Inspiring, Caring and Enriching

Self-Evaluation Form

Context

Bottisham Village College is a highly ambitious, highly innovative and highly regarded comprehensive school, based in the heart of rural East Cambridgeshire. Drawn from our local community, we are 1200 students in number and have a vision that is inspiring, caring and enriching for every student in our community. As the lead for The Anglian Gateway Teaching School, supporting other schools, ITT recruitment and the professional development of teaching staff in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland, the college is actively improving the education for young people in our area.

Opened in 1937, we were the second of the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges, built with a commitment to lifelong learning at its heart. Henry Morris, the founding father of the Village College ideal, believed that schools should be the pulse of the local community, open to all and offering an attractive and stimulating learning environment, a catalyst for social achievement and cohesion. This is a vision that still resonates today. The college is a focal point for village life and a community ethos: a comprehensive adult education programme, a community sports centre and extensive provision for the arts. In essence, the facilities, open 364 days a year, are the gateway to village life. Our adult learning courses run during the week, offering a rich selection of education for our wider community, from Maths GCSE to Level 2 qualifications in Horticulture. Additionally, our sports facilities help grow sport at grass roots level, with swimming clubs and FA affiliated football clubs all benefitting. Importantly, the college’s commitment to the on-site charity “Red to Green” is evident. Working with adults with disabilities and special needs, the college provides the supportive framework for this important community work to take place.

Based between Cambridge and Newmarket, the school serves 19 villages and 10 feeder primary schools. As it stands, the school is a 9 form entry, mixed 11-16 comprehensive academy which is heavily oversubscribed. Given the increasing numbers of applications and catchment numbers, we have completed a three year £17 million, capital build project and have now expanded to 10 forms in September 2020. Given the demographic growth in this area, The Local Authority and The ESFA ensured that more students would benefit from the inspiring, caring and enriching education that this oversubscribed college has to offer.

A member of The Anglian Learning Trust, one which serves 5 secondary and 3 primary schools, we work collaboratively with other schools to improve educational outcomes, promote social justice and tolerance, and foster ethical responsibility to build successful communities.
Our Recent History
We have successfully come through a period of significant transition without changing the fundamental identity of the college:

- We have organised and executed a successful capital build programme, despite disruptive elements;
- We have developed the senior leadership team;
- We have restructured the governing body;
- We have challenged underperformance and secured the recruitment of high quality teachers in key areas, in a competitive environment;
- We have grown new staff to fulfil challenging leadership roles, to build capacity and to distribute leadership effectively;
- We have taken steps to remodel and reduce teacher workload;
- We have remodelled our approach to behaviour management and introduced a new pastoral system to take into account our changing demographic and exclusion rates;
- We have developed more robust systems for supporting our high-needs students;
- We have developed an evidenced-based Teaching and Learning Strategy to support consistent high-quality teaching across the college and a robust Quality Assurance Framework to address a temporary lull in academic performance.

With this time of change behind us, we are confident and assured that Bottisham Village College is in a strong position to continue to offer an exceptional inspiring, caring and enriching education for our young people.

Our Story
Our overarching aims are clear: **Inspiring, Caring and Enriching** through our relationship-based approach which permeates through all aspects of college life.

Having undergone significant development over the past 4 years, our new resources are best exemplified by the new “Morris Wing”: auditorium, dance studio, modern bright classrooms and a spacious dining hall. In the same way, our new library, ICT suites, conference spaces and reception area are symbolic of a college embracing the future and providing for its community. Additionally, due to the growth and context of our cohort of students attending the college, our growth strategy has led to development of leadership structures at all levels: an inspiring Teaching and Learning Strategy, curriculum development, the development of a new positive behaviour culture to link with mental health and a well-being policy. Coupled with workload reforms and retention and recruitment initiatives, leadership and management has adapted to the growth of the college to ensure our core values remain the same: **Inspiring, Caring and Enriching**.

Working closely with our highly skilled and experienced governors, our parental forum group, our students and our staff body, we have collaboratively and cohesively worked together as a community to ensure that our growth is in-line with our traditions but also appropriate for the future.
Our staff are committed and a significant proportion send their own children to the college: those who know it best, have a deep-rooted confidence in its qualities.

The college is unrelenting in its drive for students of all profiles and backgrounds to have an exceptional educational experience. Staff are committed to having the highest expectations of students, both in terms of academic outcomes but also in preparing students to be compassionate, responsible and thoughtful members of society.

Our pastoral success is supported by therapeutic, ground-breaking work to develop a culture of positive mental-health for both students and staff. We were delighted to receive our prestigious well-being accreditation, a recognition that Bottisham has been at the forefront of this work in the county.

As a result, the vast majority of our students are well-behaved, love their learning and add value to the college’s ethos and beliefs: our strong attendance figures are a testament to this.

Despite recent rigours in recruiting specialist staff, notably in maths, the college now finds itself in an enviable position of being a place where teachers wish to work and we have developed a sound and exciting cohort of professionals with which to take the college forward. Rich CPD, Leadership development and being a designated teaching school means we are able to nurture talent, retain great practitioners and, ultimately, deliver high quality teaching and learning to our students. Supported by our inspiring evidenced-based Teaching and Learning Strategy, the college has moved forward significantly since 2017 in this area.

Academically, the college consistently achieves, notably with significant progress made in English, Maths, Science and Humanities. Our curriculum is ambitious for all students and offers a wide range of subjects for all and specialises when appropriate. Uniquely flexible at KS3 by offering a range of pathways, the curriculum is caring, challenging and considers students’ individual needs; we work closely with our feeder primaries to understand the needs of our young children. As a result, our curriculum inspires students of all attainment profiles, as they follow an academic curriculum that exposes them to the rich cultural heritage of ages past whilst providing them with the skills and knowledge that they need to thrive in a modern, dynamic global society. Knowledge-rich, the curriculum will enable students to think more deeply, to develop a wide range of skills, to apply knowledge, to creatively problem-solve, to analyse and to be self-disciplined as they reflect on their own learning.

Preparing our students for the future: our careers strategy is embedded, meeting all of the Gatsby Benchmarks. As our post-16 record highlights, students are able to move onto life beyond Bottisham in the knowledge that they have been well-prepared and given every opportunity to excel, with Henry Morris’ creed embedded: a lifelong love of learning.