

# Sir Jonathan North Community College



The college receives 'World Class School' recognition'

**W**e have been on a five year journey which has seen Ofsted rate us as Good then Outstanding. On top of that, in December 2017, we were the first state school in Leicestershire, and one of only seventeen non selective state schools nationally, to receive the World Class Schools Quality Mark.

## REPORT CARD

- » Headteacher:  
Mrs Alison Merrills
- » Type: Girls' State  
Comprehensive School
- » Location: Leicester
- » Number on roll: 1250
- » Number of teachers: 74
- » Number of support staff: 60
- » Free School Meals: 31.3%
- » Students for whom English  
is not their first language:  
38.2%
- » Number of SEND students:  
10.5%

Our GCSE English results have put us in the top 10% of schools nationally for a number of years, and last year, we were in the top 6%. We were anxious to cascade this success throughout the school. This is being achieved through whole-staff training, enrichment opportunities, and extended engagement with the wider community and industry professionals.

We pride ourselves on educating the whole student and our successes in recent years demonstrate our commitment to preparing girls to become confident, articulate and aspirational young women by the time they leave us. Numerous opportunities are provided for students to take part in a wide variety of enrichment activities in order to develop the skills they are gaining in lessons; our approach to Literacy Across the Curriculum has always been to extend these skills beyond the classroom. We are now reaping the rewards of a relentless and creative approach to skilling young women for life beyond school which has led to local, regional and national recognition of our students' talents.

Our journey began back in 2012 when embedding literacy across the curriculum became a whole school focus as more GCSE subjects were requiring a spelling, punctuation and grammar mark.

We gave our Advanced Skills English teacher a brief to skill, enthuse and support all staff in delivering literacy as part of their normal teaching practice. For the first three years, there was a clear focus each year: Reading, Writing and Speaking. The aim was to raise achievement through by teaching reading, writing and communication strategies. This whole school training was then supplemented by a number of supporting strategies such as making literacy resources available on every computer desktop, and 30 minute skills sessions covering literacy basics. The AST worked with specific subject areas to train staff to model the writing process confidently and independently. This year, we received the Heritage Schools Award, following previous success in the historically-themed Young Writer and Young Investigator of the Year competition. These achievements reflect our determination to make sure all staff, whatever their specialism, take responsibility for promoting literacy.

Underpinning everything we do is a belief that our job is to educate the whole child, so we were keen to

provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for developing their own literacy skills whilst enabling others to do so. We began training reading buddies and Literacy Leaders. The Literacy Leaders initiative trains Year 9 (13-14 year olds) students in the delivery of literacy strategies to Year 7 students in Humanities, form time, and in English. They are charged with raising the profile of literacy around the college and they attend the Year 6 transition evening to talk to parents. At the end of the course, they achieve certificates from the Sports Council UK. Reading Buddies in Years 9 and 10 are trained to work with younger students to support their reading, which has proved to be mutually beneficial:

'I like Reading Buddies as I get to see the progress the students make over a period of time. Their confidence in reading out loud grows week after week as well as their reading ability.'

'I like it because it's helpful and it helps me with the words. My tutor will help me by explaining what they mean or they will show me.'

“We were keen to provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for developing their own literacy skills whilst enabling others to do so”

Drama students take part in the Leicester Comedy Festival





Peer-to-peer reading support



Year 11 celebrate successful GCSE results

“We have developed a culture of aspiration which seeks to give students a range of engaging, challenging and creative opportunities to shine”

We have developed a culture of aspiration which seeks to give students a range of engaging, challenging and creative opportunities to shine. In addition to work carried out in the classroom, we are keen for staff to provide enrichment opportunities for students to showcase their talents and develop new ones. This year alone we have celebrated students who have won competitions for writing short stories, monologues and poems, designing book covers, and creating a new Hogwarts' professor! In March 2017 four of our students were elected to the Leicester Youth Parliament. This enables them to represent the views of young people in this area, speaking confidently and articulately on their behalf. For two years running, we won Gold Best School in the Leicester Schools Court Competition, this was alongside individual awards to students for the prestigious Best Advocate Award and Best Court Official. Behind all of these achievements lies, the hard work, dedication and motivation from our staff.

Each year, employers come into school to give all Year 10 students a mock interview, and are blown away by the enthusiasm, ambition and commitment of the girls. This year, feedback included:

‘Your students are so ambitious; every single one of them had a dream career in mind and all seemed passionate about reaching their goals.’

This wider student success demonstrates our commitment to promoting literacy skills in broad, creative and contextual ways which has helped us to move from Good to Outstanding. Following the three year programme, a key focus has been to embed good practice across the college, and develop additional strategies to respond to a changing cohort. We have employed a specialist teacher to work with students and parents who are new to English. The co-ordinator has provided extensive and regular training for all staff on how to meet the needs of students who are new to English to ensure we promote full inclusion to support language acquisition.

Our journey is far from over, but as we seek to build on past successes our aim is to ensure many more students are able to echo the words of one of our Year 10 girls: ‘I have learned many significant skills which I know will be a great asset to me in the future. I hope that all my fellow students will feel as proud as I am to call our college ‘World Class’.