

Introduction

The FCAT Central Services Team provide a wide range of educational and corporate support services to all academies within the Trust. These services have been developed to support the achievement of school improvement plans and Trust development plans as well as delivering a best value range of in-house services.

The Central Services Team provide support across the following key areas:

- Providing expert advice from qualified and experienced personnel;
- Providing and updating Trust wide policies that ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and alignment of procedures across the Trust;
- Developing strategies to assist the academies in driving improvements in pupil outcomes, student welfare and staff wellbeing;
- Developing systems to enhance reporting, reduce administrative burden and promote consistency across all FCAT academies;
- Increasing collaboration across the Trust through multi-academy working groups and encouraging communication and cooperation of all staff across academies;
- Securing best value for goods and services by taking advantage of economies of scale;
- Providing assurance to the Board of Directors that the Trust is meeting all standards required of a large MAT.

The central team are there to offer a level of service beyond that available within the academy itself. Standard operational management functions should always be dealt with by the academies in the first instance, with the specialist central team available to provide an additional tier of higher level professional support when needed.

School Improvement

Support Supplied
Provide leadership and support to help deliver and embed trust wide vision, values, non-negotiables, teaching and curriculum approaches as captured within the 'FCAT Hexagon'
To collaborate with academy leaders in providing a template for school improvement within the FCAT Six Strand Improvement Strategy
Provide support, assistance and challenge to the academy Headteacher and SLT from an experienced Executive Headteacher, DCEO and CEO.
Peer review Programme for all academies to support CPD across the trust and facilitate the roll-out of the "FCAT Way".
Provide leadership of and access to the Quality Improvement Groups (QIG) with primary secondary and all-through composition.
Support on SEND through targeted deployment of the SEND Consultant
Support effective CPD through working with FCTSA and other external bodies. Priority access to NPQ and other leadership development programmes
Coordination of externally funded school improvement initiatives ensuring manageability and impact.
Trust wide steer on workforce reform and staff well-being

Core Subject Leads, Science, Maths & English

Support Supplied
Provide advice and support to HoF, AHoF and Primary Subject Specialist Leads in their roles within all schools across the Trust.
Co-design and coordinate all-through schemes of work with particular emphasis on a rich and engaging Yr5-Y8 curriculum within core subjects.
Disseminate good practice to colleagues across the Trust by teaching, team-teaching, coaching, mentoring observation and the proliferation of subject-specific knowledge and understanding.
Provide up to date information about current initiatives and research within each subject field.
Assist with staff formal and informal support plans where appropriate.
Liaise with outside groups to support the core subjects (Inc Exam boards, IOP, RSC, etc.)

Finance

Support Supplied
Preparation and submission of annual financial statements, consolidated budgets, VAT returns, ESFA and other statutory returns ensuring compliance with Academies Handbook, Funding Agreement, Companies Act and Charities Commission Legislation.
Scrutiny and challenge of academy finances, including budget setting, cash flows, staff costs and reserve levels. Consolidation of figures for Board review.
Support academy Finance Leads, Headteachers and Governors in the preparation and understanding of financial information.
Supply and administration of Central systems including on-line banking, nominal accounting and budgeting software.
Overseeing external and internal audit programmes.
Preparation of year end Pension submissions, point of contact for HMRC.
Group procurement, assessing opportunities to reduce costs through economies of scale.

HR

Support Supplied
Provision of a suite of Trust HR policies, toolkits and procedures which are legislatively compliant, ensure best practice people management and are operationally effective and efficient.
Provision of expert HR advice on both informal and formal employee relations (e.g. disciplinary, grievance, capability), attendance management, appraisal and probationary, recruitment and retention, organisational change, organisational development, terms and conditions of employment.
Provision of training and coaching on best practice HR management to middle and senior academy leaders. This includes mandatory training and training/coaching identified through a skills and training needs analysis.
Regular meetings with Academy Headteachers and academy HR contacts.
Access to the Trust's HR Contacts Drive – a bank of resources which enables academies to undertake their HR administration operations effectively and efficiently.
Provision of workforce performance data to academies on a monthly basis.
Provision of Trust Recruitment and Selection policy, toolkit and procedure to enable consistent, fair effective and efficient recruitment procedures which enable the very best candidates to be appointed to the Trust.
Centralised recruitment administration including central logging of Vacancy Details Form, placing of vacancies on the FCAT website, internal FCAT recruitment e-mail and any other agreed external advertising medium. Access to any Trust negotiated and agreed recruitment costs.
Centralised provision of offer letters and issuing of pre-employment documents for completion.
Centralised writing of Contract and Main Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment.

Central Services Support Package

IT

Support Supplied
Support of centralised systems including Broadband connection, Firewall, Web Filtering, IP Telephone, print management and IT Helpdesk.
Group procurement, assessing opportunities to reduce costs through economies of scale.
Overseeing medium to large IT projects from procurement to completion.
Supervise and line manage academy IT Support technicians and provide access to training material.
Advise on strategic planning of IT infrastructure and hardware to support teaching and learning and keep systems up to date.
Develop a 5-year rolling procurement plan to assist in budget planning.
Maintenance of IT assets register
Oversee training to staff on use of IT in the classroom and general IT use.
Centralised IT Support Technician meetings to share best practice

Governance

Support Supplied
Clerking and advisory service for Academy Council, Board and other FCAT committee meetings.
Guidance to ensure the trust works in compliance with the appropriate legal and regulatory framework and understands the potential consequences of non-compliance.
Clerking service for review meetings of permanent exclusions.
Point of contact for complaints that have reached formal stage.
Organisation of annual Governors Away Day.
Assisting academies with recruitment of governors and overseeing training based on skills audit returns.

Data and GDPR

Support Supplied
Support for SLT with responsibility for data and assessment in the understanding of FCAT assessment and reporting systems
Support and training in the use, setup, management and updating of internal and external data and information systems such as SIMS, SISRA & ClassCharts.
Support, guidance and training data managers and exams officers in all aspects of their roles relating to data management and reporting.
Support and guidance for internal and external assessment and exam results reporting and analysis.
Provide data analysis dashboards and reports following data collections for SLT and Academy Council.
Support and guidance for statutory returns to LA and DfE such as Census, EYFS & end of Key Stage data.
Support and development of internal data and information collection used by middle leaders and classroom staff.
General GDPR and Data Protection advice, support and training provided to all staff.
Point of contact for support and advice in handling and responding to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.
Develop and Maintain FCAT Information Asset Register in compliance with GDPR.

Estates

Support Supplied
Support academy Site Leads and Headteachers in the day to day management of their estates and procurement of regular site maintenance and services.
Regular premises meetings to share best practice
Scrutiny and challenge of routine procurement / estate improvements / maintenance and repairs.
Administration and day to day management of all Estates/Health and Safety monitoring and auditing.
Oversee the day to day on-site administration and management of any commercial catering contracts
To review large scale contracts across the trust with a view to obtaining cost savings through group procurement

Marketing & PR

Support Supplied
Central oversight and management of all FCAT Academy websites. Assist with content input and give general support to ensure a fully Ofsted compliant website is being upheld
Carry out annual full website audit against Ofsted requirements.
Graphic Design – Production of high quality designs and artwork for marketing materials/prospectus', websites.
Supply academies with high quality photographs for generic marketing purposes (websites, flyers, wall displays etc) and the local media.
Assist Headteachers/other staff with constructing press releases and to coordinate material ready for publishing.
Assist academies with the use of social media accounts (primarily twitter)

Health & Safety (HSE)

Support Supplied
Oversee FCAT policy on health, safety and welfare. Preserve, develop, promote and maintain FCAT's health and safety management system.
Develop local plans to achieve FCAT health & safety objectives. Develop management arrangements for the identification of hazards and control of risks within each academy.
Support academy HSE and Premises Leads, Headteachers and Governors on Health and Safety matters and legislation
Monitor that H&S targets are being met and each academy is meeting health and safety obligations by checking that policies and procedures are being implemented by assigned staff in accordance with requirements, and by reviewing Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of health and safety performance on a regular basis.
Ensure that each academy has a structure in place to manage health and safety which includes; planning, implementation of plans, monitoring, reviewing and auditing.
Oversee external and internal audit programmes and monitoring of statutory premises reporting and testing's.

Capital

Support Supplied
Oversight of capital projects funded through the SCA funding allocation. Liaison with FCAT academies to scope condition spending priorities and agreeing spending priorities with the FCAT Executive and Board.
Support academies to achieve best value procurement in line with FCAT Financial Regulations.
Support academies in developing proposal for site development and provision of site development advice to academy Headteachers, site staff, FCAT Executive and Directors.

Safeguarding

Support Supplied
Facilitate the work of the FCAT Safeguarding Board, which all FCAT academies attend.
Annual update of the FCAT academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Risk Register
Oversee an annual programme of safeguarding peer audit in FCAT academies
Organise and deliver Governor safeguarding training provision, including through the FCAT Governor Away Day
Point of contact for academies for oversight advice and guidance to support academy Headteachers in discharging their safeguarding responsibilities, including safer recruitment.