frog

for **Multi-Academy Trusts**

Making your multi-academy trust work

The challenges for today's MATs are multitude – top of the list are ever-tighter budgets, retaining quality teachers, and walking the tightrope of attracting enough schools to become financially viable, while ensuring they don't get overstretched and fail to deliver quality education to those already in the MAT.

Many MATs are still in the process of building meaningful processes and communication systems, establishing responsibilities in their Scheme of Delegation and dealing with politics from seemingly every direction. In the early stages this can be overwhelming.

Once your operational model has been clearly established, not just intellectually, but with a proven ability to operate successfully while also attracting new schools, things get a lot easier; but this can be a long and painful journey.

Three key principles can make a significant contribution both on this journey and beyond:

1. Communicate Well - particularly when things are new or changing, clear and professional communication reduces anxiety and creates trust. Governors, parents, all the staff in your schools, even your new trustees will be worried until things are seen to be working well and settle down.

2. Remove Pain Points - reducing teacher workload, reducing administration and enabling your school teams to focus on the childrens' learning will show them that the MAT is there to support them and will help to attract new schools.

3. Work Together - creating meaningful interactions and relationships between all of your schools, and within the MAT will build trust and ease cohesion. There are also lots of opportunities to reduce teacher workload and improve the quality of provision if you work together.

Based on many years working with MATs we have distilled these and other challenges into a simple framework and provided examples, where appropriate, of how Frog is helping.

I hope you find the following insights useful.

Gareth Davies, Managing Director | Frog Education

FrogConnect

FrogConnect is a free technology for **FrogLearn** schools
that will link all of your Frog school systems together.

Centralise Communications

Keep everyone in the loop! A central hub enables you to keep control of the messages you want to share within your network of schools.

Third Party Integration

Integrate with third parties such as Google, Office 365, Planet eStream, ClickView, Encyclopedia Britannica and many more.

Share Best Practice

FrogConnect provides the ability to share exemplar materials and resources, whilst still giving you control when you need it.

Centralise Leadership

Enable trustees, governors and your exec team to collaborate within a secure environment. Share ideas, support and guidance for new leaders and schools joining your network.

Centralise Policies & Procedures

FrogConnect enables simple access to multiple documents and procedures for all of your schools via a centralised dashboard. In other words, update one, update them all.

Analytics Dashboard

A central analytics dashboard gives you a view of activity within each of your connected schools. Discover what is working well and highlight any areas that you would like to improve upon.

MAT **Improvement Framework**

LEADERSHIP & PLANNING

| Vision and Ethos | Growth and Sustainability | Management and Governance | Data and Analytics |

CORE SERVICES

| IT Infrastructure and Support | Finance and HR | Communication and Collaboration | Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare |

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

| Curriculum Development | Standardisation & Moderation | Sharing Best Practice | Teaching, Learning and Intervention |

MARKETING & RECRUITING

| Centralised Marketing and Branding | Reducing Costs | Parental Engagement | Reducing Teacher Workload |

Leadership & Planning

A successful MAT will have a strong leadership team, with a shared vision and a clear strategy for how this vision will be realised.

Good communication is vital, as is the ability for MAT leaders to access key data and management information from all their schools.

Vision and Ethos

Joining a new MAT creates a lot of uncertainty for school leaders, staff, and parents. Their own lives and the lives of the children in their care will be affected by this change; people need to know what they're getting in to and what their new world looks like.

Clearly articulated objectives and aspirations allows those around you to buy into your vision. Without this people feel will uninvolved and powerless.

EDUCATION and LEADERSHIP Trust

Values

How frog helps

Frog technology is used by a great number of schools and MATs as a public website or a secure intranet for collaboration. In fact, exactly the same technology used by organisations like National Theatre and Kew Gardens is available as part of the standard school system - we can even help with prospectus design.

values. These values and principles will underpin the work of the Trust and we believe will contribute to strengthening the schools' links with their local communities.

Students pictured with Executive Headteacher Ms P. Kane M.A and Manchester

Growth and Sustainability

Every MAT is unique with different objectives, but they all need to build a central infrastructure of systems, processes, technology and expert resources.

This all needs funding and a clear growth and sustainability strategy should be developed. There must be enough schools / pupils in the MAT to be able to fund your objectives. This area often proves contentious and needs to be communicated very clearly at the outset.

Grows with you

Clear and regular communication with all stakeholders is necessary to provide confidence as you straddle the line between financial targets and ensuring capability to deliver.

Leadership & Planning

✔ Vision & Ethos

✔ Growth & Sustainability

✔ Management & Governance

✔ Data & Analytics

Management and Governance

Communication across a MAT is significantly more challenging than in a school. There are now also members and trustees/directors, many of whom are still trying to understand and define their role.

At school level there are still governors, mostly unsure of their place in this new structure. Clear communication of roles, accountability, meeting materials and agreed outcomes must be on hand to deal with a more complex set of governance requirements, and to build confidence in the teams involved.

Data and Analytics

When a school joins a MAT, the MAT takes on responsibility for the performance of that school, both financially and educationally; and the accountability measures in place are not insignificant.

It is important therefore that the leaders of the MAT are able to access meaningful management information from all of their schools on a regular basis, including the performance of the children.
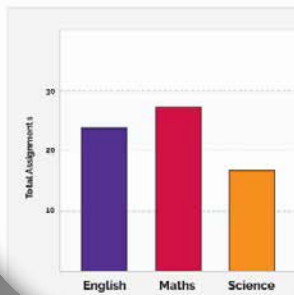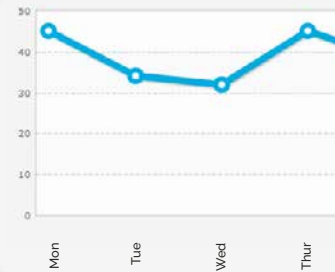
See Patterns
Act quickly.

MAT Platforms

GREENSHAW HIGH   VICTOR SEYMOUR   GREEN WRYTHE

ADMIN
PARENT
TOTAL LOGINS
254
STAFF

PARENT
TOTAL LOGINS
156
STAFF
STUDENT
ADMIN

STUDENT
TOTAL LOGINS
325
STAFF
ADMIN
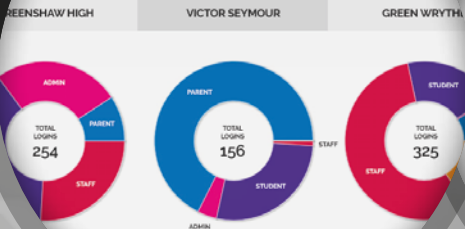
Homework Report

Showing data for [Subject ▾] as [Bar Chart ▾]   [Select]

Weeks
Jan 1st 2018
Nov 6th 2017
Aug 14th 2017
Jul 24th 2017
Apr 23rd 2018
Apr 16th 20
Apr 9th

Total Assignments
English   Maths   Science

Platform Logins

Mon   Tue   Wed   Thur

How frog helps
Frog will help you keep complete control from a central point and significantly increase visibility of important information.

Core Services

Shared policies and procedures, centralised IT infrastructure and systems to enable staff to work collaboratively across schools will free up time to focus on teaching and learning.

IT Infrastructure and Support

Many MATs now provide centralised IT services and, depending on their proximity to each other, centralised IT expertise.

One single login, one place to go that encapsulates all these systems, and all schools automatically linked to the MAT will simplify the journey for all staff.
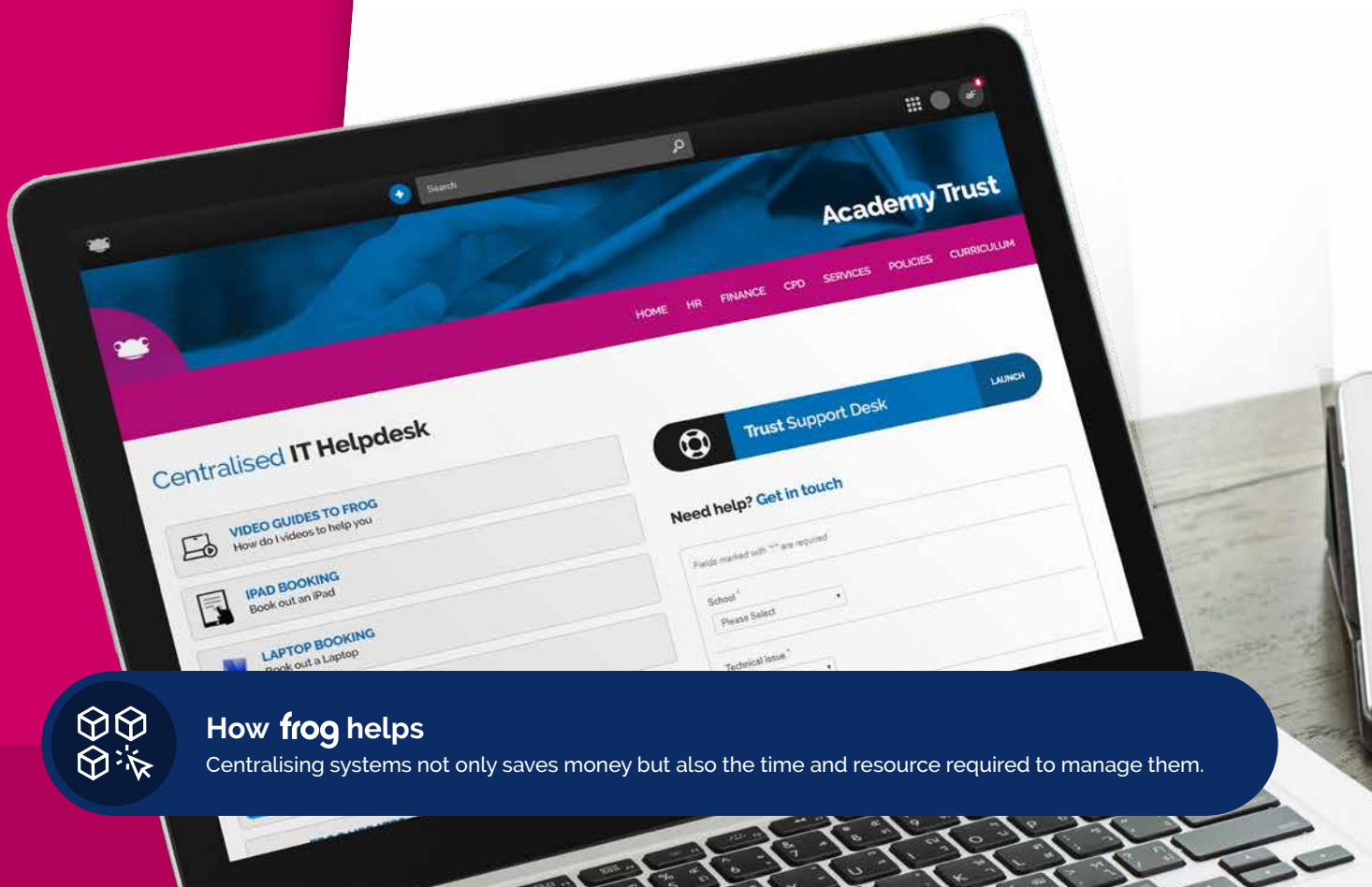
How frog helps
Centralising systems not only saves money but also the time and resource required to manage them.

Finance and HR

Finance software and HR systems are usually the first technology systems to be implemented in a MAT.

This includes the sharing of policies, procedures, staff handbooks, approved supplier lists etc. Removing the burden of this from each individual school and providing more time for teaching and school leadership.

Leadership

Free up teachers time by managing documents and systems centrally.

Core Services

✔ IT Infrastructure & Support

✔ Finance & HR

✔ Communication & Collaboration

✔ Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare
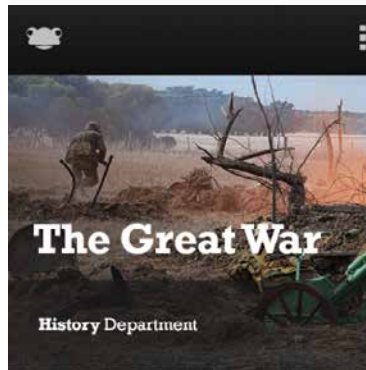
Communication and Collaboration

Schools within the same MAT are naturally working closer together than they might have previously. Improved communication tools will not not only connect people into one big family, but will enable schools to share their expertise and experiences, benefitting the whole group.

✔ Co-construct your trust's curriculum

✔ Share lesson plans and exemplars

✔ Collaborate on policies and procedures
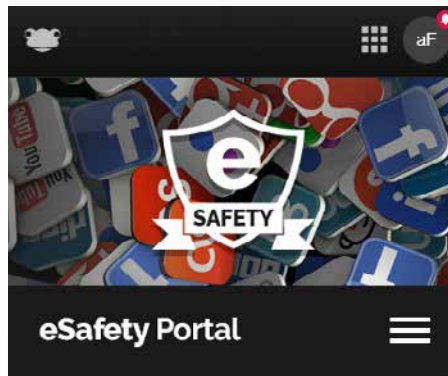
✔ Ensure everyone is kept up to date
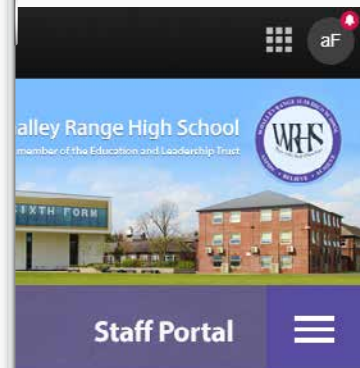
Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

Training is often the first casualty in times of economic hardship. It is important that as much benefit as possible is gained from what's available.

Keeping everything centrally can significantly extend the reach of CPD materials; whether that's digital learning materials that can be shared, or just visibility on those around you with newfound skills to talk to.
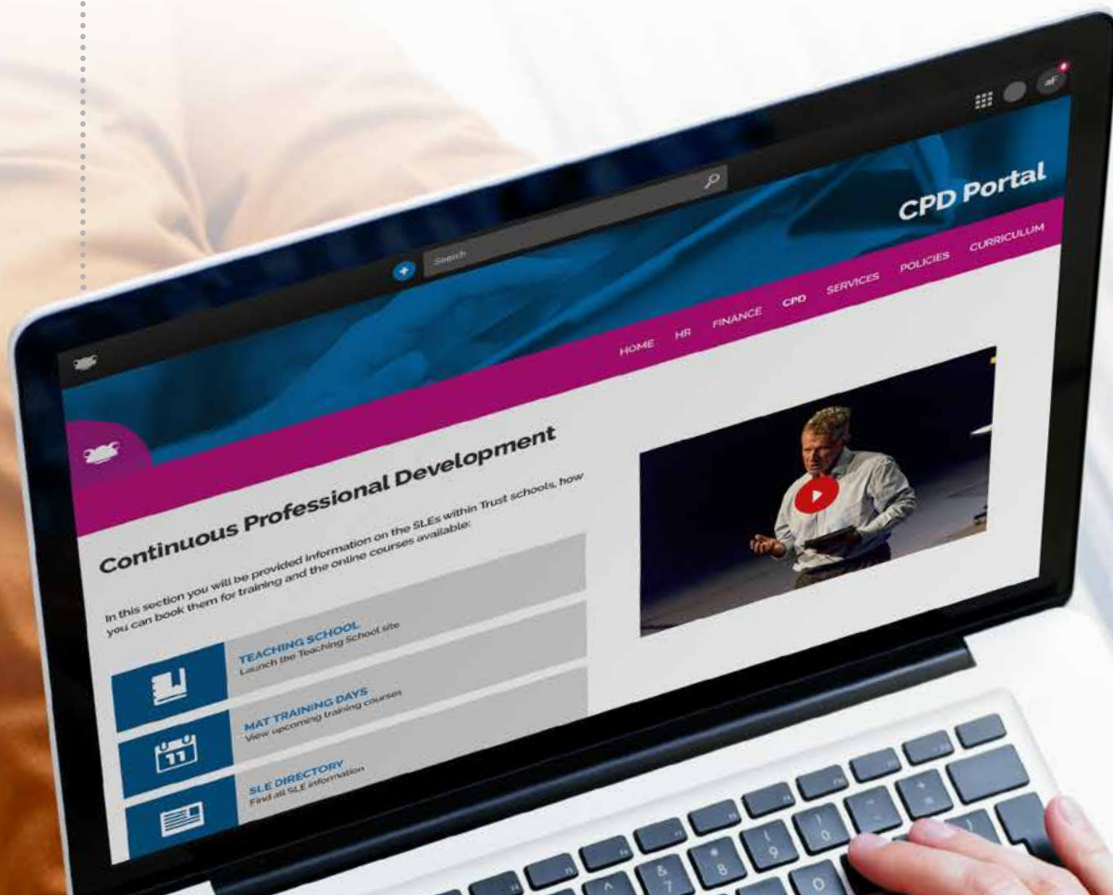
School Improvement

Does your MAT share best practice between schools? Are expectations the same across all schools, or do standards vary widely?

Accurate data from each school gives MAT leaders the power to identify where certain groups are struggling, and enables them to find the strongest resources within the MAT to support these groups.

Curriculum Development

Many MATs use a principle of "earned autonomy" for their stronger schools, but need to provide additional curriculum and learning support for other schools in their group. Some choose to provide a centralised curriculum for all of their schools, while many co-construct a curriculum collaboratively.

The ability to maintain a central curriculum, while capturing strong resources from all schools is a very effective way of reducing teacher workload and improving outcomes.
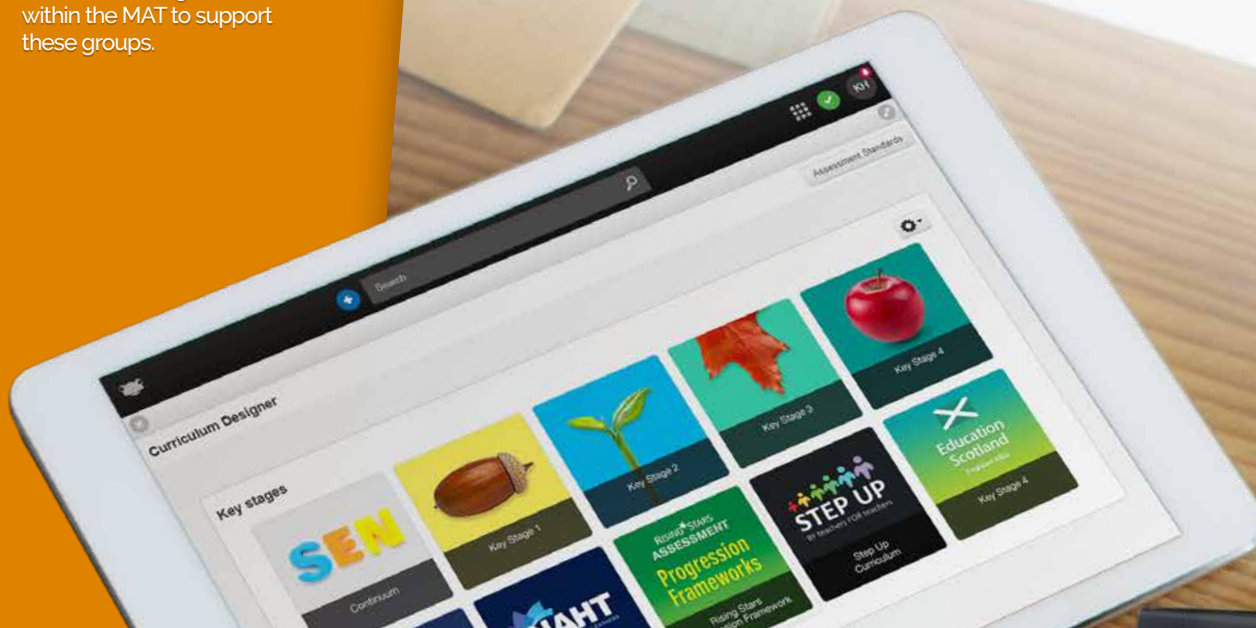
How frog helps

Do more with less. Frog enables schools to co-construct a curriculum and share student exemplars.

Standardisation and Moderation

Key to the development of a shared curriculum is the principle of clear benchmark standards ("what does good look like" for each individual aspect of the curriculum), so everyone has the same expectations across all schools. This gives all teachers a huge amount of confidence about exactly what they need to achieve.

Once these standards are in place it is then possible to moderate the teachers assessment of children's work against these agreed standards. It is clear that this process can have a dramatic effect on the quality of teaching.

"Overall assessment changes are more time effective. It has allowed us to strip back on marking."

Simon Smith
East Whitby Academy

Music Class

Evidence Capture

Use our **Frog**Snap mobile app to capture evidence during lessons and track progress.

School Improvement

✔ Curriculum Development

✔ Standardisation & Moderation

✔ Sharing Best Practice

✔ Teaching, Learning & Intervention

Sharing Best Practice

Whether it's processes, systems, teaching resources, or just advice, all MATs can benefit from the sharing of best practice between schools.

While most teachers will agree that this is important, the reality is that it is rarely done effectively. Knowledge sharing needs to become a habit, not a project, and that habit must be supported by processes and technology that make it not just second nature, but enhances everyone's daily lives.

Create strong group relationships offline and people will work together and share online.

Teaching, Learning and Intervention

Most MATs build a team of subject experts. Sometimes these are positioned centrally in a mentoring role, sometimes they are based within the schools and called upon as needed.

With clear information from each school regarding children's progress, and more specifically what areas groups are struggling with, guidance can be provided. In some cases, a SWAT team can be parachuted in to help a school deal with areas they need help with.

Key to this is the detailed information required to be able to identify these opportunities.
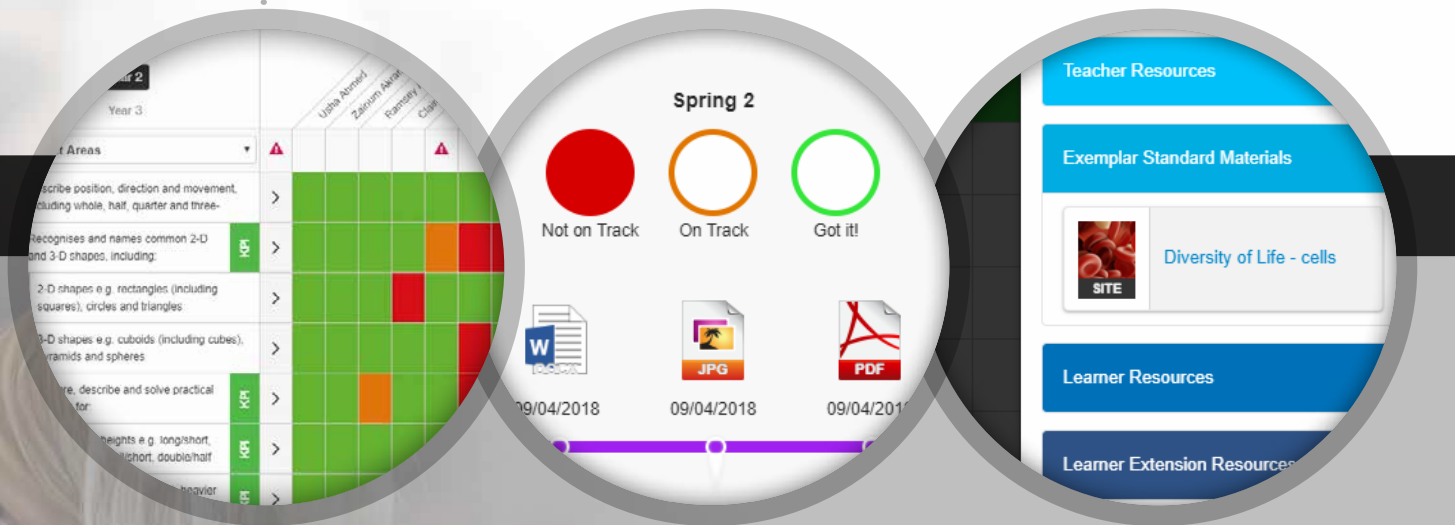
How frog helps

Frog enables teachers to identify early intervention opportunities and to deliver differentiated learning.

Marketing & Recruiting

How does your MAT attract new schools, new staff and prospective parents? Does your branding, vision and ethos come across clearly in all your schools?

Do you have effective systems in place to enable joining schools to make a smooth transition? And do these systems help you to reduce costs and teacher-workload?

Centralised Marketing and Branding

One of the greatest challenges for MATs is attracting already good schools to join them. A clear and positive vision, ethos and public image are vital to encourage these increasingly rare opportunities.

You need people to want to be part of your "brand". This applies to school leadership, governors and parents; both when attracting them to your MAT, and once they've joined. Change requires positive presentation and the ability to roll this brand and marketing out easily to all schools.
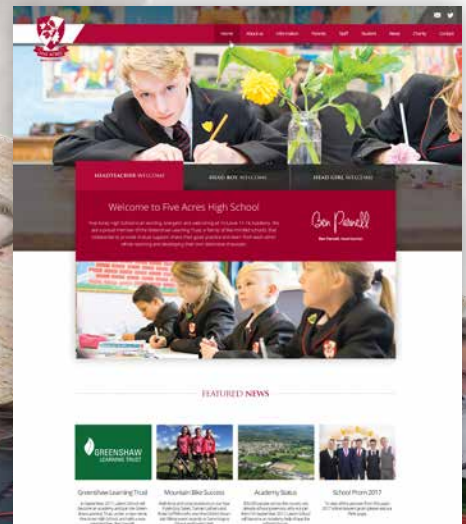
How frog helps

Our team can provide an end-to-end service that ensures your brand permiates everything you do, providing a consistent look and feel across all of your trust's digital entities.

Reducing Costs

Schools are currently facing overwhelming challenges; they have a lot less money available compared to previous years, and many are facing the difficult prospect of losing staff.

Schools must **think differently** about the way they do things and adapt quickly.

Go paperless

Going paperless isn't about reducing the cost of printing, it's about creating efficiencies in processes.

Marketing & Recruiting

✔ Centralised Marketing & Branding

✔ Reducing Costs

✔ Parental Engagement

✔ Reducing Teacher Workload

Parental Engagement

Improved parental engagement and home learning is becoming a necessity.

Connecting parents to school life is often a challenge - both providing the information and engaging the parents in it. However, giving parents visibility of their children's learning and the opportunity to interact with it can create a real connection.

Mobile App

Trips, forms, events, homework calendar, attendance, behaviour, assessment and more. All native in an app or on your PC.
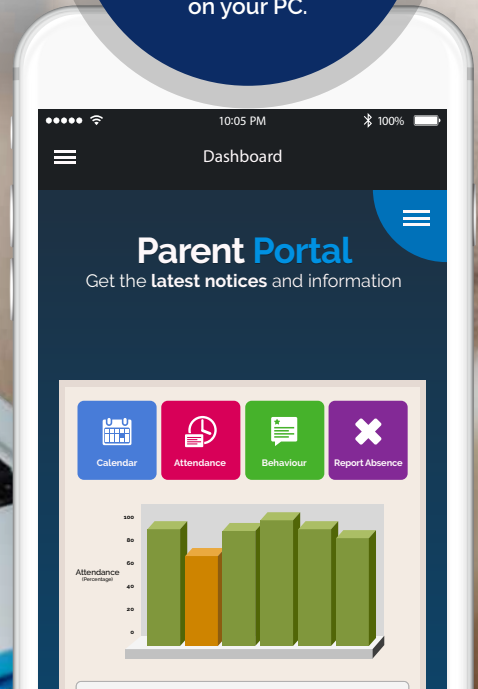
Reducing Teacher Workload

A MAT focused on reducing the administrative burden on teachers, such as changing the cultural pressures of marking, providing technologies that directly reduce workload, and offering clear guidance will see an immediate improvement, not just in the quality of teaching, but in the focus and wellbeing of their staff.

This is, of course, not just important for schools who have joined your MAT, but is particularly valuable when seeking to attract others.

PERSONAL LEARNING PLAN

OFSTED PORTAL

LESSON PLAN

HOME LEARNING PORTAL

REVISION PORTAL

Options Portal
All about your future choices

Home   Subjects   Key Questions   Careers Info   Options Form

Important Da

Monday 29th February

Progress Review Meetings.
the afternoon Mrs Mabey wi
a talk in the Main Hall regard
options choices.

Times... 3.10pm / 4.10pm /

Revision Portal
Exam preparation help

Home   Revision Tips   Exam Timetable   Past Papers   External Links   Forum   Need Help?   Stress Busters

Exam Notices   Welcome to your Revision Portal

n array of useful tips and information on revision
e. This includes access to past exam papers, a forum to
ou have, revision documents, exam timetables and more.

How to revise | BBC Newsbeat

BBC news beat

CPD Portal
Keeping you updated with relevant training, information, skills and knowledge

Home   CPD & Inset Days   Resources   Request Training   TeachMeets

How frog helps

Frog provides pre-built portals such as: Options portal, Parent portal, eSafety portal, Revision portal, Governor portal, Homework portal, Ofsted portal, ePortfolios, IT Support and more! All can be enabled with the click of a button.

What our MATs have to say...

"At a time when schools are under tremendous academic and financial pressure and resources are scarce - the need to work more effectively across our MAT is a top priority for us. Frog gives us the ability to transform what we build together!"

....

Richard Machin, Headteacher
Finham Multi-Academy Trust

"As a trust we share HR, admin, finance and some elements of governance across our 5 schools. With **FrogConnect** we no longer have to struggle to share resources across departments in the trust."

....

Sarah Balmer, Senior IT Technician
Education Village

GET IN TOUCH

If you would like to discuss your requirements further why not get in touch with us?

PHONE
01422 250 800

EMAIL
hello@frogeducation.com

What do you need to **succeed**?

Let's be honest, rolling technology, or any new processes out across multiple schools is not an insignificant task. It's not just the logistics and technology challenges, there's politics too. Fortunately, we've rolled Frog out thousands of times now and we've learned how to navigate through this.

We will hold your hand through the whole process, but a few key things to think about are...

Do you have commitment to the project from SLT?

A project that will make a difference.

You will need a small team of people to run this.
It can be vulnerable if you leave it in the hands of just one person.

Our team will help you on your journey, focussed specifically on the unique goals of your schools.

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....

hello@frogeducation.com

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+44 (0)1422 250 800