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SOLWAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL **2022/23**

P R O S P E C T U S



SOLWAY COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

 **CUMBRIA FUTURES**
FEDERATION

Message from the Headteacher



Headteacher Tom Hailwood &
Deputy Headteacher – Steph Thorp



**“Education is the most powerful
weapon which you can use to change
the world”**

– Nelson Mandela

A very warm welcome to Solway and Beacon Hill Community Schools. Together, we are Cumbria Futures Federation; two schools working collaboratively to provide an excellent education for students against the elegant backdrop of northern Cumbria. We lie at the heart of the community we serve, and front and centre for us are your children and our students. Our students are individuals, and every member of our school staff sees it as a great privilege to be able to support each and every student.

Our schools have great personalities, and a set of values that do not just daub the walls and website but feature daily in how every person in the building works together. New teachers and visitors to the school regularly comment on this, and these values provide the positive environment in which our students thrive and learn. We are academically ambitious for our students. We know within every student is a rich wealth of potential; central to our vision for everyone we teach is to inspire them to use their potential, to open their minds to new ideas and opportunities, and challenge them to be, and do, their very best. Sitting alongside this is a no less ambitious purpose to develop the moral courage and integrity of our students to do the right thing whatever their circumstances. To put it simply, to become good people, well prepared for their future lives as positive members of their families, workplaces, local and wider communities.

The quality of the relationships developed across the school helps to do this and builds a secure and healthy place on which our students can build strong foundations to make continuous progress within a safe, inclusive and ambitious environment; to go out and succeed in and contribute to the world around them.

Our small size gives us a great advantage. We see each student where they are, as individuals we know very well, and we are best placed as a result to drive progress forward. This develops a uniquely inclusive environment for each student to flourish in. No-one is overlooked, everyone is valued.

We are mindful a student's education is not a dress rehearsal. It is important that we do everything we can to make their time with us count, especially where time has been paused for many through Covid. High quality teaching, learning and engagement is at the heart of everything we do. Our staff work hard every day, with courage and integrity, to make sure students have the best possible experience while at our schools. Our ethos removes educational barriers or any obstacles the students face to ensure all have the opportunity to do their best.

Both schools have been rated as Good providers in our recent Ofsted inspections and we are, as always, committed to high academic standards along with the highest quality pastoral care. Please come and look around, all of our staff would be very proud to show our school to you and your child.

Tom Hailwood

Headteacher

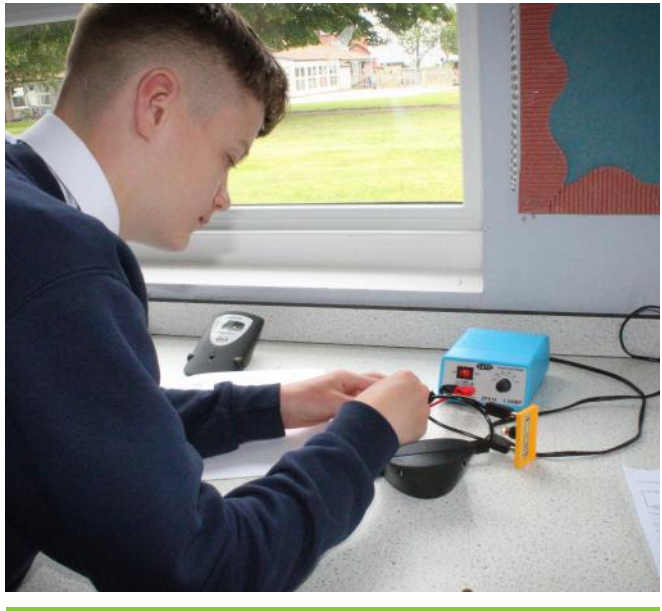
SOLWAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Learning

Our Philosophy and Methods

We offer a broad, balanced and academic curriculum tailored to the needs and aspirations 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 a sense of achievement. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan learning that builds on students’ prior learning and develops understanding.

- ✓ All students study English, Maths, Science, Humanities, Spanish, Physical Education, Art, Technology, Computing, RE and Food at KS3
- ✓ We expect students to participate fully in and engage with the learning process, so they become responsible for their own learning
- ✓ 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



FLEXIBLE AND ACCELERATED LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS

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 Trilogy, and receive Careers information in a regular, timetabled lesson. We are able to offer a wide range of option choices to complete their curriculum including History, Geography and Spanish, BTEC Sport, Art and Design, Photography and Resistant Materials. As part of our Federation, we work closely with Beacon Hill Community School in Aspatia, there including Design Engineer Construct (DEC!).

Because we are small, we are able to work flexibly with 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. By giving the students a flexible learning environment, we empower them to take control of their studies, resulting in higher engagement throughout the school.

“Pupils benefit from a good quality education.” Ofsted, July 2019

Key Stage 3

A High Priority, Not An Afterthought

School leadership has given careful thought to our curriculum design and intent and we are clear that we must develop vocabulary, cultural capital and good learning behaviours for all students at Key Stage 3.

AT SOLWAY, KEY STAGE 3 IS CONSIDERED A HIGH PRIORITY

We have re-focused our attention on Key Stage 3. Everything we teach in Years 7, 8 and 9 is evaluated to make sure it has an impact on what the students learn at KS4, recognising that what happens in the early stages of secondary education impacts significantly on future outcomes. We have made KS3 a high priority for teaching and learning; we have changed the way we deliver subjects. We work with our partner primaries to make sure that the students do not repeat work they have already covered, but at the same time ensure the students have mastery of the key line objectives in English and Maths in particular that they need to be successful at KS4. Our curriculum contains an increased emphasis on language acquisition – English in terms of expanding and developing vocabulary, but also Spanish, and we expect all students to take GCSE Spanish. All students at KS3 will learn Music and have the opportunity to take keyboard and guitar lessons from visiting teachers.



Engaging students in Key Stage 3 sets the foundations for the rest of their learning. It is extremely important to create an environment where younger students are a priority. Our Curriculum Links Wall makes it clear to students what and when they are learning, and how that links to their learning in the future.

STUDENT VOICE

“The careers advice from Solway has really helped me discover paths I didn’t know existed. When I was worried about my next steps because I didn’t know what to do, the staff helped me by showing me what I was capable of.”



Enrichment

Extra-curricular activities at Solway

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.

STUDENT VOICE

"I have gained a lot of experience from the careers programme at Solway School. I didn't realise what was available in my local area. Over the last 2 years we have taken part in careers fairs, open evenings, interview practice, networking events and more."

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES TO SUIT EVERYONE

We offer a huge range of clubs within school: sports clubs include football, netball, rugby, trampolining; then there is chess, guitar and keyboard lessons for all students in KS3. We run a French conversation class for those going skiing, drama, art and the opportunity to develop student voice through debating. 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 with teachers and students taking part side by side to compete for their house.

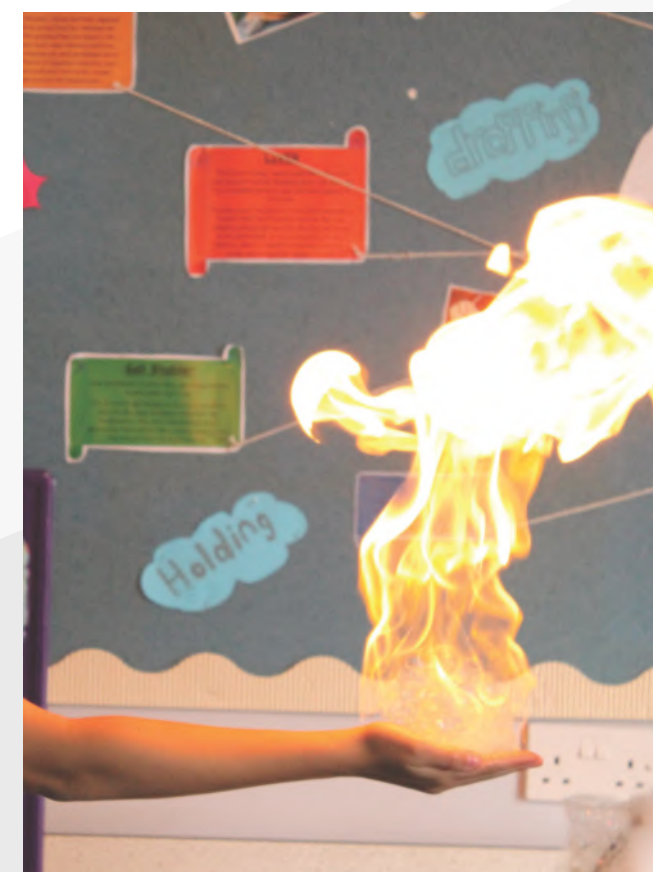
Educational Trips and Visits

Of course there are plenty of trips and visits too. All of Year 7 enjoy an adventurous residential visit in the autumn of their first year with us. In recent years we have been skiing in Italy and France and visited Barcelona to practise our Spanish and take in some of the culture. Our bike club in 2018 cycled from Pisa to Rome, and in 2019 at Alpe d'Huez; as well as challenging themselves physically they

also experienced culture and daily life. Students experience the culture of Edinburgh as well as the excitement of escape rooms, and the discipline and commitment needed to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Bronze and Silver levels. We regularly take groups to the Theatre by the Lake in Keswick and the Theatre Royal in Newcastle. In our Olympic Week at the end of the summer term we have taken the whole school to visit different places of worship – always an interesting experience. At the end of the summer term we take the entire school on a Grand Day Out (in 2019 to Keswick) which everyone enjoys.

Homework club runs regularly after school, with support available from staff and our fantastic teaching assistants, and our library and computer suites are well used by students every day outside lessons. Every student is given the challenge of completing '100 things to do before I leave Solway'. These range from helping out at a school open evening, learning to juggle, gaining a first aid qualification and how to iron a shirt!

We provide great opportunities for students to try something new and different and learn some essential skills for life after school. There is always something to do and lots going on at Solway!



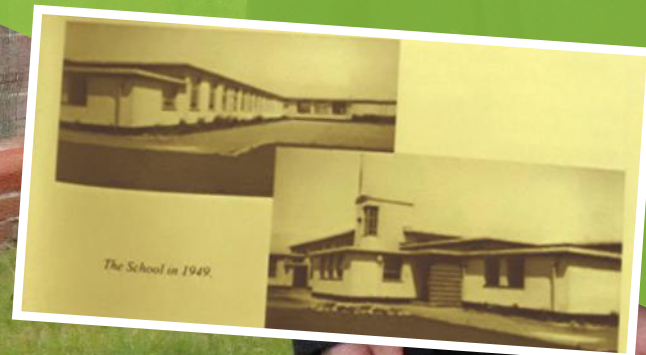


SOLWAY COMMUNITY
SCHOOL



History of the School

In May 1937, the Cumberland education committee approved plans for a new secondary school in Silloth. In July 1939, they reported that work had begun, and that "it may be claimed fairly to be a pattern in modern school building". By this time, the construction of the new RAF airfield was well advanced, and by the following autumn, the activity there had reached a point where the Director of Education "thought it wise to close Silloth School with regard to their proximity to the aerodrome". Both schools closed and the RAF used them as billets. Despite the difficulties in obtaining building materials during the war, the new school was completed by July 1940. The County Council agreed to authorise the Air Ministry to use the school to accommodate the airmen for the rest of the war, with the hall becoming the camp's cinema and occasionally, live shows presented there. After the war ended, pupils moved in and the camouflage paint was finally removed.



"Pupils demonstrate positive and mature attitudes and are articulate and polite ... they would recommend the school to a friend."

Ofsted 2019

Student Leadership

Setting Our Students Up For Success



Many senior students apply to take on a leadership role in Year 11. Chair and Vice Chair of the student body often represent the school at community events and lead a team of prefects to mentor younger students and help with the smooth running of the school on a daily basis.

PROMOTING A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

We also focus on sports leadership – both KS3 and KS4 have Sports Captains within each House, who help organise inter-house competitions and support and encourage students to take part in sporting activities on a daily basis. Peer mentoring is another cornerstone of our student leadership. Year 9 students apply each year to take on peer mentor roles for our Year 7s. This enables a broad base of support for our new students in the student body as well as valuable learning opportunities for the mentors, supported by vertical tutor groups.

By giving the students the opportunity to help their peers succeed, we develop a range of skills that are invaluable in later life. Student voice is clear in the school, and students are active lead learners, assisting staff in observing and developing good attitudes for learning. They have a regular presence at senior team meetings and were instrumental in supporting recent whole school developments such as managing mobile phones in school.

STUDENT VOICE

"With all the uncertainty of lockdown, I was so relieved to get my results. The teachers of Solway School have always been supportive, and I am very grateful, as without them I wouldn't have had my choice of 6th forms. I am going on to Keswick 6th form to continue my studies, leading me to a career in architecture."

Testimonials

From Past Students Of The School

"Very grateful for a childhood in Silloth and the wonderful school which was Solway. I would love to go back in a heartbeat. Successful in my GCSEs which allowed me to enrol at 6th form, and then continued to enhance my education through apprenticeships and distance learning qualifications. I've worked at business consultants, ITV, University of Cumbria Students' Union, and now I'm the Executive Support Assistant at Lancaster City Council and a big part of my role is Wellbeing, I love it."

Stephanie Jayne Anderson (1999-2004)

"After leaving school with a variety of GCSE's, I started an apprenticeship with Reays coaches working there until 2006 as a mechanic, whilst also gaining my PCV licence. From there I moved onto a position with Amey based at their Dalston Depot again as fleet mechanic and later workshop charge hand. From this point I decided it was the best time to pursue my long standing ambition to start my own business. From that date Robinson car and Commercial became a full time commitment, working away slowly over the next two years growing the company, where we now employ up to 25 staff. This year has seen our company win two awards, North West Family Business Award for Transport and Logistics and then crowned the National winners more recently. I had some fantastic teachers at Silloth School, who I have a lot to be thankful for in what they have helped me to achieve over the years."

Ricky Robinson (1997-2002)

"After completing a variety of GCSEs, I went on Welbeck College, The Army College, followed by University. Left the Army in 2000 and went onto work in Aerospace research, and then defence research at BAE Systems. In 2011 I set up my own Company, K Sharp, where we look at Human Science research and Future Technology, mainly for Government and the MoD. In amongst that, I also got involved in politics, and have been a Councillor at County and Parish level, as well as standing as an MP a couple of years ago. I have fond memories of Solway School."

Barry Kirby (1990-1995)

After GCSEs, I attended Carlisle college for electrical and electronic engineering. I completed my BTEC National diploma in electrical and electronic engineering and after having a look around, started my new job as a quality inspector on electronic circuit boards. I continued in this career field, working as a quality engineer for APT Electronics. It was here I saw a job advertised at M-sport. I was successful, and my job was to wire up the cars and given the responsibility of checking the cars before they were turned on whilst competing in a variety of amazing countries all around the world. I am now working for McLaren, started as an electrical technician, but now I am a Senior car systems technician. I liaise with designers on the installation, design the layout, manufacture, test and calibrate and I can say to myself I am literally the only person in the world who does this on the McLaren formula 1 car.

Paul Blackburn (1988-1993)



Community

At The Heart Of What We Do

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 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 student – chefs, local employers give mock interviews to KS4 students, the town rugby club has taught our sports



Achievement By All

We Ensure That Everyone Succeeds

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.

leaders how to referee in rugby matches to help with primary school tournaments; the volunteer lifeboat crews and fire brigade regularly work with the students. Last year We have helped with the

creation of the 'fairy door trail' in Silloth, and designed and created art in the local bus shelters and at the RAFA Club to commemorate the anniversary of the end of WW2. 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 their community they 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.

Support

Student Welfare At Solway

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.

We want our children to leave school ready to face the challenges of a changing world with 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.

We have got very highly trained, expert teaching assistants who work with students who need extra help to make sure every child is supported and encouraged to reach their potential. 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. Students access high quality careers provision which helps them aspire to what they can achieve and gives them the support they need to get there. 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, which this year has been even more vital given the circumstances surrounding Covid-19.

"The transition from primary to secondary was easy, because I was feeling prepared for it. I had lots of information about the school and I knew a lot of people there." **Ruby Graham**

"When I moved from primary to secondary school I felt nervous, but when I joined we were met with a warm welcome and open arms, the school is amazing. You can make friends and feel safe and at ease."

Daniel Petrov

"I was nervous at first but the staff, teachers and students were great and I felt included. The teachers are always there if you need anything, to talk or for help with work. I've made lots of friends since joining."

Faith Hearton



SOLWAY COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

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