



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

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Thank you for your interest in applying for this post. I hope that the information in this application pack and a visit to our setting will give you a good sense of the unique nature of our trust.

Astrum Multi Academy Trust was formed in 2017. Our outstanding founder, Newbridge School and forward-thinking leaders were keen to expand our provision within the London Borough of Redbridge to further support the growing need for special school places and services. This has led to the trust expanding our current schools, developing specialist support services, opening a second school (also currently expanding) and setting up college provision for the local community of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Our vision is to maintain and further develop our outstanding education offer to current and prospective pupils and their families who are living with SEND and disabilities and who deserve the highest degree of empathy, warmth and aspiration to thrive. We believe that every pupil has the ability to achieve and live a fulfilling life and that we, as educators, have the knowledge and resources to make this happen.

At Astrum, we value our people more highly than any other resources as it is our team who create our amazing trust. We are strongly committed to professional development and career progression, more often than not, "growing our own" - I, myself, started working for one of our schools over 20 years ago as a teaching assistant. Our Central Service Team provide support to our schools and provisions in the areas of Finance, HR/Legal, Administration, IT, Facilities and Governance to enable our school leaders and colleagues to focus their time on teaching, learning and working with our pupils.

We are looking to appoint an inspiring individual who is committed to our values, can inspire collaboration and partnership working and who puts our pupils at the heart of every decision taken. We are extremely proud of the work that we do and how we support the wider SEND community within Redbridge and its surrounding areas and we look forward to bringing a new CFO into the fold to build on our fantastic legacy.



*Lara Parr*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

Being part of Astrum Multi Academy Trust Board is a deeply rewarding commitment indeed. It involves overseeing the strategic direction, policies, and overall well-being of our beloved pupils.

As a trustee, one plays a crucial role in ensuring that Astrum Multi Academy provides a supportive and inclusive environment, addresses the unique challenges of each child, and promotes their holistic development.

Collaboration with other trustees, governors and educators is essential to make informed decisions that positively impact the educational journey of these children.

The Trust Board is looking for a candidate with empathy, dedication, and a genuine commitment to fostering an atmosphere where every child can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.



*Davide Cason*

### **Astrum Multi Academy Trust Vision**

To provide high quality education that meets the needs of every pupil, especially the most vulnerable, by being innovative and sharing best excellent practice across the Trust and wider educational community.

This will be achieved through a partnership of outstanding special schools with the skills, expertise and resources working collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes for every pupil.



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## OUR TRUST

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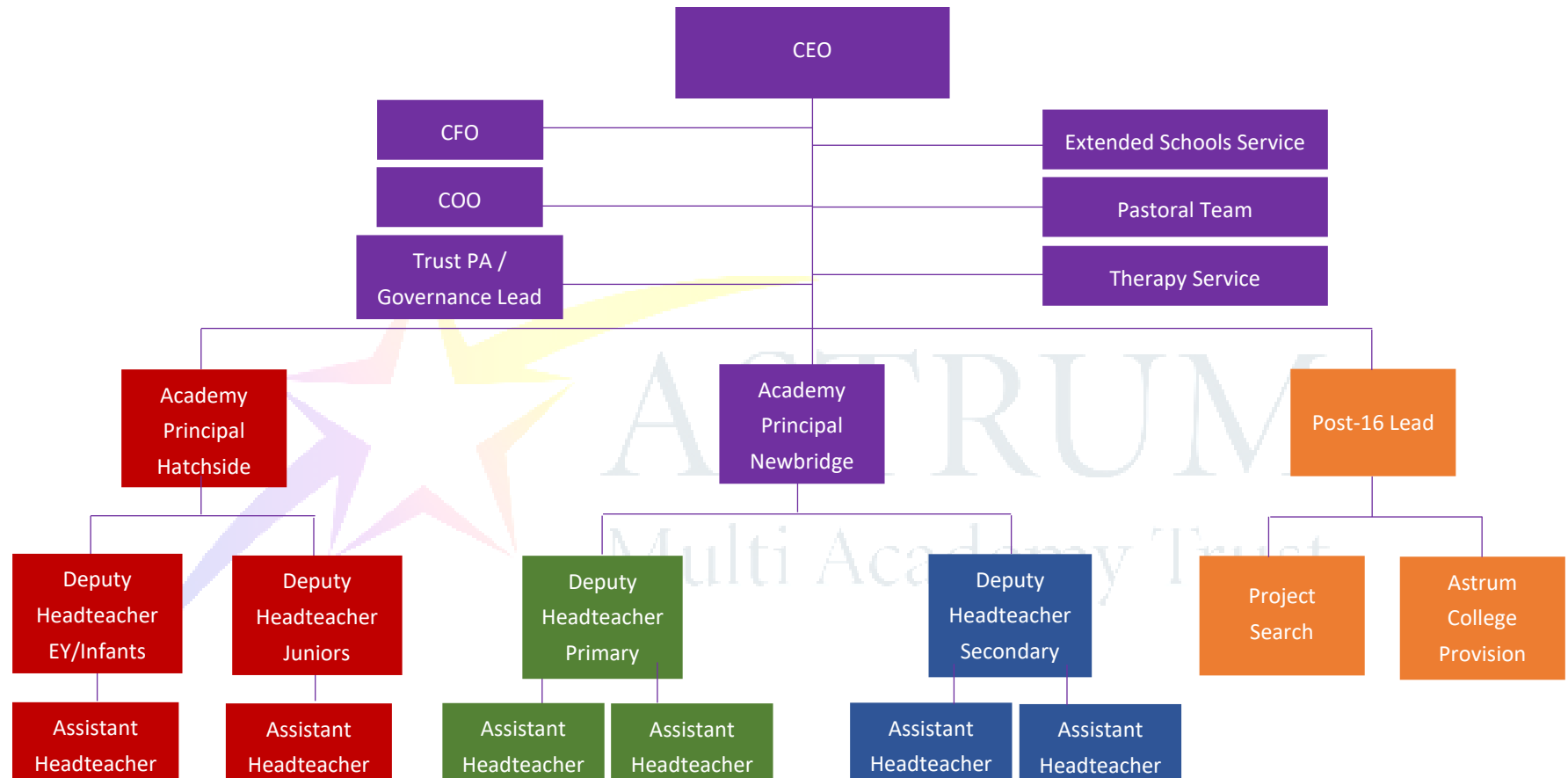
Astrum Multi Academy Trust was formed 2017 following the academisation of Newbridge School, an all through special school for pupils with a range of Severe and Complex Special Educational Needs across the London Borough of Redbridge and beyond. The second school in our Trust, Hatchside School, opened in April 2021 and currently caters for Key Stage 1 pupils with a range SEND, however, the school is expanding and we will be opening Key Stage 2 from September 2024.

In addition to our schools, we are also working in partnership with BHRUT NHS Hospitals, the Local Authority and Project Search within King George Hospital. Project Search is a one-year internship programme for post-16 pupils with learning disabilities and/or autism, whose goal is competitive employment in the community. Astrum are currently in the process of opening 'Astrum College' where our Project Search pupils will be housed, alongside a new cohort of post-school SEND pupils with severe/moderate learning difficulties. They will complete a 3-year programme of study with the intentional outcome of paid employment. Our long-term vision is to open FE provision across multiple, local sites for pupils with more complex needs who might be at risk of having limited options to post-school care and education.

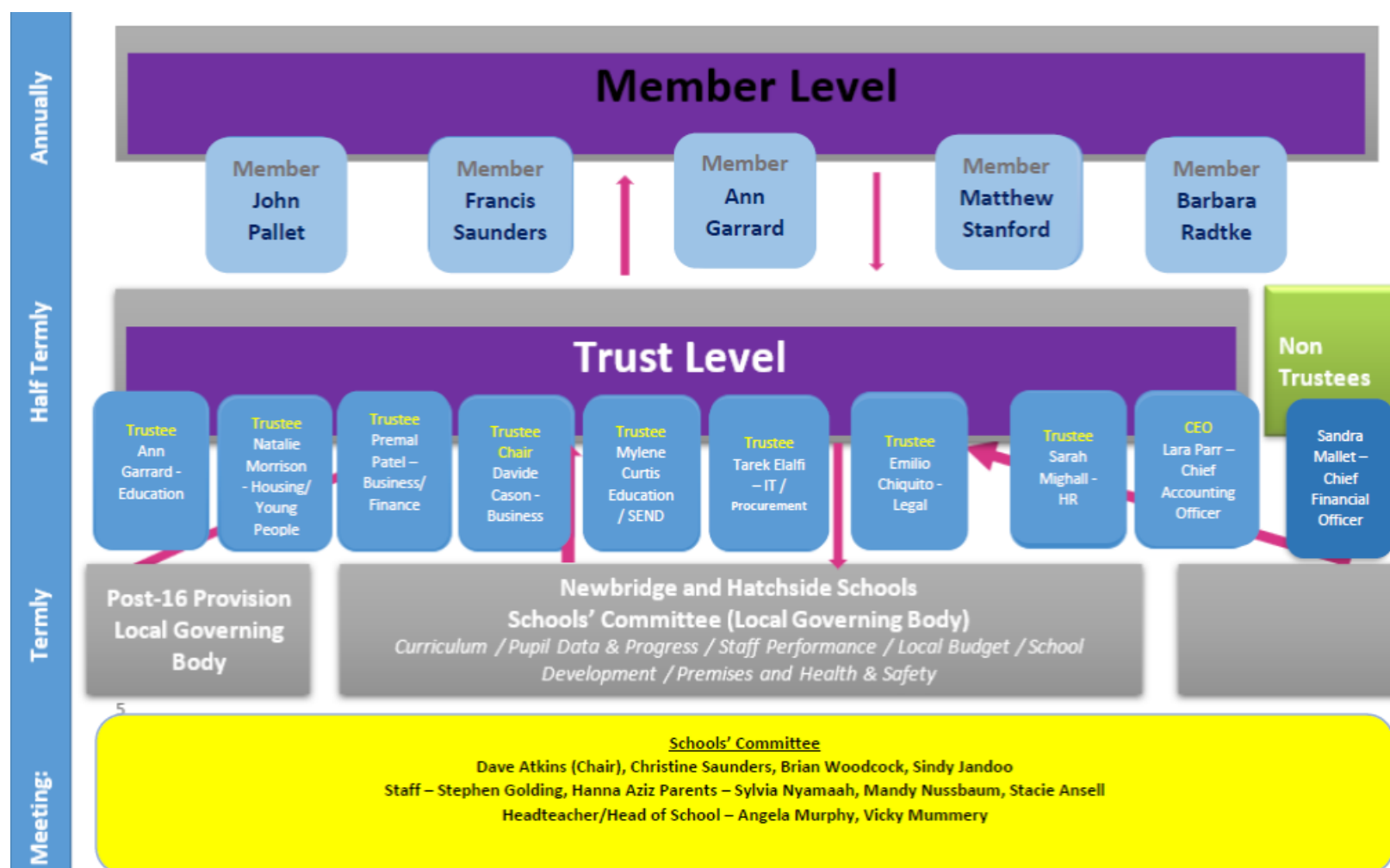
In support of our pupils' holistic needs, Astrum have developed a number of services to enable better access to education and our curriculums. Our Pastoral Support Team includes; Pastoral Lead, Parent Liaison Officers and Health/Welfare Assistants who work in partnership with families and school leaders/teachers to provide support in a range of areas, such as medical conditions, training with professionals and referrals to specialist support services. Our trust Therapy Services consists of Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and assistants who work closely with families and teaching staff to develop and implement specialist programmes. Lastly, we have worked with the local Health and Social Care Managers for a number of years to provide after school and holiday respite provision. Our Extended School's Manager works directly with school leaders and our provisions provide fun opportunities for our pupils as well as a chance for many teaching and support staff to work over-time and boost their earnings. We also hope to re-build our outreach/training/advisory services following their move back to Local Authority Management several years ago. Our schools have many specialist teaching staff and tutors who can provide both in-house as well as external CPD in areas such as; Team Teach, Assisted Handling, Makaton, ELKLAN Communication approaches, adapted EYFS approaches, etc.

We aim to grow a partnership of outstanding Special Schools and services to support the Special Needs Community in Redbridge and the surrounding areas to offer excellent opportunities for pupils and their families.

## Astrum MAT – Proposed Leadership Structure 2024-25



# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



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# CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### **Qualifications & Training**

- Qualified to degree level (desirable)
- Professional finance or finance related qualification at graduate level (i.e. ACA, ACCA, CIMA, CIPFA, MAAT or equivalent) (essential)
- Record of CPD relevant to Leadership/Financial Management
- Evidence of updating professional skills and knowledge, including training in the area of school/trust/charity finance

### **Experience**

- A proven track record of successful leadership and management experience, at a senior level (Desirable - within a school/trust/charity setting, specifically the SEND education sector)
- Experience of leading an organisation through a period of growth and expansion
- Experience managing significant financial resources with a good appreciation of relevant regulatory frameworks
- In depth knowledge of statutory requirements, procedures and regulatory requirements relating to academies/academy trusts (desirable)
- Familiarity of financial processes and procedures, including those related to internal/external audit
- Demonstrable experience of successful people management and staff development
- Experience of using and supporting others in the use of financial software packages (Desirable – working knowledge of Access Finance & Budgets)
- A proven track record of commitment to promoting, implementing and monitoring the well-being, professional learning, equal opportunities and diversity for all

### **Key Skills and Competencies**

- High level of IT competence, literacy and numeracy skills
- Ability to set and monitor budgets, within the given parameters and inform/be responsible for Risk Management
- Knowledge of statutory and regulatory accountability frameworks, relevant to the role, including the Academy Trust Handbook, Charity Commission Guidance, etc.
- Sound understanding of school finances and financial management
- Understanding of school estates/resources management and relevant risk management

### **Personal Qualities**

- The highest level of integrity and sense of moral purpose
- An understanding of, and empathy with, the lives of families living with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Excellent skills in strategic planning and strategic management of financial resources
- Approachable listener, with excellent interpersonal and 'people management' skills
- A team player who is personable and emotionally intelligent

- Ability to inspire and motivate staff – strong persuasive, influencing and interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate effectively, calmly and confidently
- Ability to present financial information to diverse stakeholders
- Decisiveness and consistency, with a focus on solutions and an ability to make decisions/recommendations based on the analysis of options
- Ability to work autonomously whilst demonstrating loyalty and collaboration, within the wider accountability structure of the trust
- Capacity to work under pressure to meet deadlines and organisational priorities
- Good organisational skills in order to plan, lead and delegate effectively, valuing the contributions of all
- Flexible with regards to working patterns and evolution of the role
- Resilience and the ability to support the school through effective change management
- Commitment to the school, community and the wider values and ethos of the trust
- Commitment to staff's and own personal development



## Job Description

Job Title	<b>Chief Financial Officer (CFO)</b>
Pay Grade/Scale	OUTL 18-19, SCP 53-60 (£65,025-£73,331)
Job type	Permanent
Hours/Weeks	36 x 52 weeks per year
Location	Multi-site, across Astrum MAT
Responsible to	CEO
Responsible for	Finance Team

Astrum Multi Academy Trust is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We will consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership.

### Job Purpose

The CFO is responsible for the financial development and sustainability of Astrum Multi Academy Trust and provisions and for the financial probity of the whole organisation.

They will be responsible for providing the leadership and management of the trust's finance and business functions, enabling the trust to work effectively towards its aims.

They will support the CEO in their role as the trust's accounting officer.

### Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities listed below are indicative of the tasks the CFO of Astrum will perform, and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. The postholder will be expected to take on additional responsibilities appropriate to the role as they arise.

### Strategic leadership and development of the trust

The CFO will be accountable for supporting the trust's strategic development and aims through effective financial planning and management, in line with regulations.

The CFO will:

- Advise the CEO, board and other trust leaders on all matters relating to financial strategy and operations
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the trust's strategy, providing financial analysis and guidance on all activities, setting financial objectives and monitoring performance
- Conduct financial due diligence on schools applying to join the trust, and report to the board and other trust leaders with recommendations
- Contribute to the trust's risk management efforts, including identifying strategic and operational financial risks, taking steps to mitigate these risks, and maintaining the trust's risk register
- Work with the CEO and Chief Operating Officer (COO) to develop, implement and monitor the trust's business plan (including strategy for growth and trust development), using effective financial and budget modelling and benchmarking to support strong decision-making
- Work with the CEO and COO to identify opportunities for growth

- Lead on the development of the trust's financial systems and processes
- Be responsible for developing a capital strategy for the trust, managing capital funds and securing capital funding through CIF and other bids
- Foster relationships outside of the trust, including membership within agreed professional networks to keep abreast of strategic developments within the sector that may impact on the trust and create opportunities for trust development

### **Financial management and control**

The CFO will be accountable for maintaining robust financial management of the trust and its academies.

The CFO will:

- Manage the budget process, from planning through to approval, working with other trust leaders
- Work with Headteachers/Principals within the trust to prepare and monitor individual academies' budgets in line with school development plans and the trust's strategic objectives
- Provide accurate and timely information to the board and other trust leaders to enable effective budgetary control
- Liaise with local authority finance officers and trust leaders/SEND administrators to identify pupil funding and oversee systems to ensure that full funding is properly recouped (including specialist grants from the DfE/ESFA, etc.)
- Develop, implement and monitor the trust's financial policies and procedures on procurement, investments, asset management and disposal, etc. in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook (ATH), enabling robust financial management
- Take appropriate action to address financial risks, problems and irregularities
- Advise the board and trust leaders on the development and maintenance of an effective internal audit procedure for the trust and its academies, including producing audit reports and making recommendations for improvement
- Manage the external audit procedures for the trust and its academies, and follow up on any recommendations resulting from audits including training needs
- Establish and monitor effective procurement procedures in order to achieve financial efficiencies, including overseeing the tendering process
- Oversee the trust's commercial contracts, ensuring they represent value for money
- Organise and manage necessary insurance arrangements for the trust
- Manage the trust's tax and National Insurance arrangements, including ensuring claims for VAT and business rates are submitted and refunds are received and appropriately accounted for
- Be responsible for the trust bank accounts and manage administration and the trust's cash position at all times, including overseeing bank deposits
- Support the income generation strategy for the trust and its academies

### **Reporting and compliance**

The CFO will be accountable for ensuring that the trust complies with its legal obligations, adheres to financial regulations, and submits accurate financial reports in a timely manner.

The CFO will:

- Complete and submit financial returns as required by the Department for Education, the Education and Skills Funding Agency, the Charities Commission and Companies House
- Prepare and submit the trust's financial returns and reports, including annual accounts and monthly management accounts
- Maintain the trust's accounts in line with the funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook
- Liaise with appropriate HR professionals to monitor developments to legislation around payroll, pensions and benefits, implementing changes and adapting processes as required
- Provide appropriate and timely reports to the trust board and other trust leaders to support effective leadership and governance

### **Leadership and management**

The CFO will be accountable for supporting the effective management of the trust and its academies, and for providing motivational leadership at all levels of the trust's organisation.

The CFO will:

- Take responsibility for the trust's financial management system (Access Finance and Budgeting), including managing user access, providing training, considering future system developments and generating reports
- Manage the trust finance team, taking responsibility for their professional development and ensuring best practice is observed at all times
- Develop the trust's central finance services, ensuring these are fit for purpose and provide a high-quality service to academies/services/provisions, helping the trust achieve continuous improvement
- Work with the COO and HR colleagues to support the effective delivery of payroll services for the trust and its academies/services/provisions
- Develop effective relationships with the trust's stakeholders and partners in order to support its development and operation
- Act as a representative for the trust in external networks and forums, raising the profile of the trust, engaging with the wider sector, and ensuring that the trust is alert to information, changes and opportunities that could affect its work

### **Other requirements**

An ability to travel between school/trust sites and provisions

Notes:

This job description may be amended at any time in consultation with the postholder.

**The trust is strongly committed to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People. The successful applicant shall be required to undertake an enhanced DBS disclosure and other safer recruitment checks**



## LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

The London Borough of Redbridge is in the North East of London, bordering Essex county. The borough shares boundaries with the Epping Forest District and the ceremonial county of Essex to the north, with the London Borough of Waltham Forest to the west, the London Borough of Havering to the east, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham in the south and east, and the London Borough of Newham to the south.

Redbridge is one of the most ethnically diverse local authorities in the UK.



# NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL

**Newbridge School** is an Ofsted rated Outstanding special school catering for children and young people between the ages of 2 and 19 years who have complex learning difficulties, often accompanied by additional special educational needs, which may include;

- Physical disabilities
- Sensory impairments
- Autism
- Associated behaviour
- Medical needs

Lower School is for pupils in Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and is made up of 11 classes with a maximum capacity of 77 pupils. Upper School is for students in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and 16-19 and is made up of 14 classes and a maximum capacity of 92 pupils.

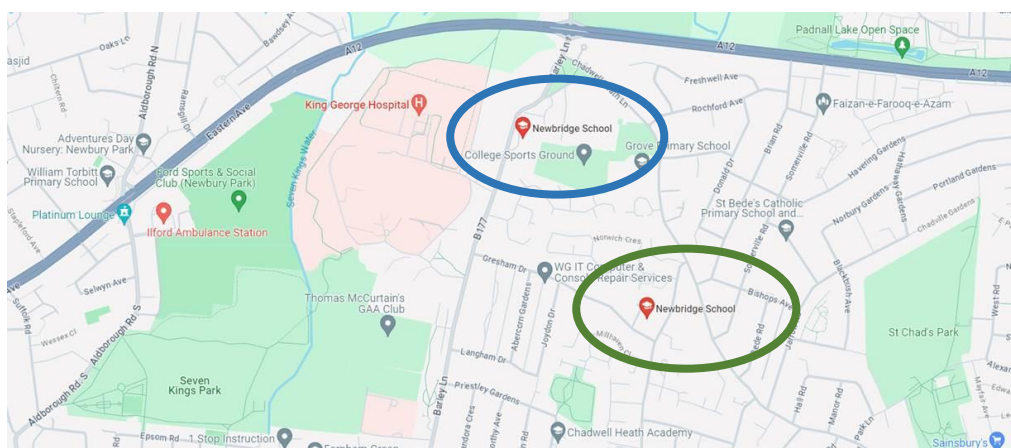
Pupils transfer from Lower School to Upper School at the end of Key Stage 2 and are supported to do this through a well-planned transition programme.

## Newbridge Lower

## Newbridge Upper

FSM – 37.66%	FSM – 40.66%
ESL – 16.88%	ESL – 35.43%
Minority ethnic pupils – 68.13 %	Minority ethnic pupils – 79.34%

Newbridge School is split across two sites, which are within one mile of each other. There are great transport links to both, with buses and they are also within walking distance of Chadwell Heath and Goodmayes stations, both on the Elizabeth Line.



Lower school - 161 Gresham Drive, Chadwell Heath, Romford RM6 4TR

Upper School - 258 Barley Lane, Goodmayes IG3 8XS



## OUR SPECIALIST FACILITIES

We are very proud of the specialist facilities we have to offer our pupils, including; hydrotherapy pools, sensory rooms, rebound therapy, playgrounds, sensory garden and much more.



# HATCHSIDE SCHOOL

Hatchside School currently caters for pupils aged 2-7 years of age with a range of SEND and with a focus on high quality, multi-disciplinary assessment and early intervention.

We opened to pupils on Monday 26th April 2021 as part of Astrum Multi Academy Trust, complimenting Newbridge Lower and Upper Schools. Hatchside School has continued to increase in size during its first 3 years, and has now reached its capacity of 64 pupils.

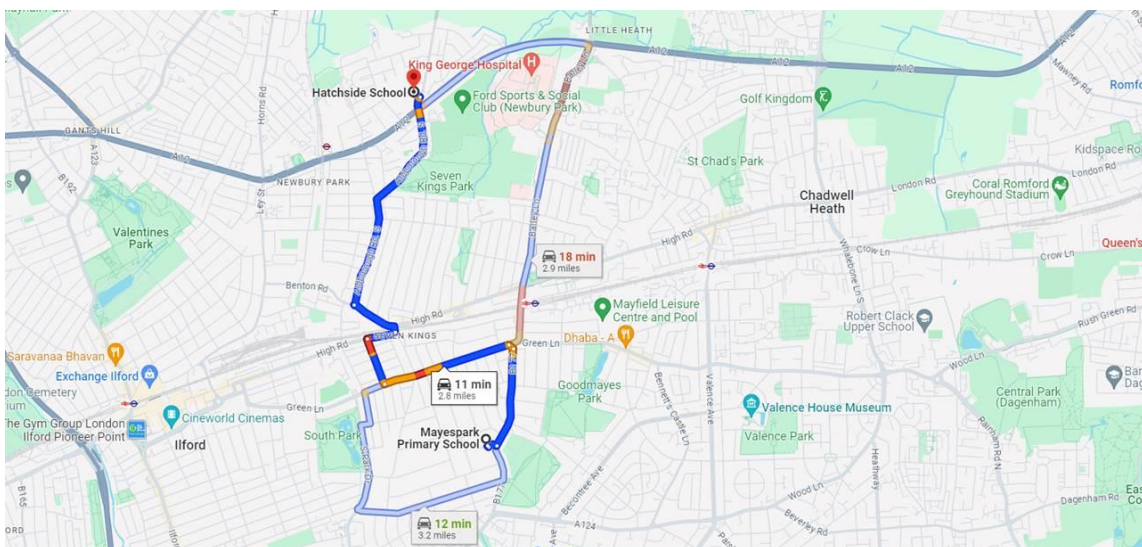
With the demand for special school places so high in Redbridge and the neighbouring boroughs, Hatchside School will be expanding to offer an additional 64 Key Stage 2 places from September 2024. Similar to Newbridge School, Hatchside will become a split site school. This is an exciting time for Hatchside School and we would like the new Academy Principal to have a key role in not only the expansion of the premises, but also the new Key Stage 2 curriculum.

At present, approximately 25% of Hatchside pupils receive Free School meals, around 13% of pupils have English as their second language and 93.5% of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which represents the diversity we have in our school.

There are great transport links to both Hatchside Schools, with buses, the Elizabeth Line and Central line stations all within walking distance.

📍 Aldborough Road North, Newbury Park, Ilford, IG2 7SR

📍 Goodmayes Ln, Ilford IG3 9PX





## OUR SPECIALIST FACILITIES

We are very proud of the specialist facilities we have to offer our pupils.



For more information please visit our website <https://www.astrum-mat.org/>