School Improvement Framework



SAST School Improvement

Updated May 2025

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Introduction

We are delighted to share the SAST School Improvement Framework with you. This is an important document because everything within it is at the heart of what we do.

SAST aspires to provide an excellent education for every child across all of its schools. We believe that our framework is a road map to help us get there. It sets out the different areas that make for educational excellence, and shows how these interact with our values, which should be the DNA of our approach.

From this emerges the 'SAST way': for each area contributing to educational excellence, we have identified aspects of practice and pedagogy that all staff should subscribe to in all our schools. This is how we foster an aspirational and ambitious culture across our trust, where best practice has the same SAST character in different schools.

We want to promote school flourishing in everything we do so that our values are lived. To that end, school improvement activities, such as the school flourishing visits, link strongly to flourishing principles, which are also part of our DNA and inform this strategy.

No doubt the framework and support capacity will continue to evolve and change. That's as it should be. We are excited to be able to launch this second version of the strategy on our journey towards educational excellence.

Paul Lavis
Interim Education Director

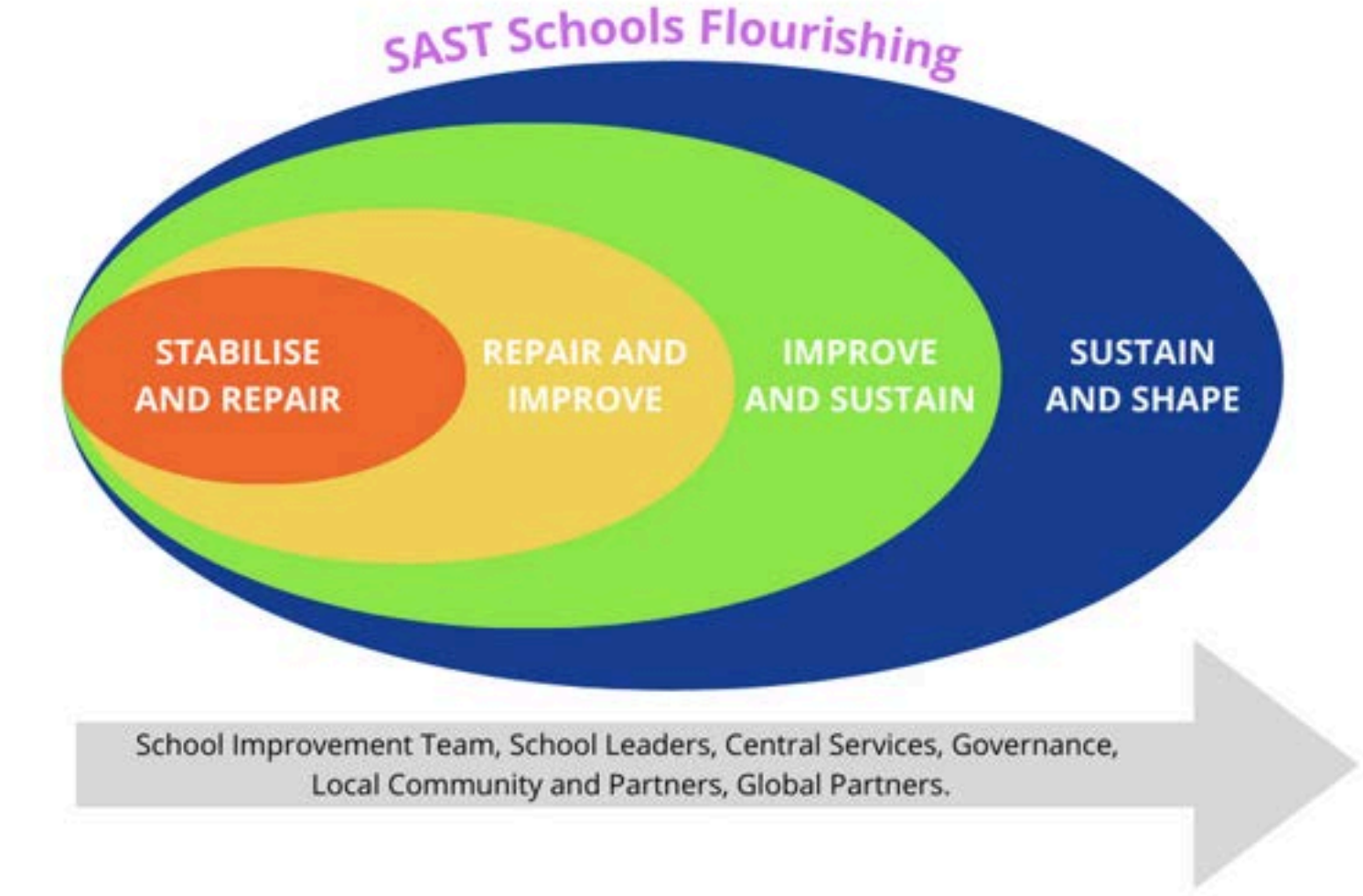
David Watson OBE
CEO

David Middleton
Chair of Trustees

School Improvement

All our schools sit within four phases of school support, depending on need, and where they are on their improvement journey.

School Improvement Phases



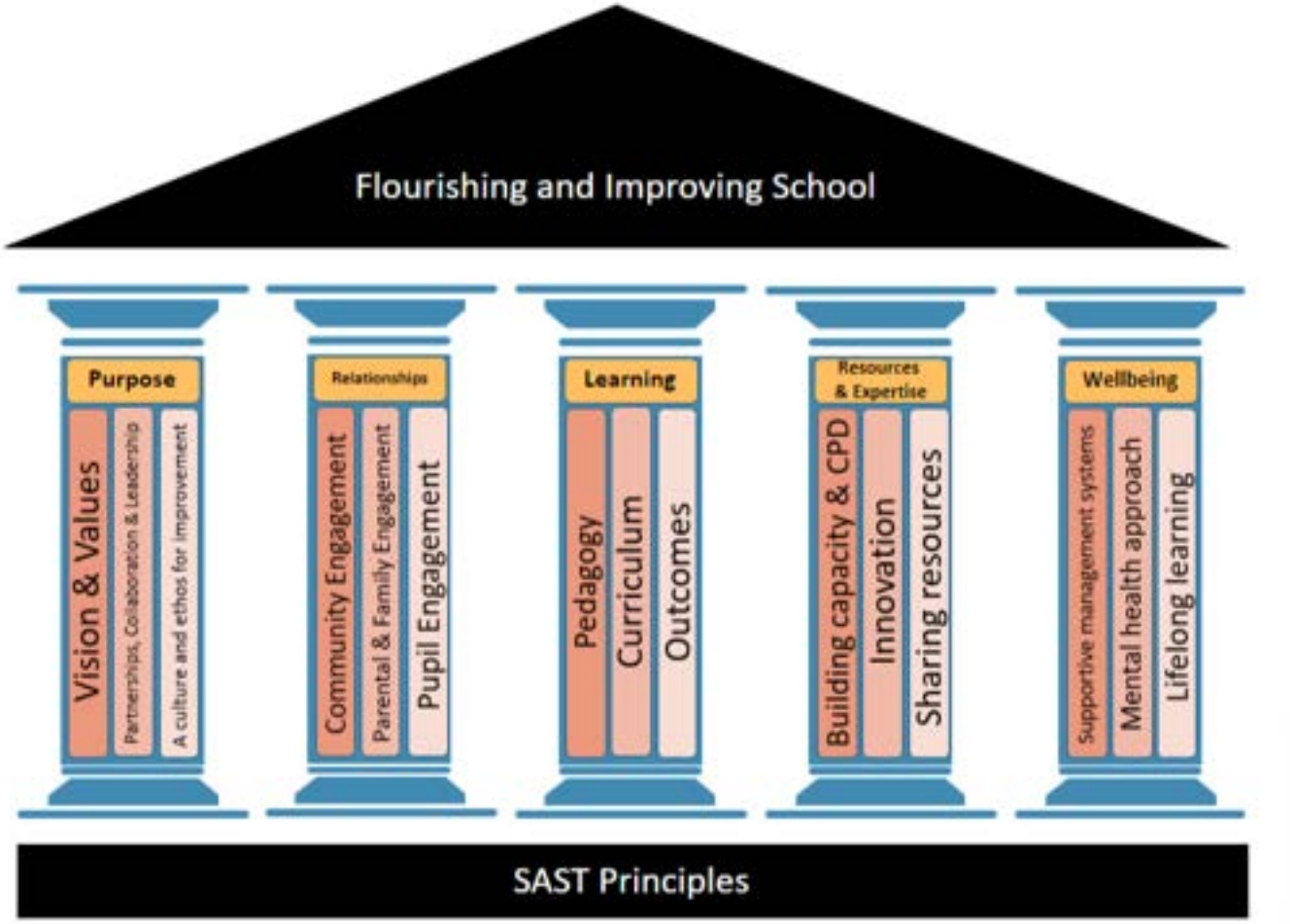
High Support and Ownership



Our approach to school improvement is strategic, structured, and focused on delivering meaningful impact. Through a series of clear and accessible resources we provide high levels of support, ensuring that leadership, school culture, teaching and learning are strengthened in a clear and systematic order. This is not about temporary fixes but about building long-term capacity, enabling schools to take ownership of their own improvement. We work through a phased process—stabilising, repairing, improving, and ultimately shaping schools into thriving, self-sustaining environments.

At every stage, we operate in partnership, offering both support and challenge to ensure that progress is not only achieved but embedded for the future. A key way that we achieve this is through Schools Flourishing visits.

Schools Flourishing



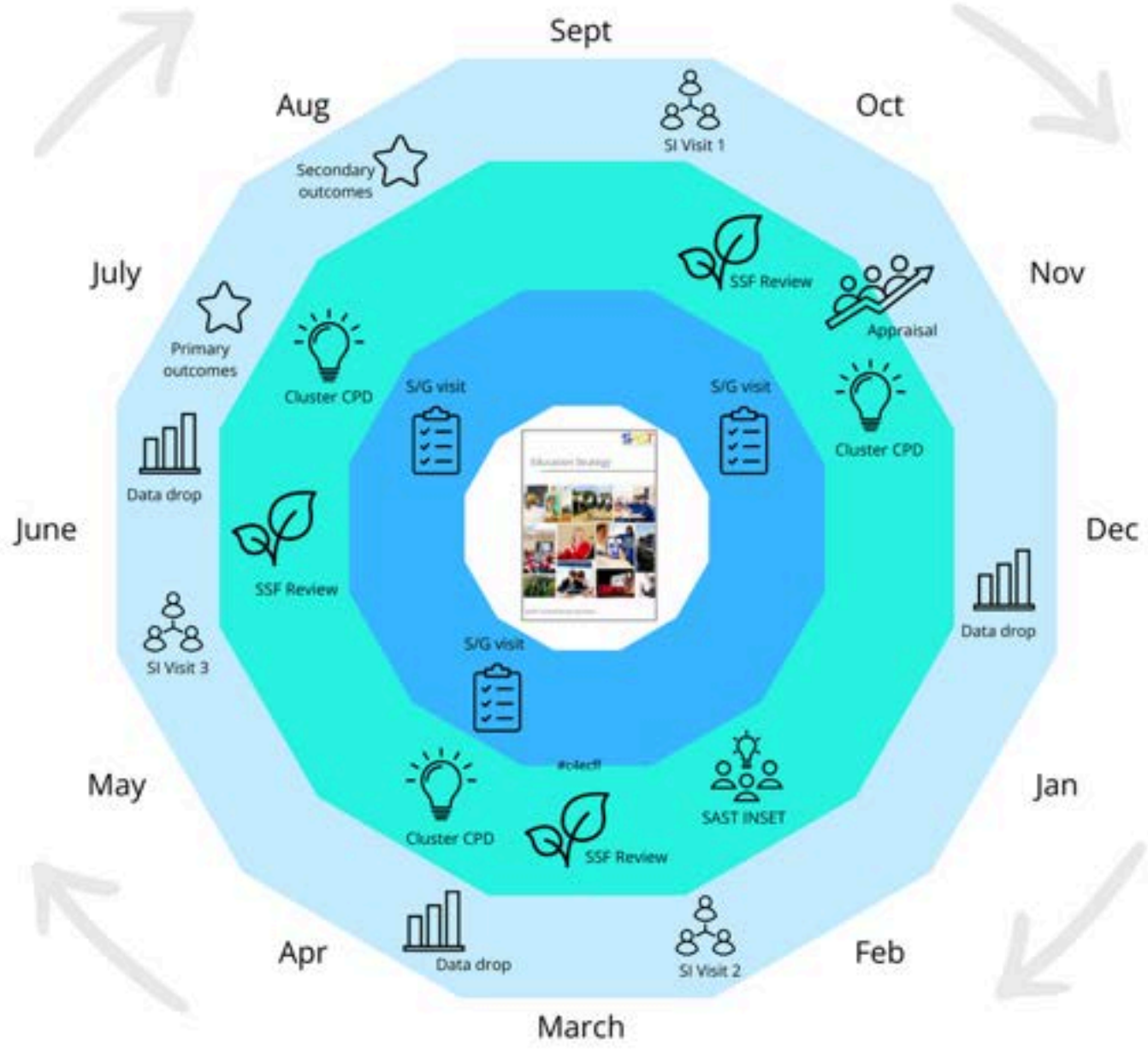
The Principles of School Flourishing Peer Review

The SAST School Flourishing Review (SSF) is based on the belief that the best form of support is rigorous and timely, provides valuable challenge focused on improvement and is led by trusted and highly regarded peers.

The process should be seen as:

- reciprocal and mutually beneficial
- a joint exercise between the review team and the school
- based on principles of genuine professional dialogue and enquiry
- a powerful model of professional development
- part of an ongoing, self-directed process of scrutiny, reflection, challenge and improvement

School Improvement Cycle



Accountability Measures

Development

Safeguarding

Partnership

Equity

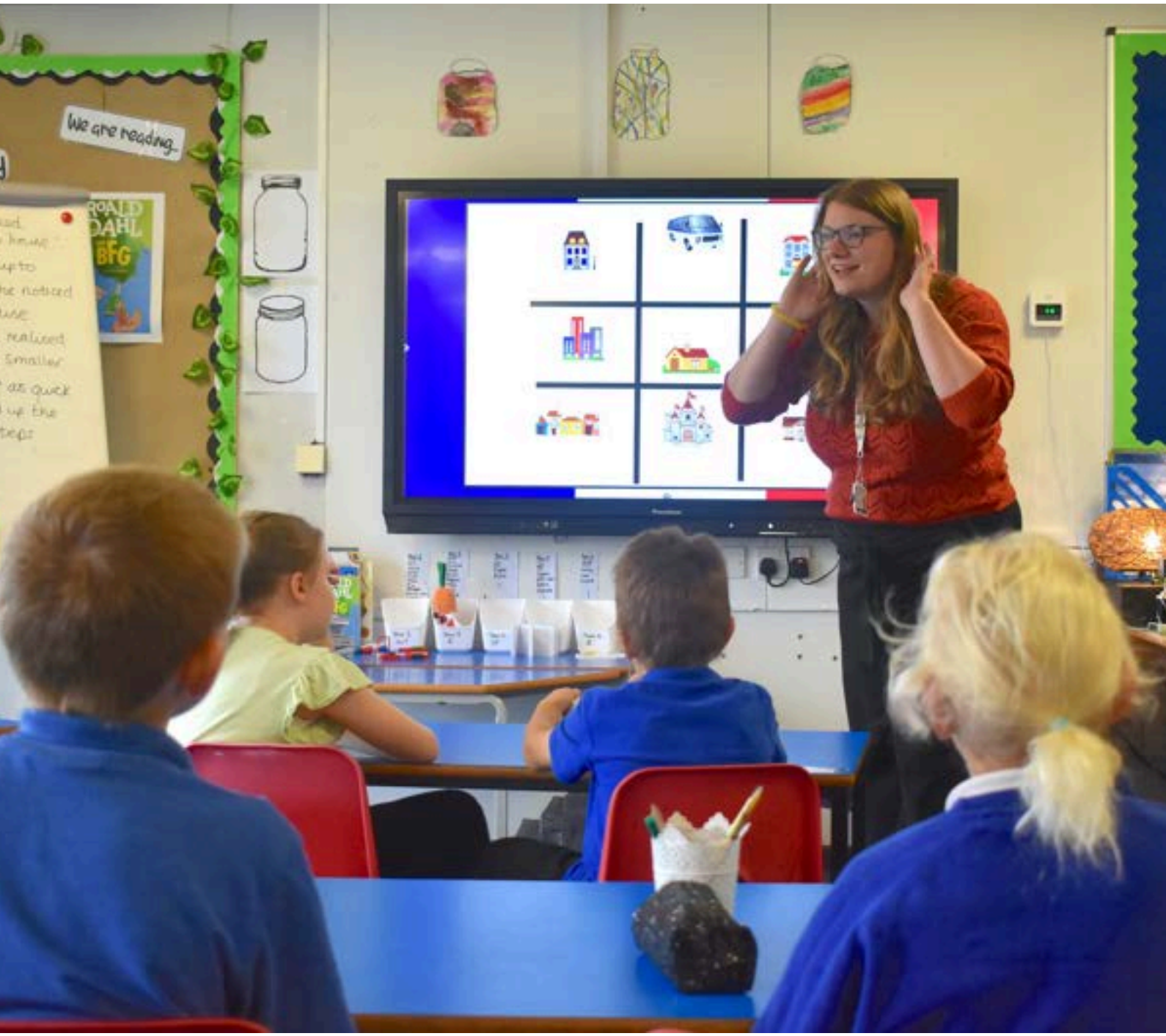
Aspiration

Kaizen

Central Support & Accountability

Strategic Area	Director of Education	EHTs/HTs	Director of Inclusion	Director of Flourishing	Safeguarding Lead
Teaching and Learning	Drives SEG agenda for teaching innovation.	Ensures teaching practices align with SEG's strategic goals.	Advocates for inclusion in teaching strategies.	Embeds flourishing principles in pedagogy.	Monitors safeguarding compliance in teaching.
(Leading to...)	Positive teaching quality trends.	Improved student engagement and progress metrics.	Higher engagement for disadvantaged or SEND learners.	Enhanced student well-being and learning outcomes.	Reduced safeguarding incidents in teaching environments.
Curriculum and Assessment	Sets strategic curriculum and assessment goals trust-wide.	Oversees implementation of SEG-aligned curricula and assessments.	Guides inclusion in curriculum design and assessments.	Advocates for inspiring and flourishing-focused curricula.	Safeguards curriculum and assessment processes.
(Leading to...)	Curriculum coherence and progression across the trust.	Improved attainment and progress.	Reduced attainment gaps for vulnerable groups.	Increased participation in engaging curriculum activities.	No safeguarding risks linked to assessments.
Behaviour and Inclusion	Oversees SEG policies on behaviour, attendance, and inclusion.	Implements SEG-aligned behaviour and inclusion strategies.	Leads attendance and engagement interventions for vulnerable groups.	Embeds relational approaches and flourishing in inclusion strategies.	Ensures safeguarding in behaviour management and inclusion practices.
(Leading to...)	Reduction in exclusions and persistent absenteeism trust-wide.	Positive behaviour and attendance metrics across schools.	Increased attendance and engagement among vulnerable groups.	Improved inclusion indicators and student engagement.	Fewer safeguarding referrals related to behaviour and inclusion.
Welfare	Embeds SEG welfare priorities into trust-wide strategies.	Oversees well-being initiatives to address attendance and engagement.	Addresses welfare barriers to inclusion and attendance.	Aligns well-being initiatives with flourishing principles.	Safeguards well-being strategies and monitors risks.
(Leading to...)	Positive trends in staff and student well-being indicators.	Reduction in absenteeism and improved satisfaction survey results.	Better support for disadvantaged learners, improving welfare metrics.	Greater alignment between well-being and flourishing outcomes.	Fewer safeguarding issues tied to welfare concerns.
Leadership	Leads SEG strategy for leadership accountability and capacity-building.	Guides leaders to implement SEG's strategic priorities for inclusion, welfare, and attendance.	Promotes inclusive leadership aligned with SEG priorities.	Embeds flourishing values into leadership practices.	Ensures leadership teams integrate safeguarding across policies.
(Leading to...)	Improved school improvement outcomes and trust-wide leadership capacity.	Greater consistency in leadership practices and alignment to SEG strategy.	Evidence of inclusive leadership practices enhancing student outcomes.	Improved school culture and staff engagement metrics.	Fewer safeguarding incidents in strategic decision-making.
CPD and Talent Development	Develops SEG-aligned CPD programs for staff growth and leadership capacity.	Facilitates CPD to align staff practices with SEG goals for autonomy and development.	Leads CPD focused on inclusion to support vulnerable learners.	Promotes flourishing-focused CPD to enhance well-being and pedagogy.	Embeds safeguarding elements into CPD programs.
(Leading to...)	High staff engagement in CPD programs and retention rates.	Positive feedback on CPD from staff; visible improvement in leadership and teaching practices.	Improved staff confidence in delivering inclusive education.	Higher staff and student satisfaction reflected in well-being metrics.	Better safeguarding practices observed through staff training outcomes.

Teaching and Learning (Pedagogy)



The SAST Way

In order to flourish...

Teachers have good subject and pedagogical knowledge



Teachers are using techniques in flexible and timely ways



Teachers know what good teaching looks like and how to improve teaching

Additional support adds value to the learning



Teachers demonstrate high expectations and positive relationships with pupils



Teachers apply a broad range of pedagogical approaches to promote a culture of learning



Teachers promote a culture that encourages assessment for learning and use assessment models that support learning



There is a shared understanding about excellent pedagogical practice



Teachers make effective use of a wide range of resources, including additional support



Living our values

Partnership

We will work alongside teachers to design and deliver innovative, inclusive, and evidence-based teaching that supports lifelong learning and the growth of every student.

Equity

We will implement teaching methods that are inclusive and equitable, valuing diverse backgrounds and experiences, and supporting each student's unique learning journey.

Aspiration

We will embrace teaching approaches that support students' overall development, fostering knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that can be applied across varied life contexts.

Kaizen

We are committed to excellence in teaching by setting high standards, using innovative and evidence-based methods, and regularly assessing and refining our practices.

All schools will benefit from:

- Access to different staff networks.
- SSF Visits
- Shared assessment and curriculum resources
- SLE Support
- SAST Education Strategy
- Sharing Best Practice Events

Phase	Lead Indicator	Lag Indicator
Stabilise & Repair	Several teachers lack key skills and techniques that support learning and independence. Engagement is not strong.	Standards of attainment and progress have been consistently low and below national levels.
Repair & Improve	Some teachers may lack key skills and techniques, and engagement may not be strong. Teachers' subject and pedagogical knowledge is not consistent across subjects.	Outcomes are below national standards, progress is below national, and disadvantaged/SEN learners make slow progress with widening gaps.
Improve & Sustain	The majority of teaching is strong, and engagement is high, with most learners able to apply learning in different contexts. Assessment is effectively used to intervene.	Outcomes are in line with national standards and improving for all learners. There are no significant gaps in progress between groups.
Sustain & Shape	Teaching is consistently strong, and teachers have deep subject and pedagogical knowledge across the board.	Outcomes are consistently above national, with no significant gaps between the progress of different groups.

Curriculum and Assessment



The SAST Way

In order to flourish...



The curriculum builds knowledge, skills, and understanding across a full range of disciplines

Pupils are enabled to access an extensive range of opportunities to encourage and inspire talents and interests

The setting continually develops, improves and innovates in the curriculum

The curriculum inspires, motivates and provides opportunities for learning creatively

Curriculum design inspires and challenges pupils in their learning. The school provides wider opportunities to enrichen learners' experiences

All pupils are developing as young global citizens and supported to become active, critical thinkers who are understanding of our diverse society

The partnership between families and school, enables them to fully engage in their children's learning



Living our values



We will collaborate with stakeholders to design a relevant, diverse, and challenging curriculum that meets the needs and interests of all learners, with assessments that promote both equity and excellence.



We will create an inclusive curriculum that reflects the diversity of our community, celebrating the uniqueness of all learners.



Our curriculum will be well-rounded, balanced, and tailored to the needs and interests of all learners, with assessments that foster a broad range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.



We are committed to excellence in teaching by setting high standards, using innovative and evidence-based methods, and regularly assessing and refining our practices.

All schools will benefit from:

- Access to different staff networks
- SSF Visits
- Shared curriculum and assessment resources
- SLE Support
- SAST Education Strategy
- Sharing Best Practice events

Phase	Lead Indicator	Lag Indicator
Stabilise & Repair	The curriculum is weak, lacking structure, coherence, and progression. There is no early identification of needs. The EYFS/post-16 offer is not effective.	Learners struggle to retain and apply key knowledge and skills, particularly in core subjects.
Repair & Improve	Areas of the curriculum are missing or lack coherence. There is very little early identification of needs. Progression and structure are inconsistent across key subjects.	Learners demonstrate gaps in their knowledge and are unable to apply learning effectively across different contexts.
Improve & Sustain	The curriculum is progressively sequenced, with a clearer structure in most subjects. There is early identification of needs. Gaps in learning are swiftly addressed.	Learners are increasingly able to recall and apply knowledge and skills across subjects, showing improvement in their understanding.
Sustain & Shape	The curriculum is coherent, ambitious, and securely embedded across all phases, with strong progression and sequencing. There is swift early identification of needs.	Learners consistently retain knowledge and apply skills with confidence and fluency across subjects and contexts, preparing them well for future stages.

Behaviour for Learning and Inclusion



The SAST Way

In order to flourish...

Leaders create and maintain an authentic, inclusive culture in their setting, which fosters a sense of belonging

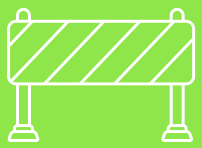


Leaders strive for equity: we make our best endeavours to ensure learners are able to participate fully in the life of our schools and communities



Staff work within a relational practice approach, demonstrating high ambition and flexibility of thought, so that every young person can feel secure and thrive

Staff ensure all learners have their individual barriers to learning identified as early as possible



Staff focus on learners' strengths and the provision needed to support them further, rather than what a learner can't do or a diagnostic label



Staff are alert to changing needs and respond with appropriate adjustments and support, through the provision of timely evidence-informed interventions



Learners' views are valued and listened to so that they are involved in the meeting of their needs



Staff communicate effectively and work collaboratively with parents and carers, respecting their views and experiences.



Staff form strong partnerships with other settings, professionals and agencies in order to ensure effective transition and make best use of specialist knowledge and expertise



Living our values

Partnership

We will partner with parents, students, and teachers to establish positive behaviour support systems that foster a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment.

Equity

Through encouraging excellent attendance and inclusive practice we will model inclusive behaviours that respect and appreciate the diversity and individuality of everyone in our community.

Aspiration

We will foster positive behaviours that support the well-being and success of all students, aligned with our trust mission to have all our pupils flourish and live fulfilling lives.

Kaizen

We will pursue excellence in behaviour and inclusion by setting high standards for respect and inclusivity, employing positive behaviour support systems, and regularly reviewing and enhancing our practices.

All schools will benefit from:

- Safeguarding audit
- Attendance support
- SENDCo Support

Phase	Lead Indicator	Lag Indicator
Stabilise & Repair	Attendance is very low, persistent absence is rising, and behaviour management is inconsistent and not relational. Incidents of bullying and discrimination are frequent. Exclusions are higher than average for disadvantaged learners.	Learner behaviour is poor, exclusions are higher than average, and parental dissatisfaction is high.
Repair & Improve	Attendance remains below average, relational behaviour management is inconsistent, and exclusions are higher than average for disadvantaged learners.	Behaviour is inconsistent, exclusions are still high, and attendance is declining for certain groups.
Improve & Sustain	Learner attendance is in line with or above national averages. Through relational practice, behaviour is improving, with bullying and discrimination swiftly dealt with.	Persistent absence is rare, and learners demonstrate high engagement and respect for others.
Sustain & Shape	Attendance is well above national averages. Behaviour and attitudes across the school are exceptional. Bullying and harassment are almost non-existent.	Exclusions are rare, and behaviour supports a respectful, inclusive learning environment for all.

Welfare



The SAST Way

In order to flourish...

There are clear, embedded and sustainable processes, including assessment systems, to support teachers

There are clear, manageable and useful systems for collecting data to support the success of our pupils

There are leadership and performance management systems supporting great teaching

The curriculum and the school's wider work helps learners know how to keep physically and mentally healthy

Learners benefit from a coherent and comprehensive guidance programme

The curriculum prepares learners for life in modern Britain by equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute to society

Learners develop responsibility and an awareness of their own learning aspirations and the resilience to pursue them

Leaders, teachers and learners create an environment where bullying, child-on-child abuse or discrimination are not tolerated



Students are committed, have a positive attitude and know how to study effectively. They are resilient, resourceful, and take pride in their achievements.





Living our values

Partnership

We will work with professionals and organisations to promote the physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being of students and staff alike.

Equity

We will strive towards all students and staff have the access to resources they need to support their well-being, while addressing and removing barriers to inclusion and equality.

Aspiration

We will take a holistic approach to well-being, fostering the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of students and staff, integrated across our educational practices.

Kaizen

We will aim for excellence in well-being by supporting the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of all students and staff, continually reflecting on and improving our practices.

All schools will benefit from:

- A culture of respect, empathy and consideration in all aspects of our work
- Phase Meetings
- Conferences
- CPD to enable and empower
- Efficient working practices
- Common email and communication policy

Phase	Lead Indicator	Lag Indicator
Stabilise & Repair	The school's culture for welfare is not a priority. Staff are demoralized, and there is no support system in place.	Welfare concerns are widespread, with staff and learners reporting dissatisfaction and disengagement.
Repair & Improve	The culture for welfare is developing. Plans are in place to improve staff and learner mental health support.	The culture of welfare is improving but not yet embedded across the school. Staff development needs more focus.
Improve & Sustain	The welfare culture is well-established, with strong feedback loops involving staff, parents, and learners. Wellbeing is integrated into school improvement plans.	Staff and learner wellbeing is improving consistently, and staff feel supported and valued.
Sustain & Shape	The school has a highly effective and embedded wellbeing strategy. All stakeholders are engaged in supporting the school's mental health initiatives.	Wellbeing is fully integrated into the school's daily operations, with a proactive approach to mental health support.

Leadership



The SAST Way

In order to flourish...

All leaders share a clear vision for our schools and SAST



Our core values are embedded in our ways of working in our schools and central teams



All leaders model the behaviour they expect of others



Leaders work with the school community, to engage them in school improvement

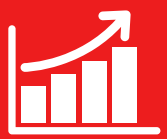


Schools demonstrate a culture of rigorous self-evaluation, with leaders focusing on key improvement priorities

The board of trustees proactively and effectively holds leaders to account



The focus of all leaders is ensuring improving outcomes for learners



Learner leadership features in the day-to-day life of the school



All staff are committed to the principles of the 'SAST Way', delivering a culture of continuous improvement



Living our values



We will work with leaders at all levels to build a culture of shared leadership, trust, and ongoing improvement, supporting excellence for everyone.



We will foster a culture of inclusivity that expects all facets of our leadership and governance to work towards ensuring equity for all.



We will build leadership capacity at all levels to promote our vision, values, and goals, empowering our community to drive continuous improvement.



We will aim for excellence in leadership by setting high standards for ethical and effective leadership across all levels, employing diverse approaches, and regularly evaluating and enhancing our practices.

All schools will benefit from:

- Senior leader support programme
- SEF/SDP review
- Flourishing visits
- Governance Training
- Termly SENCO network meetings
- SIAMS Inspection support (3 days)

Phase	Lead Indicator	Lag Indicator
Stabilise & Repair	Leaders have not addressed weaknesses, staff do not feel valued, and external support is overly relied on. Safeguarding may need review.	School improvement efforts are fragmented, and outcomes are poor. Staff morale is low, and the school is not progressing.
Repair & Improve	Leaders are developing clearer strategic direction, but performance management and staff awareness of strengths/weaknesses are still inconsistent.	Improvement is slow, and staff are not fully aligned with school improvement priorities.
Improve & Sustain	Leaders set clear direction, with robust safeguarding procedures and improved self-evaluation processes. External support is effectively used to support improvement.	Outcomes are improving, and leadership is driving consistent school-wide improvements. Safeguarding is effective, and staff feel valued.
Sustain & Shape	Leadership is reflective, setting high expectations for all, with a clear vision pervading practice and policy. External and internal reviews are used effectively.	The school's leadership team is highly effective, and school improvement efforts are sustained and embedded into daily practice.

CPD and Talent



The SAST Way

In order to flourish…



All staff have the opportunity to work with other schools / settings in the SSF partnership and across wider partnerships on improvement issues

Teachers are learning and working together in meaningful ways

The school is involved in supporting and educating parents to support their children's learning

All members of the school community seek learning opportunities and are inspired to learn to achieve better pupil outcomes

Professional learning is a feature of the school's / setting's day-to-day work

Professional development is targeted at specific groups or individuals, including teachers new to the profession

The need for professional development, including the value of coaching, is understood at senior leadership level

Professional development is focused equally on subject knowledge and pedagogy that improves the quality of teaching

All staff have the opportunity to work with other schools / settings in the SSF partnership and across wider partnerships on developing and sharing resources

Teachers are learning and working together in meaningful ways to develop learning resources



Living our values



We will work with learning providers and experts to deliver high-quality, relevant CPD opportunities that support the continuous growth of all staff.



We will strive to remove all barriers to high-quality CPD opportunities that support their professional growth and development. All staff will have equitable opportunity to grow.



We will offer diverse, high-quality CPD opportunities that cater to the specific needs and aspirations of all staff, supporting their continuous development.



We encourage strong personal ownership of CPD and talent development, offering all staff access to relevant, high-quality learning opportunities to foster ongoing growth.

All schools will benefit from:

- SAST CPD Twilight offer / menu
- SAST INSET day
- Sharing Best Practice events

Phase	Lead Indicator	Lag Indicator
Stabilise & Repair	Staff engagement in CPD is low, and leaders fail to identify and encourage talent. Collaboration with other schools is minimal.	Staff are not developing effectively, and there is little innovation or improvement in teaching practices.
Repair & Improve	The appraisal process has begun identifying staff strengths, and there is greater engagement in CPD. Partnerships with other schools are improving.	Talent development is occurring but not yet consistent across all staff. Opportunities for collaboration and growth are emerging but not embedded.
Improve & Sustain	CPD is well-aligned with individual staff needs, and opportunities for collaboration with other schools are increasing.	Staff are personally driving their own learning. Partnerships are contributing to overall school improvement.
Sustain & Shape	Staff engage fully in CPD and talent development, with consistent identification of strengths and tailored professional development. The school is collaborating with local, national, and international partners.	Staff are well-developed and proactive in securing their own CPD needs, driving innovation and excellence in teaching and learning.