

embrace  
challenge:  
expect  
excellence



**challenger**  
multi-academy  
trust



*'I truly believe that if young people **embrace challenges** – learning a new sport, musical instrument or attempting an extra foreign language – in the long-term, they can **expect excellence** elsewhere. All teach **failure**, encourage **resilience** and result in the ultimately **rewarding** feeling of **mastering something.**'*

Charlie Rigby  
Chair, Challenger Multi-Academy Trust



*'Good Schools **get on** and **do things**: dance, drama, music, art, using the outdoors, **speaking** in other languages, **finding out** about the past and other places, **growing** things, cooking, **going** places, using ICT and paint brushes, **making** things, **experimenting**, **learning** about their own bodies, **working** out how to get on with others in the real world. Above all, they use all these **experiences** as vehicles to **do amazing English** and **Mathematics** to support the structured literacy and numeracy programmes at the same time bring **purpose** to learning for pupils.'*

Professor Mick Waters  
University of Wolverhampton







The Challenger Trust (CT) was established in 1998 and has been working in some of the most socio-economically deprived areas of the UK for 14 years. Over 100 schools and 40,000 young people have benefited from our work with the trust. We run accredited outdoor educational programmes to help young people to raise their aspirations, develop the skills required to be life-long learners and improve their educational and employment opportunities. We have participated in national debate in the field of outdoor education, and contributed c.£1M toward activity for deprived children in 12 years. Through our existing partnerships we have links with worldwide business organisations, local authorities, academies and all types of schools who commission our courses.

The Department for Education approved the Challenger Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) as a sponsor for 2014. We are a small trust with minimal central overheads, with improvement models designed to maximise funding direct to schools, but with sophisticated knowledge of the education sector over many years and access to a wide range of educational professionals in the primary, secondary and special schools sectors in order to support and develop the 'Challenger' model in our academies.

## Mission

Our mission is to create a federation of outstanding schools where every young person has the opportunity to participate in engaging and active learning experiences and achieve excellent educational outcomes in an inclusive and high performing school system. An education which prepares all children and young people to enter the university or employment of their choice and succeed in life through developing leadership, service and high aspirations due to the content of their character.

CMAT believe that learning outside the classroom is just as important as learning within the school itself. Through participation in a wide range of co-curricular activities, events and educational visits, our young people will develop the social and life skills that will stand them in good stead throughout their adult life. Furthermore, success in our Challenger Diploma builds confidence, determination and self-esteem, giving our students the skills that are needed for academic success.

All Challenger schools are aiming to achieve excellence. At CMAT we believe in the concept of 'collaborative autonomy' – schools working together with common aims under a common banner in which they all believe but retaining their sense of autonomy, uniqueness and individual character. We know and research confirms that sustainable school improvement comes from support and challenge from other schools and other partners.

Ensuring excellence for children comes through a mixture of support on a personal scale, great classroom teaching, a sense of success and aspiration within the school, and the ability to shape a personal programme that suits all abilities and talents. The 'Challenger Model' ensures schools have strong networks and a strong voice in their future. We will help you build strong capacity to improve from within and a culture that looks outward and never stops aiming to achieve excellence. Collaboration within a range of networks, and autonomy at a local level, are at the heart of what we offer so that individual schools and the family of schools grow through working closely with us and each other.

## Vision: Embrace Challenge, Expect Excellence

Our academies will be places of educational excellence. We want to do what is best for our all of our pupils, teachers, staff and parents. Our aim is to see them achieve their full potential within a framework of challenge and support with strong governance and teaching excellence.

Our vision is to build a collaborative partnership of schools that will provide outstanding educational provision both in and outside the classroom through challenge and promoting excellence. We welcome pupils from all backgrounds and will work to provide them with a comprehensive range of learning opportunities that will be personalised for pupils and draw on the principles and practice of 'Learning Outside the Classroom' (LOtC) and models of 'Engaging Schools'. Our key foci is on progress and partnership. School improvement is also based on school-to-school support developed through a model of collaborative autonomy.

*'Teaching is a matter of leading your pupils to higher ground, till they have the confidence to continue climbing by themselves. The challenge is in proportion to the steepness of the gradient - but the higher you climb, the better and the wider the view.'*

**Bernice McCabe**  
Headteacher, North London Collegiate School

## Values

Through a clear leadership, service, creativity and high aspirations in our schools we will inspire and embed core values in our young people, staff and communities:



*'Once a student sees that he or she is capable of excellence, that student is never quite the same. There is a new self-image, a new notion of possibility. There is an appetite for excellence. After students have had a taste of excellence, they're never quite satisfied with less; they're always hungry.'*

*It is clear that quality work I show audiences is not the result of gifted students or specially selected students: It is a celebration of hard work, dedication, support, critique, and revision. It is the fruit of sweat and care. It showcases more than anything a school ethic and culture that compels students to achieve more than they think possible.*

*Students may have different potentials, but, in general, the attitudes and achievements of the students are shaped by the culture around them: Students adjust their attitudes and efforts in order to fit into the culture.'*

**Ron Berger**  
An Ethic of Excellence







## Our Approach to Improvement in Challenger Schools

We believe that a culture of learning at **all levels** is essential in driving improvements. This means there is a clear and consistent **focus** on the **leadership of learning**; a culture of **high expectations**, **dialogue** and **trust** between all parties, partnership with families; **engagement** in learning **outside** the classroom and strong and sustainable **links** with the **community**.

We believe that through embracing **challenge** and an **expectation of excellence** at all levels within the organisation we can encourage **respect** and **reciprocity**; promote **interdependence** and **sustainability**; empower local, national and global citizenship and celebrate culture and community in Challenger Schools.

## 6 Our school improvement strategy has six key strands;

### Effective Leadership and Governance

- // Outstanding principals and senior leadership teams
- // Distributed leadership models across the academy group
- // Focus on pedagogy and standards of achievement
- // Contributes to the leadership and capacity of The Challenger Trust
- // Quality leadership coaching and mentoring

### High Quality Teaching and Learning

- // Outstanding teaching and learning- 'Quality First Teaching'
- // Intensive continuous professional development and practice
- // Personalised according to need through links with teaching schools/Future Leaders and other providers of high quality CPD for Challenger teachers
- // High expectations and aspirations across the group
- // Assessment for learning-driving performance
- // Outcomes driven – learning outcomes across the curriculum

### Supportive and Engaging Learning Environments

- // Attractive learning environments that promote engagement
- // Learning environments within and beyond the classroom that challenge and inspire
- // Positive ethos and culture-high

- aspirations-excellent behaviour
- // Pupil/student voice and leadership programmes- a Learning Commission

### Curriculum for the Future

- // Core learning skills, literacy, numeracy and communication
- // Broad 'engagement' curriculum offer – personalised and motivational
- // Active learning opportunities through the arts, sport and adventure learning
- // Blended learning – maximising use of new technologies
- // Local & Global citizenship and understanding
- // High quality CEIAG
- // Pupil leadership - harnessing entrepreneurial talent-real world application

### Community Engagement

- // Parental involvement-engaging parents as the primary carers in a partnership with the trust and our academies and schools
- // Community partners – sports and arts centres, outdoor education groups, businesses and social enterprises that can contribute to real world learning and promote engagement
- // Children's Services and Multi-Agency teams to support young people to overcome barriers to learning
- // Local partnerships with teaching schools, learning providers: alternative and vocational courses, colleges and other schools.

cont. overleaf >>>



## Our Approach to Improvement in Challenger Schools *cont...*

### Learning Outside the Classroom - Challenger Diploma

The Challenger Diploma is an integral part of our improvement programme. Each child or young person, in both primary and secondary phases will tackle the diploma through an individually tailored programme designed to suit their personal co-curricular interests, skills and developmental needs. Throughout the programme, they will be encouraged to reflect on how their learning in one area of school life may help them in another unifying their co-curricular programme into a single coherent learning experience.

- // Personal Challenge
- // Volunteering, Community & Service Programme,
- // Leadership Programme
- // Creativity and Skills Programme,
- // Sports Programme
- // Trips and Events Programme
- // Academic Extension Programme
- // Work and professional Skills Education Programme
- // Employability and Internship Programme

Starting in primary school the diploma targets the development and accreditation of a small number of key attributes. Children and young people, over time, undertake activities within a framework leading to accreditation. These activities can be in or out of school, curricular or extra-curricular, but selected from an approved database to ensure rigour and consistency. The diploma is delivered at four levels: novice, apprentice, graduate and master and with bronze, silver and gold awards in each category. This means that students can maintain the diploma activities throughout their school careers and build a personal profile that can be used for applications to secondary schools as well as job and university applications. The diploma also recognises and accredits qualifications taken outside of school time such as ABRSM music examination grades as well as many others in the areas of sport, the arts and many other programmes.

We believe that through engaging in the Challenger Diploma, children and young people develop a desire to learn and a tendency to embrace challenges, persist in the face of setbacks, see effort as the path to mastery, learn from feedback and criticism and find lessons and inspiration in the success of others. As a result they achieve ever-higher levels of achievement and excellence.

*'Some state schools echo the **success** of their independent peers. They use **competitive** sport to **energise** the entire school culture; their leaders understand its **value** and continually promote it. **Pride** in a team, the **thrill** of a new challenge, **encouraging** every pupil to have a go all pay **academic dividends**. As a result, **attainment** across these schools tends to be **high**. If these schools can do it, so can **many more**.'*

**Sir Michael Wilshaw**, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector  
Going the Extra Mile-Excellence in Competitive School Sport

Our improvement strategies are delivered through tailored support programmes specifically designed to meet the needs and aspirations of our schools and communities. Our aim is to support networks of local schools and academies that maximise the benefits that working together can bring. Supportive networks, where there is professional support and challenge, is at the heart of what we do. All our academies will work within our ethos and values using self-evaluation and review supported by a bespoke team of education professional and partnerships to assure the governors and the Trust that each academy is operating effectively.

*'The arts especially address the idea of **aesthetic experience**. An aesthetic experience is one in which your **senses** are operating at their **peak**; when you're present in the **current moment**; when you're resonating with the **excitement** of this thing that you're **experiencing**; when you are **fully alive**.'*

Sir Ken Robinson



# Challenger Academies can be the 'powerhouse' to delivering improvement

## Belonging to the CMAT Family

As a Multi Academy Trust, Challenger welcomes all schools into our network of partnerships with universities, industry, public services, teaching schools and national organisations. CMAT promotes the principle of 'supported autonomy' and our improvement models reflect the level of support each academy requires from the Trust. The three broad levels of delegation are:

### Challenger Leadership Academies (Converter Schools)

Challenger Academies can be the 'powerhouse' to delivering improvement within the CMAT family in conjunction with the Trust. They will work closely with external partners, teaching school alliances and national organisations. It is intended that Challenger Leadership Academies will be autonomous with most powers delegated to their local governing bodies, subject of course to them remaining outstanding or good.

### Challenger Supported Academies (Converter Schools)

Supported Academies are those generally falling into the Ofsted 'requires improvement' category or at risk of falling into this category.

Here the objective will be to provide ongoing support and challenge to help them progress to 'good' and 'outstanding'.

### Sponsored Academies

Sponsored Academies are those usually falling into the 'inadequate' category. They require the maximum support within the CMAT family. In these circumstances, CMAT will select all the members of the local governing body, other than parental and staff representatives. A Challenger Sponsored Academy will have fewer powers delegated to it until it achieves a 'good' or 'outstanding' rating from Ofsted.





## System Leadership - Aiming for Excellence

All Challenger Academies will be expected and required to **share** their journey, **skills** and **expertise** with other academies within the **Trust family**, becoming **centres of excellence** from which to disseminate **good practice** and promote a **self-sustaining** culture of **aspiration** for educational achievement through a commitment to **challenge** and **excellence**.

Working with partner organisations, teaching school alliances and through school-to-school support provides an excellent framework for improvement. We encourage our leaders and governors to become 'system leaders' within local and national networks. We want them to lead by example.

CMAT will ensure that its family of academies has access to high quality support and challenge through directing, monitoring, delivering and brokering support for all schools in the Trust. The emphasis will be upon helping academies to raise standards through outstanding leadership, high quality teaching and learning, innovative curriculum development, excellent use of assessment tools and rigorous data monitoring.

The Trust will actively promote and encourage leadership that recognises that people are at the heart of its success and that school leadership can be exercised by all members of its community. Leaders who are confident, creative, innovative and understand how to manage change are the foundation for developing consistently good and outstanding academies.



*Excellence is about:*

**Caring** more than others think is **wise**  
**Risking** more than others think is **safe**  
**Dreaming** more than others think is **practical**  
**Expecting** more than others think is **possible**

African proverb



Through monitoring and evaluation, challenge and dialogue, a commitment to achieving excellence the CMAT focus will be on continuous and sustainable improvement in our academies and communities.

### CMAT will help to make a difference by:

- // utilising the skills and experience of our directors, their teams and our partners with a proven track record in enabling school improvement,
- // helping schools plan for the long term. We will support our academies to produce a clear strategic plan and operate in the context of sound financial management,
- // welcoming and supporting direct input from each academy's local governing body,
- // providing quality services based around our model for Co-Curricular activities and the Challenger Diploma,
- // embracing the networks that support our family of schools. We believe in effective partnerships through collaboration which makes use of the best talents available, wherever they may be found in our academies

### The Trust will work to ensure that all its academies exhibit the characteristic of "outstanding" as identified by Ofsted:

- // they excel at what they do not just occasionally, but for a high proportion of the time,
- // they prove constantly that disadvantage need not be a barrier to achievement,
- // they put their students first, invest in their staff and nurture their communities,
- // they have strong values and high expectations that are applied consistently and are never relaxed,
- // they fulfil individual potential through providing outstanding teaching, rich opportunities for learning and encouragement and support for each student,
- // they are highly inclusive, having complete regard for the educational progress, personal development and well-being of every student,
- // their achievements do not happen by chance, but by highly reflective, carefully planned and implemented strategies,
- // they operate with a very high degree of internal consistency,
- // they are constantly looking for ways to improve further,
- // they have outstanding and well-distributed leadership.

The services provided centrally will be flexible and responsive to the needs of the individual academies and the Challenger Multi Academy Trust. We believe that the quality of service delivery is key, whether it is from within the trust or an external supplier or partner. Academies will be fully involved in the development of central services, which will be an ongoing process. Each individual academy's requirements will be scoped and, where appropriate, recommendations and best practice sought. External services provision will be reviewed before contracts are renewed and feedback sought from academies as part of this process.

The Trust will work with each academy to help them use the resources available to them to the very best effect. There will be a retention held back from academy budgets for services delivered from the centre and for the operation of the Trust. This will be agreed every year in a transparent and open way, through consultation with all academies in the Trust.



**Excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is essential to the ethos of every one of our Challenger academies**

At the core of our Trust is an unbending commitment to traditional values. Our young people learn and study in a supportive environment where honesty, character and fair play are valued.

We expect high standards of behaviour – respect to fellow students and staff, courtesy and good manners.

As potential leaders of their generation, we develop well-rounded students, outstanding academically but also mature, self-confident and able to participate in their community and with the world.

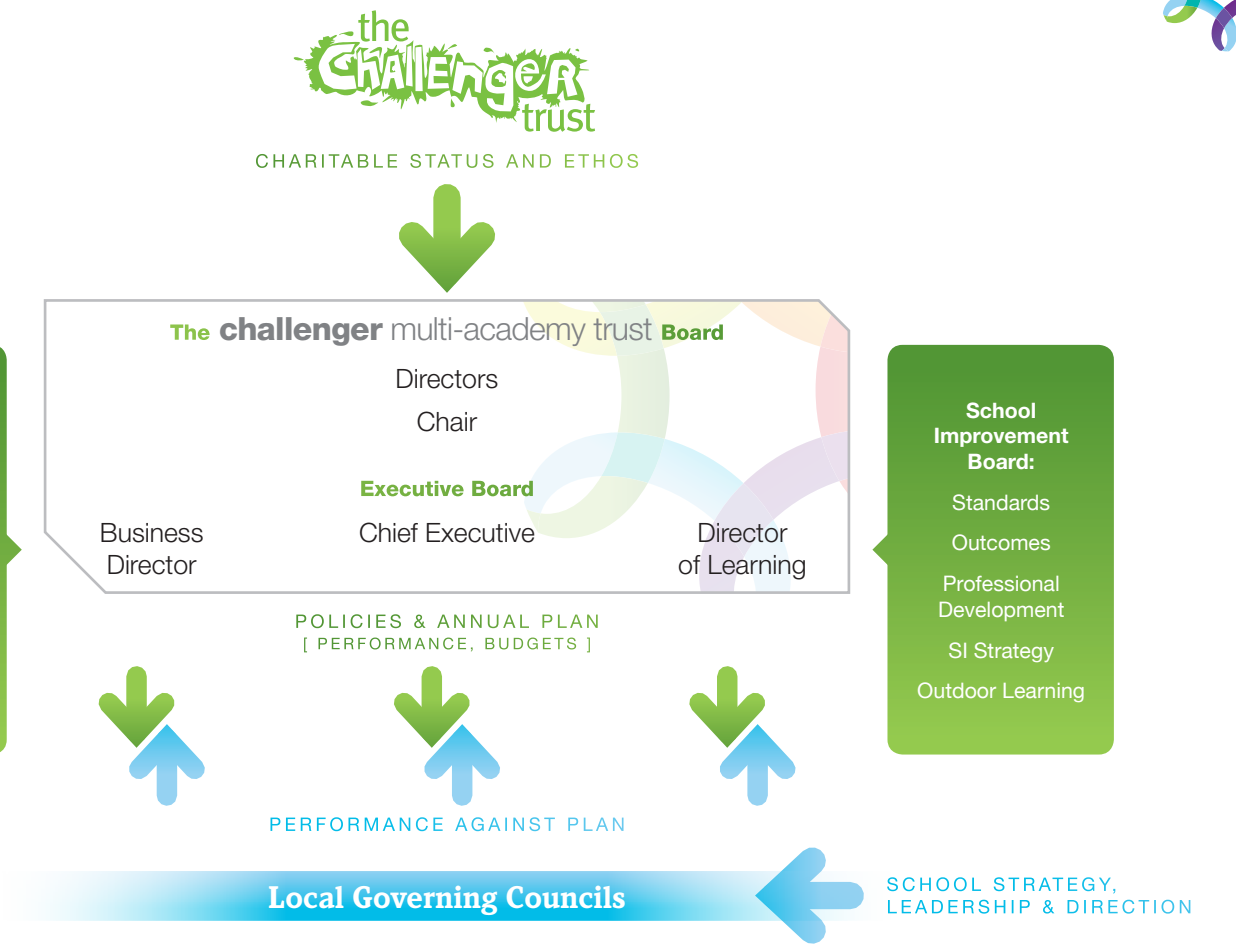
Through our commitment to curricular and co curricular study, we support their creative skills: music, performing arts, writing, dancing.

We encourage them to be as physically active as possible and to achieve at sport, to take part in the Challenger Diploma programmes and develop their individual skills, talents and aptitudes.

As leaders of tomorrow, our students are smart and well groomed and dressed for business. Our dress code is firmly enforced so that students develop pride in their appearance and what they wear, representing their academies as ambassadors within their community.

We are proud of our role in developing co-curricular education, educating young leaders of today and tomorrow to spearhead the economic growth of our country and to forge a fairer, inclusive and compassionate society.

**How Challenger Multi-Academy Trust operates:**





## Our Board of Directors



### Charles Rigby

Successful businessman and education specialist, Charles founded World Challenge, the schools developmental expedition company, in 1986. Charles sold the company to the world's largest travel company, TUI Travel PLC, in 2008 but his enthusiasm for building the self-esteem of young people through activities that may not otherwise be available to them continues. Charles is a social entrepreneur who does not shy away from the debates at the centre of educational policy.



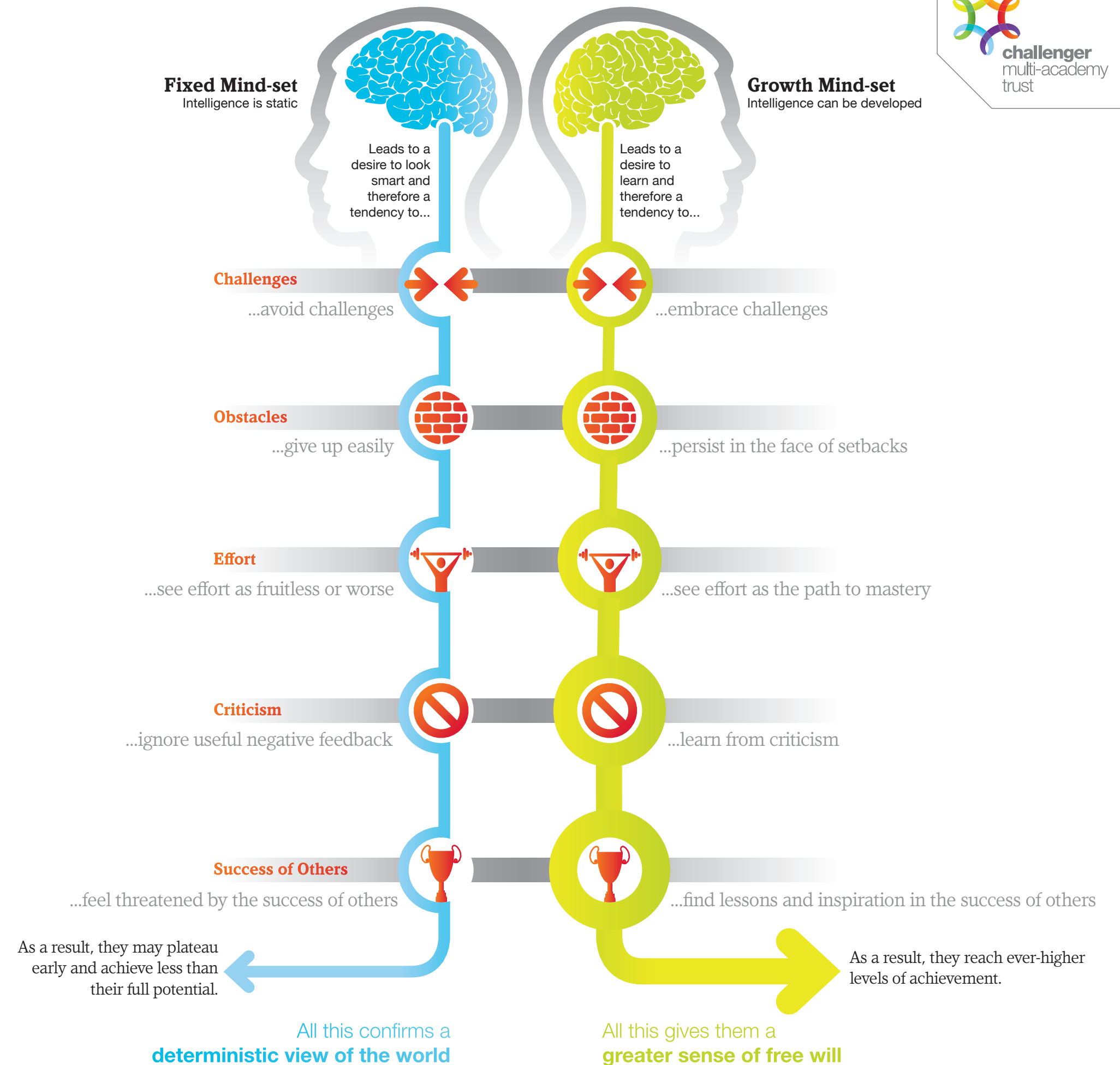
### Martin Smout

Martin is the Executive Chairman of the GB Group. The GB Group is an award-winning and innovative solutions provider offering clients complete property and construction solutions in construction, development, energy, IT, Asset management and management services. Martin has focused his efforts on the front end of the business, developing relationships and promoting repeat business, by making sure that the Group does what it says it will do and delivers schemes on time and to budget. Martin demands the highest of standards, he is passionate about our Go Beyond approach and actively encourages all GB staff to Go Beyond. Martin is also the Chairman of Contour Education Services and a governor of Wells Cathedral School and Chair of their Development Committee.



### Graeme Guthrie

Graeme is a corporate lawyer with over 40 years experience, latterly as a partner with Speechly Bircham LLP in London. He advised the management and shareholders on the sale of World Challenge Expeditions in 2008 and maintains his interest in the sector through his involvement as Chair of The Challenger Trust. Graeme has a passion for climbing the British hills and holds a fundamental belief in the significant contribution that outdoor activities can make to education and learning at all ages-particularly the young.







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