



NEWCASTLE  
SCHOOL  
FOR BOYS

LEARN ACHIEVE DEVELOP



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2027

Learn Achieve Develop

# INTRODUCTION FROM DAVID TICKNER

## HEAD



It has been a great relief to emerge from the challenges posed by the Covid pandemic and to resume a full programme of teaching and learning and other school activities. Whilst we are not complacent, we hope that we have seen the worst of the pandemic and its restrictions. We are also extremely proud of the adaptability and resilience shown by our whole school community in the face of Covid. There is, however, no doubt that Covid, and the restrictions it brought, changed some things including disrupting nearly two years of children's social and emotional development.



In the wake of Covid comes a great deal of other social change as well as economic and political uncertainty posing a number of challenges for independent schools. Having successfully established ourselves into the competitive day school market of Newcastle and the north east, we are confident that we can adapt and thrive through what seems set to be another challenging period. The School's longer-term ambitions for growth, relocation and further specialisms remain but we must first face the challenges and conditions of the next few years to ensure that we are in the strongest possible position to exploit future opportunities. Now is a good time to review where we are and to set out our medium-term plan for the next five years.

# GOVERNORS

Tim Care (chair)

Mark Gill

Lucia Graham

Claire King

Neil Lloyd-Jones

Sue Melbourne

Philip Parkinson

Jonathan Sykes

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)

**David Tickner**

Head

**Christine Dobson**

Bursar and clerk to the governors

**Graeme Hallam**

Senior School Deputy Head  
(boys' wellbeing & character development)  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Alex Newman**

Senior School Deputy Head (teaching & learning)

**Tiffany White**

Head of Junior School

**Alex Kingsland**

Director of Marketing and Admissions

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategic plan sets out the School's medium term plans and ambitions for the next five years.

This strategic plan is supported by an annual operations plan.

The purpose of both the strategic and operations plan is to guide and inform the actions of the School, its senior leadership team, governors and staff and, in doing so, offer clarity including to other stakeholders.

The School must continue to develop and respond to the dynamics of the social and economic climate, locally and nationally, while preserving its essential character and ethos.

Our focus over the next five years will be to continue to develop and deliver excellence in teaching and learning and character development by focussing on four main strategic objectives, whilst preserving the current values and ethos of the School.

As we look to the future, we are very conscious of the current economic challenges and that our parents and families will expect us to ensure the very best value. Thankfully our strong financial position ensures we can continue to invest and develop for the benefit of our pupils.

Throughout the School's emerging history, we have kept our focus on being agile, adaptable and financially responsible whilst growing and developing a successful school.

In the current climate, such an approach has never been more important. We will do all that we can to continue to provide the highest possible quality educational experience with the imperative of ensuring the long-term sustainability and capacity to deliver an excellent education for our pupils.





# SCHOOL AIMS

To provide, in a supportive environment, an excellent learning experience for boys aged 3 to 18. Specifically, we aim to:

- *challenge and support each boy to achieve the highest levels of individual academic progress*
- *develop boys and young men of excellent character*



# HISTORY

Newcastle School for Boys was formed in 2005 out of the merger of two independent boys' prep schools: Ascham House and Newlands Prep. The decision was taken to increase the School's age range following the merger and, in 2009, the School reached maturity when establishing its Sixth Form.

Since that time, Newcastle School for Boys has grown, developed and successfully established itself as 3 to 18 boys' school in the competitive day school market in Newcastle and the north east.

The School has a reputation for delivering an excellent all-round education for boys with a unique focus on character development. Particular strengths have emerged in the School's pastoral care, its ability to meet the needs of SEND pupils and its sporting achievements.

In 2017, the School acquired a new sixth form centre adjacent to its Senior School on Moor Road South. The school was recently highly commended for its emphasis on character development in the boys school category of the annual Independent School of The Year awards.

Since successfully navigating the challenges of the Covid pandemic, the School has invested in technology and begun the roll out of one-to-one devices for pupils and staff.

In January 2022, the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) judged the School 'excellent' in all areas as well as fully compliant with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations.

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The School must continue to develop and respond to the dynamics of the social and economic climate, locally and nationally, whilst preserving its character and ethos.

Our focus over the next five years will be to continue to develop and deliver excellence in teaching and learning and character development by focussing on four main strategic objectives, whilst preserving the current values and ethos of the School.

Promote and deliver pupils' learning and academic progress through:

- 1. the application of technology*
  - 2. enhanced staff development and sharing of good practice*
  - 3. a progressive and relevant curriculum and pupil experience that meets the academic, character development and wellbeing needs of all pupils*
- and*
- 4. maintain the strength of the School's finances, assets and resources to deliver successfully its aims and development objectives.*



# 1. PROMOTE AND DELIVER PUPILS' LEARNING AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY.

The School seeks to harness further its use of technology as a tool to enhance our boys' experience of school and to support their academic progress and character development. Effective use of technology should facilitate more individualised learning and remove barriers. It is the learning that should drive the use of technology; not the other way round.

There is no doubt that Covid caused an 'edtech' revolution vastly accelerated by the pandemic. Most pupils', parents' and teachers' perceptions and capabilities have now changed significantly and irreversibly. We have spent a good deal of time speaking with and learning from schools who have already successfully applied technology and deployed one-to-one pupil and staff devices. The need to embrace fully the use of technology in teaching and learning has never been greater than it is now.

Over the next five years, we will:

- i. Complete one-to-one device roll out to pupils.
- ii. Organise and develop the resources, content and information that is accessible to pupils and staff.
- iii. Develop the data and information that is available to staff, pupils and parents ensuring appropriate accessibility and the efficacy of its application.
- iv. Apply, integrate and manage the hardware and software used to enhance pupils' learning (and other functions of the School).
- v. Ensure that the further use of technology is carefully managed and supported so as not to be harmful to our pupils' wellbeing.
- vi. Integrate carefully the use of technology into the School's physical environment so that both are maximised for the benefit of pupils and staff.
- vii. Train and support staff in the use and application of technology in teaching and learning.



## 2. PROMOTE AND DELIVER PUPILS' LEARNING AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS THROUGH ENHANCED STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICE.

There is no doubt that an enormous strength of the School and much of its success is down to the skill, care and commitment of our staff. They are the School's greatest and most valuable asset.

There is a great deal of expertise and experience across a range of important areas within our staff body. This can and should be harnessed to support our pupils' learning and character development as well as the professional development and fulfilment of our staff. In the context of the School's excellent outcomes in its ISI inspection in January, the only recommendation was that the School 'ensure that pupils' achievement is further enhanced by sharing the best practice evident in the most successful teaching.'

Over the next five years, we will:

- i. Ensure the sharing of practice amongst all staff at least termly.
- ii. Support our staff in accessing and benefitting from opportunities to learn from good practice beyond the School.
- iii. Form staff working groups to support their design and re-establish programmes to review staff performance and development.
- iv. Recognise, promote and celebrate staff learning and achievements - a learning culture.
- v. Pursue high quality staff appointments that are reflective of the diversity of our pupil, parent and wider communities.



### 3. PROMOTE AND DELIVER PUPILS' LEARNING AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS THROUGH A PROGRESSIVE AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM AND PUPIL EXPERIENCE THAT MEETS THE ACADEMIC, CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING NEEDS OF ALL PUPILS.

Whilst the School, its staff, pupils and families worked extremely hard to mitigate the effects of the Covid pandemic, the restrictions under which schools had to operate meant that opportunities for some pupil activities, and the benefits they promote, were limited. If pupils have changed or have had a changed experience in recent years then the curriculum and their experience of it need to be adapted accordingly.

Over the next five years we will:

- i. Develop further the school's character development programme to ensure pupils make the best possible progress.
- ii. Review the Year 9 curriculum and its timetabling to ensure it supports pupils' transition into their GCSE studies and option choices maximising engagement and outcome.
- iii. Review the curriculum and pupil experience in Years 5 and 6 to ensure they provide the best possible preparation for learning at the Senior School.
- iv. Enhance and develop the transition programme for pupils moving from Year 6 into Year 7.
- v. Continue to develop our provision to support pupils' wellbeing particularly in the light of the impact of the Covid pandemic on pupils' mental health.
- vi. Remain alert and ready to adapt to other curriculum developments brought about by changes in educational policy and examinations.



## 4. MAINTAIN THE STRENGTH OF THE SCHOOL'S FINANCES, ASSETS AND RESOURCES TO DELIVER SUCCESSFULLY ITS AIMS AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES.

It is important that the School continues to maintain a strong and healthy position particularly during a period that looks set to remain economically and possibly politically challenging for some time to come. Thanks to its consistently prudent and strong financial management, the School is in a healthy position to meet new challenges and opportunities that may arise. Whilst it remains, a longer-term ambition of the School to relocate to a larger, more purpose built site, in the meantime, it must invest in and maintain its current facilities.

Over the next five years we will:

- i. Review the basis on which the School awards new scholarship and bursaries in order to promote accessibility and fairness. (It is not proposed to change the terms and conditions of existing awards.)
- ii. Review the components and structure of staff remuneration to maximise staff recruitment, retention and reward.
- iii. Prioritise the allocation of resources to support initiatives directly linked to this strategic plan.
- iv. Explore potential for letting school premises, maximising income through a managed partnership with an external provider, with minimal disruption to School operations.
- v. Enhance and develop existing facilities and resources.
- vi. Work to maximise environmental benefits and sustainability.
- vii. Identify possible funding streams for renewal of some school facilities.

