

**STRATEGY**  
**2025 - 2028**

# Stronger Together



**NORTH STAR**  
**COMMUNITY TRUST**

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# Foreword from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

**North Star Community Trust is proud to be one of the most successful and respected multi-academy trusts in London. We have built a formidable reputation for raising standards, expanding opportunity, and delivering lasting impact for the children and families we serve.**

Across all our schools, we have strengthened academic performance, improved life chances for thousands of pupils, and forged deep, enduring relationships with our communities. This success has been shaped by care, ambition, and a shared belief in every child's potential.

We are equally proud of the work that happens beyond the classroom. Through our community outreach programmes - from early years support and parenting workshops to safeguarding guidance and wellbeing services - we have helped hundreds of families prosper. These are not add-ons. They reflect who we are: a Trust rooted in its local community, committed to serving the whole child and the whole family.

Our trustees work closely with the executive leadership team to ensure that all these ambitions are fully realised - and that everything we do is focused on delivering for the children and families we serve.

Now we look ahead. This updated strategy defines our direction for 2025 to 2028, guided by three overarching strategic priorities: sustainable growth, transformation of our SEND provision, and deeper community engagement. These priorities reflect both today's challenges and tomorrow's ambitions - and set out clearly the kind of Trust we are determined to be: inclusive, united, and ambitious for every child.

Stronger Together is more than a title. It expresses our ethos: schools working in genuine partnership, learning from one another, and supporting each other to achieve more. With this strategy, we move forward - focused, confident, and committed to delivering an exceptional education for every pupil in our care.

**Dr Donald Graham**  
*Chair, Board of Trustees*



# Welcome from the Chief Executive Officer

**As CEO, I am proud of the journey we've shared - defined by dedication, collaboration, and a clear focus on the children we serve. Together, we have turned aspirations into achievement, extended our impact beyond the classroom, and built a community where every young person can flourish.**

We also acknowledge the challenges ahead. In Enfield, demographic shifts and falling pupil numbers are reshaping the landscape. Our response is a focused strategy centred on sustainable growth, outstanding SEND provision, and deeper community engagement.

These three overarching objectives guide all our work and rest on five strategic pillars: preparing students for the future, schools at the heart of their communities, being an employer of choice, strong leadership, and building a sustainable Trust.

We equip students with essential skills, support wellbeing in partnership with families, foster an inclusive environment for staff, invest in leadership development, and ensure financial and operational stability to sustain and grow.

These pillars underpin our commitment to delivering on our objectives and helping every child succeed.

**Marino Charalambous**  
*Chief Executive Officer*



# Our vision, mission, values and culture

## **At North Star Community Trust, our vision is simple: to help as many children as possible to succeed - at school and in life.**

We are driven by a clear mission: to work within disadvantaged communities to make a real and lasting difference, giving every child the best possible chance to thrive academically and socially. We know that where you start in life should never determine where you end up - and we are committed to breaking down barriers so that every young person can realise their potential.

### **Our work is built on four core values:**

We are inclusive, ambitious, supportive and kind, and act with integrity. These values shape everything we do - from the way we teach and lead, to how we support families and work together as a team.

To bring our mission to life every day, we use three guiding words:

Education. Community. Opportunity. (ECO)

- **Education** – Every child at a North Star school receives an excellent education, built on high standards, curiosity, and care.
- **Community** – Every child is part of something bigger, learning to make a positive difference in the lives of others.
- **Opportunity** – Every child has access to experiences and support that help them grow into confident, capable, well-rounded citizens.

We believe we are all Stronger Together - as schools, staff, children, and families. This belief runs through everything we do. Our schools sit at the heart of their communities, and our Trust exists to serve, uplift, and empower those communities.

Across all our schools, we aim to foster a culture of aspiration and belonging. We want our pupils to leave us not only well-educated, but also resilient, kind, optimistic, and ready to shape the future.

# Our schools



**Schools across our Trust share a common vision. They collaborate closely - becoming stronger together - while respecting the unique context and identity of each individual school. All of our schools are currently located in the London Borough of Enfield, in north London.**



Schools that join our Trust benefit from shared expertise, proven curriculum frameworks, streamlined operations, and a commitment to excellence grounded in local context. As we grow, we remain committed to building a family of schools that are ambitious, inclusive, and stronger together.

Our schools have strong leadership, improving outcomes, and a shared drive for continual improvement. A Trust-wide approach to curriculum, safeguarding, and inclusion ensures consistency of standards while allowing each school to reflect its community.

# Woodpecker Hall Academy

A four-form entry primary academy serving pupils from Nursery to Year 6, with a strong focus on academic achievement and personal growth.

Headteacher: Ms Nicky Ross

**"We want every child to love learning, aim high, and feel proud of what they achieve. Strong academic outcomes matter but so does helping every child grow in confidence and curiosity."**

– Nicky Ross

**"My child comes home excited to tell me what they've learned. I've seen their reading and maths improve so much and they're genuinely happy at school."**

– Year 2 parent

**"I like learning new things and my teacher helps me when I get stuck. I want to be a scientist!"**

– Year 4 pupil

Woodpecker Hall   
ACADEMY

# Kingfisher Hall Academy

A two-form entry primary academy for pupils from Nursery to Year 6, committed to high standards and nurturing every child's potential.

Headteacher: Ms Gemma Vincent

**"We set high expectations for every child and work hard to help them reach their full potential. Being part of the Trust helps us stay focused on learning, while also supporting the whole child."**

– Gemma Vincent

**"There's a real sense of care here. My daughter is doing well in class, and the teachers genuinely know her and encourage her to do her best."**

– Year 5 parent

**"I like our school because we all help each other. I want to do well in my tests so I can go to university one day."**

– Year 6 pupil

Kingfisher Hall

ACADEMY

# Enfield Heights Academy

**A one-form entry primary academy from Reception to Year 6, where academic progress and whole-child development go hand in hand.**

**Headteacher: Mrs Justyna Powrie**

**“Academic progress is a top priority for us - but so is making sure our children feel happy, safe, and supported. Being part of the Trust means we can give our pupils the best of both worlds.”**

**– Justyna Powrie**

**“My son has come on leaps and bounds. The school feels like a real community - he’s supported, cared for, and I know he’s learning every day.”**

**– Reception parent**

**“My teacher makes learning fun. I’m getting better at maths and I love writing stories too!”**

**– Year 3 pupil**

Enfield  
Heights  
ACADEMY

# Heron Hall Academy and Sixth Form

A growing secondary school and sixth form serving pupils from Year 7 to Year 13, dedicated to strong academic outcomes and preparing students for success in further education, work, and life.

Headteacher: Mr Arthur Barzey

**"We have high standards and a clear focus on achievement - but we also support our students as people. Our aim is to help every young person succeed academically and grow into a confident, capable adult."**

– Arthur Barzey

**"Heron Hall has really raised my son's aspirations. He's gone from coasting to aiming high, and the support has been excellent throughout."**

– Year 10 parent

**"There are high expectations here but also lots of support. I feel like the teachers believe in me, and now I believe in myself too."**

– Year 12 student



# Operating Environment

## Strategic context

The development of this strategy is shaped by key national and local factors that impact the Trust's operating environment. These include changes in education policy, economic conditions, and demographic shifts, all of which influence the Trust's priorities and decision-making over the next three years.

## Political context

The national education landscape is undergoing significant change. The government is currently reviewing the SEND system, with likely implications for funding mechanisms, local authority responsibilities, and the role of schools and trusts in delivering provision. There is also continued emphasis on academy accountability, curriculum reform, and the regulation of Multi-Academy Trusts. These developments require the Trust to maintain flexibility in its planning, ensure alignment with statutory expectations, and sustain high standards of governance and educational delivery.

## Economic context

The financial environment for schools remains constrained. Inflationary pressures, increased staffing costs, and rising energy prices continue to outpace uplifts in core funding. Trusts are required to absorb these pressures while maintaining quality and meeting statutory obligations. The Trust's financial strategy will focus on sustainability, value for money, and greater efficiency through central services and procurement. A clear framework for cost control and resource allocation will ensure the delivery of this strategy within available budgets.

## Social and local context

North Star Community Trust serves communities in some of the most disadvantaged parts of Enfield. The Trust's inclusive mission - particularly for pupils with SEND, EAL, and those from low-income families - remains central to its work. However, the local demographic context is shifting. Enfield is experiencing a contraction in pupil numbers, leading to reduced demand for school places across both primary and secondary phases. This trend presents significant challenges in relation to admissions, long-term planning, and financial viability. The strategy responds to these pressures by setting out a framework to protect standards, maintain parental confidence, and position the Trust's schools as the preferred choice in an increasingly competitive landscape.

# Our Priorities

**Our strategy over the next three years is shaped by three overarching strategic objectives, which reflect the current challenges and opportunities facing the Trust:**

- 1. Growth** – strategic consolidation and sustainable growth
- 2. SEND** – transformation and inclusion
- 3. Community outreach** – creating a charitable foundation and deepening engagement and support

These objectives represent key areas of strategic focus and will guide a significant strand of our work across the Trust. They sit alongside our existing five Trust-wide pillars, which continue to provide the overall structure for delivering our pledges to children, staff, and communities – anchored in our values and culture.



# 1. Growth – Strategic consolidation and sustainable growth

**Growth at North Star Community Trust is driven by a dual approach: actively seeking opportunities for schools to join us – including exploring potential mergers with smaller trusts and single academy trusts (SATs) – while also consolidating and strengthening our existing schools. We believe that by growing in a considered and strategic way, we can extend the reach of the high-quality education and community impact our Trust is known for.**

At the same time, we recognise that in areas like Enfield – experiencing one of the sharpest demographic contractions in London – sustainable growth also means focusing inward: maintaining and gradually increasing pupil numbers, deepening engagement with families, and strengthening our identity as schools of choice in a more competitive environment. This includes building organisational resilience through strong pupil retention, seamless phase transitions, and a compelling all-through offer from early years to sixth form.

Our strategy balances expansion with sustainability. We are embedding this through enhanced community visibility, sharper admissions and transition planning, and a renewed focus on relationships, trust, and reputation. By combining external growth with internal consolidation, we are laying the foundations for a Trust that is both resilient in the face of demographic change and ready to expand our impact when the right opportunities arise.



## 2. SEND – Transformation and inclusion

**There is growing pressure across the SEND system. More children are presenting with significant and complex needs, while local authorities face mounting constraints on funding and access to external specialist placements. The result is a widening gap between need and provision - felt acutely by all schools and families. In this context, North Star is taking proactive steps to build internal capacity and lead with purpose. The creation of The Nest setting marks the start of a Trust-wide shift: developing more flexible, specialist pathways that better meet the needs of our pupils.**

We are also exploring further opportunities to strengthen provision across our settings. As national SEND policy continues to evolve, we will remain responsive to the Government's direction of reform and ensure our strategy aligns with emerging frameworks and expectations. Our goal is clear: to ensure that no child is left without the right support, and that inclusion is embedded structurally - not treated as an add-on.

### 3. Community outreach – Creating a charitable foundation and deepening engagement and support

**North Star’s community outreach work has received national recognition for its impact on parental engagement, family support, and inclusive practice. We are now building on that success with the creation of a new charitable foundation to extend our reach and deepen our support for families.**

This foundation will enable us to invest in a wider range of social, cultural, and educational opportunities beyond the classroom – supporting early years development, family learning, and targeted interventions where they are needed most. At the same time, we will continue to grow our outreach offer within schools, including free parenting programmes, volunteering pathways, and tailored community initiatives.

Our ambition is to be more than a group of schools – we aim to act as a trusted community anchor, building long-term relationships, shared purpose, and real partnership with the families we serve.



# The 5 Pillars

## Pillar 1: Preparing students for the future

**North Star will ensure all children are ready to learn, thrive, and aspire by building strong partnerships with parents, providing high-quality teaching, and delivering a future-focused curriculum that includes STEM, STEAM, and life skills. We will support this through strong safeguarding, mental health support, and enriching experiences that build resilience, creativity, and a love of learning.**

Children will benefit from inspiring teaching, collaborative learning, and a broad set of life-enhancing opportunities. Provision for pupils with SEND is central to this pillar: we will ensure that teaching is adapted, staff are well-trained, and every child is known, supported, and empowered to achieve their full potential.



## Pillar 2: Schools at the heart of their communities

**The Trust is committed to empowering families and engaging with its diverse communities through free parenting support, targeted community outreach, and partnerships with charities, employers, public services, and national organisations.**

Our schools act as anchors in the community, responding to local needs while expanding opportunities for children and families. National partnerships strengthen provision and ensure that wellbeing, diversity, and social equity remain at the heart of the Trust's work. Inclusion and SEND remain central to our community strategy - ensuring families of children with additional needs are supported, involved, and connected to services that understand and meet those needs.



## **Pillar 3: An employer of choice for our staff**

**North Star will become a leading employer by fostering a supportive and rewarding workplace. This includes personalised career pathways, reduced workload through shared resources, professional learning networks, and flexible working options.**

The Trust values staff wellbeing, encourages collaboration across schools, and is building a strong employer brand through storytelling and digital platforms that reflect its inclusive, developmental culture. As part of our commitment to equity, we will actively create opportunities for people with SEND to succeed as employees across the Trust, ensuring accessible recruitment, inclusive workplace practices, and targeted support that enables them to contribute fully and confidently as valued members of our team.



## Pillar 4: High quality leadership

**Outstanding leadership is key to ongoing school improvement, and the Trust invests in recruiting, retaining, and developing excellent leaders. Structured leadership pathways are in place with access to coaching, mentoring, and nationally recognised qualifications (NPQML, NPQH).**

Senior and middle leaders are encouraged to take on Trust-wide responsibilities, promoting innovation, consistency, and continuous improvement across all schools.



## Pillar 5: A sustainable Trust

**Sustainability is driven by strong governance, robust financial management, efficient central services, and strategic estate development. The Trust Board and Academy Advisory Committees provide accountable, values-led leadership. Investments in ICT, learning environments, and service quality are guided by regular staff feedback. Through economies of scale, environmental responsibility, and local empowerment, the Trust will ensure its long-term viability and impact.**





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