



William Henry
Smith Foundation

Become the best you can be

FOUNDATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025 – 2026



William Henry Smith
School and Sixth Form



William Henry Smith
Specialist College



William Henry Smith
Therapeutic Children's Home

SUE ACKROYD
CEO AND EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL
The Smith Foundation

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IMPROVEMENT PLAN-25/26

Nurturing Growth for All: A Foundation Built on Our Values

Our improvement targets are a clear reflection of our Foundation's core values, *collaboration, integrity, curiosity, empowerment, and visionary thinking*. Each target is designed to nurture growth for all, ensuring that every child, young person, and staff member thrives in a safe, inclusive, and inspiring environment. Through focused, values-driven actions, we commit to continuous development that deepens trust, champions individuality, and drives meaningful, lasting progress across our entire community.

WILLIAM HENRY SMITH FOUNDATION VALUES

Close collaboration

It takes a village to raise a child, and that village starts with us. We're a team of listeners, collaborators, and supporters who adopt a curious yet compassionate approach, building trusting relationships with local authorities, families, children and young adults, and our people. By understanding backgrounds, behaviours, and lifelong ambitions, we strive to build individualised pathways that are guided, encouraged, and nurtured by specialists.

Compassionate curiosity

Every person's story is unique, and we take the time to understand it. We ask why and dig deeper to uncover the bigger picture. With open arms and open minds, we foster safe and nurturing spaces where children, young adults, families, and communities feel fully supported. We listen without prejudice and respond with care, helping people rewrite difficult chapters into stories of growth, resilience, and limitless possibilities. Because that's exactly what they deserve.

Visionary thinking

We know that to inspire others, we must feel inspired ourselves. That's why we set the highest standards. We lead by example, role modelling behaviours that help shape those around us. With enthusiasm, optimism, and unwavering belief in children, young adults, and our people, we nurture an environment where everyone is empowered to surpass what they thought possible. Our shared purpose, expert knowledge, and passion for progress drive us to build something even bigger than ourselves.

Unwavering integrity

We lead with honesty, purpose, and an unshakeable belief in what we do. We hold ourselves to the highest standards, always keep our word, and work hard to earn trust from the children, young adults, families, and people we serve, leaving a lasting mark that extends beyond the classroom.

Empowering community

We are a thriving village where every voice matters, and everyone is valued. By embracing diversity in all of its forms, we foster an enriching environment where individuals feel seen, heard, and supported around the clock. This counts as much for families, communities, and our people as it does for children and young adults, with a deep sense of belonging echoing throughout everything we do.



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP LEADS

	GOVERNOR CHAIR	SENIOR LEADERSHIP LEAD
Chair of Governors	Rezina Kelly	
Vice Chair of Governors	Heather Gibson	
Children & Young Adults	Kate Wilson	Leanne Clarke
People	Rezina Kelly	Tom Gilbody
Business & Partnerships	Jeremy Conway	Sarah Kaler
Environment, Premises & Resources	Jeremy Conway	Karl Adamski

1. CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

1.1 Champion Excellence in Teaching and Learning Through Supportive Quality Assurance

Impact Statement:

Teaching excellence thrives in a culture of collaboration, ensuring every learner reaches their full potential.

Actions:

- Implement peer observation and coaching.
- Use learning walks to provide constructive, positive feedback.
- Promote student facing reflection through journals and learning conversations.
- Tailor CPD based on observed needs, skills and interests.
- Introduce co-delivered CPD sessions, sharing good practice.
- Improve the use of data analysis to inform teaching and learning practice.
- Utilise 'Hand on Heart' grades as a reflective tool to set aspirational yet achievable learning targets for each student.
- Design strategic away days that drive education/teaching & learning leadership across the School, Sixth Form and College.

1.2 Enhance Oracy Opportunities Across the Curriculum

Impact Statement:

Students develop greater confidence, fluency, and effectiveness in spoken language across a range of settings, empowering them to express themselves, engage in learning, and further their participation in school/college and beyond.

Actions:

- Embed structured talk routines (e.g. talk partners, debates).
- Train staff in dialogic teaching and oracy frameworks.
- Host oracy-rich events (storytelling, drama, assemblies).
- Utilise the expertise of our integrated Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) team to embed communication-supportive strategies across the curriculum and ensure inclusive access to oracy development.
- Track and celebrate oracy development through observation, student voice, and targeted progress monitoring.



1.3 Develop a Distinct and Empowering Sixth Form Identity

Impact Statement:

The co-creation of sixth form identity has fostered a strong sense of pride, purpose, and belonging. Empowering students to lead, shape their environment, and pursue futures with confidence and clarity.

Actions:

- Co-design sixth form branding and shared values with students.
- Create bespoke sixth form spaces that reflect independence and maturity.
- Launch student leadership opportunities and social enterprises.
- Review pathways to ensure relevance for life beyond college.



1.4 Strengthen Residential Care through Compassionate Practice

Impact Statement:

Young people benefit from emotionally secure, person, centred residential care that fosters a strong sense of belonging, encourages independence, and supports their holistic development. This sustained progress lays a solid foundation for success beyond their time in care. A connected and well, trained workforce underpins this approach, ensuring consistent support, emotional attunement, and continuity across all settings.

Key Actions:

- Embed a holistic, psychologically informed framework within residential settings that prioritises emotional development, trauma, informed practices, and therapeutic consistency in daily interactions.
- Develop routines that mirror a stable family environment, fostering emotional safety, predictability, and a genuine sense of belonging for each child or young person.
- Actively involve young people in shaping routines, menus, and recreational activities to promote empowerment, personal investment, and community living.
- A strategic annual plan ensures structured weekend programmes and home community, based outreach that responds to each young person's needs, interests, developmental stage, and circumstances and is reflective of community employment opportunities and local trends and availability of emotional, practical and financial support and services.
- Ensure residential care staff receive regular reflective supervision and professional development tailored to therapeutic care, attachment, trauma, and early years and adolescent development.
- Set specific Performance Development (PD) targets to promote collaboration across all care entities.
- Establish a cross, functional team of trained staff who can work flexibly across residential care, and Boothroyd settings, enhancing integrated care, supporting continuity and consistency across sites.
- Pair Boothroyd staff with a care colleague from school to encourage co-working and the sharing of expertise.
- Design combined strategic away days that drive care leadership across all entities.



1.5 Embed Formulation, Led Practice to Personalise Admissions and Intervention

Impact Statement:

A formulation, led approach ensures every student receives personalised, joined, up support from the outset. Improving outcomes, stability, and alignment across care, education, and family.

Actions:

- Implement a formulation, based admissions process that captures holistic needs across education, care, health, and family.
- Introduce baseline assessments across health, therapy, and family domains, linked to measurable intervention outcomes.
- Embed formulation as a shared, cross, foundation framework to inform planning, daily practice, reviews, and transitions.
- Refine referral and matching processes (including at Boothroyd) to ensure placements are needs, led and well, matched, with formulation informing decisions.
- Develop a structured, formulation, informed approach to sequencing therapeutic, educational, health, and family interventions based on student readiness.
- Establish shared protocols for recording and information sharing across teams, clearly defining how, why, when, and with whom information is shared.



1.6 Empower Futures: Personal Development, Vocational Skills, and Real, World Preparation

Impact Statement:

Every learner has access to rich, tailored personal development and vocational opportunities that reflect their aspirations, enhance life skills, and enable confident transitions to adulthood.

Key Actions:

- Audit the curriculum for creativity and inclusion.
- Strengthen the Artsmark offer by embedding high, quality arts and cultural activity throughout the curriculum & sharing of good practice.
- Introduce creativity weeks across the year and invite artists and storytellers to collaborate.
- Expand use of the farm, farm jobs and enterprise projects, and supported internships for vocational learning.
- Embed play, based EYFS curriculum and approaches that foster identity, creativity, and early digital skills.
- Broaden PDHL, OT, informed, and life skills learning for independence and wellbeing.
- Connect learners with volunteering, work experience, and tailored post, 16 pathways.
- Celebrate progress through learner portfolios, showcase events, and recognition of achievements.
- Use data to personalise learning, track development, and inform planning for all learners.
- Ensure rigorous destination tracking and data analysis that evidence sustained positive outcomes, social return on investment, and meaningful life changes for all learners.



1.7 Embed the 'One Plan' to Personalise Support and Safeguard Every Learner

Impact Statement:

Embed the One Plan as a central tool for personalised support and safeguarding.

Actions:

- Provide training on co-producing One Plans.
- Link plans to daily teaching, care and pastoral practice.
- Regularly review plans with student and family input.
- Monitor and reflect on One Plan outcomes.



1.8 Advance Inclusive Attendance Through a Relational Approach

Impact Statement:

Increase engagement and attendance through connection, compassion, and flexibility.

Actions:

- Train staff in inclusive attendance methods.
- Appoint attendance champions in each setting.
- Work with families to co-create flexible, needs, led approaches. Use data to identify both areas of improvement and areas of concern, ensuring that it directly informs targeted interventions.
- Celebrate incremental progress and personal goals.



1.9 Embed Co-Regulation and Body, Based Strategies to Support Wellbeing and Readiness to Learn

Impact Statement:

Embedding co-regulation through rhythmic movement and Brain Gym to strengthen learners' emotional regulation and body awareness, boosting their wellbeing and readiness to engage confidently in learning.

Actions:

- Deliver staff training on movement, based regulation strategies.
- Pilot daily regulation routines in key classrooms.
- Support the integration of regulation routines into residential care settings.
- Share simple tools (movement cards, visual prompts) for daily use.
- OT specialists design and implement personalised sensory diets incorporating rhythmic movement and proprioceptive input, supporting individual learners' co-regulation and enhancing their readiness to engage in learning activities.
- Appoint champions to support consistency across the settings.



1.10 Drive A Fully Neuroinclusive Culture Across Our Foundation, Placing Dyslexia Inclusion at The Heart of Our Policy, Practice, and Services for All

Impact Statement

All members of the Foundation community who have dyslexia, or experience dyslexic tendencies, will feel safe, valued, and supported to achieve their potential. We will achieve this by cultivating a neuroinclusive culture through awareness raising, training, early identification, and intervention, and by providing enabling environments supported by pioneering assistive technology. This culture will be evident across all learning and working environments within the Foundation, with our dyslexic community feeling fully supported, understood, and empowered to self, advocate and to lead positive change through their lived experience.”

Actions:

- Begin the process of becoming an accredited *Dyslexia Friendly School* (British Dyslexia Association).
- Complete dyslexia screening for all Foundation students (school, college, sixth form). Staff will also be invited to access the screener. Results will establish the scale of need and inform the level of provision required.
- Publish a robust dyslexia policy. This will form part of a transparent SEND provision, clearly accessible via the Foundation website.
- Establish a cross, disciplinary team to drive forward dyslexia provision and influence continuous improvement across the Foundation.
- Develop and embed a dyslexia provision map that ensures high, quality SEND support at universal, targeted, and specialist levels. Promote transdisciplinary collaboration for seamless and effective planning and provision.
- Champion the removal of logistical and technological barriers. Ensure students and staff have access to the most effective assistive technologies to meet needs and enable them to thrive.

2. PEOPLE

2.1 Offer a Warm, Structured Welcome and Ongoing Development for All Staff

Impact Statement:

With a warm, structured welcome and a commitment to ongoing professional development, we have built a supportive culture where staff feel truly valued, empowered, and motivated to grow throughout their careers.

Actions:

- Enhance the induction and onboarding process by aligning it with the probation period, introducing buddy systems and wellbeing check, ins, and exploring the option of coaching support.
- Share a clear CPD calendar aligned with needs and aspirations.
- Include training on specialist and inclusive strategies.
- Gather feedback from new and existing staff to evolve the offer.

2.2 Cultivate Organisational Excellence and Work, Life Brilliance

Impact Statement:

Embed flexible working practices that promote inclusion and equity, support diversity and retention, and improve staff wellbeing, creating a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered to succeed.

Actions:

- Consult with staff on flexible needs and ideas.
- Review and update all policies to ensure they are clear, relevant, legally compliant, and aligned with principles of fairness, equity, and lived experience.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of existing job descriptions and contracts and revise them as necessary to ensure they accurately reflect current roles, responsibilities, organisational needs, and uphold principles of equity.
- Pilot job, sharing and adjusted timetables.



2.3 Embed Supervision as a Reflective and Supportive Practice

Impact Statement:

All student, facing staff receive consistent emotional support and professional development through regular, reflective supervision, firmly embedded within a safe and nurturing culture.

Actions:

- Pilot supervision in college with regular feedback.
- Train key leaders in supervision facilitation.
- Build supervision into the wider wellbeing strategy.
- Develop a framework for supervision across settings.
- Create dedicated safe areas.
- Use EDI surveys to drive Foundation improvement.
- Train leaders to support flexible working compassionately.



2.4 Grow Governors' Understanding of Specialist Education and Provision

Impact Statement:

Our governors lead with informed confidence and genuine insight, championing specialist education through strategic oversight and active engagement. Their deepened understanding fosters stronger connections with our pillars of the Foundation and drives inclusive, high, quality provision that meets diverse needs effectively.

Actions:

- Offer specialist, focused CPD for governors.
- Invite governors into classrooms and events.
- Share regular impact stories and updates.
- Facilitate reflective dialogue between governors and staff.
- Use the Special Interest Groups as a consistent platform for collaborative working between Governors and senior leaders.



2.5 Strengthen Professional Learning Pathways for Staff

Impact Statement:

All staff are valued and empowered through clear pathways, mentoring, SEND, focused development, and recognition.

Actions:

- Develop a visual CPD and progression pathway.
- Provide mentoring and coaching for all career stages.
- Offer SEND, specific and creative teaching development.
- Recognise achievements through supervision and celebration.
- Encourage self, reflection.
- Foster and support co-led CPD.



2.6 Deepen Family and Community Partnerships

Impact Statement:

Stronger, trust, based partnerships with families and the community have enhanced engagement, wellbeing, and continuity of support. Built through inclusive events, shared learning, and responsive, joined, up services.

Actions:

- Offer regular family in, reach events (e.g. learning walks, open classrooms).
- Strengthen outreach through home/community area visits and partnership programmes.
- Host inclusive community events to build trust and connection.
- Create family learning and wellbeing opportunities on, site.
- Develop transition support for families moving from school to college / upon children leaving school.
- Review the development of the health, therapies and families service offer – need vs capacity review.
- Develop an NVR group for families.



2.7 Embed Student and Family Voice in Decision, Making

Impact Statement:

Student and family voices are shaping decisions, policies, and curriculum. Their input has led to tangible changes, strengthened trust, and fostered a culture of shared ownership, evidenced through clear “You Said, We Did” feedback and regular engagement.

Actions:

- Run regular student voice/councils and family forums.
- Use surveys, interviews, and creative methods to gather feedback.
- Share impact of voice and actions through newsletters and displays.
- Involve families and students in policy and curriculum design.



2.8 Prioritise Holistic Health and Wellbeing

Impact Statement:

We are a thriving community where students and staff flourish physically, emotionally, and mentally. Health and wellbeing are at the heart of who we are, proactively nurtured and seamlessly embedded across every aspect of school life.

Actions:

- Conduct/offer regular health checks for students and staff.
- Integrate nutritional psychology into the kitchen, residential care, PSHE, and life skills curriculum.
- Offer therapeutic interventions (e.g. sensory diets, movement breaks).
- Adults model informed food choices and healthy eating habits and encourage regular physical exercise as part of everyday routines.
- Provide training for staff on holistic health support.



2.9 Strengthen Internal Communication and Connection

Impact Statement:

Clear, compassionate communication drives our culture of trust, transparency, and impact, with leadership setting the tone at every level.

Actions:

- Ensure all staff use and promote the “Language of Kindness”, kind, empathetic, and non-judgmental communication that supports positive mental health for students and colleagues.
- Provide visual aids and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tools to support inclusive communication for students with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and neurodivergent profiles.
- Use Tiers of Intervention or individual support plans to regularly update and share students' communication needs across education, health, and care teams.
- Offer regular training for staff on neuro, affirming communication, helping them communicate effectively and respectfully with students who are autistic, have ADHD, DLD, or other neurodivergent conditions.
- Establish clear communication between senior and middle leaders to ensure important updates, priorities, and decisions are consistently shared and understood.
- Share an annual ‘Structure of the Year’ outlining key actions, milestones, and timelines to support transparency and planning.
- Strengthen collaboration and visibility across departments to improve coordination, alignment, and shared understanding.
- Each member of the Foundation SLT will actively and regularly align their strategic priorities, decisions, and communications to all four Foundation Pillars, and explicitly demonstrate their wider impact.

2.10 Strengthening People and Processes for Organisational Excellence

Impact Statement:

We have created a safe and supportive workplace that attracts and retains talent aligned with our values. By maintaining compliance, supporting wellbeing, streamlining recruitment, and empowering managers, we strengthen our people and processes to drive organisational excellence.

Actions:

- Maintain up, to, date DBS checks and track renewals for all staff.
- Support staff wellbeing through mental health initiatives and flexible working options.
- Streamline recruitment to hire faster and more effectively.
- Provide managers with training to handle performance, conduct, and wellbeing confidently.
- Regularly review HR policies to keep them compliant and aligned with the organisation's culture.



3. BUSINESS & PARTNERSHIPS

3.1 Enhance Digital Integration for Seamless Support and Collaboration

We will embed and align key online systems (e.g. CPOMS, BlueSky, EfL, Bromcom, SharePoint, ClearCare) to support communication, safeguarding, and reflection, ensuring all staff feel connected and informed.

Impact Statement:

Empowering staff through integrated digital systems to enhance communication, safeguard effectively, and collaborate with confidence across all areas of practice.

Actions:

- Deliver staff training on each system's core functions.
- Develop easy, access guides and support materials.
- Appoint digital champions to support colleagues.
- Review usage regularly to ensure systems are meaningful and manageable.

3.2 Strengthen Business, Finance, and Legal Foundations for Long, Term Sustainability

Impact Statement:

Robust financial, legal, and employment practices support the long, term growth and integrity of our foundation.

Actions:

- Build internal legal and HR knowledge and specialty through recruitment and targeted CPD.
- Use EDI surveys to drive Foundation improvement.
- Review financial systems and forecasting to ensure sustainability.
- Strengthen financial oversight and reporting for all stakeholders.
- Ensure compliance with employment law and best practice HR policies.
- Review all policies to ensure clarity, relevance, accuracy, and compliance with evolving laws and standards, upholding fairness and best practices.



3.3 Finance Improvement and Control

Impact Statement:

We have strengthened financial management by tailoring budgets, upskilling staff, automating processes, and improving transparency. These steps ensure robust governance, operational efficiency, and support real, world skills development across our provisions.

Actions:

- Develop and implement customised budgets for each provision aligned with their specific needs and growth plans.
- Provide training and ongoing support to budget holders to strengthen their financial management skills.
- Deliver clear, provision, specific financial reports to improve transparency and accountability.
- Automate key financial processes and integrate systems to increase efficiency and reduce manual workload.
- Establish standardised checklists and procedures to reinforce internal controls and ensure compliance.
- Teach real, life literacy, numeracy, and digital skills like emails, budgeting, and coding.



3.4 Enhance Specialist Provision: Establishing the Fifth Pillar of the Foundation

Impact Statement:

Children with complex needs will thrive through integrated therapeutic support. Staff will be empowered by sector, wide learning and active communities of practice, embedding inclusive, specialist, informed approaches as a sustainable, scalable model.

Actions:

- Identify early opportunities for integration by conducting due diligence on existing services and partnerships ("low, hanging fruit") that can be leveraged or aligned with minimal friction.
- Develop a business plan and structure an offer around diagnosis; ensuring we have the tools and capacity.
- Develop a structured offer for special schools that formalises the inclusion of health and therapy services, particularly OT and SaLT as core components of education and care planning.
- Introduce psychological support pathways to address the mental health and well, being of students within special school settings, including preventative and responsive strategies tailored to neurodiverse and complex profiles.
- Align therapeutic services with educational goals by ensuring health and care professionals collaborate effectively with teaching staff to deliver integrated outcomes for students.
- Review the SPC offer to ensure it meets local needs, fits with LA partnership work, and makes the best use of available capacity.



4. ENVIRONMENT, PREMISES & RESOURCES

4.1 Create Enabling Environments That Inspire Growth and Belonging

Impact Statement:

Every space is designed to be safe, accessible, and inspiring, nurturing creativity and supporting each learner's growth, sense of belonging, and well, being through learning, play, rest, and reflection.

Actions:

- Review learning spaces with staff and students.
- Conduct EDI assessments to identify and remove any potential barriers to access and participation for all.
- Develop sensory, friendly, quiet spaces and wellbeing zones.
- Improve the outdoor environment and facilities to maximise learning and play.
- Enhance staff spaces to support wellbeing.



4.2 Develop a Sustainability Strategy to Model and Promote Environmental Responsibility

Impact Statement:

We will embed sustainability into everyday school and college life through curriculum, operations, and behaviours, to empower our community to take meaningful action for the environment and lead by example.

Actions:

- Form a sustainability working group with students and staff.
- Complete an audit of current practices.
- Launch eco, friendly initiatives (e.g. recycling, gardening, switch, off campaigns).
- Integrate sustainability and climate change education across subjects to ensure learners understand environmental systems, human impact, and the role they can play in addressing the climate crisis.
- Promote role modelling of sustainable behaviours by staff and students, embedding habits like using reusable materials, reducing single, use plastics, sharing resources, and embracing circular economy principles.



4.3 Strengthen IT Infrastructure and Digital Reliability

Impact Statement:

Boost productivity and support high, quality teaching and learning through reliable systems, upgraded hardware, and effective digital tools.

Actions:

- Provide access to reliable systems and real, time data.
- Invest in robust Wi, Fi and hardware upgrades.
- Improve communication tools to support real, time collaboration.
- Train staff to maximise use of key platforms and tools.



4.4 Maintain Safe, Inclusive, and Sustainable Learning Environments

Impact Statement:

Site safety, efficiency, and sustainability improved through audits, smart meters, and outdoor enhancements. Emergency readiness strengthened, and spaces made more inclusive for SEND needs.

Key Actions:

- Carry out regular Health & Safety audits and routine site inspections; log and track actions using Every system.
- Improve outdoor spaces with natural play areas and outdoor learning zones for all age groups.
- Conduct an energy efficiency audit and install smart meters to monitor and reduce energy and water use.
- Review fire evacuation procedures and train staff to ensure clear, safe emergency responses.
- Make premises more inclusive with adapted signage, lighting, and layouts that meet SEND needs.

