

The Hoddesdon School Trust

“Creating Memories and Futures Together”

Overview

A small Multi-Academy Trust in Hertfordshire

Established

2016

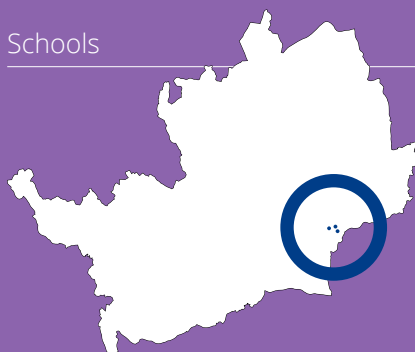
Income

£11m

Students

2,064

Schools



John Warner School

Cranbourne Primary School

Roselands Primary School



The challenge

The Hoddesdon School Trust (THST), led by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) David Allman, called us in to carry out a comprehensive Internal Scrutiny review in early 2021. The Academy Trust Handbook had significantly widened its Internal Scrutiny requirement to take in non-financial as well as financial risks and the Trust knew it needed specialist help.

THST wanted a partner that would provide optimum learning from the process, not just compliance. It wanted to be as good as it could be, not just tick boxes. Its goal was to start from first principles around the fundamentals of risk management, understand what risk appetite meant and completely revamp its risk register.

It would mean a lot of work but would transform the Trust's approach to risk – for the security of pupils, staff and the local community. Strictly Education was the obvious choice.

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I am generally not
persuaded by much,
but I thought,
'I want to work with
these people'.

CEO David Allman





When I have so much on my plate, having Strictly Education's external perspective helps me prioritise and I am making maximum use of the Internal Scrutiny process. It's also about the bigger picture, helping us identify our future strategy and where we need to focus as we grow. //

CEO David Allman

The response

We suggested three areas of focus for 2020-21: Risk Management, Budget Monitoring and Business Continuity Planning. With our review and follow up, THST learned an enormous amount and is now confident its risk register is as good as exists.

For 2021-22, the three areas were: Health & Safety/premises, Human Resources and compliance with Academy Trust Handbook. With Estates and Health & Safety currently a major priority for the Trust, the Internal Scrutiny process proved both an invaluable guide and a means of quality assurance for the action it was taking.

We have so far made 18 recommendations to mitigate medium and low risks and all have been acted upon as the Trust uses our work to make improvements.

Our expertise has reached far wider than the limited services provided by financial auditors. This can help academy trusts embed a culture of risk management, saving time and money to spend on improving educational outcomes for learners.

The result

Thanks to THST's Internal Scrutiny review, the Trust has been able to review and act on risk far more efficiently.

The Board had previously been following an old Charity Commission document that listed 150 risks. We guided them to a better focus, allowing them to cut that unwieldy list down to 15 principal risks that could be prioritised effectively.

Crucially, a large sports centre that represents the Trust's biggest strategic risk – it owns the centre but needs to find a new partner after its joint-use agreement with the local council expires in 2023 – is now on the risk register for the first time.

2020-21

- Risk Management
- Budget Monitoring
- Business Continuity Planning

2021-22

- Health & Safety/Premises
- Human Resources
- Compliance

The verdict



Everything we have done with Strictly Education has been brilliant, fantastic. I have had the opportunity to have meaningful dialogue with experienced professionals and learn from it. In my role it is rare to receive

constructive feedback, so it has been highly valuable. I know my own mind, but I have reached the limit of my technical competence, so I need specialist advisors. Strictly Education's thoughtful approach is hugely appreciated.

CEO David Allman



Working with 900 academies and 180 MATs for many years, Strictly Education has the knowledge and expertise in all corners of a well-run multi-academy-

trust. Take your Internal Scrutiny to the next level and gain best practice recommendations whilst meeting your trust's ESFA requirements.



We build and sustain excellent relationships



We continuously challenge ourselves to improve our services



We value people and their differences



We work hard to protect reputations



We are trusted to deliver great services



We strive to deliver excellent services

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You educate, we support