

E-ACT Praises the Agility of School Surveys in Catering for Both the Trust and its Individual Schools

"School Surveys has helped us create agency for headteachers. As a national trust, it is important to us to connect to the local community in each academy, hearing the voices of children, parents, and staff.

The School Surveys' team have also responded to adaptations and new questions we've wanted to ask."

Karen Rose, Director of Partnerships and Organisational Development

The Multi-Academy Trust

[E-ACT](#), a MAT Excellence Award-winning trust, has its sights firmly set on ensuring it provides its pupils with the tools and knowledge they need to achieve their ambitions. Established in 2008, every one of the trust's 29 schools has been rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' for leadership and management. In the words of its CEO, Tom Campbell, "Through collaboration, codifying best practice, and seeking out innovations and new technology, we ensure staff and students thrive." Perhaps it's no surprise that they turned to [Teacher Tapp's School Surveys](#) to help.

The Challenge

With the formation of a new executive leadership team (around 18 months ago), there was a significant focus on culture, and a drive to understand staff satisfaction across the trust. Staff voice was central to understanding where to focus, led and set from the centre. These insights allowed E-ACT to develop collaborative working groups and drive change nationally.

This academic year E-ACT wanted to give head teachers and other trust leaders the opportunity to run a range of short pulse surveys on local priorities and initiatives alongside gathering national feedback for parents, pupils, and staff. The findings inform discussions at board level and triangulate with other evidence reviewed across the trust.

After a brief discussion with our team at School Surveys, it was clear that our platform would give E-ACT the flexibility it was looking for. And so, at its 2023 National Leadership Conference, School Surveys was launched into the trust and introduced to the headteachers of its academies.

E-ACT has now been using School Surveys in earnest since the beginning of the 2023-24 school year. Karen and the team have worked hard to develop ways to maximise engagement and use the insights gained through regular surveys to drive improvement. In doing so, they've discovered the following and wanted to share their top tips:

Keep surveys tight and to a schedule

After trialling a range of different survey lengths, the team at E-ACT found that surveys with a maximum of 10 questions capture the most attention and engagement. The trust also maps out its key questions in advance and delivers them at set points throughout the year. This approach ensures that there is enough time to measure the impact of actions taken and avoids accidental overlap of survey questions.

Provide opportunities to reflect

One of the regular surveys sent out from the trust is the Headteacher's log. This provides the trust with key feedback on what's happening at a local level and from the perspective of the Heads of the individual academies.

Deliver a consistent set of trust-wide surveys, with follow-ups at a local level

E-ACT run a suite of surveys nationally. Between these nationally set points individual academies can repeat questions where they want to see if their actions are gaining traction or ask further questions to obtain a closer look at what's happening in their local community. Not only is this a well-structured route, it enables schools to take ownership over a significant part of the process, boosting engagement and buy-in.

Set up focused working groups

After the initial staff surveys were carried out, the organisational team at E-ACT set up working groups around three key areas: well-being and workload, communication, and professional development. The groups, made up of staff from a range of schools, come together regularly to consolidate the feedback from School Surveys and decide on key actions to move forward with. This works especially well in a large trust where opinions from school to school may vary greatly and allows individual schools to get a seat at the table at a national level to decide on survey questions and potential follow-up actions.

Make it easy for respondents

The uptake in survey responses has been impressive so far within the E-ACT community and Karen is keen to explore ways to get this even higher. There is a plan in place to survey parents at Parent's Evening, with QR codes displayed in key areas across the school where parents will be waiting to see teachers. Another initiative already underway is the mapping of trust-wide staff surveys to the national INSET days - giving teaching staff the time and headspace to answer their survey questions at a time set aside for this.

E-ACT is continuing to strive for the right organisational balance at both a national and local level, and a big part of this is knowing what its communities on the ground are thinking and what matters to them. Through the use of School Surveys, the trust has been able to bring to the fore the voice of stakeholders.

IMPACT

No. of surveys delivered
to date

207

No. of questions
answered

330,244

Biggest Impacts



Flexibility for both
the trust and
individual schools



Agency for
headteachers



Significant
improvements in
survey scores
since September
2024