

Strategic Development Plan 2015-2019 Summary



SEDBERGH
SCHOOL

FOUNDED 1525

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

ALVIN TOFFLET

Author of “Future Shock”, 1971



Introduction

Sedbergh has been through an exciting period of development since 2010. The School has grown from 407 pupils to over 500 and Sedbergh Prep School has increased from 83 pupils to 195. During the same period, the School has expanded its estate through merger with Casterton School in September 2013. We are delighted that the increased scale has allowed us to increase our academic and extracurricular offering without diminishing the quality of pastoral care that lies at the heart of boarding school education.

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear statement of the direction in which the School will progress during the next five years and to provide an explanation for this ambitious programme of development. This development plan does not diminish our commitment to our existing ethos or strengths which are well summarised in the School Mission Statements that follows.

There are several strands to the Plan which follows. Each element contributes to the greater purpose which is to enhance the pastoral care, education and opportunities available to all our pupils of all ages in both Schools. This is reflected by our commitment to invest in the very best teachers, to seek out the very best opportunities in and outside the curriculum and to provide the best facilities possible. Our planning is founded in a deep commitment to our pupils, not as a response to the grandiose developments in other schools.

We look forward to working to bring this vision to fruition and will look forward to discussing these plans with all those who are interested in Sedbergh, either individually or through well-established channels of communication.



Hugh Blair
CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNORS



Andrew Fleck
HEADMASTER

“We know England’s private schools are the best independent schools in the world.”

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP
at the London Academy of
Excellence, 2014

Mission Statement

To nurture each Sedberghian so that they realise their full potential in a unique and rigorous environment of excellence, characterised by committed endeavour, moral purpose and integrity of contribution. Each pupil is to be assigned to a Boarding House where responsibility for his or her welfare will be that of the Housemaster or Housemistress.

In particular, Sedbergh School and Sedbergh Preparatory School will:

1. Identify and develop the potential of its pupils in a variety of areas: academic, artistic, cultural, sporting, personal, social and spiritual; secondly, help them to obtain the best possible qualifications and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;
2. Provide a welcoming, friendly and supportive environment which recognises the worth of each individual within the School community;
3. Provide a fulfilling working environment for its staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and encourage their development;
4. Liaise closely with the parents of its pupils and encourage them to share in the life of the School and the House.

“Competitive sport is a key component in building self-esteem, confidence, school ethos and academic excellence.”

SIR MICHAEL WILSHAW

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in “Going the Extra Mile”, the OFSTED investigation



Strategic Priorities 2015-2019

1. Educational Development

a) Curriculum change

During the next three years changes to the A level and GCSE curriculum present new challenges for schools, staff and pupils. Sedbergh School will ensure that its staff are well informed about these changes and trained to teach new syllabuses effectively. Changes in the curriculum will embrace best practice whilst seeking to protect pupils from risk in untried or erratic examination procedures. We will introduce prep school pupils to an increased range of modern languages and develop technology as a subject.

b) Teaching and results

We are proud of recent achievements which have seen performance at all levels improve. We will continue to make this a focus of our effort by scrutinising teaching, developing pupils' independent study, managing the balance between academic and extra-curricular commitments and through the use of external specialists.

c) Technology

We live in a technology-rich world and will equip our pupils to use a range of devices and software safely in their personal, academic and future professional lives. This will embrace traditional office software, creative digital media and educational software. We will introduce coding skills in both Prep and Senior Schools, initially for those who are interested and progressively, for all pupils.

d) Teachers

Teachers are essential role-models, sources of inspiration and encouragement at all ages. They provide knowledge and academic guidance, offer pastoral care and share their extra-curricular interests. We will continue to seek the very best teachers by conventional recruitment and through networking to attract the very best educators.

e) Sporting ambitions

We are proud of our sporting heritage which we will maintain and develop; most particularly in rugby, cricket, hockey, netball and shooting where we aspire to win national competitions within the next five years. We will maintain our commitment to recruiting the very best coaches in these sports and will ensure that pupils and teams of all ages are prepared to the highest standards, and to support teachers who coach across the age ability spectrum. We will develop the breadth of our sporting provision, focussing on the further development of basketball and running.

2. Pastoral care and personal development

a) Safeguarding

All the school inspections of the Prep and Senior Schools in the last five years have found our work in this area to be excellent, without need for any change. Nonetheless, we will continue to develop relationships with local Safeguarding bodies, extend training and refine policy to ensure that pupils at Sedbergh Prep and Senior School are able to enjoy their schooling in safety.

b) Housemasters and Housemistresses

The quality of our boarding education is closely linked to the personal and professional qualities of housemasters and housemistresses. We will make it a priority to develop a pool of appropriate teachers who are enthusiastic, experienced and trained to undertake these roles in order to maintain continuity and the quality of our provision for the future.

c) Preparation for the challenges ahead

Our children face a complex and demanding future. In order that they can manage these pressures we will start a programme of education that draws on the best of contemporary research into well-being, leadership training, and emotional literacy and combine it with practical skills such as financial management.

3. The Size of the School

With the opening of Carus House in the Senior School in 2013, the School is the largest it has been with just over 500 pupils on roll. A small amount of further expansion could see that figure rise to 530 over the next five years. Sedbergh Prep School has grown to be almost 200 pupils and we foresee further expansion to 230 pupils in the same timeframe.

4. Use of Assets

The school has considerable assets on its two sites and has both a moral and legal obligation to use them effectively. Some are intrinsic to the activity of the Schools; boarding Houses, teaching spaces, sports facilities and Chapel whilst other assets such as residential properties are less constrained. The School will conduct a rolling review throughout the period of this Plan to ensure that its assets are appropriate and most efficiently used. It is likely that some change to the asset base will take place.

5. Facility development

We are proud of the School's unique sporting heritage and committed to its preservation and enhancement. Whilst many sporting facilities have seen significant improvement in recent years (cricket nets, swimming pool) the growth in pupil numbers has led us to identify a new indoor sports and recreation facility as a priority for development in the Senior School and intend to start construction in 2016. For similar reasons we will increase the number of pitches at the Prep School.

6. Boarding House refurbishment

The majority of our nine Senior School boarding Houses were built in the Victorian era. The quality of their fabric today is as much a testament to the craftsmanship and materials used in their construction as it is to the skill and commitment of the School maintenance teams. Just as we have benefited from the foresight of generations past, so we will invest in a systematic programme of remodelling to upgrade the facilities within the Houses to ensure they are fit for purpose for the next 50 years. We aim to start this before the end of this Plan.

Conclusion

We all know that such plans are subject to an element of uncertainty; political or economic events may require a reassessment of our aims. However, this does not diminish the importance of having clear ambitions to inform decision-making on the part of parents, the Governing body and the school management. It follows that the School will provide an annual report on progress and that any significant deviation from this plan, either in ambition or timescale will be communicated to those with particular interest in Sedbergh School.



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