

AN INTRODUCTION



The Trust was set up in November 2015 with the bringing together of King's Leadership Academy Warrington, King's Leadership Academy Liverpool and The Hawthorne's Free School to form a multi-academy trust which would be values led in developing the character of our students through our leadership specialism. The ASPIRE Centre, an alternative provision unit, was opened on the campus of King's Leadership Academy Liverpool in June 2018. King's Leadership Academy Bolton will open in the Great Lever region of Bolton in September 2019.

As a trust, we firmly believe that if young people come to a school where they feel valued, safe and teachers have their best interests at heart, then they will commit themselves; they will work harder; suffer fewer distractions; become more motivated and achieve more. Research shows that pursuing a character-driven approach to education, based on a firm set of values, is the lever that produces such an ethos. That is why each of our academies follows the trust's 'Character through Leadership' philosophy as its specialism as they strive to enhance the future social mobility of their young people.

The trust aims to enable each of our schools to become successful academies producing great educational experiences for all of our students – hence our name – 'The Great Schools Trust'. The educational landscape in England is changing at an unprecedented pace resulting in schools gaining greater autonomy. However, greater autonomy should not, in our view, mean greater isolation and lack of support and challenge. The Great Schools Trust aims to provide a context which offers support and collaboration to its constituent academies whilst holding them to account for their individual performance. We also expect each of our academies to work in harmony with their Local Authority and seek to work in collaboration with neighbouring schools.

The support the trust provides takes many forms. Our academies are first and foremost for the education of the whole child, so it is right that at the heart of what we do is a focus on the quality of the broad curriculum experience that we offer, as well as the nurturing and coaching of staff to deliver high quality lessons, will enable our students to excel. We have the highest of expectations for our academies and we expect them to have the highest of expectations of their students.

The trust has three main functions, we support our academies in meeting the challenges of our high expectations ethos through mutually supportive intervention and training. Secondly, we take responsibility for financial and resource management, so that academies can concentrate on what matters - the successful education of young people. Thirdly, because our specialism is the development of character through leadership, we support each academy in the nurturing of this distinctive ethos which contributes so powerfully to the development of our students as rounded and balanced young people poised to become well qualified and able to make a positive contribution to society as the young leaders of tomorrow.

THE LOCATION OF OUR PRESENT ACADEMIES



WARRINGTON

King's Leadership Academy Warrington

King's Leadership Academy Warrington was opened in 2012. It was judged to be good by Ofsted in 2014 with outstanding leadership, behaviour and safety. The academy is presently heavily oversubscribed with over 200 first choice applications for the 120 places it offers in Y7 and some 400 parents placing the academy in their top three choices on transfer to secondary school. The academy was the winner of the National Character Award in June 2015, and was referenced by the former Prime Minister David Cameron as 'a fantastic example of a school which was giving children the best start in life.'

SEFTON

King's Leadership Academy Hawthornes

King's Leadership Academy Hawthornes, previously known as The Hawthorne's, joined the trust in 2015. The academy had been judged as being 'inadequate' by Ofsted prior to joining the trust. It has been recently judged as showing good improvement but still requiring further improvement' The judgement recognised the many good improvements the academy had achieved since joining the trust especially in terms of the introduction of a values led ethos, improved student behaviour and increased learning time. We expect the academy to be judged as being good in all aspects at the next inspection. From September 2018 the Hawthorne's will be renamed King's Leadership Academy Hawthornes.

LIVERPOOL

King's Leadership Academy Liverpool

King's Leadership Academy Liverpool, previously known as University Academy Liverpool, officially joined the Trust in November 2015 although we had been running the academy since September 2015. Prior to our arrival the academy had a series of inspections which continually described it as being inadequate. In May 2018 the academy was judged as being 'good' with the report stating that 'the principal, senior leaders and governors have created a culture of high aspirations that is shared by all staff in an area of high deprivation and transience.' Liverpool Local Authority praised the school as being the most improved, in terms of Progress 8, in the city.

The ASPIRE Centre

The ASPIRE Centre opened on the same campus as King's Leadership Academy Liverpool in June 2018. The centre follows all of the recommendations of the 2012 Taylor Report on alternative provision and is unique in that it offers a full mainstream curriculum using the teaching staff of the parent academy. It offers 'roll on – roll off' provision in the sense that it is designed to help students improve both their academic performance and personal behaviour so that they can successfully return to their mainstream school as soon as possible.

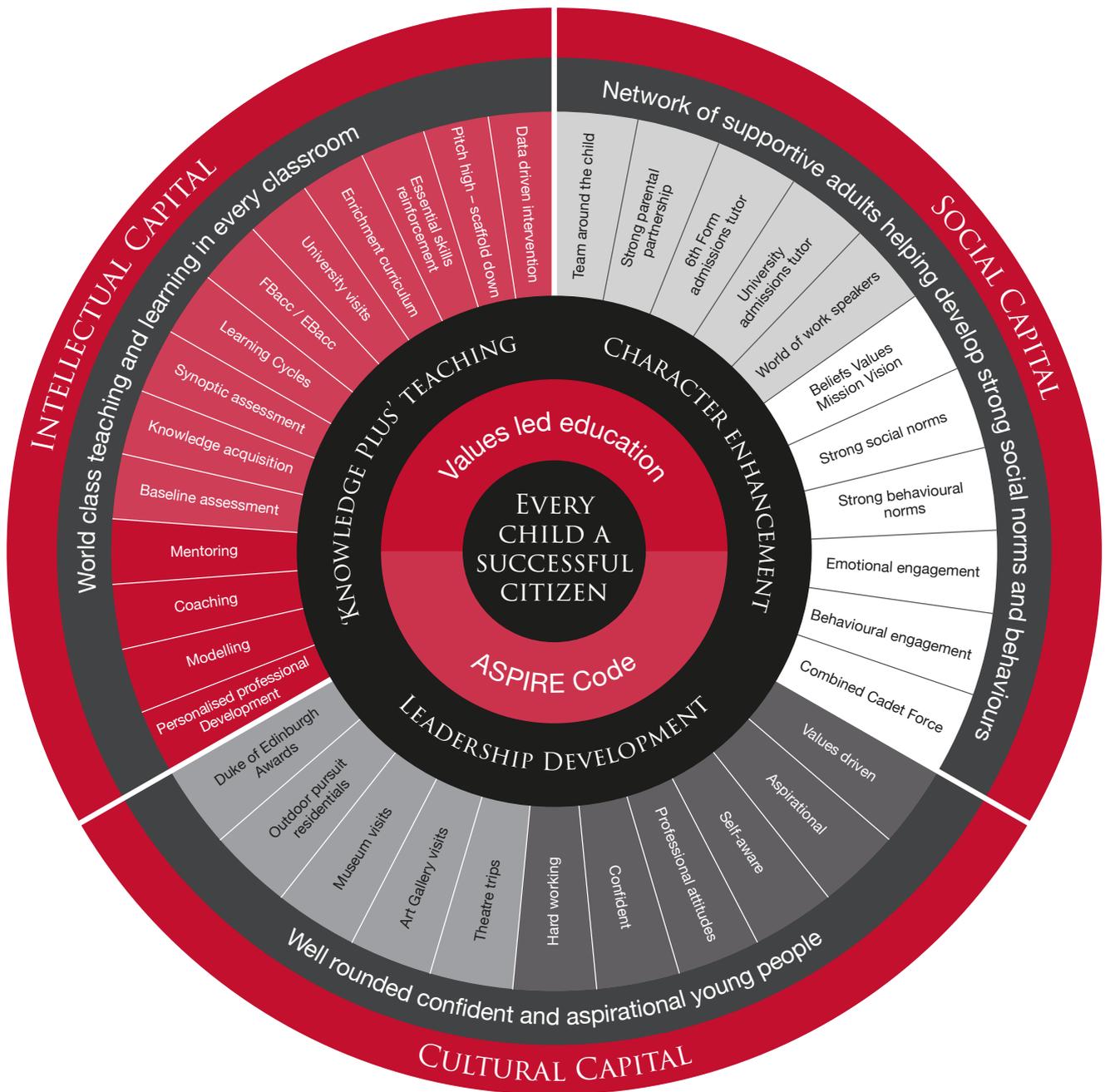
BOLTON

King's Leadership Academy Bolton

King's Leadership Academy Bolton will open in the Great Lever area in September 2019. It will be a co-educational 11 – 16 comprehensive academy built to accommodate 900 students.

THE GST 'WHEEL OF SUCCESS'

The GST 'wheel of success' brings together all that the trust, and each of its constituent academies, is trying to achieve. It demonstrates how our mission of every child becoming a successful citizen is to be achieved.



A TYPICAL ACADEMY DAY

The ethos and culture of each of our academies is reinforced by the way each academy structures its school week.

- Each day is longer than the usual secondary school day to allow additional learning time
- Each day commences with focussed reading to further enhance students vocabulary
- Each day has enrichment options to allow the curriculum to be personalised to individual need
- Each Monday and Friday staff have personalised professional development sessions built in to their teaching programme to maximise their effectiveness in the classroom



MONDAY - THURSDAY

8.00 am	Arrival and assemble in academy yard
8.05 am	Focussed reading, form time and assemblies
8.45 am	Lesson 1
9.45 am	Lesson 2
10.45 am	Break
11.05 am	Lesson 3
12.05 pm	Lesson 4
1.05 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	Lesson 5
3.00 pm	Enrichment options (pupils must attend at least two enrichment sessions each week)
4.00 pm	Finish

FRIDAY

8.00 am	Arrival and assemble in academy yard
8.05 am	Focussed reading, form time and assemblies
8.45 am	Lesson 1
9.45 am	Lesson 2
10.45 am	Break
11.05 am	Lesson 3
12.05 pm	Lunch
12.50 pm	Weekly review – time with form tutor to review the week's progress. This includes individual student coaching and support.
1.20 pm	Finish
1.30 pm	Staff training

BELIEFS AND VALUES

DEEPLY HELD BELIEFS

The Great Schools Trust is founded on seven deeply held beliefs. They are:

1. A high quality education is not only an entitlement, but a civil right for all young people.
2. Intelligence is malleable and, given the appropriate support and time, all young people can succeed.
3. Aspirations matter and it is the duty of each of our schools to adopt a philosophy of 'no ceilings' in raising the aspirations of its young people.
4. Individual success comes from having the highest expectations of all and accepting no excuses for poor academic performance.
5. A concentration on the enhancement of a young person's character will give them the aspiration, determination and resilience to achieve academic success.
6. The development of leadership traits will give all of our young people the self-confidence to step outside of their comfort zone.
7. The enhanced social mobility of our students is at the heart of all of our actions.

A VALUES-DRIVEN APPROACH

All trust schools have a values driven approach to education based on our seven pillars of character, known as the **ASPIRE Code, which is the lingua-franca of each academy.**

A - Aspiration and achievement – through the enhancement of these character traits we want our students to develop not only the highest of aspirations but also the drive and determination to achieve those aspirations.

S - Self-awareness – by becoming more self-aware our students will gain a greater understanding of themselves as a person, their strengths and, perhaps more importantly, the areas in which they need to develop.

P - Professionalism – by taking a 'professional' approach to life in the school our students will develop 'self-pride' in all that they undertake. Such pride would include being punctual, attending each and every day, dressing well, presenting their work to the highest professional standards and adopting a professional approach to their behaviour.

I - Integrity – integrity is not just about telling the truth, but is also about being true to their beliefs and upholding them no matter what circumstance they were facing. They would come to understand that integrity is about having pride in all that they do, always working to their true ability and behaving correctly towards other people at all times.

R - Respect – respect is not simply about being polite, courteous and good mannered. It is about respecting your own ability and working hard to achieve well. It is about valuing the differences in others, their background, faith and culture. It is about looking after our planet and its limited resources.

E - Endeavour – endeavour means working hard to achieve success, being focussed on the task in hand, tackling it conscientiously and diligently and having the perseverance, resilience, tenacity and grit to keep going when others start to give up.

Aspiration Achievement
A S P I R E
Self-awareness Professionalism Integrity Respect Endeavour

MISSION, VISION AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORK

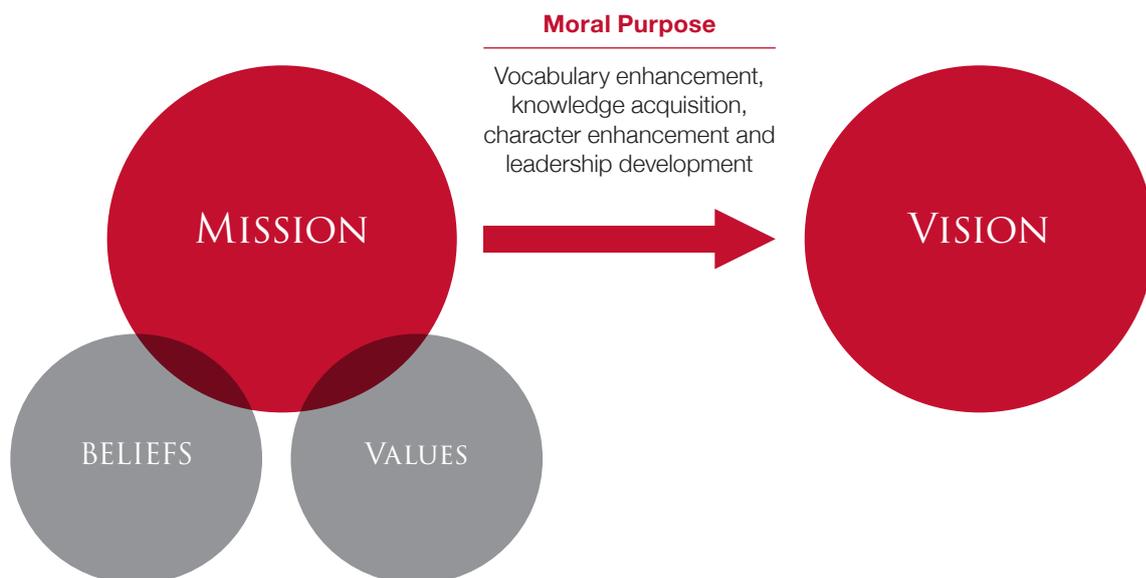


THE GST MISSION

'To harness the power of knowledge acquisition, character enhancement and leadership development to give each of our young people the aspiration and strength of character to fulfil their true potential – no ceilings!'

THE GST VISION

'To develop in each of our students the academic skills, intellectual habits, qualities of character and leadership traits necessary to succeed at all levels and equip them to become successful citizens in tomorrow's world'



OUR SPECIALISM – ‘CHARACTER THROUGH LEADERSHIP’



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Character is a set of personal traits that produce specific moral emotions, inform motivation and guide conduct. Character education is an umbrella term for all explicit and implicit educational activities that help young people develop positive personal strengths called virtues.

Character education is more than just a subject. It is about helping students grasp what is ethically important in situations and how to act for the right reasons, so that they become more autonomous and reflective. Students need to decide the kind of person they wish to become and to learn to choose between alternatives. In this process, the ultimate aim of character education is the development of good sense or practical wisdom: the capacity to choose intelligently between alternatives.

Character education in our academies is not an educational programme. It is an approach that, implicitly and explicitly, permeates all subjects as well as the general school ethos; it cultivates the virtues of character associated with common morality.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leading is more about learning specific skills than possessing inherent natural qualities. In this way, being a leader is similar to being an athlete. Certainly, some children are born with attributes that aid in athletics, such as size and quick reflexes, but success in athletics requires practising forehands and backhands if you wish to excel at tennis. Ultimately, success in any field is to do with the constant honing of skills through constant practice. By continually offering young people the opportunity to lead we allow them to develop greater personal drive and increase their determination to succeed. Team playing, risk taking and developing strategies to positively influence others are all character strengths we seek to encourage.



OUTDOOR PURSUITS

The trust has formed a partnership with the Brathay Trust in Cumbria allowing all students in Y7 and Y8 to attend leadership development residentials as part of their academy curriculum. From Year 9 students still use the centre as they commence their Duke of Edinburgh award training.

COMBINED CADET FORCE

The trust has worked hard at developing a special relationship with the Ministry of Defence since its inauguration. We are proud to say that we are now the only multi-academy trust that has a combined cadet force in each of its academies.

THE TRUST'S THREE CAPITALS

INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

Intellectual capital is the sum of the knowledge, skills and understanding that each student acquires during their learning journey at a trust school. As a trust, we have developed cross-trust 'vocabulary led knowledge rich' programmes of study that help each student gain and value an enhanced vocabulary increasing body of knowledge throughout their time in school. Alongside this formal body of knowledge, each school nurtures the development of softer skills and character traits such as high aspirations, growth mind-sets, self-confidence, self-belief, determination, resilience and perseverance as well as the ability to be a strong team player and leader. Encouraging character enhancement and leadership development alongside academic growth leads not only to enhanced outcomes, but a better all-round education, which enables our students to compete on a more equal footing with their more socially advantaged peers.



SOCIAL CAPITAL

Our schools enhance the individual social capital of each of their students by maintaining a strong network of supportive adults – internally and externally – around each student as well as developing strong specific norms, values, positive habits and well-thought out routines and practices that encourage positive behaviours and relationships. The internal support network is the staff of the school, whilst the external network is a group of influential people from the worlds of higher education, business, commerce and the armed forces who are supportive of the trust's aims. The establishment of specific norms, routines and positive habits comes from the establishment of a positive school climate and a culture of high expectations within each school.

CULTURAL CAPITAL

Cultural capital is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours and skills that a person can tap into to demonstrate their cultural competence and social status or standing in society. In many schools, especially those serving challenging environments, students rarely have access to the wide range of cultural experiences that are available to their more affluent peers. A lack of cultural capital often hinders social mobility. To enhance each of our students cultural capital all trust schools have a well thought out programme of visits to theatres, museums, art galleries and concerts to support the academic and creative growth of our students.



IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Academic excellence

All trust academies will offer a well-balanced curriculum combining both traditional and new subjects that will be aimed at preparing our young people to access the best sixth forms, universities and career pathways.

The teaching in each academy will be of the highest quality with regular and focused monitoring of each young person's progress to ensure that they are always on track. Enrichment and supportive activities will be offered at the end of each school day to ensure not only constant challenge, but that none of our young people fall behind.

Excellence throughout the curriculum

The trust's academic programme may seem formal in structure, but behind each subject name is a learning programme designed to stimulate and challenge the minds of our young people. The core curriculum of each academy will consist of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, French, Spanish, Public Speaking, Philosophy and Ethics.

Excellence in the arts

Be it music or drama, debating or dance, computer graphics or art, all young people in a trust academy can find their niche and participate through performance or by back stage management and support. Each academy will put on major performances, such as school productions, choral events, concerts and debating competitions on an annual basis.

Excellent aspirations

As part of the trust's vision and ethos, we are keen to ensure that all of our young people will leave our academies with a strong sense of purpose as to what they want to achieve in life. We want each of them to leave with a strong desire not only to play a useful and active part in our society, but to become our next generation of leaders. Our unique 'ASPIRE' programme will help them develop the necessary academic, professional and character traits that they will need to lead happy, successful and fulfilling lives as tomorrow's leaders.

Excellence in learning technologies

Today's young people are twenty-first century learners. They are 'digital learners' who have grown up in the new information age. They are part of a generation that has never known a world without the internet, without computers, without video games and without mobile phones. A life without digital technologies would be alien to them. For most of them instant messaging has already surpassed the telephone and email and has become their primary form of communication.

However, such progress does not come without dangers. We feel that it is important that all young people educated at a trust academy not only develop a deep understanding of the transformative potential of technology on the way we live, but also have an acute understanding of the inherent threats that come with it. It is our aim that every classroom in each of our academies will be an interactive learning environment embracing the very latest in educational technologies. It is our aim to embed digital intelligence into the way we work so that our young people are safe, creative and fluent users of these new and evolving forms of technology.

Excellence in both character and leadership

If young people come to a school where they feel valued, safe and that teachers have their best interests at heart then they will commit themselves; they will work harder; suffer fewer distractions; become more motivated and achieve more. Research shows that a character and leadership driven approach to education based on a firm set of values will produce such an ethos. It is the trust's intention to harness the power of character enhancement and leadership development to give each of our young people the aspiration, strength of character and self-confidence to fulfil their true potential and compete on an equal footing with the best students nationally.

Excellence in support

We will develop, in each GST academy, a strong support network of skilled and experienced adults around each of our young people. They will be there when help, guidance or advice is needed. Each academy will offer a well-planned personal development and health programme that will help them deal with the challenges of adolescence and the need to work hard if success is to be achieved.

Excellence in the classroom

All GST academies finish early each Friday afternoon. This is not to give everybody a longer weekend. When our young people have left, our teachers come together to reflect on the week that has just finished and review their classroom practice. They will work with their teaching coaches in looking at the best evidenced based research the trust can find so as to continually improve their classroom practice.

Excellence in career development

The Institute of Character and Leadership is the trust's training arm. Staffed by experienced and well qualified trainers and coaches the institute offers unique personalised training programmes to all trust staff to ensure that they are fully conversant with the latest research evidenced and cutting edge practices so that they can perform their role with the maximum effect.

THE TRUST'S CURRICULUM DELIVERY PROGRAMME

THE LEARNING CYCLES

Far too many schools are still locked in to three terms of study with individual student progress usually being assessed at the end of each academic year. This approach leaves little room to help correct students' errors, misconceptions or lack of understanding. As a Trust, we have tackled this problem through the introduction of four 'seven-week' Learning Cycles and an end of year 'nine week' Cycle. The penultimate week of each Cycle is assessment week and the final week is spent correcting any mistakes, misconceptions or misunderstandings detected during assessment week. Each Learning Cycle has its own focus, yet still builds on the knowledge, skills and concepts acquired in the previous Cycle.



Each Learning Cycle is organised in the following manner:

- The first lesson of each new Learning Module is spent helping students understand the learning journey that the Module will follow. A Knowledge Organiser, which summarises all of the knowledge to be learned over the next 5 weeks is given to each pupil. This organiser is revisited each week and a series of peer and / or teacher led quizzes helps students learn the required knowledge through constant revisiting until it becomes safely stored in their long term memory.
- At the end of the third week each student has a personal interview with his / her teacher to review their progress so as to help them further improve.
- Formal study ends as we reach the end of week five.
- Week six is devoted to student-led revision and an end of Learning Cycle assessment. These assessments are designed to test each student's grasp of the overall objectives of the Learning Cycle.
- Each Learning Cycle's assessments are synoptic in that there is always at least one question that refers back to learning from a previous model.
- When we mark the students papers, we carefully seek out areas of common error and misunderstanding so that we can plan our approaches to week 7.
- Each student's final grade is carefully checked against their academic flight path, which is the Trust's internal monitoring and intervention system designed to ensure that he / she is on track to fulfil his / her potential.
- Week seven then becomes our 'gap teaching' week where we seek to provide individual help to correct the gaps in our students learning that have been highlighted through the assessment process.
- The final nine week module follows a similar pattern, but the additional two weeks allows the whole years learning to be revisited in preparation for the end of year assessment.

WHAT PARENTS THINK



As a trust we encourage each academy to continually survey parents as to their views on the trust's educational offer. The latest survey asked parents to explain why a trust school was first choice for their child.

THEIR RESPONSES WERE:

- Access to values driven education supported by the ASPIRE code
- A longer school day to increase learning time
- The emphasis on a curriculum of English, mathematics, history, geography, separate sciences, modern foreign languages and creative subjects
- The end of day enrichment programme
- Be taught in lessons by subject experts and well qualified teachers
- Lessons free of disruptive behaviour
- Five reports each year
- Continued support of a personal mentor/tutor
- Annual visits to universities, galleries and museums at an early stage in their school career
- Access to a range of extracurricular activities including cadets, fencing and attendance at leadership residentials
- Able to gain bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards