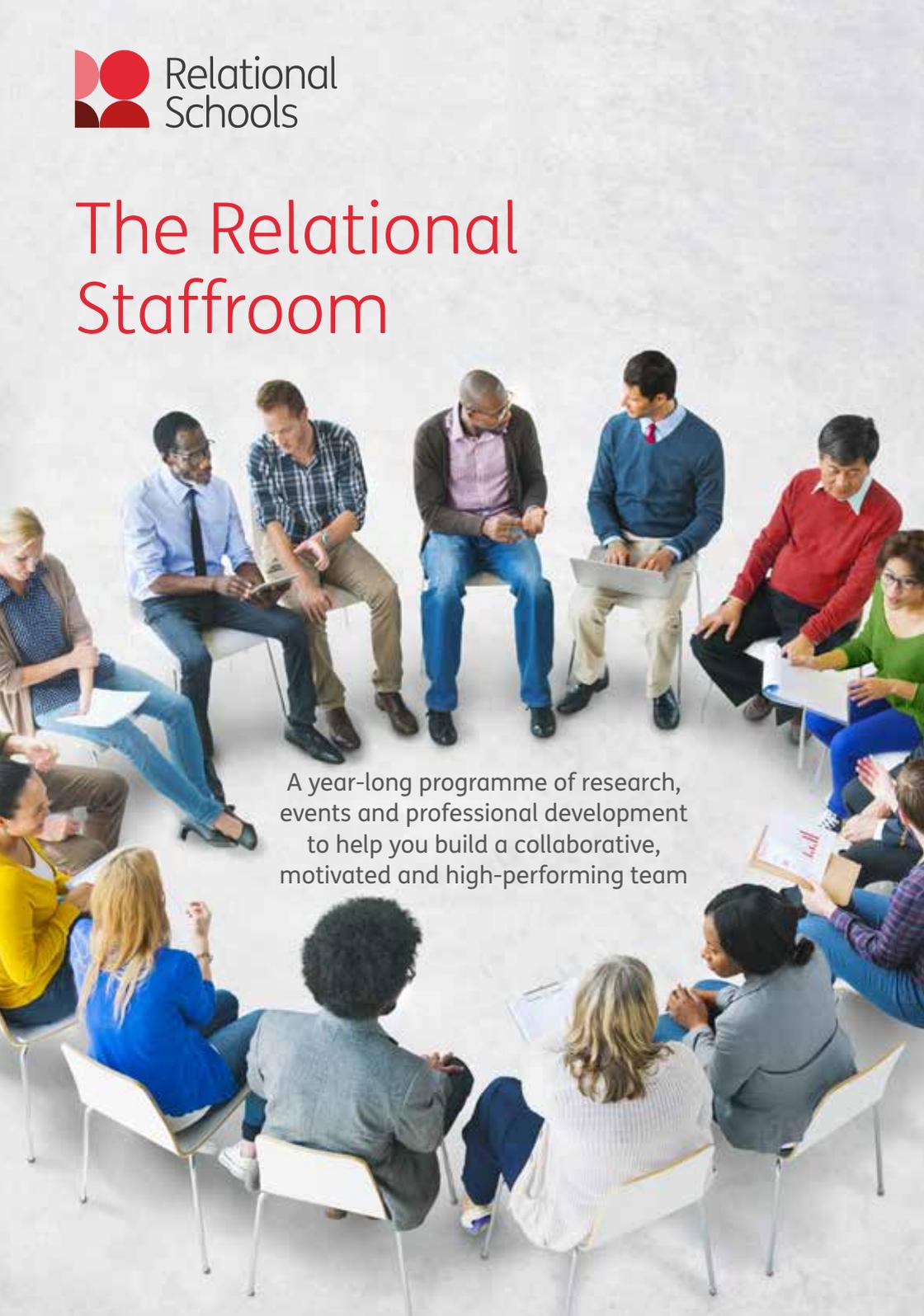


# The Relational Staffroom



A year-long programme of research,  
events and professional development  
to help you build a collaborative,  
motivated and high-performing team

**The Relational Forum from the Relational Schools Foundation (RSF) is a unique programme of professional development and guided school improvement for school leaders and managers. The focus of the 2019 programme is on the development of a relational staffroom.**

As a participating school, for as little as £160 a month\*, you will gain research-based insight into the relational dynamics of your staff team. Through its unique survey tool, RSF will explore what staff feel about their communication with colleagues, about the extent to which they feel they are all pulling in the same direction, and about how your context and culture motivate and support them in achieving your intended impact. RSF will analyse and report on your data, working with you at a regional event to clarify the findings, and to look at possible interventions and change strategies.

You will also be fully engaged in a programme of professional development, kicking off at an event with input from the leaders of high performing teams who know, through experience, just how

important team relations are to great practice. You will also have opportunities to meet and engage with other members of the cohort, and with leading academics and thinkers in the field of team leadership and management.

As the research gets underway, you will be invited to engage with – and contribute to – a range of online activities, including discussion groups, training, and reading-focused activity, engaging critically with academic papers and practitioner research.

At the end of the year, the 2019 Relational Forum will close with an informal event to celebrate what each school has achieved as a result of its participation, and to review how your practice has changed.

Think of one thing you do as a school leader that doesn't involve relationships. Managing people is an entirely relational activity, which you perform by motivating and incentivising others, meeting (or negotiating around) their needs, resolving conflict, nurturing talent, and generally rubbing along nicely.

Leading an organisation also requires you to consider your team's own relational needs, and to provide an environment and culture in which a diverse group can self-determine to work hard with and support one another in order to achieve certain challenging aims. That is the aim of our programme. After all:

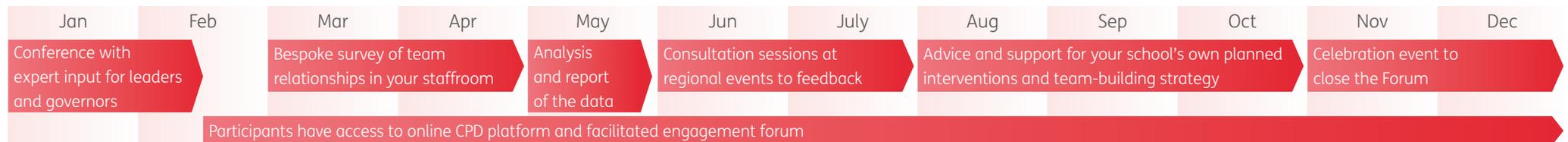
*"People leave managers, not companies. So much money has been thrown at the challenge of keeping good people – better pay, better perks, better training – when, in the end, turnover is mostly a manager issue. If you have a turnover problem, look first to your managers."*<sup>1</sup>

But to be authentic about this, and to create a truly flourishing and high-

performing team, you are required to see team relationships as ends in themselves, not just as means to another end ... to build a relational culture which encourages not just hard work, but also kindness and support, well-being and engagement, loyalty and belonging.

We will equip you with the information, inspiration, tools and data you need to be an enlightened, effective and reflective relational leader. We will show you how to map the key relationships in your school – to chart your relational base – which we will then measure with our Relational Proximity Framework. We will feed our findings back to you in a way that builds your capacity, and invite you to join an online community to work with others on the programme, accessing (and contributing to) a bank of research and professional development material around the theme. In short, we will help you be more relational in your own practice, and to build a more effectively functioning team.

**THE PROGRAMME INCLUDES:**



\*£1,875 pa for a survey involving up to 20 members of staff. By way of an illustration, a school looking to include between 40-50 members of staff in the survey would pay £2,600 for the programme; for a survey involving 90-100 staff, the school would pay £3,500 for the programme.

<sup>1</sup>Buckingham, M. & Coffman, C (1999) – First, break all the rules: what the world's greatest managers do differently - Simon & Schuster: London.

Our work demonstrates how a focus on improving relationships in schools improves a broad range of educational, social and organisational outcomes, and can overcome many of the challenges schools face in their drive to improve.

RSF measures the quality of relationships between people in schools and, through our analysis and subsequent advice and interventions, we seek to influence organisational practice and policy with a relational agenda.

Our main aim is to build relational capital and capability in the lives of students, teachers, families and communities by supporting positive and evidence-based change in:

- ✓ the way schools are organised;
- ✓ the way schools conduct their practice with respect to teaching, learning, leadership and management; and
- ✓ the way system-level organisations and authorities influence school practice through policy or regulation.

To register your interest in the Relational Forum or make an enquiry, please email Ben via [office@relationalschools.org](mailto:office@relationalschools.org) or call **01223 909408**.

To find out more about our work, see [relationalschools.org](http://relationalschools.org)

*“Our work with Relational Schools has had a profound impact on my approach as an educational leader. It reinforced the evidence that relationships are the glue that holds every learning institution together and provided a detailed set of metrics to measure this, providing areas for development.”*

Chris Dale, former Director  
of Teaching & Learning,  
Samuel Ward Academy Trust

*“In a sector that talks about evidence-based practice, a lot of the evidence being used is weak, and is used to promote a certain ideology. Relational Schools stood out to us as able to offer an independent, empirical test that what we do works. The process was simple, unobtrusive, and enjoyable, and allowed our staff and students to reflect deeply on the purpose of what we do.”*

Gwyn ap Harri, CEO,  
XP Schools Trust