

**Josh Greaves - Business and Operations Director, Wellspring Academy Trust, Barnsley**

The Wellspring Academy Trust is based in Barnsley, with Academies across Yorkshire and the Humber, falling under two Regional School Commissioners. The Trust first opened in early 2013, and having started with 1 Academy has now grown to support 12 (as of September 2016). Wellspring plans to welcome a further 5-8 academies over the next 12-18 months, located across Barnsley, Leeds, Kirklees, North East Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire. Currently the Trust comprises a Central Support Team and a number of Primary, Special and Alternative Academies (PRUs).

Prior to commencing in the role, it proved challenging to allocate the resource necessary to fund Josh's position. However, Sponsor Capacity Funding from the Department for Education (DfE) has supported the inclusion of his role within the Trust. Josh had been in the role for 8 weeks when we contacted him in April 2016. He is located within the Central Support team, directly line-managed by the CEO of the Trust.

Prior to this, Josh was employed as Business Director and Chief Finance Officer in a large Special Academy, having previously worked as a Primary SBM and as a Business Management Consultant prior to that. Josh completed the ADSBM a few years ago which included research into Trust structures, which he finds particularly interesting. Josh uses this research to inform his work within large academy trusts. In Josh's view, research into the organisational and governance structures of local, regional and national MATs is key to quality assuring and developing further the structures and mechanisms within one's own organisation. He is also a Specialist Leader in Education (SLE), a Prince2 Project Management Practitioner and holds a degree in Politics from Nottingham University. Josh plans to undertake an MBA within the coming 3 years, to enhance and develop his commercial and leadership attributes.

Speaking to Josh, it is clear he feels the commercial and education sectors have much to learn from and share with one another, both in operational practice and in continuously developing and learning. Whilst recognising some within education attach challenges and risks to the perceived commercialisation of the sector, Josh believes all senior and strategic leaders within education – across both business and teaching/learning disciplines – must harness this changing landscape by deploying new skills and realising new opportunities to enhance their organisations and outcomes for learners. Crucially for Josh, business professionals within the education sector mustn't become martyrs to outmoded ways of working, but rather fight hard to retain what worked previously whilst constantly morphing and adapting to meet future need.

In the Wellspring Academy Trust, there are a number of School Business Managers working within and across the Academies, ranging from Administrators to Strategic Business Managers. Josh's role in part is to support and challenge the SBMs to work dynamically, to foster collaboration and peer-to-peer support, and to leverage economies of scale across the Trust. The overall aim of the academy-facing aspect of Josh's role is to assist academies to achieve Best Value, operate efficiently and to identify innovative opportunities to generate income.

The NASBM Professional Standards are currently being discussed within the Trust through its termly SBM network meetings, meaning staff will have the opportunity to discuss how they plan to implement the standards and to determine the main areas they would like to focus on. The two broad aims for implementing the Professional Standards in the Trust are as follows:

- To support consistent ways of working across the Trust in terms of the SBM role and to support Principals' understanding of the role across the Trust



- To support SBMs to understand the areas in which they might wish to upskill

It is anticipated that the Professional Standards will inform practice for all Business and Administration Management professionals within and across Wellspring.