



Trust Strategic Plan 2025-28

Achieving Success Together





Vision and Strategic Plan 2025-28

Our Context

Kingfisher is a multi-academy trust based in Norfolk and Suffolk, with ambitions to provide exceptional education to pupils and communities across the East of England. We currently have seven schools, two in Norfolk and five in Suffolk. Of these schools, four are primary schools and three are secondary schools.

Our determination to provide a great education for our young people is made all the stronger due to the fact that we serve many disadvantaged communities, where the impact of a good education can be particularly life-changing.

We seek to have a deep understanding of our local communities and to have ambitions for young people equal to those of the very best schools and academy trusts anywhere in England.

Our Purpose: Achieving Success Together

Kingfisher is about powerful collaboration, where our schools and shared, central resources, come together to do more for pupils than we could separately. This work is summed up in our mission: **'Achieving Success Together'**.

We are committed to helping our entire community, but especially the young people in our care, **to flourish**.

Our work is focused upon **creating 'life choices' for young people rather than 'life chances'**.

Young people's success can too often rest upon good fortune. We want our schools to be places where it does not matter which class a pupil is in, because every adult is a highly effective expert in what they do, and every adult has an equal belief in the possibility and potential of young people.



At Kingfisher Schools Trust, we:

- **have a shared purpose** to extend opportunities for our young people: 'Achieving Success Together'
- **collaborate** to share what works in the interest of children's achievement and challenge one another to succeed
- are **committed to excellent, inclusive education**, where all children thrive in a safe and nurturing environment
- seek for all of our schools to be **excellent places to work**, where colleagues wish to stay and grow their careers

The central team, supported by the Board:

- **support individual schools** to be able to achieve more than they could alone
- provide continuity and clarity
- are a champion for successes and are **resilient and reliable** when there are challenges
- **appoint and support the very best leaders** to make an incredible difference to young people's life choices and to invest in these leaders to sustain them in their important work
- **provide exceptional support** through trust and local governance, and expert support at the centre.
- **offer the guiding values, vision and strategic planning** to create a framework for school improvement and marshal the resources needed to support this.



Our Guiding Values and Vision

We seek to do the right things in support of our young people, but also to do these things well. This means having our guiding values at the heart of how we work. We commit to respecting people, acting with compassion and being fair.

Our values guide what we do; they explain what is important to us: **Opportunity, Community, and Excellence.**

Our vision captures our ambitions for the future and what we are all working towards.

Spirit of Opportunity

Our vision:

We are ambitious for the young people in our trust schools and for ourselves.

The decisions we make as a trust and the way we work is built upon what is right for the young people in our care.



Schools have a major impact on young people's lives. It is in the hands of leaders and those working in our schools to ensure that this is a highly positive impact. As a trust, we believe that the culture in our schools needs to be carefully developed around the central idea of Opportunity.

We are serious about providing high-quality and inclusive education and this means a commitment to serving all pupils well.

For every pupil to truly benefit from their education in our schools, we will create a culture where we will be self-critical and fully examine the value of our actions in terms of the positive impact they have on our young people.



Strength of Community

Our vision:

Each school will be a distinctive community that builds confidence in young people and helps them to flourish.

Pupils will grow as individuals, work together and develop an understanding of the world around them.



At Kingfisher, we know that learning and education programmes are not the sole preserve of schools, but we believe in the **power of schooling** to do something very special for young people. The community within our schools can provide security, develop lasting relationships, and nurture individuality, alongside the pride of being part of a team. We want our schools to be safe places to learn and achieve, to connect with challenging ideas and to be challenged. Pupils should feel safe to ask questions and to learn from misconceptions.

We want Kingfisher schools to be communities where we can ensure that all pupils access enriching experiences: cultural, artistic, or sporting. Our pupils should have exposure to ideas and places that expand their horizons.

Great schools also contribute to the identity of the places they serve and the pride people take in them. Our schools are very clearly focal points for their towns and neighbourhoods; this is especially the case in rural settings and in market towns. Part of our vision is for schools to be strong communities in themselves, but that they also contribute to the development of the wider communities they are in.

The East of England is a region with huge potential. As the population and the economy grows and diversifies, we want our young people to be ready for the opportunities available, for instance, in the creative sector or the energy sector. We will develop strong partnerships with employers and further and higher education institutions, to open up pathways for pupils in our schools.



Commitment to Excellence

Our vision:

Every child will thrive in a strong school.

Expert teachers, supported by strong leaders, bring to life a curriculum that gives pupils the knowledge and skills to succeed.



Our trust is the body that sets and holds everyone to high standards, in service to our pupils. The trust will do this both centrally, through its leadership, but also collaboratively, where schools and colleagues challenge one another to improve and provide the best experience we can.

Everyone working in our schools has a part to play in creating an excellent environment for achievement, where high standards are seen in everything we do. All adults must also demonstrate high standards in personal conduct, to act as role models to young people.

Our ambition for our pupils will be seen through a curriculum which reflects our commitment to opportunity for all. The curriculum will demonstrate an entitlement to a broad range of knowledge and the depth of academic disciplines. Our aim is that our pupils grow in confidence and are fluent in how they use what they have learnt, making connections, being creative and developing their own viewpoints. In order to do this, we will place language at the centre of our teaching, building functional, critical and digital literacy.

Teaching is at the heart of what we do and our trust is a community dedicated to building expertise in the classroom. Our approach is evidence-led, with a real commitment to develop the skills of teachers and teaching assistants, equipping them with the knowledge to do a great job and make a difference for all children in their care. Within this, we are particularly mindful of the skill required to support children with vulnerabilities and additional needs and to support our staff to do this well.

All children should feel secure, safe and calm in our schools. We will be clear about the rules in schools, so that there is transparency around behaviour expectations. Our aim is to foster great relationships in our schools, where there is trust, respect, and generosity. The glue between rules as the foundation, and relationships as the goal, is strong routines. Our schools will develop good routines that help pupils to feel settled and which reinforce good relationships.



In Summary



Our guiding values



Spirit of
Opportunity

Strength of
Community

Commitment to
Excellence

Our vision

We are ambitious for every child in our trust schools and we are dedicated to success for all.

The decisions we make as a trust and the way we work is built upon what is right for the young people in our care.

Each school will be a distinctive community that builds confidence in young people and helps them to flourish.

Pupils will grow as individuals, work together and develop an understanding of the world around them.

Every child will thrive in a strong school.

Expert teachers, supported by strong leaders, bring to life a curriculum that gives pupils the knowledge and skills to succeed.

Leadership

At Kingfisher, we recognise that leadership is a determining factor in the success of schools. We believe in collective leadership, where all colleagues recognise that they have a role in supporting a healthy culture, supporting the wellbeing and success of pupils. Those in positions of leadership responsibility have a duty to pupils and their colleagues to establish a clear framework of expectations and practices that create a sense of safety and underpin a healthy, professional culture where all can thrive. As such, we expect all of our leaders to abide by our Leadership Charter, based on the Nolan Principles.

Our aim is to invest in leadership, to prepare future leaders for our organisation, and to encourage new ideas that will lead to further improvement and sustainability within our trust.

We are committed to appointing and supporting excellent leaders for our schools. We work with a national recruitment partner to find the best school leaders and we want to attract talented leaders to the region.

Governance

The key pillars of governance in the Kingfisher Schools Trust are as follows:

- The seven Nolan Principles of Public Life
- Strong financial governance, ensuring good value for money and accountability across the trust
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities between the three tiers of governance – i.e. members, the trust board and the academy councils
- Ensuring that all the schools in the trust are rooted in the communities they serve and ensuring the academy council is championing the stakeholders in those communities
- Linking governance within the trust into the school improvement cycle and the relentless focus across the trust on improving the outcomes of pupils
- Central governance support, promoting strong governance through co-ordinated training, governance tools and expert clerking, guidance and advice.



Progress Made

This is the second iteration of our Strategic Plan, after Kingfisher was launched as a new trust in January 2024. Kingfisher replaced a predecessor trust facing several challenges:

- Poor or declining outcomes
- Very few schools rated Good by Ofsted
- Termination warning notices and possibility of re-brokering by DFE
- Challenges around leadership in schools

The work done during our first Strategic Plan has led to some notable improvements, including:

- Roman Hill Primary School lifted out of special measures
- Stowmarket High School judged Good for the first time since 2006
- Northgate Primary School found to be Good after significant leadership change
- Snape Primary School noted by inspectors to have many outstanding qualities
- Termination warning notices rescinded
- Stable leadership in the trust and across our schools
- Improvements in outcomes at KS2 and GCSE

Significant work has also been done to create a stable platform for the future of the trust. The predecessor trust was subject to an External Review of Governance in summer 2023 which highlighted a number of points for improvement. With key appointments to the Board, including a new Chair, and a Governance Professional, we were able to meet all of the points for improvement within a year.

DFE also appointed a School Resource Management Advisor to visit the trust, given we inherited significant deficit budgets. With curriculum-led financial planning in place and an experienced CFO appointed, our finances now balance and we look ahead to a surplus position in 2025/26 and beyond.

Strategic Themes

The emphasis of our first Strategic Plan was on Kingfisher as a **new trust** and within this our main aim was to demonstrate that we could improve upon what had gone before.

We need to reframe our work around what it means to be a **strong trust** in future. Rather than focusing on just moving forward from the past, this shift asks us to consider **what we want to be** and **what we want to achieve**, so that Kingfisher is a trust doing a great job for its young people.



Flourishing

We see Kingfisher as a trust with strength stemming from its values, that act as the roots of what we do. Our belief is that strong values create stability and fertile ground for flourishing.

Our values relate to the potential of all young people: each one is special and with a unique contribution to make. We believe that a strong community can support and grow individuals, providing security. Excellent schools and expert teaching bring education to life and help young people to thrive.

We have been inspired in this thinking by the paper ***Flourishing Together***, produced by the Confederation of School Trusts, with the Church of England and Roman Catholic Education Offices.

To flourish is to see young people grow in confidence and ability and to be secure in their own identity, within the safety of their community. Importantly, it asks us to do more than the necessary, to provide a rich educational experience.

As a trust, we want our organisation to flourish too. Some organisations may see strength

as standing apart, but we don't believe that we can flourish in isolation. We will seek out strong connections in this next phase of our development: this includes deeper and more impactful collaboration between Kingfisher trust schools, and powerful partnerships with other trusts, dioceses, communities and businesses.

The image of the kingfisher has been chosen to reflect our origins in a beautiful part of East Anglia. It also reflects our commitment to the flourishing of everyone in our community and the 'spirit of opportunity'.

Kingfishers are known for many positive attributes in both ancient and modern cultures. They are a symbol of hope, joy, patience, peace, renewal and freedom of spirit.

We want the best for pupils of all ages in our schools. They should have access to experiences that enrich them personally and expand their view of the opportunities available to them. Moreover, we want our pupils to learn about the values, attitudes and behaviours that will help them to succeed in life, to make the most of these opportunities.



Opening Doors

To be serious about realising young people's potential, the next phase of our development needs to be more ambitious, to secure pupil outcomes we can be proud of.

Our first strategic plan was about 'securing clear improvements', in effect making sure that we did better than before. In most schools, we have proven this to be the case.

However, this is very different from truly seizing our central idea of 'opportunity' and setting out what we believe strong outcomes to be. We have been inspired in this work by visiting other successful trusts, including Star Academies.

In order to **set and communicate high expectations** across the trust we will commit to **clear goals**:

At Key Stage 2, we aim for all pupils to meet age-related expectations in reading, writing and maths and to be 'secondary-ready'

At GCSE, we aim for over 60% of pupils gaining grade 5+ in English and Maths and for all students to achieve grade 4+ in these subjects

At A Level, we aim for 80% or more of grades to be C or above

These goals provide a clear, moral and trust-wide purpose to what we are doing in all of our work. Schools will have bespoke targets recognising where they have been in previous years, but always building quickly towards these overall aims. In both of these measures, there would be some exceptions for pupils with significant needs.

There are key differences in the approach outlined here. We begin with an expectation and mindset that 100% should reach age-related expectations at primary and secondary school and then consider adjustments and support for those who won't be secure or find that easy. The alternative is to always start from previous results, or from a zero base, but this is always likely to result in lower outcomes.

At GCSE, we will move away from our focus on grades 4+ and focus on the strong pass, 5+. By focusing on strong passes, we aim to pull the whole achievement profile upwards.



Our outcomes strategy will rest upon five further pillars:

Improve levels of literacy

We will prioritise children's ability to read and write, and to speak and listen well, at all ages. To do this, we will support all teachers to be excellent teachers of language, confident in how to help children to navigate text and to use their facility with language to further build their knowledge and understanding. We will deliver a strong curriculum programme that does not leave progress to chance. Where pupils fall behind, we will be rigorous in helping them to catch-up quickly.

Lifetime tracking of pupils

We will be assiduous in identifying pupils' potential and then carefully track progress at every stage. We will identify those pupils who could achieve age-related expectations but who may need support to do so and then carefully monitor their experience of school, to make sure that they are able to make strong progress.

Adaptive teaching

We will train teachers to closely monitor understanding and application in the classroom. Instructional coaching between peers will keep colleagues focused on highly effective techniques that help pupils to progress. Teachers will be supported to use their expertise to adapt and tailor the learning so that it meets the needs of the pupils and so that misconceptions are addressed.

Regular accountability

We will develop an effective structure for achievement meetings, where standards are reviewed and data is explored. There will be clear systems and a shared view that a high level of success is everyone's responsibility. Pupil progress will be at the heart of our conversation as staff.

Taking Action

We will take action at all stages of a child's journey to ensure that they continue to make progress. Where there are gaps in a pupil's skills or knowledge we will address it early and will take action that is 'little and often' rather than significant and end-loaded. Paramount in taking action will be addressing low levels of literacy, so that pupils can access the curriculum and succeed.



Two of our primary schools qualify for support through the RISE programme and we intend to make full use of the expertise and resources available. These schools each have one criterion from the 2019 education inspection framework graded as Requires Improvement. We are confident that our Outcomes Strategy and the additional support from the RISE programme will see these schools graded as being at the expected standard or higher in the new framework.

Our work to improve schools within this next phase of our planning will also focus upon the

high profile of SEND within our cohort. We also have challenges around raising attendance and reducing persistent absence, particularly in primary schools, and reducing suspensions in our secondary schools. These complex issues will require collaborative working within the trust and seeking out best practice elsewhere.

We also await the findings of the government's Curriculum and Assessment Review. Responding to the recommendations will be an important part of our work in the coming 2-3 years.



Working Together

Central to our determination to better realise the potential of our young people, is the need to make our organisation stronger and more effective. We know that we can do this by working together.

The trust is now in a stable position due to sustainable budgeting. Reserves can be used for strategic improvements as they will be replenished and increased in future.

The improved position allows us to think more carefully about all aspects of our spending and whether key contracts deliver good value for money. Improved systems should also give leaders better insights into finances within their school or team, to manage outgoings.

The backdrop of financial stability and key improvements in our schools puts us in a strong position to grow the trust in the near future. Growth will be to the benefit of all schools, current and those joining, as our capacity to offer services and support will increase. We have a strong community and a moral purpose that we believe will be attractive to other schools or trusts looking to merge.

Our guidelines for growth recognise that we still have challenges to address in some of our current schools. We would look to find growth that meets one or more of these criteria, so that growth is sustainable:

- Brings benefit to our current family of schools
- Adds capacity to the overall trust, expertise or finances
- Creates a better balance of strength and challenge within the group
- Builds stronger clusters in locations, given our geographical spread

We also have a desire to diversify our trust. We are interested in building a broader community, to reflect the places we serve. Given our commitment to the concept of flourishing and the roots this also has in the Church of England's vision for education, we wish to explore the opportunities to become a mixed trust in future, with community and church schools working side by side. We feel that our ethos would provide a good home for church schools. We would also adapt our governance structures and work with dioceses to ensure their distinctiveness.



Challenges around insufficient SEND provision also mean that we wish to explore further specialist provisions within our schools.

Growth in pupil numbers in our current family of schools also presents opportunities, including improvements to the school estate. We will introduce a costed Estates Plan to improve the learning environment across the trust.

IT is an area where we did not make enough progress in recent years. Our systems are still too fragmented and the experience for staff and students is not consistently good. We will invest in central leadership of IT and in resources, to address this issue.

We are fortunate to have dedicated resources to build business and community partnerships. Through the investment of Sizewell C, we are the base for the Leiston Education Partnership, which brings together schools of all phases and from many trusts and the maintained sector, to address issues of attainment and aspiration in

the area. We are also developing educational capacity through this scheme. There is potential for further partnership working to aid our school improvement journey.

A key consideration in this next phase of our development is to make the organisation more mature, with strong communications and collaboration at all levels, including externally. Systems and functions need to work together to add efficiency rather than complexity and allow colleagues to focus on what matters. We need to become more data-intelligent and analytical and in doing so mitigate risks to the trust.

Strong governance is essential to improving Kingfisher as an organisation. Our scheme of delegation provides a clear structure to our work and how each level of governance should contribute. We now need to develop these ideas in practice, particularly bringing out the potential that exists within local governance, to look at how we can help each school community to flourish.



Valuing People

At Kingfisher, Valuing People is central to everything we do.

It means listening to one another, caring for each other, and working together to build great schools for everyone in our communities.

Everyone working in and for our schools plays a vital role in creating an environment where there is excellence and high standards. Our focus is on ensuring that every young person has genuine life choices and that they achieve the best possible outcomes so that they can flourish.

Kingfisher is on a journey to be a strong and sustainable trust. To support this growth, it is critical that we strive to be a great employer so that we can recruit and retain great people.

Developing our offer for staff and the experience they have is, at the same time, our key means of shaping our identity as a trust. We want Kingfisher to be a trust people are proud of and where the values stand out. We aspire to be a trust where colleagues at all levels have a stake in the improvement of the trust and each school within it and where everyone is an advocate for our mission and values.

To bring our values to life, we have three core commitments:

- **By listening**, we seek to understand and to improve. Listening helps us to stay connected to what matters most to our people and guides us to make the right decisions.
- **By caring** and through kindness, we nurture wellbeing and create opportunities. We empower people to be proud of themselves and to do great work. We provide the balance, flexibility and trust essential to their success.
- **By building**, we commit to continuous professional growth. Through strong teams and effective systems, we create a shared culture of excellence.

Over the next three years and beyond, we will build on our current working practices and demonstrate our ongoing commitment to Valuing People by embedding a series of actions under the pillars of Listening, Caring and Building.

These actions will be regularly reviewed by seeking feedback from our colleagues to ensure they continue to meet both their needs and the evolving priorities of our schools and Trust.

Importantly, we ask leaders to be self-critical, questioning whether we are upholding these commitments: Are we listening? Are we caring? Are we building?

Of course, in developing our workforce, our ultimate measure remains the progress of our young people.

An annual review will be conducted and reported to the board. This review will include an update on the measures of success. It will also serve as an opportunity to evaluate and implement any necessary changes to ensure our aims continue to meet the evolving needs of the Trust and its people.



Our Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1:

Opening doors: secure **strong outcomes** for our pupils through high-quality, inclusive education

Strategic Priority 2:

Working together: Develop Kingfisher as a **strong and sustainable trust** and a flourishing community

Strategic Priority 3:

Valuing People: ensure **everyone is valued** and supported to do their best work in service of our pupils

We expect to see improvement in many forms, but will track the following measures to monitor progress:

- Examination and test outcomes, especially in terms of core subject attainment and progress made by pupils
- Attendance and behaviour
- Improved Ofsted grades wherever inspections take place
- Number of schools increases
- Balanced budget setting and strategic investment
- Stakeholder satisfaction (staff, parents and pupils) through Edurio surveys
- Lower staff absence levels



Strategic Map

Strategic Priority 1:	
<p>Opening doors: secure strong outcomes for our pupils through high-quality, inclusive education.</p> <p><i>This priority links to the Trust Quality Descriptors of High Quality and Inclusive Education, and School Improvement</i></p>	
1.1	Introduce Kingfisher Outcomes Strategy to improve attainment and progress so that pupils reach age-related expectations
1.2	Implement Attendance and Safeguarding strategy to improve engagement with school
1.3	Develop school improvement capacity within the trust and make use of external sources of challenge
1.4	Review our provision for pupils with SEND, including Alternative Provision
1.5	Devise a Behaviour strategy to improve the culture and climate in our schools
1.6	Respond to the Curriculum and Assessment review, ensuring high-quality learning at all ages
1.7	Develop excellent CPD for staff with instructional coaching at the core
1.8	Ensure that the trust uses data to drive intelligent decisions and good governance
Strategic Priority 2:	
<p>Working together: Develop Kingfisher as a strong and sustainable trust and a flourishing community.</p> <p><i>This priority links to the Trust Quality Descriptors of Finance and Operations, and Governance. It also links to the CST material on Civic Duty.</i></p>	
2.1	Implement a Finance Plan, to ensure stable and strong systems that ensure best value
2.2	Create an IT strategy to meet the DFE digital standards
2.3	Devise a plan to deliver the ambitions of our Estates Strategy
2.4	Plan for growth: in pupil numbers, types of provision, and through further schools
2.5	Develop a clear identity and build strong partnerships, to offer more to our communities
2.6	Strengthen the effectiveness of governance across the scheme of delegation
2.7	Improve systems across the trust, increasing efficiency and reducing risk
2.8	Establish a communications function, to better engage with internal and external stakeholders

Strategic Priority 3:

Valuing People: ensure everyone is valued and supported to do their best work in service of our pupils.

This priority links to the Trust Quality Descriptor of Workforce

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 3.1 | Listening: create a culture of open dialogue, trust, and continuous feedback – where we listen with intent and act with purpose |
| 3.2 | Caring: Create a supportive, inclusive culture that prioritises wellbeing and belonging |
| 3.3 | Building: Invest in growth, development, and collaboration to strengthen our people and our trust |





Prospect House, Loddon Business Park, Little Money Road, Loddon, Norfolk, NR14 6JD
T: 01508 520600 E: enquiries@kingfisherschools.co.uk W: www.kingfisherschools.co.uk
