



Review: Swainswick Church School 4 Year Strategy to 2020

Context

- In 2016/17, Swainswick Church School developed a 4-year strategy to outline key ambitions and success criteria up to the end of academic year 2019/20 – laid out in the document 'Swainswick's Journey to 2020'. This was developed through consultation with pupils, staff, parents and governors.
- Review of this strategy was delayed until term 6 2021 due to the focus on the response to the COVID pandemic.
- Evaluation of the school's progress on these strategic ambitions will inform the next 3 year strategy to be developed for Sep. 2021.
- Review of the school's progress notes where COVID restrictions have impacted on the provision that was in place.

Summary

The school has made excellent progress, having achieved the majority of its strategic ambitions across this period – key highlights of the school's progress in this time include:

- Pupil outcomes are consistently in line and often above national average for both attainment and progress with school attainment stable over a four-year period.
- During this period, a new business manager (successfully trained), a new teaching team (except 2) and new TA team have been appointed – a strong, collaborative team has been established.
- New classroom block built – providing 2 classrooms and toilets,
- New studio/break-out room built,
- School grounds have been increased, grants have been obtained and a creative play area has been built.
- New school website developed.
- A new catering service has been contracted.
- Reception numbers have risen from 6 in 2016 to being oversubscribed annually since 2018.
- Middle leadership roles have been created and developed.
- Trained SEND Lead and increased SEND team now includes - Lead and two dyslexic specialists
- Successful academy conversion, becoming a member of the BWMAT.
- Increased IT infrastructure
- School significant deficit budget position has been cleared following the agreed reduction plan.
- Whole school consultation process to define the school vision:

Our vision for Swainswick is a school where all children are known and valued as unique individuals, where differences are respected and celebrated.

With community and childhood at the heart, our school intentionally nurtures kindness towards one another and believes that children thrive only when their wellbeing is held at the core of their journey.

We believe in our children, and through imagination, high expectations and challenge, we inspire them to reach their fullest potential, and develop an intrinsic happiness in who they are.

"The world is big, and we are small, but we can do anything, anything at all!"
Hazel Class child, age 7

Appendix 1: Detailed Self-Evaluation against strategic aims

Key to Assessment of Progress	
✓✓✓	Achieved (and ongoing where relevant)
✓	Emerging
✗	Not started

Learning		
L1. Ensure all children learn to the best of their ability.		
Teaching is stimulating and engaging, and challenges the children to be the best they can be.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the past 4 years we have routinely reviewed our strategies, and teaching structures and developed expertise. Ongoing development of knowledge in a wide field of areas (eg. growing middle leadership, White Rose, ADHD, different approaches to phonics, SEND) Grown and developed the Team Balancing across the Team - expertise, specialist knowledge, with teachers/ta early in their profession development Evolving practice and strategic decisions that allow planning for the future
Barriers to children's progress are identified early and effective interventions occur.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in provision of SEND support - approx. 15% of children with (SEND) special educational needs and disabilities but there are 3 teachers in the SEND Team - this is a high ratio. Ongoing development and investment in SEND provision. Broad investment in CPD for teaching staff across curriculum and wellbeing themes: examples include- SEND Lead, Dyslexia Training (x2), neurodiversity training, speech and language (x3), Avon Valley Police -Mental Health and online safety, closing the gap, EYFS, phonics training (throughout the school), Maths - concrete resources, reasoning skills, greater depth (throughout the school), Forest School Level 3 Approaches used to support all children, and ensure interventions are targeted and meaningful Closing the gap - identifying individual needs of the children (all children) and putting closing the gap process in place, with regular pupil review meetings. This framework spreads out in to planning for phonics/early years. System of regular parent's meetings to discuss children's barriers and progress of interventions. THRIVE practitioner on staff with allocated time to spend with pupils Timetabled 1:1 intervention provision or in very small groups (NB: this continued online throughout lockdown home-schooling period) Internal pupil review meetings cover wellbeing and Thrive alongside progress and attainment Broad range of extracurricular provision supports pupil's self confidence and self-esteem – further developing the culture of school School is constantly evolving their practice in this area - using variety of tools to support all learning needs (recent example - developing visual reminders for the whole school, identified in neuro-diversity training but supports all children)
Assessment is used to guide children's learning, and does not cause angst; children take all forms of assessment in their stride.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal data tracking implemented and evolved, based on best practice approach (currently use ScholarPack to document. Rigorous tracking and 3 formal assessment points/year, tracking data informs closing the gap processes. Introduced success criteria (supported by checklists), and the Must-Should-Challenge approach. Children take ownership of their own learning; decide on their own success criteria and level of challenge, analysing their own works, identifying what went well and their own next steps, with editing of own work to implement next steps. This approach is progressively introduced throughout the year groups, in an age appropriate manner Ongoing assessments (fire and ice challenges etc) seen as normal by children, not a cause of concern Year 6 SATS - children in Year 6 are supported through SATs process, with breakfast clubs and post SATS 'treat day', Year 6 children/parents report that children enjoy the challenge of the SATS process and did not cause angst - important part of

		preparation for secondary school. (NB: chose to continue this process in COVID years in absence of formal SATs as part of preparation for secondary school).
Children with specific talents and abilities are recognised, and have the support of the school should they wish to explore these further.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an area where progress is still to be made. (refers to broader talents and abilities not necessarily those within curriculum areas).
L2. Providing an enriching programme to create a love of learning		
Children have rich, memorable and engaging experiences throughout their education	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentional variety of real experiences – examples include Viking Visitors, PGL, whole school Valley Walk, Rondo theatre productions, music provision, Collective worship in Swainswick and Woolley Churches, Introduction of After-school Clubs, Engaging in local Community (Ambassadors of Plastic in the Ocean, members of Whale and Dolphin Society, Amnesty International weeks, Red Card to Racism, BBC Blue Planet, Election Days, First Aid Training, Experiencing other cultures/religions (Mosque Visit, Buddhist Monks visit to school). Curriculum development is articulating this through curriculum drivers and mapping progression through the year groups. The quality of education provided by the school is good – there is a strong model for curriculum development within the context of a school with mixed age classes.
Swainswick has a broad, balanced, challenging curriculum through growth mindset to maximise the child's ability	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes are consistently in line and often above national average for both attainment and progress. Through the use of Must-Should-Challenge and children's ownership of their learning, "learning to learn" attitudes embedded throughout the school. Children encouraged to adopt learning to learn behaviours, (active learner, reflective thinker etc), not just within the formal core curriculum but in social and emotional development Mixed Year Groups provide opportunities to stretch and challenge the children, The intent model developed by the headteacher gives a solid structure for the development of curriculum progression in each subject, and links well to the school's curriculum drivers and values.
Children experience a consistent approach to learning as they move through the school, which empowers children to be active participants in their own learning, and to value making mistakes and what can be learnt from them.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children take ownership of their own learning; decide on their own success criteria and level of challenge, analysing their own works, identifying what went well and their own next steps, with editing of own work to implement next steps. This approach is progressively introduced throughout the year groups, in an age appropriate manner. Culture of celebrating making mistakes as an opportunity for learning. Children work in small groups (12 or less) which builds confidence - for example Oak Class is split for specific subjects, which gives the opportunity to challenge children, build self-esteem, and provision of a high level of 1:1 feedback, children share their learning and learn from each other. Individual abilities/barriers to learning are well understood by their teacher. Learning to Learn focus is consistent throughout the classes and reinforced by being celebrated in Assembly, termly focus on Christian Values reinforces this.
L3. Ensure Swainswick's distinctiveness as a Church school is maintained		
Children develop a sense of wonder and imagination encouraging profound feelings and insights throughout school activities, and experience opportunities for reflection about beliefs, respect for faith, feelings and values, preparing them for later life.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termly focus on individual Christian Values embedded in assemblies and Christian Worship, structured through the Fruits and Roots inspirational collective worship resource. Cover all 12 values over a two year programme. Regular collective worship, both in class or as a whole school, celebration assemblies celebrate Christian values. Weekly visit from local Reverend, and weekly collective worship in St. Mary's Church (although not possible in 2020/21 due to COVID restrictions) Pupils reflect on their own beliefs/feelings and values through own prayers/readings for collective worship Pupils plan Harvest/Easter/Leavers Service themselves - taking ownership and sharing their reflections. Regularly focus on other faiths and encourage respect for difference (e.g. planned trip to mosque), As a school community we live our values throughout the school day - as demonstrated on the playground behaviour expectations, approach in the classroom, at the greeting at the gate in the morning etc Christian values celebrated and focussed on - value statements are celebrated in assembly, and collectively look for how these values manifest in our lives - unpicking with value statements and celebrating the values we see in each other.

Children enjoy spiritual development through R.E. and Collective Worship which helps them to make moral choices and understand social and cultural development from a religious perspective.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole school consultation to define the school's vision including children in the reflection on their own community. RE Curriculum, introduced Understanding Christianity, and the Awareness, Mystery Value syllabus. Our PSHE curriculum gives children the tools to discuss their own feelings/thoughts/ideas 'WWW - what went well?' approach in books is extended throughout school life - we ask children to reflect on playground experiences, how did they feel, how did others feel, what could be improved? Collective worship - KS2 pupils lead and assess their own collective worship.
L4. Ensure that the Art, Music & Sports provision progressively builds foundation skills. through a planned programme across the years		
All children leave Swainswick with key foundation skills to be able to enjoy and participate in a wide variety of sports/physical activities.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased PE provision to include timetabled provision with a wide variety across the year enhanced by additional activities Introduced varied lunchtime and afterschool coaching/clubs (although restricted in 2020/21 due to COVID restrictions). Significant investment in infrastructure for PE (equipment) - both for formal lessons and lunch/break time provision. Side Grass area redevelopment - from muddy strip to active outdoor all-weather play area, addition of flat astro-turf area outside of Apple Class - additional all weather active space. Achieved Gold School Games Award, working towards Platinum.
Children have an appreciation of different types of music, and have had the opportunity to develop music making skills.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended the music curriculum to encompass different forms and approaches to creating music - which is delivered progressively through the year groups as part of the curriculum Investment in a wide variety of musical instruments - ukuleles, djembe drums, glockenspiels, keyboards - enough for a full class provision - excellent provision for a primary school. 1:1 Music Provision made available to all year groups - good uptake (NB: although restricted in 2020/21 due to COVID restrictions) Annual Oak and Hazel Class Performance - celebrates music, art, drama and provides opportunities for all children to perform, supported by music teachers (NB: although not possible in July 2020 due to COVID restrictions)
Children respond creatively to the arts, and enjoy and express themselves through a variety of artistic forms.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children given ongoing opportunity – art/creativity and appreciation is embedded in the curriculum and termly topics Vibrant classroom displays celebrates children's art - continued and changed termly. Annual performances at the Rondo for Oak Class, introduced annual performances for Apple and Hazel Introduced exploration of different media - use of film The arts are embedded within the curriculum not a separate isolated standalone subject. Opportunities for public speaking for all children. Involvement in creative community events - Forest of Imagination, Dance Umbrella etc (NB: although not possible in 2020/21 due to COVID restrictions)
Learning environment		
LE1. Retain and enhance Swainswick unique ethos.		
Each child is known and nurtured; the individual value of the child is paramount, regardless of external pressures. Children are supportive of one another and develop empathy.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ethos is articulated in the Vision statement developed in consultation with pupils, staff and parents. Clear and strong ethos - reflected in all SIO visits, parent and pupil surveys, all visitors remark on this. Text from last page of SEF Pupils are confident, sociable and caring for each other in the school but also for those less fortunate than themselves both in the local community and further afield. Pupils are proud of their school and everything it represents. All the pupils celebrate their achievements and the achievements of others citing learning skills and growth mind-set dispositions. They make it a strong, caring community. There are well established routines to support all pupils. Older pupil's model care and responsibility in roles such as buddies, prefects/leaders, while the school council is an active group that meet every fortnight in presenting pupil voice. Pupils feel safe in school. They are certain that there is no bullying in school and cite the quick intervention of adults if there is persistent unkindness. Pupils have excellent relationships with their teachers, based on mutual respect and understanding.

Children leave Swainswick feeling self-confident and ready for new challenges.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation for secondary school is strong, Yr. 6 Leavers are self-confident and prepared for next challenge. - remarked on by parents and pupils in all surveys, pupil voice, SIO reports, mini-inspections, direct feedback to the school.Swainswick school pupils have a positive reputation with local secondary school staff.
Swainswick is recognised as a beacon of excellence for a small, rural, growth mindset school.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Having requested a health check from the local authority to substantiate the school's judgements in 2019, the school was judged to be 'strongly placed to have a favourable inspection'.This was then confirmed on joining the BWMAT Trust in 2019 - BWMAT Trust evaluation of the school is strong, with recommendation to support other small schools who join the Academy.
Local community understands Swainswick's vision and approach to learning, and is engaged with the school.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Considerable effort has been extended in explaining Swainswick's approach/ethos/vision -to the local community - examples include, website content, coverage in the Bath Parent (see appendix).Enhanced visibility reflected in oversubscribed Reception numbers.
School has sustainable pupil numbers.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Swainswick is now oversubscribed with waiting lists in Reception (compared to previous class sizes less than PAN).Track record over last 4 years of gaining rather than losing pupils in KS2.
LE2. Ensure children benefit from Swainswick's rural location, for both skills development and connection with nature		
Teachers and children enjoy extending learning into the outdoors.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Weekly timetabled forest school provision (although restricted to on-site forest school during 2020/221 due to COVID)2 forest school level 3 practitioners,Trips are frequently tailored towards the outdoors - whole school walks, Yr. 6 residential at WOLT moving towards mini Duke of EdinburghDevelopment of Side Grass natural play area creates stimulating natural play environment in which children can observe nature.
Forest school is an integral part of the curriculum		
Children have an appreciation of the environment, and develop practical skills.		
LE3. The school provides a stimulating and purposeful environment, which is unique to Swainswick.		
Side Grass provides an all-weather space for children to play, and a covered outdoor space for outdoor learning, enriching the Swainswick curriculum.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Side grass has been transformed from a muddy strip, un-usable for most of the year to a an interesting/varied natural and active play area (climbing frames, mud kitchen, willow dens, running track, outdoor classroom, and wildlife pond) through a combination of grant funding, parent fund-raising and provision of additional land from the Diocese.
Two purpose built modern classrooms with toilet facilities and break-out rooms.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local authority building project secured and completed replacing two small old temporary Elliot building classrooms with a modern purpose built airy and inspiring classrooms, and toilet facilities on the upper site.In addition:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a new flat play area established outside Apple Class astro-turfed for all year round use.Anna's Cabin - new inspiring purpose built break out room built on the upper site (garden office style building with glass windows allowing views over the valley) - funded through grant funding and significant PTA fund-raising) This provides space for class provision, music lessons, etc. (NB this was invaluable for maintaining bubbles during COVID)IT infrastructure improved - all classrooms networked, full class computer provision, improved infrastructure and security, use of TEAMS.
Welcoming reception, school office and dedicated private Head's office.	✗	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This has not been progressed - focus on provision of enhanced spaces for pupils. Will be taken forward in next 4 year strategy.
Children benefit from a well-equipped forest school, improving their learning.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Yes, and investment in additional forest school areas on site (in response to COVID). Continued investment in resourcing of forest school - provision of firepit, slack line, forest-school equipment etc.
LE4. Parents have access to knowledge to help them support their child's journey through primary school.		
Parents are informed of school activities in an effective and timely fashion.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduced new school website, school dates communicated at the start of year and termly (COVID disrupted this). Recognise this is an area where school needs' to continually improve.
Children are well supported by their parents.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Positive and consistent parent engagement - close contact due to small community, parent workshops, open door policy, parent engagement embedded in closing the gap and SEND processes. (NB: home-school provision during COVID is a positive

		example of this, parents report feeling well-supported by school through weekly provision of work, online lessons, opportunity for online drop-ins to discuss concerns)
Leadership		
LS1. Best practice governance, ensuring the school meets the needs of all it's children.		
Swainswick is well governed, and this is validated by external review.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement Visit feedback on governance is positive, the governing Body is full with no vacancies, Governing Body is reflective and continually seeks to evolve our practice. Previously to joining the Trust the school has established efficient systems and processes that take place each term so that the school is methodical and effective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termly HT & Chair of Governors review meeting SMBS & Chair of Governors budget review Safeguarding holding to account meeting Attendance review meeting Safeguarding and behaviour being fixed items on Governor and staff meetings agenda Termly Pupil progress meeting - closing the gap Termly Link governor meeting (developing) Termly H&S Site walk with link governor Policy cycle review
LS2. Ensure the long-term resilience of the school's ethos and teaching approach.		
Develop the role of middle leaders to support and drive forward whole-school.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of middle leadership is well articulated and developing, enhanced by CPD.
Head delivers effective and authentic leadership.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Improvement Officer report confirms self-assessment that Head has a clear vision and approach and knows what he wants to achieve. Leadership is effective, and authentic, supporting staff development, and remaining strong through difficult periods
The school organisation is flexible, responding dynamically to the needs of the children in the school.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, as a small school all staff demonstrate flexibility, and hold multiple roles. The school's rapid and effective transition to home-schooling provision in response to COVID was a clear reflection of this. The Headteacher, Governors and Middle leaders have a tenacious stance in the drive to improve; this leading to a secure teaching team which has made considerable improvements since the last inspection. Having created a three year strategy plan, the Headteacher and the Governing body work closely together on their shared vision for the school and the community.
LS3. Ensure a working environment which allows staff to make the most of their motivations, commitments, and capacities.		
Staff feel valued, inspired and motivated, and teaching is predominantly outstanding.	✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children at Swainswick are happy, calm and motivated, this can only happen because teachers are happy and feel supported. School has a calm happy environment ethos which permeates every corner of the school reflecting the passion, commitment and motivation that all our teachers bring to the community. This in turn reflects the value and support that is both provided from within the team and from leadership.
Staff are empowered, as part of a team, to contribute creatively to the school, and professional development supports them on this journey.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School invests in teacher's ongoing development - CPD is relevant and builds on staff interests and passions allowing them to develop professionally. CPD has a positive impact on teaching. As a small school, there is a team approach to leadership of areas/subject leadership - the subject lead is supported peer to peer, which ensures all staff have ownership and support.
Team of teachers and staff who create the environment to nurture and inspire children to flourish.		
Staff feel free to try new and creative approaches, which respond to the needs of the children.		

Appendix 2: Bath Parent Magazine coverage

school report

Swainswick Primary School

Just before the lockdown, Georgette McCready visited one of Bath's smallest schools, nestled within the Swainswick Valley



It's natural for parents to wish their children the kind of childhood they themselves wanted. Days spent playing happily outdoors, walks through wildflower meadows, building dens in the woods and enjoying communal cook-outs over fire pits. Add to that the desire for children to be able to grasp the nuances of grammar, take an interest in global issues and be both confident and kind to others, and you've pretty much got the childhood experience that Swainswick Church of England Primary School offers its 84 pupils.

The original Victorian school building is perched on a hillside overlooking the Swainswick Valley in an idyllic rural setting. It's tucked away down country lanes, but it's testament to the special community that has been grown here that so many parents from nearby places, including Lansdown, Batheaston and Larkhall choose to send their children here.

Head teacher Grant Swarbrooke joined the school three and a half years ago, during which time many improvements have been made. But he is quick to say, "Schools are always on their own little journeys and I want to stress that this is not my school, it is our school. It has a

strong sense of community at its heart. That is what is important." And true to his word, this head is very much part of the teaching team, as well as helping with school dinners and maintaining a supportive presence throughout.

A smart new classroom building with a covered side play area provides light and airy accommodation for all kinds of activities, from phonics to music Tuesdays, when everyone plays together. On the day of our visit, a group of children are excitedly handling an emu egg,

comparing it to a hen's egg and watching delightedly as the egg is cracked open.

In the old school building – soon to be upgraded to create better use of space – children are working in small groups around tables in the main hall. Because the school has fewer than 100 pupils, different year groups work side by side and there's a sense of friendship and support that runs through all ages.

Head outside and you can see why playtime is so popular. Beyond the playground is a magical semi-wild space with trees, twisting



paths and grass that allows young imaginations to grow. This additional outdoor play area was created thanks to a previous vicar allowing the school to take over part of her garden. There are children grubbing about happily in the earth, playing in the mud kitchen and using a boat for all kinds of adventures.

At the top of the natural area lies the school garden, created and supported by The Eco Club, set up by parents. Here the children are growing beetroot, kale and

"It's natural for parents to wish their children the kind of childhood they themselves wanted"

potatoes, and are clearly proud of their gardening knowledge. The Eco Club also works actively to reduce the amount of plastic used in school and has set up a car share scheme.

An outdoor classroom offers far-reaching views across trees and farmland. Many of the school's clubs are held here. It's a popular spot for art, mindfulness and yoga. In addition, every Friday is forest school time, and children leave the



school report



school campus to head for a wood in the valley where there are yurts and fire pits.

Grant is full of praise for the Friends of Swainswick School. "We are delighted that our parents are so committed to the school. They come in to school to help, they are fantastic fundraisers and they run a lot of social activities which really add to the sense of community."

The addition of a dedicated library will also be greatly appreciated by the children and the staff.

Swainswick also welcomes regular visitors to broaden the children's outlook on the world. These include visits from Amnesty International, a producer from

The Blue Planet series and parents who come to talk about their jobs. A mass tree planting will help focus minds on caring for the planet for future generations.

The school is built on Christian values and this is reflected in conflict resolution, where both parties are brought together for reflection and to apologise and move on. The whole school regularly sets out to walk across the fields to Woolley church for services, the journey itself being an important part of the outing.

Someone has left a coat out in the playground, with the threat of rain hanging in the air. A boy picks it up, unbidden, and recognising it, goes to find its owner. It is gestures such as these that convey the nurturing atmosphere in this unique community. It's no wonder that so many parents have chosen the school for their children to start in September, with word of mouth spreading and adding to Swainswick's growing popularity.

Swainswick C of E Primary School
Innox Lane, Upper Swainswick,
Bath BA1 8DB
Tel: 01225 859279
Visit: swainsschool.co.uk

All of the superb photos in this piece were taken by Anna Barclay

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