WHO ARE WE

Our idyllic village school in the glorious Somerset countryside is at the heart of its community, which shares in the school's joy for music and celebrates its sporting strength. The school was built in 1853 by the family of the late Archdeacon W T Parr Brymer, out of love and respect for his aspiration to establish a school and encourage education for all in the local villages. The children now benefit from the school's extensive outdoor space, full size playing field, delightful garden with fruit trees, and its links with the neighbouring forest school; thereby championing environmental responsibility and awareness. The main historic building is in good repair and has a restored bell, which is rung every morning by Year 6 children. The pre-school, reception, and year one is in short-term prefabricated buildings for early years learning. The village car park provides excellent capacity for vehicles and including access for the school bus from the adjacent village of Kingsdon. To complete the picture, the church opposite is a key partner for pastoral activity.

THE PROBLEM

As a small rural school, the effect of staff and pupil turnover has a significant negative impact on classroom structure and finances. Our infrastructure does not provide continuity for class size and adequate dedicated space for storage, dining, music, and indoor sport. The small total number of staff results in high workload and fewer opportunities to maximise school strengths. Lastly, the school requires complementary partnerships to better enable further improvement without eroding its existing character.

OUR SOLUTION

This Strategy communicates the long-term direction for the school and how this will be achieved. It is highly aspirational and has been developed with parents, staff, governors, children, and local community to give it the widest applicability. It will be used to guide day-to-day decision making in support of long-term success and help the school to evaluate progress.

The School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP) is the short-term plan with more detail for the following year. The SDIP is developed by the staff and explains how the strategic aims will be met.

The strategic plan is a realistic and achievable aiming mark. The ways to achieve the strategic goals are not limited and opportunities to make improvements outside the plan should be actively taken in the pursuit of providing a happy and successful place for staff and students to learn and work.

OUR VISION

"The one who gets wisdom loves life" **[Proverbs 19:8]**

WHAT DO WE THINK

OUR ETHOS

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest possible quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocese level. It therefore encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LONG-TERM	STABLE	DISTINCTIVE	COMMUNITY
We will think in a way that delivers success for current and all future generations.	We believe predictable, stable institutions provide certainty for children and form the bedrock for all other school activity.	We want to reinforce success by focussing on our small rural setting while promoting music and sport.	Our network of communities and partnerships ensure a diverse and cohesive team.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN (FEEDBACK SUMMARY)

PUPILS voiced a need for more equipment such as climbing frame, swing, trampoline, and a bigger play area. They specifically wanted a calming or rest area. In general, they liked playing with friends, doing work with teachers and school trips.

STAFF asked for long-term planning and fewer changes, clear communication and responsibilities, consistency, and an appraisal system that was linked to training and development.

PARENTS wanted the children to be listened to, regular engagement with class teachers, a focus on extra-curricular school education, trips and activities, and greater diversity.

GOVERNORS wished to maintain the school history and 'feel', improved / expanded early years, fully incorporated SEN provision, and consistent monitoring and review.

2022 - 2027

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

OUR FIRST 170 YEARS OF OPERATION HAVE BUILT A RICH HISTORY AND TRADITION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AS A SMALL RURAL SCHOOL.

Now, we are moving into an exciting period of re-establishing a resilient model for the next 170 years that meets the needs of future generations.

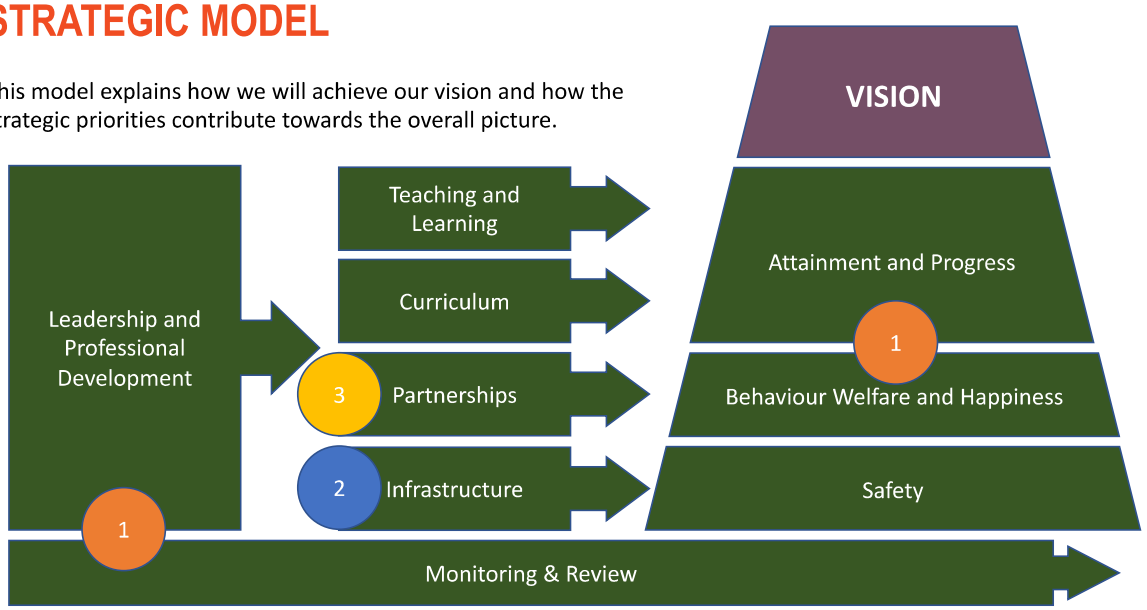
Priority 1 — INVEST IN OUR TEAM

Priority 2 — BUILD A LONG-TERM FUNCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Priority 3 — EXTEND IMPACT AND LEARNING THROUGH PARTNERS

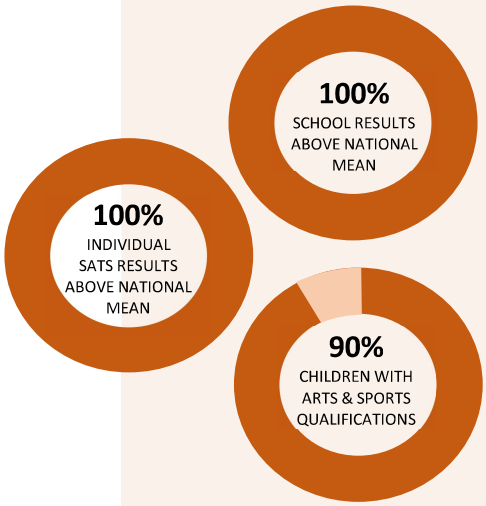
STRATEGIC MODEL

This model explains how we will achieve our vision and how the strategic priorities contribute towards the overall picture.



Priority 1

INVEST IN OUR TEAM



MONITORING AND REVIEW

Before we implement this strategy, we must understand the criteria for team success. Within the first year of this plan, we will establish metrics for reporting all strategic priorities. These metrics will represent the baseline upon which further yearly objectives will be measured.

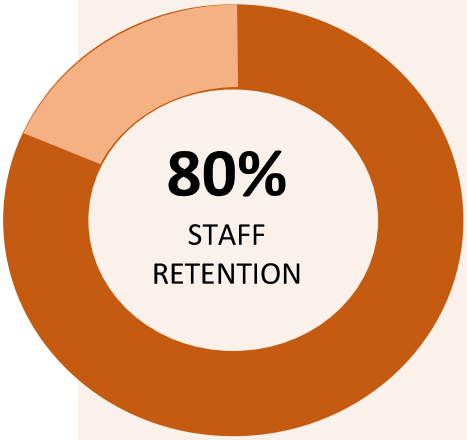
The headteacher report to the governors will review progress on these metrics throughout the year and provide the basis for governor and staff decision making. A key part of the review will be for governors to obtain direct feedback from the team, understand what the team thinks, and monitor morale. By doing so, we will be able to better target our investment.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

We recognise that outstanding outcomes are delivered by outstanding staff. Therefore, leadership and professional development is the start point for our strategic model. Getting this right leads to excellent teaching and learning, development of the curriculum, and ultimately attainment and progress.



Our team is primarily committed to developing and retaining staff members. We plan to live out this commitment by dedicating time for regular professional development, for individual bespoke courses, or experiences for all staff. We will set a predictable work-life balance and our aim is for staff to work no more than contracted hours. Finally, we will provide a culture and teaching environment that values teacher autonomy and professional independence.



RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

We know that the start point for quality begins with early recruitment, and this requires us to advertise nationally to attract high potential or accomplished teaching staff.

We will also develop a succession plan and bespoke job specifications for the school that allows early advertising of job vacancies, meets the professional needs of staff, and provides better continuity for pupils.

Priority 2

BUILD A LONG-TERM FUNCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT



INFRASTRUCTURE

By 2025, we will have published a holistic, clear infrastructure plan to take the school beyond 2057, which addresses the outcomes in this strategy. It is our intention that the first phase of that plan will be complete by 2027.

Existing fixed infrastructure dictates that the school maximum capacity is 104 pupils. The infrastructure plan will be predicated on maintaining small class sizes within the existing classroom capacity. This translates to 7 year-groups of 13 students in mixed multi age classes. The remaining capacity will accommodate pre-school admissions of up to 13 children in each age group. We will develop early years education infrastructure to provide more space with multiple free-flow indoor and outdoor areas.

GOALS

- 4 classrooms each with capacity for 26 students
- Dining area that accommodates the full school capacity
- Sufficient and appropriate storage
- A location of excellence for music and sport
- Pre-school updated and optimised
- Integrated SEN, safeguarding, accessibility, and safety infrastructure

Priority 3

EXTEND IMPACT AND LEARNING THROUGH PARTNERS

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND TRANSITION TO AN ACADEMY

By 2027, the school will have transitioned to an academy and will contribute to a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) that complements the school's individuality. We will develop the partnership to reduce the administrative burden and improve educational outcomes whilst seeking to reduce indirect costs by 10% on FY22/23 figures. School building and services maintenance will become fully outsourced to further reduce complexity.



MAINTAIN CHURCH PARTNERSHIP

The church partnership is a historic cornerstone of the school and helps maintain a basis for the school's ethos, religious education, and pastoral care. We must continue to actively promote the use the church facilities. We will also maintain outstanding links with the church to provide opportunities for worship.

SUPPORT ALL LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

We believe that when parents and carers thrive, children thrive, so we support the wellness of parents alongside the growth of their children. We will establish an outreach partnership with each community and find out what is important to them. We will then test and adjust how we operate to incorporate their needs into our annual plan. We will also work with families who are not local to ensure that we attract and grow our catchment area.

