

## **STRATEGIC PLAN DOCUMENT 2016-2019**

### **FOREWARD:**

The Learning Hub is now almost 10 years in operation. We will celebrate 10 years of our company incorporation during 2017. During that time over 8,000 young people will have accessed our services and facilities, with over 400 volunteers from third level colleges having gifted us approximately 60,000 hours of volunteer time during this past decade.

As we enter into our next 3 year strategic plan we reflect on how far we have come in terms of facilities and programme development, but also in how far our model of delivery has shown adaptability and flexibility in the context of a very changed economic environment for organisations operating in the community and voluntary sector.

What follows is our strategic plan for 2016-2019. It remains focused on our core objective of raising educational aspirations but also on concrete deliverables and outputs. It is ambitious for the organisations, for the neighbourhood we serve and for the staff and volunteers. It is also SMART - strategic, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

Our annual action plans are also available to view and are reviewed twice per year by the staff and board of directors.

We look forward to working with the community and our partners to deliver on these goals for the next 3 years to come.

### **10 GOAL PLAN**

1. Create an active learning environment that extends the learning experience beyond the traditional school day
2. Creatively embed technology and the core skills of literacy and numeracy into active learning projects across all curriculum areas
3. Provide a positive and safe social environment that inspires us as individuals and as a community by recognising the potential and the talents of young people and learners
4. Prevent early school leaving and raise the educational aspirations of families, schools and the wider community

5. Work in partnership with other agencies to provide support to children identified as most in need of additional social, cultural and educational resources
6. Create an environment that promotes the positive development of physical and mental health among young people and the community
7. Work in partnership with key stakeholders to maximise the resources available to the community by harnessing volunteers, resources and energy for the development our young people
8. Harness the resource potential of third level volunteers to act as mentors and subject matter experts in our educational programmes.
9. Provide volunteers and third level mentors with real world civic engagement experience that will enhance their social, academic and professional development.
10. Develop and maintain high quality governance and operational standards that support the sustainability of Learning Hub Limerick.

### **Current Situation:**

The Learning Hub Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and supporters have worked tirelessly during the period of this strategic plan to maintain and develop services. This has been no easy feat considering the funding environment faced by organisations operating within the community and voluntary sector.

Our goals are clearly outlined and this has helped us to argue our case for continued support during these difficult years. Our annual action plans also outline very clearly our objectives and targets. This practice of constant review, reflection and adaptation has served us well during the last 5 years and we now have a created a very solid programme of activities and operating structure from which to meet our stated objectives for the next period of our development 2016 – 2019.

Our 10 goal plan acts as an overarching guidance document for our action plans and work planning for the years ahead. Maintaining the resources and capacity to deliver on those goals will remain a challenge, but one the Board of Directors believes we can meet by continuing to

operate with full transparency and by regular sharing our results with our funding and delivery partners.

## 10 GOALS 2016 – 2019

### **1. Create an active learning environment that extends the learning experience beyond the traditional school day**

The Learning Hub operates after school from Monday to Thursday. This is facilitated by our staff, volunteers and delivery partners. We aim to maintain our opening hours at 55 hours per week. Our core activities across all Hubs are delivered from 3pm to 6pm after school with later opening hours facilitating health hub and youth café activities 2 days per week during term time.

### **2. Creatively embed technology and the core skills of literacy and numeracy into active learning projects across all curriculum areas**

With 1.5 FTE STEM proficient staff on site we are in a position to embed technology within all of our curriculum linked programmes. We are also very focused on continuing our commitment to linking our programmes to the primary level curriculum in particular with a keen connection to literacy and numeracy skills throughout our curriculum plans.

### **3. Provide a positive and safe social environment that inspires us as individuals and as a community by recognising the potential and the talents of young people and learners**

We offer a safe play and learning space off a busy road. We are also the only play area serving the neighbourhoods of Thomondgate and Kileely in particular. All learners attending the Hub for classes have access to a clean, well maintained, green space and from 2016 onwards, a fully lit and modern MUGA space for multigames use.

### **4. Prevent early school leaving and raise the educational aspirations of families, schools and the wider community**

Working with schools, parents and partner organisations, our staff are committed to supporting those students most at risk of early school leaving. We also are open to working with students

currently non within mainstream education and can support ETB home tuition hours where required. We do this by offering one on one support where appropriate and facilities for extra support activities.

#### **5. Work in partnership with other agencies to provide support to children identified as most in need of additional social, cultural and educational resources**

The neighbourhoods we serve are identified as highly disadvantaged in the national context. We are proud to deliver high quality learning, cultural and social experiences for local young people. We also aim to continue to provide real world social and cultural experiences by encouraging and welcoming a geographic mix of learners on site. While priority for places goes to local young people we encourage young people from “non disadvantaged” areas of Limerick to attend our facilities.

#### **6. Create an environment that promotes the positive development of physical and mental health among young people and the community**

Work in partnership with key stakeholders to maximise the resources available to the community by harnessing funding, volunteers and resources for the development of local young people

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Harness the resource potential of third level volunteers to act as mentors and subject matter experts in our educational programmes.

Provide volunteers and third level mentors with real world civic engagement experience that will enhance their social, academic and professional development.

Develop and maintain quality facilities to support and facilitate the well-being and engagement of the local community.

**7. Work in partnership with key stakeholders to maximise the resources available to the community by harnessing volunteers, resources and energy for the development our young people**

Continue to develop and maintain positive and transparent relationships with all our stakeholders, funders and partners by providing regular reporting, updates and information on our achievements. Maintain funding levels so as to continue to meet stated goal and objectives and service levels.

**8. Harness the resource potential of third level volunteers to act as mentors and subject matter experts in our educational programmes.**

Tap into the energy, enthusiasm, skills and potential of third level students as volunteer and mentors. Liaise with all third level colleges in Limerick to ensure positive relationships and flow of interested students to support our programme of activities.

**9. Provide volunteers and third level mentors with real world civic engagement experience that will enhance their social, academic and professional development.**

Work with student volunteers to ensure that their experience is valuable to them both personally, educationally and professionally. Maintain standards of open communication, guidance meetings and regular supervision to all students donating their time to our organisation. Ensure that volunteers receive recognition for their efforts and commitment within their third level institution also.

**10. Develop and maintain high quality governance and operational standards that support the sustainability of Learning Hub Limerick**

Meet the standards of the governance code and to regularly reflect on our governance standards and best practice. Maintain and encourage a culture of transparency, openness and good governance within the organisation. Keep up to date with national best practice guidelines and meet the required standards as set out by ICTR and Charity Regulator.