



**SOLWAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
PROSPECTUS**

**EDUCATION IS
THE MOST
POWERFUL
WEAPON WHICH
YOU CAN USE
TO CHANGE
THE WORLD.**

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Our vision:

Staff, students, parents and governors have the moral courage and integrity to do the right thing for our students: to allow everyone to be what they are meant to be; to inspire everyone to reach their potential; to be happy, safe and hardworking.

Our values:

Courage and compassion

Inclusion and equality

Respect and courtesy

Optimism and perseverance

Forgiveness and tolerance

**“TO ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS WE MUST
FIRST DREAM, THEN VISUALISE, THEN PLAN...
BELIEVE... ACT!”**

Alfred A Montepert





Solway Community School is at the heart of the community in Silloth. Established over 50 years ago, we have a reputation as a school where students of all abilities excel. Our big strength is our small size – everyone knows everyone else; yet we are able to provide a wide range of courses to match learners' strengths and interests. We know everyone – and we help them develop into unique and self confident individuals.

We remain a comprehensive school and welcome students of all abilities. Over the last three years we have been recognised for our ability to add value to students' achievement – we are now the leading school in Cumbria and the North West of England for adding value. So, where ever a student joins us, we will help them progress further with us than if they went to any other school in the North West.

One of our strengths is that we offer a personalised curriculum. We recognise that we do not produce widgets, but individuals. We tailor our provision to suit every student, as far as we can. We concentrate on making sure our students achieve substantial progress in their time with us in both academic and vocational subjects, which have parity of esteem, while at the same time make sure they mature into responsible, active members of society.

Expectations of our students are very high; in all areas of school life – uniform, behaviour, classwork, homework, social responsibility, courtesy and respect. They learn far more than subject curriculum content while they are with us. Every teacher shares this ethos. Our business as a school is to achieve the qualifications necessary for our students to move on to the next stage in their lives, be that sixth form, further education or employment. But it is also to allow our students to become grown up, confident, articulate members of society who will become everything they were meant to be.

Lifelong learning is essential. We aim to challenge our students to become independent learners, with the skills they will need to help them through life. As a school we constantly challenge ourselves to learn and improve. We have high ambitions and aspirations for our students. We want them to be the best they can be. We intend to give them the skills to get there.

We are a school where we work hard to make sure everyone has the right curriculum for them. We personalise where we can, and where it is right; we try to think outside the box for students to make sure they leave our school with the skills and understanding and knowledge that will help them get to where they want to go, and to allow them to become responsible and constructive members of the community. We want them to be able to answer the moral, political, economic and social questions that will be asked of them with confidence and understanding. Importantly, we do this for everyone, regardless of starting point, or academic potential, or aspirations.

We ask students to aim high, not to be satisfied with less than they can achieve; we support them, we find alternative routes if necessary, to make them feel safe, supported, challenged, and able to get to where they want to be. We are a community. The education we

provide is based not only on universal human values of justice, equality, respect, responsibility, but also on Christian values of forgiveness, compassion, perseverance, integrity, hope, faith in the future. This is what we share. This is what we believe. This is what we will deliver. This underpins everything we do in school. This is what we do.

It is our responsibility and privilege to inspire our students to do as well as they can. We are proud of our students, and they are proud of their school. Choosing the right secondary school is one of the most important decisions you will ever make for your child. As you look through this prospectus you will be struck by the pictures of our students. They show enjoyment, achievement, fun, challenge, concentration, determination and success in and out of the classroom. I would encourage you to come and visit us and see what is happening every day at Solway Community School. I will be delighted and proud to show you round.

Judith Schafer
Headteacher





“READING IS TO THE MIND WHAT EXERCISE IS TO THE BODY”

Sir Richard Steele

Learning

We offer a broad, balanced curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual learner. Students are constantly challenged to improve and develop their knowledge and skills in a supportive, caring environment. Success is celebrated within and beyond the curriculum so students develop confidence and sense of achievement.

We aim to provide a personalised curriculum which will engage, insure and challenge all our students. There is a strong focus on delivering the core curriculum effectively through the school, with all students studying English, Maths, Science, Religious Education, Physical Education and Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education at KS3.

Teaching and learning is at the core of all we do. Our aim is to provide the highest quality teaching and learning for our students. We recognise that all students have special skills, abilities and aptitudes and we treat them as individuals. A real strength of our school is our small size—every child is known by every member of staff as individuals, and we work hard to adapt our teaching to fit them. This promotes progress, achievement and enjoyment and fosters independence. We expect students to participate fully in and engage with the learning process, so they become responsible for their own learning and adopt an enquiring approach to their studies. We want our students to become independent, lifelong learners equipped with the knowledge and skills they will need to become successful adults.



At KS4 students will study a number of GCSEs; all will do English Language and Literature, Maths and Science, either discreet Physics, Chemistry and Biology or Additional and Core, and RE. We are able to offer a wide range of option choices to complete their curriculum; both EBacc subjects including History, Geography, French, and Spanish, and vocational options at alternative providers such as Construction, Motor Vehicles and Catering. Other choices which are popular include Art, Hospitality and Catering, Resistant Materials, Engineering and Performing Arts.

Because we are small, we are able to work flexibly with the students to make sure the range and number of their options suits their interests and abilities. There is no one size fits all education, and we are proud of the fact we can offer a personalised

curriculum where every child is considered individually.

In the Sixth Form, students currently are offered a range of AS levels including English Literature, History, Biology, Philosophy and Ethics, and Extended Project. We anticipate that the subjects offered will change on a year by year basis dependent on student choices.

Enrichment

One of the real strengths of our school is that we provide our students with a wide range of opportunities to enrich their education beyond the classroom, whether expanding their cultural horizons, getting involved in competitive sport, or developing an interest into a passion.

We run a huge range of clubs within school: sports clubs include football, netball, basketball, trampolining; then there is chess, a hugely successful Samba band that plays across Cumbria, Christmas cake club, Shakespeare for Schools, gardening, lawn bowls - whatever the discipline, we punch above our weight for a small school and offer challenge to our competitors. Our inter-house competition is fiercely competitive - and we are delighted that we have 100% inclusion - every single student joins in the inter-house competition.; and teachers and students take part side by side to compete for their house.

Of course there are plenty of trips and visits. All of Year 7 enjoy an adventurous residential visit to Borrowdale. On alternate years, we go skiing in Bormio, Italy, or to Barcelona to practice our Spanish and take in some of the culture. Our big link is with a school in Mexico which is a fantastic opportunity for the students to see the world and experience a two week exchange visit with a family. We regularly take groups to the Theatre by the Lake in Keswick and the Theatre Royal in Newcastle. Duke of Edinburgh expeditions are popular! In our 'Olympic Week' at the end of the summer term we take the whole school to visit mosques, synagogues and a Buddhist Temple - always an interesting experience. Homework club runs twice a week after school, and our library and computer suites are well used by students every day outside lessons. There is always something to do and lots going on at Solway!







Community

Solway School is at the centre of the community of Silloth. We know that students learn and achieve best when school and home work in partnership, and because of our size, we know the parents and families of all our students well. Our pastoral team are constantly in touch, either formally or informally, to keep parents and carers well informed about what is going on in school and their children's progress.

The school is often host to community events—twice a term we have a community lunch where parents and grandparents come and join us for a meal which is always very well attended. We work closely with local churches and primary schools, the Rotary Club and employers; often classes will have adults from various organisations offering their expertise and advice to students—chefs from local restaurants work with Hospitality and Catering students, local employers give mock interviews to KS4 students, the town rugby club has taught our sports leaders how to referee in rugby matches to help with a primary school tournament; the volunteer lifeboat crews and fire brigade regularly work with the students, learning life saving skills and having a lot of water based fun!

We want all students to feel connected to their local community, and also to be aware of the wider world beyond Silloth. We believe that by giving back to your community you will appreciate and understand it; students develop a strong sense of who they are and where they come from, together with the ambition and desire to experience the wider world as responsible and caring citizens with the ability to empathise with and contribute to the cosmopolitan and multi cultural environments they will live in.

**“WHEN IT COMES TO ANYTHING THAT’S SOCIAL,
WHETHER IT’S YOUR FAMILY, YOUR SCHOOL, YOUR
COMMUNITY, YOUR BUSINESS OR YOUR COUNTRY,
WINNING IS A TEAM SPORT.”**

Bill Clinton



Sixth Form

While we have good relationships with all post 16 providers locally, we are delighted that, with the support of Caldew School we are able to offer Sixth Form education for students here in Silloth. Our students are following AS levels in Biology, History, English Literature and Philosophy and Ethics for the first time and lessons are lively! The Sixth Form offers a new alternative for students from our Year 11 and we are confident that our provision will give them an attractive alternative. Certainly the ability to offer education up to 18 is an advantage.

We offer a range of AS levels which gives students the opportunity to stay with us, in an environment they

know, and with teachers who will support them, to move on to the next stage of their career.

Our approach to teaching in the Sixth Form is grounded in the belief that students must become lifelong learners with skills that will make them successful far beyond their school career. We enable and encourage students to reflect on their learning, improve their practice through problem solving and develop their confidence, independence and ability to work with others.

We expect our sixth formers to act as role models for the younger students and take on student leadership positions. They benefit from our excellent links with higher and further education providers, including in particular Newcastle, Lancaster and Cumbria

Universities who we have worked with closely, to help them with the next step in their education and careers.

They enjoy newly refurbished discreet sixth form accommodation, computer facilities and links to Caldew's virtual Sixth Form library, all of which makes their experience stimulating and vibrant.

**“EDUCATION IS NOT THE
LEARNING OF FACTS, BUT THE
TRAINING OF THE MIND TO
THINK”**

Albert Einstein





Support

“Relationships between staff and students are strong, which makes a clear contribution to students’ learning. Small class sizes mean that staff and teaching assistants can spend more time responding to individual students’ needs.”

Ofsted, 2014

Support welfare and pastoral care is a real strength of our school and we are proud that every child is looked after, nurtured, cared for and known by every member of staff individually.

Our pastoral system is centred around four Houses in a vertical tutoring format. This means that each form has a mix of students from all year groups and the atmosphere and caring environment in forms is tangible. Older students act as peer mentors for younger ones, and Ofsted praised us for the supportive and caring relationships that students of all ages enjoy.

The pastoral system aims to provide an atmosphere where it is cool to learn, and encourages high aspirations and self esteem throughout the school community. Staff - both teaching and non-teaching - act as assertive mentors for KS4 students to support them both pastorally and academically as exams get nearer.

Our support staff are excellent. We have a number of highly trained and expert teaching assistants who

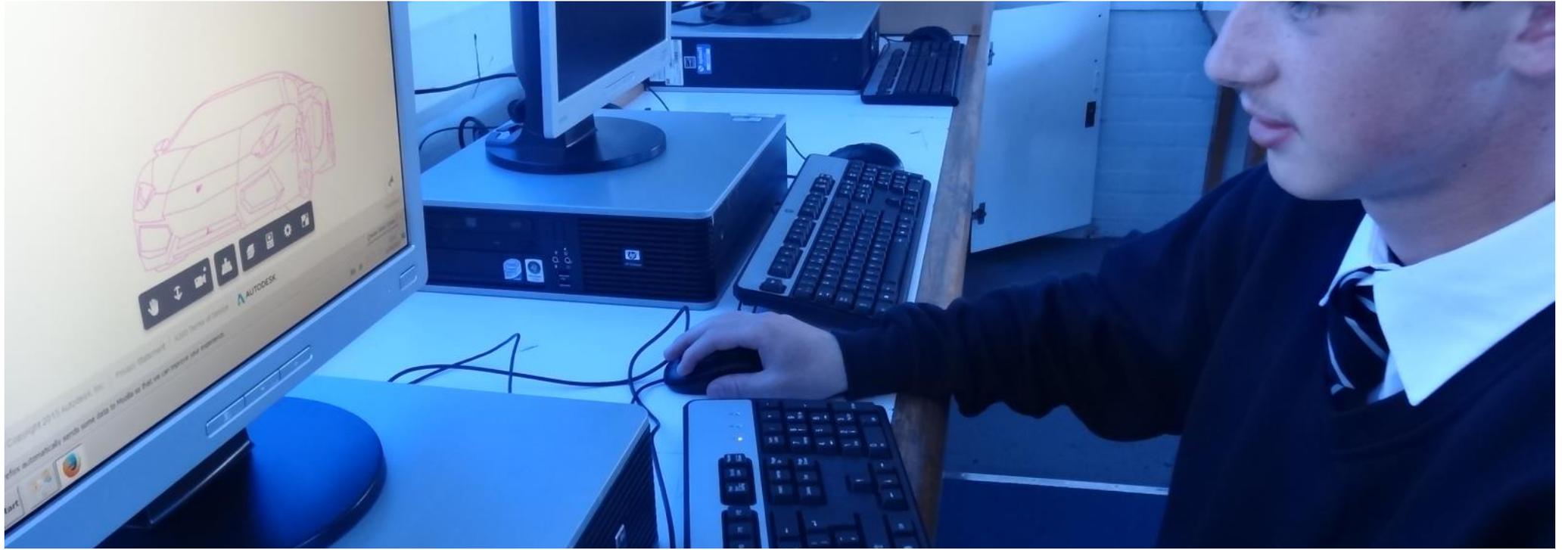
work with students who need extra help to make sure every child is supported and encouraged to reach their potential. Such is our success at this that we have received recognition from the SSAT, an independent organisation, for achieving some of the fastest improving GCSE results in the country—in the top 10% in 2014 nationally, and top in Cumbria. We are very proud of this achievement; your child will do better with us, no matter what their starting point, than any other school in the county.

We work closely with outside agencies to support students where necessary, and all students have immediate access to high quality study support, advice and guidance for all aspects of their life and development.

Your child’s welfare and happiness is very important to us and we work hard to make every child feel welcome, happy and safe. Year 7 students are particularly well supported to ensure their transition from primary school is smooth and positive.

We also make sure that our gifted and talented students are given extension, enrichment and acceleration both within and beyond the curriculum - although this done inclusively, and opportunities are widely available if appropriate.

Our school is truly inclusive. Mutual care and respect is evident, and as a direct consequence, children make excellent progress.



Achievement by All

No matter what your child's starting point, at Solway we are confident that they will do as well as they can. The whole school environment supports us in our aim to provide an educational experience that is holistic and recognises that academic attainment is the business of a school, but so is achievement in the broadest sense of the word.

We want our children to leave school ready to face the challenges of a changing world with the qualifications they need to take them to their next steps together with the confidence, understanding, tolerance, courage and compassion that will make them active and responsible members of their communities whether in this county, country or beyond.

“OUR CARE OF THE CHILD SHOULD BE GOVERNED, NOT BY THE DESIRE TO MAKE HIM LEARN THINGS, BUT BY THE ENDEAVOUR ALWAYS TO KEEP BURNING WITHIN HIM THAT LIGHT WHICH IS CALLED INTELLIGENCE.”

Maria Montessori





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