



# BURY ST EDMUNDS ALL-THROUGH TRUST: County Upper

*...offering so much more than just an outstanding education*



“An absolutely first rate school”  
Ofsted

Brochure



# Welcome from the Headteacher

County Upper is designated an “Outstanding School” (Ofsted 1999, 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2013). Fewer than 100 all-ability secondary schools have achieved this distinction four times.

Mrs Neale writes:

I have great pleasure in introducing you to the upper phase of our Trust. Success at County Upper is built on a strong partnership between teachers, parents, students and governors; a partnership which flourishes in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, where every individual is known and valued.

We are very proud that our young people feel secure and happy, that they enjoy attending and that our “can do” attitude ensures that our students achieve excellent results at all levels of ability: results which reflect, and frequently exceed, their potential.

We put great emphasis on rigorous academic teaching, underpinned by a strong pastoral system which provides a caring, disciplined and structured environment in which to work. This is supported by a very wide range of extra curricular activities, visits, enterprises and community links which provide our young people with a host of opportunities for personal development and enjoyment.

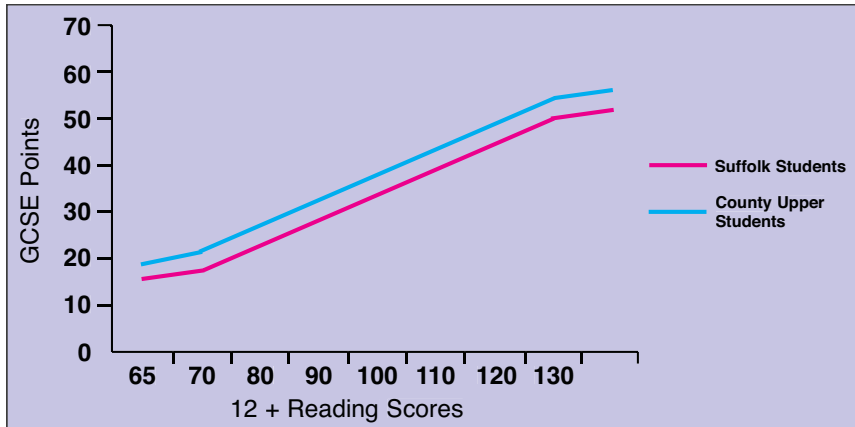
In 2011, the school became the upper phase in an all-through Trust enabling children to go from aged four to eighteen with no transitions. This ensures there is a real focus on each individual child’s progress. In 2014, the Trust was delighted to receive one of only eight World Class School awards in the country.

Our success has been recognised with a range of prestigious national awards and these are referred to in this brochure. Do talk to those who know us and take up my invitation to visit us: I am extremely confident that you will not be disappointed.



# Quality Learning...

At all levels of ability our students perform better than predicted by their prior attainment. This chart shows this most clearly:



We are able to achieve this year-on-year as a result of:

- the excellent behaviour and motivation of the students
- the quality of teaching
- the facilities for learning.

Ofsted acknowledged that “the school does exceptionally well in ensuring that almost every student achieves five or more GCSE passes and makes outstanding progress. Achievement is outstanding in English and Mathematics”. The teaching force is extremely well qualified academically and also brings a wealth of experience gained in industry, research, commerce and administration. Their work is distinguished by:

- appropriately challenging teaching provided in ability sets
- participation in the forward looking all-through Trust arrangements
- a balance at Key Stage 4, where a core curriculum is enhanced by choice, with opportunity to specialise in languages, humanities, technology, creative arts or computing
- a full range of Advanced level courses in the Sixth form, supplemented by an enrichment programme of additional studies, sport and leisure, community and work experience
- a commitment to provide the best for all the school’s students, regardless of ability.



.....recognised by the Department for Education

County Upper has received many accolades for its performance in public examinations and features in the top five per cent of schools nationally for the value it adds to students’ performance at GCSE when compared with their prior attainment.



# Quality Learning...

Students' learning is supported by outstanding facilities.

All departments teach in well-furnished suites. There are specialist facilities to support the teaching of the practical subjects. The campus includes six tennis/netball courts, an outdoor basketball court, a double floodlit multigames area, extensive playing fields, a gymnasium and two sports halls. Since 2005, there has been a continuous building programme to provide a new library, Performing Arts Centre, Visual Arts Centre, PE theory suite, completely refurbished sports hall and Food Technology suite, together with a refurbished physics block, new social areas and sixth form provision. There are more than 300 computers across the site and over £250,000 was spent this summer on our biology and chemistry laboratories.



Students' learning is also based on effective homework, close home-school links and an individual approach to every child's needs. As Ofsted put it, County "has a strong caring ethos built upon every child being known and valued. An outstanding curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of all students."



..... enhanced by national awards in all curriculum areas. We have been recognised by the Department for Education for our work in Mathematics, Science, Technology, Modern Foreign Languages and Physical Education. We have also been recognised by the Prince's Institute for our work in English, History and Music.

# Quality Caring...

Our arrangements for supporting students are too exhaustive to list. Your child will be supported. Some of the ways this is demonstrated are:

- the annual School Council survey by students in all years which confirms Ofsted's findings that students are justified in their confidence that they will not be bullied;
- consistently achieving the highest attendance figures of any Suffolk Upper School for the last twenty years, supporting the inspectors' conclusion that our students like their school and enjoy attending;
- five formal assessments per year of how each student is doing, supported by a system of awards which is valued and considered fair;
- very positive relationships between staff and students with students being known individually and their parents welcomed in the school;
- continuity of pastoral care throughout students' time in the school;
- easily understood sanctions which are applied consistently and effectively.

Examination results are only one indicator of students' performance but they are important. Our belief is that excellent results come from quality learning and caring which offer every student an outstanding experience in and out of the classroom. Year-on-year our results are consistently among the top results nationally. In January 2017, the government reported that there is no better school within at least 75 miles of County Upper!



The exceptional level of support to students and their response, judged by their excellent behaviour and attitudes, their enthusiasm and their pride in our community has permeated all four Ofsted reports and were major factors in the award of "Outstanding School" status in 1999, 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2013 as well as in a science inspection by the Chief HMI in 2009 and an HMI inspection in 2013 into our work with the top 30% of the ability range.



# An Extra Curricular Life

We firmly believe that a school is concerned with more than lessons, examinations and careers. Our aim is to aid students' whole development through adolescence to a maturity which reflects autonomy, responsibility and involvement. The role of extra curricular activity is central to that aim. As Ofsted said, "an outstanding enrichment programme adds considerably to students' personal development and well-being."

The main programme of "Education Extra" activities is as follows:

- a network of extra curricular sports activities, where students prepare to play against other schools at athletics, basketball, cricket, football, netball, hockey, rugby, rounders and tennis, as well as having clubs for badminton, dance, sailing, table tennis and trampolining. There are over 200 inter school fixtures each year as well as inter tutor group competitions;
- clubs, offering Computing, Art, Chess, Debating, Design, Drama, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, Japanese, Latin, Spanish, the Christian Union, etc;
- annual visits across the globe and exchanges to France, Germany, Japan and Spain;
- annual excursions for skiing and outdoor pursuits;
- an annual Curriculum Enrichment Week where students can experience a wealth of activities;
- the Christmas Charity week where the school works together to raise cash for worthy causes. The school has raised over £150,000 in the last decade;
- a Music Department where ensembles (Barbershop, Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, Clarinet Choir, Flute Ensemble, Girls' Choir, Guitar Group, Jazz Ensemble, Junior Brass, Orchestra, Sax Group, Senior Brass, Senior Choir, String Sinfonia, String Quartet, Swing Band, Wind Band, Full Choir) provide opportunities for public music making.



In 2015, County was the first in the country to be awarded the Gold Science Quality Mark for schools.

# An Extra Curricular Life

The annual arts programme includes:

- three full concerts, a carol service, a chamber concert and a Trust concert as well as numerous one-off performances in the community and further afield. We have performed in Suffolk Virginia, USA and in Europe;
- at least two school plays per year, supported by regular visits to the theatre and professional companies coming into school. Drama club is a very popular weekly event throughout the year. Students can work for their Bronze, Silver and Gold Arts Awards;
- an “Evening of Dance” each year to showcase our work in this area;
- the preparation and presentation of a musical as a three night celebration of our work in the creative arts;

The whole Upper phase meets together at least twice a year to celebrate and to applaud individual and group achievements. It is, perhaps, on these occasions, above all, that the essence of our task and the success of its achievement can best be gauged.



## ARTSMARK GOLD

We are proud recipients of this national award, the highest which can be given, for our work in art, dance, drama and music within and outside the classroom. Peter Hewitt, Chief Executive of the Arts Council of England, said “Your school demonstrates that it is concerned with the wider development of young people not only with academic success.” County Upper was last re-invested with the standard in 2017.



# County as a Community

We are proud to be an all-ability Trust offering appropriate academic and extra curricular programmes for all within the community. We provide additional support to those whose special needs require and deserve it.

The campus is adapted to allow access for students and adults who require the use of wheelchairs.

We have been chosen by the government as the local lead school for Gifted and Talented students and there is a full programme of activities for our own students and those from other schools. We make provision for students of exceptional ability (eg. early entry for public examinations and an Oxbridge programme).

County is for everyone.

# County within a Community

As an outward looking institution we are proud of our community links, which include:

- a formal 4-18 structure which ensures continuity of education and best use of resources;
- support of industry for work experience and placements for senior students;
- the use of our facilities by community groups, adult education and sports clubs in the evenings and at weekends;
- “sponsor” governors on the governing body, representing local industry and commerce;
- friendships with local community organisations, where students undertake voluntary work and fund raising;
- using the community and its people as a resource for fieldwork, lectures and visits.

As Ofsted said, “Links with other schools, colleges, businesses and the community are excellent.”



As an outward looking community, we are firmly committed to working within the 4-18 All-Through Trust. The Trust believes in sharing its expertise with other schools so we were delighted to be selected as a Teaching School by the Department for Education in March 2013. The Trust forms a Teaching School Alliance supporting other schools and training teachers across the region. In July 2013, on behalf of the Trust, we were designated a lead centre for Computer Science and the Science Learning Partnership training staff across East Anglia.



## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL STATUS

County gained this prestigious award in 2007 as recognition of the outstanding languages teaching and the quality of our international links. The status has subsequently been re-awarded three times for a further three years following a re-inspection of our standards.

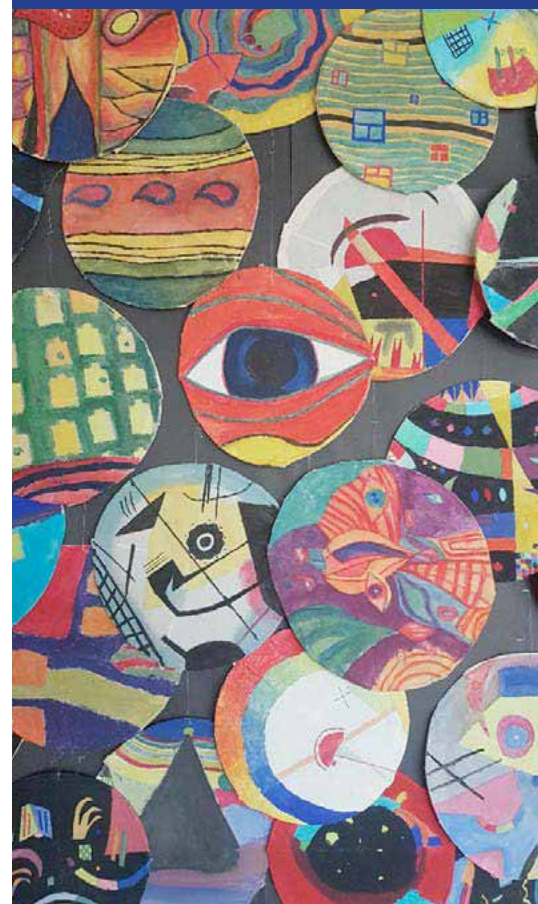
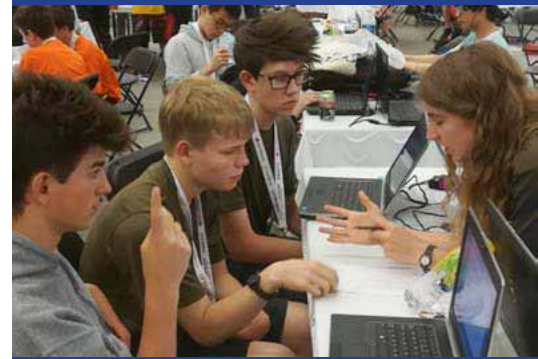


# Promoting Personal Development

Students are very enthusiastic about the way in which we support them and their “personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, are outstanding. Students’ charitable work and the opportunities they have to meet with people from a wide range of cultures are exceptional. They thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly and feel safe.” (Ofsted)

Our success in offering a strong academic programme to the students in our care is matched by our concern to help them in their personal and social development. A key contributor in this is the guidance programme. Its main components are:

- i) careers guidance and work experience for all;
- ii) individual student/parent interviews with senior staff at three key points in your child’s upper school career
- iii) Religious Education with collective worship being non-denominational in character;
- iv) the Record of Achievement scheme, a student-teacher collaboration, to identify areas of success in or outside the classroom and to work towards improvement in performance.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Since 1994 we have been awarded the national standard as an “Investor in People”. We were proud to be the first Suffolk school to gain this award which recognises our systems of communication, training and development and their impact on our high quality investment in the people for whom it is crucial – our students.



# About the Bury St Edmunds All-Through Trust



The Trust places its emphasis on the children in its care. It therefore provides a co-ordinated experience from the time they enter formal schooling aged four through to age eighteen. Within this all-through approach, we have divided into three phases: 4-9, 9-13, 13-18. This best fits most children's personal development and so enables them to experience maximum success in each phase whilst moving seamlessly between phases at the appropriate ages. As a result of our all-through approach, the Trust has:

- a co-ordinated curriculum from 4-18;
- a common assessment system so parents and children know how they are doing and staff have a clear understanding of how each child is progressing;
- common policies, suitably adapted for the children in each phase;
- a range of Trust activities shared across the phases. These include:



- weekly clubs
- enrichment activities
- curriculum days
- annual evenings of student drama and dance involving the whole Trust
- an annual Trust concert at The Apex
- annual astronomy evenings and an annual science fair
- sports festivals
- ...and much more.



Visit [www.burytrust.org](http://www.burytrust.org) to explore more about us and the individual campuses which make up our Trust. Visits are always welcome.



# Achievement for all

## Some concluding comments from the Headteacher

What are we trying to achieve?

Our work is underpinned by these four Key Aspirations which the County staff share:

- that all students have equal value
- that we must lead young people towards autonomy where they are able to make decisions and to take charge of their lives
  - that we must be a community and in all our activities we must speak of care, consideration, pride and hard work
- that all effort and achievement must be celebrated and the positive should overwhelm the negative in all our procedures.

Our philosophy is summed up by these words of Archbishop William Temple:

*"... You should treat people as what they might be, as what they have in them to become ..."*

These final words are from parents, employers and visitors, describing our students:

**"Self reliant, intellectually enquiring, capable of leadership, at ease with adults and with themselves, well-mannered, employable, confident, respectful of others, self-disciplined, sociable and straightforward, considerate, prepared for life, conscious of tradition."**

Isn't this what you want for your child?



## BURY ST EDMUNDS ALL-THROUGH TRUST County Upper

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