

Dear Colleague,

I am delighted to welcome you to Northampton Academy. You have made a great decision to pursue your career with us and I promise that you will find working here a rewarding experience. With us you will find support and development as you progress in your career.

We are part of a group of academies, primaries and independent schools called United Learning. With them, many opportunities lie ahead for you and we encourage everyone to engage and make links with colleagues in other United Learning schools at the earliest opportunity.

The United Learning motto is 'The Best in Everyone', and we wholeheartedly subscribe to this philosophy.

Our vision and mission are simple:

***"To be an Academy of character and excellence. To provide a unique and extraordinary experience that sets us apart: locally, nationally and internationally."***

***"We exist to provide the students of the Eastern District with equal or better life chances than any student in the UK."***

We are all working together to ensure we move towards our vision of being an 'Academy of Character and Excellence' and are looking to move the great work we have done in so many areas to both a national and in some cases, like our Character and STEM programmes, international platform. I am excited to have such a strong body of staff here to help continue this pathway towards realising our vision and hope to welcome you to our 'family'.

Our community has gone through a challenging period with Covid-19, so it is vital that we recognise the need to support our community in ensuring that we get everyone back to a 'new normal' as quickly as possible. Our mission is as important as it ever has been, and we must ensure that we 'go that extra mile' to provide our young people with the springboard for their next steps that will make a real difference to their lives.

We are fully committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of our young people, it is at the heart of what we do and we 'create a strong culture of vigilance' (Ofsted, Nov 2019), and 'students feel very safe in this school' (Ofsted, Nov 2019) because of this. Every decision we make as an organisation puts our students first.

We firmly believe in developing leadership for all, as such we provide opportunities for all staff and students.

For staff, we fundamentally believe in nurturing talent within our staff body. Our in-house CPD programme focuses on developing teaching and learning practices and techniques to ensure we become the best possible practitioners in the classroom. Further, we actively support staff in their Continuous Professional Development and ensure all leaders have formal leadership training through avenues such as NPQSL or NPQML, alongside this we create succession planning for future senior positions.

For students, we promise the young people of Northampton Academy 'Leadership opportunities for every student, every year' to ensure we develop them to be the future leaders of our country. This strand of opportunity for our young people is one of many that we use to help develop the character of our students. We are now nationally recognised for our character development programme which is systematically delivered through assemblies, tutor time reading, lessons, PSHE and many other facets of the school; 'Character development is at the heart of the school's work' (Ofsted, Nov 2019). We base this programme on our 'pillars of virtue':

- Respect: showing consideration for the views, opinions, and beliefs of others,

**Respect ■ Determination ■ Ambition ■ Tolerance ■ Integrity**

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**Northampton Academy**

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

An Academy of Character and Excellence

- Determination: never giving up,
- Ambition: aiming high, not just for what you want to be, but who you wish to be,
- Integrity: doing the right thing, even when nobody is watching,
- Tolerance: the ability and willingness to accept the existence of opinions or beliefs that are different from our own.

Staff play a vital role in this development of students' character and we are all expected to role model these virtues at all times. This is vital in the 'caught' aspect of our character programme. New staff must also buy in to this value led approach, and understand the importance of developing character in young people.

Northampton Academy is a school where teachers can focus purely on their core purpose of delivering great lessons. The student behaviour system is simple, easy to administer in lessons, and takes the burden away from teachers. Therefore, detentions, follow ups, and communications with parents etc. are conducted by the pastoral and senior teams; *'The school's high expectation of learning without disruption is reflected in exemplary behaviour'* (Ofsted, Nov 2019). We trust our teaching staff and as so do not conduct any unannounced observations, no lesson grading and there are three extra INSET days for departments to work collaboratively on planning. We allow departments to set their own feedback and recognition policy and have no expectation of teachers spending extra time marking. We also run 'quiet November' where meetings are kept to a minimum as we recognise the winter months as particularly difficult for staff.

A work-life balance is vital, and we recognise that spending time with family and loved ones is incredibly important. There would be no expectation of working during weekends and there will be no email communication from 5.30pm on a Friday to 7.30am on a Monday morning. E-mail traffic also stops at 5.30pm every day during the week. That time is yours to spend on activities that make you happy. This year I am delighted to appoint a member of my senior team to work alongside me to focus on optimising staff wellbeing without sacrificing the excellent provision we give our young people. It is a balancing act which we are continually improving.

These are just some of the ways we look to support staff wellbeing, you will come across many more as you progress your career with us.

We exist to provide our students with equal or better life chances in life and it is my role to ensure that I create the environment for this to happen. I operate with an open-door policy and welcome any of my staff to come and speak with me regarding any issues they are having, and I will always aim to find solutions myself or offer support in finding those solutions.

You often hear the saying 'I got into teaching to make a difference', that is something you can do at Northampton Academy. This school has transformed over the last few years and students now have high aspirations and are regularly moving on to the best universities and apprenticeships. Northampton Academy is a special place and I am certain it will only continue to get better. I wholeheartedly recommend Northampton Academy for the next step in your career.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Clyne

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