



Infinity Academies Trust



## Impact Report 2023

*Ready to learn, Prepared to flourish*

# Welcome

***For Infinity Academies Trust, 2023 marked an exciting year of growth and achievement.***

We were delighted to welcome two more academies to our Infinity family and saw our existing schools thrive at every level as they worked together for the benefit of our brilliant children.

Our pupils have been able to access some wonderful enrichment opportunities, are learning in enhanced learning environments and benefiting from the expertise and dedication of our staff who are driving forward improvements through shared working and the embracing of best practice.

Underpinning that, we have been embedding school improvement practices, core service processes and providing greater capacity for more specific and bespoke support for our academies. In short, we are empowering our heads to lead their schools with the right mix of support and challenge behind them.

It would also be wrong not to acknowledge that times are tough for our communities. Issues like the cost-of-living crisis are having a disproportionate impact on those families for whom our schools are a source of support and stability. The role of a school is so much broader than education outcomes, and what we take real pride in is the fact that our communities embrace that challenge.

We really do believe that the impact that we make goes well beyond what should be expected of a school community, and this is what we believe makes our Trust so strong. We are all working together to achieve a shared goal – and that is to support every aspect of the lives of our children.

While there will always be challenges to overcome and issues to resolve, we look towards 2024 and beyond with a huge amount of hope and excitement. Year on year, Infinity Academies Trust grows and strengthens – both in terms of the impact that we have and the ethos that binds us together. The future is very bright.

Thank you for taking the time to read this year's Impact Report. If you would like to find out more about what joining our Trust would mean for your school please do not hesitate to get in touch.

**Mr Gavin Booth**  
CEO

**Mr Sean Westaway**  
Trust Chair

***“He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”***

**Ephesians 4:16**



# 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



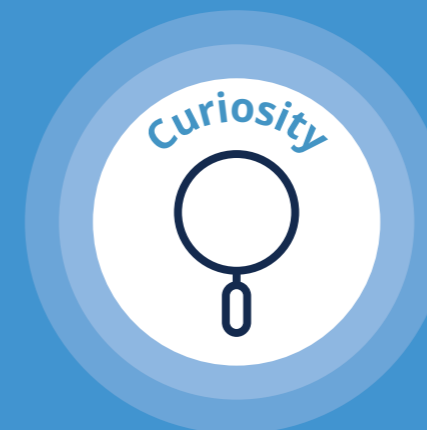
"Let all that you do be done with love."

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 you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known."

Jeremiah 33:3



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

Galatians 3:28

## Our Context

*Our Trust is a proud family of schools. We respect each school's individuality and context, but we are united by a shared ethos and values. We are proud that our community includes:*



10

Academies



OVER

2,350

children and young people



400

staff work in our schools

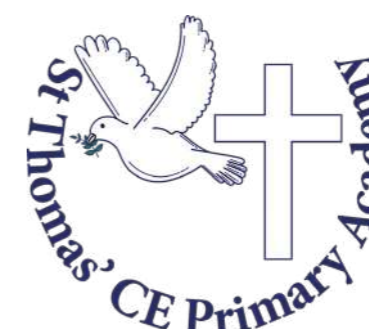
*“Joining the Infinity Academies family has unlocked so many opportunities for our school. We feel empowered and supported to achieve even more for our children and our community.”*

David Nicholson, Headteacher, Long Bennington CE Academy

## Our Academies



Little Gonerby CE  
Primary Academy



## A growing Trust

*This year we were also delighted to welcome two new schools to our family:*



Long Bennington Church of England Academy



Be the best we can be

# 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 its ability to meet the needs of all its communities.

In an educational world of many competing voices it can be difficult to be courageous; with relationships at their core, Infinity Academies Trust church schools are supported to elevate the importance of the school's vision and focus on what it truly means to be an effective Christian learning community.

Infinity Academies Trust develop/support church schools by:

- Developing the Christian vision and values into practice, Church School action group
- SIAMS SEF writing workshops as part of the School Improvement Cycle "If you don't measure what you value, you end up valuing what other people measure"
- Lesson study/Peer Review opportunities focussing on the impact of the school's Christian vision
- Networking opportunities to share good practice
- Work symbiotically with the Lincoln DBE, via the SLA, to ensure that through our distinctive Christian vision and values we are fulfilling our commitment to their vision of "Excellence. Exploration. Encouragement"
- Working with leaders at all levels to ensure exciting, engaging curriculums meet the needs of learners within their specific context
- Securing expert financial management to ensure that children are able to access opportunities which enable flourishing (residentials, curriculum experiences, extra-curricular opportunities, staffing etc.)

## **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 September 2023 by the Diocese.***

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

- "It has been a pleasure to visit each of the academies in your trust. The trust vision of one body with many parts has been evident when speaking to school leaders. It is clear that each school sees itself as a giver and receiver of support within the wider family of your MAT."
- "Throughout all MAT partnership visits to all academies, leaders have been clear that they receive strong support from the trust for school development and that the unique nature of church schools is valued and supported. They are positive and enthusiastic about their work even when this is in challenging circumstances."
- "Leaders value the time they have to work with other leaders and the trust's central team as well as the professional development they receive."
- "Leaders value support provided by the trust for their well-being – a particular strength was the opportunity for supervision in relation to safeguarding. The well-being needs of staff are also prioritised and all academy leaders described a raft of support for the welfare of pupils and families. This supports the vision of everyone flourishing."
- "It was clear from discussions and tours around each school, that diversity, equity and inclusion are a priority."
- "Pupils who are vulnerable or who have special educational needs are prioritised in each school and this helps the most disadvantaged to flourish."

## Our strategic priorities



**Outcomes and Opportunities:  
For our Pupils**



**Outcomes and Opportunities:  
For our People**



**Outcomes and Opportunities:  
For our Academies**

## Our strategic focus for 2023

### Culture and Communication

At Infinity Academies Trust, we live and breathe our mission and our values every single day so that our children and our colleagues have the tools and the support they need to flourish.

In a growing Trust, building strong cultural foundations and communicating clearly is absolutely fundamental to making the most of working together for a common purpose.

So, in 2023, we placed a great emphasis on nurturing a culture of collaboration, exploring and celebrating our shared mission - ensuring that it remains at the heart of our approach.





# 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 school improvement approach is the pupils' learning.*

## School Improvement

All the school improvement actions that we take aim to improve the provision, outcomes and opportunities for pupils across the Trust.

Throughout 2023, we continued to build upon our school improvement offer. Alongside the CEO, the Trust's Education Directors, Teaching and Learning Lead and Trust Lead Practitioner have worked closely with school leaders to put Infinity's School Improvement Model into action, as well as providing tailored support to meet the unique needs of each academy.

At the heart of this have been the Trust's shared Teaching & Learning, Curriculum, Leadership and Safeguarding Principles, our 'Infinity Principles'. These principles recognise and celebrate the fact that our academies have very different contexts and curriculum requirements, but provide a shared expectation that all staff will know, recognise and use them in their interactions with children every single day.

Throughout the year, each academy also benefited from regular visits from the Education Directors (at a minimum of three times per data cycle), providing support and challenge for school leaders. This has included providing support with School Development Planning and School Self-Evaluation and the use of Trust-wide templates that have enabled leaders to share planning, speeding up the process and building coherence across the Trust.



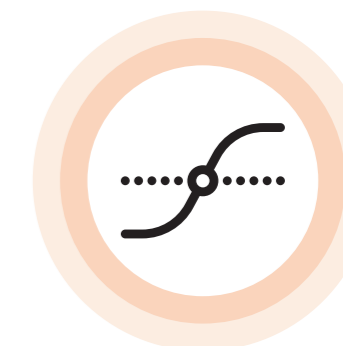
## Outcomes

*"Given all that has happened in society since the pandemic, the 22/23 academic year was the first year where it felt the rhythm of school life had fully returned. In saying that, the impact from the disruption remains very real for many of our young people – which makes their successes and progress something we should be even more proud of.*

*"We are also particularly pleased with our Early Years outcomes. They were strong and showed that the interventions we have put in for our youngest children are setting them on the right road in their education."*

**Gavin Booth**  
CEO

## Key highlights (KS2)



When compared with data from 2019, the last set of published results before the pandemic, our Trust continues to close the gap to the national average – showing our children are making impressive progress despite traditionally having a lower starting point.

### Reading

The gap to national has halved since 2019 and is now just three percentage points. In fact, progress has moved from -2.1 in 2018 to nearly 0 in 2023.

### Writing

The gap to national has closed by over a third since 2019, moving from an 11 percentage point difference to a seven percentage point difference.

### Combined

The Trust now has three schools who are above the national average for combined outcomes in reading, writing and maths, with Wyberton Primary school now above national in every judgement area.



## Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Pupils

### Our shared data strategy

After the introduction of a shared data strategy in 2022, staff across our academies have been reaping the benefits of this joined up approach.

Staff across the schools have 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 additional capacity in place, including the expertise of both a SIAMS and Ofsted trained inspector, the Trust has also been well placed to provide additional support with preparations for forthcoming inspections.

### Providing safeguarding support

During year two of the Trustwide Safeguarding Strategic Plan – Moving from Compliance to Excellence, there has also been a clear impact as new practices have been embedded across the academies.

Most significantly, there has been greater consistency of approach, added quality assurance and reassurance of compliance with the latest safeguarding standards. In addition, safeguarding leads across the Trust have continued to benefit from central support, accurate cross-Trust benchmarking and oversight of the use of the CPOMs safeguarding software.

A three-year safeguarding training pathway is also proving successful, so all staff have access to certified professional development through the National College and Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

### Enhancing curriculum and providing inspiring opportunities

Colleagues across each of our academies continue to collaborate to enhance the curriculum offer for pupils in each year group.

We also 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.

There have also been important opportunities to open up new everyday experiences that pupils may not otherwise have access to due to their family circumstances. Whether that is a first trip to the seaside, flying a kite or visiting the cinema, our academies believe it is vital that we're there to help children experience these memorable moments.





## Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Pupils

### Ofsted outcomes in 2023

*The Trust welcomed Ofsted into three of our academies in 2023. All inspections praised the progress that was being made with no outcome being less than 'Good'.*



**Little Gonerby CE  
Primary Academy**

#### Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy

##### Joined the Trust in 2022

When Ofsted visited Little Gonerby CE Primary in September 2023, the school received 'Good' gradings across all categories with the notable exception of Early Years Provision, where it was deemed to be 'Outstanding'.

Inspectors found that:

- "There is an ambition at this school that pupils will achieve well... Pupils are happy, safe and proud of their school."
- "The school, working with the multi-academy trust, has created a broad and ambitious curriculum."
- "There is a strong sense of togetherness among the staff. They feel valued and share the ambition to make the school the best it can be. Staff appreciate the high-quality training they receive. They enjoy working at the school and feel supported."
- "The trust provides effective support for the school. The trustees fulfil their statutory duties and have an in-depth knowledge of safeguarding."

### Building an exciting future for Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy

This latest Ofsted inspection was not the only highlight for the school this year. Since joining the Trust in 2022, Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy has gone from strength to strength. After a 150-year history as an infant school, it became an all-through primary in September 2023. There has also been significant investment in refurbishment of the school buildings, a brand-new outdoor learning space for Early Years pupils and an exciting new playground recently completed.





# Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Pupils

## St Nicholas CE Primary Academy

### Joined the Trust in 2019

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

Fast forward to 2023 and through the support of the Trust, the picture couldn't be more different...something that Ofsted agreed with when they rated the school as 'Good' across every category.

Inspectors found that:

- "There is a strong shared vision at this school [this] places pupils' experience of education and staff's experience of the workplace at the centre of policies and practices."
- "The school has established an entitlement and enrichment programme to ensure that all children and pupils have the chance to 'let their light shine' by broadening their interests and developing their talents."
- "The provision for pupils' personal development is well considered and ambitious...The school works hard to build positive relationships with the wider community."
- Staff overwhelmingly say they feel proud of working at this school. They say that they feel respected."

In 2023, the school also celebrated being a finalist in two categories for the Lincolnshire Education Awards, as well as taking home the Lincolnshire Active School Award.



## St Thomas' CE Primary Academy

### Joined the Trust in 2019

As a founding member of the Infinity Academies Trust, St Thomas' CE Primary Academy has continued to flourish over the past few years. When Ofsted inspectors visited to carry out a Section 8 visit in 2023 they said that 'there is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding' if they were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now.

Inspectors found that:

- "St Thomas C of E Primary is an aspirational and caring school... Pupils engage well in lessons and show very positive attitudes towards their learning. Teachers have high expectations."
- "Leaders help pupils by using restorative approaches to managing behaviour. Pupils value this way of working and feel well supported. One pupil said, 'My school is special because the teachers always have faith in us. Teachers here will never give up on you.'"
- "Staff feel well supported and listened to by leaders. Staff said that leaders are accessible and are considerate of their workload and well-being."
- "The trust provides staff with the opportunity to network with other schools and attend regular training. Staff highly value and benefit from this support."

St Thomas' CE Primary continues to be a popular choice for the local community, consistently oversubscribed for pupil places and with a strong reputation for high standards.





## 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.*

### Investing in our colleagues

This year the annual all-staff conference continued to take pride of place in the Trust-wide professional development calendar – supporting colleagues in every role, at every level.

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.

A Teaching Assistants Conference also proved to be a calendar highlight, bringing together these valued colleagues from across the Trust, unlocking training and collaboration opportunities as well as providing a place to say thank you for all the work that they do.

Across the Trust, further opportunities for staff to access support with external CPD have also been developing. Including NPO, ECF and ECT programmes as well as Kyra CPD events.

### Building relationships 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 Designated Safeguarding Leads, Curriculum Leads and Learning Mentors.

Networks of School Business Managers/ Bursars, Administrators and Site Staff across the Trust also continue to go from strength to strength, recognising the fundamental role that these dedicated colleagues have to play in the functioning of each of our academies.

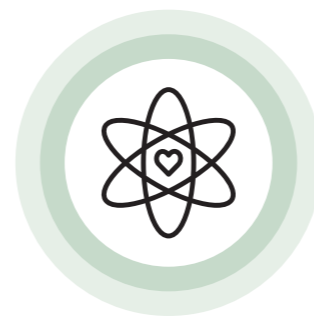
To aid this approach, a training hub has been established in Grantham (in addition to the existing facilities in Boston) in order to make networks and meetings even more accessible.

*“There is always support available when I need it. Colleagues will listen to your point of view and take your thoughts and ideas into account.”*

Quote taken from a response in the  
2023 Edurio Staff Wellbeing and Experience Survey

## How staff feel about working for the Trust

In a recent staff survey:



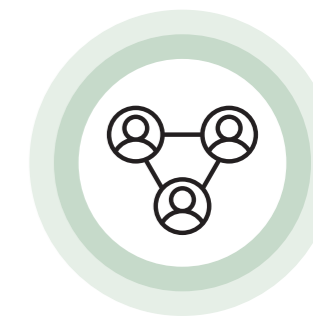
93% of all staff say Infinity Academies Trust has a clear vision and values. The national average is 75%\*.



71% of staff say they feel excited by the work that they do each day\*.



87% say they are confident that being part of the Trust is beneficial to their school and community.



Over three quarters of people feel knowledge and best practice is shared across the Trust. The national average is 56%\*.

\*National benchmarks taken from Edurio's Staff Wellbeing and Experience Surveys.





## Outcomes and Opportunities: For our People

### Working with external partners

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The Trust is proud of its relationships with external partners, in 2023 colleagues benefited from our partnerships with the Diocese of Lincoln, Learn SEND Hub, LEAD Teaching School Hub, the National College and National Online Safety.

### Making employee wellbeing a priority

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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. Some of the recent strategies that have been implemented have been a reduction in the number of pupil data collection points, a review of our marking and feedback policies, as well the introduction of a host of 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.



## 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. Just this year we have been shortlisted for:

- Leadendham CE Primary and Little Acorns Preschool received a Certificate of Excellence for the Early Years Team in the Pearson Teaching Awards
- Fiona Booth, Headteacher at St Nicholas CE Primary, was a Headteacher of the Year Award Finalist in the Lincolnshire Education Awards 2022/23
- St Nicholas CE Primary Academy was a Community Involvement Award Finalist in the Lincolnshire Education Awards 2022/23
- Jackie Wilson, Finance and HR Director, was named MAT Finance Champion of the Year at the MAT Finance Awards 2022/23



## Outcomes and Opportunities: For our Academies

***In order to ensure the smooth running of any academy, there are fundamental business service and compliance responsibilities that must be fulfilled. Our core services team are on hand to provide this support.***

### Compliance and Policy Management

Over the past couple of years a significant area of focus has been the introduction of Trust-wide compliance and policy management. This included the implementation of Every, a compliance and document management system for each academy to use, something which has provided greater consistency across the Trust's schools.

A Trust-wide policy portfolio is now overseen by the core services team, with the management of complaints, grievances and exclusions also being handled centrally.

Extensive work has also been carried out to create standard operating procedures and to centrally collate a bank of risk assessments.

For schools looking to join the Trust, due diligence is also managed by the core services team, supporting headteachers to navigate the steps to conversion and undertake the administration of the process.

### Finance

The Trust has continued to enhance its offer to academies across every element of financial management, from financial benchmarking to providing guidance and support for school budget

setting and year end. The Trust's Finance Director has also held responsibility for internal and external audits as well as maintaining financial policies and procedures, providing payroll support and monitoring pupil admissions.

Finance training and development also continues for new and existing colleagues to support all in their roles.

### HR

As a result of the systems and processes that were put in place during the last academic year, additional HR support is now in place. Every academy now has access to the Trust's designated external HR Partner, while Trust-wide new starter processes and contract and personnel file templates have also been established.

In addition, My New Term has been implemented and embedded to manage the recruitment and onboarding processes across all academies.

Standardised absence management processes have also been established and two key suppliers identified to support with the Trust-wide occupational health provision.

### 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.

This year, perhaps more than ever, there has been an additional focus on this, particularly with reference to RAAC and building suitability. After introducing Trust-wide compliance systems previously, the Trust was in a strong position to act quickly and review the situation.

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.

## Capital investments in 2023

**Over £1.1 million spent**

on improving the buildings and learning environments across our academies

**£79K**

to install LED lighting across all schools

**£66K**

for outdoor learning and play areas at Little Gonerby CE Primary

**£500K**

investment in a purpose-built nursery and wraparound care facility at Spalding Primary Academy

**£28K investment**

in IT upgrades across school estates





## Infinity Academies Trust

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