Welcome to

Staffordshire University Academy

A message from our sponsor

Staffordshire University Academies Trust’s aspirations are reflected in the culture and ethos of our academies, in the way in which our communities are built upon sensitivity, tolerance and the appreciation of difference; at the heart of our work is the education of the young people in our care. There is a whole Trust ethos based on Rights, Respect and Responsibility.

Our commitment is to raising standards. In each of our academies we are committed to, year on year, improvements in the outcomes for our young people. In all of our academies the most recent data demonstrates that the students’ achievement and progress is improving because teaching is carefully personalised to meet their needs.

We are committed to providing a stimulating, varied and broad education. Our academies offer a wide range of extra activities as well as good academic standards. We want our students to be genuinely involved in the life of our academies, participating in decisions, interested in their learning and valuing the opportunities they have had.

We are proud of their achievements, the quality of our teaching and the pastoral care we provide. We want our young people to leave our academies with ambition, an appetite for earning and the confidence to encounter the challenges and changes that will inevitably face them.

We are pleased and proud to be the sponsor of Staffordshire University Academy (SUA). Ofsted, the Trust Board and, I am confident, the school’s community recognise the significant and sustainable improvements that continue to be made at SUA. We are proud that SUA is an inclusive community school making a very positive contribution towards the life chances of the young people of the District. It is very clear to both the Trust Board and to Ofsted that the academy is led by an outstanding Principal and her team; we are very confident that SUA will continue to improve, expand and prosper.
At the same time the Trust Board is encouraged to note that SUA has developed very strong links with other schools and organisations, both locally, in the Trust and within the West Midlands, as this outward looking philosophy places the academy at the centre of educational transformation; in line with current government policy about chains of schools working together to improve the life chances of all youngsters.

When considering which school can best deliver positive outcomes for its young people, a rich and stimulating curriculum and the educational and social experiences that your child needs, to follow their chosen career pathway, I hope that you will consider SUA as a place for your child to study. Whatever your decision, I would like to wish you good luck with your child’s future studies.

Keith Hollins
Chief Executive Officer
Staffordshire University Academies Trust
Here at Team SUA we make a difference. As we enter a ‘New Era’ this has been perfectly symbolised by our brand new academy uniform. Student voice is central to the success of our Team, the students chose the uniform and are delighted with the results! The culture of our academy ensures that our students achieve the very best life chances. Standards are high. Our students follow a simple RESPECT code which instils the right level of focus for the very best learning to occur. Following our most recent visit from Ofsted, it was pleasing to receive positive feedback about our students who, it was reported, ‘show a great respect for staff and each other’ and, during the inspection, they were ‘polite and considerate’. We achieved a ‘Good’ grade for Personal Development with our ‘strong pastoral care’ being recognised as an important strength for our students. We are really proud of Team SUA and all excited to be a part of it.

Our three academy values are Aspire, Believe, Achieve! These values underpin all that we do to ensure we are relentless in our mission to provide the very best life chances for all of our students. SUA’s dedicated staff body are a group of reflective practitioners who are constantly reinventing the way that students learn. We have been innovative in our approaches to teaching and learning, sourcing ideas from international practices. We believe it is working too as Ofsted stated, ‘As a result of effective teaching and students’ commitment to learning students are making faster progress’. Our excellent GCSE and A Level results show this to be true; the hard work of our students is paying off.
We care about the progress and education of all of our students. Successful learning is about partnership and we work to achieve this through excellent communication between the academy, parents, governors and the local community.

Our students work in a well-equipped environment that we continue to review. The academy offers access to several IT suites and a range of technology, including an iMac suite and a state of the art drama studio. We expect students to be engaged with the curriculum in a creative and innovative way, but not forgetting about the core values of education, ensuring they are equipped with skills necessary in today’s modern world. In the past year we have partnered with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Veolia, the FA, Walsall Football Club, the NHS, Lloyds Bank and many local businesses who enrich the experiences of our students with once in a lifetime opportunities.

The academy embeds in the character of our students fundamental values of democracy, freedom and a wider understanding of different faiths and beliefs; celebrating diversity through our unique CHARACTER programme. Students develop an understanding of the clear link between rights and responsibilities and know the difference between right and wrong. Students learn to be reflective and are taught the importance of respect and tolerance of others.

We are delighted to invite you to visit our academy to share with you all of the fabulous opportunities we have to offer. Come and take a look at SUA to see why our offer should be considered by your family.

Rowena Hillier
Principal
The Curriculum at SUA is personalised to the needs of our students.

Students experience a broad and varied curriculum, which prepares them at each stage of their educational journey with us. We believe in the mantra ‘knowledge is power’. Coupled with great teaching and the right work ethic, our students will achieve their personal best. At the start of each half term students are issued with Knowledge Organisers. These pinpoint the key content skills that students need during that half term to excel here at SUA.

In Year 7 and Year 8 students experience the core subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as a range of humanities, modern foreign languages and creative subjects. We are proud that whilst many schools reduce their arts provision, we have expanded ours to include art, music, drama, dance, catering, design and technology and PE.

British values underpin our work across all subjects and our bespoke CHARACTER programme makes us unique. We believe developing a student’s character makes all the difference to their success in life; we help nurture and develop this.

As students move into Year 9 they are asked to personalise their curriculum further, opting into a range of subjects to experience increased hours. We believe this gives students the chance to really foster a deep interest in these subject areas.

By Year 10 and 11 our students enter the qualifications stage of their time at SUA. Students have made decisions about a pathway of subjects which could be linked to their intended career pathway. Our options process is flexible and fair; our students deserve the widest range of opportunities.
Many of our Year 11 students continue to study here at our post-16 offering: SUA6. After completing their studies in our sixth form many move on to study at university, a higher level apprenticeship or on to employment. All lessons are one hour long with a 20 minute tutor period each day.

For every year group careers advice, information and guidance is paramount. Opportunities are available for all students to have interactions with businesses which may ignite a desire for a future career pathway. We start work on aspirations as soon as students join us in Year 7. Each student makes a one sentence pledge to be remembered, centred around their interest and future aspirations.
The English department is a place where participation, structured around discussion, is encouraged. This together with the content of our curriculum maximises student engagement.
Our syllabus in Years 7, 8 and 9 is engaging and inspiring, studying a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts. We focus on a broad spectrum of works from 19th century poetry to contemporary texts. Students develop proficiency and increase their confidence as communicators within both written and spoken English. Personal and creative responses to texts are encouraged.

Years 10 and 11 prepare students for assessment at GCSE English language and English literature. We aim to produce confident, effective and flexible communicators in both written and spoken English.

Throughout key stage 4, students prepare to complete their GCSE exams. The literature component allows them to study challenging yet engaging texts across a wide range of genres. Students are encouraged to form and develop opinions about the content of these texts as well as their construction.

In preparation for the English language exam, students develop confidence in core skills necessary for employability and success; these include effective written communication and reading for meaning, as well as speaking and listening.

We can happily say that a number of our students continue to study English into sixth form and beyond. At this point, they are encouraged to broaden their understanding of the subject to include technical, linguistic studies and further develop their creative writing skills.

The English department offers a wide range of extracurricular activities including visits to the Harry Potter studios, theatre visits, drama work shops, visits from successful authors and creative writing workshops. These events and activities are well attended and enjoyed by all students.
Whole Academy Literacy

At SUA we aim to create 21st century learners who will be successful in their future field of work. To fulfil their potential, students need to communicate confidently through writing and speech; they must listen carefully and be able to understand the written word.

Improving literacy and learning has an impact on students’ self-esteem, motivation and behaviour; the ability to communicate is empowering. Students are encouraged to respond to higher order questions as it encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry. We believe high standards of literacy allow students to learn independently.
Curriculum areas teach literacy through schemes of work which include specific literacy objectives.

Subject teachers mark students’ work for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

All members of our academy community support the drive to raise standards of literacy by having consistently high expectations:

- Curriculum areas teach literacy through schemes of work which include specific literacy objectives.
- Subject teachers mark students’ work for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Students require vocabulary, expression and organisational control to access the demands of every subject across the curriculum.

A number of fun and engaging extracurricular activities are planned throughout the year to promote high levels of literacy such as World Book Day and the opportunity to participate in writing workshops and competitions. We have a well-stocked library at the heart of the academy, where we regularly host visiting authors and book fairs.
The mathematics department is comprised of a team of experienced, specialist teachers who are committed to challenging students of all abilities to reach their full potential. They ensure that all students succeed in becoming mathematically fluent, in order to confidently tackle mathematical challenges presented in any future education, employment or daily life.

Our students follow a comprehensive and ambitious seven-year curriculum that develops a deep understanding and mastery of mathematical skills and concepts. The curriculum is carefully and logically sequenced in order to build on prior learning to maximise student retention and understanding. During lessons, the maths team aim to foster a lifelong enthusiasm for mathematics through the delivery of engaging lessons with strong links to the ‘real world’.

They also provide opportunities for students to enrich their mathematical experiences by providing a wide range of extra curricular activities. The progress of all students is paramount to staff, so they are always on hand to provide extra help or support to students who need it during and after the academy day.
The science department is committed to ensuring all students achieve in all year groups across each of the three sciences: chemistry, biology and physics. We encourage students to Aspire, Believe, Achieve at every possible opportunity within our subject areas.

Our aim is to guide students along their path to become confident learners, well versed in the methods and ideas of science. The science curriculum provides students with the foundations to understand the inner workings of the world using scientific processes and concepts from all fields of endeavour.

To achieve this mission students will use scientific reasoning and thinking skills to problem solve, communicate effectively, work cooperatively and use technology to work towards the goals of becoming lifelong learners and functioning in a global environment.
The skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are all developed ensuring confidence is built in preparation for study at GCSE level.

Language lessons are great fun as they include a variety of activities including games, songs and role-plays. Students soon develop the confidence to communicate in the target language and they enjoy participating in conversations.

Extracurricular activities are supported through language clubs. The club is open to all students and staff attend to take part in learning a language too; the power of team work is an essential ingredient to the successes we see!

Learning a language is invaluable, but visiting the country you are learning about is even more exciting as it enables you to put this into practice. At SUA a highly successful annual visit to France is organised, it is incredibly popular! During the visit students go to museums and top tourist attractions where they are given the opportunity to speak French and experience French food and culture first hand.

Having the opportunity to learn languages is so important and at SUA students have the opportunity to learn French and Spanish. Starting from the basics including numbers and colours, students become confident learning to talk about themselves and their friends and families.

Other interesting topics include: academy life, hobbies, their homes, holidays, the environment, future aspirations and expressing opinions.
Here at SUA, our young historians are able to explore and investigate a vast array of time periods; taking in the sights, sounds and smells from the Normans, to the Victorians and right up until the modern world.

Delving into the past helps students to develop their skills of empathy. What was it like to be a front-line soldier in World War One? Students apply their knowledge and develop their extended writing to provide an insight into the past. Analysing evidence, considering context and evaluating reasons for change and the impact of this over time are all explored through the varied time periods.

Exciting educational visits take place to Quarry Bank Mill, The Imperial War Museum and Thackray Medical Museum. Students are given the chance to see artefacts first hand to compound their learning and understanding from the classroom.

Students learn the importance of understanding our place in history and how this knowledge can shape their futures.
Exploring the world around us considering the physical environment and the human environment is the experience offered to geographers at SUA. Students examine topics such as globalisation, rivers, the weather and climate, coasts and population.

Developing an inquisitive mind, analysing reasons for change and exploring the pressures that a population of 7.5 billion people place on our planet fosters a love for this subject.

Opportunities for field work are included in a geographers experience at SUA. If taken through to examination in Year 11, visits to Carding Mill Valley in the Shropshire Hills and Wolverhampton are undertaken to develop the skills necessary to be prepared for part of the final assessment.
Religious Education

At SUA the study of religious education is broad and is designed to challenge the perspectives of our learners whilst encouraging them to build their own opinions, beliefs and identity.

Students study a thematic curriculum including key questions such as, ‘Can we Google God?’ As well as studying cultural beliefs, ethical debates are held focussing around theories that might determine human behaviours and actions. The study of non-religious groups and scientific beliefs are also covered to provide opportunities for analytical thinking.

Social Sciences

Social sciences are offered to Year 9 students at SUA to provide an insight into two of our popular GCSE courses. Studying many ethical and philosophical themes, with links to both psychology and sociology, students study medical ethics, freewill and determinism.

A range of unique topics are covered, designed to allow students to question and understand the world around them and the people they live with.
Art, craft and design at SUA provides opportunities for learners of all ages to have access to a range of processes, methods and techniques. Students are able to develop an awareness of male and female artists from a wide variety of time periods and cultures. They become familiar with applying the visual and tactile elements to their work and consider a range of stimulating topics. Throughout lessons students are encouraged to observe, select and interpret imagination, feeling and understanding.

Students have the opportunity to develop their skills of observation through first hand acquaintance with objects and artefacts from the natural and manmade world. Using materials, an investigation and experimentation of ideas is explored to enable students to progress in skill and grow in confidence with their work. All students are given the opportunity to express ideas about the world in which we live and the world of fantasy.

Students have the opportunity to see how art, craft and design has made significant contributions to the world in which we live across time. All learners have the opportunity to develop and build confidence to express considered opinions about their own work and the work of others, both in written and spoken terms.
Exploring creativity through food preparation, whilst teaching core skills about leading a healthy lifestyle through diet, are essential ingredients to the catering experience for students at SUA.
Life skills are developed to enable our learners to prepare and cook healthy meals for themselves and their families. Students gain a broad knowledge of: the hospitality industry, nutrition, food safety and planning menus.

An incredibly popular option through to examination at the end of Year 11, students build upon the skills they have developed in the lower years.

Studying catering is incredibly rewarding and supports our young people gain employment in hotels, bars, restaurants, night clubs, membership clubs and cafés both nationally and internationally.
Fantastic facilities and equipment, from iMac computers for student’s compositions to a class size samba kit. Extracurricular opportunities are offered for all students.

Instrumental lessons are offered ranging across all instruments: trombone, trumpet, French horn, tuba, violin, viola, cello, double bass, rock guitar, classical guitar, flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, keyboard, drum kit and vocal lessons. A fabulous opportunity for all students to SUA; individual and group lessons are offered.

The academy show draws together the talents of students through music, drama and dance. There is always something on offer to become involved in and ‘The Arts’ continue to grow from strength to strength!
All students get the opportunity to explore and experiment with different instruments and genres of music.

Music is always heard at SUA!
Practical and critical activities are used that demonstrate the understanding of different styles, genres and traditions. Students are able to demonstrate skills with appreciation of form, shape, texture, colour, decoration, surface treatment, scale, proportion and structure.

Using a variety of appropriate tools and equipment, students thrive in this practical subject and the design outcomes are truly impressive.

Studying practical subjects enriches all students at SUA. Having the opportunity to explore a range of 3D designs, processes and techniques is fascinating. Covering both traditional and new technologies, students explore the use of designing for different purposes, using a variety of materials.

The exploration of differing designs, products and resources relating to a range of craft and design, from the past and from recent times, including European and non-European examples allows for knowledge and understanding to be developed; integral to the investigating and making process. Critical thinking and the ability to articulate this through extended written analysis are developed and strengthened through design and technology.
Drama at SUA strives to create the opportunities to explore the richness and depth of human expression. A broad and comprehensive curriculum enriches our students to comprehend the world and find their unique ‘voice’.

Students cover a vast array of topics, challenging their perceptions of stereotypes whilst encouraging them to think ‘outside the box’. The opportunity to develop an extensive range of life skills throughout the experience of drama such as: increased confidence; the value of positive and critical feedback – with a strong emphasis on teamwork; the ability to develop social skills in preparation for life beyond the academy, are all essential for every student.
Through dance, learners of all ages have the opportunity to express themselves creatively through the study of different genres. Innovation, improvisation and imagination are key to success as individual, paired and group routines are incorporated into studies. Students quickly become appreciative of choreography and are able to effectively evaluate skills through the study of professional and amateur dance.

Enrichment visits are undertaken throughout the year enabling our students to see the skills they are learning first hand, in addition to gaining broader life experiences through the study of dance from different cultures. Leadership skills are developed and a strong sense of team collaboration exists, particularly for students choosing dance as an option in key stage 4.

Many students enjoy the experience of performing on stage and regularly participate in local competitions and academy shows throughout the year. This experience is fundamental to developing self-confidence and poise as valuable skills for later life.
Students have endless opportunities to try a broad range of team and solo sports as part of their core curriculum.
Using a mastery approach, skills are developed through modelling, deliberate practice and high quality feedback. Students learn how to officiate and umpire different sports as a key to their own leadership development.

After the academy day many clubs and competitions are held further enhancing the love of sport. Our teams regularly compete against other Staffordshire school teams. For many students these clubs help them achieve a balance with their academic studies and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Local sports people visit the academy to share their sporting successes and build aspiration in our learners.

Within classroom based learning, students develop an understanding of contemporary issues within sport and can apply this to topical issues in a broader context. As part of the sixth form curriculum, students learn about careers linked to sport and many establish the foundations for their future careers.

Studying sport as a GCSE and at post 16, options focus students on the skills, knowledge and understanding that universities and employers demand for further education and lifelong careers in sport related professions. The new partnership with Hednesford Town Youth and Junior teams is set to develop across the academy.
Studying health and social care is a natural choice for many of our students wishing to pursue a career in areas such as social work, child care, paramedic and public services. Through the investigation of contemporary case studies, students develop a deep understanding of the specialist knowledge, skills and core values needed to work and care in the community.

Students develop empathy and communication skills which many learners apply when undertaking work experience placements.

Through collaboration with experts spanning the breadth of the health and social care sector, students can apply their learning to work based scenarios.

Studying complex contemporary themes such as relationships, human growth and factors affecting mental health, students develop a deep understanding of an individual’s life experience and can better relate to the world in which we live.
Community

The academy has a strong sense of community and lots of great work goes on to support this. You may have already noticed that we refer to ourselves as “Team SUA”. This is witnessed throughout each day in the academy and is seen during assemblies, staff meetings, sports days and form group activities.

Aspire,
Believe,
Achieve!
Elections take place each year for the Academy Council who are active in contributing to academy life. Student voice is taken seriously here at the academy and is regularly gathered on issues such as teaching and learning, food served in the canteen, uniform and charitable endeavours.

Events that raise money for charities occur throughout each year: Children in Need, Macmillan coffee mornings, Comic Relief, Sports Relief and a summer fayre are just a few examples. Students also nominate additional charities through the Academy Council and collections are made allowing Team SUA to all participate taking pride in our local community and supporting a vast range of charities.

Students have participated in local arts projects and a local history project with a well-known, famous historian. Sixth form students undertake dementia friendly training and also participate in international visits to Auschwitz.

Each year students represent the academy at local events and host a Christmas party for our local senior citizens. All of these activities contribute to the development of pride; being proud to be part of the SUA community, ensuring thoughtfulness and RESPECT are understood by all.

A range of activities are available to students across the year groups ranging from sports, music, drama, STEM, languages and home work clubs. All of these enrich a constantly busy weekly schedule and students are welcome to involve themselves in as much as possible.

During the autumn term each year, work begins on the academy show: a much anticipated highlight of the calendar.

Students are kept informed of activities available via published half termly timetables, posters, form group messages, assemblies and through the academy website.

A breakfast club runs daily from 8am offering breakfast, activities and support to students of all ages.

Many departments offer booster sessions in the upper years offering additional support opportunities throughout their GCSE studies near to examination periods. This is alongside a comprehensive programme of period 6 lessons where teachers are available to give further help and advice.
Visits are arranged for every year group at the academy throughout Year 7 to Year 13. Many of these visits compliment the curriculum and offer opportunities for students to experience learning opportunities outside the classroom.
Close links are established with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre where all Year 7 students participate in a series of workshops hosted at the academy, to perform and watch others. This culminates in an exciting day out at the theatre performing and watching an annual Christmas show.

A highly popular visit to France is just one annual addition to the SUA calendar. Others include site visits to castles, orienteering across the Chase, river visits, sporting tournaments such as the Badminton Championships and even residential visits away from home! Student participation is essential to the success of the visits that are arranged.

Opportunities to visit employers, colleges and universities are in place to support students in their aspirations and pathways for life beyond SUA. All students have the opportunity to visit our sponsor Staffordshire University and each year several students secure places to study there after completing their Year 13 studies.

Through a new and exciting partnership with Hednesford Town Junior and Youth FC, all students from 2021 will have the opportunity to take part in high quality sessions and theory based football classes using the latest technology. Football is used to improve the students’ knowledge of business, anatomy, physiology, health, well-being and sciences. Students will arrange district-wide tournaments and competitions that will provide real-life opportunities to understand what is required to organise, budget and deliver big events.

Sixth form students also have a vast programme of enrichment activities including visits to Russell Group universities and other cultural and team building activities; these prove incredibly popular. An annual residential visit helps students experience life away from home.
Celebration and Rewards

We believe students should be recognised for upholding the academy RESPECT code and going 'above and beyond' and to this end we take great pleasure in rewarding our students for their effort throughout the academy year. As well as our rewards system, where students can accumulate points that can be used to purchase gifts, we also run regular reward visits. Recent visits have seen our students enjoying a day out at Alton Towers, Drayton Manor Park, Old Trafford and sightseeing in London. Student voice plays a key role in our rewards strategy and the Academy Council are consulted every year on what they would like the rewards system to include.

Attendance

Excellent attendance at the academy is essential to ensure our student achieve their potential. There are a number of systems in place to support students in maintaining their attendance. We aim for each child to achieve at least 97% attendance. Our dedicated pastoral team work very closely with students and their families to provide a variety of support strategies if they are needed.

We are delighted to celebrate 100% attendance achievement awards with a significant group of students each year. Attendance is celebrated through the presentation of badges, certificates, gifts and partially funded visits off site.
We have high expectations of behaviour at SUA. We believe every child has the right to learn in a calm, productive environment. Our simple RESPECT code underpins the behaviour expectations at the academy, encapsulating what is expected from each student and what they can expect from others.

Visitors are invariably impressed by our students; their good manners and orderly behaviour.

Ofsted, in their most recent visit commented, ‘Relationships between pupils and teachers are respectful’, and observed students ‘feel safe and are safe’.

Form tutors are the first point of contact for students amongst an experienced and dedicated pastoral team who ensure that each child receives individual guidance, building positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect.
The support of each individual learner is paramount to their success. We want all students, whatever their needs or abilities, to be happy, successful and achieve their best.

A committed team of non-teaching pastoral staff are available to ensure that this is the case at SUA. Support is provided by a dedicated team of student and behaviour support officers, teaching assistants, a progress team and access to counselling services.

SUA is fully inclusive and support is provided by every teacher in the academy. A varied assembly programme, the promotion of British Values and through our CHARACTER programme, every opportunity is taken to ensure students are challenged and supported in all they do. Where students are identified as requiring additional support or strategies to access learning, the student themselves will be part of this planning to help inform staff.
Curriculum support is offered to students through the academy’s Progress Centre where a number of interventions take place to support the development of literacy, numeracy and social awareness.

SUA offers exceptional links to outside support agencies for our students, their families and the wider community through our Chase View Hub. Ofsted described the centre as, ‘a high quality provision’. The centre prides itself on a welcoming reception area, three consulting rooms, a family room and a meeting room that host a range of emotional well being initiatives and interventions.

SUA also has a fully qualified team of Mental Health first aiders to ensure that students welfare and wellbeing is at the forefront of everything we do. A healthy Team SUA is a high performing Team SUA.
The students and staff of SUA have occupied a fantastic new building since late 2013. There are many facilities which enhance and support the learning environment that allow students to ‘Aspire, Believe, Achieve!’

Our facilities include our Chase View Hub, fully equipped classrooms, multiple IT suites, advanced CCTV and security systems, a fantastic sports hall, a multi-gym, a fully functional drama studio, several tennis courts, large outdoor fields and football pitches as well as fully furnished creative arts spaces. The exciting new partnership with Hednesford Town Junior and Youth FC will inevitably lead to an increase in the quality of our sporting facilities.

We are incredibly proud of our academy.

If you would like to see or find out more please contact reception on 01543 224700 or email info@suacademy.co.uk for further details.