

Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust

Trustees Impact Statement

2023

Thomas Telford School opened in 1991 as a City Technology College sponsored by the Mercers' Company and Tarmac, and was given the independence and autonomy to establish a different approach to secondary education. The school became the top performing comprehensive school in the country in 2000 and has remained as one of the top performing non selective schools ever since.

In 2003 Thomas Telford School and its sponsors opened Walsall Academy in Bloxwich with Sandwell Academy and Madeley Academy following in 2006 and 2009 respectively. Each academy adopted the Thomas Telford School template and were given the autonomy to develop their own distinctiveness and specialisms to suit the communities that they served.

Each Governing Board consisted of sponsor governors, many with experience of the Thomas Telford School model and community governors with local knowledge and expertise. The three academies, along with Thomas Telford School have worked collaboratively from the outset and benefitted from a close working relationship. These include shared services and purchasing, sharing of staff to ensure students always have a specialist teacher in the classroom, joint training days to allow curriculum development, cross moderation and professional development opportunities, shared governor training and a Heads/Chairs Collaboration group meeting termly to discuss strategic matters.

Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT) was established in September 2017 and initially consisted of the three academies; Madeley, Sandwell and Walsall. The formation of TTMAT was the natural progression from working together for over more than a decade within the Thomas Telford family of schools. Thomas Telford School provides a centralised advisory, support and financial service to TTMAT schools. In all but legal terms Thomas Telford School operates in the same collaborative way as all the other TTMAT schools. In September 2018 Redhill Primary School joined TTMAT becoming Redhill Primary Academy. In 2020, Thomas Telford University Technical College formerly the West Midlands Construction University Technical College, joined TTMAT. In the same year, the first Year 7 cohort was admitted.

The TTMAT board ensures the educational performance of each school is closely monitored, with support made available if requested. It ensures that finances across each school are managed effectively to promote the most efficient use of resources. It ensures that safeguarding in each school is high on the agenda and provides routine support and guidance through a regular programme of visits. It supports schools with recruitment and training of the best staff and actively pursues a succession management strategy that provides its schools with future senior leaders and Heads as opportunities emerge over time.

The TTMAT board consists of a highly experienced group of people providing expertise from an array of educational and business settings and with a strong understanding on what has made Thomas Telford School and the academies so successful over the past 30 years. The intended impact of the TTMAT Board is to provide robust challenge and strong support for each school, whilst allowing the Local Governing Boards and the respective Heads to focus on the day to day task of running successful schools. Each school is characterised by environments where standards of learning, behaviour and outcomes are excellent and opportunities for extra curricular activities, facilities, and careers guidance and support are first class.

TTMAT trustees take their responsibility for all the schools/academies within the group seriously noting in particular the importance of monitoring the well - being of its students and employees very closely. This includes receiving termly reports, and more frequently when appropriate, from the Executive Advisor who will report as Accounting Officer, as well as safeguarding and educational standards within all the schools/academies in TTMAT.

Trustees recognise the importance of supporting other schools from within the community to improve and remain committed to this challenge. Through the growth plan, the intention is to build the capacity of TTMAT to include up to five secondary and five primary schools. It is not envisaged that TTMAT be any bigger than this. Once TTMAT has established the additional capacity in terms of personnel who have the experience to work with partners and deliver school improvement, it will commit to support other schools, utilising short and medium term contracts via a Memorandum of Understanding or Federations, with clear exit routes planned in to the school improvement strategies. This strategy will allow TTMAT to support more schools.