



## **Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026**

Based on 2018 framework and its subsequent revisions

# **ABINGDON LEARNING TRUST    STRATEGIC PLAN: 2021 -2026**

## **Introduction**

After 3 years together, we have established a Learning Trust of three schools aiming to support not just the school communities, but the wider community, including beyond the Abingdon area. We use a 'three-step' approach to: consolidate and support the current schools as a multi-academy trust; increase the reach of the Trust and impact with additional schools joining the Trust; extend the provision for wider community benefit as a Learning Trust for the areas in which it supports schools. We have now completed phase one. This iteration of the business plan establishes our intended approach over the next 3-5 year period, and will be kept under review.

## **Our aims**

- a) We will nurture curiosity, character and independence, fuelling a passion for learning in all children and staff to shape confident, creative, resourceful and resilient individuals.
- b) We will support and deploy resources effectively and efficiently to make a valued contribution for the good of all our young people, our economy and our community.
- c) To achieve this we will secure:
  - A broad, deep and balanced curriculum enabling choice and inclusive learning opportunities, promoting aspiration
  - Financial sustainability and commercial resilience, with operational efficiency and effectiveness
  - Net zero emissions across our organisation with educational initiatives that build a reputation for high quality education on climate related issues
  - Expansion of the Trust to support the majority of school age children in the Abingdon area - in order to support investment in community provision, shared use of facilities, learning opportunities and networks

## **Our values**

- **QUALITY:** to create an outstanding learning community, including strong leadership and governance
- **OPPORTUNITY:** to provide the best opportunities for all children to reach their full potential
- **COLLABORATION:** to support a shared commitment and dedication to learning
- **AMBITION:** for continual improvement and to strive for excellence in all we do
- **COMMUNITY:** To be an active participant in our community, leading and supporting initiatives for the benefit of all members of society

## **Trust-wide improvement**

Priorities have been developed from the Trust-wide schools' improvement plans, supported by the strong relationship with Abingdon and Witney College, and in collaboration with schools in the Abingdon Partnership of Schools, the OX14 Partnership (of state and independent schools); as well as the town, district and county councils, local businesses and universities.

- Continued focus on a rich and deep curriculum at all stages from Early Years to the Sixth Form
- Ensure that outdoor education is an entitlement for all pupils and students in the Trust – from Forest School at Primary to Duke of Edinburgh Awards in the Sixth Form
- Enhanced Trust and schools' leadership and governance: succession planning, recruitment, retention, and continued development of skills, knowledge and understanding
- Addressing the differences in attainment and progress for vulnerable pupils (those with Special Educational Needs/ Disabilities (SEND); those in receipt of Pupil Premium grant) and others, so that they meet at least national levels of attainment and progress; and ensuring that girls and boys do as well as each other based on national benchmarks
- Staff development: Teachers with access to responsive and tailored Professional Pathways; staff have formal accreditation routes with continued training and annual appraisal
- Early Years, family and community: including pre-school provision and youth work
- Delivery of safe, stable and responsive support for teaching and learning, and school and Trust leadership and management through the ICT strategy
- A continued focus on staff wellbeing and welfare through the Trust Wellbeing Charter and regular staff surveys
- A commitment to achieving a net zero carbon emission position by 2035.

## **Delivery milestones**

The milestones set the direction of travel for the Trust as markers for business development and Trust-wide improvement, rather than as fixed targets; each will be supported by educational drivers, with financial efficiencies and effectiveness.

- 2021- 22: Ensure that current Trust schools are supported and challenged through coronavirus recovery, and prepared for Ofsted inspections. Enhance ICT provision and value for money through appointing one strategic provider across the Trust. Implement one

consistent MIS across the Trust. Review SEND provision at secondary – internally and in light of OCC’s consultation - to bring recommendations for change for September 2022 onwards for implementation.

Actively engage with local and regional networks to bring external learning to the Trust and its schools; discuss and develop an offer of support for schools in the localities and neighbouring areas, including through Partnership Agreement/s.

Working with our strategic energy procurement partner, construct a 5 year plan for school energy generation and use, to bring about a net zero position by 2035.

- 2022 - 23: Ensure that % students taking EBacc subjects at KS4 increases from 2021/22 level to at least national level. Appoint a Lead DSL across the Trust building on the Safeguarding strength identified in the schools. Roll out Tier 2 services including Catering and ICT. Implement the Estates Plan, and ensure changes to Catering bring about a net reduction in C footprint compared to 21/22. Develop relationships with schools relating to school improvement and net zero. Continue to seek additional primary schools to join the Trust and seek sponsor status as a Trust, if appropriate. Undertake review of staff profile and governance demographics, and develop a Succession Plan.
- 2023 - 24: Review Estates Plan and further develop land use and site investment plans, in consideration of the Local Plan and anticipated changes in school provision and numbers in the area. Ensure capacity is available in order to grow as new schools become available to sponsors as a result of Local Plan housing growth. Seek funding, either as a solo trust or with other education providers, for dedicated Sixth Form accommodation.
- 2024 - 26: Look to teaching school status or similar; additional new primary and/or secondary school through Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) plans, or through good schools joining the Trust. Continue to seek external funding streams which support growth plans, e.g. property/site development and training centre/hub and community resources.

## **Governance**

There are clear lines for governance to run each school, for Trust-wide education standards, central services and financial sustainability, and the strategic direction for future growth and business development.

- a) Where schools otherwise have ‘earned autonomy’ the Trust Board will consider risks and when support is needed; and provide central services for the efficient running of the schools
- b) Also to oversee investment in schools’ improvement, in services and processes to support educational standards and for financial sustainability
- c) This will be supported by our relationship with Abingdon and Witney College (AWC) and oversight of wider partnerships as a Learning Trust for the community

- d) A national advisory group will be established for advice and networks and reputations (national and international) to support the development as an area-based Trust, outward-facing and not parochial
- e) All activities will be carried out to support and promote an ethos that develops positive behaviour, mutual respect and care, and as an employer of choice.

## **Growth Plan**

More detailed consideration will be given to a growth plan for the Trust, matched to the delivery milestones and kept under review with a clear business case made for each decision to be taken along the way.

- a) It is not growth for growth's sake. Growth is important for the Trust to support improvements in education and increased learning opportunities. Schools will join the Learning Trust as a partnership and for their wider community, as well as leveraging the practical benefits of an academy trust.
- b) To ensure efficiencies and opportunities of scale for effective partnerships, resources and investment, particularly in the primary phase - to ensure that there is an equal 'voice' at both primary and secondary phases within the Trust
- c) We are also keen to include Special Schools, greater Early Years numbers, increased numbers in the joint Sixth Form and to be able to make an application for new Free School(s) as a result of planned housing development.

Future growth will develop services and support as a Learning Trust, working closely with others to achieve our vision for all children in the areas in which we have schools. This would, for example, include Early Years, youth work, community-based facilities and area-wide initiatives (county/district; universities; independent sector; employers).

## Central services

The tables below illustrate the scale of activity and nature of services which are provided by the Trust to support schools for greater efficiency in services and procurement, to raise education standards Trust-wide and greater financial stability sustained over time.

- **Tier 1 services** are included within a 6% levy:
  - Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Technical Officer, Finance, Payroll and Human Resource functions will be run from a central office across all schools
  - Audit, premises and other insurances, health and safety, compliance, Trust governance support, school improvement support, safeguarding support, premises bids, annual staff survey, appraisal support for Heads. Central procurement to take advantage of economies of scale providing continued savings for schools
  - School improvement is tailored to individual schools, as well as providing cross-Trust quality assurance activity, continuing professional development and training, and funding for release for training with accreditation eg NPQs.
  - Trust-wide network focussing on improving the educational experiences and outcomes for vulnerable pupils and students
  - Safeguarding and H&S networks across the Trust with regular meetings and peer review, as well as external review and assessment
  - Trust-wide school improvement budget of (min) £50 000 for schools to support work on Trust improvement priorities
- **Tier 2 services** provide further efficiencies and economies of scale to be identified with schools, including:
  - Premises, ICT and catering: 'bought in' from schools' budgets (separate to the levy) through service level agreements.
- **Income generated by growth** will be invested in schools' improvement and in ensuring financial sustainability of the schools and Trust.

# ANNEX

## Implementation

To help secure the strategic aims for Abingdon Learning Trust there are clear deliverables and targets identified for a 3-5 year period, to be kept under review.

### A. A broad, deep and balanced curriculum enabling choice and inclusive learning opportunities, promoting aspiration

- Quality of education is at least good, with significant areas of outstanding practice
- Leadership and management at all levels are at least good
- No significant differences between groups including boy/girl, SEND, Pupil Premium and vulnerable young people
- All students are well-prepared for their next steps, whether readiness for school, primary/secondary transitions, sixth form, college or university and employment

#### KPIs

21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
EYFS: GLD at 74% KS1: phonics 86% KS2: combined RWM at 72% and 15% above ARE KS4: attainment higher than national levels; EBacc at 38% entry 6th Form: VA in top 25% nationally; Score is higher than 0 but lower than 0.38, and lower confidence interval limit is higher than 0	EYFS: GLD at 75% KS1: phonics 90% KS2: combined RWM at 74% and 20% above ARE KS4: attainment higher than national levels; EBacc at 40% entry 6th Form: VA in top 25% nationally; Score is higher than 0 but lower than 0.38, and lower confidence interval limit is higher than 0	EYFSL GLD at 75% KS1: phonics 91% KS2: combined RWM at 78% and 25% above ARE KS4: attainment higher than national levels; EBacc at 44% entry 6th Form: VA in top 25% nationally; Score is higher than 0 but lower than 0.38, and lower confidence interval limit is higher than 0	EYFS: GLD at 76% KS1: phonics 91% KS2: combined RWM at 80% and 28% above ARE KS4: attainment higher than national levels; EBacc at 50% entry 6th Form: VA in top 25% nationally; Score is higher than 0 but lower than 0.38, and lower confidence interval limit is higher than 0	EYFS: GLD at 76% KS1: phonics 94% KS2: combined RWM at 80% and 30% above ARE KS4: attainment higher than national levels; EBacc at 52% entry 6th Form: VA in top 25% nationally; Score is higher than 0 but lower than 0.38, and lower confidence interval limit is higher than 0

**These KPIs** are to drive Trust-wide improvement rooted in provision by the current schools within the Trust. They are set to meet the ambition of the Trust and against national benchmarks for staged strategic progression. These will be kept under review by the Trust and how they translate to individual school improvement plans.

## B. Financial sustainability and commercial resilience, with operational efficiency and effectiveness

- Pupils on roll within 2% of capacity across Trust (at 25% in 18/19 when the Trust started, 7% in 2021)
- Balanced budgets with reserves growing as per policy
- Staff costs at 75% of overall income (average of 80% in 18/19, 76% in 2021)
- High level of satisfaction with Tier 1 services; Tier 2 services
- Trust assets well-managed and ICT infrastructure effective
- HR and well-being Board KPI graded as 'green' (Attendance is more than 95%; staff survey data show overall 90%+ satisfaction; annual turnover less than 10%)
- Governance is evaluated as at least 'good' (inspections; annual skills and impact surveys; external feedback)

### KPIs

21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 2 catering in place</li> <li>• Stable budgets across all schools</li> <li>• Estates development plan drawn up and agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One ICT provider common across all Trust schools</li> <li>• Single MIS in all schools</li> <li>• Tier 2: catering and ICT services across the Trust</li> <li>• Review staffing arrangements; remuneration strategy</li> <li>• Staff spend in schools is at 75%</li> <li>• Schools contribute to Reserves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review staff and governance profile and develop and implement Succession Plan</li> <li>• Staff spend in schools is at 74%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review staff and governance profile and develop and implement Succession Plan</li> <li>• Staff spend in schools is at 74%</li> <li>• Seek out external sources of capital funding for a dedicated Sixth Form accommodation</li> </ul>	

**The KPIs** support efficient and effective use of resources Trust-wide, for central services to support schools directly and to ensure opportunities of scale for effective partnerships, resources and investment. This includes compliance, accountability and strong governance; and to be a local employer of choice.



## C. Expansion of the Trust

- The Trust to influence and directly support school-aged children in communities within 45 minutes of travel from Abingdon
- Secure investment for community provision, shared use of facilities, learning opportunities and networks; including statutory services (county/district councils), community assets/ buildings, independent schools, universities and employers

*NB – pupil numbers assume increases due to popularity in current Trust schools, and additional schools in some years.*

### KPIs

21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Total pupil number = 2000 Sixth Form number = 200	Total pupil number = 2200 Sixth Form number = 220	Total pupil number = 2700 Sixth Form number = 250	Total pupil number = 2730 Sixth Form number = 280	Total pupil number = 2820 Sixth Form number = 290
Increased numbers Y7 (FZ) Increase numbers for RC Reception classes  Collaboration District Council, OCC	Increased numbers Y7 (FZ) Increase numbers for RC to PAN Secure sponsor status Develop services to other schools	Increased numbers Y7 to PAN (FZ) Additional primary school to join Trust Review land-use and seek options for investment	Review land-use and seek options for investment	Primary free school (tbc)

**A Growth Plan** will identify specific activities with a clear business case for each decision made. The increase in student numbers is based on current trends, with any new schools joining the Trust being contingent upon the joining school's decision and that of the RSC. This will, in turn, have direct impact on the Trust's ability to meet its expansion KPIs. There may be variations as opportunities arise over that period.

There are three stages of development: consolidation of arrangements for the current three schools; additional schools to join the Trust; and increased earning opportunities and wider community provision. Initial growth is likely to be through additional primary schools joining, increase in secondary school students and an expansion in Sixth Form provision.

Further development will be based on collaboration, partnerships and investment opportunities, including statutory services (Oxfordshire and wider) in particular for vulnerable children and disadvantaged families, for example literacy across all ages and indicators for social mobility and employment.

## **Acronyms**

KPI	Key performance indicator
EYFS/EY	Early Years foundation Stage/Early Years
GLD	Good level of development
RWM	Reading, writing and maths
ARE	Age-related expectations
VA	Value-added
HR	Human resources
SLT	Senior leadership team