

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

*VISION FOR SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT AT
CONSILIUM ACADEMIES*



Consilium
Academies
Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions

INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to introduce you to the School Improvement Strategy for Consilium Academies. We have produced this strategy to articulate our vision and model for school improvement, ensuring that we continue to keep our work focussed and driven by our core moral purpose; to transform the life chances of our students by offering a truly world-class education.

This School Improvement Strategy will be accompanied by our school improvement toolkit which provides additional information and resources for school leaders to utilise in implementing this strategy.

The Consilium Mission

“Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions”

We are proud to be Consilium Academies, a Trust that believes in the unique value of each individual. Our vision, actions, and purpose are guided by this principle and a dedication to do all we can for the communities we serve.

We never put a ceiling on potential. Instead, we work with our Academies to provide high-quality education that is truly inclusive, giving every student the same opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in life beyond the classroom.

We are committed to enriching the lives of all those involved in our Trust through an ambitious, student-centred approach to education.

This charter is built upon the foundations of Consilium Academies’ Trust mission and values. The purpose of the charter is to ensure our mission and values translate into practice within our Academies, ensuring that every student benefits from our distinctively inclusive ethos.



The Trust's School Improvement Strategy is centred around our core values set out in the Consilium Charter:

Partnerships – Collaboration is the key to success. We work together to deliver on the promise set out in our mission statement.

Opportunity – Our aim of “Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions” applies to all members of our Trust community, with our inclusive approach delivering a breadth of opportunities to give each individual the chance to fulfil their potential and prosper.

Integrity – Through our student-centred approach, advantage and ability are never seen as a ticket to involvement. We believe in every child's right to high-quality education and access to amazing opportunities – irrespective of their individual circumstances. Integrity at Consilium means always putting students at the heart of everything we do.

Equity – We are truly inclusive, believing passionately that every student should be given the skills and support needed for them to meet their full potential. We are aspirational for all of our students, and we will ensure every student has the opportunities they need to achieve the highest of ambitions.

Excellence – We don't settle for second-best, our standards are always high and we support everyone across the Trust to achieve them.

People-Centred – We genuinely want the best for each member of Consilium, that's why everyone is treated with the highest level of respect. Our inclusive culture inspires us to be bold and engenders trust. It brings us together in ways that help us make a difference.

Every single member of our community deserves the very best opportunities to succeed. This School Improvement Strategy sets out to describe how Consilium Academies will work to ensure every student and member of staff is motivated, challenged, inspired, and valued.

“Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions”



David Clayton
Chief Executive

CONSILIUM'S CAPACITY TO SUPPORT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

At the heart of our approach to school improvement is our ethos of collective responsibility, a key pillar of the Trust's strategic plan. Every member of the Consilium Team has a shared commitment to our mission, which is central to our decision making. School leaders and Local Academy Board members recognise that the Trust is truly invested in their communities and, as a result, leaders across the Trust work collectively in the best interests of our students.

School Improvement Team

The Trust employs a dedicated school improvement team, which is led by the Deputy Chief Executive, supported by two Directors of Education. Each Director of Education is an experienced Headteacher with a strong track record of school improvement in challenging contexts. The School Improvement Team includes colleagues working as practicing Ofsted Inspectors and with experience as Specialist/Local Leaders of Education who utilise the breadth of their experience to provide expert, high-quality support to schools within the Trust.

Schools within the Trust also access support from:

- Four Education Advisers – experienced school leaders with a clear focus on developing and improving the quality of education within schools. Each Education Adviser is responsible for two schools, providing the capacity for intensive work to be completed rapidly.
- Head of Professional Development – leading the Consilium Centre for Professional Learning, and supporting school leaders to ensure every colleague receives high-quality and targeted professional development necessary to address each schools' identified priorities.
- Head of Safeguarding – ensuring robust systems and procedures for safeguarding and ensuring safeguarding is always effective and reflective of best practice.
- Trust Data Team – ensuring school leaders have access to high-quality, timely, and accurate data through our Trust dashboard, covering all key performance indicators and groups.

Independent School Improvement Partner

In addition to the central school improvement team, the Trust provides additional capacity by commissioning an external school improvement consultant. The SIP is an experienced successful secondary Headteacher and is also a practicing Lead Inspector for Ofsted. The SIP makes at least one visit per term to each school, focussing on a Trust priority for each visit. The purpose of these visits is both to provide objective assurance to Leaders and Trustees of the improvement journey of each school, while providing focussed improvement support to school leaders.

School-to-School Support

Embracing our collaborative ethos, the Trust provides opportunities to leaders and practitioners across the Trust to share best practice and support the school improvement objectives of schools within the Trust.

As part of our focus on school-to-school support, the Trust designates a team of middle leaders as Consilium Leaders of Education (CLEs). CLEs work across the Trust for one day each week, providing expert advice and support within their area of expertise.

CLEs may be focussing on supporting particular teachers with pedagogy and subject knowledge development, or heads of department and other teachers with curriculum design or development. They also lead their cross-trust subject network, and work closely with Education Advisers and the Head of Professional Development to deliver training in school.

Subject and Specialism Networks

The Trust runs a number of networks for colleagues to come together across the Trust. These networks facilitate the sharing of best practice, with all leaders benefitting from the best the Trust has to offer. They provide a forum for high-quality professional discussion, as well as opportunities for colleagues to learn from each other and develop professionally.

Examples of these networks are:

- Subject networks: our heads of department in each subject are part of Trust-wide subject networks, to share excellent practice between departments.

- Non-subject networks: for instance, the teacher development network for teacher educators, and the curriculum development network, along with coverage of other key areas including safeguarding, attendance, careers, personal development, and SEND.
- Aspiring To networks: colleagues who aspire to middle or senior leader positions in the future can join cross-trust networks where they meet with colleagues already in these roles to discuss what career development may be helpful to them in achieving their aspirations. These networks can also arrange job-shadowing or secondment opportunities.
- Project-based networks: when we want to trial projects across a number of departments, colleagues will often work across the Trust, facilitated by the CFPL or an education adviser. In the 2020-21 academic year we have cross-school networks working on comparative judgement assessment in English, phonics and reading development, physics subject knowledge development for non-physics specialists in science, and others.

Consilium's Centre for Professional Learning

The core driving force behind the Consilium Centre for Professional Learning is a desire to provide students with the best possible education, and the belief this can only be achieved if every colleague, regardless of role or career stage, has access to high-quality professional development they deserve.

Every colleague, whether teaching or support staff, will be supported and developed through the professional development review process, which replaces traditional forms of performance management.

The professional development review process is focussed on the aspirations of the individual, ensuring that every colleague receives the support and development they deserve to achieve their own aspirations for their careers.

We believe our team of support staff are vital to ensure our schools are well-resourced, safe, compliant, and work as well as they can for the benefit of our students. In addition to the professional development review process, we commission and fund industry-standard qualifications for colleagues in support roles and are also able to support and fund teaching assistants, higher-level teaching assistants, and colleagues in student-facing pastoral and safeguarding roles, to qualify as teachers should they wish.

The Centre for Professional Learning works with and supports in-school leads for professional development to craft the best and most appropriate whole-school offers for their colleagues. We don't impose a central 'curriculum' for teacher development, because the needs and priorities of each school are different.

However, we want to support each school to give due focus to whole-school priorities, with departmental training, middle leader training, and one-to-one development and coaching supporting fewer, more in-depth, whole-school messages.

All teaching staff will receive the following 'universal' offer from their school:

- Regular whole-school training, driven by the school's priorities and the in-school professional development lead, with support from the Centre for Professional Learning. This will be designed with the context of the school in mind with subject-specific and individualised training to suit the career stage and expertise of specific teachers.
- Regular subject-specific training within subject teams. This will draw on the whole-school training and ensure it is considered through the lens of applicability to specific subjects, year groups, and classes.
- Regular teacher-specific training. This will be owned and run by in-school teams, and may take the form of 1-to-1 instructional coaching or teacher learning communities, and is supported by the Centre for Professional Learning.
- Access to the relevant subject and other networks across the Trust, according to their role within school.



In addition to this 'universal' offer, colleagues across the Trust have access to bespoke programmes of CPD matched to their own aspirations for their career. We partner with external organisations to enhance our offer to staff, and will support teaching staff with recognised qualifications where appropriate. We are keen to work with a range of partners who use the best available evidence to design rigorous professional development.

Consilium's School Centred Initial Teacher Training operates across two hubs in the North East and North West to place trainee teachers in schools across the full range of subjects. We have been training fantastic teachers for a number of years, and our strong track record of doing so is recognised in the outstanding judgement from Ofsted.

All Early Career Teachers (those in their Newly Qualified or Recently Qualified years) at Consilium Academies receive regular support from a mentor, regular instructional coaching, and regular training alongside their NQT or RQT cohort both within their school and across the Trust, with the opportunity to develop relationships with their peers across the Trust as part of our Early Career Teacher Networks.

We believe offering colleagues a strong induction to the teaching profession is of vital importance. We want to set our colleagues up for a long and successful career in teaching, and help them to provide the best education possible for students.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONSILIUM CHARTER

It is critical that every school within Consilium Academies is successful in the context of the external accountability system, ensuring that Ofsted recognise that the effectiveness of our provision is consistently good or better. However, the Consilium Charter goes further than this, setting out an ambitious vision for education within Consilium Academies, driven by our inclusive ethos focussed on providing an equity of opportunity, enriching the lives of all of our young people.

Our approach to school improvement will support schools to be successful in delivering the values and pledges set out in the Consilium Charter.

Being an effective school within the context of the Consilium Charter means:

Leaders at every level act as true advocates for the values and pledges set out in the Consilium Charter, consistently leading with core moral purpose, openness, honesty, and transparency, putting the needs of the community at the centre of all decision making.

There is a clear and consistent focus on developing our colleagues, investing in them as individuals, understanding their aspirations, and creating the conditions for them to thrive. As a staff body, we are open to honest feedback and support in order to continuously develop our practice.

Delivering a curriculum that is broad, balanced, and rich providing equity of opportunity for all students regardless of their background or postcode. There is a universal understanding that demographic does not determine destiny. While the curriculum ensures we educate our students about social, moral, and cultural issues, it also prepares them for a life in modern Britain.

We believe strongly in the educational value of experiences and opportunities which occur both inside and outside the classroom. With a clear investment in the arts, sport, vocational subjects, and a diverse extra-curricular offer, Consilium schools understand the value in nurturing talent by ensuring these opportunities exist.

We are a people-centred organisation that truly believes everyone has a unique gift, skill, or talent. It is our responsibility to find and nurture this talent so every member of our community fulfils their potential and in doing so, we transform their life chances.

The curriculum must be ambitious in its design, enabling students to know more and remember more over time and teaching our students and staff about tolerance, difference, respect, and appreciation while preparing them for life in modern Britain.

In planning the detail of the curriculum, teachers ensure students have repeated exposure to abstract concepts in different contexts to help secure these into their long-term memory. At Key Stage 3, schools will teach the full range of national curriculum subjects to the depth that is required to fully prepare students for the next phase of their education and ensure students have access to a wide range of cultural, emotional, and social experiences.

Subject leaders are passionate about their curriculum intent, understand how best to implement the curriculum, and have a deep understanding of how the impact of it is captured.

At Consilium we routinely seek to develop pedagogy and practice through a research evidence-based whole-school approach to teaching and learning.

Every individual within the Consilium family will feel safe, respected, and cared for. The ethos in our schools will extend beyond one of tolerance, but where diversity is both embraced and celebrated.

Every student is recognised as having an entitlement to access the full curriculum, regardless of their needs. Through a focussed approach to identifying needs and implementing appropriate support, students' barriers to learning are removed and an equity of opportunity is achieved.

At Consilium Academies, we believe reading is an invaluable life skill. Our schools' strategies will instil a love of reading while motivating students to read increasingly challenging books which will raise literacy standards. This focus on reading not only improves standards of literacy in English for students of all ages and abilities but will also raise standards across the curriculum.

The Careers education programme must be designed to ensure our students are properly prepared for life and work in the 21st Century. The content of the Careers programme ensures our students positively engage in the opportunity to develop the educational, social, and employability skills necessary for success in an ever changing and challenging world.

The Consilium values will pervade the ethos in each school which must be clearly defined around a common goal; it is everyone's right to a good quality education. Our value of equity is central to the mission of the ethos in each school. Each school has a clear, unwavering and known position on standards and expectations, allowing for reasonable adjustments to be made for pupils with SEND. The fair and consistent application of effective systems will allow every student to learn free of unnecessary disruption.

We are clear at Consilium that there is a strong correlation between good attendance at school and increased life chances. Our schools will be persistent in their approach to securing excellent attendance for every student. By knowing our students and their families exceptionally well and by having a mutually respectful relationship with parents, our dedicated attendance teams will work compassionately but with rigour to remove barriers that prevent any student from attending school.

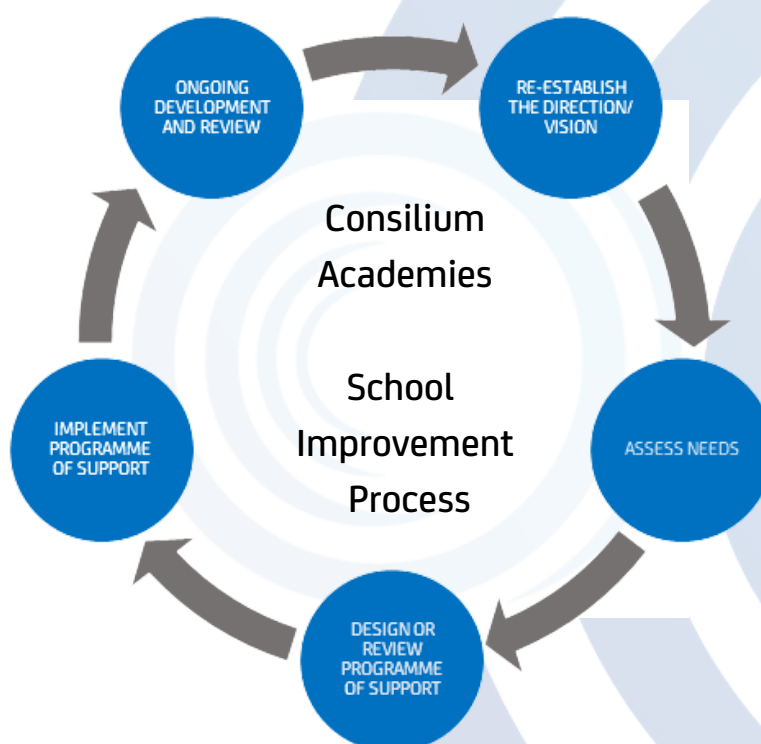
At Consilium, we believe in a truly inclusive education. The skills and expertise of our staff, alongside the provision and ethos of Consilium Evolve, will ensure the learning needs of all our students will be catered for as we prepare them for the next phase of their education, in turn transforming their life chances.

All schools within Consilium recognise that they share a collective responsibility for the education of every young person across the Trust. This is recognised by the way in which colleagues collaborate, working supportively to help ensure every student gets the best opportunity to succeed. Successful schools within the context of the Consilium Charter are able to demonstrate their impact on the life chances of their own students, but also on those more widely across the Trust through the support and capacity they have provided to the wider system.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS AT CONSILIUM

The Consilium School Improvement Strategy starts with the premise of ensuring that the strategic vision, mission, and values of the Trust are embedded within everyday life across the Trust. The process involves a robust, qualitative and quantitative evaluation of needs. This evaluation will be draw upon a range of evidence including, but not exclusive to, student outcomes, effectiveness of the curriculum, pedagogy, behaviour, attendance, and school culture. We will use a diagnostic approach to assess the needs of each school based on a secure evidence base.



Our evaluation of the impact of school improvement activity and the assessment of need is reviewed on a termly basis in conjunction with school leaders and Local Academy Boards, to ensure the deployment of school improvement resources is sufficiently focussed. Once the needs of each school have been confirmed, a programme of support is generated to address agreed improvement priorities.

The Directors of Education are responsible for overseeing the delivery and impact of the programme. In the planning phase, clear outcomes and success criteria are agreed by which the success of the programme is measured.

The Deputy Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the deployment of school improvement support and meets regularly with Directors of Education regarding the progress of implementing programmes of support. Through the ongoing process of Development and Review, the school improvement team will work in conjunction with school leaders and Local Academy Board members to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme of support in order to make adjustments and changes over time.

We will utilise a range of evidence to evaluate the impact of the school improvement function. Much of this evidence will be generated from activity which is central to the Development and Review Cycle.

ASSESSING NEEDS

We will use a range of indicators to work in collaboration with Leaders and Local Academy Boards to determine the focus and level of school improvement support. Information utilised in making this assessment of need may include:

- Feedback from Leaders and Local Academy Boards
- Peer reviews and external reviews
- Quality Assurance of self-evaluation and development planning
- Data analysis covering key performance indicators including attendance and behaviour
- Intent, implementation, and impact of the curriculum
- Community (Parents, Staff, Students) Voice

At Consilium Academies, we believe each school is unique and at a different phase in its development. We have defined five stages of the school improvement journey to highlight the different levels of support that may be required at each phase.

The five phases of school improvement can be broadly defined as:

Intervention

Schools requiring intervention are generally showing little or no improvement over time, and leadership, including local governance, may lack the capacity to make the necessary improvements with sufficient urgency. Significant intervention is required to secure urgent improvement.

Ignition

Schools at the ignition phase of improvement may demonstrate some initial signs of improvement, but further capacity is required to ensure improvement continues in all areas, and with the required urgency. Significant support is required to ensure there is the required level of capacity to secure improvement.

Acceleration

During the acceleration phase of improvement, schools will be able to demonstrate impact of school improvement actions in aspects of the schools practice. Further support will add additional capacity to increase the pace and breadth of this ongoing improvement. These schools will have the ability to provide support in a limited range of areas where strength has emerged.

Precision

Plentiful good practice and strong leadership capacity exists in schools at the precision phase of improvement, because school improvement actions taken to date are beginning to have a sustained impact. Schools in this phase of improvement require forensic and targeted support to address the few remaining areas for improvement. These schools will be providing an increasing level of support across the Trust and wider system where capacity is demonstrable.

Cultivation

Leadership capacity in schools in the cultivation phase of improvement is substantial, and demonstrated by sustained improvement and strong performance over time. In this phase, schools are well placed to provide extensive support both across the Trust and to the wider system.



The phase of improvement will act as an indicator for the focus and extent of school improvement support. However, it is recognised that progress through the phases of improvement will not be linear, and that each school's improvement journey will be unique. For that reason, whilst the phase of improvement may indicate the nature of support required, project planning will be bespoke to each school, and completed in collaboration with school leaders and Local Academy Boards.

Indicative levels of support at each phase are provided below.

Intervention

Substantial training provided to ensure that the Local Academy Board has the skills and knowledge to support the school's improvement journey.

School Improvement Team taking temporary responsibility for overall leadership of school before a longer term leadership model is established.

Trust-led design and implementation of policy and practice surrounding behaviour, attendance, and other key aspects of school life.

Substantial safeguarding support provided where necessary to ensure that safeguarding is effective.

Full and thorough assessment of long-term need with a long term support plan for the school implemented.

Substantial support from Consilium Leaders of Education to address urgent priorities surrounding curriculum development.

Full-time Education Adviser support taking initial responsibility for the design and implementation of whole school approaches to curriculum development and teaching and learning.

Substantial training, development, and recruitment of leadership to secure sufficient capacity for improvement.

School's CPD offer for staff led by the Centre for Professional Learning to secure clear focus on urgent areas for improvement.

Review and re-establishment of vision and values in accordance with the Consilium Charter.

Self-evaluation and development planning led by School Improvement Team.

School Improvement Team members placed on the Local Academy Board to support the development of capacity.

"Team around the School" meeting on a half-termly basis. These meetings will be chaired by the Deputy CEO, and attended by all relevant leaders within the school improvement team, along with the Headteacher, appropriate members of SLT, and the Chair of the Local Academy Board to monitor progress against identified urgent priorities. Local Authority representatives will also be invited to attend to offer further support.



Ignition

Education Adviser support to develop whole-school approaches to curriculum development and teaching and learning, and to develop capacity at middle leadership.

Substantial additional support provided to the school's leadership team, potentially through an executive leadership model.

Support from the Director of Education to re-visit and embed the school's vision and values in accordance with the Consilium Charter.

Director of Education directly co-ordinating the self-evaluation and development planning process.

Full and thorough assessment of long term need with a long term support plan for the school implemented.

While safeguarding is effective, additional support available to strength and develop the culture of safeguarding.

Full-time Education Adviser support taking initial responsibility for the design and implementation of whole school approaches to curriculum development and teaching and learning.

Where Local Academy Boards would benefit from additional capacity, experienced school leaders from within the Trust may be utilised to provide this support.

Input from the Centre for Professional Learning to support the development of the CPD offer in conjunction with identified whole-school priorities.

Key areas for improvement within the curriculum will be supported by Consilium Leaders of Education, as identified within the assessment of needs.

School Improvement Group meeting on a half-termly basis. These meetings will be chaired by a member of the School Improvement team and attended by the Director of Education and Education Adviser assigned to the school, the Headteacher, appropriate members of SLT and the Chair of the Local Academy Board to focus on school improvement priorities. Local Authority representatives will also be invited to attend to offer further support.

Precision

Education Adviser activity targeted at remaining identified priorities to secure consistency.

Director of Education providing support and challenge to the self-evaluation and development planning process.

Update training for Local Academy Boards to address any gaps identified within the skills audit.

Ongoing coaching and mentoring support for the Headteacher from the Director of Education, alongside targeted challenge and support for remaining identified priorities.

Limited deployment of Consilium Leaders of Education where this is required to address an identified priority.

Targeted review of remaining identified priority areas, with specific project-based support implemented where necessary to drive improvement, potentially focussed on defined groups of students.

Twice-yearly progress review meeting with a School Improvement Team member to monitor impact against identified priorities and review KPIs.

Acceleration

Director of Education providing support and challenge to the self-evaluation and development planning process.

Targeted review of areas of need, with specific project-based support implemented to drive improvement.

Focussed support from the Centre for Professional Learning to address targeted priorities.

Targeted deployment of Consilium Leaders of Education to accelerate the pace of improvement in identified subject areas.

Education Adviser support for Quality of Education Leaders to add focussed capacity in order to secure consistency across subject areas.

Ongoing support and challenge provided to the leadership team through the work of the Director of Education.

Ongoing training and support for Local Academy Boards focussed on identified whole school priorities.

Coaching, mentoring, and modelling in place for relevant members of the leadership team to ensure the Consilium vision, mission, and values drive the school improvement actions of the school.

School Improvement Group meeting on a termly basis. These meetings will be chaired by a member of the School Improvement team and attended by the Director of Education and Education Adviser assigned to the school, the Headteacher, appropriate members of SLT and the Chair of the Local Academy Board to focus on school improvement priorities. Local Authority representatives will also be invited to attend to offer further support.

Cultivation

Specific project-based support implemented where necessary to maintain standards.

Education Adviser activity targeted at developing succession planning at all layers of leadership.

Director of Education reviews of the self-evaluation and development planning documents.

Annual progress review meeting with a School Improvement Team member to monitor impact against identified priorities and review KPIs.

Ongoing coaching and mentoring support for the Headteacher from the Director of Education, focussed on supporting their contribution to the Trust and wider system.

Update training for Local Academy Boards to address any gaps identified within the skills audit.

The School Improvement Team will provide both ongoing support and/or project-based support, based on the assessment of needs. Project-based support will be designed to meet the development priorities of the relevant school but may, for example, include reviews of attendance, pupil premium, SEND, high attaining pupils etc. The Trust will identify the most appropriate specialist to conduct.

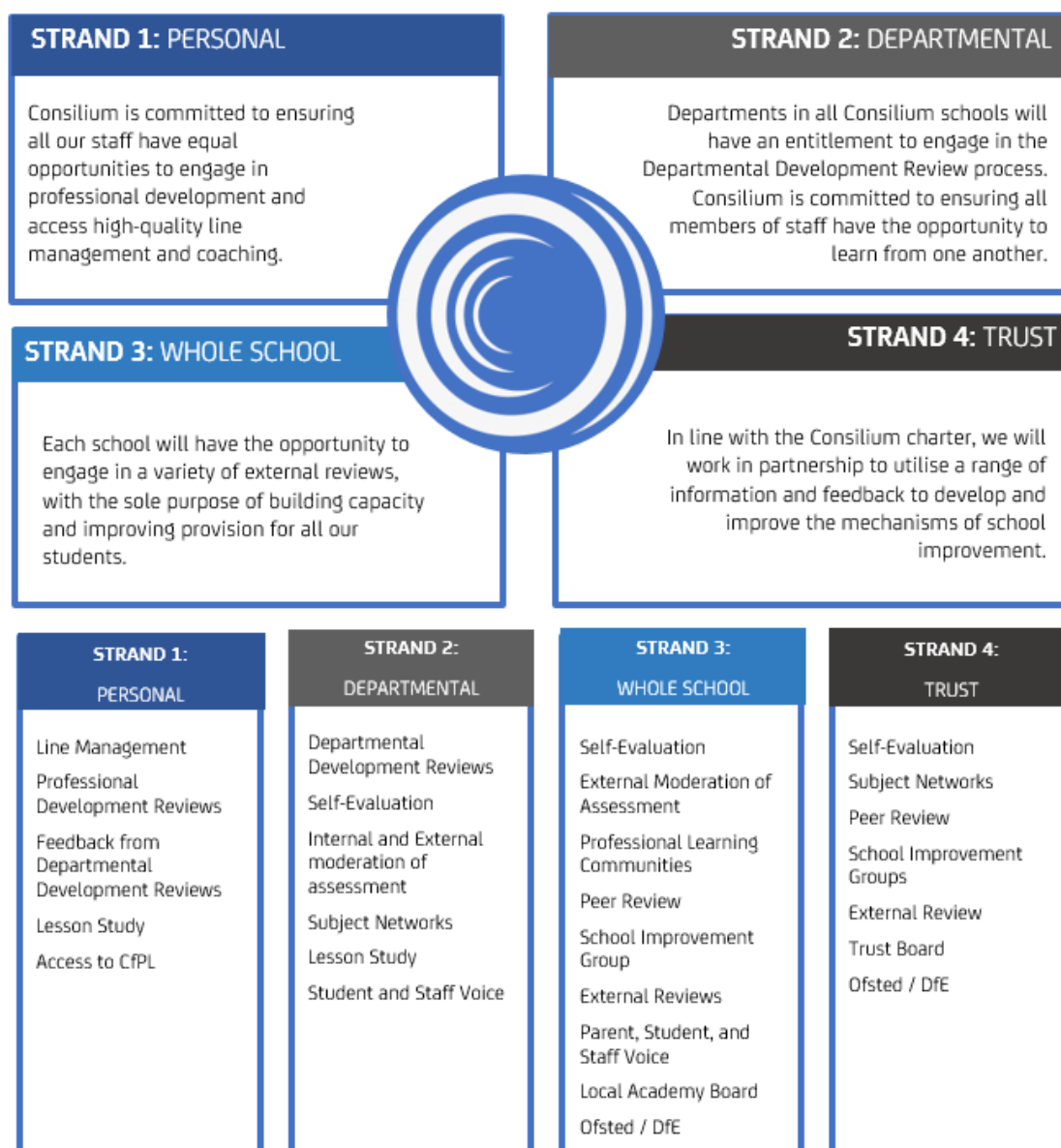


DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

While traditionally, quality assurance can often be seen as a way of measuring performance to make summative judgements, at Consilium Academies we believe strongly in reviewing the quality of provision on offer to support the development of the skills, knowledge, and attributes of all our professionals throughout our schools.

The development and review process works at an individual, school, and Trust level to ensure we maintain an accurate evaluation of the effectiveness of our work, in order to inform our planning for further improvement.

There are four aspects to Consilium's approach to development and review:





Proud to be part of
Consilium
Academies



**Armthorpe
Academy**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Buile Hill
Academy**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Ellesmere Park
High School**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Heworth Grange
School**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



Consilium
Centre for Professional Learning

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Consilium
Evolve**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Moorside
High School**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Thornhill
Academy**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Washington
Academy**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions



**Wyvern
Academy**

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions

