



Our growth strategy – the next stages 2017 to 2022

To be agreed: autumn term 2017

Next review: autumn term 2018

Contents

Executive summary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	6
2. Our values	6
3. Our goals reflect our values	6
4. The next growth stage	7
5. Conditions and capacity for growth	8
6. Admissions	10
7. Ofsted inspections	11
8. SIAMS inspections.....	13
9. Our determination to grow.....	14
10. Capacity in governance	15
11. Operational and financial capacity.....	15
12. Educational improvement capacity	16
13. Teaching School Alliance (TVTSA) capacity.....	17
14. Proportionate interventions – tight and loose principles.....	18
15. Financial readiness	19
16. Income generation and maximising our estate	19
17. Geographical parameters	20
18. Academy recruitment / joining criteria.....	20
19. Conclusion	21
Appendix one: DALP geographic parameters	22
Appendix two: Growth trajectory	23
Appendix three: The DALP incubator hub model.....	26

Our growth strategy – the next stages 2017 to 2022

Executive summary

Introduction

1. Our further growth is rooted in our moral purpose – to make the biggest possible positive difference in the many, diverse communities we serve.
2. Further growth will secure further group improvement.
3. Our growth to date has led to increased capacity and expertise in all key areas of MAT activity: Governance, Education and operational/business.
4. Our capacity is mapped and assured by our Institute for Leadership, Research and Development (ILRD).
5. Our cross-phase, EY-19 character supports and requires further growth.
6. We have already invested in capacity to grow.
7. We have secured record student outcomes (Summer 2017) during the busiest growth period we have ever had. Disadvantaged students perform exceptionally well in DALP academies.
8. We have record student admissions and projected admissions into all DALP academies.

The next growth phase

1. Will continue to be tightly focused on our identified geographical 'patch'.
2. Will continue to align with our values of inclusion and diversity.
3. Will be characterised by increased collaborative working outside of our group (with other MAT s/LA s/TSA s).
4. Will lead to further group economies.
5. Will ensure a continued balance between 'capacity givers' and 'capacity takers'.
6. Will lead to the creation of DALP 'Incubator hub(s)' in other regions/locales.

Governance capacity

1. We have a tightly focused, highly skilled trust board (the Vice Chair is a recent NLG).
2. All established DALP academies have an Ofsted local governance judgment of Good or better.
3. Our Scheme of Delegation is compliant, clear and works.

4. We have found innovative local solutions to shortages in trustees/governors.
5. We continue to succeed in some difficult MAT territory with our local diocese.
6. We have increased our external scrutiny and challenge (beyond Ofsted and the RSC).
7. Our due diligence process is top drawer and nationally recognised.

Educational capacity

1. Our cluster model (EY-19) is powerful. It enables the MAT to successfully drive support and challenge with consistency, coherence and clear impact.
2. We have significant capacity across the group – at all leadership levels.
3. The group already has 3 NLE s and two applications in progress.
4. The group has a former, recent HMI and a serving Lead OI in its education team.
5. We have an established, highly successful TSA in our northern cluster. We have submitted an application for an aspirant TS in our central cluster.
6. Senior education leaders serve on a number of national forums (e.g. FASNA, NIPT, DfE (SAFG), East Midlands TSC)

Operational and financial capacity

1. We have a highly effective central team of professional and technical experts in Estates/FM/H&S, Marketing and Communications, Data and MIS, ICT, HR and Risk, Audit and Compliance.
2. We have a track record of unqualified financial audit for a number of years.
3. The COO is a trustee of the ISBL (NASBM) board.
4. Each DALP Finance Manager is cluster based – resulting in robust financial support and challenge in each cluster.
5. Our Group Financial Controller is centrally based and reports directly to the COO.
6. We have already achieved significant economies of scale across the group.
7. We have significant expertise in SEND and HN funding.

Conclusion

DALP is unashamedly ambitious.

We are ambitious for our students, their families, their communities and our colleagues.

We are system leaders – driven by a moral imperative to make the biggest possible difference in a diverse range of contexts.

Our next stage of growth will enable us to keep doing this with those already in our group; and to offer the benefits of the DALP family to more communities.

Not to grow further is not an option.

Debbie Clinton

Acting CEO

1. Introduction

The Diverse Academies Learning Partnership (DALP) is a large group of academies comprising two trusts - the Diverse Academies Trust (DAT) and the National Church of England Academy Trust (NCEAT). DAT is a multi- academy trust (MAT) and NCEAT is a single academy trust. DALP is a diverse partnership operating in the primary, secondary and special state education phases.

From our informal two secondary school partnership beginnings in 2007, we have grown to our current 14 academies, hard MAT position. We have done this through a tremendously successful track record – endorsed by Ofsted and the DfE (through the RSC).

This paper presents the case for further, planned growth from autumn 2017.

2. Our values

Our values endorse our commitment to grow in a planned and coherent way. Deeply embedded, are the principles of diversity and supporting and challenging others through robust, deep partnership and collaboration. Our values are as follows:

- Putting students first
- High aspirations, high expectations and high standards
- A culture of scholastic excellence and ambition
- Collaboration through challenging partnership
- Encouraging diversity and valuing individuality
- Supporting each other and others beyond DALP to improve
- Valuing each other's differences and contributions

3. Our goals reflect our values

1. Our academies to excel in examination outcomes for all their learners
2. All academies enrolled within DALP prior to September 2016 to be capable of good or outstanding judgements from Ofsted (*we have met this goal*)
3. All academies to be oversubscribed or on a significant upward admissions trend
4. All academies to be working closely together, jointly creating a sustainable model of high quality education for the students who attend them. This will be the result of: (i) creating and accessing the very best corporate services, (ii) creating and sharing ideas that work,

- (iii) creating and adopting common policy and practice, (iv) utilising teachers, leaders and support staff for the benefit of all academies
5. DALP to be self- sustaining and outward looking using its capacity to support those who are underprivileged, in difficulty, or in any other way in need
 6. An inclusive culture becoming the norm in each academy, with exclusions rare and every student leaving their academy with a plan for the next stage of their career
 7. Our Professional Development Programme to be producing high quality committed professionals and future leaders for DALP academies as well as those beyond
 8. DALP academies to be recognised nationally as organisations of high quality, producing outstanding results within a culture of innovation and achievement
 9. All academies to continually develop their own unique characteristics and ethos re-enforcing their individual identities within their respective communities. In our faith academies, their unique distinctiveness will underpin how they grow, develop and enrich the experiences of all students across DALP
 10. DALP to constantly build upon the diversity of its academies in order to broaden the experience of its students and communities - challenging discrimination and prejudice in all its forms

4. The next growth stage

We are committed to further growth to achieve the following objectives:

1. Sustained high performance and outcomes for existing academies
2. Building capacity and expertise to enable all academies (existing, new converter, and sponsor) to progress to become outstanding as soon as possible
3. Sponsoring less than good schools/academies to become academies within DALP in proportion to our capacity to deliver improvement
4. Attracting existing good/outstanding academies into DALP in sufficient quantities
5. Facilitating the conversion of good/outstanding maintained schools to become academies within DALP
6. Maintaining an appropriate structure to facilitate an increase in the number of faith academies in DALP
7. Building a MAT of between 20-30 academies (12 secondary, up to 18 primary/special) over the next 3 to 5 years. (*The number of primaries/specials to be flexible depending upon circumstances*)
8. Sustaining a manageable and coherent geographical 'catchment' area of operation

9. Controlled growth according to a coherent plan and pace approved by the RSC
10. The creation of DALP satellite hubs in other regions/locales – see appendix three

5. Conditions and capacity for growth

Our track record to date (with our established 9 academies as at September 2017) is thus:

Outcomes

We have a strong and improving track record.

We have NOT included our five new academies for 2017-2018 in this list for obvious reasons.

EYFS-KS2 – Two primary academies

Tuxford Primary Academy (TPA) has improved rapidly.

When the current Principal and DALP took over the then school, it was in a dire state. Attainment and progress in all measures (EYFS – KS2) was inadequate and well below national floor expectations. In less than three years, all measures have increased rapidly. For example:

KS1 RWM – In 2017, we have seen huge increases in the proportion of students at or above expected progress. Significantly, the outcomes were very close to predictions.

KS2 RWM and GPS – In 2017, almost all measures have increased significantly again on 2014.

Progress in the large majority of measures is outstanding.

Admissions into TPA continue to grow rapidly. As a result, our new building is already full.

The academy has a huge number of accolades and awards – further evidence of its national recognition for rapid improvement.

Wainwright Primary Academy (WPA)

Our work in WPA only began in September 2016; but already we have seen significant improvements (as indicated by Ofsted in their Section 8 inspection of the academy in Autumn 2016); and by the DfE in their EIA visit of September 2017).

KS4 and KS5 – Seven secondary academies

Attainment and progress in our secondary academies continues to improve.

2017 KS4 outcomes data is not comparable with previous years as the grading system in both maths and English has changed from letter grades to numbers. Grade 4 is considered a good pass and grade 5 a strong pass. In addition progress 8 (P8) is not comparable to 2016 and is highly volatile....even Ofsted have stated that it will not be looking at P8 during 2017-2018 inspections.

Levels of progress in maths and English can no longer be calculated due to the grade changes in these subjects.

KS4:

The % 5 A*-C (where C=4 in En/Ma) has improved in 4 of our academies. There has been a very slight drop in 2 of the academies and 1 academy (Queen Elizabeth's Academy – joined September 2017 as a re-brokered academy) remains very low.

The % of students achieving grades 9-4 in English is strong and above the National average in 4 of the 7 academies. In 2 of the remaining 3, the value has improved compared to 2016 outcomes. In 1 academy the outcomes remain low, due in no insignificant part to the legacy of poor teaching from a previous academy sponsor.

The % of students achieving grades 9-4 in maths has remained strong or improved in 4 of the academies – 1 of these has improved significantly. Two of the academies have shown a slight drop against target, however a significant contributory factor was the impact of tier of exam entry. This was due to a complete lack of guidance regarding grade boundaries provided (or not provided) by the exam boards. One academy remains significantly below the national average.

KS5:

AS level exam entries are now not automatically made. This is a result of specification and assessment model changes and so AS level data cannot be compared with previous years.

L3 APS per entry remains above or well above the DFE minimum expectation in 6 of the 7 academies.

L3 Academic VA (value added) has improved or remained strong in 4 of the 7 academies. One further academy has remained the same when compared to 2016 and 2 have declined. One of them was new to the MAT in 2016 and only related to a very small number of students.

L3 Vocational VA has improved in 4 of the 6 academies who entered students for these qualifications. One further academy has outcomes that have declined but remain above national average and 1 academy has declined since 2016. Overall 5 of the 6 academies has produced VA outcomes above the national average – some well above.

The number of viable applications to every post 16 within the MAT has increased significantly since 2016.

6. Admissions

Our academies are growing and growing fast.

We have NOT included our five new academies for 2017-2018 in this list for obvious reasons.

Primary

Tuxford Primary Academy (joined February 2013)

During its time in DALP, the pupil roll (including nursery) has grown from 146 to 339.

Wainwright Primary Academy (joined September 2016)

During its time in DALP, the pupil roll (including nursery) has grown from 375 to 386.

Secondary 11-16

Tuxford Academy (joined August 2011)

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 1102 to 1258.

National C of E Academy (joined August 2011, although collaboration began in 2007)

During this time the student roll has grown from approximately 879 to 1091.

Holgate Academy (joined September 2013)

During its time in DALP, the student roll has declined from 901 to 868; but is now on a firm upward trajectory (the result of rapid improvements since September 2013)

East Leake Academy (joined November 2012)

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 780 to 860.

Retford Oaks Academy (joined April 2012)

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 652 to 815.

Queen Elizabeth's Academy (joined September 2016)

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 443 to 542.

Walton Girls' High School (joined June 2016)

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 779 to 890.

Sixth Form

Tuxford Academy

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 138 to 293.

National C of E Academy

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 45 to 156.

Holgate Academy

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 92 to 100.

East Leake Academy

During its time in DALP, the student roll has declined from 155 to 117; but is again on an upward curve after amending admissions requirements to make them more challenging.

Retford Oaks Academy

During its time in DALP, the student roll has declined from 107 to 53; but, again, indications for September 2018 admissions are very positive (following the Ofsted S5 inspection Good judgment earlier in 2017).

Queen Elizabeth's Academy

During its time in DALP, the student roll has declined from 64 to 27. This will recover as we secure the 11-16 part of the academy and as post-16 students begin to enter the shared sixth form facility with Holgate and National CoE academies.

Walton Girls' High School

During its time in DALP, the student roll has grown from 185 to 191.

7. Ofsted inspections

This is a significant statement viz. our capacity.

We HAVE included our five new academies w.e.f. September/October 2017 for obvious reasons viz. balancing 'need' versus 'capacity'.

Primary

Tuxford Primary Academy has improved from an Ofsted category to Good (October 2014 – AI led). We now judge much of its work to be outstanding. The academy is scheduled for a short inspection during 2017-2018. We predict at least some Outstanding aspects and possibly, an overall Outstanding judgement.

Wainwright Primary Academy remains an academy requiring improvement. However, a Section 8 HMI led monitoring inspection in November 2016 judged effective action to be taken and praised the rapid improvement in the academy since joining DALP. Similar praise was given in an EIA visit by the DfE in September 2017.

Bracken Lane Primary Academy was judged to be 'Good' in all areas (January 2013). Since this time the most recent head teacher continued to have considerable impact across the academy and is now advising all DALP primary academies in EYFS improvements.

Samuel Barlow Primary Academy was judged to be 'Requiring Improvement' in its most recent full Ofsted S5 Inspection. The most recent HMI monitoring visit (December 2016) judged the school to be taking effective action to become a good school. The report particularly highlighted strong and determined leadership taking swift action and the development of a culture of high expectations. This leadership was provided from Thrumpton Primary Academy's Headteacher and governors.

Thrumpton Primary Academy was judged to be 'Good' in all areas (May 2014) and this was a significant improvement since its previous 'Requires Improvement' judgement. The report commented on the strength of the head teacher's work and her being able to deliver swift impact. This head teacher is now our Executive Principal with the responsibility for primary quality and improvement.

Special

Redgate Primary Academy was judged to be requiring 'special measures' in its last full S5 Ofsted inspection. However in its last HMI monitoring visit (March 2016) the school was found to be making positive progress to address areas of concern. The current head teacher was specifically mentioned as making a positive impact and the changes were benefitting children.

Yeoman Park Academy was judged to be 'outstanding' in all areas (March 2013). Expertise from Yeoman Park leaders and teachers is being used to support Redgate Primary Academy.

Secondary

Tuxford Academy is Outstanding (May 2012 – HMI led) and remains exempt from routine inspection. An Ofsted survey inspection (October 2013 – HMI led) of alternative provision use by

the academy judged them to be outstanding also in this regard. The academy has successfully passed all annual Ofsted desk risk assessments to date. We judge the academy to be securely outstanding.

National C of E Academy is Good with outstanding leadership and management (October 2014 – AI led). The academy was previously only just rated as ‘Good’ with many areas for development. We now judge much of its work to be outstanding. The academy is scheduled for a short inspection during 2017-2018. We predict at least some Outstanding aspects and possibly, an overall Outstanding judgement.

Holgate Academy is Good (July 2015 – AI led). The academy was previously in an Ofsted category. It remains securely Good.

East Leake Academy is Good (March 2016 – HMI led). It remains securely Good.

Retford Oaks Academy is Good (July 2017). This is the first ever Good Ofsted inspection result for the academy in its history.

Queen Elizabeth’s Academy does not currently have an Ofsted rating as it received a new URN in early 2017, however the most recent Section 8 HMI led monitoring visit in December 2016 judged effective action to be taken and praised the rapid improvement in the academy since joining DALP.

Walton Girls High School is Good (November 2015). It remains securely Good. This academy is making substantial progress and we predict some Outstanding aspects and possible an overall Outstanding judgement in its next inspection.

In all inspections, without exception, the skills, capacity and impact of our MAT have been praised and judged as significant by the lead inspector. We have always accurately forecast the outcomes of all Ofsted inspections.

8. SIAMS inspections

National CofE Academy had a very successful SIAMS Inspection in September 2015. The academy was judged as Outstanding in all aspects of the SIAMS framework other than for the impact of collective worship (which was deemed Good). This was the first time the academy was judged to be Outstanding.

Queen Elizabeth’s Academy was judged as Satisfactory in its most recent SIAMS Inspection (October 2015). It has not had a SIAMS Inspection during its time with DALP.

9. Our determination to grow

We have, quite deliberately, grown with care and reasoned pace to date.

Our expansion, never at the expense of performance and quality, has been hard won and is guarded preciously. We note that the most recent Ofsted focused inspections of MATs have been mixed. However, common messages in the most effective MATs are:

1. Careful, planned growth at an appropriate pace
2. Ensure your MAT has a regional emphasis (we have never reneged on our requirement that DALP academies must not be more than one hour's drive from our headquarters in Newark)
3. There is probably an optimum size for MATs (around 20 schools in any one MAT) – although we appreciate that MATs such as the Harris federation do belie this with their clear successes with 40+ academies. However, the key with them and with other effective larger MATs is their structural capacity, their tight regional focus, and their readiness to expand
4. That the MAT vision and raisons d'être are clear and shared by all in the MAT
5. That corporate services are fit for purpose and highly effective
6. That staff PM/Appraisal is robust across the MAT
7. That all academies are known very well indeed by the MAT
8. That any external support and challenge used is highly effective and value for money
9. That Schemes of Delegation are clear and fit for purpose – maximizing accountability and minimizing risk
10. That proven best practice is routinely shared across the MAT

We are confident that we perform strongly against 1-10 and many other indicators.

We plan to grow to our target of approximately 20 -30 academies (up to 12 secondary and the remainder primaries/specials, although this will be flexible) over the next 3-5 years.

Our capacity to facilitate improvement across our MAT is provided by our Business and Education Directorates, the quality and expertise of those working within our academies and the wealth of resource available through our rapidly developing Teaching School Alliance. We will also secure external resource where and if appropriate. We are growing our substantive corporate capacity under strict controls to ensure we maintain value for money. We increase capacity in proportion to need. We do not operate with excess capacity although we do ensure that capacity is in place before embarking on a new project.

10. Capacity in governance

Our **trust board** is highly effective. It has overseen its own recent reform, and has significantly strengthened its abilities to support and challenge the executive. As a result, it has been praised in recent Ofsted inspections. Securing high quality external members and trustees, along with challenge from an external strategic partner, provides the board and the executive with clear evidence of the trust's impact on academy performance. The Vice Chair of trustees is also a newly qualified NLG.

Local governance is the strongest it has been. Recent reforms have cut bureaucracy, streamlined meetings and enabled a sharp focus on local academy performance. Without exception, our local governors have been judged to be at least 'Good' in all Ofsted inspections in established DALP academies.

Local governance is not yet securely Good in Queen Elizabeth's Academy (re-brokered September 2016); Wainwright Primary Academy (re-brokered September 2016); Samuel Barlow Primary Academy (sponsored September 2017); and Redgate Primary Academy (sponsored October 2017).

11. Operational and financial capacity

We have significant resource at the centre of DALP. Through a clear, balanced corporate vision of 'centrally driven, locally delivered' challenge and support, we continue to secure efficiencies across the MAT. In short, the larger we get, the easier this is to achieve.

Operational

The business operation is led by the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The COO has led a revolution in the quality of professional and technical support for our MAT. The emphasis of this approach is 'corporate leadership with local delivery'. In practice this means a highly effective team of professional and technical experts lead and manage corporate functions, locally delivered through technical support and challenge for all of our academies. These teams drive all aspects of estate and facilities management, health and safety, risk assessment, HR, audit, compliance, data management, ICT management and marketing and communications.

The COO sits on the NASBM board of trustees.

Financial

Financial capacity is led by the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) – an experienced chartered accountant with over 20 years of senior experience in large commercial and educational organisations.

The CFO, in a very short time with DALP, has transformed the quality of financial management and information – at all levels of the organisation. A strong team of cluster based Finance Managers, combined with a centrally based Group Finance Controller, now provide strength, efficiency and depth across our group. As a result, we exercise strong financial control – in our academies and at the centre - with a focus on targeting maximum resources into teaching and learning.

The **Head of Governors' Services** manager and **Company Secretary** leads a highly effective, tightly trained team of academy based clerks.

The **Executive PA** team provides all PA services for the ACEO and all senior executives and Principals across the trust. PA services are top drawer in all areas.

12. Educational improvement capacity

We have significant resource at the centre of DALP and across our current family of academies. Through a combination of central resource, internal DALP secondments and top-drawer external providers, we can expand quickly. Our Academy Transformation Teams (ATT) contribute to the educational due diligence exercise and then lead the necessary improvements.

We are absolutely confident in welcoming schools/academies that are in an Ofsted category and those that are not in such need but wish to formally join our family.

The **CEO** is currently on secondment as an Interim CEO in another large MAT. The request for this deployment came from the RSC's office, and is testament to the clear reputation of the CEO, and of the capacity of DALP, with the DfE. The CEO is an NLE.

The **Acting CEO (ACEO)** is a recent HMI and NLE (August 2015) and, before that, led Nunthorpe Academy in Middlesbrough – an outstanding secondary converter academy (in all aspects), TSA, DfE sponsor and umbrella trust lead school. She also has experience as the chair of an IEB, working in DfE funding teams, is a member of the FASNA national executive board, Gov net Education Advisory Board and Chair of the East Midlands CEO Forum.

The **Executive Principals** team (x5) leads clusters of academies along with significant individual group wide portfolio responsibilities. One of the EP team is the Director of the DALP Institute of

Leadership, Research and Development (ILRD). Two of the EP team are NLE s; one of them is a LLE. One of them sits on the NIPT national NQT assessment panel. All of them have significant track records of sustained, lasting school improvement.

The **Principal** for East Leake Academy is an experienced serving Ofsted Inspector.

Considerable capacity exists across most of the academy senior and middle leadership teams. We have an established culture of secondments and deployments across the academies – creating capacity as needed. Many of our leaders are SLEs and MLEs.

Executive Assistant Principals (EAPs) – Maths, English, PDBW, Inclusion, Post 16 and EYFS.

We have considerable capacity in this team and it must be noted that the staffing capacity for academy improvements has been centralised so no single academy carries ‘extra’ capacity.

Our EAPs have an impressive track record of improvement within DALP and in their senior leader roles before DALP. They are all subject or phase experts with huge credibility and confidence. All are deployed to our academies on a proportionate basis each year. They have a key role in our Academy Transformation Teams (ATTs)– from due diligence and onwards.

Lead Practitioners (LPs)- PDBW, SEND, Curriculum Enrichment, Post 16 Maths

In addition to the EAP team, the Education Directorate has access to and utilises group Lead Practitioners. These are established colleagues with a track record of school improvement who are based in a single DALP academy but have one or two days of their time seconded to facilitate school improvements. They have a hugely positive impact in all the academies with which they work. This constitutes a significant part of their CPD. The LP experience is an established route into group EAP roles for our most effective colleagues.

13. Teaching School Alliance (TVTSA) capacity

Tuxford Academy is the lead school for the Trent Valley Teaching School Alliance (TVTSA). Prior to this Tuxford Academy (as Tuxford School) had a successful record of partnership and school to school support and had previously acquired Training School Status. Teaching School re designation was awarded in 2014.

TVTSA (as part of DALP) has an excellent record of successful bids/brokerage for school to school support and evidence of impact in both primary and secondary schools and academies. TVTSA became a designated OLEVI centre in February 2017.

Support and intervention is provided by a team of NLEs, LLEs, SLEs, Lead Practitioners and subject coordinators for secondary and primary phases. These accomplished professionals lead network groups and provide bespoke support and intervention for individual schools and teams of leaders. TVTSA has a strong track record of successful CPD including OTP, ITP, NQTP, POC, OTAP. They deliver NPQSL as a hub for a local licence holder. It also delivers leadership development and a Primary CPD package.

TVTSA has strong links with local HEIs and has an experienced and successful ITT team supporting School Direct and PGCE trainees in both phases and across a range of subjects. TVTSA's Research and Development programmes provide professional learning experiences for colleagues resulting in innovation and improvement in teaching and learning.

TVTSA is a member of the Nottinghamshire and East Midlands Teaching Schools Alliance Network.

During 2017-2018, the DALP Institute of Leadership, Research and Development (ILRD) will be formed – into which our TSA will collapse.

The ILRD will have a group wide focus on the development needs and ambitions of all DALP colleagues, trustees and governors.

14. Proportionate interventions – tight and loose principles

This is a key DALP philosophy.

We operate within an ethos of 'earned autonomy' and our academies are at varying stages in that sliding scale. An academy's position on that scale is reviewed annually through a process of risk assessment. Every Autumn, following examination outcomes evaluation by the Executive Principal (Deputy CEO) (along with other key measures) our '**Annual Academy Risk Assessment**' is published for each academy.

Tight and loose principles and practice (TLPPs) are integral to DALP. These are used, across all academies, to ensure an acceptable baseline of service to children, young people, parents and colleagues. Above this baseline, academies are encouraged to celebrate and build on their diversity and difference – thus more loose practice is encouraged and nurtured.

Finally, our slick, simple, highly effective academy support, challenge and monitoring systems (CSI across the group) are second to none. Tight use of these systems ensures that we know our academies very well and intervention, when needed, is rapid and effective.

15. Financial readiness

DALP has considerable experience of carrying out Due Diligence which enables trustees to support the transfer of new schools into DALP.

The need for educational improvement usually goes hand in hand with financial and business challenges. We have clear processes that enable us to review and implement change in the use and prioritisation of teaching and support staff. These enable resources to be found to bring about improvement and meet curriculum priorities.

Our trustees have confidence in the ability of the organisation to take on challenging schools and we have experience of working alongside the ESFA to put Financial Recovery Plans in place. Alongside this, our blend of local and central services allows most schools to reduce teaching and non-teaching costs. We have a small team of staff who, in addition to their academy and corporate roles, support new schools to embed best practice policies and procedures. This also enables any good practice from new academies to be shared across the group.

Trustees have invested in the capacity of the Trust to enable DALP to respond to supporting further schools and would welcome new partners.

16. Income generation and maximising our estate

We are proud of our entrepreneurial approach to the education business.

We are currently:

1. Securing s106 and CIF income through close working relationships with neighbouring local authorities and district councils
2. Radically adjusting our PFI funded academies estates to secure additional commercial income
3. Operating a robust Curriculum Led Financial Planning (CLFP) model across the group
4. Securing on going teachers' pay savings through structural review of UPS and TLR payments
5. Working closely with neighbouring local authorities to secure income for additional special and high needs capacity – some of it in our mainstream academies. We will create additional resource bases during 2017-2018
6. Submitting a MDIF bid during 2017-2018. We secured additional income during 2016-2017 via the then RAGF DfE route

17. Geographical parameters

Appendix one details the agreed geographical area from which DALP normally recruits new member academies. The general principle is that no academy is more than (and in many cases much less than) a 50-60 minute drive from DALP's centrally located head office – near Newark.

This area is bounded to the west by the M1, to the North by Doncaster, to the South by Grantham and to the East by a line drawn from Gainsborough to Grantham parallel to the A1. The geographical area is very well served by main transport arteries (M1, A46, A1 and the main East Coast rail line) as well as an efficient network of north-south and east-west A roads.

This geographical area is small enough to enable effective partnership and collaboration across all the academies. It has also enabled the creation of north, central, south, east and south west clusters – these Executive Principal led groups of academies share services, staff and leadership.

Appendix one also details:

- (a) the location of current DALP academies (at September 2017)
- (b) those who are imminently to join us
- (c) those with whom we are talking and have expressed an interest in DALP

18. Academy recruitment / joining criteria

1. Potential converter/sponsor schools/academies should be situated within or very close to DALP's defined geographical boundary (Appendix One)
2. Sponsored academies will be accepted on the recommendation/approval of the RSC and after due diligence by a DALP Academy Transformation Team which will make its recommendation to the Board
3. No more than 1 secondary and 2 primaries will normally be sponsored in any single academic year. More can be considered by exception
4. In the case of converter primaries/single trust primary academies, priority consideration will be given to those from which the majority of children attend an existing DALP secondary academy
5. All academies will need to have the formal approval of the RSC before they can join DALP
6. The DALP Board will approve all new academies and the Trust Boards will be required to ratify their approval

7. All schools/academies will need to prove that they are financially viable or that the leadership/structural model adopted on entry is financially viable
8. All converter academies/existing single trust academies (i.e. those deemed good or better by Ofsted) will be required to demonstrate what and how they will be able to contribute to the growth and development of DALP
9. DALP will need to be satisfied that all academies will fully engage with, and be fully committed to its vision, values, goals and tight principles and practice

19. Conclusion

DALP is now not only in a position to grow further. It needs more growth in order to benefit from further economies of scale and additional resource.

Fundamental to our growth strategy is working very closely with the RSC and his colleagues. This has worked very successfully for us to date.

At the heart of our operation is the principle of diversity and we recognise the importance of all our academies retaining their individual identities and unique characteristics within their local communities. We also recognise that we have a moral imperative to contribute to improving the quality of education for children beyond our existing academies by supporting others in need. By doing this we will then be able to improve the life chances of all young people across our MAT and many beyond.

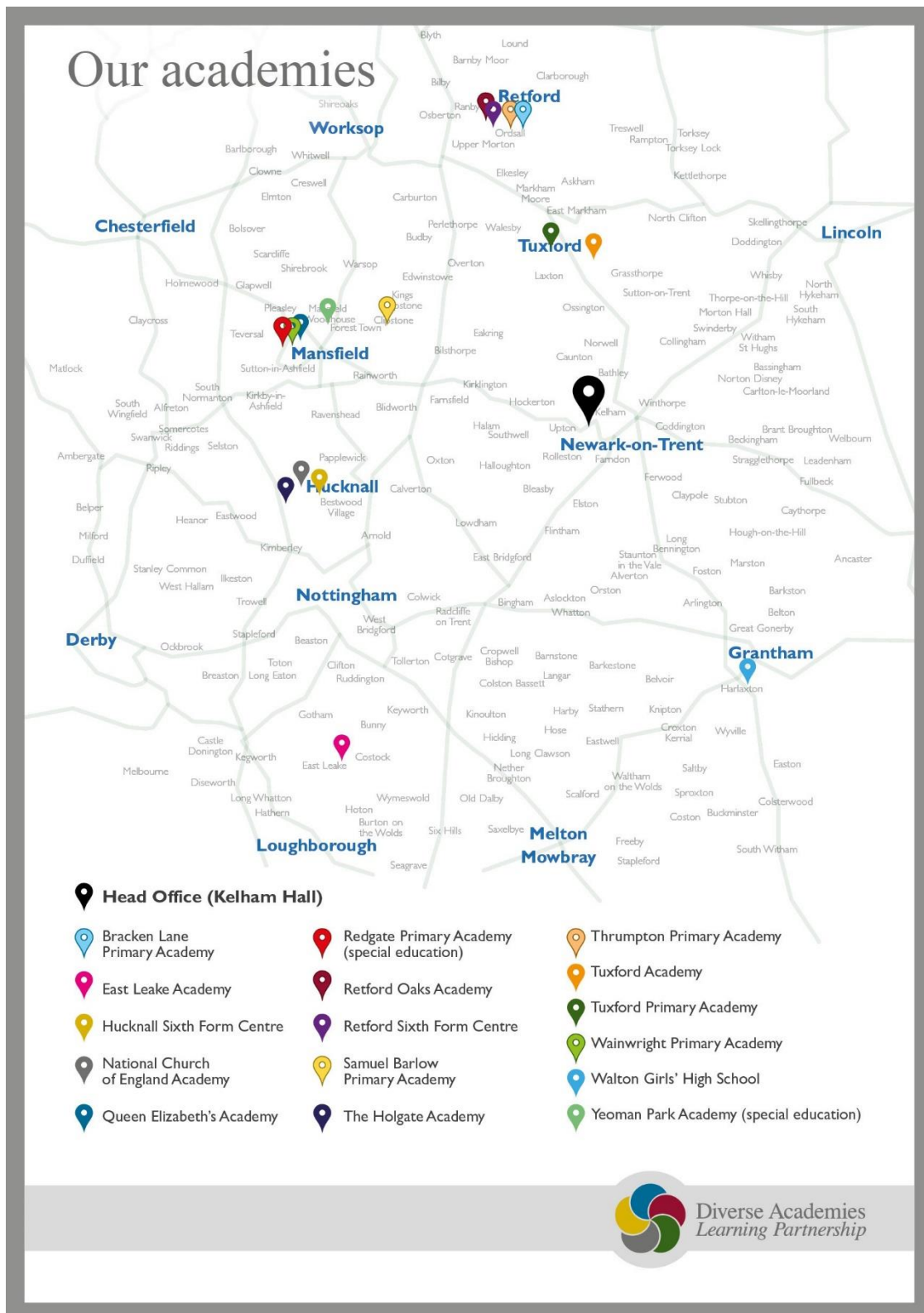
As I have consistently stated, growing, in the manner described above, remains an imperative for our MAT and its long term future.

Debbie Clinton

Acting Chief Executive Officer

October 2017

Appendix one: DALP geographic parameters



Appendix two: Growth trajectory

Introduction

This appendix is heavily caveated.

1. The growth trajectory we describe is subject to many extraneous circumstances – some of which we have no control over (e.g. a general election in 2018-2019).
2. Any growth is always subject to RSC agreement and, thus, to our alignment with RSC regional MAT growth objectives.
3. All growth is not at the same pace – some growth years will be busier than others.
4. The cluster context is vital but very difficult indeed to manage and predict. Clearly, this factor is hugely affected by local circumstance along with the RSC's perspective. For these reasons, I have only postulated possible cluster growth for the next 3 years.
5. Finally, there is an obvious limit to the number of schools and academies which are 'Ofsted Good or better' at any one time. At the time of writing, our RSC region is challenged by the numbers of schools and academies which are NOT 'Good or better' – there are too many of them! Hence the need for successful MAT s such as ours to grow.

Rationale

This trajectory is rooted in achieving and maintaining the necessary balance in our capacity. We know that, at any one time, our growth is successfully achieved through balancing schools/academies in 'need'; and those which bring 'added value'.

Possible DALP growth trajectory

2017-2022

2017-2018

Current academies

<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>AP (free)</i>	<i>Free</i>
5	7	2	1 in progress	0
3x Good or better 2x RI or worse	6x Good or better 1x RI or worse	1x OS 1x RI or worse	n/a	n/a

Cluster context

<i>Cluster</i>	<i>Total schools</i>
Central	6
North East	5

South East	1
South West	1

TOTAL – 14

Proposed expansion and type

<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>AP (free)</i>	<i>Free</i>
1x Good or better	1x Good or better	0	0	2 (Primary – 2x 2fe) prep only
1x RI or worse				
<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>
7	8	2	1	2

Cluster context

<i>Cluster</i>	<i>Total schools</i>
Central	7 + 3
North East	5
South East	1 + 2
South West	1 + 1

TOTAL – 20

2018-2019

Proposed expansion and type

<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>AP (free)</i>	<i>Free</i>
1x Good or better	1x Good or better	1x Good or better		2 (Primary – 2x 2fe) prep only
1x RI or worse	1x RI or worse	1x RI or worse		
<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>
9	10	4	1	2

Cluster context

<i>Cluster</i>	<i>Total schools</i>
Central	7 + 3
North East	5 + 1
South East	1 + 1 + 1
South West	1 + 1 + 1

TOTAL – 26

2019-2020

Proposed expansion and type

<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>AP (free)</i>	<i>Free</i>
1x Good or better				2 (Primary – 2x 2fe) open
1x RI or worse	1x RI or worse			
<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>
11	11	4	1	2

TOTAL - 30

2020-2021

Proposed expansion and type

<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>AP (free)</i>	<i>Free</i>
1x Good or better	1x RI or worse			2 (Primary – 2x 2fe) open
<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>
12	12	4	1	2

TOTAL - 31

2021-2022

Proposed expansion and type

<i>Primary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>AP (free)</i>	<i>Free</i>
				2 (Primary – 2x 2fe) open
<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>	<i>Running total</i>

TOTAL –

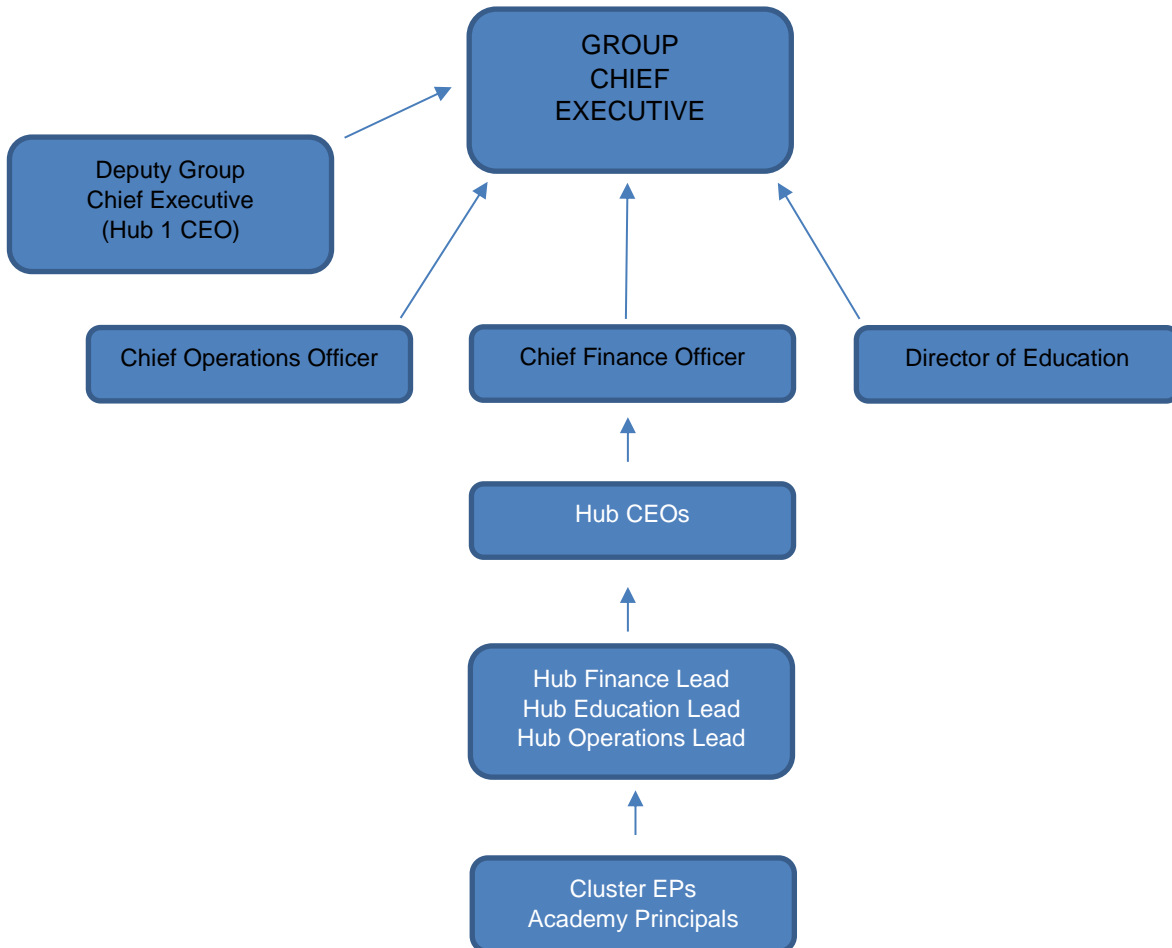
Debbie Clinton

Acting CEO

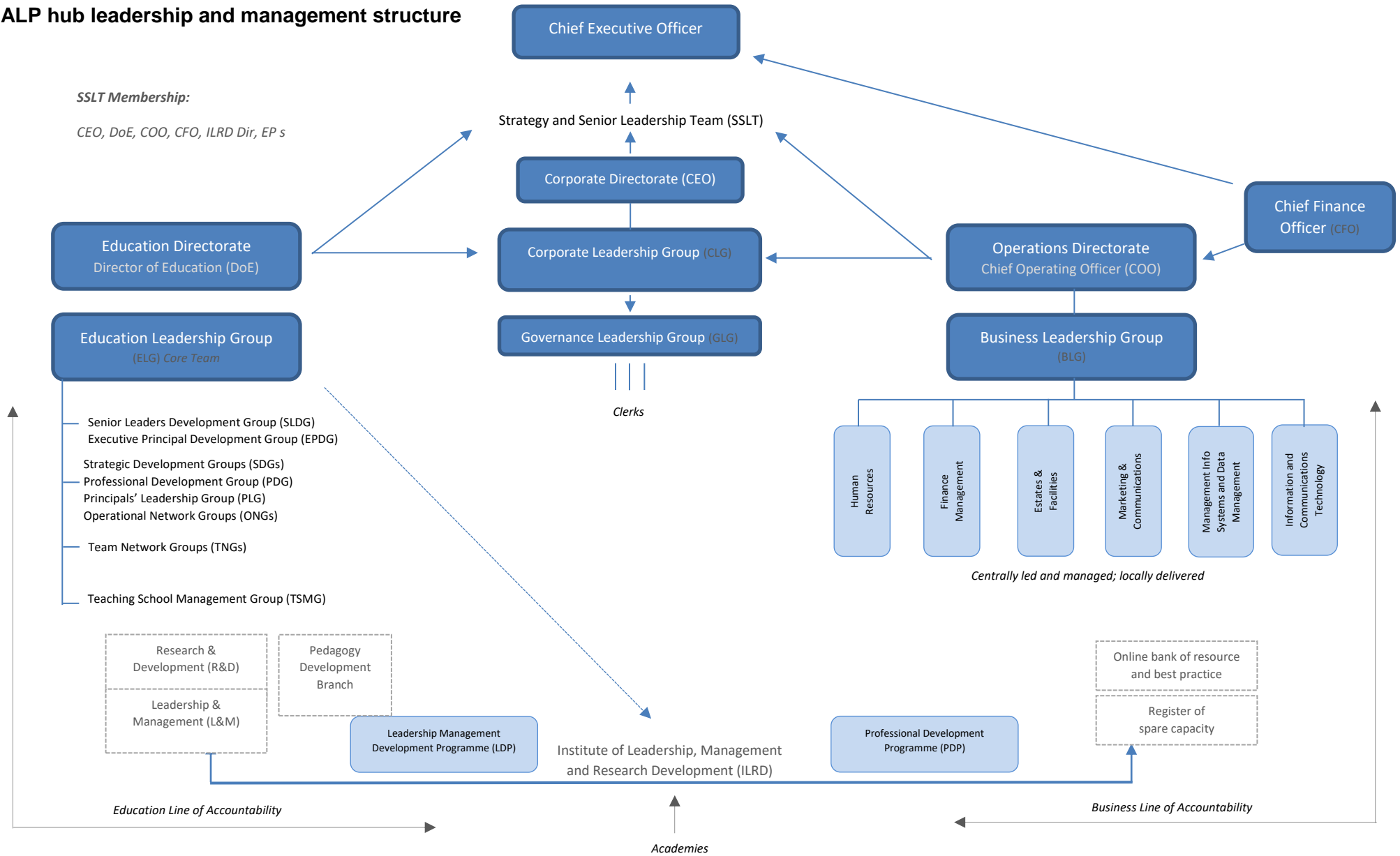
October 2017

Appendix three: The DALP incubator hub model

Group executive leadership and management structure



DALP hub leadership and management structure



DALP group governance structure

