

Ratcliffe College

3-Year Rolling Strategic Development Plan

September 2022 - August 2025

“Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel”



Foreword

Ratcliffe College aspires to be a leading Catholic independent day and boarding school which is financially secure. Consequently, this is an appropriately ambitious 3-year rolling strategic development plan that communicates a strong and deliverable 'vision' for a progressive, creative, caring, environmentally sustainable and internationally minded School for children and young people aged 3-18. Most importantly, it is underpinned by our proud Catholic heritage with its distinctive Rosminian charism, together with an unwavering commitment to ensuring that young people fulfil their potential.

As we celebrate the 175th anniversary of the College's foundation it is timely to reflect upon the illustrious history of this most remarkable of communities. However, it is also the case that we need to take substantive steps to future-proof the College and ensure that it is well-placed to help future generations learn and grow in the light of the Gospel. Change inevitably constitutes a challenge, yet Ratcliffe College is well-placed to embrace a creative and forward-thinking dynamic to ensure that it offers a truly outstanding quality of education. Our local, national and international reputation is built upon the quality of our current provision and the ambition that we articulate for the future. All stakeholders need to reflect upon the fact that the College has evolved since its foundation and whilst we are custodians of the much-loved traditions of this school community, it is our responsibility to drive the College forward so that it continues to offer a modern, diverse, creative and intellectually exciting curriculum. This 3-year Rolling Strategic Development Plan (SDP) is designed to provide a strong sense of strategic direction (from 2022 until 2025) by considering, from a developmental perspective, each of the ten core strands that we use to benchmark the quality of education that we provide. These strands also provide the framework for the annual Divisional and Departmental Tactical Plans (TP) which comprises the short-term developmental objectives for the College during each successive academic year.

Jonathan Reddin,

Headmaster.



THIS STRATEGIC PLAN TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE FOLLOWING:

- Recent Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Inspections: Educational Quality Inspection and Focused Compliance Inspection, 2022, Intermediate Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2018 and Prep School DCI, 2022.
- Annual consultation with all staff through various forums.
- Feedback from the student body.
- Questionnaires to Parents and Students (most recently Autumn 2021).
- Future Development Plans as highlighted by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

THIS PLAN IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT:

1. Provides a coherent strategic vision for the College.
2. Provides the opportunity for all within the College community to embrace this vision and work together to ensure its delivery.
3. Serves as a clear statement of intent for the College's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and members of the Governing Body and Board of Trustees.
4. Provides all members of the Ratcliffe College community (students, staff, current and prospective parents, members of Governing Body and Board of Trustees, Old Ratcliffians), with a clear understanding of the future direction of the College.



Mission Statement

“Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel”

With Christ at the centre of our learning, we:

- *Help young people to achieve their greatest potential*
- *Guide their intellectual growth, nurture their God-given talents, and inspire them to live in service to others*
- *Aim to develop honest, confident, responsible and compassionate members of society, based on the educational values of Blessed Antonio Rosmini*

We are a Roman Catholic school, welcoming and valuing all children because of their innate dignity.

Vision

“To be a leading Catholic independent day and boarding school, which is financially secure.”

Vision Statement

“Encouraging Big Ideas”



7 Strategic Goals

Ratcliffe's unique educational offering based on our College motto, "Legis Plenitudo Charitas", Love is the fulfilment of the Law, provides a perfect context within which young people may acquire the emotional knowledge and interpersonal skills necessary to live happy and purposeful lives. The College's inclusive Catholic ethos is complemented by the outstanding quality of our College community through which our Mission, "Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel", serves to nurture resilience and develop maturity. Young people leave Ratcliffe with a strong sense of who they are and their purpose in the world, equipped socially, emotionally, morally and spiritually to go forth and make a difference to the communities in which they live and work.

1. To be a centre of excellence in Catholic leadership

Ratcliffe College aims to be a centre of excellence for Catholic leadership in the diocese, working collaboratively with other Catholic schools in the area and take a leading role in the Chaplaincy network to share and lead best practice. We wish to provide a venue for retreats, conferences & meetings to strengthen our Catholic identity and support our Mission. We aim to be a centre for training future teachers, working with the Nottingham Catholic Teaching School and the Catholic Independent School Council (CISC). By working together, we aim to share best practice in all areas of Catholic education.

2. To create inspirational learning environments to support academic and co-curricular excellence.

Ratcliffe College has a strong track record of academic and co-curricular excellence founded on the educational values of our founder Blessed Antonio Rosmini. Rosmini's teachings continue to inspire new generations of young people to be truly independent and creative thinkers and to '*encourage big ideas*', our current vision statement. We aim to empower our students to develop resilience through a growth mindset adopting a 'not yet....' rather than a 'can't do....' attitude to their learning and their personal development. We aim to cultivate young minds to accept and welcome failure as a natural part of self-improvement and personal growth.

Ratcliffe College inspires a lifelong love of learning through the outstanding quality of teaching and learning that it provides for young people. We continue to review our approaches to teaching and learning, informed by effective evidence-based research. Children are encouraged to share their ideas and learn through collaboration and debate. They are further encouraged to develop their intellectual and spiritual curiosity beyond



the confines of the formal curriculum. Our students are challenged to engage holistically with the wide range of opportunities that the College provides, developing their skills, knowledge and understanding. The College aspires to provide the very best facilities to enable students to achieve their greatest potential both in and outside the classroom.

3. To develop the College roll to achieve long-term financial security

Ratcliffe College remains a popular choice for families locally, nationally and internationally for their children's education. We are renowned for academic excellence and outstanding pastoral care, built upon a proud heritage as a day and boarding school. We aim to generate a sufficient surplus annually, which will enable the College to thrive and enhance our outstanding offer for future generations.

4. To develop the boarding offer

Although predominantly a day school, Boarding is very much at Ratcliffe's *'Heart and Soul'*. Indeed, Boarding lies at the centre of our school, literally as well as metaphorically, while its diversity and community spirit portray the essence of the College. We offer a truly nurturing, supportive environment with a strong sense of community. The combination of academic, co-curricular activities and pastoral care is what makes Ratcliffe College a home from home for our boarders. By living within our boarding community students experience first-hand cultural diversity that helps to instil tolerance, respect and compassion for all. Ratcliffe has a rich history of Boarding which has taken many different forms over the years. We aim to develop our boarding experience, adapting to demand locally, nationally and internationally to enable the College to remain a leading Catholic boarding school.

5. To be an environmentally sustainable College

With Christ at the centre of our learning, our College community strongly believes that we all have a responsibility towards the environment. The children and young people are actively encouraged to do all they can to ensure they are environmentally responsible. As a Catholic School, we are ambitious in our future plans to enact Pope Francis's plea that each of us evoke, "a renewed sense of shared responsibility for our world." We are unequivocally committed to conserving natural resources and protecting local ecosystems to support health and wellbeing, now and in the future, through recycling initiatives and renewable energy solutions.



6. To develop student and staff wellbeing

Ratcliffe College is committed to providing an environment in which students and staff are consistently supported to feel happy, self-fulfilled and able to successfully manage their own wellbeing. We recognise the importance of physical and mental health as part of wellbeing and are committed to supporting students and staff to manage workload and maintain a positive work life balance. We aim to ensure that staff and students develop resilience and strategies to respond to challenges, as well as providing training and support. Wellbeing and Health are integral to our ethos and the way of life that we aim to develop further, so that all students and staff enjoy their time as part of the Ratcliffe community.

7. To increase our Public Benefit

Ratcliffe College is an internationally minded community that is resolutely committed to the concept of localism. We recognise our extraordinary potential to serve the local communities around us and we are committed to sharing our resources and skills. The College is committed to ensuring that the lives of local people and communities are enriched by our presence. We are part of the rich fabric of the East Midlands, and we actively embrace our social responsibility to serve others.



Core Values

Love

Compassion

Dignity

Justice

Service

Whole College Culture

- A clear, understood and 'lived' Catholic Mission with an inspirational Vision
- A safe and secure environment with effective management of resources
- Highly effective leadership and governance
- High standards and expectations for all built on a strong safeguarding culture
- A bespoke, innovative, creative curriculum underpinned by outstanding Teaching and Learning



RATCLIFFE COLLEGE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Ten core strands have been identified as providing the framework necessary to meet these strategic goals.

- 1. The quality of student achievement and learning*
- 2. The quality of teaching and assessment*
- 3. The quality of pastoral care and arrangements for student welfare (including boarding)*
- 4. The quality of our co-curricular provision*
- 5. The quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students*
- 6. The quality of leadership and management*
- 7. The quality of governance*
- 8. The quality of communications including marketing and alumni relations*
- 9. Public Benefit - Charitable Activities*
- 10. Commercial Enterprise*



1. The quality of student achievement, learning & assessment

TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING WE NEED:

- A dynamic and balanced curriculum which is responsive to the evolving workplace of the twenty-first century
- Effective teaching and active learning which serves to provide the challenge necessary to enable children of all abilities to fulfil their potential whilst inspiring a lifelong love of learning
- Teachers and students who possess growth mindsets and recognise the personal strengths of all students
- Heads of Departments who enhance teaching and learning by monitoring all aspects of staff and student performance whilst promoting an intellectually aspirant culture where the sharing of good practice is commonplace
- A vibrant culture of continuous professional development (CPD) and the opportunity for meaningful career progression
- Small class sizes, outstanding resources and excellent facilities
- Excellent academic results (routinely positive value-added scores in all departments at GCSE, A Level)
- Effective communication of School's learning priorities to students and parents
- Excellent quality of formative and summative assessment.

2. The quality of teaching and assessment

HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT IS DEPENDENT UPON:

- Outstanding subject teachers who possess excellent subject knowledge and are fully cognisant in terms of their knowledge and understanding of each individual student's capabilities
- Resources which support innovative, dynamic and engaging approaches to learning
- A rigorous assessment framework which supports the needs of all students and enables them to be able to fulfil their potential
- A commitment to assess and critically reflect upon all aspects of school life

3. The quality of pastoral care and arrangements for student welfare (including boarding)

TO ENSURE THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF PASTORAL CARE, WE NEED:

- Robust safeguarding protocols and procedures
- A caring and effective environment for boarding



- Effective behaviour, anti-bullying and peer-on-peer abuse policies
- Staff who are attentive to the needs of each individual child
- Effective pastoral structures (both horizontal and vertical)
- An inclusive culture which celebrates diversity and is sensitive to the needs of all children regardless of SEND, gender, sexuality or ethnicity
- Outstanding careers/higher education guidance
- A positive ethos where students with specific needs are included in every aspect of the life of the School with draws on our Catholic ethos
- Listen to the views of all students through active Student Voice Committees
- Ensure that the school site becomes increasingly secure
- Excellent record-keeping and clear lines of communication
- Counselling provision

4. The quality of our co-curricular provision

IN ORDER TO PROVIDE OUTSTANDING CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WE NEED:

- A diversity of experiences external to the classroom which serve to develop every student and promote the pursuit of excellence and participation for all
- An awareness by students of the many benefits to be gained from participating in a wide variety of co-curricular activities
- To ensure that all staff engage positively with the co-curricular programme and trips & visits

5. The quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students

THE QUALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EDUCATION OF OUR STUDENTS

- Students who draw upon the inspiration of the Gospel Values and possess an intrinsic desire to contribute towards the community life of the School by living out our Mission, “Learning and Growing in the Light of the Gospel”
- Students who, through their Faith journey in school, are sensitive to non-material aspects of life and who develop their cultural, spiritual and aesthetic sensibilities as they progress through the School
- Students who are open to exploring cultural diversity within a context of mutual respect and understanding
- Appropriate training for all staff so as to ensure they appreciate the significance of this area of School life



6. The quality of leadership and management

TO ENSURE AN OUTSTANDING QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT WE MUST ENSURE:

- A coherent vision for the next 5 years
- Clear strategic direction
- Effective oversight of all aspects of school life to ensure consistent and effective implementation of policies and development plans
- Effective communication of key developmental objectives so that they are readily understood by all members of the School community
- Engaged and motivated staff
- An outstanding quality of CPD to enable all staff to develop leadership and management skills

7. The quality of governance

TO ENSURE EXCELLENT GOVERNANCE WE NEED:

- A coherent vision for the next 3 years
- Clear strategic direction
- Effective and rigorous oversight of all policies
- Governors with a clear understanding of both the College's context and national educational landscape
- Governors with an informed insight into all aspects of School life - especially the educational offering through sub-committees
- Effective long-term financial planning
- Attentive monitoring of College's performance in all regards (spiritually, pastorally (safeguarding), academically, financially, commercially, marketing, etc.)
- Effective appraisal of the Senior Leadership Team
- A supportive culture predicated upon effective scrutiny of performance data and an appropriate level of challenge
- Effective oversight of scholarships/bursaries
- Greater focus upon public benefit the strategic development of the site

8. The quality of communications including marketing and alumni relations

TO ENSURE HIGH QUALITY COMMUNICATION AND EFFECTIVE ALUMNI RELATIONS WE NEED:

- Excellent relations with all stakeholders
- A coherent strategy for developing the role of the Ratcliffian Association
- An active and effective Development Office



- A strong market position that effectively communicates the distinctive features of the College in order to attract day and boarding students of a high calibre
- Effective management/leadership of all aspects of external relations

9. Public Benefit

TO ENSURE THAT RATCLIFFE COLLEGE IS A SECTOR LEADER IN TERMS OF ITS COMMITMENT TO ENSURING AN OUTSTANDING LEVEL OF PUBLIC BENEFIT WE NEED TO:

- Become increasingly effective at networking and building partnerships in the local community
- Communicate our purpose more effectively
- Become increasingly effective at networking and building commercial partnerships both at home and abroad
- Diversify revenue streams in order to support core charitable purpose, e.g. summer school/language immersion
- Increase the scope of our public benefit activities
- Have more effective oversight of our activities

10. Commercial Enterprise

TO ENSURE THAT RATCLIFFE COLLEGE MAXIMISES ITS COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL LOCALLY, REGIONALLY, NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY:

- Become increasingly effective at networking and building commercial partnerships both at home and abroad
- Diversify revenue streams in order to support core charitable purpose
- Have more effective oversight of our commercial activities

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