



# READ SCHOOL

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## Annual Report 2021-2022

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## **Introduction from the Chair of Governors**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am delighted to present the Annual Report of the Board of Governors for the academic year 2021-2022. In what was another extraordinary year for Read School, we have continued to make strong progress in the work to strengthen the culture of continuous improvement in everything we do and to ensure that we provide an inclusive approach, distinctive family ethos, a strong sense of community and tradition of nurturing the individual gifts and talents of every pupil. Of course, we also need to secure the long-term financial stability and longevity of Read School, through effective leadership and governance and the development of commercial enterprise that supports sustainable, profitable growth. In this report, which will be updated and published annually, we have provided many details of the progress we have made, including the realisation of a small operating surplus in the year. We have also highlighted many wonderful achievements and our short and longer-term plans for further improvements, which take account of the valuable inputs we have received from yourselves, students and staff.

### **Coping with Covid 19**

We again experienced the significant challenges brought about by the Covid pandemic. We must extend a special thank you to the whole student body, yourselves and all the staff, for the great resilience, determination and understanding everyone demonstrated throughout the pandemic in coping with the difficulties of extended periods of remote learning and all the challenges that form of schooling brought, especially for those who were preparing for external examinations. Despite some early uncertainty about the potential cancellation of exams for another year, our students displayed great resilience and application in preparing for and sitting the external examinations in School. Our congratulations go to them all for the excellent results they delivered.

### **Key Investments 2021-2022**

The year saw the delivery of some significant investments at Read School, including:

- Return to Read School of the Title to Drax Community Primary School.
- Refurbishment of Drax Community Primary School and its leasing to Kids' Corner.
- Refurbishment of the girls' boarding facilities and the boarders' common room.
- Refurbishment of the Boarding House plumbing and other plumbing improvements.
- Upgrading of the fire detection and alarm systems.
- Installation of the CCTV system.
- Refurbishment of the front sports field.

### **Looking Forward to 2022-23**

Plans for further investments include: rainwater management systems; toilet upgrades, having already completed the work on the boys' toilets during the summer break; further site security improvements; further plumbing improvements; heating controls; energy generation and conservation measures; refurbishment of the boys' boarding facilities; extension of LED lighting, and; the refurbishment of the front field pavilion.

### **Funding of Investments**

During last year, we greatly benefitted from the very generous support of many alumni and other friends of the School, especially in the two major projects of the Front Field and Drax Community Primary School, as well as from the receipt of some external grants. In the year ahead, we will have to face the current and extraordinary inflationary pressures as well as continuing to invest in our facilities for the benefit of all our students. Some of the future investment will come from the continuing growth of our student roll,

including boarders, and some will come from the letting of school facilities through Read School Enterprises. Nevertheless, the continued generosity and support of the Draxonians, other alumni and the PFA will remain very important. We will also be exploring further opportunities for external grants for specific projects.

### **The School Improvement Plan and the Strategic Plan**

This report contains summaries of the School Improvement Plan and the 5-Year Strategic Plan, and these documents reflect the many inputs we have already received through your responses to various surveys and similar responses received from students and staff. Both these documents will be updated annually to reflect delivery of plans, adjustments and newly identified requirements.

As you will see from the Head's Report and the Committee Chairs' Reports, it has been a difficult, challenging and yet very successful year. Staff and governors have been very focussed on continuous improvement plans and actions and my thanks go to them all for the great progress that is being made to secure the sustainable future of our wonderful School. My congratulations and sincere thanks go to Mrs Ainley for her tireless and inspirational leadership.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian A Watt', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

**Brian A Watt Chair of the Board of Governors**

## Head's Report

We reflect back on the progress and achievements of the last year with great pride. This was the year when Read School, like all other schools across the country, recovered from the trauma of Covid and rejoiced in the return to normality and things that had previously been taken for granted – inter-school sports, elimination of pupil ‘bubbles’ and a gradual resumption of all the normal Read School activities, including educational trips and visits, performing arts and events in school. Notwithstanding this, the School was required to manage rigorous pupil and staff LFT testing and the challenges of Covid-related absence of pupils and staff. Read School stepped up to the challenge with a very efficient and well organised operation to conduct twice weekly testing for all, with other precautionary measures still in place.

Despite the continuing challenges imposed by the pandemic, Read School delivered a successful year, reflected in the quality of provision inside and outside the classroom. The School's prior, successful implementation of on-line learning via Google classroom was again invaluable in ensuring continuity of learning. Being able to download teaching resources or upload homework to the Google Classroom are all things that we now take for granted and weekly learning summaries for parents were continued throughout the year to help support Covid-related absences.

Read School was an early leader in resuming the rich curriculum from September, with practical lessons in Science, Art, DT and Food conducted as normal, as well as educational trips and visits. This included trips for Lower Junior School to Cannon Hall Farm, Sundown and Yorkshire Wildlife Park, as well as for Upper Junior School trips to the National Space Centre, seaside and a residential visit to the Hollowford educational centre in the heart of the Peak District National Park. In Senior School, Creative Arts pupils visited the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Deep and participated in various theatre trips and culinary challenges, while in the Easter holidays a group of forty-eight pupils and six staff travelled to Iceland for a long-awaited exploration of the spectacular geology and beautiful landscape of this fascinating country. Our taste for adventure re-whetted, planning is now underway for 2022-2023 trips to Pompeii, Berlin and Normandy.

### Sports

Sport plays a huge part throughout all sections of the School, inspiring and motivating our children and developing confidence and self-belief, so the return of inter-school fixtures from the Autumn term was welcomed by all. It has long been the case that Read ‘punches well above its weight’ in sports and the year was remarkable in the number of wins against much larger schools. What differentiates Read from other schools is the spirit with which every game is played, with team spirit, inclusion and fair play taking priority for all our sports teams. Beyond the numerous sports fixtures, Senior pupils had the opportunity to participate in sports tours: netball for the Senior girls and cricket for the U13 and U14 boys where Read pupils were again complimented on their exemplary behaviour and camaraderie.

For a small school, Read has a disproportionate number of pupils who compete at a high level in their chosen sports outside school and we regularly celebrate their many accomplishments, including Head Boy Jake Sowden who finished the year by winning the 2022 English Schools National Golf Championship, while studying for his A-level examinations.

Significant investment in sports facilities was made with a mammoth project to restore the front field and lay a new drainage system, ready for the new rugby season. All of this was made possible by a successful Draxonians' Association fundraising appeal, as well as through time and expertise donated by former pupil, Mark Atkins, John Matthews and a number of supporting parents.

### Performing & Creative Arts

In 2022 we were treated to two stellar dramatic productions, with *Cinderella-Rockerfella* in the Junior School and the Senior School production of *Wizard of Oz* – a reminder of the formidable talents of Read pupils and staff alike. Music was again a key highlight of the year with a Christmas concert, Talent Show, Open Mic night and many other musical and choral performances at Open Days, church services and Commemoration Day, while the Moloney Trust competition again provided the forum for a display of the

musical talent of Read pupils of all ages. Drama and Music are now firmly embedded not only as GCSE options but also within the curriculum of all pupils from Lower Junior School upwards. A number of exciting projects await in 2022-23 with musical links being forged with Selby Abbey and rehearsals already underway for this year's drama productions.

The Creative Arts department was delighted finally to get its long-awaited laser cutter, thanks to generous PFA funding, which has already been put to good use in stretching the technical talents of Read pupils. Meanwhile Food Technology again went from strength to strength with a number of successful initiatives launched, including a Leeds United Cookery Competition, a 10-week Read School Cookery School course, pasta making at Carlton Towers and our first pupils, Daisy and Estelle, gaining the prestigious Leiths Food & Wine Certificate.

## **Examination Results**

This year's cohort of public examination pupils had been well and truly put through the mill with two consecutive years of cancelled exams and 2021-2022 represented the first 'normal' exams in two years.

Results days in August gave us much to celebrate and record A-level results were achieved by the School with a 100% pass rate and 97% of all grades achieved at A\*-C. There were many individual success stories, including Jane Caukill who achieved AAA, Dan Pierce AABC, Hannah Morgan BBBC and Estelle Nicholson with a double distinction in the BTEC Health & Social Care, as well as a merit in the Leiths School of Food and Wine certificate. All pupils who applied to university achieved their first choice with three pupils choosing to take a gap year.

Our Year 11 cohort achieved an overall GCSE pass rate of 92% (comparing very favourably with the national average pass rate of 73% and 69.6% in Yorkshire and Humber) and 51% of grades 9-6 (A\*-B). There were some outstanding individual pupil results, including in subjects not offered at many schools such as Drama, DT, and Food. In addition to mainstream GCSEs, three SEND pupils also achieved ASDAN and Functional Skills qualifications.

As ever, our senior students leave us with much more than grades and are moving on with DofE qualifications, CCF experience, sports triumphs and a wealth of experience gained from a vibrant extracurricular programme as well as confidence gained from their time at Read School.

In Junior School a new *Rising Stars* Hodder assessment system was implemented for Reception to Year 6 to track pupil performance three times per year in PiRA (Reading), PUMA (Maths), GAPS (Grammar Punctuation and Spelling) and facilitate progress tracking throughout Key Stages 1 & 2. All test results achieved were in line with expectations. Year 6 pupils also took national curriculum tests (SATs) from 2019, achieving a pass rate of 87% (versus the 2019 national average of 65%) with 22% pupils achieving 'greater depth' (national average 11%).

## **Pupil Roll**

We started in September 2021 with a pupil roll of 224 and ended with 250 pupils of which the breakdown was 95% day and 5% boarding pupils, certainly a different profile to the yesteryear statistics of 50+ in boarding. New pupil enrolment continued to be primarily as a result of positive referrals from past and present parents for which we are profoundly grateful. We continued to maintain small class sizes, relative to other independent and state schools and plan to retain the family feel that has long been associated with Read School.

Following the reduction of international students during the Covid pandemic and similarly to other schools, the recruitment of boarders remained a challenge and overdue improvements were made to girls' boarding and the boarders' common room, with a refurbishment of boys' boarding planned for the coming year.

A link was established this year with a new agent, which resulted in two Spanish school group visits, providing an excellent cultural immersion opportunity for Read and visiting pupils alike.

Our goals remain to enhance Read School's reputation, to increase awareness of the School within the local area and international boarding community and to be the 'small independent school of choice' for parents seeking an outstanding, bespoke, all-round and full education for their child.

### **School Operations**

Considerable investment was made this year in school maintenance and infrastructure, including new plumbing and heating systems for the boarding house, refurbishment of the boys' toilets, extensive fire safety upgrades, a CCTV system and the start of a systematic LED conversion programme for all school lighting. A new Estates Manager, Craig Jackson, was appointed to join the site team in September 2022 and will progress the School's new energy conservation programme, exploring the expansion of our existing biofuel and solar panel systems.

Read School purchased three brand new school buses, replacing the old 'yellow perils' and the externally-operated school bus service route to Monk Fryston was brought in house to deliver further efficiencies.

Continued focus was placed on growing the School's lettings business, Read School Enterprises, which maximises use of the school facilities after hours and during school holidays, primarily through rentals to local sports teams and an educational summer school. This provides additional revenue for the School to be reinvested in vital maintenance and upgrade projects. Business Development Manager, Andy Jackson joined the School team and, as part of his role, will manage lettings and outreach projects.

Following successful conclusion of negotiations with NYCC to restore the disused Drax Community Primary School back to Read School ownership, a complete refurbishment of the school was undertaken between January and June 2022, supported by a generous donation from Draxonian and former governor, David Ward. The project was completed on schedule and to budget and a lease agreement was signed with Read's Pre-School partner, Kids' Corner. The new Pre-School currently has a pupil roll of 35 with capacity for 75. A grand opening was held as part of the Drax village Jubilee celebrations, commemorating a significant milestone in Read School History.

### **Priorities for the New Academic Year**

At the outset of the new academic year, a key focus was on the important changes to safeguarding legislation: *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and the *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS)*, both updated in September 2022.

Valuable inputs from recent pupil, parent and staff surveys will inform the finalisation of the school improvement plan and five-year strategic plan which provides the framework necessary to meet the School's aims and vision.

From a financial standpoint we will continue to focus on growth of boarding and Sixth Form and developing alternative sources of revenue via Read School Enterprises.

A CCF restructure, the development of curriculum guides for parents and the introduction of A-level Economics and Classical Civilisation have all been successfully implemented at the start of term.

At the core of all our efforts will remain an unremitting focus on the academic progression, wellbeing and happiness of our pupils. Onwards and upwards!

Mrs Ruth Ainley  
Head

Link to Commemoration Day Service July 2022:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7xKBoA5gto>

# History, Mission, Values and Vision

## Background and History of Read School, Drax

Read School was founded from the endowment declared in the will of Charles Reade dated 1667. The school, erected at Drax, was designed as a free school, for the habitation of the schoolmaster *“to instruct the children of the parish without charge, to read, write and cast accounts, and further to teach them Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and other languages as occasion should require”*.

From 1902 until 1967 the school was known as Drax Grammar School and was a voluntary aided grammar school serving the Selby and Goole areas. In 1967, a decision was taken to extend the schools in Selby and the governors at Read School had to decide whether to become independent or to close the school. The decision for independence followed and the school became known as Read School. Well-known and respected in the area, Read School is now a fully co-educational, boarding and day school, taking children from the ages of 4 to 18. A wide range of academic studies is offered at GCSE and A-level, together with a full programme of sports, drama, music, CCF and adventurous activity.

Pupil roll, the barometer of the School’s financial health, has fluctuated over the past ten years from a high of 380 to a low of 167. The School has embarked on a programme of recovery and rejuvenation and had a roll of 250 at the end of the academic year. In 2022, Read School celebrated its 355th anniversary.

## Read School Mission, Values and Vision

Read School delivers a first-class education, welcomed by parents and enjoyed by pupils. It is a school with a pervasive warm and friendly culture that pays attention to individual needs, with small class sizes and high-quality teaching. The School is set apart from others by its inclusive approach, distinctive family ethos, a strong sense of community and tradition of nurturing the individual gifts and talents of every pupil.

### Mission

- To maintain a warm and welcoming school with an inclusive ethos for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds;
- To enable all pupils to realise their academic potential with a broad and rich curriculum that promotes a lifelong love of learning;
- To develop well-rounded, resilient and aspirational young people who have the confidence, skills and enablement to achieve success in their chosen careers and to make a positive contribution to society.

### Aims

- Provide outstanding day & boarding school provision for boys and girls aged 4-18, with small class sizes, excellent teaching and a broad and balanced curriculum which responds to the needs of each child;
- Ensure outstanding pastoral care and arrangements for pupil welfare, including boarding, thereby ensuring the quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils;
- Offer a wide range of educational opportunities outside the classroom and high quality co-curricular provision, including sports, music & performing arts, adventurous activity and volunteering;
- Embrace activities for public benefit, including outreach in the local community;
- Secure the long-term financial stability and longevity of Read School through effective leadership and governance and the development of commercial enterprise that supports sustainable, profitable growth.

## Governing Body

### Governing Body as of July 2022

<b>Governors:</b>	<b>Role / Board of Governors</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
Mr Brian Watt	Chair of Governors	Oct 2016 Chair Mar 2020
Mr David Pritchard	Vice Chair of Governors and Interim Chair of the Read School Foundation	Feb 2020
Mr Graeme Campbell	Finance & Premises Committee	Mar 2022
Mr Trevor Evans	Chair of Safeguarding, Health & Safety Committee	Apr 2017
Mrs Sarah Jackson	Chair of Education, Teaching & Learning Committee Safeguarding, Health & Safety Committee	Jul 2020
Mrs Kim O'Hara	Health, Safety & Safeguarding Committee	Mar 2022
Mrs Clare McLaughlan	Chair of Finance & Premises Committee	Feb 2020
Mr Chris Sunley	Education, Teaching & Learning Committee	Jul 2020
Dr Richard White	Education, Teaching & Learning Committee	Mar 2020
<b>Also attended Board Meetings:</b>		
Mrs Christine Payne Parent	Safeguarding, Health & Safety Committee	
Mrs Ruth Ainley	Head	July 2018
Mr Mark Voisey	Deputy Head	Sept 2001
Other Staff Members	In attendance for various Committees	

### Departures:

Mr Kevin Weston retired in July 2022, having had a very successful year negotiating the recovery to Read School of the Title to the Drax Community Primary School.

### Arrivals:

Mrs Kim O'Hara and Mr Graeme Campbell joined the Governing Body in March 2022 and have further strengthened the Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Finance & Premises Committees.

The Board is continuing to seek to recruit governors with marketing and communications skills and health and safety skills.

### Representations to the Governing Body

Representation to the Governing Body may be made at any time to the Chair of Governors, c/o the Head's PA at Read School:

Head's PA  
Read School, Drax, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 8NL, UK

Email: [headspa@readschool.co.uk](mailto:headspa@readschool.co.uk)

Tel: 01757 618248

## Meetings

The Governing Body met on the following dates and discussed the matters shown below:

- 1 October 2021
- 3 December 2021
- 18 March 2022
- 30 June 2022

Each meeting addressed the standard matters of:

- Board Administration
- Financial Update
- Head's Report
- Committee Chair Reports

Other key matters discussed during the many Board and Committee meetings included:

- The return of the Drax Community Primary School.
- Key staff recruitment.
- Student recruitment targets and achievements.
- Debt recovery concerning unpaid school fees.
- Repayment of School loans.
- The Trade Unions Recognition Agreement.
- Improvement of governance and governor visits to School.
- The Draft Strategic Plan.
- The Draft School Improvement Plan.
- The growth of Read School Enterprises.
- The potential impact of the Humber Low Carbon Pipeline Project.
- Major School projects.
- Future Commemoration Days.
- Overall School performance and preparations for inspections.

## Annual Governance Questionnaire

The Governing Body is transitioning well from an essential short-term focus on primarily financial matters to a broader and more strategic approach. More progress should become evident when we have the long-awaited Strategic Plan, now in draft, with specific improvement action plans, accountabilities and performance measurement/analysis. In the Annual Governance Questionnaire responses, governors highlighted some key areas for improvement as follows:

- Our governor training is not good enough.
- New governor orientation needs to be improved.
- We have started our annual evaluation process but have much to do.
- We need to work hard on delivering identified areas of improvement.
- We still have a long way to go in developing and implementing our Strategic Plan.

Since completing this first Governance questionnaire, the following actions have been completed:

- Our governor training has been improved with on-line courses and every governor has completed the essential modules.
- The governor orientation pack has been refreshed and updated.
- The annual questionnaire content has been further developed, based on an accredited and widely used model for Independent Schools.
- Identified areas of improvement have all been addressed.
- A draft Strategic Plan has been developed and incorporates views from parent, student and staff surveys and is now linked to a School Improvement Plan.

## Committee Chairs' Reports

### Finance & Premises

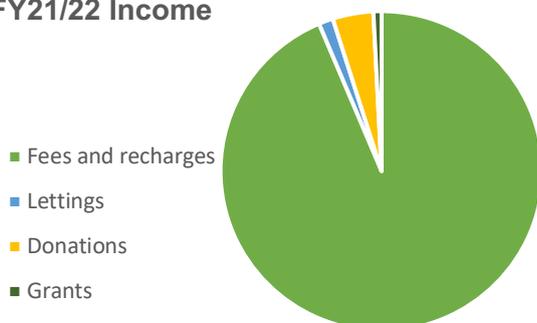
The Finance and Premises Committee meets regularly to discuss the financial position of the school including review of the monthly management accounts, cash flow, new capital projects and fee collections to ensure efficient running of the school and value for money on fees.

Headline results for the last financial year ended 31 August 2022 were:

	Year ended 31 August 2022	Year ended 31 August 2021
	£	£
Income	3,062,986	2,543,633
Expenditure	<u>(3,051,137)</u>	<u>(2,705,367)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	11,849	(161,734)
Gains/(losses) on investments	(287)	5,292
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	1,753,749
Net increase in funds	<u>11,562</u>	<u>1,597,307</u>

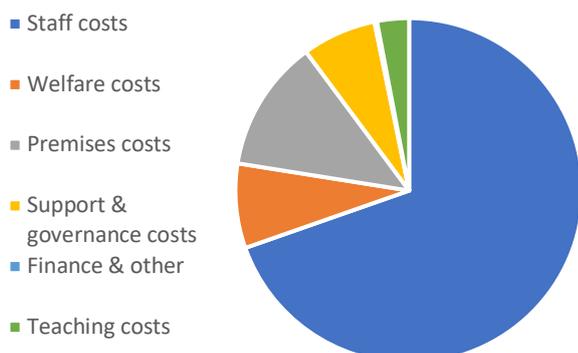
Over 90% of income comes from fees with the balance made up by donations, letting income and grants:

#### FY21/22 Income



The highest levels of expenditure were on staff and premises costs:

#### FY21/22 Expenditure



Clare McLaughlan  
Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee

## **Education, Teaching & Learning**

The Education Teaching and Learning Committee has become a body with strong education experience covering all year groups and seeking to improve the standards of education through challenge, support and questioning.

The Covid pandemic did restrict some governor visits in 2020/21 but, following the successful implementation of online learning across all ages from Reception to the Upper Sixth at the start of the pandemic, by September 2021, the Committee Members were eager to get into school to meet the students and staff and to see the excellent work of the committed staff and students in both the Junior School and Senior School.

The Committee focused on student assessments, specifically on the attainment and progress of different groups of children including SEND, gender and the more able, to review the statistical validity within cohorts across the school. Discussions with the Junior School and EYFS provision enabled a detailed review of progress made by the children, improving the Committee's understanding of such progress as the children move through the years.

During the Spring Term, the Committee reviewed the provision of challenge for all from Reception to Sixth Form. Governors used pupil and staff voices to identify the extent of how the students engaged in both group and independent learning through higher order questioning.

The wider curriculum in both the Junior and Senior Schools enables students to explore linguistic abilities with the introduction of Mandarin and Latin, as well as French, German and Spanish. The Leiths Cookery School initiative has encouraged and inspired children in the Senior School to explore and develop their love of cookery. Annual drama productions in all Key Stages enable the children to take part and to explore their own creativity and confidence.

Our observations over the year concluded that Read School provides a broad, balanced and varied curriculum that enables the students to fulfil their potential in both the core elements of learning as well as their cultural, creative and sporting potential. This prepares students well for their next stage of education or working life. The Committee reviewed and noted the many successes of students both academically and in the wider curriculum and were pleased to see the School celebrating these successes and achievements, both in and out of the school environment.

### **ETL Priorities for 2022 / 2023**

- Review how the progression of knowledge and skills builds within the wider curriculum in both the Junior and Senior Schools.
- Review how the full curriculum provision is communicated and shared with parents.
- Identify how PSHE is delivered and monitored across the whole school.
- Continue to review the pupil progress across the school with a focus on how children are taking ownership of independent learning.

Sarah Jackson  
Chair of the Education, Teaching and Learning

## **Safeguarding, Health & Safety**

The Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee holds the responsibility of supporting and reviewing core areas of safeguarding, health and safety compliance within the school and boarding as well as overseeing the pastoral and wellbeing aspects of the whole school. During 2021 / 2022 the committee grew in expertise, especially in the area of safeguarding.

Once again Covid lockdowns restricted visits to school meaning that site inspections were limited. As with many educational establishments the wellbeing of both students and staff became a top-level priority as home isolation served to become a concern for many students, especially in our Senior school. The governors ensured that regular communications with the Pastoral Leads and Designated Safeguarding Lead was fully maintained throughout the periods of lockdown.

September 2021 saw the full return of pupils to school and the governors were reassured that all protective measures to prevent infection were fully implemented to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff.

The governors were encouraged by the effective systems towards regular testing in place for all senior school and when necessary Junior school students. Later in the year the regime for vaccinations was equally evidenced.

The full impact of lockdown and its impact on the mental wellbeing of both students and staff emerged it was very clear to governors that the DSL and Pastoral Leads had a secure awareness of the students, indicating that this area of provision is an excellent resource of the school. Governors have evidenced the commitment of the school towards safeguarding through the rigorous training schedule completed by all staff and governors at the start of each academic year.

As boarders returned to school gradually over the year the chair ensured that visits of support were reinstated and communications with the students provided a clear view of the provision given by the school. Governors were pleased to see and hear about the upgrading of girls boarding and eagerly awaits the similar transformation for the boys this coming year.

Health and Safety inspections began with more rigour in the latter half of the Spring term, however the governors were pleased to have received regular updates of both essential repairs and improvements over the whole year.

The committee were also encouraged by the appointment of a new estates manager whose expertise was proven to be a significant asset to the school in terms of ensuring compliance.

Priorities for 2022 / 2023:

- Supporting the review of the PSHE curriculum with a particular emphasis on in student mental health and wellbeing.
- Review of the implementation the key pastoral and safeguarding policies and practices through pupil voice.
- Develop a full and comprehensive awareness of the essential works pertinent to full compliance across the school
- More regular inspections and discussion with Estates Manager to evidence compliance and housekeeping of documentation.

Trevor Evans  
Chair of the Safeguarding, Health and Safety

## Marketing & Communications

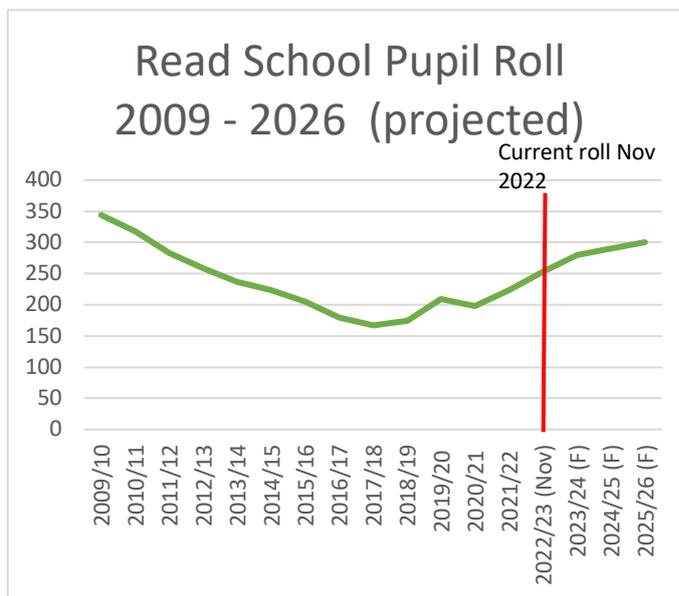
The Marketing and Communication Committee last met on 9 June 2022 and agreed its priorities for the year ahead:

- International recruitment;
- Forces/diplomatic recruitment;
- Website optimisation;
- Geographical targeting in Doncaster and Wolds areas;
- Expanding the football academy partnership;
- Expanding Leith's academy activities;
- Holding a Primary outreach event in Autumn Term;
- Sixth Form outreach activities;
- Continue building the school profile in the local community through parent referrals, welcoming school events and relationship building;
- Continue to develop Read School enterprises hiring of school facilities, taking back bookings from Vivify Venues.

A key strategic area, to support sustainable, profitable growth of the School, is increasing the student roll, whilst maintaining comparatively small class sizes. The current plan is to achieve a roll of 300 by the end of the academic year 2025/26. Since 2017/18 the roll has grown by 86 (51%), reflecting the tireless efforts of the Head and all her staff, as well as the many references of potential new parents and students by existing parent and students. The governors are very grateful for all this very helpful and essential support in promoting Read School through strong references and for the associated generation an increasing number of promising enquiries about our wonderful school.

### PUPIL NUMBERS 2009-2026

Academic Year	Total*
2009/10	344
2017/18	167
2018/19	174
2019/20	209
2020/21	198
2021/22	224
2022/23 (Nov)	253
2023/24 (F)	280
2024/25 (F)	290
2025/26 (F)	300
<b>Current v. 2017/18</b>	<b>51%</b>



As the current year progresses, we plan to strengthen our Marketing and Communications skills and are seeking to recruit a new governor to help guide our initiatives in these areas, especially with student recruitment and the hire of our facilities. Anybody with such skills and an interest in becoming a governor should, in the first instance, contact Mrs Julie Walker, the Head's PA.

Brian Watt  
Interim Chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee

## **Foundation**

The Foundation is the coordinating body for the School's various fundraising and grant-receiving activities, both directly and in conjunction with The Draxonians' Association and The Parents' and Friends' Association.

Two major projects were funded from philanthropic donations made by alumni and other generous individuals in 2021/22. Following a fundraising campaign by The Draxonians' Association, the first covered the comprehensive drainage and re-seeding of the front field, necessitated after an attack by chafer grubs. Additionally, the refurbishment of the recently re-acquired Drax Community Primary School premises was financed through a very generous donation from a former governor and Draxonian. Several smaller projects, such as the refurbishment of the girls' boarding accommodation and the boys' lavatories were also financed. In all, charitable donations plus Gift Aid received during the year amounted to about £100,000.

Additionally, grants totalling £25,000 were received for specific projects

David Pritchard  
Interim Chair of The Read School Foundation

# School Improvement Plan 2022-2023

## Academic

- Sharing of curriculum information - Junior School, KS3-5 curriculum guides to be developed and posted on website to make teaching content more explicit for parents;
- Continue to improve progress tracking throughout Junior and Senior School with Hodder Assessment data (Junior School) and flightpaths (Senior School) and implement good communication of these with parents;
- Appoint an overall school PSHE coordinator to coordinate/oversee PSHE delivery;
- Ensure sufficient focus on British values in assemblies and in form time;
- Continue to raise bar with regards to stretch and challenge of our brightest and most gifted pupils. Raising aspirations programme to include Oxbridge entry and evening lecture series.
- Continue to focus on developing independent learning skills and higher order thinking with pupils taking leadership with their own learning;
- Continuous improvement on value-added scores (current A-level +0.5; GCSE+0.4);
- Focus on boys' attainment after 2022 results suggested girls outperformed boys;
- Develop select Level 3 BTEC pathways (BTEC Sport and Health & Social Care now offered);
- Add A-level Economics and Classical Civilisation to Sixth Form subject portfolio;
- Launch Sixth Form Read Diploma to consolidate extra-curricular attainment and endeavour;
- Embed alternative qualifications (e.g. Functional Skills, Entry Level, ASDAN);
- Strengthen music links with Selby Abbey (choir and instrument); set up lunchtime concerts;
- Plan live Careers Fair March 2023 to showcase career opportunities and re-rollout Morrisby. Careers programme.

## Pastoral / Pupil Wellbeing /Safeguarding

- Complete staff training for NMS and KCSIE 2022;
- Increase pupil voice with two annual surveys and initiatives endorsed by School Council;
- Review counselling and mental health provision, increasing as appropriate;
- Appoint lunchtime supervisor;
- Set up Food Council to address concerns and suggestions;
- Continued investment in School Council (e.g. Parliament visit scheduled January 2023);
- Accessibility – continue to work on wheelchair accessibility throughout school.

## Staffing

- CCF staffing restructure –teacher team replace previous CCF management to improve quality of CCF provision at Read School;
- Rollout of voluntary staff union recognition agreement with half termly JNCC meetings;
- Continue developing staff' subject knowledge via external professional development and embedding a 'growth mindset';
- Continue to build relationships with partner state and independent schools, achieving objective of all teaching staff to have at least one 'partner' in a state and independent school;
- Continue to build the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programme within Read School with PE and MFL trainees welcomed this year;
- Install CCTV system and review site security;
- Set up staff well-being committee.

## Finance & Management

- Continued growth in pupil roll to achieve budget targets (270 by end academic year 2022-2023);
- Continued growth in Read School Enterprises (facilities lettings) as alternative revenue stream;
- Grow Boarding and Sixth Form;
- Continued focus on refurbishment and investment in infrastructure in the following key areas:
  - Sports changing rooms - upgrade

- Boys' boarding refurbishment
- Performing Arts studio – toilets installed and flooring improvements
- Sick bay facilities upgrade
- Visitor toilets in Moloney Hall upgrade
- Eco-energy- review existing facilities and optimise (including LED lighting)
- Front field pavilion refurbishment (including toilets installation)
- Car parking.
- New Estates Manager to update H & S policies and develop documentation library.

# Read School Five-Year Strategic Plan Summary

## Aims:

- Provide outstanding day & boarding school provision for boys and girls aged 4-18, with small class sizes, excellent teaching and a broad and balanced curriculum which responds to the needs of each child;
- Ensure outstanding pastoral care and arrangements for pupil welfare, including boarding, thereby ensuring quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
- Offer a wide range of educational opportunities outside the classroom and high quality co-curricular provision, including sports, music & performing arts, adventurous activity and volunteering;
- Embrace activities for public benefit, including outreach in the local community;
- Secure the long-term financial stability and longevity of Read School through effective leadership and governance and the development of commercial enterprise that supports sustainable, profitable growth.

## Strategic Framework:

1. Teaching, learning and pupil achievement;
2. Pastoral care, safeguarding and arrangements for pupil welfare (including boarding);
3. Extra-curricular provision and sports;
4. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils;
5. Leadership, management and governance;
6. Marketing and communications, including alumni relations;
7. Public benefit – outreach and charitable activities.

### 1. In order to achieve the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement, we will deliver:

- A curriculum which inspires pupils and enables them to make excellent progress;
- A curriculum which builds key soft skills which meet the needs of the evolving workplace;
- Effective teaching and learning which enables children of all abilities to fulfil their academic potential whilst acquiring a lifelong love of learning;
- Teaching strategies which allow pupils to take leadership with their learning by promoting independent learning and higher order thinking skills (ISI 2018 recommendation);
- Effective monitoring of pupil progress throughout all key stages, including benchmarking to national averages, and clear communication of academic performance to parents;
- Effective communication of School's learning priorities to pupils and parents;
- A collaborative teaching staff who promote an academically aspirational culture and who routinely share good teaching practice;
- Small class sizes, good teaching resources and facilities;
- Excellent academic results (performance to national and local results and value-added);
- Investment in digital solutions to enhance teaching and learning in school.

### 2. In order to achieve the quality of pastoral care and arrangements for pupil welfare (including boarding) we need:

- Robust safeguarding protocols and procedures;
- Effective behaviour and anti-bullying policies;
- Staff who are attentive to the individual needs of each child;
- An effective pastoral structure (form tutors, heads of key stage, pastoral leadership team (PLT));

- An inclusive culture which celebrates diversity and is sensitive to the needs of all children, regardless of gender, sexuality or ethnicity;
- Excellent careers and higher education guidance;
- A positive ethos where pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life;
- A commitment to ensuring that gifted and talented pupil enjoy stretch and challenge;
- Strong pupil and parental voices and effective mechanisms for capturing them;
- Appropriate site security;
- Excellent record-keeping and clear and effective lines of communication;
- Excellent counselling provision;
- A caring and effective environment for boarding, which complies fully with NMS 2022.

### 3. In order to achieve the quality of extra-curricular provision and sports we will deliver:

- A diversity of sports, performing arts, CCF, DofE and other extracurricular experiences, ensuring that every pupil gets to develop skills and confidence outside the classroom;
- An awareness by pupils of the many benefits to be gained from participating in a wide variety of co-curricular activities;
- **Sports:**
  - Ensure that outdoor and indoor sports facilities throughout the School are well managed, safe and fit for purpose (e.g. front and back field, MUGA, sports hall, sports changing rooms and shower facilities, including plans for a gym/fitness suite)
  - Maintenance resources to support sports facilities;
  - Competitive sports fixtures within the independent sector and local community, including national and overseas sports tours;
- **CCF:**
  - 2022-2023 restructure of CCF, increasing teaching supervision and refreshing staffing with a new cohort of staff and adult volunteers
  - Ensure provision of additional extra-curricular opportunities, outside Thursday sessions, including camps, flying (RAF) and special events;
  - Ensure that school investment in CCF is commensurate with requirements.
- **DofE:**
  - Ensure continued provision of DofE programme at Read School: Bronze Award (Y9); Silver Award (Y10) and Gold Award (Sixth Form);
  - Ensure that school investment in DofE is commensurate with requirements;
  - Retain Read status as DofE accreditation centre.
- **Music & Performing Arts:**
  - Continue to improve the quality of instrumental music performance within the School (orchestral music, rock bands, jazz group etc.);
  - Ensure that school investment in Music and Performing Arts is commensurate with requirements e.g. upgrades of Performing Arts studio (Old Gym) and back-stage facilities within Moloney Hall;
  - Continue to strengthen links with Moloney Trust for further funding;
  - Liaise with external organisations (e.g. Selby Abbey) to ensure that we are increasingly 'outward facing';
- **Cooking:**
  - Continue to invest in school kitchen facilities;
  - Build up Leith accreditation programme and courses available for pupils;
- **Other:**
  - Ensure wide variety of extra-curricular activities available each term for Junior and Senior Schools and that all subjects have extension opportunities to develop and nurture pupil talent;
  - Provide more imaginative play areas/play equipment for younger children by developing play areas for LJS and UJS pupils;
  - Ensure an increasingly dynamic and diverse programme of activities at the weekend;
  - Exploit our spectacular natural environment more fully (kitchen garden, forest school).

**4. In order to achieve the quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of our pupils we will deliver:**

- An effective School Council, ensuring that pupils receive effective feedback to issues raised, ensuring that democratic values are reinforced;
- More meaningful opportunities for volunteering - both within and outside School;
- Improved School environmental sustainability credentials, maintaining a consistent approach to ecological matters and a commitment to achieving 'net zero' target;
- Continue to involve pupils in all aspects of school community life such as the planning of new site development projects and the running of community focused events;
- Continue to develop Read School platform of giving, promoting charitable outreach for local, national and global causes to develop a sense of social responsibility and effect meaningful contributions to designated charitable causes;
- Increase the number of pupil-led assemblies and greater diversity of guest speakers;
- Appoint a coordinator of school PSHE programme and continued development of PSHE programme within school and alignment to legislative requirements, ensuring greater coordination between themes discussed in PSHE classes, tutor groups and assemblies;
- Ensure ongoing training for all staff involved in PSHE delivery, an important and evolving area;
- Ensure pupils are made aware of the enriching and positive benefits from living within a community that celebrates diversity and nurtures a culture of mutual respect.

**5. In order to achieve excellent leadership, management and governance, we will deliver:**

- Coherent vision and clear strategic direction
- Effective leadership, management and governance oversight of all aspects of school life to ensure consistent and effective implementation of policies and development plans;
- Ensure ongoing effective financial management of School, with targeted build-up of reserves;
- Effective communication of key developmental objectives so that they are readily understood by all members of the School community;
- Review of all regulatory and non-regulatory policies annually;
- Engaged and motivated staff;
- Ensure all departments/areas of the School develop plans respond to the developmental priorities contained within the annual School Improvement Plan (SIP);
- Ensure an improved level of communication and coordination between the Lower and Upper Junior Schools and Senior School in order to ensure greater strategic coherence;
- An effective appraisal programme containing clear developmental targets;
- Governing committees comprising requisite levels of professional expertise and motivation;
- Governors to provide effective oversight of scholarships and bursaries;
- Ensure that governors continue to be an active and supportive presence within School.

**6. In order to achieve excellent marketing and communications, including alumni relations, we will deliver:**

- Excellent relations with all stakeholders;
- A coherent strategy for developing the role of the Draxonians Association;
- An effective Foundation to encourage legacy donations;
- A strong market position that effectively communicates the distinctive features of the School in order to attract day and boarding pupils of a high calibre.

**7. In order to develop the public benefit of the School, we will:**

- Become increasingly effective at networking and building partnerships in the local community;
- Communicate our purpose more effectively;
- Increase the scope of our public benefit activities via Read School Enterprises;
- Become increasingly effective at networking and building commercial partnerships both in school and in the wider community.