

Cotham School 3 Year Strategic Plan 2020-23 September 2020 updated December 2020

High Standards, Inclusiveness and Cooperation

## Providing a life-enhancing education that develops the character, talents and potential of every child regardless of starting point or context

Cotham School is a Co-operative Academy that serves both a local and wider-ranging Bristol community. The Cooperative movement's values are reflected in our own. Our school is a fully inclusive one and we aim to create a respectful and positive culture and ethos where students' diversity, creativity and full potential is harnessed to enable them to excel and build strong foundations for their future. We serve students from many communities and many parts of the City. Our students come from a very diverse and very large number of Primary schools, in any given year 30 or more. Our student body is therefore highly diverse and there are stark contrasts between the socially and economically advantaged and disadvantaged. The school's catchment is wide and reaches into areas of relative affluence as well as very high levels of deprivation. The school pupil base is in Quintile 4, IDSR (more deprived) of all schools in terms of deprivation and the number of students now in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding is higher than National (Quintile 2, IDSR). 51 languages other than English are spoken by our students have EAL. Our student body is made up of 15 of 17 possible ethnic groups identified in the IDSR and BAME students make up 54% of our student population.

When Ofsted visited the school in March 2018, they recognised that "Governors and school leaders have a strong commitment to serving the needs of their diverse community. They are determined to make sure that the needs of all their pupils are met so that all can maximise their potential." Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for our students and to them achieving highly and one of the strengths of our school is the positive relationships between students and staff. Overall, we will want to see that the difference we make to children and young people in the round is exceptional. As part of this we are committed to understanding that unconscious bias and discrimination exists. We are committed to challenging stereotypes and advancing equality and equity in our school community and to providing ongoing training for staff (and students????) on values-based interactions and unconscious bias. We believe this can be achieved through outstanding leadership, excellent teaching, learning and assessment, recruiting a diverse range of staff, fantastic opportunities for our staff to develop and ensuring there is excellent communication and engagement with all of our stakeholders but particularly our students. It will also be achieved through honest and robust self-evaluation and by being 'outward facing', developing partnerships with other educational and external organisations that will benefit our students.

If we are to make the biggest difference, inside and outside the classroom, our success will not only be measured in academic outcomes. Post Covid we would like to be part of a wider movement to see change in our education system, a 'new normal', including extra funding for mental health services and enrichment activities, curriculum and examination reform and more intelligent accountability. However, academic outcomes do need to be part of how we judge what we have achieved and there is still more to do,

particularly for our most disadvantaged students. Our goal is that our outcomes improve so that there is no significant variation in outcomes between student groups and so that all of our students' life chances are significantly enhanced.

Academic Outcomes			
Key Stage 4	Intended Outcomes 2020-21	Intended Outcomes 2021-22	Intended Outcomes 2022-23
Grades 9-5 in Eng/ Ma	No exams		
Grades 9-4 Eng/ Ma	No exams		
English 4+	No exams		
English 5+	No exams		
Maths 4+	No exams		
Maths 5+	No exams		
5 x Grades 9-7	No exams		
Attainment 8	No exams		
Progress 8	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
Ebacc Progress 8	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
Open Progress 8	Average	Above Average	Above Average
English Progress 8	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
Maths Progress 8	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
English SPI	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
Maths SPI	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
Science SPI	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average
MFL SPI	Average	Above Average	Above Average

Humanities SPI	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	
Key Stage 5	Intended Outcomes 2020-21	Intended Outcomes 2021-22	Intended Outcomes 2022-23	
Level 3 Value Added 'Academic'	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	
Level 3 Value Added 'Applied'	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	
Level 3 Value Added 'BTEC'	Above Average	Above Average	Above Average	

		Our Strategic Priorities
SP1.	Quality of Education: Excellent Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA)	<b>Context:</b> The school has good and often excellent practice but there is still some within-school variation. We have placed a consistent emphasis on developing our TLA practice to meet the increasingly diverse needs of our students through well-planned and diagnostic CPD and rigorous QA processes in recent years. 25% of our current Yr 7 cohort based on our own assessments of their reading have, at the time of writing, a reading age of 9 years or below. The teaching of ready, oracy and writing across the subjects is now forming a key part of our school improvement strategy. Additional work was done by all Faculty Leaders during T6 of 2020-21 ahead of full reopening to identify the most important 'threshold concepts' that students may have missed during Lockdown as we know that student engagement with remote learning was variable with our most deprived students the least likely to have engaged. Consideration was given to planning effectively : Retrieval Practice, Modelling, Scaffolding, Questioning and Guided Practice.
		<ul> <li>What are we going to do?</li> <li>Post Covid we will plan for an Autumn Exams series so that there is minimal disruption caused to year 11 students transitioning into Year 12. On returning to school reading levels will be tested again for those entering Year 10 so that they can be supported in class by their teachers but also so that those who need additional support can receive it through the National Tutoring Programme. Teachers will re-teach the threshold concepts covered during lockdown and target students who we have identified as having the biggest gaps in their learning for live feedback, addressing misconceptions inc. SPAG/general knowledge. They will use formative assessment to inform judgements about when to move onto independent practice or when to move onto new concepts.</li> <li>Ensuring that teachers teach consistently well and are able to meet our students needs in the classroom is always important but never more so than now. Therefore, achieving excellent TLA leading will remain the school's foremost priority so that we can support our students to achieve strong exam outcomes in spite of the disadvantage they suffered in 2020-21. This will be achieved by further developing pedagogy to cope with Covid-imposed constraints in the classroom. This will include building on what we have learnt through the Lockdown around the use of remote teaching and digital technologies to support learning to support homework tasks and should it come to it another period of Lockdown.</li> </ul>

This additional work and the insight it provides will sit alongside our existing TLA strategy summarised here as the 'Cotham' Principles of Teaching and Assessment' which contains guidance that is clear, simple and manageable for all teachers and provides a clear framework for expected practice across the school. A curriculum review will continue during some of the period of this plan and will be central to supporting the development of excellent TLA and teachers will benefit from an even higher quality of curriculum planning and resourcing for all year groups. A continued commitment to high quality staff development has been and will continue to be central to developing our TLA model and strategy. We have adopted an appraisal system called the 'Professional Development and Appraisal' (PDA) model. This will continue to fully support the development of excellent practice in our school. A Core TLA Team has already been established. They will continue to work across the school to quality assure, exemplify and share excellent practice in our TLA model. Regular dialogue about TLA will lie at the heart of all that we do, encouraging teachers to try new approaches, share best practice and take some risks. From the second year onwards (2020-21) of the formation of the TLA team and the PDA model we will include more subject-specific modelling, more peer-to-peer support, more personalisation and more time into our CPD programme. Teachers will also receive appropriate training so that they are ready to provide adaptations to their lessons for the increasing number of students with low levels of literacy, with EAL and with SEND. Our Leading Practitioner will lead on the development of a school coaching model which will be central to the CPD programme enabling all teachers and HLTAs to develop their practice Teaching and Learning Communities (TLCs) and 'coaching triads'. Our pedagogical focus will be on improving the guality of feedback that we provide to our students Where we have gaps in our knowledge we will source evidence based options or invest in materials from outside the school that meet our quality standard. In this way a culture of reflective practice in the pursuit of excellence becomes a routine part of our teaching and HLTA staff's experience What will success look like? Our teaching, learning and assessment practice will reflect shared principles about quality. Teachers at all stages in their careers will be exceptionally well-supported to progress in their practice through a triangulated and long-view approach to professional development and appraisal. There will be clarity and consistency in using the graduated response and Assess, Plan, Do, Review

cycle to support SEND students, particularly those with high-level SEMH needs. Low stakes testing and formal assessment is

		used to inform planning, teaching and assessment consistently effectively across the school. These methods will prepare students well for terminal exams in Years 11 and 13 as evidenced by student voice and a sustained improvement in exam outcomes. The Principles of <i>Teaching, Learning</i> and <i>Assessment</i> will be implemented through: Consistent application of the Cotham Lesson Structure Quality assurance mechanisms: regular low-stakes learning walks and work scrutiny Whole-school and personalised CPD to support the Principles of TLA Targeted coaching support
SP2.	Quality of Education: A Relevant and Responsive Curriculum	<b>Context:</b> We have ensured over many years that Cotham School's curriculum is aspirational, broad and balanced. The curriculum aims to develop SMSC awareness, creativity and performance skills, literacy, numeracy, new media and IT skills as well as providing a stimulating range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits to support wider learning. We have a 2 year KS4 and a wide ranging P16 academic and vocational offer. The curriculum provides continuity and progression throughout the key stages. It supports a clear route for progression whether that is to University, apprenticeships or direct to the workplace.
		What are we going to do? Post Covid we will consider what aspects of the curriculum during 2020-21 we will need to adapt or supplement to support 'recovery'. In Year 7 we will implement a New Beginnings nurture group and programme for extra English and Literacy lessons and a plan to support students with key numeracy skills. We will plan our Year 8 and Year 9 curriculum to consider which skills and key concepts from the previous year need to be woven into planning for Terms 1 and 2 so that this academic year can proceed successfully for our students.
		The principle of developing and offering a curriculum that is relevant, meets the needs of students and is responsive to communities and employers in Bristol and the wider sub-region will remain central to our curriculum development strategy. We will continue to review our curriculum across the school so we know in detail where our strengths and weaknesses lie. We will agree on shared principles for our curriculum. Our curriculum will still be characterised by breadth, balance, coherence, relevance, appropriate challenge and progression but it will also aim to draw on and reflect the full diversity of the UK's population as well as the diverse heritage of Bristol and the modern City it has become. We aim to create a culturally inclusive <i>l inclusive and anti racist??</i> curriculum

		<ul> <li>We are very aware that we have a key role to play in meeting the needs of students with SEND and in providing high quality provision for students who have EAL and will continue to evolve our staffing model and interventions.</li> <li>Over the next two years (Year 7 already reviewed in 2019-20), each subject's Schemes of Learning for KS3 will have diversity and inclusion as a key principle for review and will be designed to consider: <ul> <li>Intent: The 'big ideas' essential to cover so that students have a grasp of the substantive and disciplinary knowledge which is distinct to each subject.</li> <li>Implementation: How planning, sequencing, assessment will contribute to the delivery of the subject curriculum. This also concerns the subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge needed for the 'intent' to be realised.</li> <li>Impact: Students' outcomes- what they know and can do as a result of the curriculum, for example: showcased through increased engagement through its relevance and relatability, the quality of work produced in lessons and examination success.</li> </ul> </li> <li>We will continuously evaluate the quality of all curriculum provision to ensure that it is fit for purpose, provides clear pathways and outstanding additional opportunities and activities beyond the subject curriculum to meet the needs of all students, enrich their educational experience and further develop their cultural capital so that they make at least good progress in their time with us.</li> <li>What will success look like?</li> <li>Our curriculum will reflect shared principles about quality and ethos.</li> <li>There will be a well resourced curriculum for use by every teacher</li> <li>Enrichment will be seen by all our students as the informal element of our wider curriculum and will make a measurable</li> </ul>
SP3.	Quality of	<ul> <li>Context</li> </ul>
	Education: Personal development	We work hard to ensure that the quality of care, guidance and support available to students is high so that when a student does meet a problem they know that there is always someone there to help. We have both a year group pastoral system with Heads of Year (Learning Coordinators) and tutors as well as a vertical house system to support this. The wider curriculum aims to support students to manage risks and to keep themselves safe socially, emotionally and physically in all contexts including when on-line. Cotham was an early adopter school for the new RSHE curriculum and the school runs an educational assembly programme using carefully selected guest speakers.

There is a strong and wide ranging CEIAG programme at the school and very high numbers of students go on to further education or employment with training sustained over time. There is a good range of provision for students to access support for emotional and mental health issues, including with learning mentors and the school counsellor.

Our students are supportive of each other and are in turn well supported by our highly effective Year Group and House Systems and our Student Council. Students have extremely positive relationships across different year groups. Students know where and how to report bullying, including cyber bullying. They tell us issues are dealt with promptly and very effectively.

## What are we going to do?

Post Covid we support our students to transition back into school life with a wider 'reintegration curriculum'. We will have a plan to manage any additional trauma and ACEs which our students may have been subjected to during this time. We will seek to re-establish positive routines at school for our students and support them and their families to ensure they feel safe and attend regularly.

We will review our student voice through the school council and house system to ensure that there are a wider range of views represented. We are particularly keen to gather Yr7-13 student voice on how as a school we nurture a 'sense of belonging' to our community and how staff and students can work together to engage in open and honest dialogue.

We will continue to place emphasis on supporting our students to build the foundations they need to achieve their future ambitions. We offer additional opportunities and activities beyond the subject curriculum to enrich the educational experience and further develop our students' cultural capital. However not all of our students take part in these and encouraging and facilitating access to them will be a priority, particularly for our most disadvantaged students. We will seek to broaden our extra-curricular activities and enrichment to more effectively engage our BAME students and ensure positive images in our classroom resources and around the school site that reflect the school's demography.

We will continue to employ a Careers Leader dedicated to supporting an exemplary CEIAG education programme. The school will engage with local employers and in Year 10, all students will continue to undertake at least 5 days of work experience. Post 16 work experience opportunities will also be facilitated for all Year 12 students.

		<ul> <li>Stage 2 to Key Stage 5.</li> <li>The teaching of PSHE, RSE and RE by subject specialists across KS3 and 4 will be maintained at Cotham with a programme of study for each year group which includes a focus on social and emotional development; social action and positive mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>We will support our students to make a positive contribution to our local communities and to the Bristol community as a whole. We aspire to become a hub for the communities we serve and provide opportunities for students to create and take part in community events and to volunteer in their communities. We will continue to host and facilitate events and activities that welcome the wider community and alumni and seek to harness their skills and experience to enrich our students' experience and wider opportunities as 'Cotham Supporters'</li> <li>What will success look like?</li> <li>Numbers of students participating in enrichment activities, particularly from those who are least likely to at present, is increased</li> <li>Events arranged/ organised during Black History Month throughout the year and an annual 'celebration of diversity' event</li> <li>The Gatsby Benchmarks will be fully met on an annual basis</li> <li>Our high numbers of students in education or training Post 16 are maintained annually.</li> <li>Our record over time of ensuring close to zero NEETs is maintained annually</li> </ul>
SP4.	Quality of Education: Behaviours and	Context Our school culture is one where the full range of success – creative, sporting, academic, practical support for others and triumph over adversity is celebrated. Very good behaviour is the norm at Cotham. The small minority of students who struggle with behaviour expectations respond well in the vast majority of cases to our behaviour management system. There are key staff who

are well- skilled in restorative approaches that help to build empathy and resolution and all staff have had some training in this area. Students understand and there is buy-in to our simple set of rules and boundaries and behaviour is very good. Visitors always comment on the calm and purposeful atmosphere that pervades the school.

"Pupils behave well around the school site. They enjoy coming to school and the atmosphere in the playground and in social areas is positive and friendly. Pupils are respectful and courteous to staff. They welcome those from different backgrounds or who hold different beliefs ... Pupils are respectful when talking with adults and courteous to visitors." Ofsted 2018 The school's attendance and persistent absence rate is consistently above the National Average.

## What are we going to do?

Post Covid we will support our students to transition back into school life so that they are able to adjust to any additional constraints and restrictions imposed upon them as a result of changes to school routines and procedures that have had to be put in place. We will support our students to feel safe in school so that their attendance remains high, providing additional support through our Inclusion and Interventions team for those students and their families who need it.

We will continue our focus on creating a culture where all students can flourish and achieve their full potential and be proud of themselves, their achievements and the school. We will continue to reward achievement in its widest sense. A range of strategies will be used including celebration events, assemblies and contacting parents and carers to recognise achievement. In addition to our Student President, Vice President, House Captain and Prefects roles, Sports Leaders and Respect Ambassadors, we will create further opportunities to increase the range of leadership opportunities for students in all year groups.

Positive, supportive relationships between staff and students lie at the heart of our school but our students have told us that they want staff to ensure that high standards, consistently and equitably applied without bias, create an excellent climate for them to learn. Leaders will at all times, be highly visible and accessible so that staff and students are fully supported in this endeavour. They will model exemplary behaviour and actively promote the school's values in their day to day interactions with all members of our school community.

At all times, staff will seek to promote excellent behaviour supported by our Cooperative ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others. Staff will support our students to develop behaviours that will enable them to thrive and we will hold ourselves to account for being fair, unbiased and equitable when managing behaviour in our school. Leaders will

		ensure our behaviour for learning systems are constantly under review. In particular, our fixed term exclusions are too high and we will consciously develop systems that enable a sustained reduction in these so that students can remain in lessons and in school whenever it is possible for them to do so. We will continue to establish clear expectations in relation to practices where there can be an impact on student welfare, specifically: permanent exclusion, negotiated transfers, attendance, elective home education, children missing from education.
		<ul> <li>What will success look like?</li> <li>Our focus on an improved behaviour support strategy and systems, values-based interactions and ensuring excellent attendance and punctuality will result in: <ul> <li>A reduction in number and frequency of high level sanctions for all students but particularly for those who are BAME students</li> <li>Attendance remains above average and is maintained over time and our target of 96% is met.</li> <li>Persistent Absence (PA) - is reduced and maintained over time. It is certainly below 13.2% (school figure for 2018/19) and does not exceed the national average</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
SP5.	Highly Effective Leadership and Governance	Context? The school's improvement priorities are based on a detailed understanding of the diversity of our intake and student outcomes. The SLT continually seeks to deepen its understanding of who is achieving, who is underachieving and why. A review of Governance has stated that: <i>"Trustees of Cotham School are knowledgeable and hold all of the skills and behaviours required to deliver highly effective governance. The trust board is fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses and is committed to addressing areas that would benefit from improvement. There are strong relationships across the organisation and a committee structure with clear roles and responsibilities led by professional, dedicated chairs. The information shared with trustees by the school is detailed and allows trustees to know outcomes for pupils". Our joint KS5 provision with RGS highlights our commitment to partnership working. We have a deep appreciation of how working in partnership can and does improve provision for students and their outcomes.</i>
		What are we going to do?

Led by the Headteacher and SLT we will ensure strong and accountable leadership and management at all levels across the school (ie: teaching and associate staff). Specifically:
• Leadership CPD and leadership meetings/ forums that are delivering measurable impact in securing consistently good middle and senior leadership across the school.
• The SLT, Extended Leadership Grp and other Middle Leaders assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their Faculties accurately and with measurable impact
<ul> <li>BAME staff recruitment and leadership for example through hosting and contributing to the Aspiring BAME Leaders programme</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Subject knowledge and delivery priorities are informed by triangulated assessment of teaching/ assessment quality through learning walks, work scrutiny and student voice. These are acted upon through the Faculty Improvement Plans (FIPs) and CPD at Faculty level</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Our revised appraisal procedures- the Cotham Professional Development and Appraisal model- are embedded:         <ul> <li>'Objectives through FIP' approach is implemented so that there is full alignment with school improvement priorities</li> <li>Evidence demonstrates that all appraisal is consistently robust across teams, supportive, ensures accountability and delivers impact on school improvement priorities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
We will take active steps to ensure our staff becomes more diverse by reviewing our recruitment strategy. We will recruit and develop top quality professionals to teach, support and care for our students and they will have access to focused and effective CPD which translates to the teaching of a high quality curriculum which is responsive to our students' needs and which supports high staff morale and staff retention.
We will continue to be an outward facing school, engaged in the wider realms of education at a local and national level. We will continue to be represented and a voice for educators at the Race Equality in Education Steering Group (REEG) within Bristol City Council to affect systemic change at city level. This strategic work will be supported by one of the SLT who chairs BAMEed SouthWest.
Our strategic partnerships with other education providers will be cultivated and strengthened. We will lay ourselves open to external scrutiny, for example through commissioning external reviews and will develop our practice through engaging with educational research, for example through the NFER. We will continue to contribute to local and national improvement at system level including through a Teaching School Alliance sharing expertise and excellence in teacher training, NQT development and induction and middle leadership development in Bristol and the SW and also with teacher training institutions, such as the University of Bristol and UWE. We will also work in the same way through the Bristol Education Project (a State and Independent

School Partnership) of which Cotham is a founder member, the Bristol N24 Primary and Secondary group, the East Central Heads	
(Secondary) group and through Subject networks for the benefit of our students.	

We will continue our work to create a culturally inclusive school environment. Stakeholder voice will be harnessed through the student council and house systems, through our QA triangulation, parents evening questionnaires, the staff consultation meeting structure, the Joint Governors and Staff Committees including through annual surveys. We will actively seek to hold events in school which support BAME parental engagement with a focus on our African Caribbean and Somali parents and carers and raising awareness for our Somali parents and carers around the British Education system and their role within it.

Strong governance on the strategic development and direction of the school is underpinned by a model for school improvement that is based on evidence and will be periodically reviewed in terms of its impact and effectiveness. The Governing Body will review its effectiveness on an annual basis. Governors have also committed to continuing their regular monitoring visits to ensure an accurate understanding of the school. T

## What will success look like?

The headteacher and SLT will

- Ensure that the school's leadership structure and quality assurance mechanisms are delivering impact on our school improvement priorities resulting in excellence in all areas of the school's work leading to improved students outcomes for all groups of students, in particular, the most disadvantaged.
- Ensure Cotham is fully staffed with high quality professionals. However, our staff will be more diverse, with more BAME staff and leaders
- Our strategic partnerships with external agencies will be strengthened, benefiting all stakeholders, contributing to consistently strong outcomes for our students.
- All parents and carers will feel comfortable in our schools and be well supported to engage in their children's current education and planning for their future next steps at key transition points

Governors will:

- Review 'Compliance and Risk' in all areas
- Review their governance structures at every level but particularly the role of the members and the governance arrangements for the Post- 16 centre
- Ensuring adequate succession planning

		<ul> <li>Link their agendas, monitoring, support and challenge to the key priority areas for improvement that are set out in strategic documents already in place</li> <li>Develop a clear strategic rationale to the issue of whether joining a MAT would better enable them to deliver their priorities</li> </ul>
SP6.	Resources HR and staff	Context
	Site and Facilities maintenance and development Income and expenditure	<ul> <li>What we're going to do:</li> <li>We will implement a recruitment strategy that ensures that Cotham is a school of choice for those seeking employment in the education sector. A key priority will be increasing applications and appointments from a more diverse cohort of applicants. This will be supported by a staff well-being strategy to include a series of internal CPD courses and support mechanisms to support staff engagement and satisfaction; to upskill Line Managers to provide support to assist them in the leadership of staff.</li> <li>We will ensure that we have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the capacity and capability of leadership, including governance, and staff at all levels to support leadership and staff development, teacher recruitment and retention and succession planning.</li> <li>We will maintain our HR Policy review cycle, facilitating the development of policies that align with the schools strategic, operational and statutory requirements.</li> <li>The main school site will be maintained to its existing high standards and improvement made where this is possible to take account of our growing cohort. We will make strategic CIF bids to support to fully regain use of Stoke Lodge for our students, their families and the wider community. We are already a venue for community groups and activities but we aim to increase our letting income by at least 10% over the next three years.</li> <li>Outsourcing of the school catering function to achieve the proposed financial and risk reduction benefits starts from 2020-21 and this will be carefully monitored alongside other income and expenditure plans to support the achievement of the school's key financial performance indicators. The 3 year financial plan is robust and we will continue to be carefully managed to ensure the long term viability. Assessment and review of the fundraising strategy and implementing new initiatives will ensure the long term sustainability of these types of income stream, volunteer support and re</li></ul>
		What will success look like?