



Astrea Academy Trust

INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE



ASTREA 2025



TRUST VALUES



SCHOLARSHIP:

We will be informed by the best of academic and organisational thinking and research, using this where we can and expanding it where possible.



CURIOSITY:

We will ask searching questions, not take things on face value, seek out the best of what is known and engage in appreciative enquiry.



TENACITY:

We will deliver on our promises and see things through to completion. We will embody pace, urgency and determination in our focus on improving outcomes for children and on our own performance.

CEO'S INTRODUCTION

Just a day before the first national lockdown in March 2020, Astrea's Board of Trustees appointed me as the new Chief Executive. What I have seen since I started in July that year is a trust that has a deep well of moral purpose and schools that have more that unites them than sets them apart. Our trust is also an organisation that is now coming of age and moving beyond those foundational years into the next phase of its development, challenging us to take our place securely and confidently amongst our communities and on the national stage.



Trustees have set us a clear challenge through their vision that:

All Astrea children will learn, thrive and lead successful lives.

Working together, Astrea schools will tackle head on the barriers that stand in the way of children's success. We will do this through a relentless commitment to a brilliant education, a focus on inclusion for all, and by delivering on our promise of opportunities that inspire beyond measure.

This strategy aims to build on the energy and moral purpose that characterises Astrea, and to deliver on this vision as we move into a mature phase with a determined focus on helping our children to learn, thrive and lead successful lives.

That work starts and ends with a universal belief in high standards and expectations for every child, no matter what barriers they face. This must be our guiding light: we are not going to reduce expectations because of a child's background or home life, or because they are new to English or have a special education need. In fact, the opposite is true. It is our job to redouble our efforts, use our creativity and our craft to help children overcome these barriers so that they can flourish.

Underpinning this vision is a confident and overt commitment that knowledge and scholarship will be celebrated. Alongside this, we will stoke ambition whilst also helping our children to become resilient in the face of challenge. And we commit to providing all Astrea children with rich opportunities and to supporting them every step of the way, building aspirations and securing great futures.

Time is our most precious commodity, and so collaboration will be central to our delivery of this strategy. We will pool our knowledge and resources to create efficiency and avoid falling into the trap of simply recycling 'the best we know about', focusing instead on learning about, contributing to and delivering the best there is.

Like schools across the country, our teachers, leaders and support staff have gone above and beyond, day in day out, and I am incredibly proud of what the Astrea family has achieved. As the trust matures, we are in a strong position to embark upon this next exciting phase, where all of our energy will be focused on providing a brilliant education which helps children to learn, thrive and lead successful lives.

 *Rowena Hackwood*
Chief Executive



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OUR STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

Astrea was founded in 2015 and we took on our first few schools in May 2016. In just three years, the Trust grew to 27 schools across two regions of the country, and encompassing four local authority areas delivering an education across nursery, primary, secondary, sixth-form, special and all-through settings. The pace of this growth comes with inevitable challenges, and now is the moment to bring together the best strategies we can identify to make sure that Astrea becomes a strong, sustainable organisation that enables children to learn, thrive and lead successful lives.

We are clear-sighted about the challenges ahead of us in achieving the academic standards that all of our pupils deserve and we are tenacious in our resolve to tackle barriers to ensure we meet our aspirational standards.

First, we will address barriers to attainment by ensuring that more pupils are in school for more of the time. Lower-than-average attendance is a common challenge for almost all of our schools and time in school is also too often lost due to exclusions. A brilliant education is an inclusive one, so this strategy commits us to renewing our efforts to reduce exclusions whilst maintaining safe schools for pupils and staff alike.

Second, we will address low levels of academic outcomes for all our pupils from the youngest to the oldest. Reading continues to be a significant barrier for many Astrea children and early literacy has worsened during the pandemic, so we will prioritise phonics as part of this strategy.

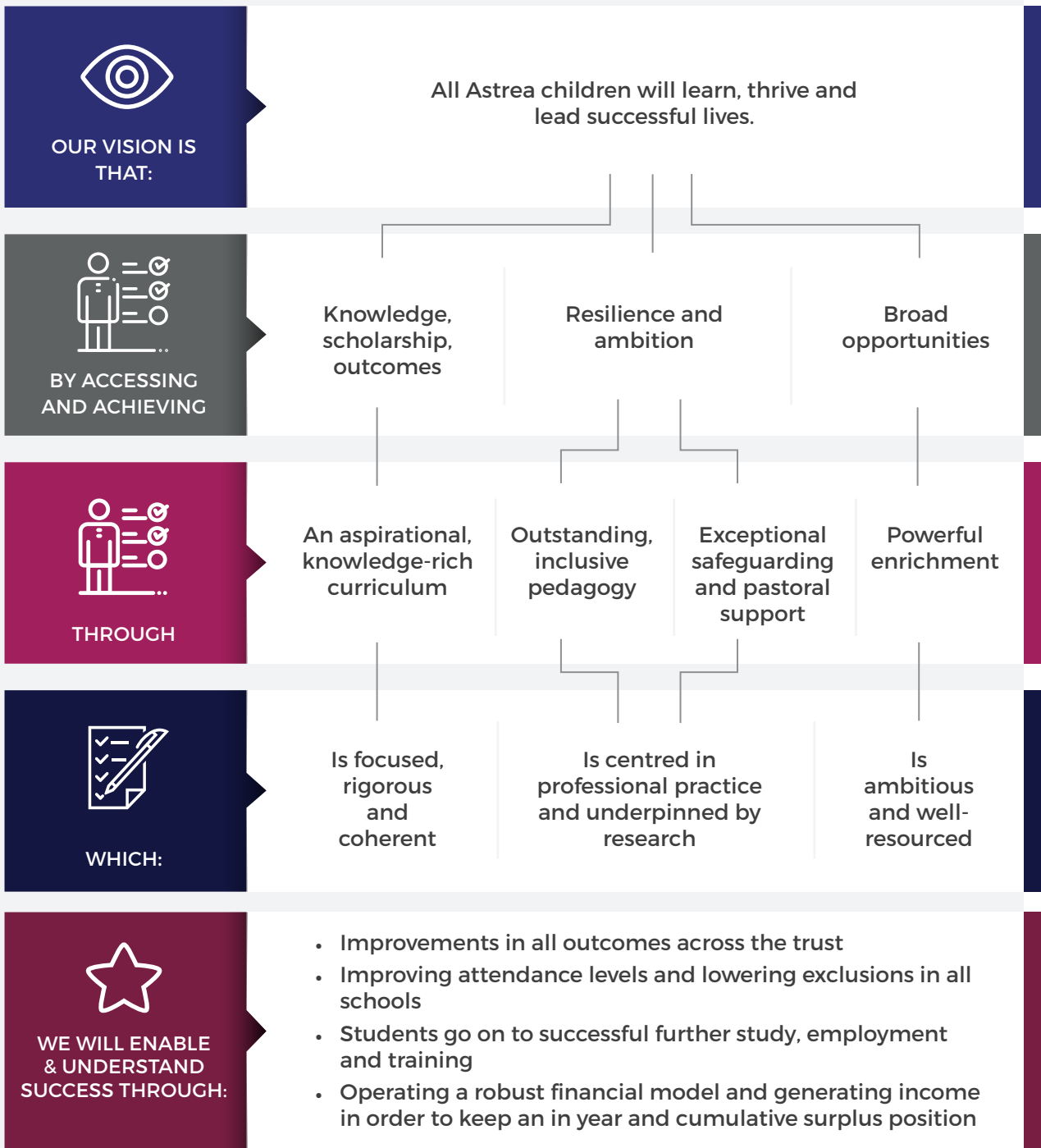
In 2019, when SATs were last taken, attainment levels across our Trust were below the national average in many of our schools. We know that the pandemic has not improved this picture. In our secondaries, we will continue to build the rigour, richness and purpose of the Key Stage 3 curriculum to ensure that pupils have strong foundations in place for their GCSE years, and within three years expect to see all schools achieving positive progress and outcomes in line with or exceeding national averages.

Third, we will align our curriculum for all key stages with our expectations of teachers, investing in professional development, quality classroom resources and career pathway development, a commitment that we will reiterate for all of our staff.

And fourth, linked to the above, we have yet to unlock the full collective might of the Trust and all of its people. We can go further – and with greater pace – to deepen collaboration within all of our professions and to advance expertise. We can also run more efficiently so that more of our people's time, talent and energy is freed up to have its best effect for pupils and so that money can be invested where it will have greatest impact.

These four challenges are areas that we are committed to addressing, and for which we will be held to account. They cannot be met on Day 1 of our strategy and we will only succeed by establishing clear timelines for delivery. Meeting these challenges is, however, fundamental to the success of all of our schools within our trust, but more importantly they are fundamental to our children learning, thriving and leading successful lives.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



KNOWLEDGE, **SCHOLARSHIP** **AND OUTCOMES**

- ★ Our focus is on consistently excellent teaching and a world-class curriculum.
- ★ A brilliant education must be an inclusive one and every teacher is a teacher of every child.
- ★ We will put in place building blocks for long term success rather than focusing on quick fixes. Leaders will implement three-year improvement plans at every school and will make clear how success will be seen and understood.
- ★ High standards of attendance and behaviour will be articulated, facilitated and expected.
- ★ We will collaborate to create, share and embed a knowledge-rich curriculum, centred in leading practice and driven by our practitioners in specialist subject communities. These will be supported by shared materials and enabling technology.
- ★ The curriculum will be vocabulary-rich, building on a renewed strategy for phonics instruction in our primaries and a Trust-wide mission to advance reading and a love of literature.
- ★ We do not want children to 'catch up'. We want to give them a head start, which is why we will also focus on ensuring excellence in all of our Early Years settings.



RESILIENCE AND AMBITION



FOR OUR STUDENTS:

- ★ We will continue to develop leading safeguarding practice underpinned by a best-in-class quality assurance framework and more support for our dedicated safeguarding practitioners.
- ★ We will continue to roll out leading practice to support children with SEND and other needs, through exceptional training and support for leaders, teachers and support staff.
- ★ We will create opportunities for children to be active participants in their community, equipping them to make the most of civic participation and to be ambitious for their place in the local, national and global context.



FOR OUR STAFF:

- ★ To unleash the potential of our pupils, we need to do the same for our staff, leading to increased diversity in recruitment and progression
- ★ All professions within the Trust will be supported by the Astrea Institute, an approach that will ensure that all of our professions have high aspirations for themselves and those they serve. Colleagues will benefit from structured career-appropriate CPD, career pathways, coaching and access to qualifications.
- ★ A culture of wellbeing will be evident throughout Astrea and be grounded in positive behaviours and manageable workload. Where there is a need to go further and to access specialist support, the Trust will strive to make this happen.
- ★ We will improve our links between delivery and quality standards through improved objective setting, performance management and governance.

BROAD OPPORTUNITIES



- ★ Every child will have an **Astrea Advantage**, gained through the renewal of our Promise to extend a brilliant education beyond the classroom.
- ★ We will integrate key aspects of the **Astrea Promise** into the curriculum, so that knowledge and experiences reinforce one another.
- ★ We will invest in a programme of curriculum-related and extra-curricular opportunities for every child to pursue their passions through enhanced opportunities to participate and compete in music, sport, performing and visual arts.
- ★ Supported by powerful partnerships and the work of Astrea Ambassadors, we will enhance our careers provision and empower students to make the most of further study, training and employment.

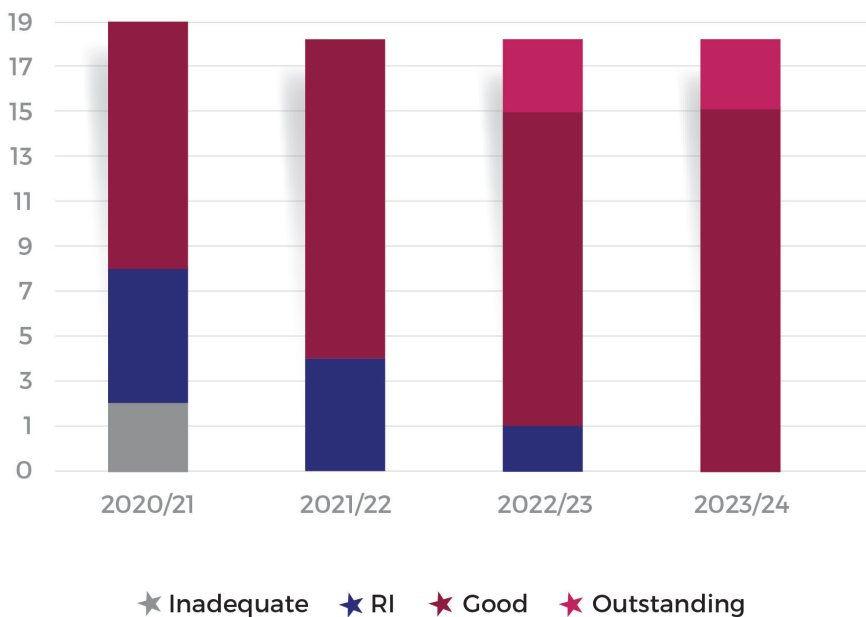
THE TRUST AS CUSTODIAN

- ★ **Trusteeship is custodianship for the benefit of others** and this is a duty that we take seriously. The Trust will develop further financial resilience and budgetary reserve, building on our current approach, and resourcing all parts of the Trust according to strategic priorities rather than legacy practices. We will apply our policy of '**funding for fairness**' and support those schools that need the greatest help in order to enable every child to learn and thrive, and to support the development of focused expertise in the centre that benefits all schools.
- ★ **Common operating models** will be introduced across HR, Finance, Estates, Procurement, IT and Systems so that service standards become truly excellent and so that time, effort and money is freed up to support classroom practice and improve service quality.
- ★ The Trust will at all times be responsible, ethical and efficient in how it runs the 'business of the business'. To ensure this, **effective executive and non-executive governance** will be embedded from the boardroom to the classroom.
- ★ Decisions will be made that reflect the **environmental challenges** our world faces.
- ★ Led by educational and professional need, we will plan for and improve our **core service for ICT** that is properly resourced so that staff are equipped to teach effectively and children are prepared for the future of technology.
- ★ Work will start immediately to **improve our sites** and a **multi-year capital programme** will build Astrea's place in our communities.
- ★ Improved **active management of risk** will be embedded to safeguard the Trust.

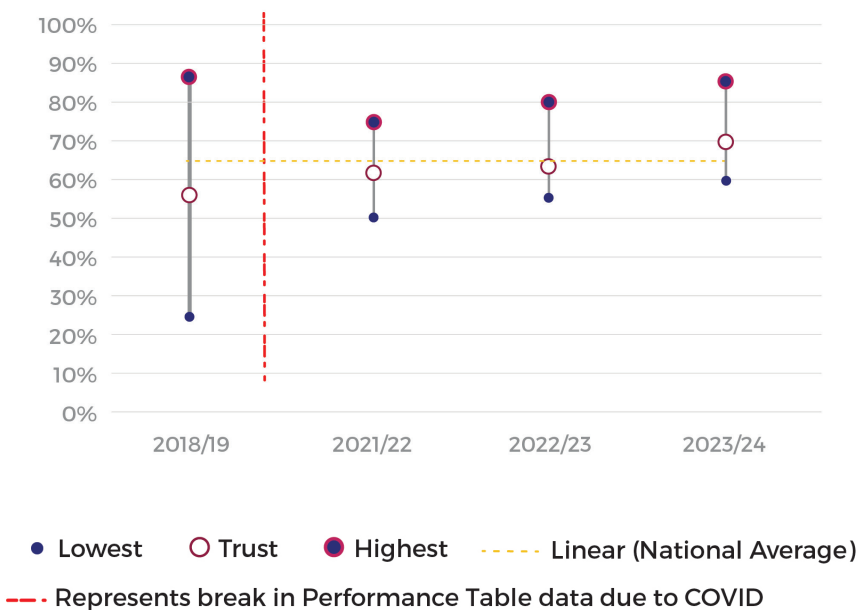


HOW WE'LL JUDGE OUR SUCCESS - PRIMARY

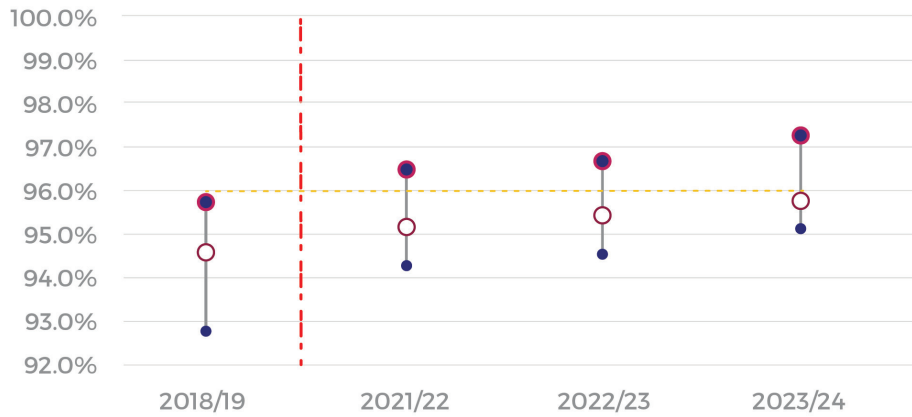
SELF-EVALUATION JUDGEMENTS



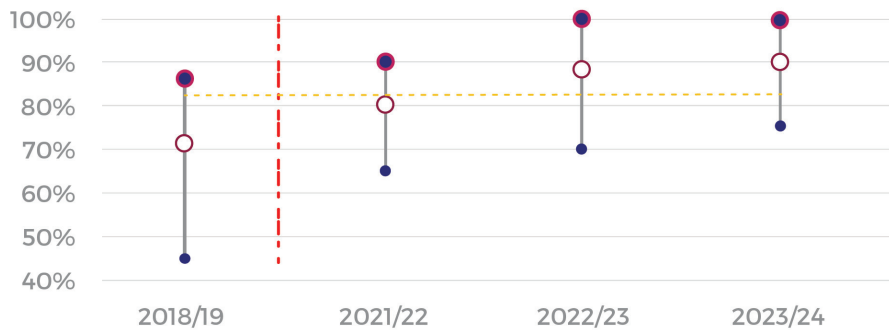
% OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING EXP STD IN RWM COMBINED AT KS2



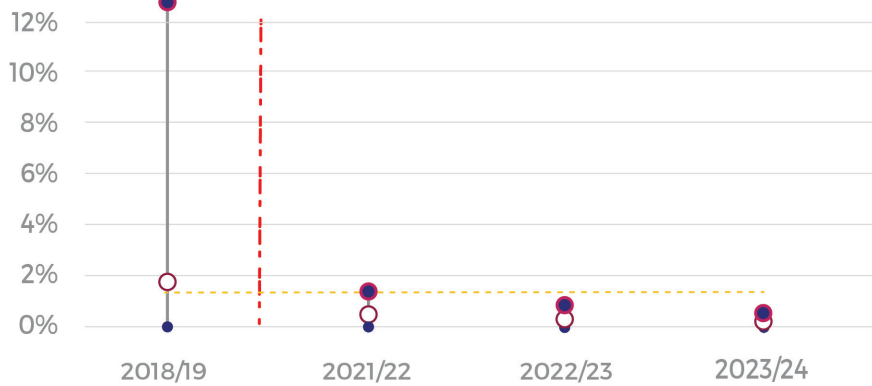
% ATTENDANCE



% PUPILS PASSING YR1 PHONICS SCREENING



%1 + FTE

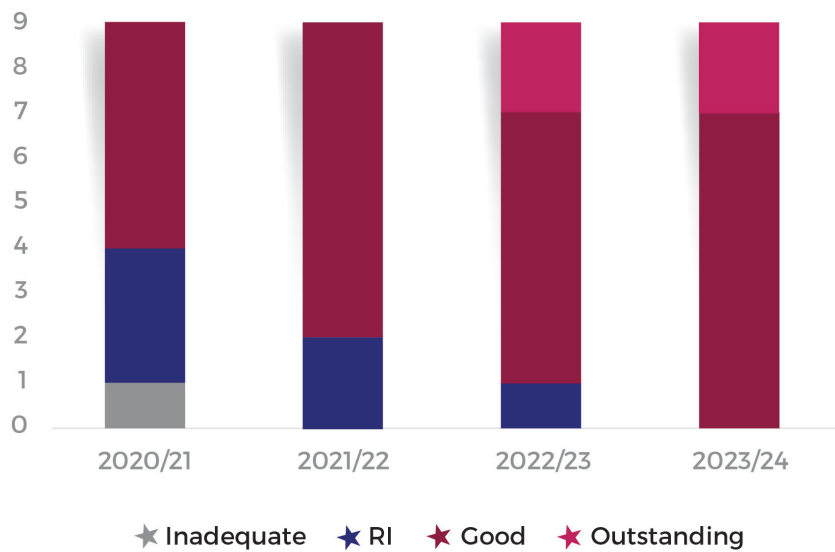


● Lowest
 ○ Trust
 ● Highest
 - - - Linear (National Average)

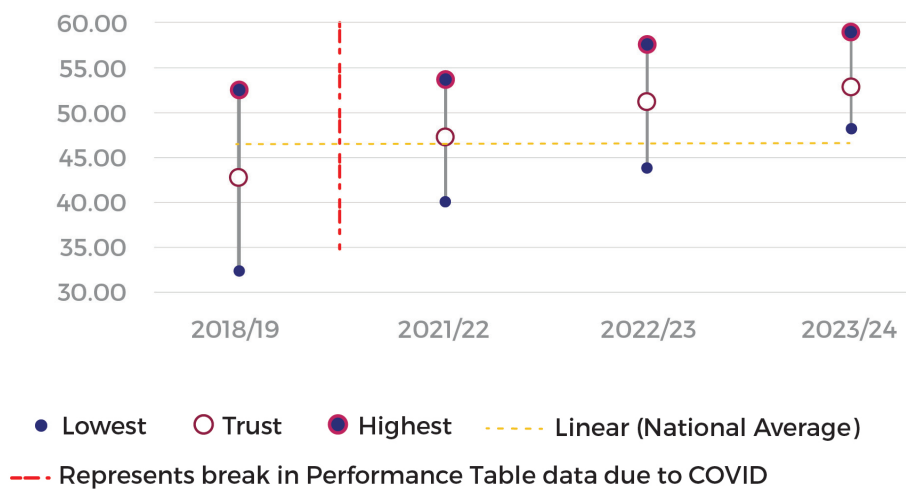
- - - Represents break in Performance Table data due to COVID

HOW WE'LL JUDGE OUR SUCCESS - **SECONDARY**

SELF-EVALUATION JUDGEMENTS



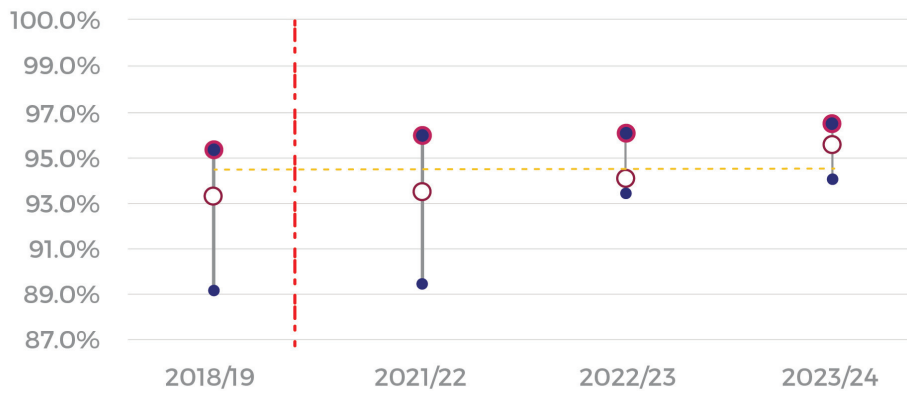
ALL - KS4 ATTAINMENT 8



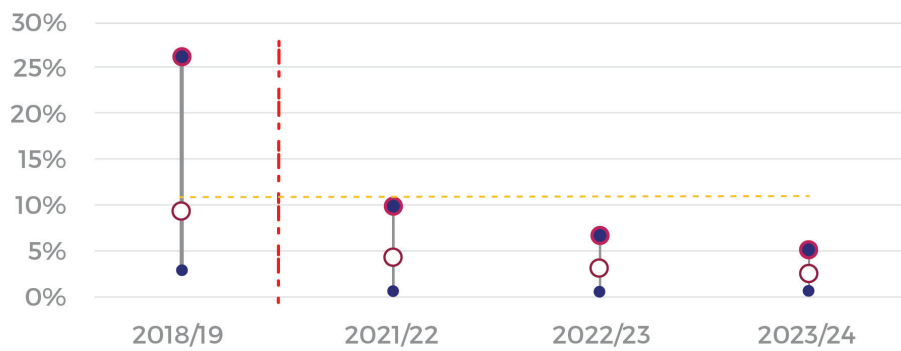
KS5 AVERAGE GRADE

YEAR	Lowest	Trust	Highest
2018/19	C	C	C
2021/22	C+	C+	C+
2022/23	B-	B-	B-
2023/24	B-	B-	B-

ATTENDANCE



%1 + FTE



● Lowest
 ○ Trust
 ● Highest
 - - - Linear (National Average)

Represents break in Performance Table data due to COVID



Astrea Academy Trust

INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE

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