

# Strategic Plan 2016-2021



# Message from the Chair



**Community engagement changes schools for the better. Schools can help to change communities for the better. Schools and communities working together can radically transform the futures of young people.**

We aim to develop our prime function, drive forward the **inclusion and equity agenda** and lead to development of the academy's role as a **hub**, a resource for wider SEN provision in Gateshead, a **centre of excellence** and, primarily, a provider of **learning, training and employment pathways** for young people with SEN

## Our Focus for the next five years

**To directly empower young people who face barriers to learning**

To provide equality of opportunity and experience to develop the aspirations of students to secure higher achievement at all levels

**To empower the community of parents and carers of children with special educational needs**

To organise and significantly extend into a wrap-around service the support and advocacy available to parents of young people with special educational needs, learning difficulties or disabilities



Patron of Cedars Academy Trust  
Paralympic Gold Medalist  
Stephen Miller escrimeur, HONDOL



***“By sharing our vision of the future we aim to demonstrate the need for more, and better, personalised services....”***



The Board and Executive of Cedars Academy Trust believe that the needs and aspirations of disabled people should be at the **heart of our work**

We believe that **partnership development** offers support and diversity, attracts more and

different funding, improves service delivery, enhances educational opportunities, allows creativity & risk responsibility and allows resources to be shared

Trust Status ensures a **sustainable long-term commitment** between people and organisations that have a vested interest in our students and in their education, training and employment

We have had massive support over the years from volunteers, donors and our strategic partners. We would like to **thank them all** and we hope that this document reflects on what we have achieved and what will be possible in the future by continuing to work together

***“Together we are stronger....”***

**Thank you for your interest in Cedars Academy Trust**

**Gill Morton** Chair of Governors

# Message from the Headteacher



**Our provision is highly individualised, responsive and rich; it is focussed on the promotion of communication, emotional development, resilience, and the development of personal and social skills**

We place a significant emphasis on enrichment and activity, it's positive impact on developing independence, cognitive functioning, emotional literacy, mental health and self-esteem

As students progress through school the focus is on preparation for an extensive range of accredited routes and transition into a range of routes into FE, training or employment

Our understanding of how children learn drives curriculum development and innovation



***“We place a significant emphasis on enrichment and activity.....”***

**Whilst it is ambitious in scope, our new Strategic Plan will ensure we make the most effective use of resources and take into account key emerging issues**

There is a need to continue to extend the knowledge and understanding of how young people with difficulties learn and how their needs can be appropriately met within an inclusive framework that extends beyond the school curriculum



**Going forward we will focus on four key priorities:**

**Strengthening management and leadership potential** throughout our staff and colleagues

**Deepening our understanding of effective practice and improving the delivery of our high quality services** to make a real difference

**Building strong relationships** and working closely with our partners which include parents, commissioners, our supporters and our staff

**Seeking out opportunities to expand our business model** to ensure more people are aware of us and, understand us and can access our services

We hope you enjoy reading about some of our achievements to date and our plans for the future

**Martin Flowers** Head Teacher

# Our Mission



Ours is a community of learning, where secure partnerships create opportunities for students, staff, parents and carers alike to grow to become intellectually, emotionally and socially **fit for life**

**We will achieve our vision by delivering excellent services which will transform the lives of our service users; to support this we will work in partnership with our stakeholders:**

- To deliver choice and personalised services to meet individual needs
- Help our service users fulfil their potential by focussing on improvement and achievement
- To be recognised locally and nationally for the innovative and excellent services we offer and be eager to improve and innovate in everything we do
- Build relationships through trust, by encouraging feedback and committing to deliver what we say we will do
- Embrace change and seek out new opportunities

## Our Values

### A Community of Learning

enrichment and activity  
at it's core

### Excellence and Innovation

to grow and develop together

### Equality of Opportunity

we all can participate  
and contribute

### Transformation through Partnerships

together we are stronger



# Our Strategic Objectives



## Leadership

### *Right People with the Right Skills*

A robust, consensual, distributed, transformational leadership model

Enhanced leadership roles and whole-school involvement in developing and implementing new and key initiatives

Developments to accommodation and learning environment are to the highest standard



*Excellence and Innovation*

## High Quality Services

### *Making a Real Difference*

An appropriate, challenging and responsive curriculum meeting all needs

Analysis is openly shared and ensures effectiveness and consistency across Academy

Responsive Teaching is fully embedded in all practice

Improved access and opportunities for life skills, employment and vocational pathways



*A Community of Learning*

## Strong Relationships

### *Together We Are Stronger*

Interventions, support and guidance improve well-being and enhance safeguarding processes

Care that supports learning and that brings confidence to young people and their families

Improved understanding of family needs, stronger parent voice and the development of the Family Team

Improved Educational & Pedagogical Partnerships, building coalitions for transformation



*Equality of Opportunity*

## Business Model

### *Growing Stronger as a Business*

Communication & Marketing; Celebrating *What We Do Well*

Future provision vision agreed and shared

Multi agency partnerships and our specialist provision is enhanced and our resources maximised

Best value in all transactions and agreements are secured and the development of a long term business model & marketing strategy



*Transformation through Partnerships*

## Cedars Academy, Ivy Lane: KS1-4

**A very special school with a reputation for excellent practice, that provides education, enrichment and opportunities for young people aged 3 to 16 years**



## Our Achievements



Pupil numbers are now the highest they have ever been in the school's history

We have supportive relationships with Gateshead and other Local Authorities who recognise our service as an essential part of their service provision

The introduction of a highly effective Access to Learning team provides strategies to support staff and students to overcome barriers to learning

An extensive range of nationally recognised accreditation is offered to our students during their Transition years

A very high success rate for all of our leavers through transition from Cedars Academy into FE, training or employment



*Excellence and Innovation*

Cedars Academy Trust Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021

*A Community of Learning*

## Our Challenges

School **leadership distributed** amongst an increasingly more skilled and empowered staff; vital to the academy's success is the ability to transform, both as a response to changing needs of pupils and to local and national pressures, to increase our ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices, and to grow leadership capacity in others

To respond to **what, how and why children are learning**; to have clear expectations and rigour in monitoring and analysis; to achieve, share and sustain outstanding practice throughout the school



Continued involvement in regional and national initiatives, informed research and development work and increasingly more access to **innovative practice**



That we better respond to individual learning and emotional need; interventions and strategies **break down barriers to learning**, enable better outcomes in life, and that families receive the support they need

To support **partnerships and diversity**, improve service delivery, enhance educational opportunities, allow creativity & risk responsibility and enable resources to be distributed equitably

To provide **additional, high quality accommodation** for our growing population at our two sites



*Equality of Opportunity*

*Transformation through Partnerships*

## Cedars Post

A further education and training provider for young people who require specialist individualised programmes to develop their independence and employability skills to make a successful transition to adulthood

### Our Achievements

The development of three learning routes, Routes to Independence (R2I), Routes to Employment (R2E) and Routes to Vocation (R2V)

Individual timetables across all programmes are entirely bespoke and individualised to the learner, responding to their needs and aspirations



Developing outstanding community and employer partnerships that provide our students access to the world of work

Delivering real outcomes in independent living and employability

Students take part in 'be inspired to...' and develop skills for leadership and management

roles; where learners assist in the management of finances for the Social Enterprise and also help to support advocacy arrangements and organise social network events



## Our Challenges

To raise awareness of the college and our **unique personalised** education and training programmes

To work closely with a range of providers to develop a post 16 strategy that will provide a **learner journey from 0-25 years**

Develop an inter-agency approach and work in partnership with a range of agencies to ensure the **smooth transition** of young disabled people from school into training or employment opportunities in our local community

To work collaboratively across the region to **ensure access** for students to the excellent range of specialist facilities and expertise

To develop the **Cedars Trainee and Apprenticeship Programme** and deliver this in partnership with the employability project to provide access to work opportunities

To **break down the barriers** that employers envisage exist to employing disabled people by using creative and innovative engagement methods

Ensuring **long term funding** to sustain the provision in the longer term



# Community



## Sports Academy

To provide support, advice, expertise and facilities or people to have access to sport regardless of their level of ability, health or age



## Our Challenges

**Financial Climate** and pressure on Local Authority budgets

To provide **specialised sporting facilities** to accommodate our growing population



Continuing to build on our profile as a **Regional Centre of Excellence** for Disability Sport

## Our Achievements

We play a key role in Tyne and Wear Disability Sport Competition Structure and Inclusion CPD, The Innovation Project and Community and After School Programme Support



Our strong links with national bodies in sport, particularly EFDS and DSE ensures that Cedars has the capacity to increase opportunities regionally and nationally

Our Community Sport & Development Officer post has enhanced our significant role in sport across the region

We provide regular training, advice and guidance to the school sport workforce on inclusive practice



*Excellence and Innovation*

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To further develop our **training program** to support widening inclusive practice

Building on the success of the Paralympics and ensuring a **continued legacy**

Work with other providers to support them to provide **inclusive competition** and strengthen entry and exit pathways to school games and regular participation



Showcase what can be achieved through sharing good inclusive practice, use of role models, allowing and supporting **young people to lead the way**

Use our collective expertise to test and drive **innovative practice** and new solutions to maximise our impact



*Equality of Opportunity*

*Transformation through Partnerships*



**Cedars Academy & be inspired to...**  
**Community Led Digital Media Hub and Retail Outlet**  
**The effective sharing of accessible media to the learning disabled and mainstream communities**

## Our Outcomes

**Social & Digital Inclusion:** Media facilities will bring all sectors of the community together under the commonality of education and entertainment, help combat social isolation

**Employability:** Staffing of the facility, internship

**Education:** Accredited and Non-accredited multi-media courses into apprenticeship

**Improved Digital Communication:** Community led Internet TV/Radio Channel with content being provided by the users of the facility; Community News Channel will inform the wider community of what's on locally, sharing life experiences, provide advertising opportunities for local support groups, businesses, charities

**Equality and Diversity:** Providing voice over, subtitles, on screen sign language and multi-lingual options



**Health:** Increased mental well-being and confidence

## Our Challenges

Increase the delivery and number of users gaining **accreditation** in more education courses including Drama and Media

Populate the Internet TV Channel with **community led** media content to help increase number of viewers

Develop **advertising opportunities** for local businesses across broadcast platforms and website

Development of an **employer toolkit** – a best practice guide to provide information, advice and guidance for potential trainers and employers

**Raising awareness** of the media facilities to the business community and corporate sponsors encouraging businesses to purchase cost effective media products such as promotional/marketing films

Promoting **positive images** of learning disabled people, both within their own community and further afield

Developing a resource which allows others to find local support groups not only for the **individual but wider family members**

To strengthen the **lines of communication** within the community and widen people's horizons to the possibility of new links and partnerships



# Our Challenges and Opportunities for 2016-2021

In addition to the ambitious plans for our services there are a number of other projects and developments we will be taking forward as part of our 2016 – 2021 programme

Our individualised and person centred services ensure that **we meet the needs** of the people we support

**Greater personalisation** in the provision of health, social care and education services allows for more choice and greater control by individuals

To increase **parental voice**, improved Parent/Family Support and the development of the Family Team

To continue our commitment to **excellence and high quality care** and a constant review of opportunities to improve services for the people we support



Working with commissioners and local partners to meet need and **grow and develop our services**



A review of our **estate and accommodation** will ensure that our premises align to our ambitious growth and development plans

To **strengthen the Trust Executive Team** to support the changes occurring across the disability sector and in line with our business plan and new strategic objectives

To build a **strong leadership team** across the Trust and to ensure we have a workforce that will deliver future service needs

To allow for key academy groups to work in a more engaged & aligned way allows **creativity & risk responsibility** and allows resources to be distributed equitably



Improved **Educational & Pedagogical Partnerships** in based on the principles of sharing outstanding practice in all areas of Special Educational Needs with other establishments and wider partners

**Employing Strategic Thinking** to all our services to ensure that the business model and partnership development offers support and diversity, attracts more and different funding, improves service delivery, enhances educational opportunities

To provide **quality additional accommodation** to accommodate our growing population and increased scope of provision



