

Dear Colleague

Welcome to Smithills School

Thank you for showing an interest in working at Smithills School. I do hope you will find the following information useful; should you wish to know anything else about the school, all you have to do is ask.

In November 2016 the school was inspected and placed in Special Measures; we are not contesting this judgement; however it does not provide the complete picture of a vibrant school with a wonderful staff and great young people.

We know that achievement in Maths and English is not yet good enough and significant steps have already been taken to bring about the necessary improvements. At the same time we recognise that many subject areas in school have performance at or above National residuals.

The main force for change in the school is our new Joint Executive Board whose members include me, the Principal, together with a Head teacher of an outstanding school; a National Leader of Education; an Ofsted inspector; an external advisor and an independent Chair. Clearly, things are set to improve here and rapidly. We are confident that being in an Ofsted category will put us at the cutting edge of Learning and Teaching and will provide exceptional career opportunities for those who chose to take the challenge and work with us.

We have faced a number of difficulties over recent years; fortunately, these are now behind us and we intend to make speedy and sustainable progress from now on. We hope you will want to be part of our journey.

Smithills was a Specialist Performing Arts College from 2003 to 2013 and although the nature of Specialist Colleges has changed, our commitment to Performance, Music and Art remains as strong as ever. Our World Championship bands continue to captivate audiences both in this country and abroad, as they did last summer on their tour in Ireland and will do next summer when they return to America. Our dramatic performance and pantomimes are second to none and we continue to cultivate talent in all forms of the media. Instrumental music lessons are still available to all of our students free of charge, as are all instrument loans.

Both our formal curriculum structure and our extra-curricular programmes allow students to grow and develop into rounded, capable citizens. Progression to Key Stage 5 and FE is the 'norm' for the vast majority of our students. Our sports fields are huge, as is our superb Sports Centre (opened 2001) and, together with facilities like our own indoor, heated swimming pool, allow our staff to promote competitive sport in many forms as well as prioritising health related fitness.

In this academic year we have numerous field visits and trips within the UK scheduled. Over the last few years our students have undertaken community work in Kenya; attempted to climb mountains in Africa; performed in our outstanding dance productions in New York and toured with one of our internationally renowned bands in other parts of North America.

Our school campus is large and set in beautiful surroundings to the north of Bolton. We are a truly comprehensive school of nearly 1000 students. Bolton itself is part of the Greater Manchester conurbation, but remains a Lancashire town in its own right and is steeped in history and character.

If you would like to know more then please visit our website at www.smithillsschool.net. Or, better still contact us and arrange to visit and see us at work.

Yours sincerely,



Alec Cottrill
Principal