

Paternoster School

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028

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The Paternoster school long-term strategic plan has been written in conjunction with senior leaders, SAND AT and the school LAB (Local Advisory Board). In developing this plan, our intention is to set out to communicate our vision, ethos, values, aims and the long-term direction for the school, so our stakeholders are clear on where we are going and what we are aiming to achieve.

Paternoster is a provision for children and young people whose needs cannot be met in mainstream education. We strive to ensure the continued education of young people in a supportive, positive and good quality education environment in order to enable them to achieve and make progress against the outcomes in their EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans). Our core aims include:

- Young people are engaged in education, have a positive attitude to learning and confidence in their academic achievements.
- Young people develop their emotional resilience.
- Young people achieve stretching academic and vocational attainment targets to improve future life chances.
- Young people have clear planned progression routes at 16 designed to meet their preparing for adulthood EHCP outcomes which will lead to employment, community activity and independence.
- Young people are kept safe and are able to make safe lifestyle choices.

We provide education and support placements to a minimum of 60 (full time equivalent) pupils at any one time, with a commissioned age range of 2 to 17 years. Pupils with an identified need in the following areas are considered for placement: SLD, MLD, PMLD, C & L, AS.

It should be emphasised that our over-arching priority is to ensure each and every pupil attending Paternoster receives a meaningful and personalised education so that their individual needs and aspirations can be met. Paternoster School and has an emphasis on developing communication skills and independence, including practise and preparation for adult life. This provides excellent opportunities for our pupils to be included and contribute to the wider community.

Paternoster school is based in Cirencester, a market town, in Gloucestershire, with a population of approximately 19,000 residents. Pupils attend from the Cotswolds, Wiltshire, Swindon, Worcestershire, and Oxfordshire. In Gloucestershire the numbers of children and young people with EHCP and SEN support have been increasing in recent years which impacts the ability of the Local Offer to provide appropriate support to children and young people.

The rate of children and young people recorded with Social, Emotional & Mental Health and Autistic Spectrum Disorder have seen substantial increases in the last 5 years. These now represent 41% of all children and young people with an EHCP. Locally 45.3% of children and young people with an EHCP attend a mainstream school and 28.4% attend a specialist school (the remaining proportion are in Further Education settings, Early Years settings, Alternative Provision settings or are awaiting provision).

There are currently 12 maintained, academy / free Special Schools in Gloucestershire. The number of Special schools has reduced from 12 in 2017 but the pupils on roll in the schools has been increasing in the same period. The LA have appointed Reach South Academy Trust to open a new 200 place MALD school in Gloucester in 2026.

Paternoster School become part of SAND Academies Trust in June 2019 and supports developing the Trust vision of the three key priorities: to be the schools of choice, the employer of choice and the trust of choice. The original Paternoster School was placed in Special Measures in March 2018. The most recent Section 5 OFSTED inspection (October 2023) categorised the school's overall effectiveness as Good and Good in all areas. What the school needs to do to improve:

"Elements of curriculum implementation need more time to embed. For example, staff do not consistently apply the approaches the school has adopted to teach some subjects. This can impede pupils' learning. The school should build on and strengthen the consistency of the implementation of the curriculum so that pupils learn well in all areas."

This strategic plan has been written to reflect leaders' and the Trust's continuing ambition for the school and to address the wider picture of school improvement.

Our Vision



At Paternoster School we ensure that every pupil is part of our safe, caring, respectful and vibrant community, where they are provided with diverse opportunities and high-quality teaching and learning. **We believe that all pupils should have meaningful, personalised pathways and choices throughout their school years, so their needs and aspirations are met.** Our curriculum has an emphasis on developing communication skills and independence, skills for living and for life, and enrichment. This provides excellent opportunities for our pupils to be included in, and contribute to the wider community, instilling a positive attitude towards lifelong learning.



- To support our pupils to be effective communicators who can express themselves in their preferred communication mode, make choices and has the right to contribute, belong and be heard.
- To provide a meaningful, happy, and secure learning environment in which pupils develop their abilities and make progress according to their individual needs.
- To forge positive working relationships with parents and carers and encourage a partnership between home and school at each stage of school life.
- To develop an inclusive and creative curriculum so our pupils are successful young people who enjoy learning and make outstanding progress.
- To maximise all learning opportunities and develop confident individuals who take a full part in activities within the school and the community.
- To equip pupils with valuable life skills, positive behavioural and self-regulation skills to enable them to achieve to their highest.
- To promote Relationships and Sex Education, PSHE and Citizenship, Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC, Cultural Capital, Personal Development, Anti-Bullying, and mutual respect.
- To promote independence and life-long learners who leave school equipped for the adult world whether in employment, education or supported living.
- To encourage pupils to have aspirational goals and to pursue personal interests, to make choices and decisions so they can contribute positively to society and to use their skills beyond school life.
- To ensure equality of opportunity for all, regardless of disability, gender, race, age, or sexuality.
- To support health and emotional well-being for all in the school community.

Values



The new senior leadership team undertook a review of the school values and gathered the input of all stakeholders to fully represent the school and where we are now.



What we do



- Employ well trained staff who offer unique teaching and learning experiences.
- Provide close liaison and partnership with parents and carers.
- Closely monitor our curriculum plans and ensuring creative and innovative approaches to teaching.
- Provide individual teaching, small groups, and whole class sessions where the pupils can benefit from interaction with peers and develop skills required to engage effectively within a group.
- Deliver successful teaching/therapeutic interventions that are judged on their impact and swift response to pupil needs as required.
- Partner with other specialist professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Parent Support Worker, Social Care, Educational Psychologists, Health Practitioners, Occupational Therapists, Continence Services, Transition Coordinators and Respite Providers.
- Provide a programme of offsite activities, visits and cultural experiences providing many opportunities for broader experience and generalisation of communication and behavioural skills vital for successful integration into and enjoyment of the wider community.
- Carefully plan and support transition into new classes and when moving on from the school.
- Promote continuous professional development for all staff in the school, to ensure that Paternoster School provides the best education and care for pupils.
- Ensure an inclusive whole school approach to self-evaluation and school development planning, creating a culture of continuous improvement and forward thinking.

Paternoster School are part of the SAND Academies Trust commitment:

We take our responsibility for the education, safety and wellbeing of children and young people very seriously and are committed to playing our part in developing a quality educational provision across Gloucestershire, and beyond.

SWOT Analysis



A SWOT analysis is a situational assessment tool that has been used to review the school's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This has allowed us to look at the internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) factors and use these to devise a strategy for the future.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear curriculum progression for pupils New staff appointed to SLT with skills and expertise to lead the school across different areas Staff team Staff and SLT knowledge of individual pupils Mental health, nurture and behaviour support SAND AT focus and direction – level of support for future plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large proportion of new teaching staff – 5 out of 8 classes with new teachers since January 2023 Age of building and structure Individual subject leadership SLT new to role Capacity to use school grounds in full due to safety concerns SAND AT focus and direction – level of support for future plans
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth of school Friends of Paternoster School / Community links Staff undertaking leading roles across the MAT MAT support Available infrastructure, within locality, to expand school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in SEND Change in commissioning brief – in relation to the provision at the school LA clarity and pace Changes to funding formula / pupil banding National guidance / policy change Post-16 destination measure

Our strategic priorities were formed and refined by the senior leadership team, Local Advisory Board, and Trust and staff representatives. It should be noted that our priorities are not numbered, this acknowledges that we do not see one priority as more important than another, our priorities are nonlinear and will often run in parallel to one another. The broader targets and timeframes below will be developed and refined in our annual School Evaluation Form and School Development Plan.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – DEVELOPMENT OF PREMISES

Context:

The school was redeveloped, in part, in 2017/2018. The works created new office spaces, classrooms, group rooms, hygiene rooms and toilet facilities. This was achieved by refurbishment of an existing single storey area and a 2-storey new build to the rear of the existing single storey area. The first floor of the new build accommodates a staff room (now a classroom), offices, stores (further break-out spaces and a nurture room), meeting rooms and toilet facilities. The ground floor of the new build accommodates 2 classrooms, a hygiene room, 2 group rooms, toilet and storage facilities. The existing refurbished area comprises 2 classrooms, a hygiene room, a laundry, 2 group rooms and toilet facilities – alongside a new office / reception area. The works also included the refurbishment of the old staff room to create both a sensory and therapy room.

5 classroom spaces and the staff room are currently housed in ‘temporary’ modular buildings that are a number of years beyond their usable life and have been inspected as not fit for purpose by the school and trust site staff and LAB. The premises and site need modification. This need allows us to use the opportunity to improve rather than simply part or update existing problems, ensuring the learning environment is best suited to the complex and varied needs of our pupils. In addition, as the pupil roll number grows so too does the need for additional classroom space.

The current arrangements to access the school premises for staff parking and transport has been raised in a health and safety audit as a school priority. The Area needs re-tarmacking and there are currently insufficient parking bays for staff and visitors.

The school playing field is not fit for purpose as there is currently scope for pedestrian / public access and the site is not secure to allow use by all pupils.

What is the current picture?

- We have had superficial updates to modular buildings, including painting, lockable cupboard doors and secured entrance doors with fobbed entry for one classroom.
- We have arranged some offsite parking for staff at the Watermoor site.
- We have developed outside areas, including updated the playground with community access to changing facility – funded by Friends of Paternoster School.

What are we working towards?

- To create the ideal learning environment for pupils with SEND.
- To be an example of best practice in regards to our physical space.
- To replace modular buildings with spaces that are fit for purpose with adequate areas for changing and staff toilets.
- To retarmac parking area, reducing the amount of car access points to increase parking spaces and enhance pedestrian safety.
- To explore the advantages and disadvantages of fencing the front of the building so the parking area can be used as an alternative fire evacuation point (as stated – evacuation point 2) and control access to cars throughout the day.
- Update corridor, including staff and pupil toilet areas in old section of the building that are beyond useable life expectancy.
- Fence field, where allowable by Historic England, and create additional parking for staff on a hard standing at the entrance that is already serviced by double gates and a dropped curb.

Related SAND Academies Trust aims:

- To direct the maximum resources available to the trust’s schools, facilitating and servicing high standards.

Estimated Timeline:

September 2023	→	Gain 3 quotes and Archaeological costings for fencing the field Gain estimates for retarmac of front of school
October 2023	→	Application of local council for changes to layout (entrance and exit works) for front of school Apply to MAT for central funding to fence the field
January 2024	→	Ground works and resurfacing for front of school – superficial repairs completed
April 2024	→	Field fencing works to be completed
September 2025	→	Gain quotes for new toilets and corridor improvements in the ‘old’ building
July 2026	→	Replacement of modular buildings with appropriately specified classrooms
July 2028	→	Works to complete update of corridor and toilet areas

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – INCREASE ROLL NUMBER / EXTERNAL GROWTH

Context:

Nationally, children and young people with SEN in Gloucestershire were less likely to have any sustained destination than those with no identified SEN (95.1%). 12.9% of children and young people with EHCP qualified to level 3 by age 19 in 2020. In 2020 86.4% of children and young people with an EHCP and 86.7% of children and young people with SEN support aged 16- 17 years were in education or training vs. 91.7% of all children and young people in Gloucestershire schools.

What is the current picture?

With 11 leavers looking for Post-16 placement for September 2023, the Local Authority had only placed 1 pupil in a Post-16 provision by the given deadline of March 2023. The remaining pupils were at high risk of being NEET.

What are we working towards?

- To explore the advantages and opportunity of acquisition of the previous Watermoor Primary School site to serve as a Post-16 unit.
- To revisit our commissioning brief to extend to 19 years of age and increase the school's PAN to reflect Post-16 provision.

Estimated Timeline:

September 2023 → SAND AT support to begin briefing document and strategic plan for addition of Post-16 provision

Related SAND Academies Trust aims:

- To direct the maximum resources available to the trust's schools, facilitating and servicing high standards.
- To develop a trust which is outward looking and enterprising.
- To develop children and young people's independence skills and support families to take part in a parallel journey with their child as they prepare for adulthood.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – DEVELOP LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

Context:

In January 2023, Jennie Laird started as the new Headteacher; with the previous Headteacher moving to a strategic role within the MAT as Quality of Education Director. The school subsequently has a new leadership team with Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher (formerly Assistant Headteacher) and two other SLT members coming into role within the first few months of 2023.

Paternoster School has had a high turnover of teaching staff in the past 4 years. In February 2023 3 classes were being led, full time, by HLLPs and the support team. Further to this in January 2023 1 class teacher was new in post. In Term 5 an ECT joined the teaching staff and a full-time teacher returning from maternity leave gave notice to work Term 6 before leaving her role at the school. There has also been further notice from a full tie class teacher announcing her retirement in July 2023.

What is the current picture?

The Headteacher has been undertaking induction and support from the MAT; the Deputy Headteacher and Family Support Worker (join DSLs) have had supportive development of their role through an external and internal auditing process.

Following a recruitment process, 3 new teachers have been appointed for September 2023, these are all UPS teachers with SEND experience.

The Deputy Headteacher is the curriculum lead and is managing the majority of the subject based curriculum.

September 2023 all 8 classes to have teachers leading the class with LP6 and LP4 support where required. Subject coordinators for English and Maths in place.

What are we working towards?

Established subject leads with roles on challenge and support groups. Effective use of cover teacher to enable subject leads to attend CPD, review their subject and support staff.

Developed roles of subject coordinators and identification of staff strengths through Teacher 360 and performance management. Succession planning for SLT and lead safeguarding roles. Strong subject and curriculum knowledge throughout the school.

Related SAND Academies Trust aims:

- To utilise the skills and experience of staff and leaders across the trust to the best advantage of the children and young people
- To provide an environment where staff can continually develop and progress their careers
- To build formal and informal partnerships across Gloucestershire and beyond

Estimated Timeline:

July 2023	→	Review SAND AT Support category and put in place plans for support
September 2023	→	New teachers to start in role and subject coordinators allocated roles.
September 2023	→	UPS teachers given who school development role to reflect current short- and long-term priorities in school improvement.
July 2024	→	Review SAND AT School Improvement Strategy Support Category and level of support required for the leadership team.
October 2024	→	Performance management review of targets.
December 2024	→	Explore advantages and disadvantages of various school structures in line with staff strengths.
September 2025	→	Headteacher completion of Mulberry Bush new headteachers course, implementing strategies and long-term planning developed as part of this CPD.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – EMBED SEQUENTIAL LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM PROVISION

Context:

Our curriculum is written with an overview of the intent, implementation and impact of our plans. EYFS and Key Stages 1-3 will work on a new 3-year rolling program, from September 2025, which has been partially trialled over the last year. However, 2 years of this curriculum cycle was during Covid-19 partial closures and this has not been embedded into forward planning for subsequent years. Our Moving On Moving Up curriculum, for Key Stage 4 pupils, is taught on a 2-year cycle for years 10 and 11 with a focus of life skills, qualifications and moving onto post-16 provision.

What is the current picture?

Our curriculum is, at its heart, aspirational, responsive to individual pupil needs and dynamic, with personal development at the core. It promotes a love of learning and guides teachers across school in preparing learning and point to quality resources to help students learn. The curriculum provides clarity of intent and clearly defined sequential learning pathways that are skill and content based ensuring they are relevant and develop key transferable skills. To remain effective, we continue to develop the curriculum collaboratively, evaluating and improving it to reflect the school's values. It aligns with national learning standards. We found this approach has provided teachers with a platform where they can share best practices, knowledge and resources with each other.

We use sequential pathways and a spiral curriculum approach so knowledge and skills builds on previous learning and pupils have the opportunity to revisit areas of their learning in a range of experiences and contexts.

What are we working towards?

To provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils; opening, rather than closing doors to future health, happiness, inclusion in society and local community; and success educationally and personally.

Related SAND Academies Trust aims:

- To provide the best possible education for children and young people, including those with additional and complex needs, in both mainstream and special schools.
- To achieve excellence through innovation, creativity and continuous improvement.