



Lymm High School School Improvement Plan: Themes & Priorities, 2015-2018

This document provides an outline of the key themes and priorities for the development of Lymm High School over the next three years. It will be used by senior leadership, middle leaders and support staff team leaders to inform the more detailed action plans that they have for their respective areas. These plans will be reviewed three times a year to ensure that we are making sufficient progress towards our objectives.

The themes and priorities outlined here came about as a result of consultation with parents, students, governors, teaching and support staff in the summer term of 2015. It has also been written with the Lymm High School Charter in mind, which sets out the enduring aims and principles of the school. For each theme, this document outlines our:

- **Key objectives:** what we are trying to achieve
- **Moral purpose:** why we are trying to achieve it
- **Success criteria:** how we will know we have achieved it

The key themes and priorities are:

<i>Achievement for All</i>
<i>Excellent Teaching</i>
<i>An Inclusive School for All Abilities</i>
<i>Professional Learning Culture</i>
<i>Behaviour & Ethos</i>
<i>Extra-Curricular Activities</i>
<i>Community Links</i>
<i>Communication with Parents</i>
<i>Learning Environment</i>
<i>School Finances</i>

The document is intended to be aspirational, but also realistic. We start from the principle that great schools keep it simple, relentlessly focusing their efforts on getting the basics right. You will not find any highly original ideas here, and we believe this is the right approach. When the basics are right, schools are fantastic places in which to learn and work and students, parents and staff tend to be happy.

Finally, it should be noted that this document is by no means exhaustive; there is a great deal more going on in the school than suggested here and plenty more objectives for improvement. There are also many other measures we use to monitor our performance over time that are not included (for example, figures on attendance, punctuality, exclusions, rewards given to students, parental engagement and destinations of our students in terms of further education, training or employment).

Achievement for All

Objective: Academic outcomes have historically been high at Lymm High School, but we are capable of better and recognise that expectations need to be higher. We want every single one of our students to leave with the very best set of qualifications and grades of which they are capable, regardless of their background or prior ability.

Moral Purpose: Examination results matter hugely to the life chances of young people and, whilst education must always be about more than raw academic outcomes, we make no apology for putting academic excellence at the heart of our vision for a great school.

Success Criteria: We are served by excellent primary schools and tend to have an able intake to begin with. Therefore, our chief measure of success will be comparisons with schools in similar circumstances. Our aim for the next three years is to be in at least the top 20% of similar schools in terms of progress made by all key groups of students in our school.

Excellent Teaching

Objective: There are some superb teachers at Lymm High School and the standard of teaching generally is good. The objective here is to ensure that teaching is consistently excellent. This starts with the need to significantly raise our expectations of what young people are capable of, so that lessons contain higher levels of challenge for all abilities (including differentiated work where appropriate) and that all students are fully engaged in the intended learning. Part of this drive to raise expectations will include the regular setting and marking of rigorous homework, something that we recognise is not consistent enough at the moment. Similarly, we want to increase the consistency with which students see their work marked and are given high quality feedback.

Moral Purpose: Students will not achieve their potential without excellent teaching. They only get one chance at a secondary school education and their success or otherwise ought not to be determined by the vagaries of the timetable; they are entitled to the best, whoever is teaching them. Homework is an important part of learning and all students deserve to be taught by teachers who recognise this by regularly setting and marking it.

Success Criteria: Monitoring data (e.g. lesson observations, learning walks and assessment checks) will demonstrate an overall rise in the quality of teaching and assessment, in all subjects and across all key stages. In particular, there will be greater levels of challenge and engagement. Records will demonstrate that homework is being regularly set and marked for all students and parent surveys will recognise this improvement.



Inclusive School for All Abilities

Objective: One of the current strengths of the school is the way in which our students are cared for as individual human beings – although we are a large school, students and parents often comment that it does not feel like that. We want to keep this feeling. We also want to keep working hard to ensure that we have a highly inclusive school that meets the needs of **all** individuals within our community, where everybody feels happy and a part of all aspects of school life. This includes a recognition that our academically most able students need to be fully stretched and provided with an enrichment programme that allows them to gain entry to the top universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. It also means making sure that students with special educational needs are similarly supported and pushed to achieve their full potential.

Moral Purpose: As a school that is proud to be comprehensive, we have a duty to represent the whole of our community, to ensure every single student feels part of our school community and is given the opportunity to realise their full potential. This applies as much to the most able students as it does to those of average or below average academic ability.

Success Criteria: Student and parent feedback will continue to say that pastoral care is strong and that students are happy coming to school. A programme for academically gifted students will be in place, with students and parents reporting high levels of satisfaction with this programme and the numbers of students gaining places at top universities (including Oxford and Cambridge) continuing to rise. The progress made by students with special education needs will continue to improve.

Professional Learning Culture

Objective: We want all staff to be part of a culture of honest, critical reflection and desire for continuous improvement. They should feel part of a strong, supportive school community, trusted and invested in as professionals, with access to a wide range of opportunities for high quality CPD, including collaboration with other schools. Monitoring systems should be aimed primarily at recognising and sharing good practice.

Moral Purpose: We owe it to our students to be constantly striving to get better at what we do. Teachers and support staff who are working hard deserve to feel fully supported by leadership and trusted to carry out their roles to the best of their ability.

Success Criteria: Staff well-being surveys will record high levels of job satisfaction. There will be a healthy level of staff turnover, with colleagues generally leaving for positive reasons. The quality of teaching will have improved, as evidenced by lesson observations, learning walks, assessment checks and examination results.



Behaviour & Ethos

Objective: Behaviour is already a strength of the school, as is the pastoral care students receive. Relationships between students and staff are strong, major incidents (including bullying) are rare and the vast majority of lessons proceed without significant disruption. We are aiming to build upon this so that no lesson is affected by low-level misbehaviour, conduct on corridors and at break-times is consistently impeccable and every student is wearing our uniform correctly at all times. Furthermore, we want there to be a tangible ethos of aspiration and a thirst for learning amongst all students. Students displaying the behaviours we are looking for will be regularly recognised and rewarded.

Moral Purpose: Every young person deserves to learn in an environment that is free of distractions and where aspiration and ambition are the norm. Excellent behaviour is the foundation for any school's success. Students who consistently behave well deserve to be recognised.

Success Criteria: Behaviour logs, student and staff surveys will all record a decrease in the amount of low-level inappropriate behaviour. It will be very rare to come across a student not wearing uniform correctly. Our rewards system will be high-profile, consistently applied, effective and valued by students and parents. Above all, feedback from students, parents and staff will demonstrate that expectations have risen and that our young people are aiming higher than ever before.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Objective: The extra-curricular programme is a real feature of Lymm High School already. There is a remarkable range of activities available to students, allowing them to take part to an extraordinarily high level in many cases. The number and range of trips available is fantastic, including many residential trips. However, not all students take full advantage of the opportunities on offer – and, sadly, this applies most to our students from disadvantaged backgrounds, even where activities are free or financial assistance is available. We want to change this.

Moral Purpose: Participation in extra-curricular activities is fundamentally important in helping young people develop vital skills such as teamwork, communication, resilience and responsibility. Every young person, regardless of their financial circumstances, deserves access to the full range of extra-curricular provision and we owe it to them to do everything we can to encourage them to take part.

Success Criteria: All students will be regularly taking part in at least one extra-curricular activity. Participation levels of disadvantaged students (defined, as a starting point, as those in receipt of Pupil Premium funding) will increase significantly relative to those of other students.



Community Links

Objective: We want to ensure that the school remains at the very heart of the local community. We want to build on existing links with community groups, as well as create new ones, to benefit both the community and our students. In particular, students should be playing an active role in improving their own local community. We also want to maintain and develop links with partner primary schools as well as good relationships with other local secondary schools.

Moral Purpose: A large organisation like Lymm High School has a duty to play a role in serving the wider community in which it operates and encouraging our students to help will also help them to develop as decent, well-rounded citizens. Good relationships with other local schools can only benefit the educational provision of young people in the area.

Success Criteria: The range and number of links with community groups and organisations will increase. Students will be taking part in significantly more activities aimed at helping the local community.

Communication with Parents

Objective: Parents and carers report high levels of overall satisfaction with the school, with the vast majority saying they would recommend it to other families. Generally, they also speak highly of the responses they get when they do need to contact school – with Student Services often getting mentioned positively in parent feedback. However, a significant minority feel that communication from the school could be better. We agree. For example, the website needs improving to better reflect the wishes and needs of parents. In time, we want to move towards a comprehensive Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) where parents and carers can readily access information relating to their child's learning, progress and homework. An important part of this will involve designing an assessment and reporting system in response to government changes that parents value as accurate and clear.

Moral Purpose: As a school, we recognise that our obligation to provide excellent provision extends beyond the students themselves. Parents and carers are entitled to know what their children are doing at school, how well they are doing and how they can help them at home. This information should be easy to access and should not rely too heavily on the ability of teenagers themselves to readily communicate with their parents!

Success Criteria: Parental surveys will report a clear increase in satisfaction with levels of communication with the school. A VLE will be in place that matches the best provided by other schools.



Learning Environment

Objective: We are blessed with excellent facilities in many areas, including our sports fields, leisure centre, many of the main school buildings and Ty'n-y-Felin (our residential centre in Anglesey). Given that the financial climate over the next few years is unlikely to improve, large scale projects in this area are unlikely. However, we can do better with what we have got and there is work to do to make sure that all classrooms and public spaces are clean, vibrant and enriching; they should celebrate the successes of our young people and promote the high levels of aspiration and ambition that we are striving for. We also know that we need to do more to improve the ICT facilities, student toilets and the spaces in which students currently have to dine.

Moral Purpose: Every young person is entitled to a physical learning environment that, as an absolute minimum, is fit-for-purpose, clean and free of litter. At the same time, they are more likely to succeed if their surroundings reinforce and promote the values to which our school community aspires.

Success Criteria: Learning walks and site walks will show that all classrooms, corridors and other public spaces are clean and tidy, that displays clearly reflect our school's values and aspirations and are regularly updated to celebrate our students' successes. ICT facilities will have significantly improved, as will the state of the toilets and overall dining experience for all our students.

School Finances

Objective: School budgets have come under severe pressure in the last couple of years and the financial climate over the next five years is almost certain to be even tougher. Like all schools, we are going to have to make some very difficult decisions and work harder than ever to protect the quality of provision for young people. Our objective here is to make sure that we are always planning ahead and being pro-active in looking for ways of doing things differently in order to avoid cutting some of those aspects of education that we most value. Part of this will involve trying to raise more money ourselves.

Moral Purpose: Prudent financial management is always central to the moral purpose of any school; we have a great responsibility to use public money in the most efficient way to provide the best possible experience for young people. Over the next few years, which are almost certain to see significantly more cuts in real terms to school budgets, this responsibility becomes more important than ever.

Success Criteria: Our budget will be balanced and stable and parents/students will not notice the impact of financial cuts. We will have been able to maintain our excellent extra-curricular provision in the arts, music and sport. We will be raising significantly more money from external sources, helping to fund projects that improve the experience of our students.

