



School Improvement Strategy

2025/2026



EMMAUS
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Mission.

Welcome to Emmaus CAT a family of great schools strong in faith, serving society.

Our vision is simple; to provide great Catholic education across Greater Manchester. The distinctive context of each school in Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust (CAT) is unique and must be fully embraced and understood. We recognise and value the distinctive context of each school within our CAT. Every school brings unique strengths and capacity, and each one has a vital role in shaping the future strategy of Emmaus CAT.

The Emmaus Story

The structure of the Emmaus story, at the heart of which is the breaking of the bread; gives the Catholic community a perfect reminder of coming to know Jesus as Lord in the Eucharist:

- The coming together
- The hearing of the story
- The gathering around the table
- The breaking of the bread
- The recognition of Jesus as Lord
- The renewal of personal discipleship
- The departure to share new experience and good news

St Luke's story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus is heard by many as a contemporary reflection of their experience. Two disciples openly share their disappointment and loss on the road; they do not disguise how they see things; they tell the story of how they lost their dreams and hopes. **(Humility)**

They are joined by Jesus, who listens to them and opens their minds to a larger perspective than their limited experience. In going to the table, the disciples meet the one they thought had gone forever, in the breaking of the bread. **(Faithfulness)**

That experience enlivens them to take the road back to Jerusalem and share their new experiences with their companions. **(Service)**



CULTURE EMMAUS CAT – 6 CRITICAL QUESTIONS

At the outset of our strategic planning, we ask ourselves these questions.



1) Why do we exist?

Our Mission and Vision.

To provide great Catholic Education across Greater Manchester.

2) How do we behave?

Our habitual virtues (Gospel Values)

Humility – Faithfulness - Service

3) What do we do?

We enable our schools to provide great Catholic education across Greater Manchester as one Catholic Academy Trust serving local parishes and communities to ensure that children get the very best Catholic education and faith formation.

4) How will we succeed?

By working collegially as a family of great schools, strong in faith, serving society.

- Aligned agency
- Ambitious curriculums and character education
- Talent, and supporting our people to flourish

5) What is most important, right now?

Strategic Focus Area 1: Mission

1. To promote a distinctive Catholic Mission and culture to ensure Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust (CAT) continues to be **strong in faith**.

Strategic Focus Area 2: Quality of Education

2. To ensure Emmaus CAT provides great schools to provide an ambitious curriculum for all pupils to flourish and **serve society**.

Strategic Focus Area 3: School Improvement

3. To build a strong and sustainable infrastructure, making effective use of resources, enabling Emmaus CAT schools to **serve society**.

6) Who must do what?

Our roles and responsibilities.

We work collegially with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.



Creating a Healthy Catholic Organisation

We are creating a healthy Catholic organisation through living out our Mission we aim to be Strong in faith, Christ-centred, and child-centred.

- Minimal politics.
- Minimal confusion.
- High morale.
- High productivity.
- Low turn-over of the best people.

We know our core business. Pupils are at the heart of Emmaus CAT. Our vision is focused on pupils getting the very best Catholic education and formation. All pupils are entitled to a rich ambitious curriculum and to the powerful knowledge which maximises life chances. Our pupils need powerful knowledge and character education to understand and interpret the world. Our pupils will leave our schools ready to be of service to society.

It is fundamentally important to us that we share the same mission. All Emmaus CAT pupils and staff should benefit from our best collective practices. We will all benefit from the collective resources, brand, and reputation of the Emmaus CAT. We do not want a culture of conformity that kills innovation and drives away the best staff.

At Emmaus CAT we believe it is the concept of **professional agency** that is to be the foundation of our success: we are aligned in our mission, vision and virtues; these are our non-negotiables. We are determined to create a healthy Christ-centred and child-centred organisation.

*“Where schools have greater autonomy over what is taught and how pupils are assessed, pupils tend to perform better”
(OCED 2011)*



Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

The foundations of Emmaus CAT are the seven major principles of Catholic Social Teaching, drawing on Scripture, tradition, reason and experience to provide principles for reflection, and guidance for action. The seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching include;

- The dignity of work and the rights of the worker;
- Solidarity with all people;
- A preferential option for the poor;
- Stewardship and care for creation;
- The call to community and participation;
- The sacredness of life and the dignity of the human person;
- Human rights and the responsibility to protect them;

The Catholic church community participated in the formation of this social doctrine with the aim of improving the lives of entire communities. At its core Catholic Social Teaching is there to promote the dignity of the person. Working alongside these principles keeps the values of Emmaus CAT at the core of our simple aim, to ensure great schools, strong in faith, serving society.

All our strategies will clearly define and communicate our core principles which underpin our Catholic mission, culture and context.

Safeguarding

At Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust children are at the heart of all that we do, and we firmly believe that safeguarding the children within Emmaus CAT is both a fundamental responsibility and a privilege. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone and all staff members play an important role as we work together to safeguard children, and we ensure all staff members understand this and that their knowledge is kept up to date. Our schools are unique, which means so are the challenges that we face as we navigate the landscape, but we are resolute in our commitment to meet these by understanding that safeguarding is at the forefront of Catholic Social Teaching.

Schools within Emmaus CAT are diverse in context, with varying pupil demographics and their own specific safeguarding issues. This diversity requires Emmaus CAT to have tailored safeguarding policies and practice, and to ensure that all practice is child-centred and considers what is always in the best interests of the child.



Consistency in safeguarding policy and practice across all of our schools is a must, so we strive to achieve aligned processes without compromising the individual needs of the school.

By providing regular, consistent and effective safeguarding training to all staff members across multiple schools we ensure that every member of staff is equally aware of safeguarding issues, policies, practice requirements and procedures.

In order to efficiently report, monitor and address safeguarding concerns across all our schools Emmaus CAT leaders must be able to track incidents and responses in real time to ensure timely interventions take place and that there is compliance with statutory requirements.

Within Emmaus CAT we recognise that successful safeguarding is a combination of people, systems, processes and leadership. We view safeguarding through the lens of context. Safeguarding in context includes all the relationships a child might have over time, such as communities, school, and online. Contextual safeguarding identifies vulnerable children and enables preventative plans to be put in place. We understand there are four principles of harm reduction. These are:

- understanding the context and identifying the risks. We exercise a high level of professional curiosity.
- taking action to prevent harm
- developing in children the skills and resilience to avoid and recover from harm.
- engaging with parents, staff, partner agencies and the wider community to reduce the risk of harm, with a 360-degree approach. This enables a well-rounded, personalised strategy for diligent safeguarding.

Emmaus CAT works in partnership with key safeguarding agencies within our footprint. This includes the local authorities in Manchester, Trafford, Tameside, Stockport and Oldham. Engaging with the wider community, including other external agencies and parents can enhance safeguarding efforts. Building strong relationships with these key stakeholders can provide additional support, resources and insights into local safeguarding issues.

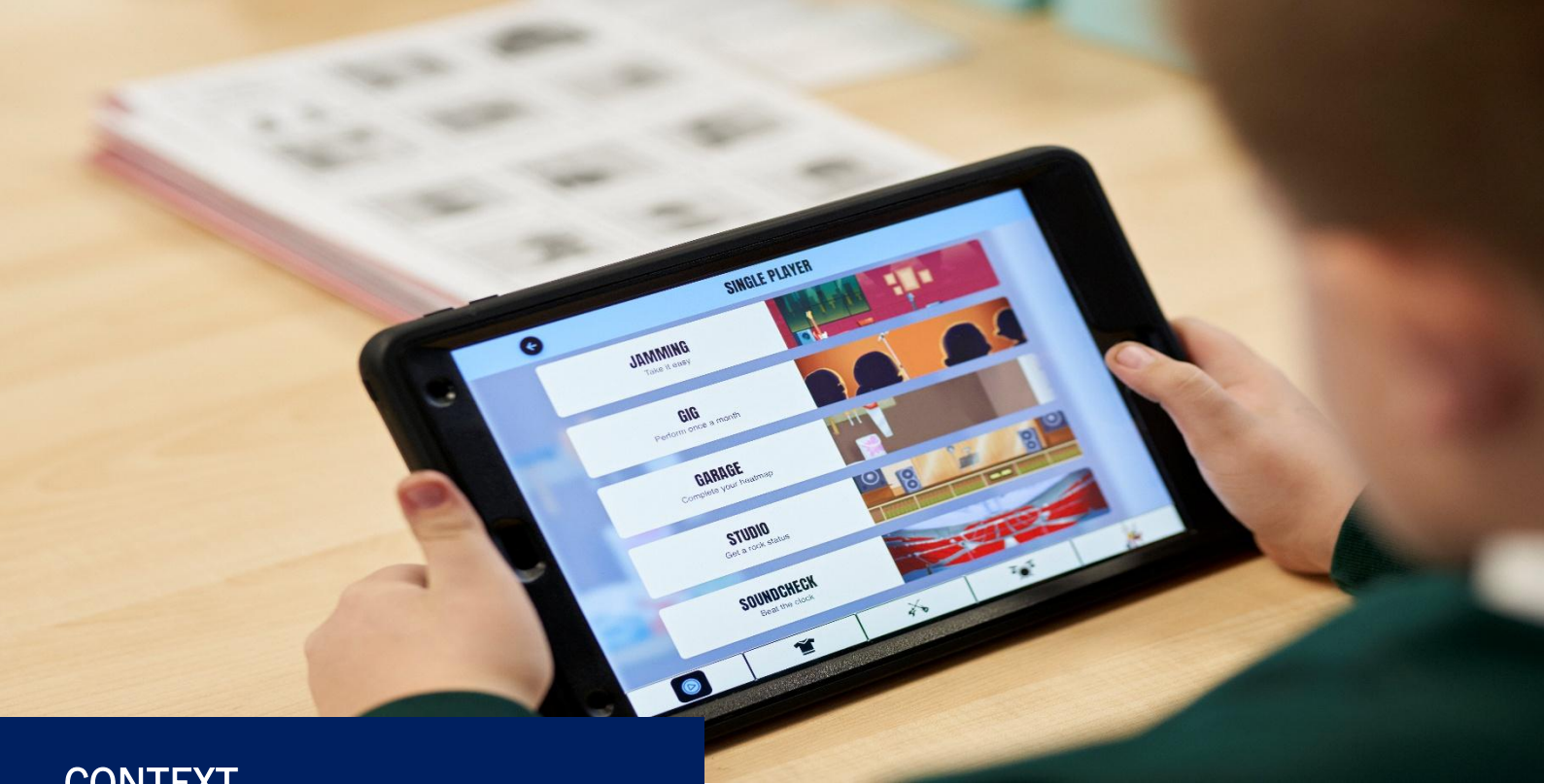
Safeguarding within Emmaus CAT presents a complex and multi-faceted challenge. However, we provide a safe and supportive environment for all pupils by implementing centralised policies, comprehensive training, robust reporting systems and encouraging collaboration. We ensure that safeguarding remains a high priority as we aspire to best practice standards. We are committed within the values of our Catholic Social Teaching, to ensuring that every child in our care is protected and supported to achieve their full potential.

At Emmaus CAT we aim to create effective partnerships with parents and carers, the prime educators of their children, to ensure that each child reaches their full potential, with high expectations and aspirations, in a positive, supportive and safe environment.

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust is one Catholic voice across Greater Manchester serving the children and young people in our Catholic schools, communities, parishes and families.

All of our key strategic documents clearly define and communicate our core principles which underpin our Catholic culture, mission and vision.

Emmaus CAT, greater than the sum of its parts.



CONTEXT



Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust is one of three CATs covering the length and breadth of the Diocese of Salford with a footprint which serves the Roman Catholic schools within the areas of Manchester, Oldham, Stockport, Tameside and Trafford. Emmaus CAT is the only Catholic Academy Trust in Greater Manchester.

Our schools are aligned in our mission and share our philosophy of working collegially to develop meaningful relationships between schools, parishes, families, communities and the Diocese of Salford by continually supporting school improvement, faith formation and being of service to society.

The Emmaus CAT footprint consists of 57 primary schools, 10 secondary schools, 2 sixth form colleges and a special school, creating the potential to education over 26,500 children across our schools, and employing approximately 4,500 staff by 2030, creating one Catholic voice across Greater Manchester.

Why? Our Rationale

School improvement is most effective when rooted in collaboration. At Emmaus CAT, we work together - challenging, supporting, and sharing best practice - to provide ambitious, high-quality Catholic education for all.

This work is driven by faith and a profound moral purpose: to promote social mobility and equity. We build on openness, partnership, and a collective pursuit of excellence.

We believe in forming a community larger than any individual school - one in which pupils and staff understand their identity as part of a global Catholic family.

Our pupils will be faith-filled, knowledgeable, and prepared for life in modern Britain and the world.

Vision of the Strategy and where we want to be

We believe that our school communities are best served by focused, well-supported, highly skilled, and mission-driven headteachers and leadership teams. We also recognise the vital role of the Emmaus CAT Central Team in empowering school-based colleagues through collaborative working and by fostering a positive, professional culture across the Trust.

Our approach to school improvement follows a termly, cyclical model, aligned with our annual standards review process. The in-school support offered complements our ongoing professional development programme, Development Boards, and the Emmaus CAT Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provision.

Our overarching goal is to ensure that every teacher, in every classroom, is delivering high-quality education - both in what they teach (curriculum) and how they teach it (pedagogy). To achieve this, we are committed to ensuring that all teaching is informed by the best available evidence from research. There can be no improvement in pupil outcomes without improvement in teaching, and no improvement in teaching without access to the highest quality professional development.

During the 2025/2026 academic year, our school improvement efforts in **primary** schools will centre around the following key strands:

- Self-evaluation and school improvement (including curriculum and outcomes)
- Safeguarding
- Attendance
- Effective career and professional development
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Writing

Each autumn term, the specific nature and scope of support within these focus areas will be determined collaboratively by the Emmaus **Primary** Education Team, the Chair of Governors, and the headteacher, as part of the annual standards review. The level and type of support provided will be tailored to each school's current position on its improvement journey, including its categorisation within Emmaus. Additionally, the timing of a school's entry into Emmaus CAT will influence the intensity and duration of support received.

In 2025-26, our support work is focused on the following strands within our **secondary** schools:

- Specific support agreed from the annual standards review
- Self-evaluation and school development planning and Leadership CPD
- Year 11 raising achievement plan
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour and Personal Development
- Attendance
- SEND

Each autumn term, the specific nature and scope of support within these focus areas will be determined collaboratively by the Emmaus **Secondary** Education Team, the Chair of Governors, and the headteacher, as part of the annual standards review. The level and type of support provided will be tailored to each school's current position on its improvement journey, including its categorisation within Emmaus. Additionally, the timing of a school's entry into Emmaus CAT will influence the intensity and duration of support received.

All Emmaus CAT central services will be aligned around the following trust quality descriptors to ensure that effectiveness can be evaluated.

Catholic Mission, Culture and Context. Catholic Social Teaching is at the foundation of all our school improvement. We believe in the call to community and participation. We work collaboratively with the Diocesan Education Team to ensure our schools have a vibrant Catholic life and ethos. We celebrate our pupils via CAT-wide liturgical opportunities and enrichment activities.

High-Quality and Inclusive Education. We believe that a relentless focus on SEND, inclusion and early years provision is instrumental in supporting our schools and pupils of all ages. We provide expertise in these areas alongside safeguarding to help the most vulnerable within our care. This will best prepare our pupils in Year 11 to live life to the full and be of service to society.

School Improvement. Our central team provides bespoke support based on when a school joins us, and their category of need. Within the central team we have cross-phase expertise in teaching and learning, curriculum, SEND and inclusion, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, personal development and leadership and management. We work with a range of local and national multi-academy Trusts, local authorities and research schools to continually improve our own practice and ensure robust systems of external quality assurance of our work.

Emmaus Talent. Workforce: In addition to our Central Team, we offer opportunities for colleagues within our schools to support other colleagues. For example, our Development Boards, Professional Learning Networks, Emmaus CAT Initial Teacher Training and our work with Talent-Ed ensure robust succession planning and continually nurture the talent within our workforce.

Finance and Operations. Services relating to People and Culture (HR), Finance, Estates, Governance, Procurement, Health and Safety, ICT/Digital Services and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), are provided through dedicated centrally commissioned teams. These colleagues and services add capacity to school leadership to enable them to meet the needs of their pupils and community.

Governance and Leadership. Our roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and mapped within our scheme of delegation and organisational structure. We communicate with clarity and consistency to all our stakeholders. It is Emmaus CAT that is the legal entity and our schools the constituents.



How will we get there?

ALIGNED DOCUMENTATION (Primary)

Headteachers are the leaders of school improvement in their school(s) and have the earned agency in relation to many areas below. That said, some aspects of school improvement benefit from clear alignment and consistency across the Emmaus CAT.

At Emmaus CAT, we align on key documentation. This ensures that governing boards across the CAT are provided with the same level of information. As a result, there will be a consistent flow of information between school leaders through to Directors of the Trust Board. This key documentation is set out below.

- **School improvement strategy:** The School Improvement Strategy sets out the support each school will access throughout the 2025/2026 academic year. As well as routine support, each school will engage in three CAT-wide reviews: an EYFS review, a safeguarding review and a SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) review.
- **Self-evaluation form (SEF):** It is expected that school leaders will have a SEF in place for the start of the academic year. This document should be a working document that is updated regularly. School leaders are encouraged to engage in deep and thorough self-evaluation linked to the Ofsted framework. At Emmaus CAT, we have linked self-evaluation to the principles written by [Sir David Carter](#). School support will be brokered based on the category of each school. Challenge will also come through the CAT-wide reviews (EYFS, SEND and safeguarding). School priorities (areas for development) from the SEF should feed directly into the school development plan. The SEF will be an integral part of the annual and mid-year review process.
- **Catholic Self Evaluation Document (CSED).** It is expected that all schools have a Catholic School Self Evaluation Document. This template has been produced to support leaders to complete their CSED with clarity and indicate clearly where inspectors can find evidence to support each judgement. Each school should aim to capture their unique Catholic culture. The document serves only as a guide to what leaders might include.
- **School development planning (SDP).** It is expected that school leaders will have an SDP in place for the start of each academic year. The format of the SDP is straightforward. It is recommended that school leaders focus on two/three key priorities that they have identified through their robust self-evaluation, closely linked to the SEF. Actions, timescales, and key personnel should be noted. School leaders and governors should measure the impact of their actions termly. Evaluation of the SDP will be an integral part of the annual and mid-year review process.
- **Headteacher reports to governors:** It is expected that school leaders will provide the local governing body with this termly report, to be presented to governors in meetings 2, 4 and 6. It is recommended that the section of the report that refers to curriculum is aligned to the termly SEF and SDP subject focus. Headteachers should continue to report termly on core subjects.
- **SENCO report to governors:** It is expected that the school SENCO will meet termly with the SEND governor and discuss key aspects of SEND, as outlined in this report. Sections of the report e.g. around attendance and behaviour, align with the headteacher report to governors.
- **Cumulative visit record:** This is used by the education team to summarise support visits to schools and set out identified next steps. Emmaus education professionals will complete this form after every scheduled visit and share this with school leaders. An evaluation of actions to address the priorities identified in the visit record will form part of annual and mid-year reviews.
- **Subject self-evaluation:** This document could be used to support subject leaders who are new in post or for those schools that require a consistent approach to how subject leads collate information about their area of responsibility. The document is not mandatory for schools but can support subject leaders' presentations to governors, SLT or the CAT central team about strengths and next steps.

- **SEND checklist for subject leaders:** This document could be used to support subject leaders in monitoring provision in their subject for pupils with SEND. This document is linked to the EEF 5-a-day SEND principles.
- **Pupil Premium, Music Development Plan and Sports Premium planning and evaluation reports:** It is expected that these are reviewed annually in consultation with the Local Governing Body (LGB). Documentation should clearly indicate the impact of spending on pupil outcomes. Schools should use the [DfE \(Department for Education\) template for Pupil Premium](#), the Association for Physical Education templates for the sports premium, [School music development plan: summary template - GOV.UK](#)
- **Data prediction and results collection forms:** These enable Emmaus CAT to build a picture of attainment for pupils over time. Schools should explain any significant variance in attainment from previous years. Headteachers should use this proforma when sharing key headline data with the LGB. This completed document will be discussed at the ASR.
- **Primary school due diligence** (for schools prior to joining Emmaus CAT): The due diligence template should be used by headteachers to summarise key information prior to the due diligence visit from one of the Emmaus CAT central education team. John Donald will speak to headteachers prior to the due diligence visit to discuss aspects of the form that can be collated in advance. For due diligence visits, school leaders should also complete the **attainment and progress proforma** for the last two academic years.

CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY

Each school has the self-determination to design and implement its own ambitious curriculum and pedagogical principles. Each curriculum will be at least as ambitious as the National Curriculum (2014) while adhering to any Diocesan policy on Religious Education and the general norms prescribed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (10% of curriculum taught time is dedicated to Catholic Education in Key Stages 1 – 4). All primary schools will have access to an Emmaus model curriculum if they choose to adopt it.

Each primary school will adopt a reading and phonics scheme that has been validated by the Department for Education (DfE). It is expected that pupils in Key Stage 3 will continue to receive support with their reading and phonics where this is weak.

Each school's curriculum will:

- be built upon the skills and knowledge that pupils acquire from the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and cumulatively develop at each stage of transition.
- be designed so that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND have the best possible opportunities to achieve as well as all other pupils.
- be relevant to the needs of the pupils in response to the world in which pupils live.
- be academically rigorous and be based on best curriculum thinking and research.
- include a deliberate and focused strategy to the teaching of reading across the curriculum.
- enable all pupils to achieve well and progress to the next stage of their education, employment or training.
- be published on their school website.

Through both curriculum reviews and supporting with the schools' own quality assurance systems, the Director of Primary Education and Director of Secondary Education will ensure that school leaders and governors are provided with timely and accurate contemporary evidence. This information will enable governors to have a healthy understanding of the quality of education provision, behaviour and safeguarding in their school.

“Ofsted’s evidence points to a strong correlation between effective schools and effective governing bodies. Where governance is strong, this inevitably means a good grip on data and issues relating to the school’s performance. In any system where self-evaluation is important, the role of the governing body in making it more rigorous is significant.” (Gilbert C 2012)

ASSESSMENT

The Director of Professional and Career Development organises shared moderation across the Emmaus CAT. This covers EYFS early learning goals, writing at key stages 1 and 2, GCSE English and Maths. These meetings provide school leaders and governors with a baseline for standards across the Emmaus CAT footprint.

Over time, these processes will enable leaders to develop a better understanding of progress in relation to age related expectations. Through the annual standards review process, school leaders share end of key stage data. They report termly ongoing assessment information to local governing bodies. As Emmaus CAT continues to grow, we will work with school leaders to explore common assessment systems.

School leaders are expected to hold regular **pupil progress meetings** with staff in order to:

- gain an accurate oversight of pupils' achievements
- help identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge
- plan actions to close these identified gaps in knowledge
- Provide governors and CAT Directors with assurance about the accuracy and reliability of teacher assessment information.

Emmaus CAT headteachers and primary executive leaders have worked together to produce an exemplar for pupil progress meetings, which is available to Emmaus CAT schools. This will help to ensure that these meetings are effective and have the intended impact on raising standards.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

At Emmaus CAT, we aspire for all pupils in our schools, including those with SEND, to benefit from an ambitious, high-quality Catholic curriculum. This is driven by faith, a moral purpose, and a desire to enable social mobility and equality in educational opportunities. This aspiration is built on an honest, challenging, and open culture, partnership working and a shared determination for every pupil with SEND to thrive.

We know that schools with effective SEND provision have a strong focus on high-quality teaching and rich educational experiences. They prioritise ensuring that SEND leadership is strong. We understand the need for a collective responsibility for SEND: everyone across Emmaus CAT has a role to play in improving outcomes for pupils with SEND.

Emmaus CAT has developed a SEND team to lead the strategic direction of SEND provision.

The team consists of:

- A secondary senior leader (SEND and inclusion)
- Two primary executive leaders (with SEND expertise)
- Two primary specialist subject leaders (with SENCO and behaviour support expertise)



Core offer

Emmaus CAT provides a core offer for all our schools, in relation to SEND.

This comprises of:

- a wide range of support for SENCOs in school. This includes access to a trained SENCO who can provide support and guidance on SEND provision
- ensuring that SENCOs new to their role are mentored by experienced SENCOs
- termly SEND network meetings, which enable our SENCOs to share strong practice and benefit from high-quality training from external professionals
- support, as needed, from the central SEND team. This support includes coaching for teachers to develop their pedagogy in SEND, training for teaching assistants where needed, and guidance on adaptations for SEND
- support for pupils' behavioural needs e.g. by providing therapeutic interventions or developing behaviour strategies in schools
- support from our SEND team and finance team in provision costings for EHCPs
- access to comprehensive training packages, including those from Whole Education and The Autism Education Trust.

The SEND team, the Directors of Primary and Secondary, Emmaus Executive Leaders and Specialist Subject Leaders play a key role in identifying the strengths in SEND provision in our schools and ensure that they can be shared effectively to support areas of underperformance in other schools.

CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - EMMAUS INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

High-quality Career and Professional Development (CPD) is the cornerstone of our commitment at Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust (CAT). We aim to nurture and develop the most valuable resource within our organisation: talent. We recognise that talent is key to achieving excellence in education, and we are dedicated to providing robust learning and development opportunities for all staff members. Our strategic approach to professional learning ensures that learning initiatives are of the highest quality, responsive to individual and collective needs, and grounded in expertise from both within our CAT central team, our schools and the broader educational community. The overarching goal is to foster continuous improvement at every career stage and job role, ultimately having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Our *strategy* is to deliver a programme of CPD that is not about individual courses, but ongoing learning and reflection with a focus on improving teaching.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Each school's LGB serves as the Emmaus and Diocesan ambassador within its community and Parish. LGB members possess a deep understanding of their local context and the specific needs of their school community. This insight is vital to the Directors of the Emmaus CAT Board, helping them ensure that schools remain rooted in their communities. LGB members also play a crucial role in safeguarding, given their close involvement in the daily life of each school. They provide valuable perspectives on pupils' experiences, maintaining clear oversight of whether all children feel a sense of belonging and receive the learning and development opportunities they deserve. The specific responsibilities of each LGB regarding governance and school improvement are outlined in the Emmaus CAT scheme of delegation.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND REVIEW CYCLE

The Annual Standards Review (ASR) is termly cycle of planning and evaluation. The ASR process enables Emmaus CAT, Chairs of Governors and school leaders to agree the school self-evaluation and school development priorities for each individual school. Together they will collectively formulate a baseline position to set out an assessment of needs. To support the assessment, planning and appropriate allocation of resources, we use a four-stage model. This is the four-stage improvement model devised by Sir David Carter 2016.

Having accurately identified an area of need, the next step is for the CAT's leaders, in consultation with the school, to decide upon and commission the most appropriate support or intervention to bring about rapid improvement.

Schools who are categorised as Stabilise or Repair, will undergo intensive support to move them to Improve. Qualitative and quantitative information gathered from these visits will be shared with headteachers and should in turn be shared with members of the LGB. The LGB and Emmaus CAT Central team will hold school leaders to account against pupil performance data, SEF and SDP priorities.

As a school develops the capacity to sustain performance and systems, school leaders are less reliant on support from external bodies and the Emmaus CAT.



High performing schools have a greater degree of autonomy and professional agency to lead their own development in line with the [Emmaus CAT Guiding Principles](#). Conversely, schools that are underperforming may require a greater degree of directed action to address priority areas quickly and effectively. This is identified on a school-by-school basis, where all schools are matched to a category. This informs the level of Emmaus CAT support.

CAPACITY TO DRIVE IMPROVEMENT

Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust (CAT) harnesses substantial internal expertise to drive school improvement, delivered through both its Central Team and the Emmaus CPD offer. This internal capacity is made up of highly experienced and respected Executive Leaders and Specialist Subject Leaders who work collaboratively with school leadership teams to identify priorities and implement targeted improvement strategies.

The CAT Central Team works in close partnership with school leaders to strengthen self-evaluation and school development planning. Strategic oversight of the School Improvement Strategy is provided by the Primary and Secondary Directors of Education, supported by a wider team that includes Executive Leaders, the Director of Professional and Career Development, Directors of Safeguarding, and Specialist Subject Leaders. In addition to this internal capacity, schools have access to a carefully selected group of approved external providers, ensuring a comprehensive and high-quality improvement offer.

Emmaus CAT is committed to continuous reflection and the ongoing refinement of its school improvement approach, responding proactively to the CAT's growth and the changing educational landscape.

A central pillar of this strategy is a sustained focus on Early Years and SEND provision, acknowledging their crucial role in securing positive outcomes for all pupils. Our deep expertise in these areas—including safeguarding—enables us to deliver robust, targeted support for our most vulnerable learners.



Further Reading

A Framework for Effective School Improvement: Final report of the ESI project (Reezigt et al, 2001): 70595591-6_en.pdf (europa.eu)

A School's Guide to Implementation guidance report | Education Endowment Foundation (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net)

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DfE MAT SI Capacity Framework. DfE Publishing Service

Gilbert Christine, 2012. *Towards a self-improving system: the role of school accountability*. National College for School Leadership

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Northern Lee, 2022. *Curriculum Matters – a couple of edu enthusiasts – thinking out loud* (wordpress.com)

OECD report, 2011: *School autonomy and accountability: Are they related to pupil performance?* (OECD, 2011): 48910490.pdf (oecd.org)

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<https://cstuk.org.uk/knowledge/guidance-and-policy/the-dna-of-trust-led-school-improvement-a-conceptual-model/>



Appendices

Four Stage Improvement Model

Stabilise	Repair	Improve	Sustain
<p>Seriously underperforming school. The need is for rescue or recovery: rapid control, arrest of decline, assessment of priorities, firm action, critical decisions, and modelling what is needed. It needs calm and reassuring leadership, ability to focus on urgent priorities, to give team members the right jobs and leaders highly visible.</p>	<p>Such a school requires reinforcement: building capacity, harnessing good practice and improving that which is not, developing and empowering staff, ensuring consistency, raising aspirations, and designing and implementing a strategy for creating a school that is good or better. It needs to secure early improvements, build a medium-term plan and visible leadership starting to focus on quality assurance.</p>	<p>The task involves refinement: ensuring that all teaching and learning is good, refining monitoring and evaluation, ensuring that the needs of every pupil are met, growing leaders, reducing achievement gaps, and maximising progress and outcomes. It needs robust monitoring and tracking, management shifting to leadership and to benefit from collaboration.</p>	<p>Sustaining excellence. This requires attention to renewal: not simply sustaining outstanding practice but building on it, innovating, fine-tuning and spreading the school's influence more widely. It needs to secure excellence, lead collaboration and have a 3-5-year plan. It grows new leaders at every level.</p>
<p>Leadership is unstable. Governance is busy but ineffective. High staff turnover creates massive inconsistency in quality. Attendance is significantly below average. Outcomes are weak and below national. Behaviour (and/or safeguarding) is unsafe and chaotic. No clear focus on school improvement. Self-evaluation is inaccurate and overly generous. Emmaus CAT or external support has no impact as the school has no capacity to accept it.</p>	<p>Leadership has been refreshed and is now stable. Governors know what needs to be done. New staff are well supported by Emmaus CAT and are delivering better learning opportunities but not everywhere. Attendance is improving but still below average. Internal assessment of non-exam cohorts are improving but overall results are below national. Behaviour is better but still a high degree of low-level disruption. This school does not yet have the capacity to develop future leaders.</p>	<p>Stable leadership is impacting on standards. Governors are now holding leaders to account effectively. Staff morale and performance is consistent. Attendance is now at national average. Outcomes are at/or above national average in key indicators. Behaviour is positive with few incidents of low level or serious disruption which is managed well. Some staff are supporting other schools. This school has good capacity to develop future leaders.</p>	<p>Leadership is strong and improvements are embedded. Governors feel accountable and know the school well. Staff see their career progression throughout the school. Student attendance is above national for all groups. Outcomes are significantly above average although a small number of groups may underperform. Behaviour is excellent and high-quality support is available. School is now giving support and adds capacity to Emmaus CAT. This school is developing leaders for the future.</p>

Annual Standards Review Process IMPROVE and SUSTAIN Categories

Annual Standards Review Process for Schools in the IMPROVE & SUSTAIN Categories

Each school will take part in an Annual Standards Review and a Mid-Year Review, supported by ongoing monitoring activities throughout the year.

Primary schools will receive annual reviews in EYFS, Safeguarding, and SEND, tailored to the specific needs of each school.

Secondary schools will receive annual reviews in Safeguarding and SEND, as well as in Attendance, Behaviour, and Personal Development, proportionate to their needs and aligned with their development priorities.

Half term one	Half term 2	Half term 3	Half term 4	Half term 5	Half term 6
Annual Standards Review (ASR) to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEF & SDP • Safeguarding • Attendance • CPD • SEND • Disadvantaged • EYFS • Curriculum • Outcomes; analysis of examination data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book scrutiny • Pupil interviews (focus on SEND and disadvantaged) • Curriculum documentation check • Pupil and sports premium impact • Year 11 progress meetings 		Mid-Year Review (MYR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEF & SDP - Impact • Safeguarding - Impact • Attendance - Impact • CPD - Impact • SEND - Impact • Disadvantaged • EYFS - Impact • Writing - Impact • Wider curriculum impact • Outcomes – analysis of projected examination data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book scrutiny • Pupil interviews • Curriculum documentation check • Year 11 progress meetings and final predictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget setting • Planning for next academic year

Annual Standards Review Process REPAIR Category

Standards Review Process for Schools in the REPAIR Category

Schools in the REPAIR category do not follow the standard Annual Standards Review (ASR) and Mid-Year Review (MYR) cycle. Instead, they begin with an ASR, followed by **TERMLY REVIEWS** to monitor progress and provide more frequent support.

Primary schools in this category receive enhanced support from Emmaus Specialist Subject Leaders (SSLs) and Executive Leaders. In most cases, an SSL is deployed within the school to drive rapid improvement and provide focused, in-school support.

Secondary schools in the REPAIR category receive an annual Safeguarding and SEND review, as well as an annual review of Attendance, Behaviour, and Personal Development. These reviews are proportionate to the school's needs and aligned with its development priorities. In addition, secondary schools benefit from tailored support provided by Emmaus Senior Leaders, matched specifically to the school's improvement goals.

Half term one	Half term 2	Half term 3	Half term 4	Half term 5	Half term 6
<p>Same as ASR but an enhanced review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes data • Pupil progress meeting review • SEF / SDP • Safeguarding • Planned interventions for SEND and disadvantaged pupils • Attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book scrutiny • Pupil interviews (focus on SEND and disadvantaged) • Curriculum documentation check • Specific CPD for teachers • Attendance • Governance • Year 11 progress meetings 	<p>TERMLY REVIEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEF / SDP review • Pupil progress meeting review. Data check point. • intervention plan moving forward. • Safeguarding • Attendance and behaviour • SEND and disadvantaged • EYFS • Writing Curriculum • Staff welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book scrutiny • Pupil interviews • Curriculum documentation check • Specific CPD for teachers • Governance • Outcomes – analysis of projected examination data 	<p>TERMLY REVIEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD impact • Pupil progress review • Impact of interventions • Safeguarding • Attendance and behaviour • SEND • EYFS • Writing • Year 11 progress meetings and final predictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget setting • Book scrutiny • Pupil interviews • Curriculum documentation check • Planning for next academic year

Annual Standards Review Process STABILISE Category

Standards Review Process for Schools in the STABILISE Category

Schools in the **STABILISE** category do not follow the standard Annual Standards Review (ASR) and Mid-Year Review (MYR) cycle. Instead, they begin with an ASR, followed by half-termly **Progress and Impact Meetings** to closely monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of support.

Primary schools in this category receive intensive support from Emmaus Specialist Subject Leaders (SSLs) and Executive Leaders. These schools also undergo comprehensive annual reviews in EYFS, Safeguarding, and SEND. In most cases, both an Executive Leader and an SSL are deployed within the school to support rapid improvement and drive sustained change.

Secondary schools in the **STABILISE** category also receive an annual Safeguarding and SEND review, along with a review of Attendance, Behaviour, and Personal Development. These reviews are proportionate to the specific needs of each school and aligned with their development priorities. In addition, they benefit from intensive, in-school support from the Emmaus central team, tailored to their improvement goals.

Half term one	Half term 2	Half term 3	Half term 4	Half term 5	Half term 6
<p>Same as ASR but an enhanced review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes data • Pupil progress meeting review • SEF / SDP • Planned interventions for SEND and disadvantaged pupils • Two-day review of curriculum plans and delivery • Behaviour review • Local Governance Review 	<p>Progress and Impact meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda specific to the actions brought forward from the ASR • Book scrutiny • Pupil interviews • Curriculum documentation check • Specific CPD for teachers • Attendance / behaviour review • Safeguarding • Year 11 progress meetings 	<p>Progress and Impact meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda specific to the actions brought forward from the ASR • Book scrutiny • Curriculum documentation check • Governance 	<p>Progress and Impact meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda specific to the actions brought forward from the ASR • Book scrutiny • Curriculum documentation check • Safeguarding • Outcomes – analysis of projected examination data 	<p>Progress and Impact meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda specific to the actions brought forward from the ASR • Year 11 progress meetings and final predictions 	<p>Progress and Impact meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda specific to the actions brought forward from the ASR • Planning for next academic year

Annual School Reviews

To maintain high standards and provide ongoing assurance to school leaders and governors, each school within Emmaus CAT receives an annual review in the areas of Early Years (Primary) Core Curriculum (Secondary), Safeguarding, and SEND. These reviews form the foundation for effective and sustained school improvement:

- **Early Years (EYFS) Review (Primary Schools):**
 - Schools newly joining Emmaus CAT will receive a comprehensive, full-day EYFS review.
 - Existing schools will receive a focused follow-up review.
 - Reviews typically occur in the autumn term.

- **Curriculum Review (Secondary Schools):**
 - In secondary schools, the annual EYFS review is replaced with a focused curriculum review.
 - This review prioritises the core subjects of English and Mathematics and subjects where rapid improvement is required, quality assuring curriculum implementation, and impact.
 - The review supports departments in identifying strengths, addressing areas for development, and ensuring alignment with trust-wide expectations and national standards.

- **Attendance and Behaviour (secondary)**
 - New schools to receive full behaviour and attendance review
 - Schools to receive full behaviour and attendance review in agreement with the headteacher and alignment with development plan
 - All schools to receive progress review from the previous full review

- **Safeguarding Review:**
 - New schools undergo a full safeguarding review, resulting in a detailed action plan where appropriate.
 - A follow-up review is conducted the following year, with full reviews scheduled on a three-year cycle.
 - Additional interim reviews may be carried out determined by need.

- **SEND Review:**
 - All schools participate in a summer term SEND review following a peer-review model.
 - Headteachers and SENCOs visit partner schools within the Trust to observe best practice and identify areas for development. These reviews are led by members of the SEND team and focus on EEF SEND guidance.

These structured and collaborative reviews underpin our commitment to continuous improvement and high-quality provision across all schools within the CAT.

Primary Strategic Priorities 2025 - 2026

Strand	Explore (Autumn)	Prepare (Autumn & Spring)	Deliver & Sustain (Spring & Summer)
Self-evaluation and school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASR meeting: SEF & SDP focus Curriculum Outcomes Staffing and curriculum-based budget review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteacher termly network meetings. Bespoke support from Emmaus Primary Team, based on SEF and school development focus. LGB training and termly attendance at LGB meetings (when appropriate). Subject leader meetings and curriculum reviews for SDP targeted curriculums Half-termly sessions of Behaviour CPD. Behaviour and Attendance networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MYR meeting. Peer Review. Chair of Governor and Emmaus CAT Central team monthly meetings. Budget setting.
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual safeguarding review and identification of any training needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding action plan Delivery of training CPOMS induction for all new schools Monthly drop-in case surgeries Professional supervision for DSL, DDSLs and headteacher Bespoke support from the Primary Director of Safeguarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy, paperwork and procedure implementation. DSL support. MYR to discuss progress on action plan implementation.
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review attendance for school for previous academic year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for school attendance leads Centralised fortnightly attendance monitoring Termly attendance network meetings Review of attendance strategies and interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MYR meeting process Policy, paperwork and procedure implementation
Effective CPD to improve the quality of teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School CPD linked to the SDP priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at curriculum CPD networks Access to high-quality CPD to enhance teaching and learning Participation in Development Board Networks and PTI curriculum events Deployment of Specialist Subject Leaders to model effective pedagogy where needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurable impact of CPD to be shared centrally Continuous review to identify CPD priorities
SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Emmaus SEND Review from summer term to provide basis for SEND action plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND conference – Autumn Term Bespoke support from SEND Team based on identified needs from previous year annual SEND review. Annual Emmaus SEND review – summer term – peer review process with support from Emmaus Primary Team. Termly SEND network meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy, paperwork and procedure implementation Peer support provided for new SENCOS.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autism Education Trust and Whole Education training packages. 	
EYFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Emmaus EYFS Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EYFS termly network meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderation meeting for EYFS. MYR meeting to check progress against EYFS Review targets and identify any support needed from central team.
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASR meeting with a focus on writing outcomes. Termly Pupil progress meetings, review of pupils' writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing specific CPD events Facilitated school visits to observe high quality writing Deployment of specialist subject leaders to support the teaching of writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross CAT moderation of writing at EYFS, Year 2, 4 & 6



Secondary Strategic Priorities 2025 - 2026

Strand	Explore (Autumn)	Prepare (Autumn & Spring)	Deliver & Sustain (Spring & Summer)
Self-evaluation and school development planning and Leadership CPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASR meeting: SEF & SDP focus L&M assessment of SLT & MLT Staffing and curriculum-based budget review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteacher Network Meetings Headteacher forum & performance management In school support per half term from Director of Secondary Education Chair of Governor and Director of Secondary meetings LGB training & termly attendance at LGB meetings (when appropriate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MYR meeting Peer Review Chair of Governor and Emmaus CAT Central team monthly meetings Budget setting
Year 11 raising achievement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target setting and Raising Standards calendared plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emmaus CAT English Subject Review Emmaus CAT Maths Subject Review Match-up action plan Deputy Headteacher Network Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject Network meetings Standardisation and moderation Post Mocks analysis
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual safeguarding review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding action plan Professional supervision for DSL, DDSLs and Headteacher In school support per half term from Director of Safeguarding EBSA developmental work School based early help offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy, paperwork and procedure implementation DSL network 6 accredited CPD sessions
Behaviour & Personal Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Behaviour & Attendance Review Annual Personal Development Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour & attendance action plan CPD re data analysis and action plans Personal Development action plan In school support per half term from Emmaus CAT Leader for Behaviour & Personal Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 sessions of Behaviour CPD Behaviour & Attendance networks Policy, paperwork and procedure implementation
SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual SEND Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND conference – Autumn Term Bespoke support from SEND Team based on identified needs from previous year annual SEND review. Annual Emmaus SEND review – summer term – peer review process with support from Emmaus Primary Team. Termly SEND network meetings. Autism Education Trust and Whole Education training package In school support per half term from Emmaus CAT Leader of SEND and Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND network Policy, paperwork and procedure implementation



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