



# Our Culture Framework



# Our schools in



Live out our  
**RESPECT**  
values



Maintain  
school  
identity



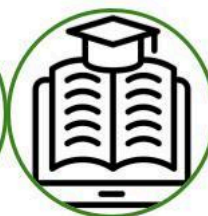
Commit to  
continuous  
improvement



Collaborate in  
communities  
of practice



Embrace  
challenge and  
support



Are curious  
and keep  
learning

Our distinctive culture is the unique and intentional way we operate, setting us apart and defining our identity as The Stour Federation. A strong culture is characterised by colleagues working collaboratively, supporting one another towards a shared purpose. Conversely, a weak culture arises when individuals work in isolation or opposition, prioritising personal gain over collective success.

## **CULTURE = VALUES + BEHAVIOUR**

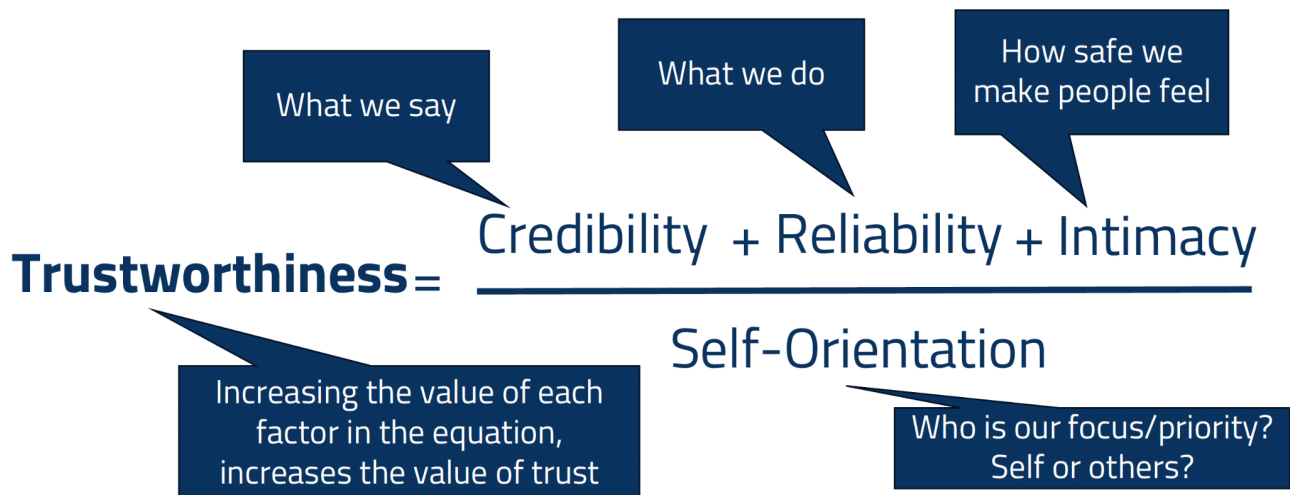
To cultivate a truly strong culture across our trust, we must have clearly articulated values that serve as our guiding principles. Crucially, our leaders play a vital role in ensuring these values are not just words on a page, but are actively lived and upheld through consistent accountability for behaviour at all levels.

Central to fostering this robust and supportive environment is the critical responsibility of our school leaders to actively build relational trust with their teams. This relational trust is the bedrock upon which a positive and productive culture, climate, and structure are built – an environment where every member of staff feels valued, supported, and empowered to flourish.

Drawing upon Charles Green's Trust Equation, we understand that trust is built through a combination of key factors:

- **Credibility:** Leaders must demonstrate competence, knowledge, and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Stakeholders need to believe in their leaders' expertise and judgment.
- **Reliability:** Leaders must be dependable and consistent in their actions and follow-through. Stakeholders need to know that their leaders will do what they say they will do, fostering a sense of security and predictability.

- **Intimacy:** This refers to creating a safe and supportive environment where open communication and vulnerability are encouraged. Leaders should foster genuine connections with their stakeholders, demonstrating care, compassion and understanding for their perspectives and challenges.
- **Self-Orientation:** This crucial element emphasizes that leaders must prioritise the needs and wellbeing of their team and the wider school community over their own personal gain. Stakeholders need to feel that their leaders are genuinely invested in their success and the success of the children.



By consciously increasing the levels of credibility, reliability, and intimacy, while actively demonstrating a low self-orientation, our school leaders will directly enhance relational trust within their schools. This increased trust is the catalyst for a truly great culture.

### **Our Vision:**

A truly great culture, underpinned by strong relational trust, empowers high-quality teaching. This, in turn, makes a rich, challenging, ambitious, and relevant curriculum irresistible to our children, enriched by wonderful experiences both within and beyond the classroom. The result is pupils making significant progress in their wellbeing, learning, and development, all within calm and beautiful classrooms and buildings. In this environment of trust and support, every single colleague will be motivated and empowered to come to work each day and deliver the best work.

**People, Place and Processes** support and enable this endeavour.

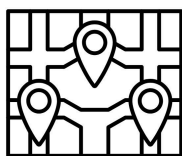
### **Our Culture Framework - 20 Questions**



#### **PEOPLE**

1. To what extent do all colleagues have genuinely high expectations of pupils?
2. To what extent does the school privilege staff training time and aspire to be expert through the provision of high-quality professional development?

3. To what extent does the school successfully support teachers in enacting the curriculum in a way that engages learners?
4. To what extent do leaders create the conditions for growth within the school (through communication, clarity of decision-making and prioritising, and setting a culture of high expectations)?
5. To what extent is the school inclusive with adaptive teaching practices?
6. To what extent is there a sense of connectedness within the school for the pupils? (where pupils feel professional warmth, care, support and appropriate challenge to aspire to do their very best)?
7. To what extent do members of the school community act with respect and integrity towards others (all stakeholders in interactions)?
8. To what extent does the school nurture strong relationships with all stakeholders and is rooted within its community?
9. To what extent is pupil agency and pupil personal leadership a strong feature of the school's culture?
10. To what extent is respect for diversity tangibly apparent in school and the curriculum work? Can leaders articulate this clearly?



## **PLACE**

11. To what extent is the school a safe, calm, orderly, friendly environment for all?
12. To what extent are classrooms well-resourced for pupils to learn each particular subject?
13. To what extent are break and lunchtimes organised for pupils to feel they belong and can enjoy school and social unstructured time? How do they support respectful behaviour?
14. Are there sufficient spaces and opportunities for dialogue to take place within school?
15. To what extent does the school entrance/reception area create a positive first impression?
16. To what extent is work with the community evident in the school?



## **PROCESSES**

17. To what extent are the policies, routines and processes enacted in classrooms and the school?
18. What evidence is there that the implementation of school behaviour and attendance policies support the desired culture?
19. What evidence is there of the effectiveness of all three tiers of the pupil premium strategy supporting the progress and development of children at a disadvantage?
20. What levels of enrichment activities are available for those who need the most support and how is this tracked and acted upon?