

The King's School's Strategy & Strategic Plan 2024-29

Introduction

Our strategy sets out how the school will focus its efforts to deliver its purpose and achieve its vision for the next 5 years. Successful implementation of the strategic plan will ensure that we can continue to deliver its purpose and improve the way it does this within a dynamic and increasingly challenging environment.

School Purpose

Our [purpose](#) is: "To inspire every young person to achieve their best possible academic and personal outcomes within a highly supportive and challenging school community". Our overarching ethos is to deliver "Achievement for All".

School Vision

Our [vision](#) is: "We will work with young people in our community to raise their aspirations and achievement. With our success rooted in The King's School's rich history, we will respond to the present and look to the future. We place all young people at the heart of our decision-making, ensuring everyone has access to excellence in teaching and learning with a rich curriculum tailored to meet their needs and aspirations. We embrace diversity, respect difference and celebrate the unique characters of our individual students and staff. We use the depth that comes from our diversity to build on the culture of high achievement in our school."

School Values

Our key [values](#) of: Achievement, Creativity, Integrity, Respect and Resilience underpin everything we do to achieve our vision.

Strategic Review

We have conducted a systematic strategic review of our current situation. This ensures that we understand our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – internal and external. We have also evaluated our current financial situation, draft Capital Plan and current Improvement Plans and Risk Register to inform our review.

Strategic Intent

Our strategic review identified five strategic objectives that we must deliver if the school is to continue to fully deliver its purpose:

- **Attract and retain high quality staff (teaching and support)**
- **Offer a broad curriculum from 11 to 18 (academic and enrichment)**
- **Exploit technology**
- **Build partnerships**
- **Invest in facilities.**

Resources

We have experienced a steady reduction in the purchasing power of the annual funds received from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)¹), cuts to our funding from Devon County Council and an inability in recent years to secure matched funding from the DfE's Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) to maintain our buildings. We broadly need to be £100,000 in surplus in order to maintain our reserves and to fund our capital plan. Any successful CIF bid would require the school to make a 10% funding contribution.

Whilst the school is currently (as at 04 Jun 2024) forecasting a £136,000 operating deficit in 2024/25, it is undertaking activities which will enable it to set a balanced budget. This situation is typical of recent times and reflects the current pressure on school finances.

Our Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA), a registered charity, raises funds from the local community to provide small scale funding to meet curricula and extra-curricular needs - £7,564 in 2022-2023.

Despite our relentless efforts to make efficiency savings, we have had to make some very difficult financial decisions to deliver a balanced budget in recent years. These decisions have impacted staffing, the curriculum, enrichment activities and our capacity to maintain our infrastructure. We have concluded that we will be unable to achieve much of our strategic intent without securing significant external funding.

Strategic Plan

We recognise that strategic objectives and strategy are two different things. The objectives are what the school wants to achieve, while the strategy is the actions taken to achieve them. In addition, we are mindful of the severe resource constraints facing the school and the fact this is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future.

Consequently, our immediate strategic approach is to:

- i. Focus on delivering what we believe we can afford.
- ii. Pursue activities that that will help us to identify the best approach to raise external funding.

This reflects a recognition that identifying and planning strategic activities that are unfunded would be of no benefit. The initial requirement is to understand possible options to achieve a step-change in the school's external funding model. This will include undertaking research to help us to understand the approach of other schools in similar circumstances. Based on the findings, we will then assess the feasibility of engaging in different external fundraising activities, while simultaneously ensuring we minimise risk to ongoing operations. We will then update our strategic plan accordingly.

Annual Review

The Board recognises that our strategy and its associated plan are closely linked to the school's operational improvement process. We will ensure that the implementation of the

¹ The ESFA is an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE) responsible for funding education and skills providers in England.

Board's strategic and School's operational improvement plans is monitored routinely and endorsed annually by the Board.