

## **Frequently Asked Questions – Sapiientia Education Trust.**

### **1. What is Sapiientia Education Trust (SET)?**

SET is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) that was established by Wymondham College in 2016. We currently have a partnership of 17 schools in Norfolk and Suffolk, consisting of 10 Primary and 7 Secondary schools. We educate around 7000 pupils and employ 1350 staff. We are a 'not for profit' charitable trust and are state funded.

Our vision is to provide:

***'A Word Class Education, locally enabling every pupil to flourish.'***

### **2. What is SET's track record?**

There are lots of ways of measuring success in education. Measurable outcomes for our pupils have significantly improved since the inception of the Trust and this is consistent across the Primary and Secondary phases. Ofsted reports consistently praise standards in our schools, with several schools improving their overall grading in their first inspection after joining us.

In the past year three of our schools have been evaluated by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' with several other schools receiving 'Outstanding' elements in areas of their provision. All of our Primary Schools are now rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' and we would bring this wider expertise to benefit the Federation's pupils and staff.

We regularly survey our staff, pupils and parents. All of these indicate high levels of satisfaction with our Trust and schools. In our recent staff survey, responses scored significantly higher than national equivalent surveys and this is consistent across all areas. Ofsted parent view responses demonstrate strong parental support for the work our schools do.

We actively promote the value of enrichment activities. All of our schools offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities, and this is a core part of our ethos. Similarly, staff would access a wider range of training opportunities.

### **3. Which Schools are part of SET locally?**

We run a number successful schools in the wider Attleborough area. This provides an established local network of schools for the Federation's two schools to join.

Local Primary Schools include: Wymondham College Prep School, Old Buckenham Primary School and Great Hockham Primary school. Local Secondary schools include Attleborough Academy, Old Buckenham High School and Wymondham College.

We believe there is a natural synergy for the Federation's schools to join us and the overwhelming majority of the Federation's pupils will attend one of our schools for their secondary education. Consequently, we are excited at the opportunity to further develop educational provision across the schools and the town.

#### **4. What is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?**

Academies are schools that are state-funded and funding is received directly from the Department for Education (rather than via local councils). MATs cannot be run for profit and must meet the charitable aims of the trust. Technically, a MAT 'is a charitable company limited by guarantee'.

#### **5. What are the benefits from joining a strong MAT, like SET?**

By being a member of a MAT, a school benefits from being part of a wider community of education professionals who can offer support and assistance to raise standards and widen opportunities.

Schools within our MAT share best practice, resources and knowledge and work together to deliver the best outcomes. It's effectively all about being part of a supportive community working towards the same goals, with the necessary structures and accountability in place to ensure standards are met and maintained.

SET offers our schools extra support to improve the education offered to our pupils. We provide support around the delivery and resourcing of the curriculum, additional training for staff, access to coaching and development programmes, specific expertise around SEND and safeguarding and access to a range of supportive networks, all focussed on sharing effective practice, ideas and resources.

The trust also provides additional support for schools through the central estates, finance, ICT, Health and Safety and HR teams, enabling a school to focus on the main job of providing world-class education for its pupils. School's also benefit financially from being part of this wider network through trust wide contracts which can offer significant savings and other economies of scale.

#### **How is governance organised in SET?**

SET has a clearly defined governance structure, that has frequently been praised in Ofsted reports. Our schools operate parent focus groups, where the Headteacher works with parents to discuss and consult on school-based issues.

We have members and trustees who oversee the strategic work of the trust. Their roles are defined by our funding agreement with the Department for Education and by charity law. We have chosen to have strong parental representation of our trust board and on our sub-committees.

## **6. Do schools in SET all look and feel the same?**

They don't! We believe that each school is individual and serves its own community. We are supportive and our schools are united in one aim – to provide a world-class education for our pupils, within the context of the community they serve.

We are proud of the diversity of our schools – our schools are varied, ranging from rural primary schools, urban schools, smaller schools and larger secondary schools. What all of our schools share are high expectations and the delivery of a holistic, wide-ranging education.

## **7. Will Uniform change?**

We believe that Uniform is important, but the choice of uniform rests at school level. There are no plans to change uniform at either of the Federation's schools, should they choose to join us.

## **8. Will you make changes to admissions arrangements?**

We have no plans to change admissions and all admissions are in line with the national School Admissions Code.

## **9. Do the land and buildings transfer to SET?**

All of the land and buildings are leased from the Local Authority on a long-term lease. SET would become responsible for the upkeep of the buildings.

## **10. Will staff pay and conditions change?**

Staff are protected under TUPE regulations. In any event, SET has fully adopted the national school teacher pay and conditions regulations and we use nationally agreed support staff pay scales.

We engage constructively with Trade Union and professional associations, including running our own JCC (Joint Consultative Committee) where we meet regularly with regional union representatives to discuss issues, formally consult on policies etc.