

## Press Release

### **The Elizabethan Academy Celebrates Recognition for Excellence in Inclusive Culture**

The Elizabethan Academy is proud to announce its recent recognition of excellence in creating an inclusive culture for its most vulnerable students. This accolade, through independent quality assurance organisation Challenge Partners, highlights the school's dedication to fostering an environment where every student can thrive, regardless of their individual challenges.

Located in the heart of Retford, The Elizabethan Academy has a long-standing commitment to its core values of Respect, Responsibility, and Resilience. Since its transition to an Academy in 2012, the school has seen significant growth and development, becoming oversubscribed for Year 7 entries and experiencing a substantial increase in sixth form enrolments.



### **Inclusive Culture as an Area of Excellence**

The school's inclusive culture has been identified as an area of excellence due to its comprehensive and innovative approach to supporting vulnerable students. The

Elizabethan Academy has implemented a range of unique strategies and practices to ensure all students have access to a tailored educational experience that meets their needs.

### Key Initiatives and Impact

1. **Adapted Curriculum:** The school offers a small nurture group setting for Key Stage 3 students, focusing on social and developmental gaps alongside academic learning. The Foundation Learning Pathway in Key Stage 4 allows students to concentrate on core subjects and life skills, reducing their GCSE options to better suit their needs.
2. **Enhanced Provision (EP):** An offsite facility supports students with anxiety-related non-attendance, complex learning needs, and challenging behaviours. Tailored learning journeys and virtual classroom options ensure these students remain engaged and connected to the school's curriculum.
3. **Aspire Curriculum:** For hard-to-reach Key Stage 3 students, the Aspire Curriculum combines thematic core learning with practical outdoor activities, aiming to boost self-esteem and social skills.
4. **Reading Initiatives:** Recognizing a decline in reading and comprehension levels, the school introduced "Drop Everything and Read" (DEAR) time and revamped library resources. These efforts have significantly improved reading ages and fluency across lower years.
5. **Transition Support:** The Academy's detailed transition process, which includes additional visits, dedicated transition days, and involvement in annual reviews, ensures that students from feeder primary schools are well-prepared and supported as they join the Academy.

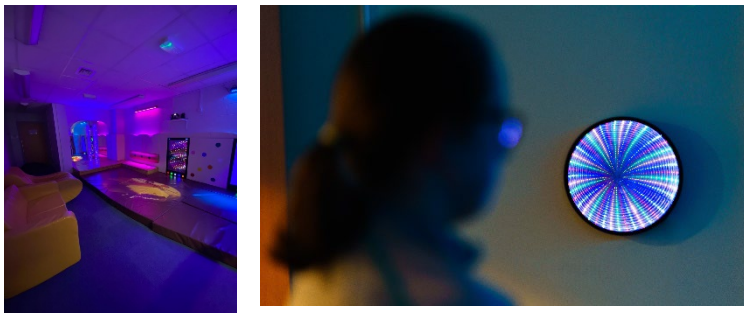
These initiatives have led to measurable improvements, including a reduction in suspensions, enhanced attendance, particularly for those attending the Enhanced Provision, and significant gains in reading ages. The school's inclusive approach also prepares students for future success, with all students moving on to suitable post-school destinations.



## Recognition and Reputation

The Elizabethan Academy's efforts have not gone unnoticed. The school is the only secondary institution in the local authority to receive the Nottinghamshire Dyslexia Schools Kitemark and has also been awarded the Autism Friendly School Kitemark. These accolades reflect the school's exemplary support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The schools Director of SEND, Dawn Ager said “We constantly strive to do the best by all of our young people, which means being adaptive and innovative to meet the diverse needs of the students with SEND that transition to the Elizabethan. We have a reputation amongst professionals and the local community for being the school of choice for children have SEND, and we work closely with parents and carers to ensure that we keep their child at the centre of all the decisions that are made.



## Community and Leadership

Principal, Christine Horrocks said, “As a stand-alone academy we are aware of the importance of being outward looking and working collaboratively with other organisations. Challenge Partners supports this sharing of best practice and provides an external audit of the quality of our provision and leadership. I am delighted that we received accreditation for this area of excellence as it reflects our inclusive ethos as set out in our vision statement of “Success for All”. We have recently shared our culture and ethos with headteachers in Northumberland. We look forward to sharing our practice and continuing to learn from others. Our greatest challenge is how we continue to fund our provision in the longer term as it will be unsustainable with the current funding available for our most vulnerable students. Adequate funding must be made available if we are to ensure vulnerable students can continue to thrive and have their needs met in a mainstream setting”

Their leadership and the school's unwavering focus on creating an inclusive and supportive environment have been pivotal to this success.

The Elizabethan Academy continues to build its reputation within the local community and beyond, with growing interest in admissions and a waiting list for entry across



various year groups. This recognition for excellence in inclusive culture is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the entire school community.



For more information, please contact: [upsonh@elizabethan.notts.sch.uk](mailto:upsonh@elizabethan.notts.sch.uk) or on 01777 713700 Ext 05.

### **About The Elizabethan Academy**

The Elizabethan Academy, based in Retford, Nottinghamshire, is a secondary school with a growing sixth form. The Academy is committed to providing a high-quality education that prepares students for their future, emphasising the values of Respect, Responsibility, and Resilience.

**Ends**