

Learning First Federation

Three Year Strategic Plan 2015-2018

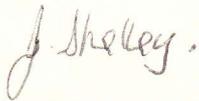
**Foreword**

The key aim of this Strategic Plan is to ensure the future success of our recently formed Learning First Federation, so that it may provide the very highest quality education for all of the pupils we serve. Although our schools strive to develop their own personal identities, many areas of commonality between Kingsfield First School and Knypersley First School exist, including the provision of education to children in Biddulph, the financial constraints, the maintenance of old school buildings and the challenges of providing a highly engaging curriculum that promotes the very highest rates of progress and attainment.

We believe by thinking more strategically we can overcome many of the barriers we face and work with a clear vision and purpose towards the future.

May we take this opportunity to thank Mrs Sarah Haydon (Strategic Development Committee Chair) and all sub-committee members for working with such vision and drive to complete this Plan. Thanks also to stakeholders who took the time to attend meetings and provide their thoughts throughout our consultation process.

Signature   
Mrs Abigail Rourke (Executive Headteacher)

Signature   
Mrs Jackie Shelley (Chair of the Governing Body)

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May we take this opportunity to thank Mrs Sarah Hyton (Strategic Development Committee Chair) and all the committee members for working with us on this and drive to complete the plan. Thanks also to stakeholders who took the time to attend meetings and provide their thoughts throughout the consultation process.

*[Signature]*  
Mrs Jackie Shelley (Chair of the Governing Body)

*[Signature]*  
Mrs Angela Howes (Executive Headteacher)

## Executive Summary

The Governing Body for the Learning First Federation oversees Knypersley First School and Kingsfield First School. This document includes the Learning First Federation's vision for the future, a strategy to deliver this vision and the plan that details the actions necessary to achieve the vision.

The Governing Body agreed the following key principles:

- The strategy will be embedded within the work of both schools
- The document should not be fixed in time and should respond to policy and legislative changes, funding considerations and emerging pressures
- The strategy should be informed by analysis, consultation and discussion.

Between summer and Christmas 2015, the Strategic Development Committee completed extensive consultation. The document was signed off on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 by the Full Governing Body.

The vision has been developed by considering the key priorities of children and the adults around them. This strategic plan aims to deliver the vision:

*The Learning First Federation will provide outstanding education and learning opportunities by knowing children well and understanding their needs, developing each child to their full potential by offering personalised interventions.*

The overarching strategic aims for the Learning First Federation are split into the following headings:

- Learning and Curriculum
- Staffing
- Buildings and Equipment
- Partnership

Underpinning all the strategic aims are the agreed key values.

### Strategic Aim 1- Learning and Curriculum

This strategic plan provides the opportunity to make a commitment to continuous improvement. To this end, the key strategic aims for the next three years are:

- a) All teaching across both schools will be at least 'good'. There will be a 10% increase in 'outstanding' teaching each year. The Learning First Federation aspires for both Kingsfield and Knypersley First schools to be Ofsted 'outstanding' by the end of this strategy.
- b) The introduction of the new curriculum has been a challenge for both schools. There are no national targets at the time of writing this document. To this end, the Learning First Federation has agreed to implement the following targets in relation to reading, writing and maths:
  - ✓ 2015/16- 70% of children in years 1-4 will be at or above the age related expectation.
  - ✓ 2016/17- 80% of children in years 1-4 will be at or above the age related expectation.

- ✓ 2017/18- 85% of children in years 1-4 will be at or above the age related expectation.

These are challenging targets and reflect the Learning First Federation's aspirations for the development of the young people attending both first schools.

- c) Early Years Foundation Stage attainment will consistently be above the national figures.
- d) Provision for children with disabilities and special educational needs will be well supported by the deployment of an effective range of external agencies sought independently by the school.
- e) Staff will work to close gaps in performance, particularly in relation to gender and disadvantaged children. Staff will continue to provide bespoke solutions to close these gaps and work innovatively to provide effective interventions. This will be monitored through annual plans.
- f) Where there are documented benefits for young people, current levels of spending should be maintained in relation to non-core subjects. Additional opportunities should be sought and innovative solutions identified to add depth to the learning experience. For example, playing and experiencing musical instruments and learning outdoors. Uncertainty about future funding allocations may mean that this will be a challenge for Governors, but economies of scale should be identified where possible.
- g) The residents of Biddulph are predominantly White British. Staff will continue to identify opportunities to broaden the understanding of different religions and cultures in line with established Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) programmes and the promotion of Fundamental British Values work.

#### Strategic Aim 2- Staffing

Key areas for consideration for the next three years are:

- a) Investigate whether it is possible to provide incentives for teachers to work within Knypersley and Kingsfield First Schools. This may involve providing opportunities to newly qualified teachers that are not available elsewhere, or providing flexibility to others that may need it.
- b) In order to ensure that children receive the best learning opportunities available, the Governing Body will look to ensure that there are adequate funds to employ full-time Teaching Assistants within Kingsfield First School.
- c) A review will be completed in relation to the possibility for employing a 'floating' teacher that can work across both schools. Providing consistency for children is crucial; this additional resource could cover sick leave and provide additional interventions, when necessary.

### Strategic Aim 3- Buildings and Equipment

Strategic aims that will continue to develop and improve the buildings and equipment across both schools are:

#### *Kingsfield*

- a) Improve outdoor play areas and use them effectively. Changes are needed to the school yard where a raised area poses possible health and safety concerns. Development of the school field will also be a key consideration.
- b) Improve ICT capability and invest in additional resources such as cameras and iPads.
- c) The rooms that were previously managed by Leek College have recently been handed back to the school. An options appraisal should be completed to identify the best use of this building. Some suggestions have been: the introduction of a library; development of a computer suite; and, additional classrooms/ 'break-out' spaces.

#### *Knypersley*

- d) Consideration should be given to development of the school field as this is largely unused for the majority of the year. It may be possible to add an outdoor learning space.
- e) The room previously managed by the acting group Knypersley Players has been handed back to the school. An options appraisal should be completed to identify the most appropriate use for the building. The government are currently considering the provision of 30-hour free nursery provision for 3-4 year olds. This room may give the additional capacity to effectively introduce and manage this.

Continued investment across both schools is important. Replacement and improvement of furniture and an agreed plan for maintaining decoration will help the Governing Body to effectively plan finances going forward.

### Strategic Aim 4- Partnership

There are two specific aims for Kingfield First School over the coming three years:

- a) All other schools within Biddulph are members of a Trust. Kingsfield is not, and there would be significant benefits to Kingsfield if they were able to join. There is likely to be some cost associated with this.
- b) Following the 'Requires Improvement' categorisation by Ofsted, the school has suffered from some reputational issues. There have been significant changes within the school, and aspirations that Kingsfield will be an 'outstanding' school in three years are not unrealistic. The challenge going forward is to ensure that positive news stories are highlighted either through the local press or through the school's own publications, to combat negativity from those who knew the school previously but do not have recent knowledge.

## Introduction

The Governing Body for the Learning First Federation oversees Knypersley First School and Kingsfield First School. This document includes the Learning First Federation's vision for the future, a strategy to deliver this vision and the plan that details the actions necessary to achieve the vision. There have been many changes within the world of education in recent years. The Governing Body agreed that a document should be developed that would set out the strategic priorities for the coming three years. This would ensure that actions could be put into place to mitigate against possible risks and challenges for the Learning First Federation. It would also provide direction in relation to funding decisions, and around curriculum and safeguarding issues. It is hoped that this will mean that the Learning First Federation is well placed to be able to respond to national, regional and local challenges.

Both Knypersley and Kingsfield First Schools have well-established processes for developing and monitoring the delivery of annual plans. These plans are largely operational documents and detail the direction of travel for the coming year. The Governing Body has a monitoring role in relation to these plans. Annual plans will continue to form an important part of the management of both schools, and it is envisaged that this strategy will help to inform these documents.

A sub-committee of the Governing Body developed this document and it was signed off by the full Governing Body on XXX. The group agreed the following key principles:

- The strategy will be embedded within the work of both schools
- The document should not be fixed in time and should respond to policy and legislative changes, funding considerations and emerging pressures
- The strategy should be informed by analysis, consultation and discussion.

Between summer and Christmas 2015, the Strategic Development Committee completed extensive consultation with the following groups:

- Children
- Staff
- Parents and Carers
- Local stakeholders
- The wider Governing Body

In addition to qualitative consultation, members of the Governing Body completed the following activities:

- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis (*See Appendix 1*)
- Identification of other strategies and good practice
- Assessment of 2014/15 attainment data and predictions for 2015/16 performance
- Analysis of initiatives to improve attainment and performance completed in 2014/15 when the new curriculum was introduced, and planned actions for 2015/16.

## Vision for the future

The vision has been developed by considering the key priorities of children and the adults around them. This strategy aims to deliver the vision:

*The Learning First Federation will provide outstanding education and learning opportunities by knowing children well and understanding their needs, developing each child to their full potential by offering personalised interventions.*

## Strategic Aims

The overarching strategic aims for the Learning First Federation are split into the following headings:

- Learning and Curriculum
- Staffing
- Buildings and Equipment
- Partnership

Underpinning all the strategic aims are the agreed key values. The importance of these should not be underestimated, and came out strongly through consultation, particularly from children who felt positive about their school experience because of the key values:

Friendship	Respect for others	Kindness	Self-discipline
Truthfulness	Respect for property	Responsibility for own actions	Being polite and considerate
Self-belief	Courage	Determination	Tolerance

The vast majority of feedback from children and parents/ carers stated that children were happy and felt safe. The sub-committee spent time trying to understand what made children happy and agreed that maintaining this should be fundamental to this strategy and assessing its effectiveness.

Each strategic aim is developed further below. There are aims that can be monitored through analysing data; there are also aims where actions need to be developed in order to work towards achieving the aim. There is a great deal of interdependence across the themes and an integrated approach to change is essential to success.

### Strategic Aim 1- Learning and Curriculum

There are many identified strengths in relation to learning and the curriculum. Teachers are highly skilled and well-trained, working across both schools and motivating each other. There is a good mix of new enthusiastic teachers and those with valuable experience. Both schools were exceptionally forward-thinking in their preparation for delivering the new curriculum introduced in 2014/ 2015. Performance data is highly scrutinised and regular discussions are held in relation to pupil progress and necessary interventions. Parents gave positive feedback about interventions where children needed additional support. This strategy makes a commitment to the continuation of interventions to support children to achieve their full potential. Staff are working hard on ensuring 'mastery'; that

children can independently use and apply the information they have learned in different contexts. The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team recognise that it is important to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Joint opportunities are sought for both schools to take part in new and different activities that add to the learning experience for children.

Children and parents/ carers were enthusiastic about the level of extra-curricular activities that were offered across both schools. Staff aim to maintain the level of clubs and to continue to offer an increasing number of opportunities. It is recognised that it is important to provide a range of activities that enrich the curriculum and 'create memories' for young people.

This strategy provides the opportunity to make a commitment to continuous improvement. To this end, the key strategic aims for the next three years are:

- a) All teaching across both schools will be at least 'good'. There will be a 10% increase in 'outstanding' teaching each year. The Learning First Federation aspires for both Kingsfield and Knypersley First schools to be Ofsted 'outstanding' by the end of this strategy.
- b) The introduction of the new curriculum has been a challenge for both schools. There are no national targets at the time of writing this document. To this end, the Learning First Federation has agreed to implement the following targets in relation to reading, writing and maths:
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These are challenging targets and reflect the Learning First Federation's aspirations for the development of the young people attending both first schools.

- c) Early Years Foundation Stage attainment will consistently be above the national figures.
- d) Provision for children with disabilities and special educational needs will be well supported by the deployment of an effective range of external agencies sought independently by the school
- e) Staff will work to close gaps in performance, particularly in relation to gender and disadvantaged children. Staff will continue to provide bespoke solutions to close these gaps and work innovatively to provide effective interventions. This will be monitored through annual plans.
- f) Where there are documented benefits for young people, current levels of spending should be maintained in relation to non-core subjects. Additional opportunities should be sought and innovative solutions identified to add depth to the learning experience. For example, playing and experiencing musical instruments and learning outdoors. Uncertainty about future funding allocations may mean that this will be a challenge for Governors, but economies of scale should be identified where possible.
- g) Biddulph is a predominantly White British town. Staff will continue to identify opportunities to broaden the understanding of different religions and cultures in line with established Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) programmes and the promotion of Fundamental British Values work.

## Strategic Aim 2- Staffing

A strong and dynamic staff team are crucial within both schools. Confident and well-trained staff provide excellent learning experiences for children and are critical to the achievement of the aims within this strategy. Both schools have good teachers and excellent Senior Leadership Teams.

Stakeholders identified challenges in relation to recruitment and retention of teachers within Biddulph, and this is likely to be an issue going forward. There are very few, if any, applications for vacant positions. Underpinning this area for development is the Governing Body's commitment to ensuring that staff working within Kingsfield and Knypersley First Schools will receive comprehensive training opportunities and will be given the ability to progress, if this is something they aspire to do.

Key areas for consideration for the next three years are:

- a) Investigate whether it is possible to provide incentives for teachers to work within Knypersley and Kingsfield First Schools. This may involve providing opportunities to newly qualified teachers that are not available elsewhere, or providing flexibility to others that may need it.
- b) In order to ensure that children receive the best learning opportunities available, the Governing Body will look to ensure that there are adequate funds to employ full-time Teaching Assistants within Kingsfield First School.
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## Strategic Aim 3- Buildings and Equipment

Continued investment in relation to both school's buildings and the equipment within them is important. The effective management of health and safety issues, and ongoing planned and ad hoc maintenance, helps to avoid injury to children, staff and visitors to the school. Well-maintained and attractive schools attract new pupils who may be considering schooling options within the town. Consideration should be given in this strategy, and the strategy that follows, to the likely increase in housing within the town and the certainty that this will increase the number of young people that are seeking school places within Biddulph. It is essential that both schools make themselves accessible to increased numbers of children, where possible.

Achievement of the educational aspirations within this document is reliant upon the provision of the latest technology and a wide range of resources to assist learning.

Strategic aims that will continue to develop and improve the buildings and equipment across both schools are:

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#### Strategic Aim 4- Partnership

Both schools seek the views of children through School Councils. Children are honest, and their views are refreshing and thought-provoking. This strategy makes a commitment to continuous engagement with all stakeholders, including children. The wide range of views aids decision-making and helps to identify future priorities. Maintaining good relationships with partners across Biddulph is important in order to ensure that communication remains open and information is shared widely.

The Governing Body for the Learning First Federation is made up of volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds. This adds strength to the Governing Body and ensures effective scrutiny and challenge, where appropriate. A future option for the Learning First Federation (LFF) may be the inclusion of other schools within the Federation. The LFF has had considerable success improving the outlook for Kingsfield First School. It may be possible in the future that the expertise within the LFF may be put to good use with other Ofsted deemed 'Requires Improvement' schools.

There are two specific aims for Kingfield First School over the coming three years:

- a) All other schools within Biddulph are members of a Trust. Kingsfield is not, and there would be significant benefits to Kingsfield if they were able to join. There is likely to be some cost associated with this.
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The challenge going forward is to ensure that positive news stories are highlighted either through the local press or through the school's own publications, to combat negativity from those who knew the school previously but do not have recent knowledge.

### **Monitoring the Strategy**

The Governing Body recognises the importance of monitoring progress against the aims set out in the strategy. The plan attached (Appendix 2) contains specific actions for the coming 12 months and will be regularly updated by the Executive Headteacher, who will ultimately be responsible for the operational delivery of the actions contained within the plan. The Governing Body will be updated termly, in line with current arrangements for providing updates on the annual development plan.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) Analysis

Appendix 2 Action plan 2015/2016