and expects all member schools to share this commitment. Equality of opportunity means that children and their families, all other service users, job seekers and employees will be treated equally and fairly regardless of their: colour; race; nationality; ethnic or national origin; religion; gender; marital status; sexuality; disability; age; or any other unjustifiable criterion. All schools within the Symphony Learning Trust will seek to create an environment in which services and employment are provided without fear of discrimination. The Trust is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and harassment of any kind. Through joint ventures each school seeks to increase its efforts to deal firmly with instances of discrimination and harassment, including racial abuse and attacks, wherever they occur. The Trust has responsibility for establishing an Equal Opportunities Policy, and the Exec HT/ Head Teacher of each member school is responsible for its implementation throughout the school. The associated “Equal Opportunities in Employment: Guide to Good Practice” sets out the action required to implement the policy in this area of activity. In employment, the Trust is committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which broadly reflects the local community that each school serves.

Expenses Policy

Staff/volunteers may claim reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in the course of the Symphony Learning Trust and Academies/ Schools’ business (please see Travel information). These may arise from SLT Staff/volunteers attending meetings, training or conferences, or purchases made on the Trust’s behalf. Any purchase made on behalf of the SLT must be approved by the budget holder prior to purchase. It is essential the SLT Inland Revenue regulations are met and therefore this policy must be adhered to when making an expenses claim. Payments for the personal expenditure of staff/volunteers must be made using a Staff Expenses Claim Form.

The purchase of classroom equipment and items must be completed using the purchase ordering system and paid for directly by the SLT/Academies. A Staff Expenses Claim Form may not be used for reclaiming the cost of such purchases. Staff/volunteers should make reasonable efforts to get the best value possible when purchasing items, food or travel tickets. Supporting documents required as evidence, such as receipts and bills, must be attached to the Staff Expenses Claim Form. Claim forms must be approved and signed by the budget holder, Business Manager in respect of Support Staff and Head Teacher in respect of Teaching Staff. Claims by the Head Teacher must be authorised by the Chair of the Local Board of Governors. Claims which do not meet approval will not be processed and will be returned.

Family Leave and Pay Policy

This policy has been developed recognising statutory requirements covering maternity, paternity and adoption provisions, as well as the wider issues concerning working families, such as parental leave provisions. The policy identifies employees’ entitlements to maternity, adoption, paternity and parental leave. It is not a comprehensive interpretation of employees’ legal rights and, in case of dispute on

Interpretation, wording used in: legislation; Conditions of Service Handbooks; and in any Local Agreements may take precedence.

The head teacher should ensure a copy of the policy is available to an employee when notification is given to them by the employee.

If there is a requirement for further information or any specific queries, contact will be made with a HR Advisor.

GDPR Data Protection Policy

All staff are responsible for:

- Collecting, storing and processing any personal data in accordance with this policy
- Informing the school of any changes to their personal data, such as address
- Contacting the DPO in the following circumstances:
 - With any questions about the operation of this policy, data protection law, retaining personal data or keeping personal data secure; - If they have any concerns that this policy is not being followed;
 - If they are unsure whether or not they have a lawful basis to use personal data in a particular way;
 - If they need to rely on or capture consent, draft a privacy notice, deal with data protection rights invoked by an individual, or transfer personal data outside the European Economic Area. The GDPR is based on data protection principles that our schools must comply with.

The principles say that personal data must be:

- Processed fairly and lawfully and, in a transparent manner;
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it is processed;
- Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- Kept for longer than is necessary for that purposes for which it is processed;
- Processed in a way that ensures it is appropriately secure.

This policy sets out how the school aims to comply with these principles.

Grievance Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to assist employees to raise individual or collective complaints and to have those complaints resolved quickly, fairly and where appropriate as informally as possible. Wherever possible, the primary aim of the policy is to facilitate the repair of working relationships. A grievance is a concern, problem or complaint raised by an employee or group of staff relating to their employment. Examples of grievances include issues about terms and conditions of employment, changes to working practices, organisational changes, actions not being carried out in line with policies etc.

This policy does not apply to complaints which relate to bullying or harassment. Such cases will be dealt with under the Dignity at Work Policy.

IT Acceptable Use - Staff & Volunteers (The 'Acceptable Use Policy Agreement' should be signed by all members of staff at the start of their employment within SLT)

This policy is intended to ensure:

That staff and volunteers will be safe and responsible users of the internet and other digital technologies;

That school ICT systems and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse;

The school will try to ensure that staff and volunteers will have good access to ICT to enhance their work and improve opportunities for learners and will, in return, expect staff and volunteers to agree to be responsible users.

Leave of Absence Policy

Please also refer the 'Leave of Absence Guidance'.

Emergency & Compassionate Leave		
Leave	Duration	Paid/unpaid
a. Emergency leave: (<i>unforeseen domestic issues</i>)	Immediate 24 hours. Up to 48 hours (max) in crisis situation	Paid, up to 2 days max. Additional time off required after the emergency has passed may be taken using annual leave / working additional hours or as unpaid leave
b. Compassionate Leave: (<i>usually confined to cases of bereavement or extreme dependent care situations/hospitalisation</i>)	Up to 5 days (or an addition 3 days where this follows 2 days emergency leave)	Up to 5 days paid. Or time off may be unpaid / taken as annual leave or working additional hours unless extenuating circumstances
c. Additional compassionate leave: (<i>granted in exceptional/life threatening circumstances</i>)	Up to an additional 5 days (a max. of 10 days leave in total)	Paid leave may be granted
Medical & Welfare Appointments		
Leave	Duration	Paid/unpaid
a. Attendance at medical /dental/optician appointments (<i>for employee or dependent</i>)	Time off to be agreed where this cannot be arranged outside of work. Proof of appointment to be provided.	Paid leave may be granted
b. Medical screening i.e. cancer screening / cervical smear test / breast examination		Paid leave may be granted
c. Blood Donors	To be agreed	Paid leave may be granted
d. Day surgery or inpatient treatment	Proof of appointment to be provided.	To be recorded as sick leave.
e. Bone Marrow Donors	To be agreed	Unpaid
f. Fertility/IVF Treatment	Proof of treatment / appointment required.	Paid leave may be granted Absence to be recorded as sick leave if accompanied by GP fit note. See guidance for more details.
g. Gender Reassignment	Proof of treatment / appointment required. To be agreed between Head Teacher & employee	Paid leave may be granted Absence to be recorded as sick leave if accompanied by GP fit note.
1. Domestic Reasons for Absence		
Leave	Duration	Paid/unpaid
a. Moving house	1 day	Paid leave may be granted
b. Attending relatives wedding/civil ceremony	1 day	Paid leave may be granted

c. Examination & Revision (for study directly relating to their role in school & is approved/funded by school)	• Day release • Final revision for exam (equal to the duration of the exam) • Attendance at exam • 3 days study leave (for those undertaking correspondence exams)	Paid
d. Graduation	1 day	Paid leave may be granted
e. Interviews	Up to 5 days Plus additional 5 days granted at Governors Discretion	Paid leave may be granted
Training & Examinations		
Leave	Duration	Paid/unpaid
All staff		
Required Training (as part of their role)	• Day release, • Final revision for exam purposes (equal to the duration of the exam) • Attendance at exam • 3 days study leave for those undertaking correspondence courses (in addition to revision, exam leave) Academies policy does not go into any detail under this section.	Paid, including payment of all fees & relevant expenses NB. Part time employees attending training outside of their contracted hours should be paid.
Individual Training / CPD		Paid leave may be granted
Individual Training / CPD Examinations		Paid leave may be granted
Other Leave		
Leave	Duration	Paid/unpaid
a. Lecturer (during contractual hours)	Approval required by Head teacher / Governors	Paid leave may be granted. Any fees received by employee should be paid directly to the school.
b. Professional Bodies		Paid leave may be granted where operational needs permit.
c. Participation in Sporting Activities	To be agreed by Governing Body (Supporting information to be provided where applicable)	Paid leave may be granted
d. Career Breaks /Sabbatical	See guidance on Career Breaks & Sabbatical	
e. Other requests	Approval required by Head teacher / Governors	Paid leave may be granted
5. Statutory Leave		
Leave	Duration	Paid/unpaid
a. Redundancy – support for job seeking/training	Reasonable time – to be agreed between Head teacher & employee with at least 2 years' services	Paid

b. Jury Service or: Formal attendance at court /tribunal or as a witness on behalf of The Crown, Police or Defence, or for either side in a civil case.	On average up to 10 days but can be longer	Paid If unpaid, employees can claim loss of earnings from the court. Where an employee claims from the court, employers can chose to pay a "top up" to ensure that the employee sees no reduction to pay during this time.
c. Magisterial Duties (Justice of the Peace)	Up to a maximum of 18 days, or equivalent half days per annum.	Paid leave may be granted Employees can claim loss of earnings from the court.
d. Other Public Services Duties, including: • Local Councillor • A School Governor / Trustee • Member of any statutory tribunal, for example employment tribunal • Member of health authority • Member of the Environment Agency • Member of the prison independent monitoring boards.	An aggregate total of 15 days (or 18 in the case of JP's or 20 in the case of LA Councillors) per annum) 1 days leave on day of poll Up to 5 days per Academic Year.	Paid leave may be granted Paid Paid
Trade Union Duties:	Reasonable time off may be granted (as per section 168 of TULRA). Please contact your HR Adviser	Paid leave may be granted Schools to liaise with HR
Reserve Forces a. Time off for Training b. Mobilisation	To be agreed between Head teacher & employee. Maximum duration of full time service when call out is usually no more than 12 months, although the exact duration will depend on the nature of the deployment.	Paid leave may be granted 2 weeks paid leave may be granted for the annual training camp Unpaid. The employee will receive a salary from the MoD For more details please visit: https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist
Retained Firefighters, Special Constables and Cadet Corps	Up to 5 days per annum	Paid leave may be granted
Religious Observance & Beliefs	To be agreed between Head teacher & employee. Leave for the purpose of religious observance will be granted, unless there are exceptional circumstances which make it impossible for the employee to be released.	Unpaid or work additional hours.
Trade Union Duties:	Reasonable time off may be granted (as per section 168 of TULRA). Please contact your HR Adviser	Paid leave may be granted Schools to liaise with HR

Reserve Forces c. Time off for Training d. Mobilisation	To be agreed between Head teacher & employee. Maximum duration of full time service when call out is usually no more than 12 months, although the exact duration will depend on the nature of the deployment.	Paid leave may be granted 2 weeks paid leave may be granted for the annual training camp. Unpaid. The employee will receive a salary from the MoD For more details please visit: https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist
Retained Firefighters, Special Constables and Cadet Corps	Up to 5 days per annum	Paid leave may be granted
Religious Observance & Beliefs	To be agreed between Head teacher & employee. Leave for the purpose of religious observance will be granted, unless there are exceptional circumstances which make it impossible for the employee to be released.	Unpaid or work additional hours.

Long Service Award Leicestershire County Council's Local Conditions of Service includes a Long Service Award on the completion of 25 years' aggregated service. Symphony Learning Trust will recognise previous service with Leicestershire County Council for all employees that have joined the Trust. The award generally applies to all employees, regardless of whether they work full-time, part-time, term-time only, annualised hours or, on a fixed term contract. It does not apply to casual staff. The policy explains the eligibility criteria for employees and how to apply.

Probation Period Policy

The purpose of the probation policy is to ensure that all new employees have the opportunity to become familiar with the main duties and tasks of their post and to demonstrate that they meet the appropriate standard of performance, behaviour and attendance expected of them. It also gives the head teacher the opportunity to assess a new employee's suitability for the role they have been appointed to. **All new employees who are appointed to a permanent or temporary contract, regardless of the length of time, are required to satisfactorily complete a probationary period before they are confirmed in post.** A probation period will usually last for 6 months although this may be extended in exceptional circumstances. During an employee's probation period their performance, behaviour and attendance will be monitored and assessed by either the Head Teacher or another manager who will be responsible for overseeing this policy.

Social Media Policy

The primary purpose of this policy is to clarify how employees should conduct themselves when using all forms of social networking websites and blogs, whether conducted through their school's media, personal media and in work time or in one's own time.

Employees wanting to create a work-related social media site must discuss this with, and obtain the relevant approval from, the Head teacher / Head of School. If followed, this policy will guide employees on how to minimise the risk they may place themselves and pupils in when they choose to write about their work or

matters relating to the school/trust and their personal lives. This in turn will minimise situations where safeguarding concerns could arise, employee's integrity or professional standing could be undermined, or the school, the Academy Trust and/or the Local Authority brought into disrepute and professional relationships with colleagues and pupils compromised. Additionally, adhering to this policy reduces the risk of employees inadvertently contravening sections of the Data Protection Act or falling foul of any breaches of confidentiality, privacy, libel, defamation, harassment and copyright laws. This policy is not intended to prevent employees from using social media sites, but to make them aware of the risks they could face when sharing information about their professional and/or personal life. Employees should be encouraged to report any concerns that they have regarding content placed on social media sites by colleagues to the Head teacher / Head of School. **Employees should be aware that the use of social media sites in a manner contrary to this policy, including if others implicate you in a breach, may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases may be treated as gross misconduct, which itself could lead to summary dismissal.** Any instances of "cyber bullying" will initially be addressed under the Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure and may result in disciplinary action.

Staff Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and each school should notify staff of this code and the expectations upon them. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example and acts as a role model to all the pupils within the school. This includes:

- Dress code;
- Confidentiality;
- Integrity and Security;
- Gifts;
- Social Contact and Social Networking;
- Internet Use and Electronic Communication; □ Physical Contact and Personal Privacy; □ Professional Relationships.

Therapeutic Return to Work Policy

This policy is an annex to, and must be used in conjunction with, the Attendance Management Policy, and applies to all staff employed by The Symphony Learning Trust. An employee's General Practitioner (GP) and/or Occupational Health may recommend and provide advice that the employee returns to work on a therapeutic basis and how that could be facilitated – although this does not always need to be the case and schools may wish to suggest this as a way of supporting an earlier return to work (in which case a medical certificate would be needed to support periods of time not worked due to ill health). This means that the employee will initially work less than their contracted hours and it is also important that consideration is given to duties/responsibilities as well as hours.

Travel information

Claims for expenses must be agreed with your Line Manager prior to undertaking the travel or any such activity that leads to an expense to the school.

The SLT does not provide car insurance for staff/volunteers using their own vehicles. Staff/volunteers members are responsible for ensuring they are appropriately insured prior to travel.

Staff/volunteers must also ensure that the car is safe and legal to drive and have adequate insurance to cover any business or travel to and from work. Upon request the school reserves the right to see a copy of your insurance documentation.

For further information please refer to the SLT Expenses Policy on the SLT website <https://www.symphonylearningtrust.co.uk/content/policies.php>

Whistleblowing Policy

Symphony Learning Trust (SLT) is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty and accountability. It is very important that all employees feel they are able to talk about any concerns they may have and where they have reasonable cause to believe there has been a detrimental effect on education provided to pupils and the working environment for staff.

This policy encourages and enables employees to raise promptly (disclose) any serious concerns they may have about the activities of employees, Governors, or external organisations in relation to their dealings with the School, without worrying about doing so.

This policy:

- Enables employees to raise any concerns they may have and to receive feedback about the outcome of any resulting investigation. It is important to note that the employee will not receive information regarding the detail of the investigation or any actions taken;
- Allows employees to understand how and where to escalate their concerns if, following the completion of any internal processes, their concerns remain.
- Protects employees from reprisals or victimisation for 'whistleblowing' in good faith.

This policy is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of an employee's own contract of employment. If an employee is concerned that their own contract has been, or is likely to be, broken, they should use the organisation's grievance procedure.

Pension info for employees

It is very important that you log in and check your pension record is accurate on a regular basis. This make any queries easier to resolve if they are current.

Use the links below to view or create your account with LGPS (Support Staff) or Teachers Pensions (Teachers).

[Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund - Leicestershire Member Self-Service \(LGPS\)](#)

<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/members/new-starter/what-is-my-pension-online.aspx>

[EMMS - Pension Information | Leicestershire Traded Services](#)