

WeST 2030: Every Child Achieving

**A Strategic Plan for Community,
Opportunity, and Sustainable Growth**

**WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST**

Executive Summary

This document outlines the strategic direction for the Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST) for 2025–2030. It reflects a pivotal moment as we transition leadership and renew our commitment to our localities through additional outward-facing partnerships. While our foundation remains ‘Stronger Together’, our focus now embraces achievement, civic responsibility, cyber security, and the intelligent use of AI to empower teams and teachers. This plan combines strong central capacity with empowered local decision-making, so that while the Trust sets strategic direction and safeguards the system, choices are made closest to the child and our impact in the South West is deepened.

Four Pillars:

1. Education Excellence and Achievement
2. Character, Culture and Opportunity
3. People, Talent and Workload
4. Community, Connection and Place

Three Strategic Enablers:

- A. Financial Stewardship
- B. Safe, Sustainable and Digital Environments
- C. Governance, Risk and Assurance

Measures of Success (KPIs 2030):

Achievement, Leadership, Inclusion
Civic Duty, People, Digital, Sustainability, Governance and Assurance

Charters:

- The Student Charter
- The Staff Charter
- The Community Charter

Our Vision, Mission & Values:

The WeST Compass

Following consultation with Trustees, Governors, Headteachers, and Executives (Oct 2025 – Feb 2026), our guiding principles have been refined to emphasise inclusivity and tangible outcomes.

Our Mission

"Empowering all children and young people to impact positively on society."

Updated to include "all" (emphasising inclusivity) and "young people" (reflecting our Sixth Forms).

Our Vision

"Every child achieving in a great school."

Updated from "Every child in a great school."
We recognise that attendance alone is insufficient; our promise is now explicitly linked to holistic achievement—academic, social, and emotional.

Our Core Values (The WeST Way)

These values guide our behaviour and decision-making.



Collaboration

We are "Stronger Together," sharing expertise across the trust to lift every school.



Aspiration

We refuse to accept that geography or disadvantage dictates destiny.



Integrity

We act ethically, transparently, and with financial propriety.



Compassion

We recognise need and act with positive intention to support wellbeing.



Respect

[New Addition] We value diversity, listen to our communities, and treat every individual with dignity.

Strategic Framework

The Four Strategic Pillars (2025–2030)

These pillars represent the outcomes we promise to our students, staff and communities. The four strategic pillars provide the framework through which our mission and vision are achieved.



Pillar 1: Educational Excellence & Achievement

Goal: To ensure every WeST school is in the top 20% nationally for progress and attainment.

01

The Achievement Guarantee

Focus on student success beyond "school improvement." We will relentlessly close achievement gaps for vulnerable students, ensuring they keep up, not just catch up.

03

Primary-Secondary-Tertiary Cohesion

Strengthen the "Cradle to Career" transition. Ensure primary curriculums dovetail seamlessly into secondary, preventing the KS3 performance dip. Develop meaningful pathways to work for all.

02

Inclusion & Special Provision

Expand internal capacity for Alternative and Special Educational Needs. Utilise trust assets (e.g. South Dartmoor) to create inclusive pathways, supporting the most vulnerable learners within the WeST family.

04

Data-Informed Intervention

Leverage AI and data visualisation to identify real-time learning gaps. This allows for rapid, targeted intervention at classroom level.

Pillar 2: Character, Culture & Opportunity

Goal: To develop young people who are ready to lead and serve.



The WeST Experience

A guarantee that every child, regardless of their school's location, has access to trust-wide cultural, sporting, and residential opportunities (e.g., The Netball Academy, Trust Orchestras).



Belonging & Purpose

Framing attendance not as compliance, but as **belonging**. We will create school cultures where every child feels seen, valued, and known, where **every child understands their purpose and can articulate their aspirations**. When students feel they matter and see a future for themselves, showing up becomes meaningful.



Respect & Behaviour

Implementing a trust-wide behaviour framework rooted in our value of **“Respect”**, with an explicit behaviour curriculum that teaches what respect looks like in practice, creating safe, calm, scholarly environments.

Pillar 3: People, Talent & Workload

Goal: To be the education employer of choice in the South West, shaping the next generation of the workforce and its leaders.



1. The Workload Charter (AI-Enabled)

We commit to using technology (including Generative AI like Copilot) to strip away low-value administrative tasks (e.g., minute taking, resource generation), allowing staff to focus on being excellent for the students.



2. "Grow Our Own" Leadership

With clear pathways, we will develop the next generation of leaders from within, mitigating recruitment challenges in the South West. Provide pathways for our own students to strengthen our WeST workforce as young adults.



3. Staff Wellbeing

Recognising that high performance requires high support. We will maintain a "social contract" that protects staff time and prioritises professional autonomy within a supportive framework, maximising the opportunities offered by flexibly working.

Pillar 4: Community, Connection & Place

Goal: Schools as "Anchor Institutions" that strengthen their localities, deepening WeST impact across the Southwest so that families actively seek a WeST school.

1

The Cluster Model

Structuring growth around geographic clusters (Plymouth, Devon, Cornwall) to ensure schools are interconnected, financially sustainable, and locally responsive.

2

WeST Community Councils (WCCs)

WCCs will restore the link between schools and their communities, providing meaningful stakeholder engagement and "lived experience" feedback to the Board.

3

Civic Duty

Our schools will act as hubs for community services, recognising our role in supporting the wider family unit and fostering partnerships with local services (e.g. family support, food banks, NHS, emergency services, CAB, Local businesses and CoC, Mental health charities)

The Strategic Enablers

Foundations for Delivering Our Pillars

To deliver these pillars, our operations must be robust, compliant with the Academy Trust Handbook 2025, and focused on the protection and development of our schools.



A Financial Stewardship, Due Diligence & Autonomy



B Safe, Sustainable & Digital Environments



C Governance, Risk & Assurance

Enabler A: Financial Stewardship, Due Diligence & Autonomy



Financial Shepherding

We act as careful stewards of public funds, adhering to the Academy Trust Handbook principles of regularity, propriety and value for money, while using our collective strength to support schools through financial volatility and protect the classroom.



Rigorous Due Diligence

Whether in procurement or trust growth, we apply a safety-first due diligence framework. We will not expand the Trust or enter contracts without a robust evidence base that proves it adds value for learners and communities and strengthens the WeST family.



Earned Autonomy

While we pool Capital (SCA) and Reserves to provide a safety net, we do not apply full GAG pooling. We empower Headteachers to act as local stewards of their budget, guided by central expertise to ensure long-term viability.

Enabler B: Safe, Sustainable & Digital Environments

Cyber Protection

We will aggressively protect our schools from digital threats. A dedicated Digital Lead will ensure 100% compliance with the ATH 2025 cyber standards and enforce the "No Ransom" policy, safeguarding our data and assets.

Strategic Estate Management

Our 5-year capital plan is not just maintenance; it is asset protection. We align fully with the School Estate Management Standards to ensure every building is safe, compliant, and inspiring.

Sustainability as Stewardship

We will implement a "Climate Action Plan" as a duty to future generations, moving the Trust toward Net Zero by 2050 and reducing energy waste to redirect funds back into education.

Technology, AI and Workforce Capability

We will invest in secure digital infrastructure and responsible AI, building the technical capability of our workforce and students so innovation strengthens teaching, learning, operations and decision-making.

Enabler C: Governance, Risk & Assurance



Protective Governance

Our trustee and local governance model is designed to protect the Trust's reputation and standards. We will augment our professionalised 'Internal Scrutiny' model, including periodic external benchmarking and peer review with high-performing trusts, that goes beyond compliance checking to provide rigorous strategic assurance on risk.



Guidance over Compliance

We provide the frameworks and guardrails that allow schools to operate safely, intervening only when those guardrails are breached, informed by internal scrutiny findings and external trust comparators.



Local Accountability

The WeST Community Councils provide a vital "listening ear" on the ground, ensuring the Board is alerted to community risks and safeguarding culture issues early.



Workforce Data

We will use sophisticated analytics to track and build retention, representation and equity.

Measures of Success (KPIs 2030)

Priority	Success Indicator (2030)
Achievement	Students in all WeST schools in the top 20% nationally for KS2, KS4 and KS5 progress and attainment.
Leadership	100% young people have had a meaningful leadership opportunity when they leave the phase. 100% move successfully on to the next stage (school, college, university or work)
Inclusion	The attainment gap between Disadvantaged/SEND and Non-Disadvantaged/SEND students is removed.
Civic Duty	Every school has an active WeST Community Council and a documented "Anchor Institution" plan.
Finance	Reduce trust top-skim to 3.5% without any reduction in quality of service.
People	Staff turnover is below national average; 70% of leadership appointments are internal. Staff survey >80% return. eNPS >+20. SRA reduced by 50% on 2025 metric.
Digital	100% compliance with DfE Cyber Standards; AI tools fully integrated into admin workflows.
Sustainability	Carbon footprint reduced by 30%; Climate Action Plan fully operational.
Governance and Assurance	Internal scrutiny provides robust strategic assurance, with findings periodically validated through external benchmarking and peer review with high-performing trusts. 100% Estates Compliance.

Our Promise

The WeST Charter: Our Trust Dividend

“Stronger Together” is not just a slogan; it is a measurable advantage. The WeST Charter sets out the tangible guarantees we make to our three core constituencies, acting as both a safeguard and a catalyst for our schools.



The Student Charter



The Staff Charter



**The Community
Charter**

The Student Charter

The Guarantee: Every child in a WeST school receives more than they would in a standalone school.

1 Enriched Opportunity

Access to Trust-wide events, competitions, and elite pathways (e.g., The Netball Academy, Trust Orchestras, International Trips) that no single school could access alone.

3 Educational Quality

You will be taught by staff who are part of subject communities, constantly refining their expertise through the WeST Institute.

2 Continuity of Care

A seamless "Cradle to Career" educational journey. Our clustering model ensures that transition from Primary to Secondary is a bridge, not a cliff-edge, with shared data and pastoral handover.

4 Equity of Access

Whether you attend a small rural primary or a large urban secondary, you have equal access to high-quality digital learning tools and safe, compliant facilities funded by our pooled capital reserves.

The Staff Charter

The Guarantee: WeST is a place where you can grow your career without moving house.

Professional Growth

Access to the WeST Institute, offering bespoke CPD, NPQs, and leadership coaching. We leverage our scale to bring in world-class training that individual schools could not afford.

Talent Mobility

We encourage internal promotion. With 31 schools, your next career step, whether into leadership, subject mastery, or trust-wide roles, is likely within the WeST family.

Fair, Inclusive and Flexible Work

We treat colleagues fairly and inclusively, expanding flexible work where roles allow and applying consistent, transparent processes and reward principles.

Wellbeing & Workload

We use our collective power to reduce your burden:

- **Centralised Operations:** HR, Finance, IT and Estates are managed centrally, freeing school leaders and teachers to focus on teaching.
- **Digital Innovation:** We invest in AI tools trust-wide to automate administrative tasks and reduce working hours.

Peer Support

You are never isolated. Every Teacher, Leader, Support Staff and Headteacher belongs to a professional cluster, providing peer challenge, support, and shared planning.

The Community Charter

The Guarantee: A WeST school is a permanent Anchor Institution in your locality, protected by the strength of the whole.

Financial Shepherding

We act as careful stewards of your school's future. By pooling reserves and sharing resources, we protect individual schools from financial shocks and demographic dips. We ensure that every school remains viable, solvent, and safe for the long term.

Local Voice

Through our WeST Community Councils, we guarantee that local voices are heard. We respect the unique identity of each school and its history, ensuring it serves your specific community needs while benefiting from Trust strength.

Civic Responsibility

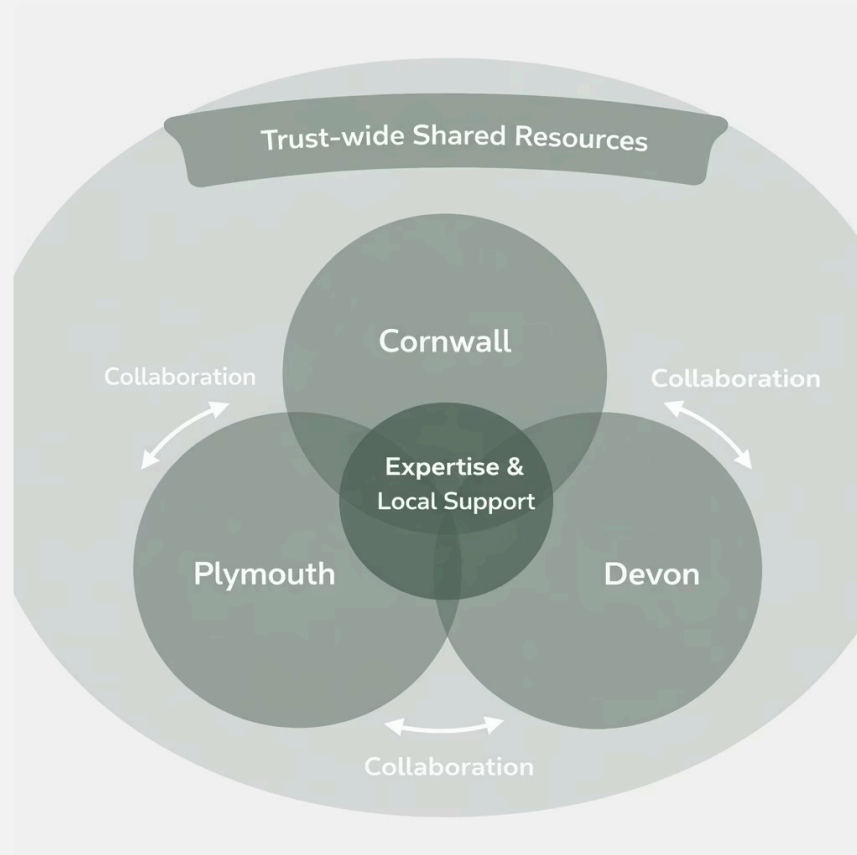
Our schools are not islands. We commit to using our facilities and resources to support the wider community: hosting adult learning, family services, and community groups.

Collective Influence

As a large Trust, we advocate for the South West region at a national level, attracting investment and influencing policy to benefit your children.

Our Commitment to the South West

The WeST Family of Schools is structured around geographic clusters, serving as Anchor Institutions. This model ensures schools are interconnected, financially sustainable, and locally responsive, benefiting from the Trust's collective strength and resources.



By balancing central strength with local autonomy, we ensure child-centric decisions. The Trust acts as a protective shepherd, creating a sustainable model for educational excellence across the South West.

Every Child Achieving

WeST 2030: Stronger Together

A unified Family of Schools committed to educational excellence, community connection, and sustainable growth across Plymouth, Devon, and Cornwall.

Glossary:

An **anchor institution** in UK education is a school or group of schools (such as a multi-academy trust) that is firmly rooted in its local community and plays a crucial, long-term role in supporting that community. In other words, beyond its primary educational mission, it contributes strategically to the community's social and economic well-being – often prioritising help for those who need it most. The term “anchor” highlights that such an institution is anchored in place: it is a stable, lasting presence in the area and invested in the future of its locality.

AI	Artificial Intelligence	KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
ATH	Academy Trust Handbook	KS#	Key Stage # <i>(2, 3, 4, 5)</i>
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau	NHS	National Health Service
CoC	Chamber of Commerce	NPQs	National Professional Qualifications
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	SBM	School Business Manager
DfE	Department for Education	SCA	School Condition Allocation
eNPS	Employee Net Promoter Score	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
GAG	General Annual Grant	SRA	Staff Related Absence
HR	Human Resources	TLA	Teaching and Learning Assistant <i>(TA)</i>
IT	Information Technology		