

MAT CASE STUDIES

Red Kite Learning trust - Case study

HFL Education partnered with Red Kite Learning Trust to support post-16 development across 22 schools through specialist CPD, funding expertise and leadership collaboration. Together, the partnership has helped strengthen sixth form provision, improve networking opportunities and support school leaders across the trust.

I can still remember the spine-tingling moment when I heard Richard Sheriff, CEO of Red Kite Learning Trust and then acting President of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and the general secretary Geoff Barton open the annual ASCL conference back in 2020 on the eve of the first lockdown. Discussions focused on how we bring our sector together to solve common problems for the benefit of all pupils and local communities; it made me feel as if I belonged amongst others who were speaking the same language as me.

Finding kindred spirits with a passion for social justice in our fragmented system was a breath of fresh air and meeting with colleagues from the Red Kite Learning Trust solidified my initial impression of how the Trust supported schools just like my fellow colleagues at HFL Education: with expertise, with empathy and with a genuine compassion and desire to do the very best.

Listening to the Red Kite Trust choir sing for Trust leaders, Head teachers and over a thousand school leaders made me reflect on how they would remember that moment in years to come, and how I hoped they would use that moment to express a time in their lives when they had to perform in a situation which was out of their natural comfort zone. And how they nailed it! And provided the other talking point for all the great and good in that room.

Exploring ideas and hopes with Red Kite colleagues as we networked during the conference was the start of a relationship which has flourished over time. We found ourselves acting as mutual sounding-boards for common problems that have challenged schools and settings. I was thrilled to discover that the work I had developed on generating financial efficiencies for schools, promoting apprenticeship pathways and ensuring underserved students receive the funding they deserve, was so much in tune with the priorities of the Alliance.

HFL Education now works closely with Red Kite to deliver CPD and conferences, bringing our Post-16 expertise to the doorstep of 22 schools, giving them access to CPD and conferences and a unique level of support from the HFL team.

Events such as the Sixth Form Advantage Programme supports support Sixth Form leaders to optimise funding and curriculum opportunities, as well as providing networking opportunities within the trust, allowing the sharing of ideas and best practice.

That ASCL conference was the start of a partnership journey. Whilst it is sometimes quicker to travel alone, our experience is that we can achieve more and carry heavier burdens when we walk together. Our relationship has deepened the further on our journey we have travelled. The co-creation of

solutions like HFL Education and Red Kite Connect's Sixth Form Advantage Programme is a great example of the power of partnership, benefiting many sixth form leaders and their students.

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