




# The LETTA Trust

## Guide for Schools Considering Joining the Trust

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<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Trust Board	<b>Signed:</b>	



# The LETTA Trust

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## Chair of Trustees

Peter Sherrat

## Chief Executive Officer

Jo Franklin

## Chief Finance Officer

Razna Begum

Dear Colleague,

We very much appreciate your interest in The LETTA Trust and would be happy to share everything you need if you are considering joining our family of schools. We enclose this guide which you may find helpful.

We hope that it will quickly become evident that as new schools join, there is a close collaboration process to create a shared vision while encouraging each school to have its own strong identity and creativity.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Jo Franklin

CEO

Peter Sherratt

Chair of Trustees



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### 1. Welcome to the LETTA Trust community

LETTA Trust schools are committed to working in partnership and learning from each other. Together we strive to give children the best chance of happiness and success at school and beyond; to growing active citizens with a strong moral compass who will make a positive difference in the world. We are a multi-academy trust founded on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017. Our vision is a promise to our pupils; our values determine how we work together.

### 2. Our vision

Our vision is that every child in every school in our trust:

- Loves **learning**, achieves their very best, has fun at school and feels excited about the future
- Knows how to make friends and get along well with **people**; to treat them with fairness, compassion and respect
- Grows **healthy** and strong, believes in themselves and has the confidence and resilience to follow their dreams
- Feels part of their **community**, proud of their school and inspired to make a positive difference in the world

### 3. Our values

Our values determine how we work together:

- **Aspiration:** aiming high; broadening horizons; creating possibilities
- **Innovation:** taking risks; daring to be different; pioneering research; shaping the future; leading the way
- **Equality:** inclusive; excellence for all; celebrating diversity; all for one and one for all!
- **Generosity:** open doors; collaboration; challenge and support; community-minded; team spirit; Ubuntu

### 4. Ubuntu

Our guiding principle is the philosophy of **Ubuntu**; a southern African philosophy that speaks of our interconnectedness, of the importance of relationships, of openness and generosity to one another.

*"Ubuntu does not mean that people should not enrich themselves. The question is: Are you going to do so in order to enable the community around you to be able to improve?"*

Nelson Mandela

*"I am who I am because of who we all are."*

Leymah Gbowee

### 5. Who's in the LETTA Trust?

**Bygrove Primary School:** <http://www.bygrove.towerhamlets.sch.uk/>

Chair of Governors: Stuart Poyser

Head of School: Fiona Durnian

**Stebon Primary School:** <http://www.stebon.org.uk/>

Chair of Governors: Peter Sherratt

Co-headteachers: Jeremy Iver

#### **The LETTA Trust**

Chair of Trustees: Peter Sherratt

Chief Executive (CEO): Jo Franklin

Chief Finance Officer: Razna Begum

### 6. Governance

See appendix 1

## 7. Joining the LETTA Trust

We have the very highest aspirations for our pupils, our staff and for the community we serve. That means providing the best possible school experience for children and families at our existing schools, but it also means growing, welcoming more schools into our family, sharing good practice and collaborating widely.

The Trust can grow in 3 ways:

- Schools in a stable position choose to join the Trust – this would strengthen the capacity of the Trust to work with schools who need support
- The Trust may be asked by the Regional Schools Commissioner to 'sponsor' schools in need of support – we were approved as sponsors by the DfE in January 2017
- The Trust may be asked to start a new school in an area of local need.

In each case, trustees decide which schools join the Trust; they determine whether welcoming in a new school is in the long term interests of both the Trust and of the new school. Before deciding how to proceed Trustees need to be satisfied that the Trust had the capacity to support an incoming school well without disadvantaging existing schools.

We understand that our strength lies in partnership; being able to facilitate staff working together in a meaningful sense is what will secure future success. All schools need to be able to fully participate. As such our Trust is based on geography and the schools within it are no further than half a lunchtime's (30 minutes) travel from one another.

## 8. Autonomy for schools in the LETTA Trust

LETTA schools are equal partners who benefit from the collective advantages of Trust membership whilst enjoying a high degree of autonomy. Each school retains its own unique character. All schools are encouraged to innovate in terms of pedagogy, curriculum and community involvement, to continue to build their own identity and secure the best outcomes for children.

Incoming schools enjoy the same autonomy by default where they have financial stability and pupil outcomes are good. If a school joins the Trust because it is struggling, the school will be given autonomy once it is performing well again i.e. good outcomes for pupils and financially stable.

## 9. School improvements benefits in the LETTA Trust

Bygrove Primary School is a designated National Teaching School and as such organises school improvement activities for teaching school alliance partners (The LETTA Teaching School Alliance or TSA). The TSA oversees a successful initial teaching training programme, (LETTA ITT), which was graded outstanding by Ofsted in November 2017. LETTA Trust schools benefit from a range of school improvement opportunities as part of the TSA including:

- Daily interaction between staff
- Bespoke school improvement partner support from the CEO and/or a Local Leader of Education (LLE)
- Peer review
- Staff training courses for teachers and support staff
- Leadership development training including the NPQML, NPQSL, coaching and mentoring, bespoke middle leaders training programmes and action learning groups for HTs and DHT/AHTs
- School based ITT programme
- NQT programme
- RQT (recently qualified teacher) programme
- Subject leader networks

- Cross-school moderation events
- Research opportunities
- Opportunities to deliver training, share practice and mentor other professionals
- Enhanced recruitment opportunities

## 10. Trust school business support

The LETTA Trust's central business team provide each school with the following services:

- Finance including all academy finance requirements
- HR management and support
- Premises support including health and safety reviews
- Identifying collective savings including bulk purchasing of resources
- Income generation including fundraising and links with business partners
- Safeguarding audit
- Support and guidance relating to the process of academisation

## 11. Policies

The Trust board provides each school with a set of statutory policies. These are kept up to date by the CEO with the latest legislation and best practice guidance. Some of these policies require a section of school specific information to reflect local practice and need. Schools must follow the statutory policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policies
- Finance including charging and remissions
- HR statutory policies
- Health and safety policies
- Complaints procedure
- Equalities information and objectives

Each school and its Local Governing Board may choose to develop and adopt other policies that reflect the school's character and guide practice at the school. These are non-statutory policies and could include:

- Teaching and learning
- Assessment
- Curriculum
- Subjects area policies
- Trips
- Parental engagement
- School uniform
- Homework

## 12. Before joining the LETTA Trust

- See NGA guidance paper 'Staying in Control of your School's Destiny: joining a multi-academy trust'
- Spend time deciding what your non-negotiables are; the dealmakers or deal-breakers
- Be clear about your vision, values and ethos so you can be sure they align with the Trust you choose
- Consider the size, capacity and geography of the Trust
- Evaluate the Trust's capacity to provide effective challenge and support
- Leaders and governors should meet the CEO to find out first-hand about the Trust and ask questions

- Leaders and governors could visit schools in the Trust to see the vision and values in action
- A governor might wish to attend some Trust Board meetings
- Governors write to The LETTA Trust Board to ask to join the Trust
- Governors name The LETTA Trust on the school's application to the DfE for permission to convert to academy status

### 13. The due diligence process

Before agreeing to a request for a new school to join the Trust, trustees carry out a due diligence process. This process includes looking at:

- Pupil outcomes information
- Leadership and governance
- Views of staff, parents and the local community
- Financial position
- Asset condition
- Other risks and mitigating factors

### 14. Key documents

- The LETTA Trust Articles of Association
- Scheme of delegation which includes financial procedures
- Master funding agreement
- Supplementary funding agreements for each school
- Audited accounts
- Academies financial handbook
- Due diligence document
- Minutes of Trust Board and Committee meetings

Further information is available on our school websites and the Teaching School Alliance website <http://www.letta.org.uk/>

### 15. Contact us

If you are interested in join The LETTA Trust or you know a school that might be, contact us and arrange a visit:

- **0203 405 1120**
- **Rabea Begum** (Executive PA)
- [rbegumPA@letta.org.uk](mailto:rbegumPA@letta.org.uk)

# The LETTA Trust Governance Structure

