

The Best of **BEST**

2022/23 academic year



BEST

BEDFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS TRUST



**Our aim is to grow
the BEST in everyone**

WELCOME

Welcome to the Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST).

This brochure celebrates a selection of the exciting learning opportunities that enable all within our community to enjoy and achieve.

Currently, we comprise 10 schools and five nurseries, delivering a first choice education to over 5,000 children across Central Bedfordshire, from nursery age to advanced level study.

We are committed to inspiring, supporting and challenging each other to be the best we can be.

The uniqueness of each of our schools is prized. Each has its own ethos, uniform and character. Each has its own Principal.

Each share a core belief in the importance of high expectations, hard work and the development of our BEST community.

We hope you enjoy finding out more about us.

Dr Alan Lee
Chief Executive Officer and
National Leader of Education

Ilona Bond
Chair of Trustees



OUR VALUES

Our vision is to grow the BEST in everyone.

We believe in the importance of high expectations, hard work and the development of a community of schools and nurseries where each of us strive to 'be the best that we can be'.

Our original three core values were established as we launched BEST back in 2016. They helped us shape everything we stood for in our formative years, and continue to stand for today.

At the start of the 2021/22 academic year we launched a fourth core value – to have the courage to be compassionate.

We are halfway through the second phase of our strategic plan, aimed at delivering connection across our trust.

As the wider Central Bedfordshire area looks to convert from three-tier education to a two-tier model, we aim to unite BEST, deepen our values and define our culture.

Part of this culture is to develop BEST as a mindful and compassionate community.

We offer an invitation to all staff to take part in mindfulness training and development. So far, more than 100 of our employees – around 15% of our workforce – have taken the opportunity.

As we blaze a trail in this area, our momentum continues to grow.

BEST Values

We will:

Always put children first

Our reference point question is 'how will this improve outcomes for children and enable them to go on and succeed in life?'

Collaborate to support and compete to challenge

Our schools work together to add value and compete to continually improve.

Provide community-based provision

Our schools form a coherent learning community at the heart of the Bedfordshire community.

Have the courage to be compassionate

Our community treats all with trust, kindness and honesty.



Putting children first is a core BEST value



**Lots of opportunities
beyond the classroom**

THE STORY OF BEST

The first six years of BEST have been a real success story.

We formed in the summer of 2016, succeeding BEMAT – the Bedfordshire East Multi-Academy Trust.

Six schools were the founder members of the BEST family – Etonbury, Gothic Mede, Gravenhurst, Langford Village, Robert Bloomfield and Samuel Whitbread Academies – along with nurseries at Arlesey and Shefford.

We have grown significantly since, with St Christophers Academy in Dunstable the first school to join BEST in September 2017.

Lawnside Academy in Biggleswade and Campton Academy followed in January 2019 and November 2020 respectively, while we also opened Pix Brook Academy – a new free school in Stotfold – in September 2019.

Nursery provision has also expanded, with Langford added to the facilities under our BEST Nurseries banner in April 2021. School-based provision at Gothic Mede and St Christophers brings our total number of nurseries to five.

Moving forward, we are looking towards further growth, continuing to establish BEST as a key civic partner in the communities we serve, and a full transition to a primary-secondary model of education.

We have come a long way in our first six years, and an exciting future is ahead of us, too.



★ In September 2021 we produced a special commemorative brochure to celebrate our journey so far.

Contact us for a copy of *5 Years of BEST* or pick one up from one of our schools.



CAMPTON ACADEMY

Campton | Reception - Year 4 |
Ofsted – Outstanding (2010) |
www.camptonacademy.org.uk

Campton Academy is a successful, friendly lower school with high standards. It provides a happy and safe environment with a family atmosphere.

Pupils are seen and treated as individuals and are taught a structured, broad curriculum. Teachers and support staff deliver stimulating, exciting and enjoyable lessons, with a focus on ensuring everyone achieves their best.

They strive to provide equal opportunities for all and are skilled in identifying needs and providing support to address these.

As a values-based school, it aims to ensure all pupils develop the skills and knowledge to become confident, lifelong learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Campton provides outstanding educational and extracurricular experiences for its pupils and has a deeply inclusive culture. The school is proud of the strong pastoral and academic support systems it has refined over the years and believes these to be key to its success.



OUR SCHOOLS



GOTHIC MEDE ACADEMY

Arlesey | Nursery - Year 4 |
Ofsted – Good (2017) |
www.gothicmede.org.uk

Gothic Mede Academy is a values-based lower school for children between the ages of three and nine years old. It is a happy, nurturing and safe school where everybody challenges each other to be their best.

All the children are given a variety of opportunities and experiences so that they can develop, ready for their next stage in education and for what they will encounter in life.

Through a growth mindset approach, adults and children alike strive for improvement, talk about their learning and understand that challenging themselves and making mistakes are the best ways to develop.

The school community's high expectations and ambition are reflected in the school motto: *Pride in ourselves, pride in our school, pride in our community.*



ETONBURY ACADEMY

Arlesey | Year 5 - 11 |
Ofsted – Good (2020) |
www.etonbury.org.uk

Etonbury Academy is a school where every child can shine. Pupils are confident, love learning and flourish. Staff are dedicated professionals who care and nurture every individual child by unlocking their full potential to be the best they can be.

The extended secondary school's proven track record and first class learning environment provide a seamless education from Year 5 through to Year 11.

The school believes in educating the whole child – inside the classroom and beyond – by providing an engaging curriculum and a vibrant programme of extracurricular activities.

Etonbury is at the heart of the community; a local school with a global outlook, preparing young people for the future.

Its facilities, resources and specialist teaching are second to none. So, too, is the commitment to pastoral care. This is a place where every child is safe, secure and supported.

The school is on the cusp of an exciting future, too – with plans in place for the opening of a new sixth form in September 2023.



GRAVENHURST ACADEMY

Upper Gravenhurst | Reception - Year 4 |
Ofsted – Outstanding (2011) |
www.gravenhurstacademy.org.uk

Gravenhurst Academy is a small village school where pupils of all abilities thrive. The rural school is proud to provide a personalised, values-based education, where children are cherished and celebrated through their whole journey.

Through its ethos of growing together, learning together, the school achieves good academic standards and its dedicated, hard-working staff are committed to ensuring each pupil is given the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Gravenhurst also provides inspirational learning through outdoor activities in the school's wonderful grounds, which include a woodland area, meadow and allotment.





LANGFORD VILLAGE ACADEMY

Langford | Reception - Year 6 |
Ofsted – Good (2017) |
www.langfordvillageacademy.org.uk



Langford Village Academy is small, friendly school which converted to primary at the start of the 2021/22 academic year, as part of Central Bedfordshire Council's wider two-tier transition in the area.

The well-designed curriculum enriches pupils' lives through a good range of engaging activities.

The school is values-based and pupils learn important morals such as tolerance, respect and thoughtfulness. This contributes strongly to effectively developing spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth.

There is a strong partnership between pupils, staff, parents, governors and the local community. The school provides a nurturing environment where children are supported, encouraged and imbued with a passion for learning

The school is a Forest School and as such ensures pupils have engaging learning experiences in the outside environment.

The school also contains BEST Nursery (Langford) on site.



LAWNSIDE ACADEMY

Biggleswade | Reception - Year 4 |
Ofsted – n/a |
www.lawnsideacademy.org.uk

Lawnside Academy puts its children at the heart of everything it does. Each day its hard-working staff strive to improve the provision, opportunities and experiences offered to pupils, and develop skills that will last throughout their lives.

The values-based school strives to nurture a passion for lifelong learning, encouraging all to be confident and independent.

It provides opportunities for pupils to develop their courage, perseverance, self-esteem and aspiration, while feeling safe to take risks, make mistakes and challenge themselves.

A happy environment exists where children can learn, laugh and smile, where all are part of the family and feel a strong sense of community.

Lawnside values everyone for who they are, celebrating individuality and diversity, and creating a culture where all children have their voice heard.

The school also provides to all children a rich, varied and high quality programme of activities and experiences, including sport, arts, music and cultural events.



PIX BROOK ACADEMY

Stotfold | Year 5 - 11 |
Ofsted – n/a |
www.pixbrookacademy.org.uk

Pix Brook Academy opened as a new free school in September 2019, and currently has cohorts up to Year 8.

At its core is the moral purpose to educate the socially responsible citizens of the future and it ensures all members of its community – staff, pupils, parents and governors – are clear on the importance of this mission.

Pastoral support combined with the school's inclusive and creative curriculum enables pupils to make excellent progress.

State-of-the-art facilities means the school is able to provide both breadth and depth of provision in terms of technology, sporting amenities and educational resources. There is also a highly qualified and committed staff body who were appointed as specialists in their field.

Pix Brook is very much part of the local community and has strong relationships with schools in the area. These links form the basis of the learning journey for its young people and every opportunity is taken to ensure their academic performance is matched by their development as well rounded and thoughtful young people.



ROBERT BLOOMFIELD ACADEMY

Shefford | Year 5 - 8 |
Ofsted – Outstanding (2014) |
www.robertbloomfield.beds.sch.uk

Robert Bloomfield Academy is a thriving, happy and successful middle school. The excellent standards achieved by pupils over their four-year journey are the result of their hard work, the support of parents and the expertise of dedicated staff.

The school also has an exceptional learning environment, enhanced by specialist facilities, which enables it to offer a full range of opportunities within and beyond the classroom.

Robert Bloomfield is a caring community that values each child and provides them with the opportunity to fulfil their potential and enjoy learning. The school believes in building a child's confidence, adaptability and resilience for the future, within an ordered and structured environment, where high expectations are the norm.

Pupils respond well to this and are very proud of their school. This is reflected in the high commitment and standards they bring to so many aspects of school life.

The school's sporting record is excellent, with many regional and national successes, while performing arts are equally strong, covering music, drama and dance.





SAMUEL WHITBREAD ACADEMY

Clifton | Year 9 - 13 |
Ofsted – Good (2017) |
www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk

Samuel Whitbread Academy provides an exceptional academic and extracurricular experience in an excellent learning environment where students are expected to work hard and achieve their best.

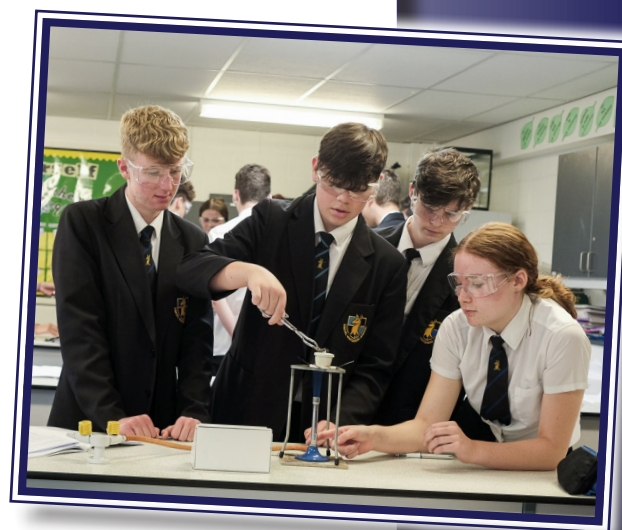
The upper school offers a well-balanced curriculum with plenty of choice to prepare students for the next stage in their lives.

Most students continue on to the Sixth Form, which is one of the largest and highest performing in the area and provides a huge range of courses designed to match the expectations of universities and employers.

Pastoral care at Samuel Whitbread is exceptional and there are dedicated pastoral support teams for each year group. Extracurricular opportunity is a vital part of the school's ethos and students are expected to get involved in at least one club or activity.

The school's sporting successes are particularly impressive with a number of county, regional and national titles across multiple sports over recent years.

The Whitbread Sports Academy offers programmes to sixth form students in rugby, netball and football, and has partnerships with Northampton Saints, Saracens Mavericks and Shefford Town and Campton FC as part of this.



ST CHRISTOPHERS ACADEMY

Dunstable | Nursery - Year 6 |
Ofsted – Good (2019) |
www.stchristophersacademy.org

St Christophers Academy is a multi-faith primary school situated on the border between Dunstable and Luton, serving a diverse community from both areas.

The school has been described as 'a village school within a town' as there is a strong community presence, with generations of the same families having passed through its doors.

Pupils benefit from a challenging and enriching curriculum while, as a values-based school, there is a strong philosophy of caring and an ethos that places children at the heart of everything it does.

St Christophers holds the Investors in Pupils accreditation, received for its "whole school approach" to participation, empowerment of children by involving them in everyday decision making, the strong relationships between pupils and staff, and how it helps young people to improve their confidence, achievement, attendance and behaviour.

OUR NURSERIES

Our nurseries provide first class, family-orientated care accessible to all.

We recognise that an appropriate and positive nursery experience will help children feel confident as they begin their educational journey.

Our structures fully support the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, placing the child and their family at the centre of all learning and development.



We have three facilities which come under the BEST Nurseries banner:

- ★ BEST Nursery (Arlesey)
- ★ BEST Nursery (Langford)
- ★ BEST Nursery (Shefford)

We also have school-based provision at Gothic Mede and St Christophers Academies.

Together, they provide nursery sessions, wraparound care and holiday clubs for children from the age of four months to 12 years, all year round.



EDUCATION SERVICES

Driving up educational standards is one of our core priorities.

Our target is to deliver student outcomes in the top 20% nationally.

The BEST Education Services and School Improvement Team (BESSI) lies at the heart of this ambition.

Led by Director of Education Alison Wilshaw, the team consists of highly-qualified and dedicated professionals who are specialists in their areas.

The team works tirelessly to support the exceptional provision in our schools, with help tailored to the specific needs of each academy.

This has helped performance at all key stages improve significantly since BEST formed, with attainment above national averages.

BESSI also has a thriving CPD offer, and is the lead delivery partner for ECF and NPQ training across Central Bedfordshire and beyond.

All teaching and support staff in BEST have access to an extensive range of quality courses, either for free or available to our schools and nurseries at generously discounted rates.

Further development opportunities exist in the form of a staff shadowing scheme and paid internships for STEM university students who are considering going into teaching.

BESSI's work stretches beyond our trust, too, with the team's expertise called upon to deliver educational services to nearly 150 schools in the wider geographical area.



IN NUMBERS – OUR IMPACT in 21/22

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

★ We worked on national school improvement projects for the DfE with **4** schools in Northamptonshire, **2** in Central Bedfordshire, **2** in Bedford and **1** in Luton.

NPQs

★ **10** Lead Teachers and Principals delivered on NPQ programmes and **5** on ECT programmes, plus many on other CPD activities.

★ We delivered **5** separate NPQSL programmes to **93** participants, **2** NPQLTD to **30** participants, **2** NPQLT to **39** participants and **1** NPQLBC to **11** participants.

★ 20/21 crossover: We delivered **3** NPQSL to **35** participants and **2** NPQML to **20** participants. We posted a 100% pass rate, many with very high/top grades.

ECT/ECM TRAINING

★ We trained **56** ECTs and **53** ECMs from Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough.

★ We delivered **24** training sessions – some online, some from Pix Brook Academy, some from Linslade School.

★ An ECT induction tutor support group also ran.

SCITT QA

★ **3** members of the SI team and **1** Principal worked with Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough schools to ensure the next cohort of teachers are ready.

★ They carried out **36** visits to **14** schools across **3** LAs.

★ Ofsted Link Trustee for Chiltern SCITT.

INTERNSHIPS

★ **2** graduates recruited on the Connolly Funded Scheme, based at Samuel Whitbread Academy.

★ **7** STEM interns enlisted, and based across Etonbury, Robert Bloomfield and Samuel Whitbread Academies.

EXTERNAL

★ Supervision training outside BEST by our Lead Teachers.

★ Primary Maths Lead Teacher used within local cluster of schools as lead in calculation policy redesign.

★ **3** BEST staff identified as Mastery Specialists for local maths hub – commissioned work.



★ The work of BESSI was the focus of the fourth edition of our series of **BEST Success Stories**, published in January 2022.

Read more on this case study – plus the rest of the series – by heading to our website.

CASE STUDY – INVESTING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Over the last four years we have ploughed £2.7m into our school estates and buildings.

This is money over and above school budgets, meaning they can spend their resources on what they should be being spent on, such as teaching and learning and staffing costs.

Our multi-million pound capital spending programme is possible thanks to the access we have as a multi-academy trust to exclusive sources of government funding.

Our approach is to ensure our schools are warm, safe and dry, giving Principals peace of mind when it comes to allocating their own budgets on other priority areas.

We want to improve the environment not just for our learners, but for those who work for BEST as well.

Staff wellbeing is a top priority and our capital spending reflects this. We have upgraded toilets and refurbished staff rooms, and are creating wellbeing gardens at all of our sites for staff to use to relax.



★ Our capital investment programme was the focus of the fifth edition of our series of *BEST Success Stories*, published in June 2022.

Read more on this case study – plus the rest of the series – by heading to our website.



CENTRAL SERVICES

BEST Central Services is set up to work closely with our schools and nurseries.

We provide essential, responsive services to support their day-to-day running. By prioritising these, we empower schools and nurseries to concentrate on what they do best – educate learners.

Our driving ethos is to help schools and nurseries to improve by providing high quality support in key operational areas.

We also deliver value for money due to the economies of scale and purchasing power we command as a trust.

The key operational areas we work across include:

- ★ Finance
- ★ HR
- ★ Capital and Estates
- ★ Health and Safety
- ★ Equality and Diversity
- ★ Policies and Compliance
- ★ Communications
- ★ Governance
- ★ ICT
- ★ GDPR and Data Protection

Chief Operating Officer Craig Smith and Chief Financial Officer Nafia Baust lead on these areas and work closely with Principals to ensure all the services provided meet their expectations and function at a high level.

The team oversees capital build projects and our estates strategy to ensure all schools benefit from well-equipped, safe and highly effective learning environments that are well maintained and appropriate for their needs.

Our services are subject to a rigorous quality assurance system and continual improvements. There is also a clear risk management process for supporting schools by ensuring they are compliant, especially around safeguarding, policies and website activity.

We are a small team but the purpose is clear – listen and understand, then deliver for our schools and nurseries.



WELLBEING AT BEST

The wellbeing of everyone really matters at BEST.

We are committed to being a trust that cares, values and looks after all – both staff and children.

This ethos led us to install compassion as a new core value last year.

Our BEST Wellbeing Charter ensures we remain focused on embedding health and wellbeing in all aspects of trust life.

We are creating staff wellbeing gardens at all of our sites – a pledge we made to celebrate our fifth anniversary – to give those who work for us an area to relax.

We offer our staff access to an Employee Assistance Programme, offering them help and support when they need it most, and fund mental health first aid champions in our schools and nurseries.

We are also immersed in making BEST a mindful and compassionate community – see the impact report, *right*, to see how we're leading the way in this ever-growing practice.

Our commitment to wellbeing will always be a priority. It is an integral part of who we are.



BEST is leading the way for wellbeing in the educational trust sector.

**– Juniper Education
Internal Scrutiny Report 2021/22**

MINDFULNESS – A GROWING LEGACY

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

- ★ Over **120** members of BEST staff have developed their practice in mindfulness-based training courses.
- ★ **12** employees have completed mindfulness teacher training courses.
- ★ **2** staff are studying for masters degrees in mindfulness.

IMPACT IN WORDS

Feedback received from delegates on our range of training courses is wholly positive. Comments include:

- ★ 'This course has genuinely improved my mindset and mental wellbeing. I would recommend it to anyone even if you're not sure if it's for you.'
- ★ 'Feel calmer, less anxious, more aware.'
- ★ '...improved the relationships I have at work... I'm more focused and energised.'
- ★ 'I have taken back control of my time and feel more confident.'

EXTERNAL INFLUENCE

BEST is the sector lead for mindfulness in education:

- ★ Presentations have been given at both national and international conferences in the last 12 months, and support given to other trusts.
- ★ Our CEO Dr Alan Lee is a Trustee of the Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) and a member of the Oxford University Mindfulness Centre CEO Group.
- ★ Dr Lee also represented BEST at the Centre for World Peace on Holy Isle to meet with leaders in mindfulness and discuss its impact across international boundaries.

LOOKING AHEAD

- ★ We launched a virtual mindfulness space at the start of the 2022/23 academic year to allow our staff to share their journeys, post links to current research, and find out more information about courses and retreats.
- ★ We are employing Will George as a mindfulness coach to further enhance our culture across our family of schools and nurseries.
- ★ BEST features as a case study in Maggie Farrar's forthcoming book *Leadership: It's an Inside Job*.

**Due to be published in late 2022*

2021/22 REVIEW

Celebrations take place across the BEST family to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The many special events include playground street parties, tree plantings and choir singing at church services in the community.

Langford Village, *pictured*, and Gravenhurst Academies both unveil mosaics which were designed by pupils and now take pride of place at the entrances to both schools.



Sarah Fraher is appointed permanent Principal of Campton Academy.

Mrs Fraher initially joined the school in 2006 as an NQT and had been interim Principal since January 2021.

Meanwhile, Robert Bloomfield Academy Principal Sam Farmer announces he is leaving the school at the end of the academic year.

He had been in post since September 2018.



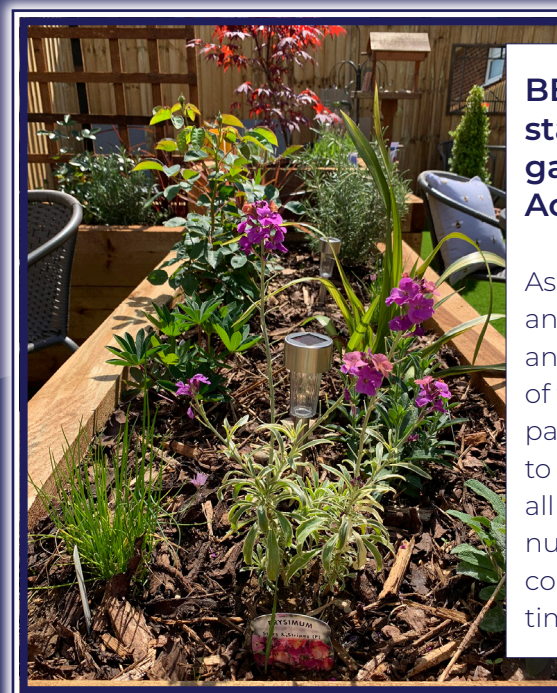
Six BEST academies demonstrate their commitment to PE and sport by earning the School Games Mark.

Gothic Mede and Robert Bloomfield (Platinum), Etonbury, Langford and Pix Brook (Gold) and Campton (Silver) all achieve the prestigious national honour.



BEST schools and nurseries rally round to help the people of Ukraine following Russia's invasion.

"Overwhelming" donations of essential items such as clothing, toiletries and toys – such as at Pix Brook, *above*, and St Christophers, *right* – were packed up and taken to the country's borders for the millions of refugees displaced by the war.



BEST opens its first staff wellbeing garden at Etonbury Academy.

As part of our fifth anniversary celebrations and amid the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, we pledged to create areas within all our schools and nurseries where staff could relax and take time for themselves.

● Etonbury Academy is named runner-up in the VotesforSchools Student Voice Awards for the second successive year.

● Samuel Whitbread Academy achieves the Eco-Schools Green Flag accreditation.

● Gothic Mede receives the Primary Science Quality Mark as well as being recertified as an Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence.

● Samuel Whitbread student Caitlin Doody wins silver for her contemporary solo performance at the Dance World Cup in Spain.

● Alan Stupple becomes the new BEST Director of Maths. He had previously been KS5 Maths Lead at Samuel Whitbread.

● Pix Brook Academy embarked on the secondary education phase of its development, with its first Year 7 cohort starting in September.

● Samuel Whitbread U18 girls' rugby team win the Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens Bowl – the world's largest school rugby tournament.

● Our BEST Education Services and School Improvement Team rebrands as part of the national introduction of teaching school hubs.

● Etonbury's U15 boys' and Samuel Whitbread U18 boys' football teams reach the semi-finals of their national cup competitions.

● We create new Lead Teacher roles across the trust. Incumbents include Lucy Blackford of Lawnside (EYFS) and Alison Sugden of Gothic Mede (Wellbeing).

● The construction of Pix Brook Academy is Highly Commended in the RTPI East of England Awards for Planning Excellence.

● Confederation of School Trusts CEO Leora Cruddas is the keynote speaker at the third annual BEST governor conference.

2021/22 PERFORMANCE

After two years of disruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic, national curriculum assessments returned for 2021/22.

With the last two cohorts of GCSE and A Level/BTEC students awarded Teacher/Centre Assessed Grades, and other key stage assessments cancelled, students sat exams for the first time since 2019 – and performed admirably:

KS5

- ★ At Samuel Whitbread, the average point score was up for both A Level and vocational subjects compared to 2019.
- ★ Academic: **37.23** (up 6.55 points).
- ★ Applied General: **31.05** (up 5.32 points).

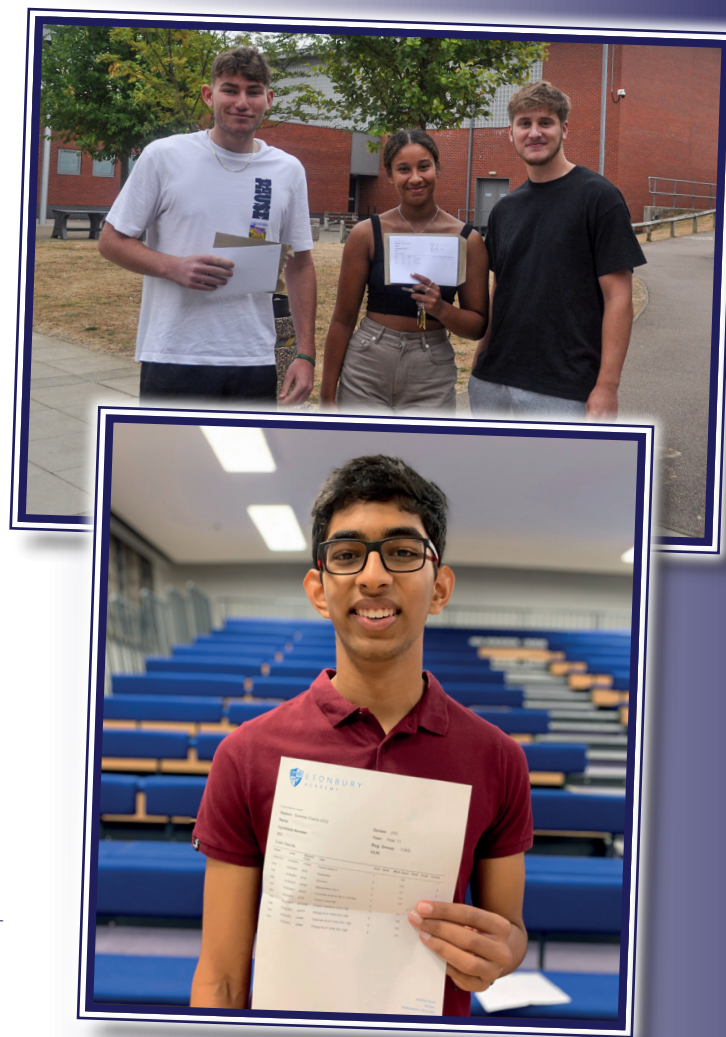
KS4

- ★ At Etonbury, **71%** of students achieved grades 9-4 in at least five different subjects – with a **100%** pass rate in English and Maths.
- ★ The 9-4 figure at Samuel Whitbread was **83%**, with **27%** at the highest grades (9-7).

KS2

- ★ Robert Bloomfield was above the 2022 national average in all areas.
- ★ Pix Brook Academy had pupils sitting SATs for the first time. The school was above the national average in Reading, Writing and GPS.
- ★ St Christophers was above the national average in Reading and in line with the average mark in GPS.
- ★ Etonbury's best area was Writing, in which it was above the national average.

**All data correct at time of going to print in August 2022*



We are focused on improving schools



**We are supportive of
two-tier conversion**

TWO-TIER UPDATE

Central Bedfordshire is moving towards a two-tier educational system.

The switch to a primary-secondary model is part of the local authority's Schools for the Future programme, which aims to ensure the area can accommodate planned housing growth by having the right schools in the right places.

With around 43,000 new homes due to be built in the area by 2035, as set out in Central Bedfordshire's Local Plan, thousands of additional school places will be required.

BEST is supportive of the two-tier model and has been working tirelessly with the local authority and other schools for a number of years to agree plans.

We have schools in three clusters. St Christophers Academy is part of the Dunstable and Houghton Regis cluster, which already follows the two-tier system and can provide enough school places to cater for the known housing growth.

Lawnside Academy is in the Biggleswade cluster, which is set for transition in September 2024.

Our other eight academies are all part of the Shefford and Stotfold cluster. The first phase of schools – including Langford Village Academy, see *above right* – converted at the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

In April 2022 Central Bedfordshire Council and schools revealed new and exciting plans for the second phase, with a new target date for transition set for September 2025.

After recent uncertainty, this cluster plan delivers for all of our schools and gives them all bright futures.

The next important stage is to continue working with CBC to ensure that each of our schools is ready for two-tier.



★ Langford Village Academy's first Year 5 cohort, pictured in September 2021 after the school had converted to primary status.

BEING PART OF BEST

We have worked hard to create a strong ethos and culture at BEST.

Our school leaders have autonomy but also benefit from a structure that provides a high level of support and a framework for sharing learning across the trust.

We champion a 'high autonomy, high accountability' approach – supporting Principals to manage their schools as effectively as possible and to respond to the needs of their local community.

The support from the centre – be that school improvement activity or wider operational work – enables schools to focus on teaching and learning and to devote as much effort and resource as they can to this.

Our highly-functioning model empowers schools to achieve the best they can while offering support when they need it most.

Whether it is our high quality central services or the economies of scale that come with size and efficiency, we have the infrastructure to help without reducing autonomy.

Likewise, we believe strong governance is critical to highly effective performance, so we entrust our Trustees and Local Governing Bodies to lead on their nominated areas.

Governors are empowered via our effective Scheme of Delegation and we have invested energy into creating a strong support offer and programme for governors.

Our schools run themselves. We support and challenge them to be the best they can be.



High autonomy, high accountability culture



Our responsibility is to invest in our people

WORKING FOR BEST

BEST is one of the biggest employers in the area, with more than 700 members of staff at the start of the 2022/23 academic year.

We're proud of the special ethos that runs through our family of schools, nurseries and central team.

We share a vision to grow the BEST in everyone – and that includes our people.

Our aim of providing an outstanding education to our young people can only happen if we recruit, retain and develop the highest quality staff.

And we want to make sure everyone feels valued in the workplace, across the whole BEST family.

As a single employer, we are able to offer our staff a fantastic range of benefits. These include an excellent working environment, great opportunities for career development and training, and discounts and deals to save money.

★ All vacancies across BEST are advertised via the education recruitment website MyNewTerm.

Scan the QR code, *right*, to see our latest vacancies or visit www.mynewterm.com and search for the Bedfordshire Schools Trust to find our careers page.



If we don't have any suitable roles, you can join our Talent Pool to express an interest in future opportunities.



SCAN ME

NEXT STEPS...

Joining a multi-academy trust is a big decision.

We passionately believe we have a strong set of values and our ethos works for our schools and nurseries.

We welcome expressions of interest from schools that would like to find out more about the benefits of joining the BEST family.

If your school is considering joining BEST we would be delighted to help you with the next steps. These include:

- ★ Arranging a personal meeting with our Chief Executive Officer Dr Alan Lee and Chief Operating Officer/Deputy CEO Craig Smith.
- ★ Organising for you to visit our schools to talk to the Principals about what it is like being part of our trust.
- ★ Talking to you further about our school improvement model and how we would anticipate working with you.
- ★ Answering any further questions you may have to help you understand more about our Central Services and how this can bring added value to your school/s.
- ★ Discussing with you our due diligence process and how we would manage the application and transition to BEST.
- ★ Ensuring your school community is treated with respect at all times.

For a confidential, informal discussion or an expression of interest, please email our CEO Dr Alan Lee on aalee@bestacademies.org.uk



I get a lot of support as a headteacher I wouldn't otherwise get – it all makes a huge difference to how easy it is to run a school.

– Tom Clarke
Principal
Gothic Mede Academy



Being part of BEST
adds value to schools



**BEST House, Shefford Road, Clifton, Shefford,
Bedfordshire, SG17 5QS**

01462 811519
info@bestacademies.org.uk
www.bestacademies.org.uk

