

Registration, refreshments & exhibition					
08:45 - 09:00	Welcome: Chris Zarraga, Director, Schools North East & Tom Shears, Ward Hadaway				
09:00 - 09:40	<b>18 Months into Delivering the Opportunity Mission in the NE: Successes, Challenges and Priorities for 2026</b> Katherine Cowell, Regional Director, Department for Education				
SESSION ROUND ONE					
09:45 - 10:25	<b>Collaboration</b> Navigating the Changing SEND Landscape Erica Wolstenholme, National Coordinator for Whole School SEND, nasen	<b>Community</b> Setting up and Managing Subsidiaries - Legal and Operational Insights for Trusts Tom Shears & Tim Care, Ward Hadaway LLP	<b>Challenge of Inequality</b> North East Education Policy Update Ben Hardy, Policy Manager, Schools North East		
Refreshments & exhibition					
11:10 - 11:50	<b>Curriculum Review: Insights for Trust and School Leaders</b> Dr Vanessa Ogden, CEO, Mulberry Academy Trust & former member of the Curriculum Review Panel				
Main room		Classics Suite			
11:55 - 12:35	<b>Panel Debate: The New Ofsted Framework</b> Chair: John Roberts, Tes Panellists: Andy Jordan, ASCL, Chris Mitchinson, South Hylton Primary Academy & Kate Reid, Polam High School	<b>The Lower Achievement of White Working-Class Pupils at School,            and What Might be Done About it?</b> Stephen Gorard, Professor of Education, Durham University			
Lunch & exhibition					
SESSION ROUND TWO					
13:35 - 14:15	<b>AI in Action: Collaborating for Smarter, Happier Schools</b> David Baldwin, NTLT, Andy Sherlaw, WBHS & Fleur Wilkinson, John Spence.	<b>Smarter Spending, Better Systems: Unlocking Impact            Through ICFP</b> Zoe Levitt, Education Director, Consilium Academies	<b>Building an Effective Trust Attendance Strategy</b> Louise Sanderson, Croftway Academy & Paul Martindale, WISE Academies		
SESSION ROUND THREE					
14:20 - 15:00	<b>Why Policymaking is so Hard</b> Sam Freedman, Senior Fellow, Institute for Government	<b>Harnessing the Spark: How a Bold Vision, Careful            Planning &amp; Positive Culture Drive a Successful Merger</b> Louise Spellman & Katy Riley, Spark Education Trust	<b>Ganging Up on the Problem: Mapping Partnerships to            Tackle Inequality</b> Sean Harris FCCT, Director of PLACE, TVED		
SESSION ROUND FOUR					
15:05 - 15:45	<b>Horizon Scanning for Trust Finance and Operations:            Preparing for What's Next</b> Sam Freedman, Senior Fellow, Institute for Government	<b>Now We Are Merged: Leading With Vision After a Trust            Merger</b> Alice Witherow, Cheviot Learning Trust	<b>Tackling Inequality Through Community Collaboration,            insights            from Poverty Proofing®</b> Ancha Stoodley, Poverty Proofing the School Day Team Manager, Children North East		
15:45	Close				