



# HETHERSETT ACADEMY

Prospectus



We are part of the Inspiration Trust, a not-for-profit charity twice ranked as the country's top comprehensive schools group for pupil progress to GCSE.

Our schools follow a knowledge-rich curriculum, structured by traditional subjects, to ensure systematic and thorough teaching for all.

We also offer the widest range of sporting and cultural opportunities to our young people, and encourage them to play an active role in their school and the wider community.

Our family of schools work together to ensure that all students have access to the very best teaching expertise, exceptional facilities, and extracurricular activities to excite and broaden young minds.



## Welcome

Welcome to Hethersett Academy – a focused centre of excellence and successful learning for all.

We provide a broad and high-quality curriculum that has been recognised by Ofsted as being Outstanding in all areas, and seen our students consistently achieve some of the best GCSE results in East Anglia.

We are here to ensure that each student achieves highly and develops his or her own particular abilities, interests, and talents to the full – academic, sporting, personal, and social.

Young people are key partners in their own learning and their voice matters: we listen to their views and ideas and act upon them. We engage them in the running of the academy and provide students with opportunities to develop leadership and organisational skills.

We take many opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom. We encourage students to visit widely across our county, our country, and around the world, and bring their first-hand experiences back to the classroom.

As part of our extended school day, all students get to try their hands at an exceptional range of cultural and sporting activities, many finding hidden talents and lifelong passions.

We aid the development of the vital life skills which ensure that young people can contribute to their communities as active citizens, both today and in the future as they progress on to university and their career.

We look forward to you and your child joining us on this exciting and rewarding journey.

Gareth Stevens  
Principal



## About our academy

Our academy starts at Year 7 and aims to ensure students have a strong foundation to tackle GCSEs in Year 11 before moving on to further study.

We have strong links with nearby primary schools, ensuring a smooth transition, and our size and community focus helps students settle in quickly whether they join us in the main Year 7 round or through a mid-year transfer later on.

Many of our students come from Hethersett, Little Melton, Mulbarton, Cringleford, and nearby villages, although we are increasingly welcoming families from Eaton, Norwich, and Wymondham who are keen to benefit from our academic focus and broad range of cultural and sporting activities.

Our vision is that every student achieves their best – this, of course, includes their academic results, but we also highly prize developing each student as a capable and valuable member of the community.

We aim to achieve this by ensuring everyone associated with the school commits to achieving outstanding progress, and enjoys and engages in their learning while being prepared to take on challenge without the fear of failure.

Through this ethos we encourage each student to be a responsible and active member of both the school community and their local neighbourhood.

Students can create their own curriculum to suit their particular strengths as they move through the school towards their formal GCSE examinations.

Our academic curriculum is supported by a huge range of extra activities such as the trips and visits undertaken within subject areas, participation in music and art events, and a wide selection of sporting opportunities across a huge range of sports activities.

Our extended school day brings about additional enrichment provision, focusing on science, technology and maths, creative arts, and literacy.

All students have an opportunity to study something new or to build on subjects they already enjoy.

In addition, they are able to choose from a variety of extracurricular sports and hobbies run by external coaches and members of the community as well as volunteers from within the academy.

## Joining our community

New students joining Hethersett Academy in Year 7 enjoy a structured programme of transition days in the preceding summer term.

During this time, parents also have the opportunity to come along to meet the students' form tutors.

The purpose of the extended transition period is to introduce students to their form tutors, to meet each other, to reassure students and parents alike that they will be well cared for when they arrive at the academy, and to ask any questions of academy staff.

We aim to work with parents and carers to help our students flourish and develop into accomplished, cultured young adults over their time with us.

Our new students have dedicated cloakroom facilities, are each allocated a personal storage locker, and are introduced to Year 8 students who welcome the opportunity of mentoring our new students.

Following our parents' evening during the summer term, parents and carers are invited back to the academy just a few weeks into the autumn term to see how their child has settled in.

The autumn term starts with an exciting two-day residential trip to Hautbois Activity Centre at Coltishall.

This is an opportunity for students to build strong relationships and develop confidence in their own skills at the start of a new school year in preparation for the challenges to come.

We also welcome students who choose to transfer at other ages, either in September or part-way through the school year.

This can be families who have recently moved to the area, or where a student doesn't feel they are achieving their best at their existing local school.

We regularly hold school tours and open events for families that are thinking about changing schools, to help them explore their options and understand how Hethersett can help their child achieve their best at GCSE and beyond.



## Learning for life

Our curriculum covers a diverse range of subjects to help each student find their passions, and tailor the choice of subjects to their particular strengths.

It is important that all students achieve excellence in English, maths, and science and we apply focus to numeracy and literacy skills from the moment they enter the academy.

During their early years our students study a broad curriculum including English, biology, chemistry, physics, maths, history, geography, French, Spanish, religious education, technology, physical education, art, and music.

We guide students as they narrow their studies towards GCSE, ensuring they challenge their goals and make the right choices for them as individuals.

The academy day starts each morning with tutor time, enabling students to settle in and focus on the day's work ahead. Tutors are able to get to know their students so that they can support them appropriately through the year.

Tutor groups are made up of students from two year groups – so students become more confident of making friendships across the year groups and can see the learning journey that their friends are taking in the year ahead of them.

Year 7 students are supported by Year 8 students in the early days when they are finding their feet in their new school and there are lots of new experiences to be dealt with.

Year 9 and 10 students share tutor groups and Year 11 students are grouped on their own to enable tutor time to be more focused on any specific GCSE support that may be required.

The academy is divided into four colleges: Brunel, Curie, Dyson, and Hawking.

Each student is allocated to a college and we hope they will represent their college in one or more of the competitions that run through the school year.

College points are accumulated for class work and other activities and these lead to an awards ceremony at the end of term.

Monday to Friday our timetable is made up of five one-hour classes, plus break and lunch time. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, we add an additional sixth one-hour session.

These midweek enriched timetable sessions feature homework, music, drama, arts, and sports clubs, designed to ensure that students both get the most out of their studies and develop the social skills and cultural awareness to succeed outside of school.

## A world of opportunities

On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday our academy day includes an additional sixth one-hour session, dedicated to going beyond the normal school experience.

The sessions are broken into three strands to ensure students enjoy a breadth of activities, with the balance between the strands flexing as students progress through the school.

The first strand is enrichment activities. These are designed to give students a range of options to extend and enrich the curriculum they study in their other lessons at the academy.

The activities on offer frequently change to reflect students' interests, with recent opportunities including app design, creative writing, STEM club, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Combined Cadet Force, film club, rock school, and many more.

The second strand is dedicated to sporting activities, covering many disciplines. The opportunities can include traditional school sports such as football, rugby, swimming, netball, and fitness, but also more unusual pursuits like archery or Zumba.

These sessions are run by staff from the academy and coaches from the University of East Anglia and other local sporting experts.

Some sessions are held at the UEA Sportspark whilst some take place on the academy site.

The third strand is devoted to private study. Here students spend time working in their tutor groups, supervised by their form tutor, where they can complete homework but with additional support.

Period six takes on a different flavour as students approach their GCSE exams. In this crucial period, students instead receive additional maths, English, and science lessons, leading to considerable improvement in these core subjects.

To ensure they do not miss out on other activities, we also offer Year 11 students the chance to take part in an hour's sporting activity after school twice a week.

A late bus to Mulbarton and surrounding villages is available on each day for those students participating in activities with a later finish time.



## Encouraging broad horizons

We ensure that students are able to take advantage of a wide range of trips and visits, supporting classroom learning and developing our young people's confidence and personalities.

Each trip is carefully managed to ensure that students gain the most they can from their time out of school.

To give just a flavour, recent trips have included short local coastal walks and camping trips, and visits further afield including visiting the CERN laboratory and Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland, and touring the First and Second World War battlefields in France.

We place great value on cultural activities and sporting pursuits.

Collaborating as part of a band or orchestra, or pulling together in a sports team helps develop important life skills such as teamwork, communication skills, self-belief, and confidence – as well as ensuring real enjoyment and fun.

We encourage students to learn a musical instrument – from classical instruments as part of our string ensemble or jazz band to modern

instruments as part of our rock school – and to experiment with art, drama, and dance.

We stage regular concerts and showcases so students can experience the thrill of performing in front of an anticipating audience, including at prestigious venues like Norwich Playhouse and Norwich Cathedral.

Our student sport leaders help pupils throughout the academy take part in sport, and also assist with activities for local primary schools.

Our popular Combined Cadet Force offers students the chance to learn valuable self-reliance and teamwork skills, in a unique structured environment that also offers a potential career path.

Whatever your child is interested in, we believe we can help them develop their skills.

## Supporting our students

### Pastoral care

Every student is important and to ensure we identify and support each student's needs we operate a college system alongside our excellent special educational needs department.

Our four colleges provide a clear support system for each child, from their form tutor to their college assistant principal, to the senior leader in charge of care and guidance.

Academic mentoring is provided for students to help them achieve their goals.

### Student ethos

We support our students with formal structures that include the student council, college councils, head boy and girl, and prefects.

Our vision is that students enjoy and engage in their learning – listening to their views is important in ensuring this happens.

### Uniform

Our uniform is smart and traditional.

We encourage each student to take pride in their appearance and be proud to belong to Hethersett Academy and to represent the school on their way, in uniform, to and from school.

### Partnership with parents

We work in close partnership with parents and provide online access to progress data as well as the opportunity to come into school for a parents' evening to meet and speak with teachers about the progress their child is making.

Communication between school and home is critical to ensuring the right support is given to enable the student to make outstanding progress.

Throughout the year, we organise specific year group events to keep you informed of progress and we hold an achievement evening to recognise excellent success by students.

We also arrange events to coincide with important times where students are making choices about the subjects they study as they progress towards the GCSE exams at the end of Year 11.



## A wide range of subject options

We offer a wide range of subject options, giving our students the chance to focus on their skills and interests.

We constantly review our subjects and qualifications to ensure they reflect the needs of students and their future employers. Courses recently offered include:

- Applied science
- Arabic
- Art and design
- Business studies
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Child development
- Computing
- Design and technology: Resistant materials
- Design and technology: Textiles
- Drama
- English language
- English literature
- Environmental and land-based science

- French
- Food technology
- Further maths
- Geography
- History
- Information and communications technology
- Maths
- Media studies
- Music
- Photography
- Physical education
- Physics
- Religious studies
- Russian
- Science
- Spanish

## Applying for a place

### Year 7 applications

Most students join us at the start of Year 7. The application process is organised by Norfolk County Council, and begins in the autumn of the year before.

We hold open evenings and offer tours of the school in the first half of the autumn term. Please contact us for times and dates.

Norfolk County Council will ask you to choose which school you would like your child to attend, with applications closing at the end of October. They will then allocate places, with offers sent out at the beginning of March.

Should more students apply than we have places, spaces will be allocated based on our admissions policy; this is updated from time to time and can be found on our website.

### Joining at other times

We are always happy to hear from families who would like to join us during the school year, or at different ages.

This may be because of a recent move to the area, or to find a school better suited to your child.

Simply contact us to arrange a visit or for more details.





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