



Bury St Edmunds
All through



County Upper School

UNITY Schools Partnership

The UNITY Schools Partnership is a partnership of schools located on the Suffolk, Cambridge and Essex borders. We share the same values, face similar issues and are geographically close enough to support and challenge each other. We recognise, however, the unique characteristics of each of the communities we work in and how they are reflected in distinctive school cultures. We encourage cultural diversity, celebrate the special qualities of each of our schools and recognise that for communities to become sustainable they must develop and grow.

We are not looking for corporate solutions but a partnership that respects, sustains and supports. Our model is about creating interdependence; schools that are more self-sustaining than stand-alone academies, less dependent than local authority schools and more independent than schools in corporate chains.

However, we do all subscribe to a set of shared values, principles and operational processes that ensure quality education for all our young people. Our central belief is that every young life is special; open to possibility, gifted with the potential to change the world for the better but too often bound by the limits of their own circumstances. Our ambition is to unlock the potential of all children, remove the barriers to aspiration and ensure that all our young people succeed. Our board comprises a range of trustees from the commercial, financial and public sectors. Our job, as sponsor of County Upper, is to provide both support and challenge to the school as it continues to develop and grow.



I believe County Upper School is a very special place in which to learn, work and grow both inside and outside the classroom. Staff have a clear commitment to ensuring County Upper School is an exceptional school for every child where excellence is standard in all we do.



Of course examination results matter and at County Upper our pupils consistently achieve excellent results in all areas of the curriculum. However, this is just one aspect of a County Upper education and students are supported to show ambition both within and beyond the classroom.

School should be fun, it should be exciting and you should make friends, some of whom you keep for the rest of your life. Happy children are more likely to be successful and we see it as our responsibility to bring out our students' talents, to broaden their interests and to develop their personal qualities.

To do this we aim to foster confidence, perseverance, tolerance and integrity; to enhance communication skills; to embrace creativity; to encourage teamwork; and to promote an openminded and outward-looking mentality so that our students are ready to play an active role serving their wider community.

We care about the individual and we pride ourselves in the warmth of a community in which all our students feel valued. Your children are the most important people to you and to County Upper School. Our commitment is to help them develop the skills, knowledge, qualifications, character and ambition to become outstanding young people.

We want our students to become adults of whom you and we are proud; individuals who contribute to and are learners and leaders in the world in which they live.

I look forward to welcoming you and your child to County Upper School and to you joining us on the next stage of our and your journey.

Please do come and visit – you will be made most welcome.

Sally Kennedy
Headteacher

“The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils” (Ofsted, June 2021)

Our curriculum is far more than the subjects that are taught; it is the whole range of learning opportunities that students have access to throughout their time at County Upper and will form the basis of their lifelong learning and success.

We aim to make learning exciting, challenging and fun so that all students develop the knowledge, skills and interests that will enrich their lives. An experienced and highly committed staff and team of teachers empower and prepare our students for the 21st century. We want students to be enthusiastic about their learning, to accept responsibility for their learning and to develop a thirst to learn more.

Our staff model the commitment to lifelong learning we expect from our students and work together to develop innovative and effective classroom practice to inspire and support every student to achieve and excel.

We constantly review and develop our broad and balanced curriculum so that students have

access to subjects that will maximise their learning and future options. Students benefit from quality first teaching, mentoring and support from teachers and non-teaching staff members across the school. We recognise that students need to develop the attitudes, characteristics and self-belief to tackle any challenges in future life. Learning is a mind set, as much as a series of skills. We therefore teach students how to study and become effective and successful lifelong learners. Our students understand the importance of a ‘growth mind set’ and resilience - students are encouraged to try things beyond their current experience - essential for their future success.



The County Upper learner is: independent, a communicator, creative, reflective and a team player.

An engaging and inspiring curriculum

We believe in every young person's potential to achieve and to improve on their previous personal bests, both inside and outside the classroom

Getting better never stops at County Upper and all members of the school community - students, staff, parents and governors - are committed to and ambitious for the development of the school and of our students.

Our uncompromising aspirations & expectations for every individual student support them to believe in themselves and their abilities and to achieve more than they may have ever thought possible. This is evident in the sporting, musical and dramatic success of students as well as in the number of students obtaining places at top universities including Oxford and Cambridge.

Students and staff understand the keys to success and there is a common emphasis on hard work across the school. The consistently high examination results at GCSE and A-Level are testament to this. We expect students to both reach and exceed the individual targets we and they set for themselves and we will ensure systems are in place for every student to reach their full potential. University should be an option for every student at County Upper, should they wish.

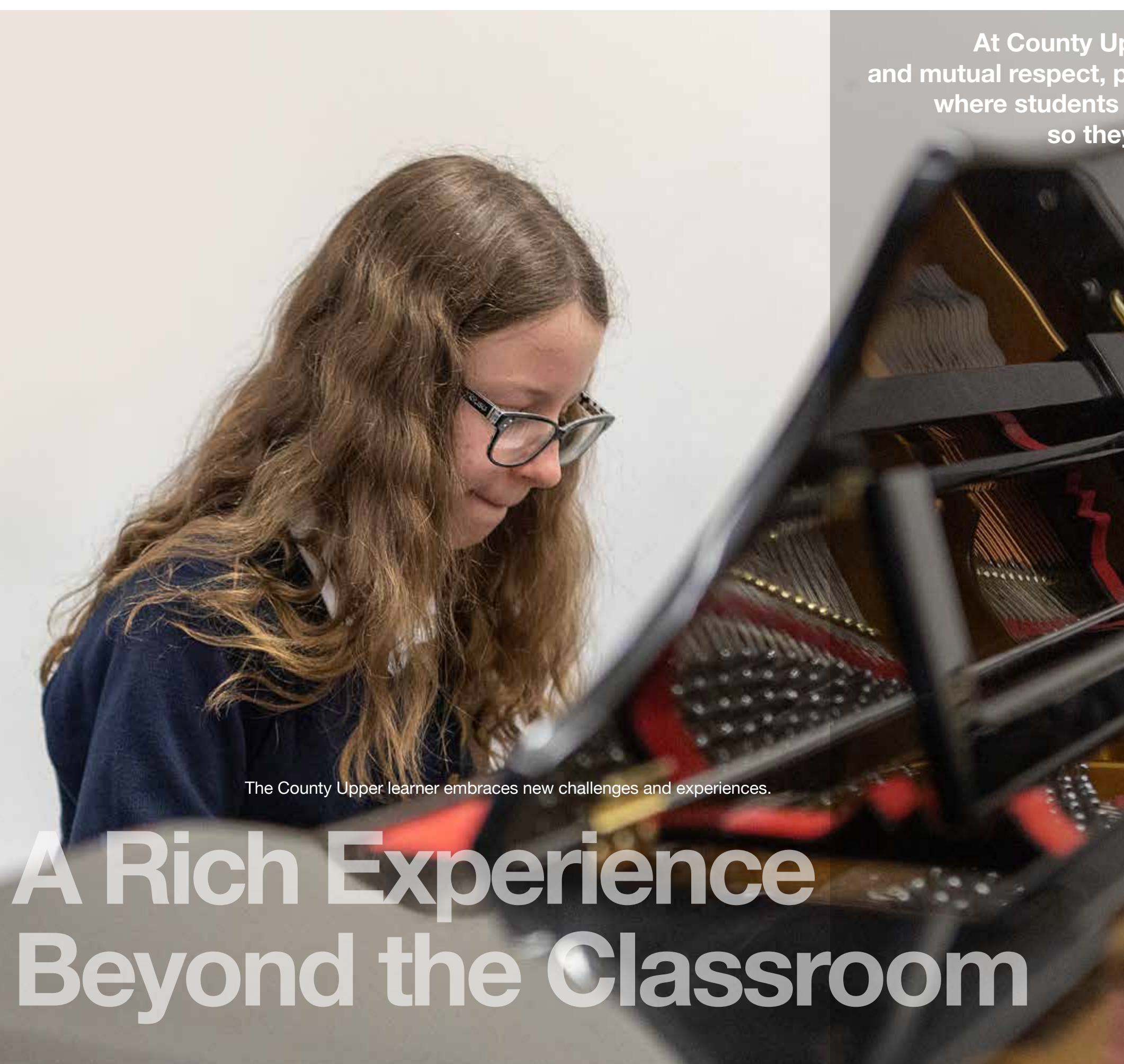
High expectations of student achievement are matched by equally high standards and expectations of students' behaviour and attendance. Clear, shared expectations create a calm and orderly environment in which teachers can teach effectively and students can learn.

Like you, we are ambitious for your child and we look forward to working with you to ensure your child has every opportunity to become outstanding and have an outstanding life.



The County Upper learner is: kind, empathetic, tolerant, respectful, responsible and proud.

High Aspirations for Every Child



At County Upper we will foster understanding, tolerance and mutual respect, providing a safe and supportive environment where students can develop their personality and character so they become confident, caring and responsible young people and global citizens

The County Upper learner embraces new challenges and experiences.

A Rich Experience Beyond the Classroom

Examinations are not the only measure of educational success. That is why we place so much emphasis on providing extra-curricular opportunities. Participation in these activities enables our students to develop a wider range of interests and also to acquire essential personal skills which will be of great benefit to them in their future careers.

Students are given opportunities and support to take on challenges that will stretch and develop them as well as bring great enjoyment and fulfilment. There is an incredibly extensive and exciting range of extra-curricular clubs and activities and all students are expected to take part in these activities which support their learning, develop skills, nurture talents and build character.

Sport, music, dance and drama feature very strongly in our extra-curricular offer. Sporting teams and individuals enjoy success at local, regional and national levels and benefit from established school partnerships with local

sports clubs, local schools and the Youth Sports Trust.

Dance, drama and music productions are of real quality. There are visits and trips locally, nationally and internationally which all students can take part in. These include: ski trips, expeditions, international exchange visits, sports tours and trips across Europe, Asia and America.

We believe that we have a joint role with parents in ensuring each student develops a set of values and moral standards, knows right from wrong and how to conduct themselves. We will only have achieved our vision if our students leave County Upper as well-rounded citizens, confident in their ability, with strength of character, moral judgement, emotional intelligence and a desire to make the most of their lives and of those they encounter along the way.

Our personal, social and health education programmes, tutorial programme, assemblies and enrichment days support students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

“The school is calm and orderly” (Ofsted, June 2021)

Our commitment at County Upper is to create an environment where every student can be safe, happy and successful. We value the diversity of our community, recognise that our students have a range of individual needs and realise that we need to provide care and guidance for all students to become the confident and successful person they can be. School and life will present all of us with challenges and we need the

support and guidance of others to respond positively and meet these challenges. The knowledge, confidence and reassurance that the school, with parents, will help students through these problems makes us a caring community.



Care and Support

The curriculum that your child will follow in Year 9 is one that is designed to provide a firm base for continued success at GCSE and beyond.

We nurture our students

We believe that life beyond the classroom should be filled with enriching experiences.

We nurture our students and take pride in the quality of our pastoral care

Our pastoral system ensures no student is left behind, undervalued or ignored. We work hard to support your child to make a successful transition to our upper school and support their future progression to university, further education and employment. We will also support our students' development from children to young adults.

Each student is placed in a registration group when they join County Upper, with a Form Tutor who comes to know them well as individuals during their time together. Under the leadership of an experienced Head of Year, each student's academic progress and wellbeing is carefully monitored. The Form Tutor develops a close insight into the student's social and academic development through a programme of individual tutorials as the student moves up through the school. Form Tutors help identify obstacles to progress and suggest ways to overcome them. Later on, when examinations and extra-curricular commitments create workload pressures, tutorials can help students plan their time effectively.



We believe in every child and have high aspirations for all.

Our partnership with parents is important to us and we work hard to ensure that our communication is open and positive

We have high expectations of parents in the same way that you will have high expectations of us. We believe that your positive contribution is the most important factor in ensuring that your child succeeds personally, academically and socially. We know that to achieve the potential in our students we need to be united in our approach.

and achievements and will invite you to parent information evenings to provide information, advice and guidance.

We will provide regular information about your child's academic progress, attendance, behaviour



Our partnership with parents is important to us

We pride ourselves on the fact that County Upper is a school at the heart of the community with the community in its heart

All those who work and study here form a caring and supportive community characterised by positive relationships.

In striving to achieve our vision to be exceptional, we expect every student to develop leadership skills and qualities as well as an awareness and responsibility for the community and world in which they live. Developing student leadership is important to us and we provide a number of opportunities for students to be involved in leadership activities and volunteering within school and in the local community.

The School Council is the students' voice and we listen! We are developing tomorrow's leaders today. We want our local community to be proud of their school and the school to lead and be involved in the local

community. Our students work with other schools and community organisations to make our community better for everyone. We also welcome the community into the school to work with our students, share our activities and resources and to make us a better school.

Our students regularly lead charity fundraising projects and raise significant funds to support local, national and international charities chosen by and supported by the students themselves. Our work extends beyond the local community and students are involved in global citizenship projects and collaboration with student leaders in our partner schools across the world, developing their awareness and opportunities as global citizens. This work has been recognised by the school achieving the International School Award.



Our community

We listen to our students and empower them to have thoughtful, confident voice.

County Upper's outstanding sixth form offers a range of exciting courses and experiences

COUNTY UPPER *Sixth Form*

From traditional GCE 'A' levels are well-established technical awards, we are able to provide all our students with an excellent foundation to prepare them for the next stage of their lives, whether that is university, college or apprenticeships. We take great care to help students find the right course at the right university for them. This includes a comprehensive Oxbridge programme and sees a large number of students move onto Russell Group universities. Alongside our academic excellence, we are proud

to provide a friendly, work orientated environment where great importance is attached to independent learning. This is supported by positive relations between staff and students. Our experienced sixth form tutor team regularly monitors the academic progress of each student and oversees their personal development and wellbeing. A strong pastoral programme of workshops, visiting speakers and visits throughout the year enrich the students' education and prepares them for the adult world.

The Sixth Form

Our Sixth Form is underpinned by community values to support everyone in fulfilling higher aspirations.





Independence

Our students are confident, happy and well prepared for their next steps.

We encourage students to make the most of the wide array of extra-curricular opportunities available here

We encourage students to make the most of the wide array of extra-curricular opportunities available here. These include over a hundred clubs and societies a week and a large number of residential visits across the world linked to every subject area and to recognised schemes, including the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. Some links, including the Anglo-Japanese Science Summer Schools, attract national recognition. Sixth formers experience considerable success through extra-curricular opportunities. For example, our debating teams compete in the top competitions with students from major independent schools; our computer scientists have represented the UK in Canada,

Europe and China and our art students' work has been recognised by leading Art Colleges. Students are actively encouraged to take on leadership roles across the school, to further develop their skills and confidence. All subjects have captains, whose role is to promote the values and ethos of the department, and provide and engage the lower school students in activities. Sixth formers chair the Student Council and many of our societies; they lead some of our fifteen music ensembles; help run drama club and, as Captains of Sport, represent us at a range of events where the department's success is recognised regionally and beyond.



Leaders of the future

Our Sixth Form students are leaders in the school

Engaging the lower school, staff and the wider community across a range of activities, everyone enjoys a fun-filled annual charity week, around curriculum study to raise tens of thousands of pounds for local and regional charities, whilst promoting the special atmosphere for which County Upper is renowned.



We warmly welcome you to come and look around for yourself; you won't be disappointed!





County Upper School



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