

# The Growth of Multi-Academy Trusts

The implications and opportunities for the  
Independent education sector

March 2016

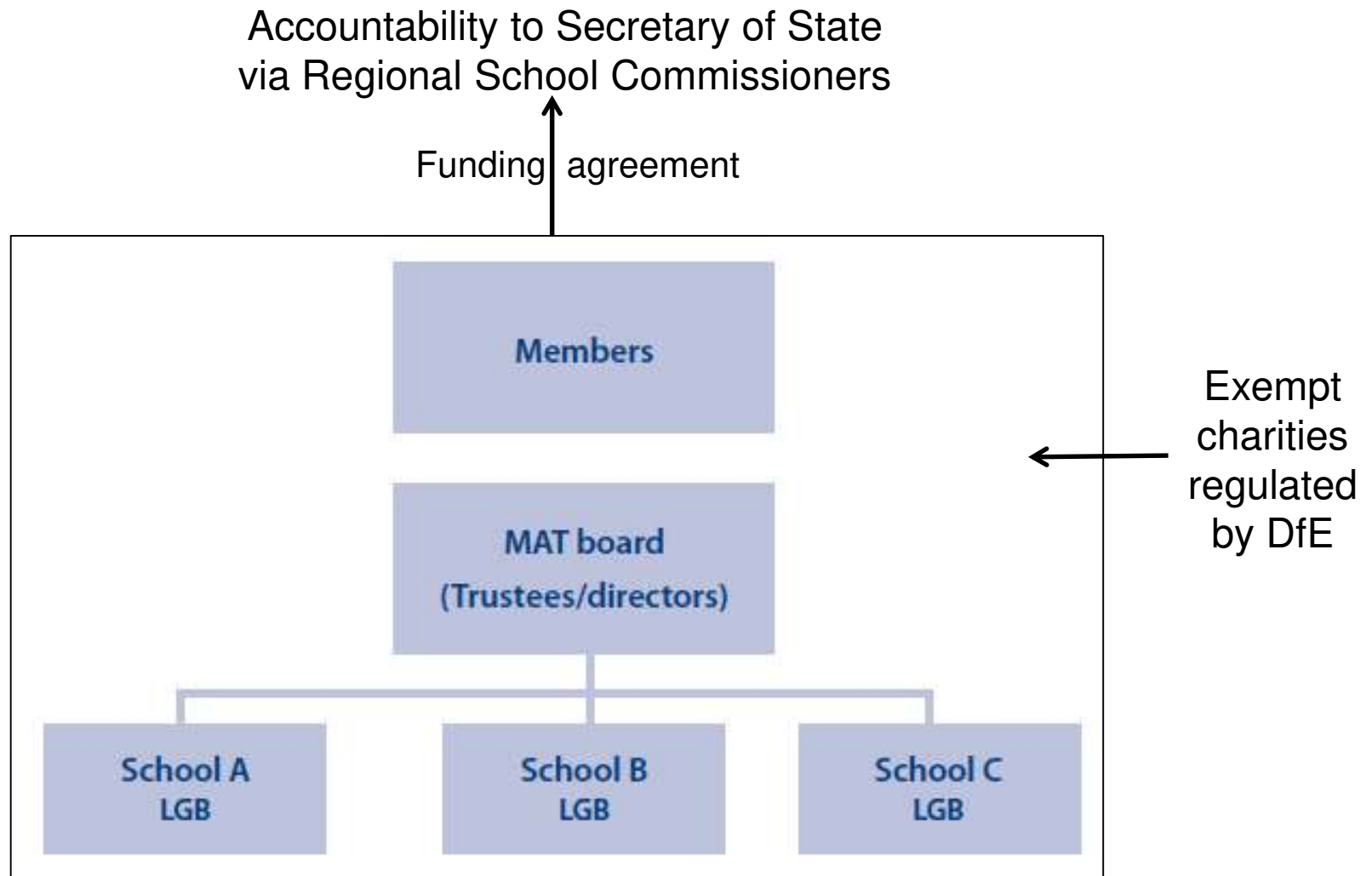


# The genesis of MATs

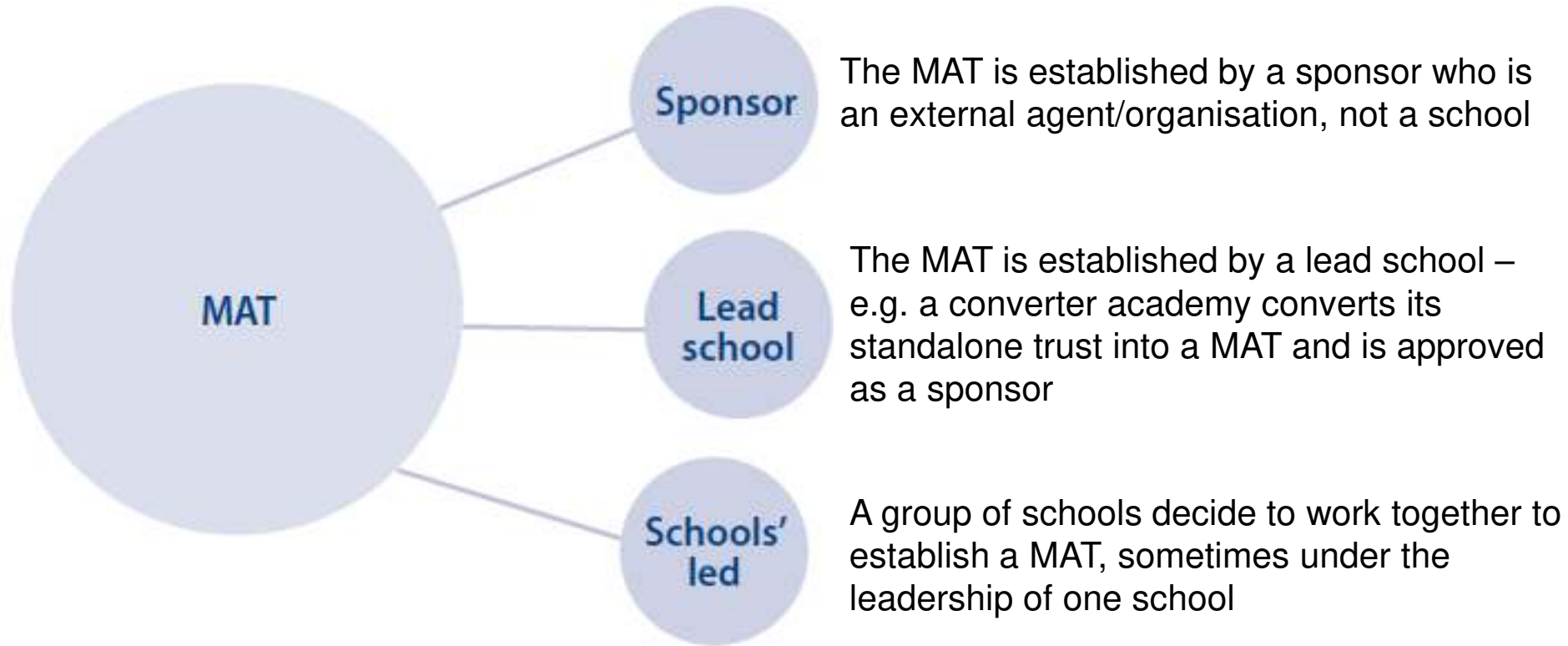
- The academy movement owes part of its DNA to the independent sector
  - Academies were conceived as independent state schools (forerunners were City Technology Colleges)
  - Academy trusts grew out of both independent school groups and school improvement federations/ groupings in the maintained sector



# Legal framework



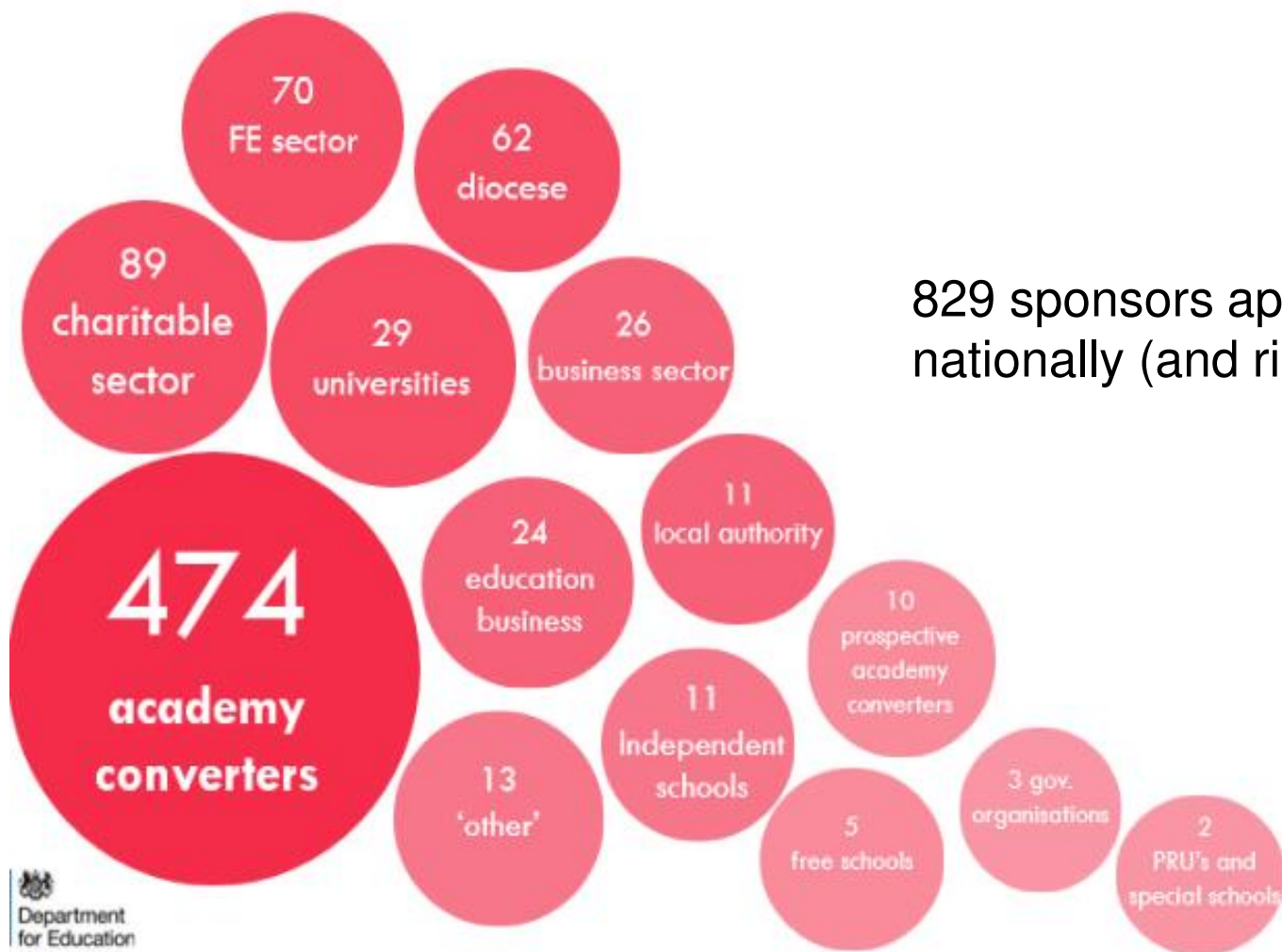
# Pathways to becoming a MAT



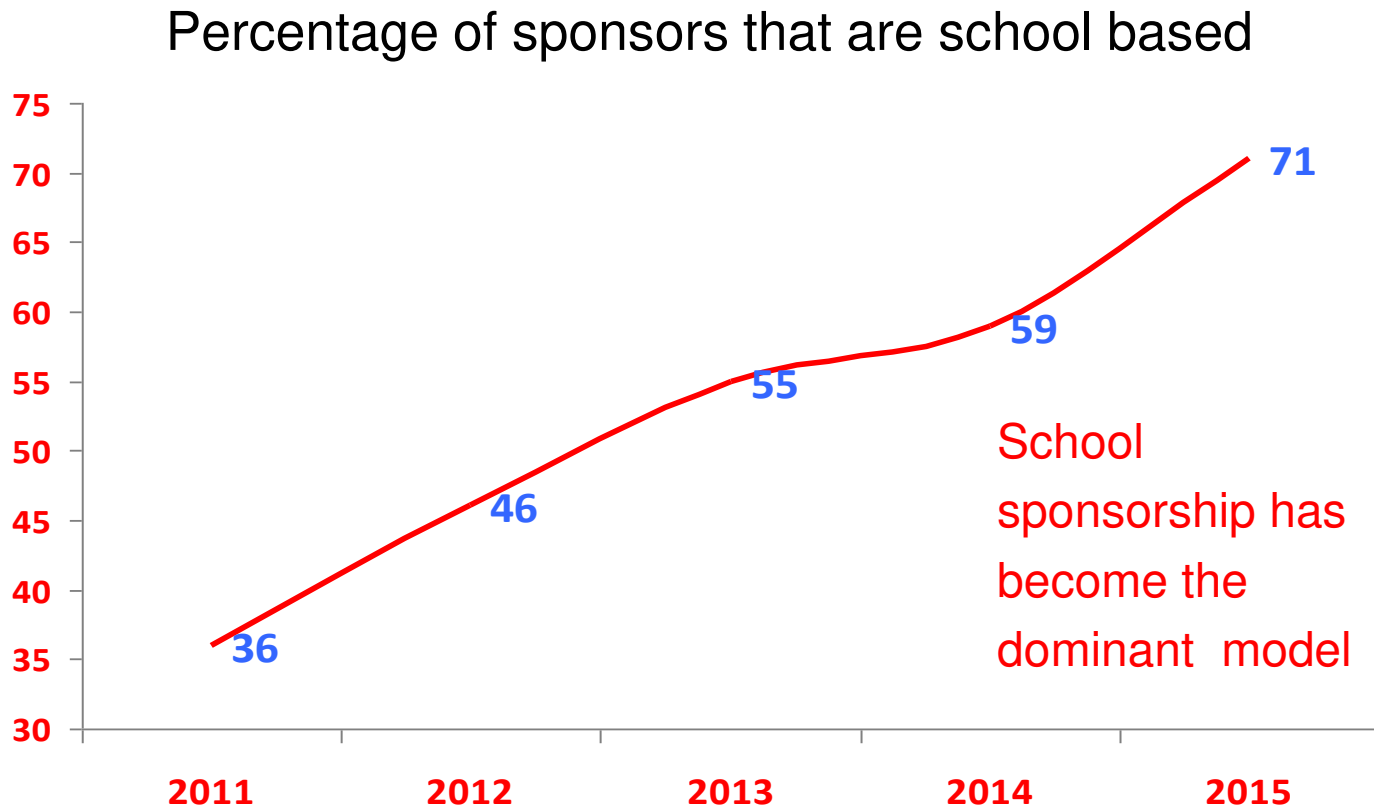
## A growing number of MATs

Group range	2011		2015	
	Number	%	Number	%
1	649	59%	2093	41%
2	132	12%	519	10%
3-5	128	12%	932	18%
6-10	57	5%	547	11%
11-20	31	3%	443	9%
21-30	25	2%	126	2%
31-40	18	2%	136	3%
41+	55	5%	283	6%
Total	1095		5079	

# The sponsors



# Changes in sponsorship over time



Department for Education

# Support beyond sponsorship

- Independent sector schools are also supporting academies with
  - Governors and governance
  - Leadership
  - Subject expertise
  - Broader partnership programmes
- Some academy chains are a mix of state and independent schools





# Learning from early sponsors

## Best sponsors

- Geographically focused
- Worked through clusters
- Did not expand too fast
- Had clear pedagogical approach
- Used improvement expertise within schools
- Strong, distributed and continuous leadership
- Effective governance
- Strong oversight

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## Struggling sponsors

- Geographically dispersed
- Overambitious: expanded too fast
- No clear school improvement approach and insufficient school improvement capacity
- Tended to rely on regional directors, consultants and bought-in school improvement
- Weak central organisation
- Some financial improprieties
- Variable oversight/governance

# Reforms made by struggling early sponsors

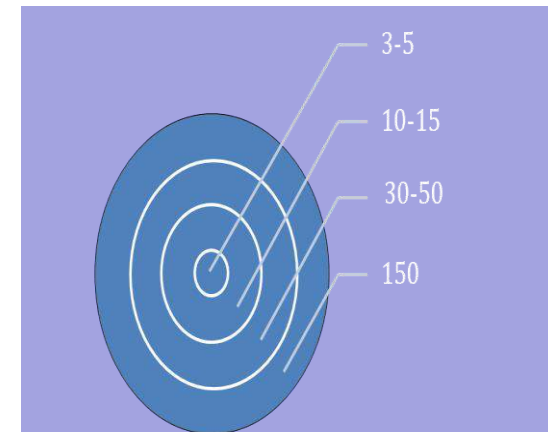
- Change of leadership - new CEOs
- Improved governance
- Loss of academies
- Independent reviews
- Move to clustering
- Emphasis on school improvement
- Links with stronger schools/TSAs
- More independent audit
- Pause on further expansion

**E-ACT**



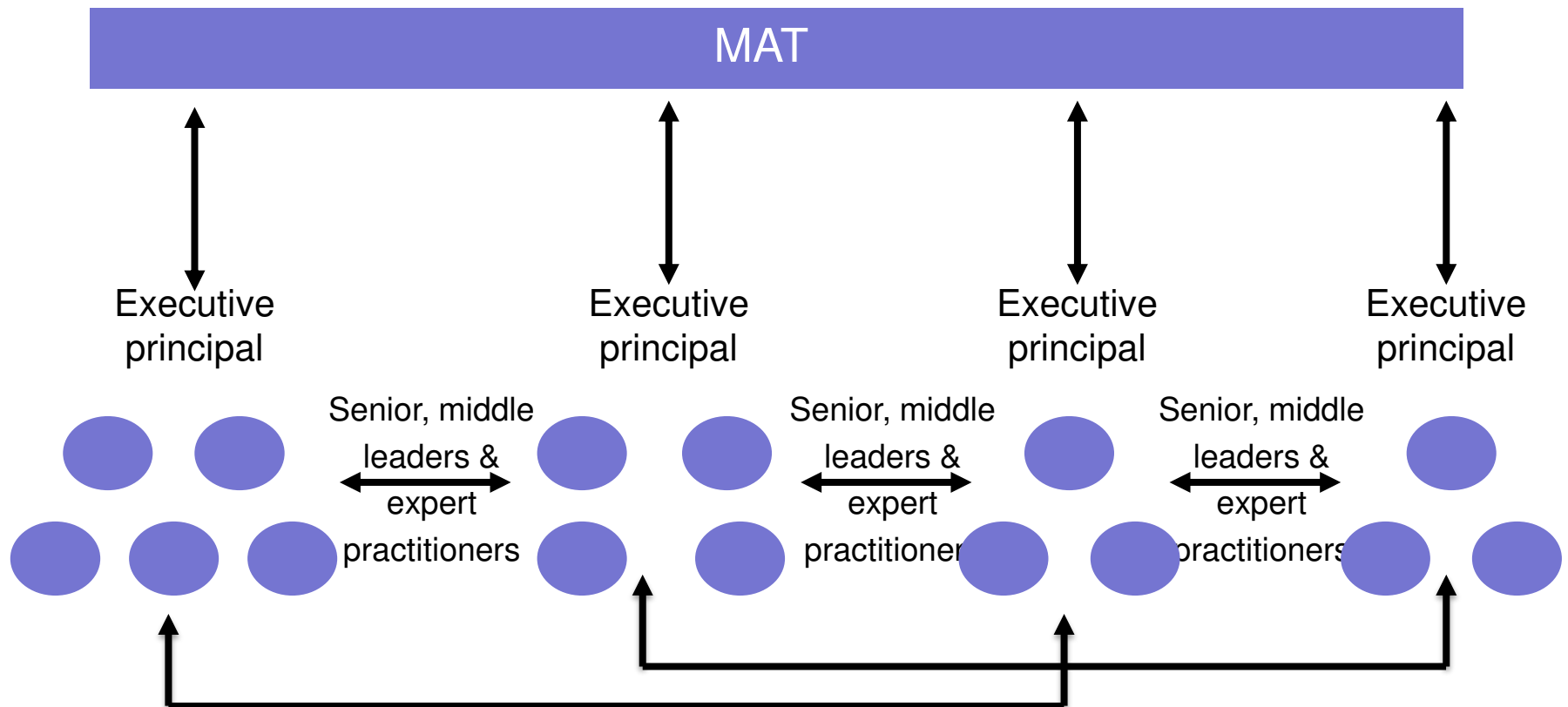
# Characteristics of newer sponsors

- Most have fewer than 10 academies
- Building more on in-house expertise
- Cross-phase trusts becoming more commonplace (but impact not yet proven)
- Often a mix of converter & sponsored academies
- Increasing number of diocesan MATs
- Differential levels of autonomy
- Some MATs struggling with business sustainability
- Clustering becoming more the norm



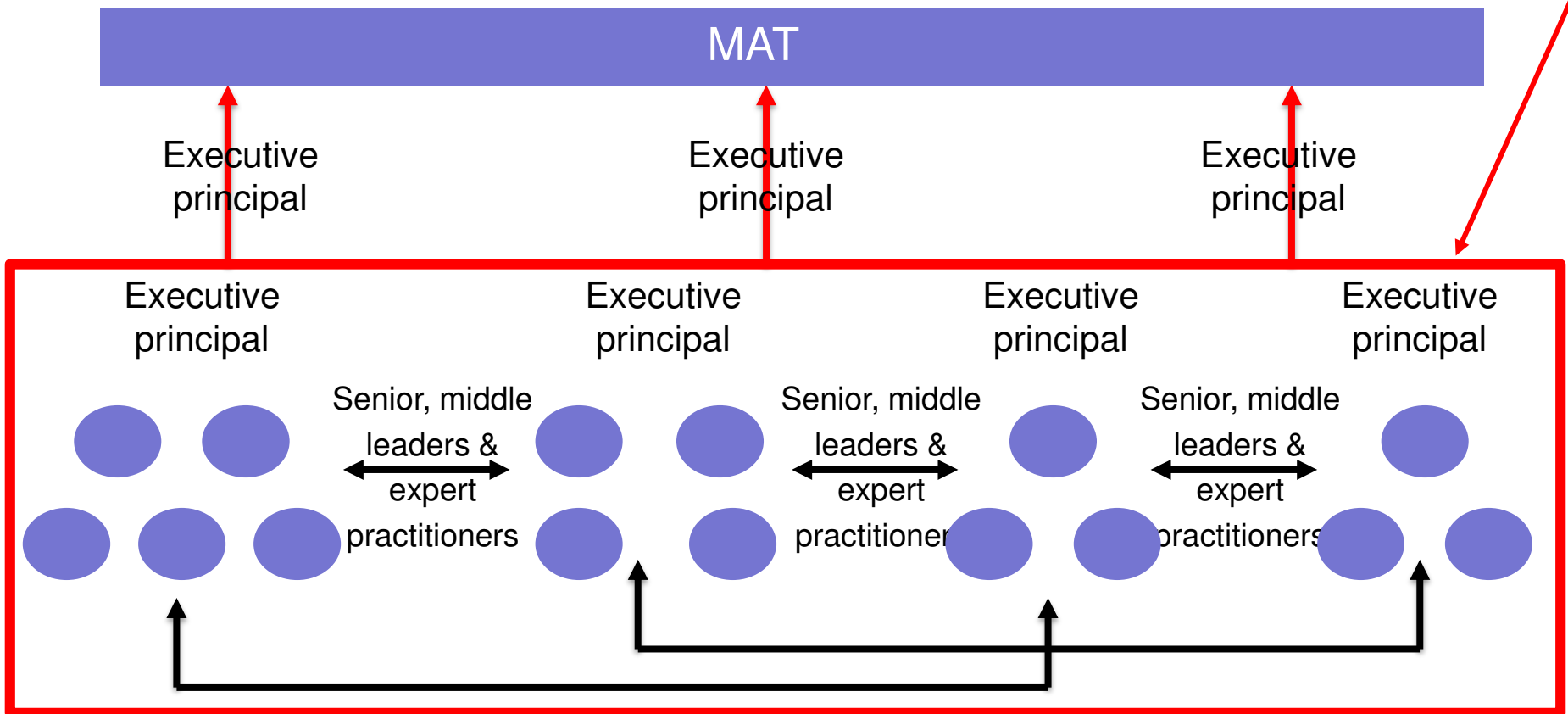
# MATs working through clusters

Scale and spans of control in a growing MAT



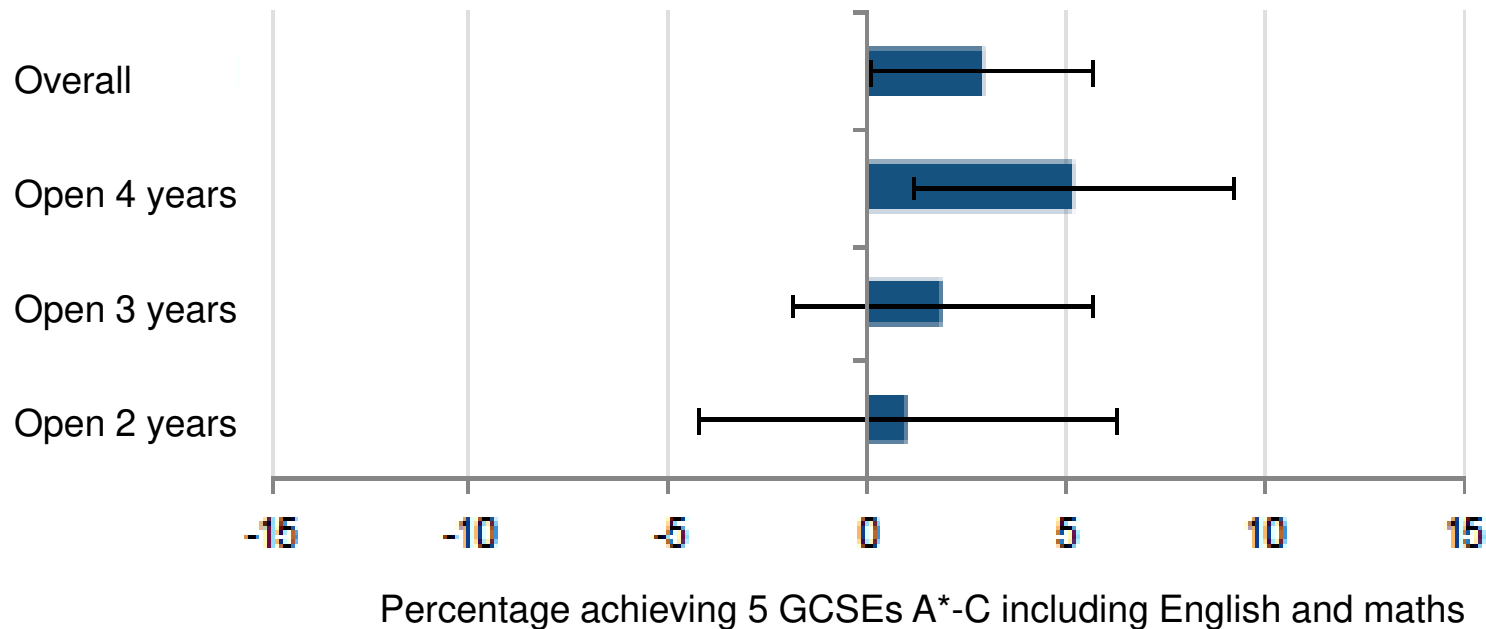
# MATs working through clusters (and in some cases) regions

Some larger MATs also using Regional Directors



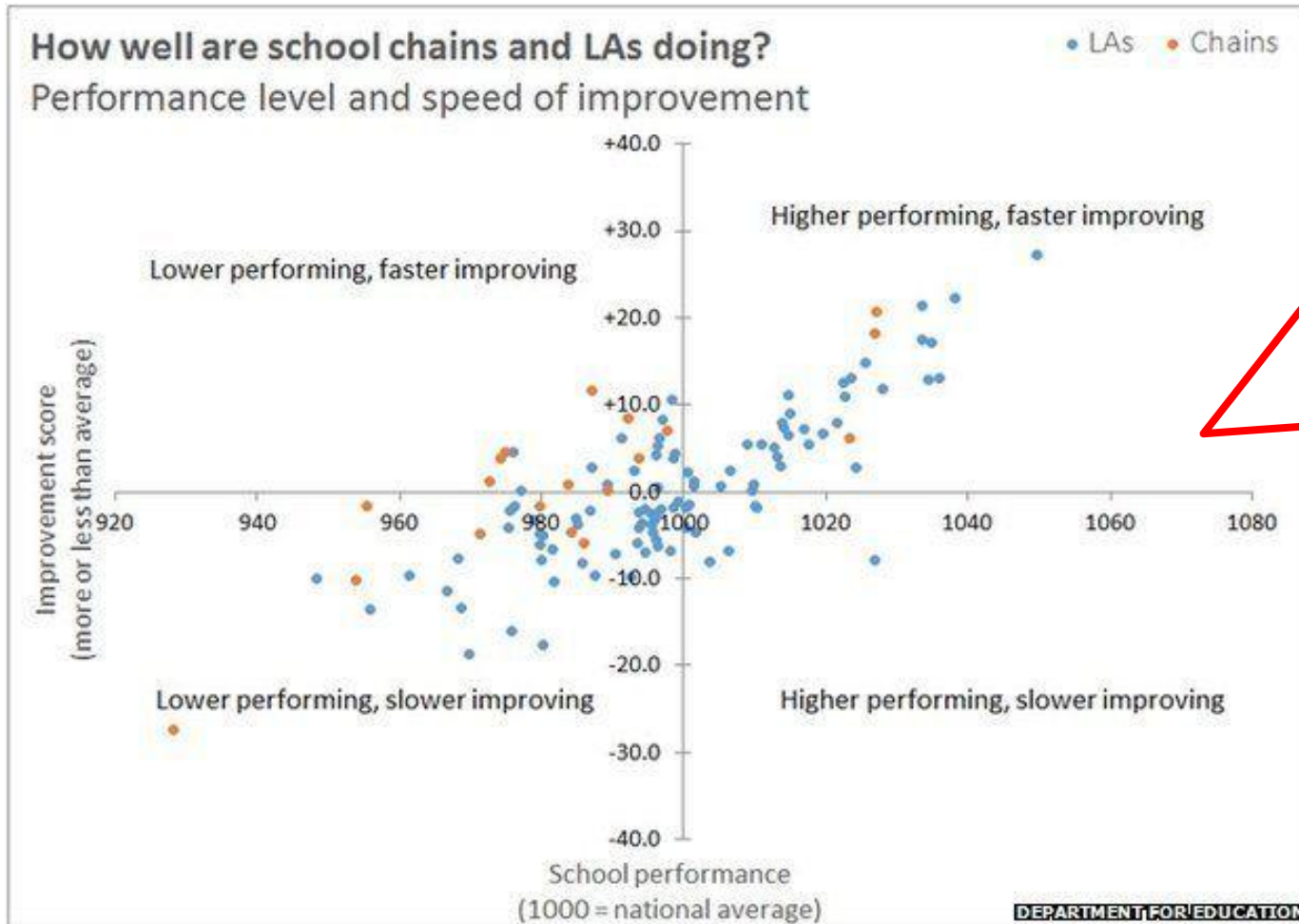
# Impact of sponsored academies and MATs (1)

Difference between sponsored academies and similar maintained schools in 2014 percentage achieving 5 A\*-C including English and maths



Source: NfER, *2015 Analysis of academy school performance in GCSEs 2014*, Local Government Association

## Impact of sponsored academies and MATs (2)



- Not that much difference in the distribution of LA and MAT performance
- Big variations within and between MATs



# Impact of sponsored academies and MATs (1)

- Some challenges
  - 130 academies have received a warning or pre warning notice(s)
  - Around 100 academies (or more) have had to be re-brokered from one sponsor to another
  - The rate at which sponsors are turning round 'inadequate' schools is arguably not as rapid as for maintained schools\*

\*The evidence is partial and sponsors are taking on some of the toughest schools



# There are risks in not being part of a MAT

*“Academy converters were initially high-performing schools that were given the option to become academies. Over time, the option to become a converter was opened to schools with lower performance. Forty-five per cent of converter academies are in MATs.*

***“Last year, we reported that more converters that were not in MATs declined than those that were in trusts. This remains the case in inspections this year.”***



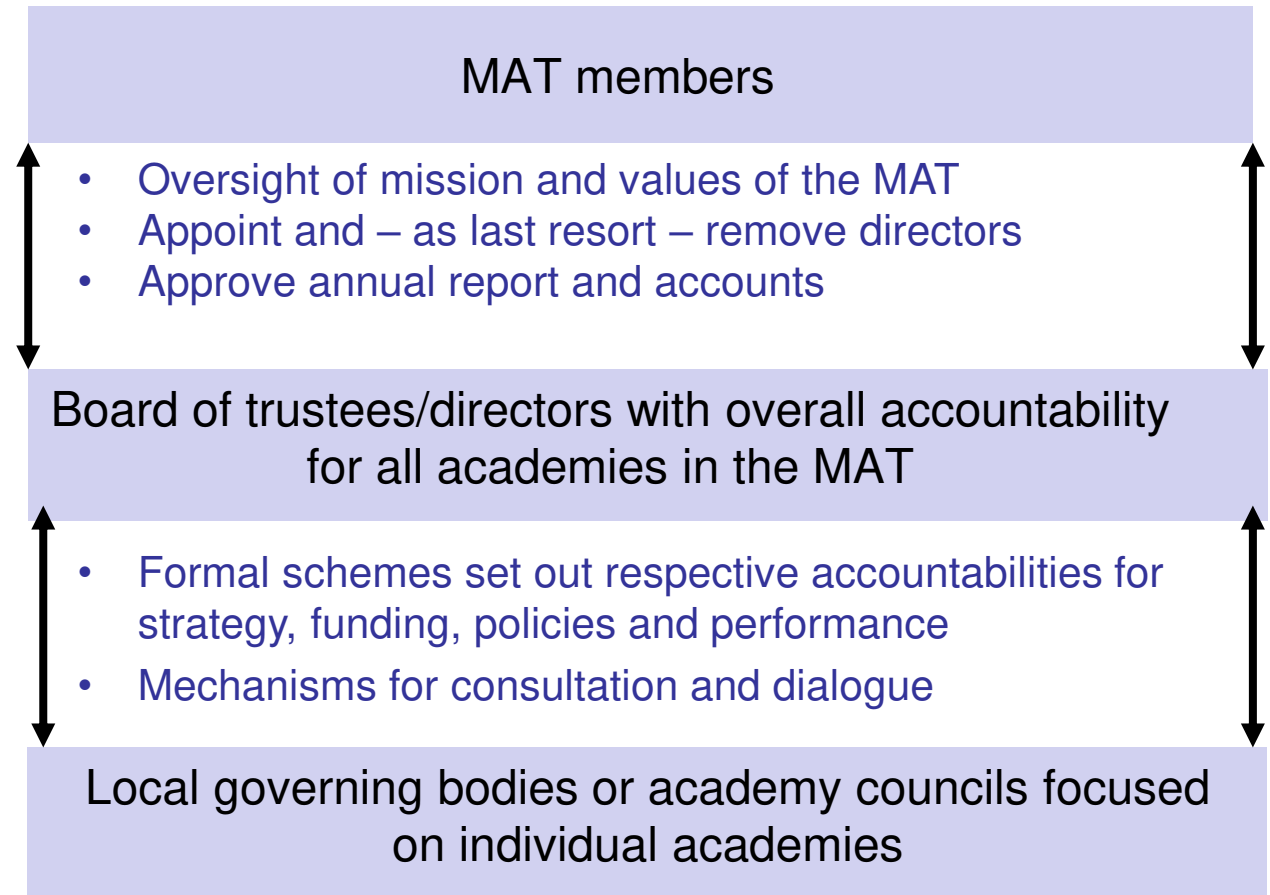
Source: The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2014/15

# Six areas of potential learning from the best MATs

1. Layered governance
2. Sharp accountability
3. Leadership models and pathways
4. Staff development
5. Business support
6. Balancing hierarchy and networking



# 1. Layered governance

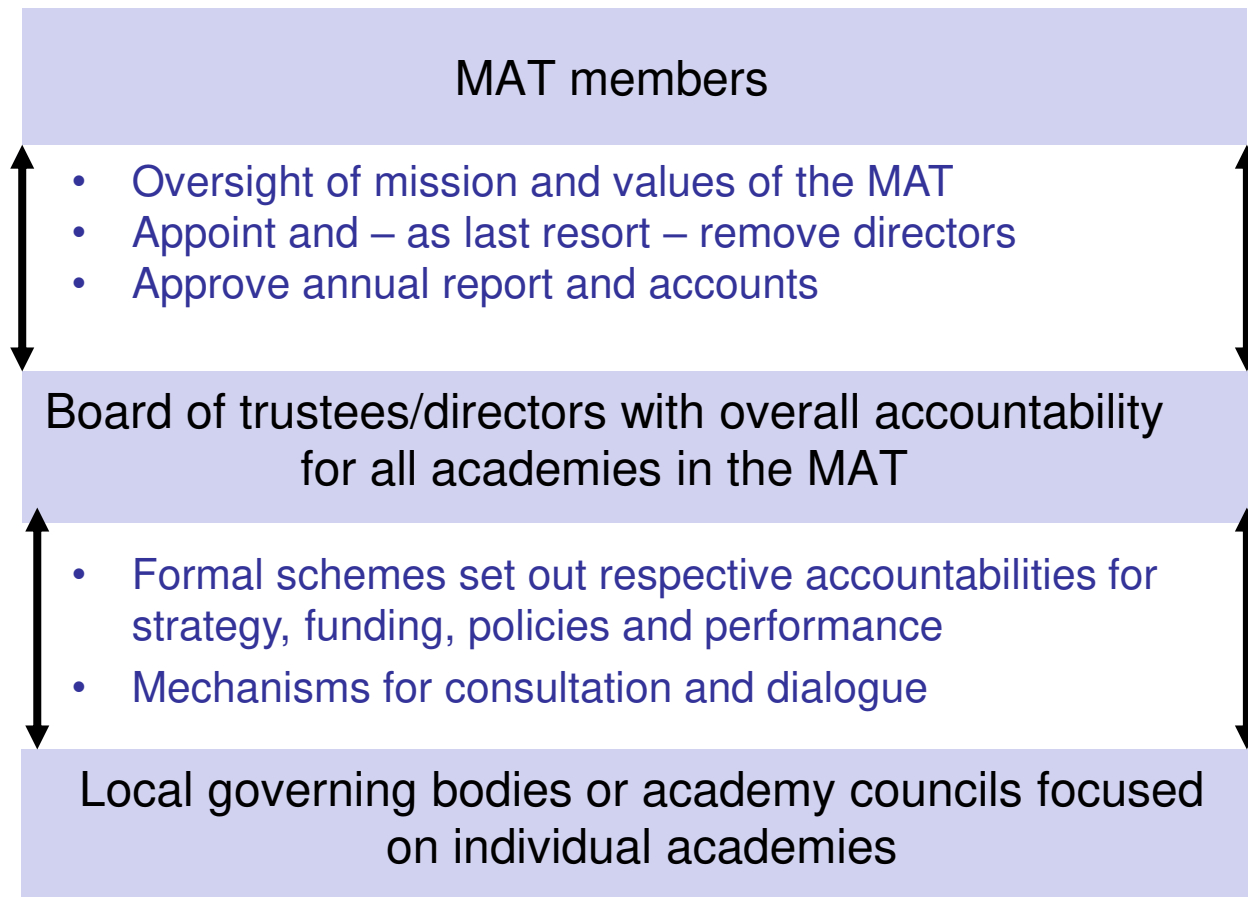


# 1. Layered governance

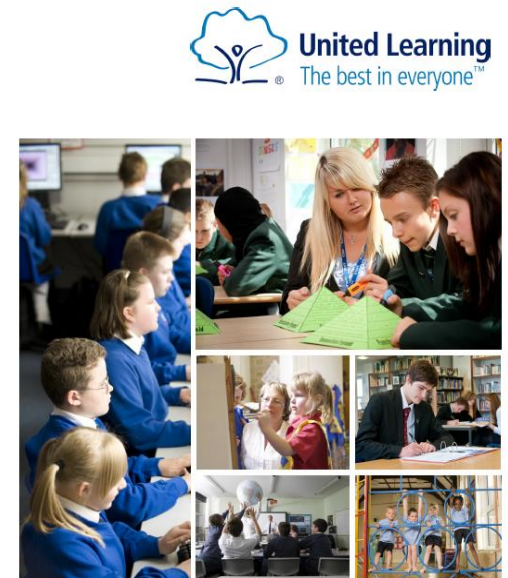
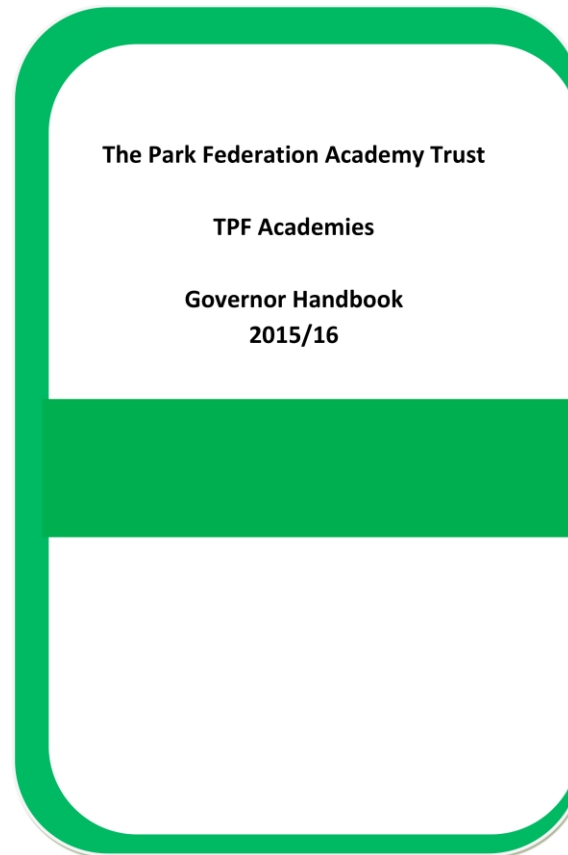
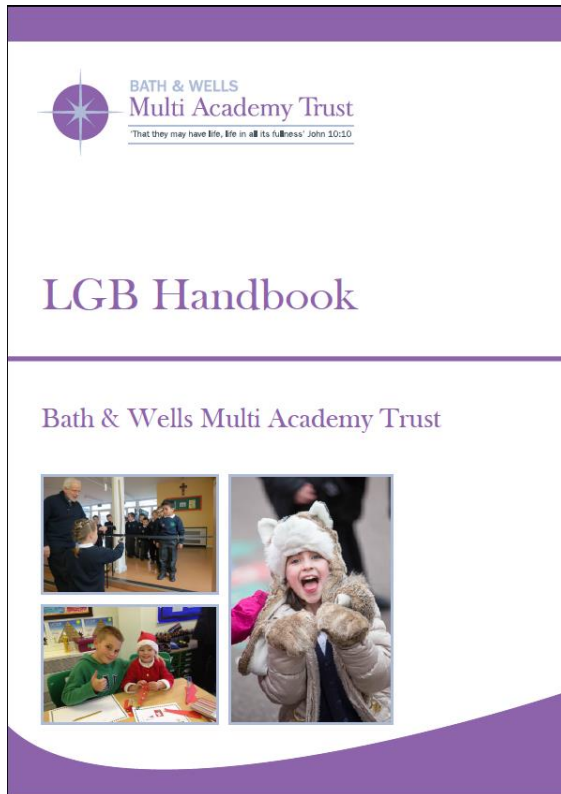
- Emphasis on skills
- Good training and development



- Size typically of 7-11 members
- Fewer committees
- High quality chairs



# Examples of formalised operating rules



Handbook  
for Local Governing Body members

## 2. Sharp accountability (1)

**BLACKBOX**  
Academy Dashboard - Term 1 2015

Wings Oak Academy Date: Oct-15 Group: G3

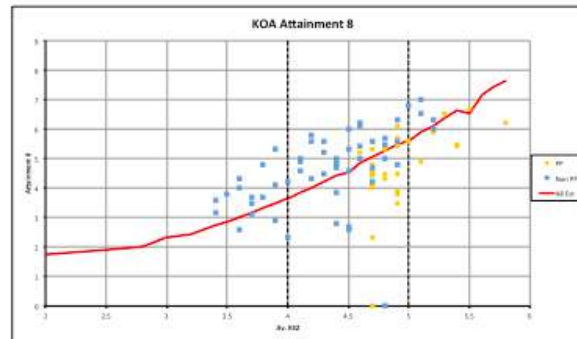
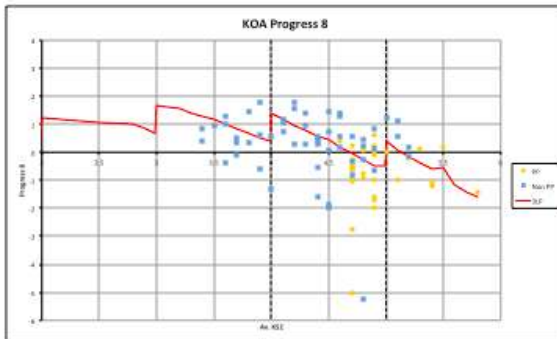
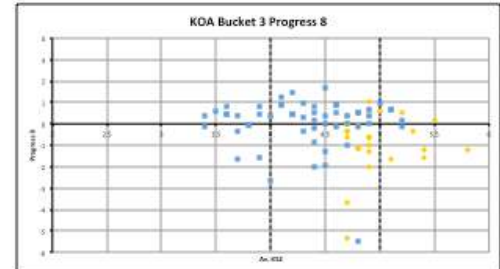
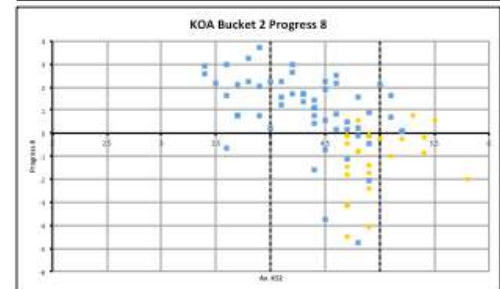
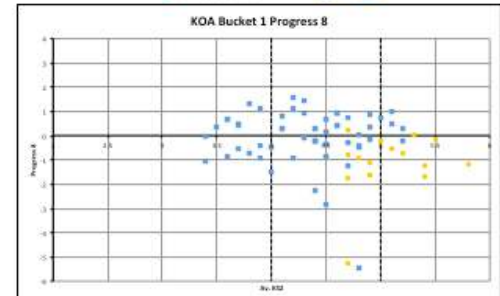
2016 Outcomes for pupils

Subject	2015 Progress	2015 Attainment	2016 Progress	2016 Attainment	2016 Progress Gap	2016 Attainment Gap
English	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Maths	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Science	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
History	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Geography	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Art	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Music	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Physical Education	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Religious Education	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Personal, Social and Health Education	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Foreign Languages	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%

2016 Outcomes for pupils (continued)

Subject	2015 Progress	2015 Attainment	2016 Progress	2016 Attainment	2016 Progress Gap	2016 Attainment Gap
English	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
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Science	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
History	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Geography	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Art	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Music	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Physical Education	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Religious Education	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	0.0%	0.0%
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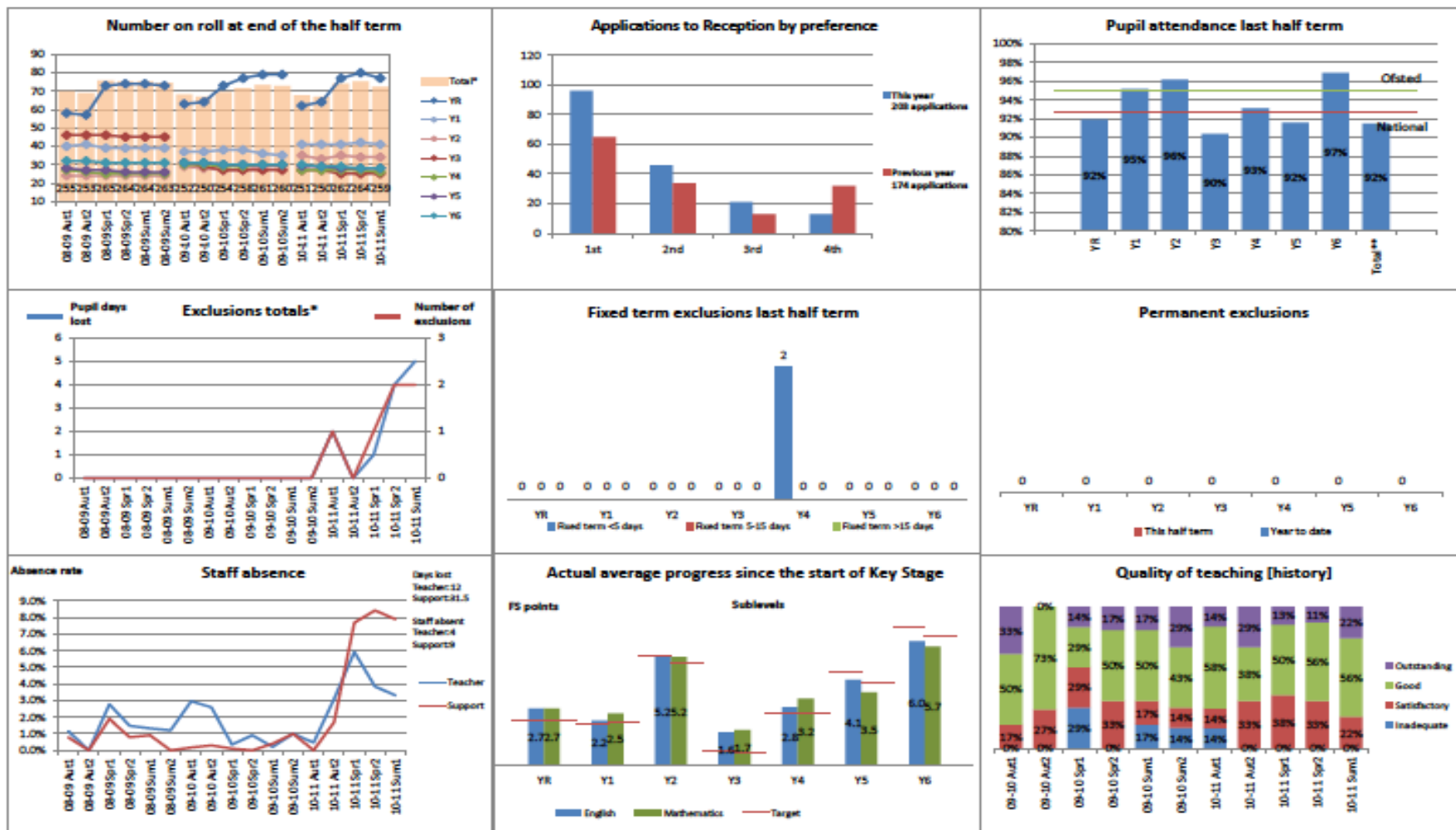
CLF Data Analysis



Source: Cabot Learning Federation



## 2. Sharp accountability (2)



Source: ARK Schools Trust

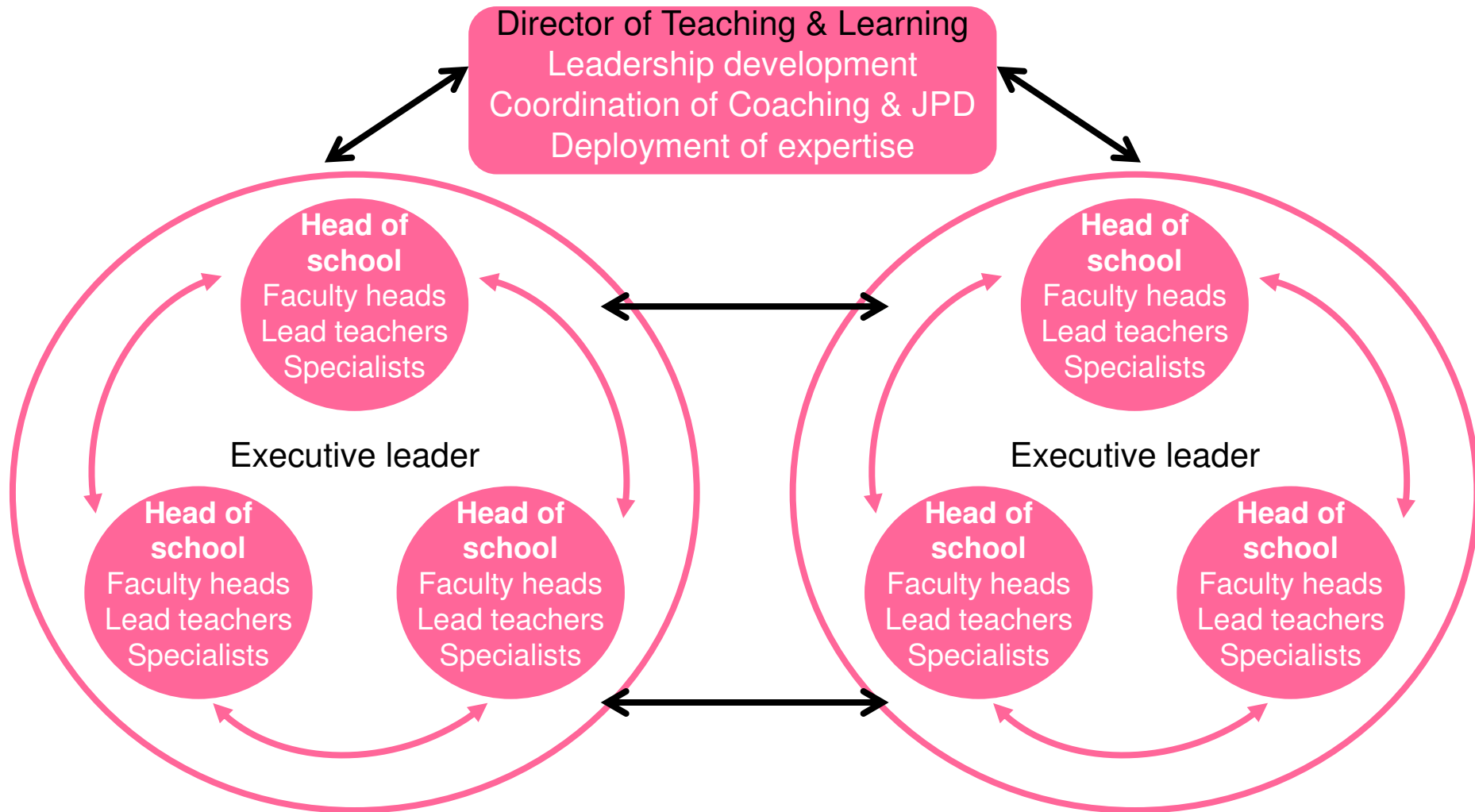


## 2. Sharp accountability (3)

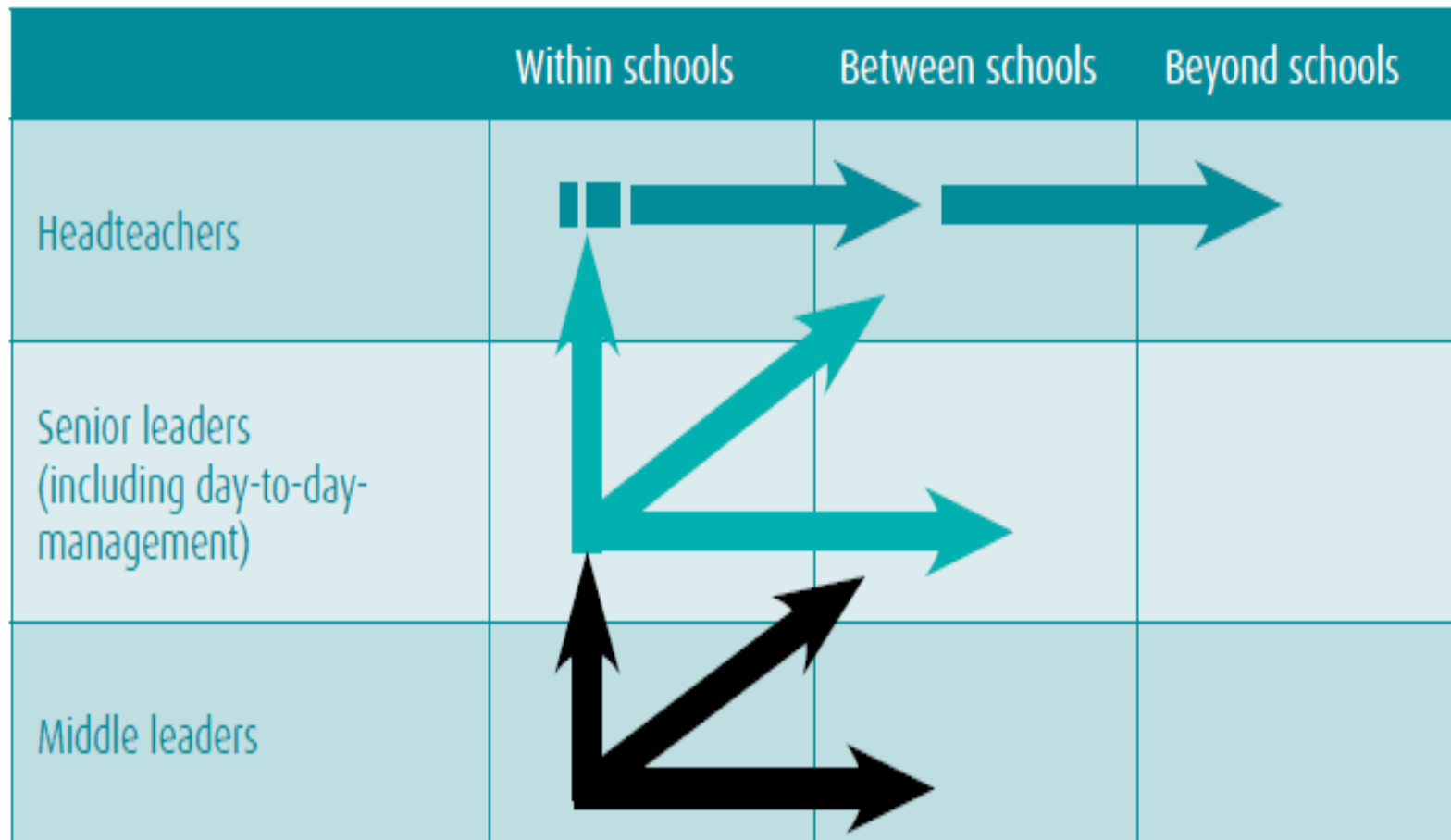
- Peer review and/or external review
- Joint lesson observations
- One-to-ones between senior leaders
- Shared assessment and moderation
- Learning walks
- Joint reviews on issues of concern
- Common performance management



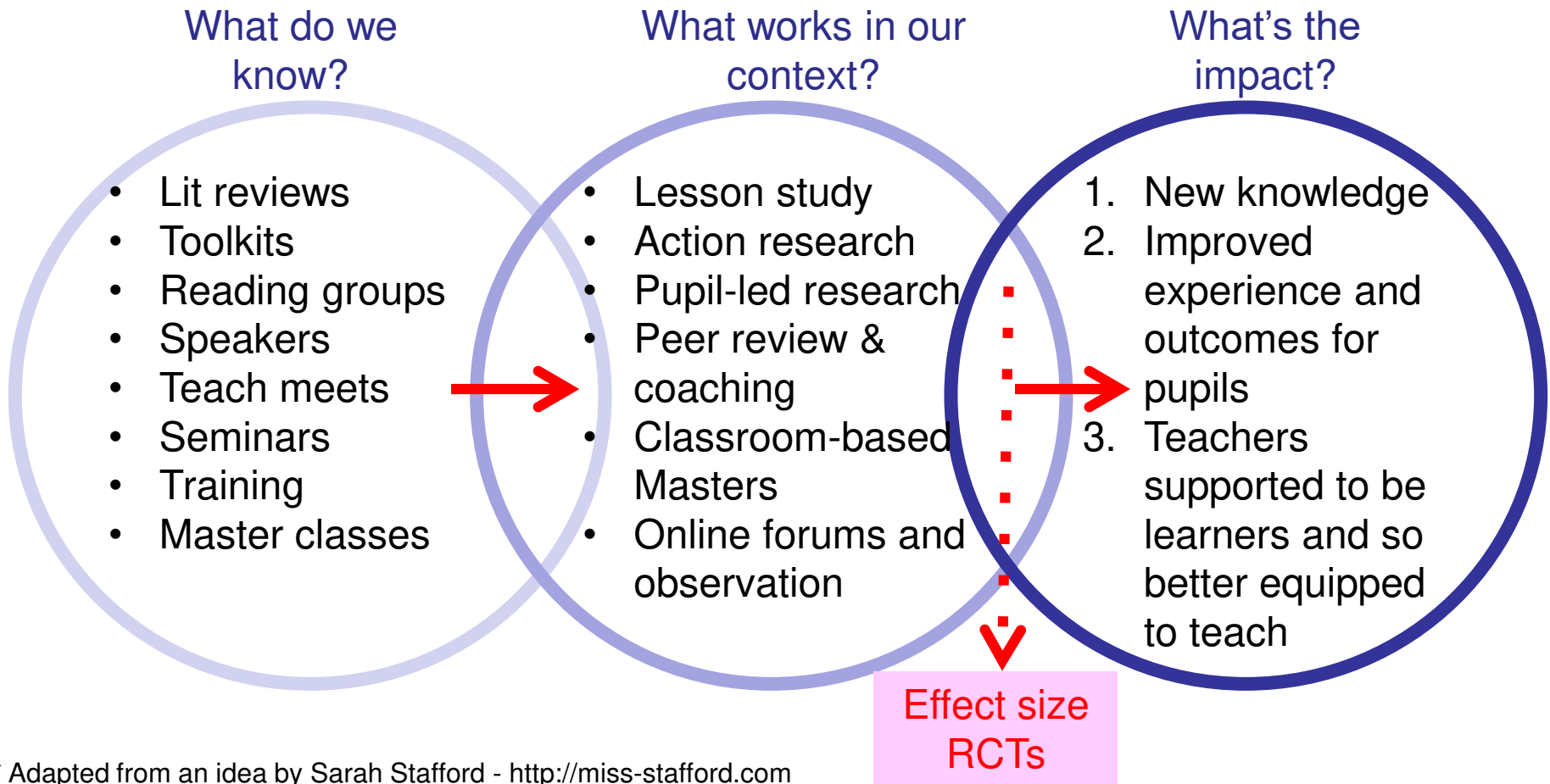
### 3. New leadership models...



### 3. ...and pathways



## 4. New ways of thinking about staff development...



\* Adapted from an idea by Sarah Stafford - <http://miss-stafford.com>


## 4. ...to support the growth of a shared teaching and learning model

- Agreeing on the fundamentals of school turn-around
- Sharing schemes of work, curriculum models and student voice
- Building up a shared understanding of outstanding teaching and learning
- Standardising through co-construction key aspects of pedagogy
- Flexing the curriculum to meet students' needs



## 4. ...with a teaching school as part of the MAT


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[EVENTS](#)

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## Welcome to the Harris Federation Teaching School Alliance

The Harris Federation Teaching School Alliance is the professional development centre for the Harris Federation. We provide high-quality training that is facilitated by experienced school leaders, who have exemplary records in leading successful school improvement, and improving outcomes for their students. Our highly practical training and support programmes are available to all schools and academies, not just to Harris Federation staff.

The Harris Federation has a proven track record of transforming underperformance rapidly, with 20 of our secondary academies all rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' and 75% rated 'outstanding' (Ofsted). The success we have had so far is a direct result of the talented and dedicated teachers, support staff and leadership teams we have in our Academies.

[Read More](#)

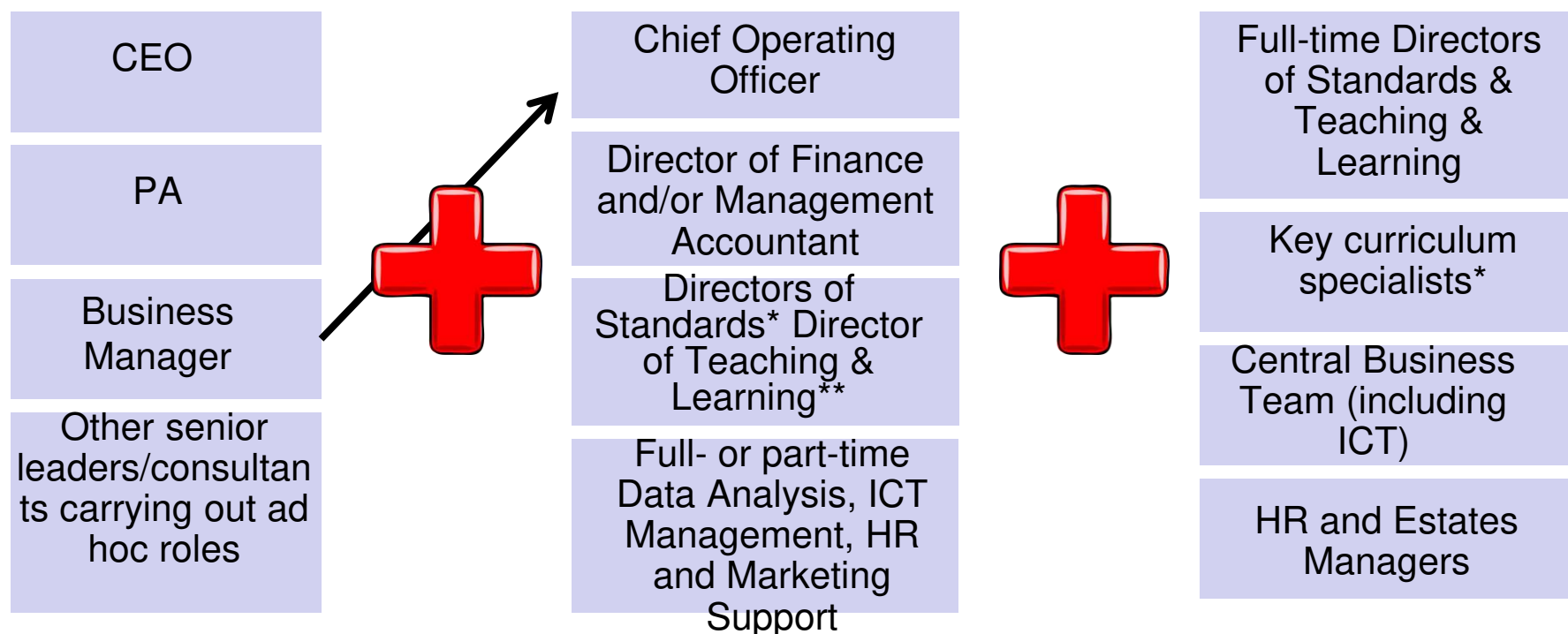
Training for new teachers	✓
School leaders	✓
Quality of teaching	✓
Specialist leaders	✓

## 5. New model for business management

- Shared posts and teams across schools – particularly at senior AND middle leadership level and in specialist areas
- Flexible deployment of staff with expertise
- A chief operations function to lead:
  - Shared services – HR, EWO, ICT, estates etc
  - Joint procurement
  - Integrated business planning and financial management
  - Common data systems



## 5. New model for business management



\*Might be linked to SLT role in a MAT academy

\*\*Might be an external consultant/expert

\*Might be based in academies

Fledglin

MAT spectrum

Mature



## 6. Balancing hierarchy and networking

Shared understanding of how to improve teaching and learning



# Pause for thought

Questions?

Disagreement?

Discussion?

Debate?

