

Our Strategy



2024/5 - 2029/30



Flourishing Children, Flourishing Schools,
Flourishing Communities.

Our Mission:

Flourishing Children. Flourishing Schools. Flourishing Communities.

The SAST mission captures our core purpose of creating an educational environment where students, colleagues, and the wider community can thrive together.

Flourishing Children

At the heart of the vision are the children. SAST is dedicated to helping every child flourish — academically, emotionally, and socially. This involves fostering a supportive, inclusive environment where students feel safe, encouraged, and inspired to grow. By focusing on individual strengths, talents, and wellbeing, we aim to develop confident, capable young people who are prepared for the challenges and opportunities of life.





Flourishing Schools

Flourishing schools are learning communities. SAST recognises that strong, dynamic schools are essential for effective learning. We want our schools to be vibrant educational environments where leaders, teachers, and support staff, work collaboratively to deliver excellent outcomes. Through innovative teaching practices, continuous professional development, and a focus on wellbeing, SAST schools aim to be beacons of educational excellence, offering a holistic experience that goes beyond the classroom.

Flourishing Communities

SAST believes that schools are at the heart of their communities. When schools thrive, so do the neighbourhoods and families around them. The “Flourishing Communities” aspect of our mission emphasises the role of schools as hubs of local life, fostering strong relationships with parents, local organisations, and businesses. By engaging with and contributing to the community, SAST hopes to create a cycle of positive impact, where education not only benefits individuals but strengthens the community.



Together, these three pillars encapsulate SAST’s commitment to creating an environment where everyone can flourish in harmony.

Our Values



Partnership



Equity



Aspiration



Kaizen

Partnership

Our family of schools believe that partnership is key to success. By working together with students, parents, staff, and the wider community, we foster an environment where all voices are valued. Through shared goals and mutual respect, we create opportunities for growth and achievement, ensuring that together, we can build a brighter future for everyone.

Equity

We are committed to providing every student with the resources, opportunities, and support they need to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances. For us, equity means more than fairness; it is about creating an inclusive environment where all individuals can flourish. We strive to remove barriers to learning, ensuring that every student is empowered to reach their full potential.

Aspiration

We encourage every student to dream big and aim high, nurturing their ambitions and helping them to realise their goals. Through high-quality education and a supportive environment, we promote a culture where every individual is encouraged to grow and flourish. We equip our students with the skills and confidence to explore new possibilities and make a meaningful impact in the world.

Kaizen

Inspired by the philosophy of continuous improvement; kaizen reflects our commitment to always striving for better. At SAST, we believe that growth is a constant journey. We encourage students, staff, and the wider community to embrace challenges, reflect on experiences, and seek out opportunities for learning and improvement. Through innovation and perseverance, we create a dynamic environment where progress is celebrated, and excellence is a daily pursuit.

Our Strengths

SAST has come a long way since it was formed in 2017. We have grown from our 7 founding schools, to now having 18 schools. These include thirteen primary schools, four secondary schools and an alternative provision.

We have large town primary schools with over 300 children, smaller village primary schools and also nursery provision. Our popular secondary schools cover both North Dorset and South Somerset, and include three Sixth Forms. There is a mix of formerly maintained, and Church of England schools in the Dioceses of Salisbury and Bath and Wells, which retain their Christian ethos.

We have developed our shared services, so we can now support our schools when it comes to finance, HR, IT, estates, health and safety, data, marketing, and communications. We have leaders who specialise in safeguarding, inclusion, church schools flourishing, and school improvement.

Our proven track record of improving schools, means that 17 out of our 18 schools are now rated as 'Good' overall by Ofsted, and with the remaining school expected to achieve an improved grading this year. This is an impressive feat for any multi-academy trust, and proves that we are stronger when we work together. Additionally all of our SIAMS inspections have had positive outcomes, which we are very proud of.

SAST has demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt and innovate, consistently evolving its educational practices to meet the changing needs of students and the community. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement (Kaizen), SAST not only ensures academic success but also prioritises wellbeing and personal development. The trust's commitment to relational practices and inclusivity has created an environment where both students and staff can thrive. All of these things have been referenced in Ofsted and SIAMS inspections.

We are outward facing, and engage locally, regionally and nationally with our partners receiving recognition of our work from local diocese and local authorities, partner trusts, and the Church of England nationally for our 'Flourishing' work.

Challenges / Areas for development

Like other MATs across the country, we face a number of significant challenges in the coming years as we work to maintain and improve educational outcomes across our schools. Key challenges include managing increasing financial pressures, particularly with rising operational costs and fluctuating government funding.

At the same time, we will need to adapt to evolving national educational policies and curricula while ensuring consistency in high standards across our diverse range of schools. Staffing recruitment and retention, especially in subject areas with national shortages, will also remain a critical issue.

SAST will need to address the growing demand for mental health and wellbeing support among students and staff, ensuring appropriate resources are in place to meet these needs.

Balancing these challenges with the Trust's ambition to offer an inclusive, high-quality education for all students will require strategic planning, strong leadership, and innovative approaches to resource management.

We must do more to improve progress of disadvantaged children across SAST, and we must ensure we meet the needs of children with SEND, and those who struggle with attendance and behaviour.



As a trust we recognise the importance of small rural schools, but it is becoming ever more challenging to ensure they are financially viable and that they deliver high quality education. We hope that by working together, across our local clusters we can provide the support and flexibility to ensure their success.

We must ensure we balance the need for high support with the desire for school ownership, so that schools feel both guided and empowered. Our shared services team needs to deliver financial benefits but also enhance educational outcomes for our students

We want to focus on creating a smooth transition between primary and secondary practices to create a seamless learning journey from EYFS to post-16.

And finally, we need to develop clear strategies to integrate evolving technologies, including AI, into the teaching and learning process while maintaining a human-centred approach.



Our priorities

1. We are stronger together



At the heart of SAST is the belief that we are stronger together. Our collective success is driven by a clear, mission-focused approach, where the flourishing of children, schools, and communities forms the foundation of our strategic plan. This "flourishing agenda" is central to all our schools, whether church or non-church, ensuring that every student thrives in an environment of support and opportunity.

We are committed to fostering a healthy and shared culture across SAST, grounded in our core values of partnership, equity, ambition, and continuous improvement (kaizen). Collaboration is key, and we prioritise school-to-school support, utilising the talent within our Trust whilst also bringing in external expertise where needed to enhance our collective growth and development. Strong teams, underpinned by Lencioni's principles of effective teamwork, are essential to our success, enabling us to address challenges with cohesion and innovation.

Our shared resources are designed to benefit all children across the Trust, ensuring equitable access to opportunities and support. We are dedicated to achieving strong outcomes for all students, regardless of their background, including gender, socio-economic status, or special educational needs. We recognise that reading and maths are fundamental equity issues, and we are committed to using attainment and progress as key tools to address and overcome disparities in achievement.

SAST is focused on delivering value for money, particularly through our shared services and school improvement initiatives, ensuring that every resource is maximised for the benefit of our students. This focus on efficiency and impact is will be reflected in our financial strength, with customer feedback on shared services highlighting our collaborative approach. Ultimately, the success of our Trust is measured by strong outcomes for all children, with evidence from staff surveys reinforcing the positive culture and effectiveness of our work.

What does success look like?

- **Financial strength:** Regular audits demonstrating efficiency and effective use of resources.
- **Positive shared services customer feedback:** Surveys from school leaders and staff to measure satisfaction and impact.
- **Outcomes for all students are strong:** Consistent improvement in attainment and progress across all schools.
- **Staff survey evidence:** High engagement and positive feedback on the collaborative culture within the trust.



Our priorities

2. Children feel safe and want to attend school



At SAST, we prioritise the safety and wellbeing of every child, ensuring that they feel secure and eager to attend school. We recognise that a child's welfare is just as important as their academic progress, and this belief is embedded throughout our schools. Inclusion is a cornerstone of our approach, with clear actions in place to meet the needs of disadvantaged children, ensuring that all students, regardless of background, are fully supported and have the opportunity to thrive.

Our safeguarding procedures are robust and effective, maintaining the highest standards to protect every child. Attendance is carefully monitored, and our effective processes ensure that all groups of children are supported in achieving high levels of attendance. SEND provision is well-established, with tailored support that ensures students with special educational needs and disabilities achieve outcomes in line with their peers.

We are committed to preparing children for the next stage in their education and beyond, equipping them with the skills and resilience they need for the future. To further enrich their learning experience, every child benefits from the SAST guarantee, which ensures they receive a broad range of enriching experiences at key milestones —11 by 11 and 16 by 16.

Every child within the Trust has an adult they can turn to, ensuring emotional and social support is always available. Our safeguarding is 100% effective, providing the highest level of protection for all. Attendance across all groups remains strong, and the outcomes for children with SEND align closely with those of their peers, demonstrating the success of our inclusive approach. The SAST guarantee ensures that every child has access to the support and experiences they need to succeed, both academically and personally.

How we measure success:

- **All children have an identified trusted adult:** Surveys and feedback loops to verify every child has someone they can confide in.
- **Safeguarding is 100% effective:** External and internal audits of safeguarding practices.
- **Strong attendance across all groups:** Attendance data showing high attendance and low persistent absenteeism.
- **Outcomes for SEND students align with peers:** Monitoring attainment and progress for SEND students to ensure parity.
- **SAST Guarantee:** Evidence of every child accessing key experiences by 11 and 16.



Our priorities

3. Teachers can teach and children can learn

At SAST, we are committed to creating an environment where teachers can teach, and children can learn without distraction. A key part of this is ensuring that good behaviour is consistently maintained both in the classroom and around the school, fostering a positive atmosphere where learning can thrive. We believe that children must be taught not just the content, but also how to succeed—equipping them with the skills and mindset needed to excel. Children are prepared to learn each day, supported by relational practices that demonstrate our care and commitment to their growth.

We hold the principle that every teacher is a great teacher, and we are dedicated to ensuring that all staff are empowered to develop their professional skills. Teachers take responsibility for their ongoing development through platforms like Steplab, which encourages self-directed growth and reflection. To support this, we provide structured, evidence-informed, and regular continuing professional development (CPD) that ensures teaching remains at the cutting edge. Additionally, we recognise the importance of supporting children who may be dysregulated, providing the necessary strategies and resources to help them succeed in the classroom.



Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all students, ensuring that it is inclusive and adaptable to a range of learning styles and abilities. This approach is informed by the latest research and best practices, with an increasing focus on the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance learning experiences. Success at SAST is measured by disruption-free classrooms where effective teaching and inclusive practice allow all children to thrive. By focusing on these core principles, we create an environment where both teachers and students are empowered to achieve their fullest potential.

How we measure success:

- **Disruption-free classrooms:** Behaviour and attendance data showing minimal incidents of disruption.
- **Effective teaching:** Regular lesson observations, learning walks, and pupil progress meetings.
- **Inclusive practice:** Evidence of diverse learners engaging positively and achieving well.



Our priorities

4. Power to lead – Leadership matters

At SAST, we believe that leadership is a powerful driver of success, and we are committed to developing strong leaders who can make a significant impact on outcomes for both students and staff. Leadership matters because it enables schools to thrive, and good leaders are integral to the success of any school. We recognise that effective leadership delivers good outcomes, and we are dedicated to ensuring that our leaders have the skills and vision needed to lead great schools.

Our Leadership Charter is grounded in our mission and values, providing a clear framework that guides and inspires leaders across the Trust. Leadership development is a priority for us, with opportunities for all leaders to grow in alignment with our core values. We provide a wide range of resources to support ongoing professional development. Additionally, leadership conferences and visits, expose SAST leaders to best practices and effective leadership models, helping them continuously improve and innovate.



We also understand the importance of equipping our leaders with the skills necessary for the digital age. Leaders have access to training in digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance their leadership capabilities, ensuring they are prepared for the future of education.

Success for us is reflected in the continued achievement of good schools and great outcomes for all groups of children. Leadership qualifications further measure and recognise the development of our leaders, ensuring that we are building a strong leadership pipeline that drives sustained success throughout the Trust.

How we measure success:

- **Schools maintain or achieve 'Good' or better** in Ofsted inspections and remain Judgment 1 in SIAMS inspections.
- **Great outcomes for all groups:** Monitoring attainment and progress data.
- **Leadership qualifications:** Increased uptake of NPQs and other accredited leadership training.



Our priorities

5. Talent Wins

At SAST, we recognise that talent is a key driver of success, and we are committed to identifying, developing, and retaining the best people to ensure the Trust continues to flourish. Clear and structured processes are in place to identify talent, focusing on motivation, qualifications, and evidence of impact. To ensure the long-term strength of the Trust, we prioritise succession planning for key roles, preparing future leaders who will continue to advance our mission and values.

Our approach to talent development is evidence-informed, with professional growth linked directly to the Golden Thread that runs through our strategic priorities. We strive to create a workplace where people feel valued and supported, fostering an environment that enables talent to thrive and stay. SAST is committed to being a great place to work, recognising that a positive and supportive culture is vital for the retention of our talented staff.



We actively look outward for inspiration, learning from the best practices in education and leadership to ensure we are always evolving. Ambition is at the heart of what we do, and we encourage our staff to push boundaries and aim high. To support this, we offer talent bursaries that allow for targeted development, further empowering staff to reach their full potential.

Success is reflected in the uptake of SAST opportunities by our staff, as well as in our clear CPD roadmap that provides structured pathways for professional growth and advancement across the Trust. Through these efforts, we ensure that talent remains a cornerstone of SAST's continued success and impact.

How we measure success:

- **CPD road map:** Clear professional development pathways linked to career progression.
- **Staff take up of SAST opportunities:** Tracking attendance and engagement in CPD and talent development initiatives.



Our priorities

6. Local schools serving their local communities



At SAST, we believe that local schools play a vital role in serving and strengthening their local communities. Our schools provide value through initiatives such as local Annual General Meetings (AGMs), where the community can engage directly with the Trust and shape the direction of their school. Academy Committees are at the heart of this approach, providing valuable governance through a bottom-up model that ensures decisions reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

We are committed to working in close partnership with parents, recognising their essential role in supporting their children's education and fostering a strong, collaborative relationship. Both staff and student voices are valued, with feedback actively sought, listened to, and acted upon. This inclusive approach ensures that everyone within the school community has a say in the ongoing development of the school environment.

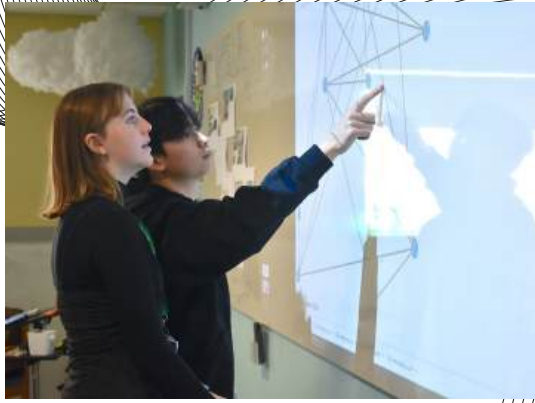
Our "place-based" approach focuses on working with local stakeholders to solve community-specific issues and build a shared vision for the future. By addressing the unique needs of each locality, we create schools that are truly embedded within their communities, serving both educational and social purposes.

Success for us is reflected in the outcomes achieved by our students, with 100% progressing into education, employment, or training. We also measure our success through surveys and Ofsted feedback, which capture the voices of staff and students, ensuring that we are continually improving and meeting the needs of the communities we serve.

How we measure success:

- 100% of students progressing into education, employment, or training.
- Surveys and Ofsted feedback reflect positive student, staff, and parent experiences.





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