



## **Welcome from the Headteacher**

Thank you for considering becoming part of Chaucer School.

Chaucer School is genuinely at an exciting stage of development. We're under no illusions that this is a school in a challenging context, in a community significantly hit by the ravages of Covid. However, we also know that working in a school like ours brings rewards like no other. We are looking for other like-minded colleagues to join us in our drive for first class education hand in hand with first class support. With a range of new colleagues in place in 2021-22, including myself as newly appointed headteacher, we have a renewed sense of developing pride and ambition. In short, Chaucer School is stepping up to the plate. Our expertise and impact with safeguarding for our community is something we're extremely proud of. Our work on personal development, and in particular work on careers and aspirations, is starting to pay back with a cultural shift into bigger and better beliefs in real futures for and from our students. Our support for success behaviour system aims to work with students and families to find a way to encourage, build, and maintain positive behaviour in school. Our three core values of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness are at the heart of our drive for improvement from and for students. With support from our Trust colleagues across Tipton School Academy Trust, both primary and secondary, and our extremely supportive and involved governing body, we know we are 'better together' to realise the life chances and dreams of every child in the Trust.

I hope the following information gives you something of an insight into what makes Chaucer School different to many other schools. If you like to visit to see if Chaucer School is the place for you, please do get in touch to make an appointment.

Best wishes

**Joanna Crewe**  
**Headteacher**



## **Our Context**

The IDACI deprivation index of 2019 places our students as living in one of the most deprived wards in the country – the top 1% - 246<sup>th</sup> out of 32,844 wards in England. This position had worsened since 2015 and we can see that position having been exacerbated again through COVID impact, and the cost of living crisis. The 7 domains of deprivation such as income, employment, health, crime, all place our students under significant risk, with some factors rating at the most disadvantaged scores. Pupil Premium funding is registered for 65% of all students, rising to 72% for KS3 students.

Covid recovery in a disadvantaged community can be slower than in other parts of the country in terms of returning to learning habits, routines, punctuality and attendance. Safeguarding needs have increased significantly as children returned after lockdown, with 50+ students at Child in Need/Child Protection, 30+ open CYT cases, and 20+ open MAST cases. Attendance is an ongoing focus area as we strive to embed aspiration and a belief in the importance of education. This context informs each of our strategies to support, safeguard and guide students to success, but significantly impacts on trust, engagement and aspiration to be socially mobile. Our inclusive practice and trauma informed, ACE aware relational approach to work WITH students and families is therefore crucial in order to reengage students into learning.

## **Quality of Education**

With the Trust, we have co-constructed and continue to align a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all students, particularly disadvantaged, the best possible opportunities for success. We continue to address the challenge of knowledge, communication and cultural capital with disciplined innovation through delivery, experience and intervention for students to close any gaps that have emerged. The end points of the curriculum are for all students to have been nurtured to realise their life chances and dreams as successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens with the best possible qualification outcomes for employment readiness.

The curriculum and supporting structures have been redeveloped so a broad range of subjects are available to enhance further the effective delivery of knowledge and skills for all students including those with special educational needs. We are also at the next stage of curriculum alignment across the trust, working towards KS3 alignment in Core and EBACC by Autumn 2022. In addition, our commitment to genuinely alternative curriculum offers at KS3 and KS4 mean that we invest in both internal and external provision. We are proud of our LINC provision, and the access that all students can gain to horticulture, bike maintenance, construction, furniture restoration, bee keeping, and hair and beauty.

With lower literacy levels than average, every teacher is a teacher of literacy at Chaucer School. In terms of supporting literacy and reading, all teachers are aware of the importance of supporting literacy needs; all have a literacy objective for the year in terms of delivering cross curricular literacy; a key thread of CPD through the year is on embedding literacy support into each curriculum plan.



The school uses the Rosenshine Principles of learning as a structure for teachers, underpinned by the statement 'I am the evaluator of my impact on student learning.' Training through 2021/22 has maintained a focus on these principles, with the added dimension of ensuring the planned curriculum allows for adaptive teaching to address wider gaps in skills and knowledge post-COVID, as well as addressing key learning and misconceptions in all subjects. Teachers more consistently recap knowledge, and check understanding through questioning and low stakes tests to ensure learning is built incrementally. 2022-23 will see an increased focus on feedback of all kinds at all levels.

A teaching, learning and assessment trust wide cycle has introduced standardised Trust assessment points and then deep analysis leads to next steps being specified. Qualifications have been aligned across TSAT to ensure that the best possible support can be deployed, as well as best practice on sharing of assessments, resources and planning. Our trust relationships continue to grow and develop as we learn as much from our differences as our similarities – but always 'better together.'

### **Quality of Support**

Safeguarding in school is of the highest standard. A high volume of safeguarding cases from our community means our staff are experts in their field, and processes are watertight to effectively manage and maintain the safeguarding needs of the children of Chaucer School. No stone is left unturned in seeking strategies to support children through our trauma informed ACE aware relational approach.

We have a very strong culture of inclusive practice/impact developing its curriculum to support students with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and ensuring trauma informed pedagogy is at the forefront of delivery. This means that a core strand of staff CPD is focused on trauma informed, relational practice in the classroom. The Social Discipline Window of working WITH students and families, rather than doing 'to' or 'for' them, is at the heart of our approach. There is a focus on relationship and behaviour training for staff, including sessions around trauma informed practice and the 'window of tolerance;' PACE training to further enhance our effectiveness at dealing with students who find themselves unable to regulate their own behaviours; and further CPD around EMR (establish, maintain, restore) method of building positive relationship to teaching staff. We also set great store in all staff use of the behaviour database enabling subject leader in particular to have an acute understanding of the behaviour data within their own areas, and teacher/student relationships.

Year 7 and Year 8 have seen the introduction of mixed ability tutor groups, which students stay in for the majority of their lessons. Behaviour data, staff voice and student voice all suggest this has been a positive development for the school, and the benefits for engagement and progress mean KS3 mixed ability teaching will remain at Chaucer for 2022-23.



In a context of traditionally poor attendance, both within the city and in the immediate environment, the school pursues all avenues to tackle the aspiration to attend and achieve. The attendance team are relentless in their pursuit of improvements to attendance under the lens of safeguarding, supported by the team of tutors, Engagement Leaders and Year Leaders. Attendance is everyone's business. The most recent OFSTED visit in 2020 recognised that we see attendance as high priority and that the support is strong.

SMSC learning is tracked through curriculum development plans and is also tracked centrally by area and year group to ensure opportunities are not missed for any aspect of SMSC, as well as linked to context dependent learning. Our LIFE programme is interleaved with the curriculum to provide learning strategies, interpersonal skills, financial awareness and emotional intelligence. We have a rich programme of external professionals coming into school to educate large and bespoke groups not just on career and academic pathways, but also, regarding the dangers of gang culture, knife crime, CCE/CSE, in order to match our community context and need. These opportunities support student confidence, resilience and independence.

Careers provision further enhances the practical work of raising of aspirations all students with high quality careers activities and interventions. The LIFE curriculum includes a careers curriculum element in Years 7-11, including local labour market information, different sectors of work, and the difference between a job and a career. This is moving towards driving links to careers through curriculum subject choices. NEET figures are low, and engagement with aspirational sixth form provision is increasing significantly, as well as a cultural shift towards a real belief in aspirational careers, courses and futures to be proud of.