

Year 6 Open Evening 2020 – Welcome and Admissions

Welcome to the Rushcliffe School virtual open evening for year 6 pupils and parents.

My name is Damian Painton and I'm very proud to be the Principal here at Rushcliffe.

Whilst it is sad that we are unable to physically welcome you into the school, it is a pleasure to be able to showcase all that our school has to offer through this series of videos and written materials. You can, of course, also browse our website which contains lots of additional information.

At the heart of everything we do is our core purpose of giving everyone the chance to shine brightly. This is about ensuring that every young person, no matter what their ability, their background or the barriers that stand in their way, can be successful. That they have opportunities to pursue their interests, have their talents nurtured and realise their ambitions – both at Rushcliffe and in their lives beyond.

We are an academically very successful school. Pupils joining Rushcliffe will make academic progress well above national levels whilst with us. However, we offer far more than this. If all that pupils leave us with is a good set of examination results, their journey will have been wasted and we have failed them as a school.

We believe in developing well rounded, kind and considerate young men and women ready to take up their place and be successful in the world. We want them to have a broad range of skills and experiences that they can draw on in many walks of life. We want to open pupils' eyes to the vast array of opportunities that exist and make sure that they leave us to enter the next stage of their lives – whether that be college, University, an apprenticeship or the world of work – head and shoulders above the rest.

We want to give pupils all the opportunities that they need to thrive. If pupils have a passion for sport, there is lots on offer for them – whether they are an elite athlete training every day at 5am (and we have plenty of those), they simply enjoy sport or they want to get the most from the health benefits of regular exercise.

If pupils are enthusiastic about science, technology, engineering or the natural world, there are opportunities for them. The picture on the top right of your screen is one my favourites. That was the day when 560 Rushcliffe students entered the Guinness Book of Records for the most simultaneous Elephant toothpaste experiments ever undertaken. Yep – that's a thing. Elephant's toothpaste. 560. In a sports hall. What were we thinking?

If pupils are keen dancers, artists, musicians, singers or actors, if they have a passion for radio, there are opportunities for them. We've invested in brand new facilities for the performing Arts in the last three years – because we see the benefits it brings for all pupils.

If pupils want to explore the world, they can with us – whether through Duke of Edinburgh or many other avenues. Although travel at the moment is not so straight

forward, in normal times, we have pupils visiting all sorts of places – locally, across the UK and further afield across the world.

We are a school that serves its community. Pupils are able to give back through volunteering in lots of different ways. Reading with younger children, leading languages lessons or sports festivals for pupils from our feeder primary schools, becoming a dementia befriender and visiting a local care home every week.

The opportunities are endless and we genuinely believe that every single pupil at Rushcliffe can thrive in a way that is right for them as an individual – and be enabled to pursue their talents, interests and ambitions.

As a school, we set high expectations in all things that we do. We make no apologies for this and believe that ambition and aspiration enable pupils to be successful – provided that there are the right support structures to run alongside. At Rushcliffe, in addition to their teachers, pupils can turn to a whole host of people for help – our pupil support unit, our learning support and inclusion team, our wellbeing team and school counsellors to name just a few.

We believe in creating a really strong sense of community. This is underpinned by our core values. These are not just words on a screen or a wall – they are things that we all, pupils and staff, try to live by each and every day.

But our community extends beyond the walls of the school – and beyond the bounds of West Bridgford. We have partnerships with schools in France, Spain, China, Nepal, Holland, Guatemala and Malawi. Our pupils have worked on community projects in Kenya, Peru and Ecuador. These are life changing experiences. We firmly believe in supporting pupils to become global citizens – people who understand and contribute to a rich, diverse and ever-changing global community. We are accredited as an international school. The badge is unimportant. What it stands for is.

Creating a community that functions harmoniously and maximises pupils' chances of success starts with the very basic things. We ask all pupils to follow the Rushcliffe Way. These are the behaviour of people who are kind to each other and considerate. Why wouldn't everyone want to do these things?

As you will know, we are part of the Spencer Academies Trust, a regional trust that includes 7 other secondary schools and a number of primaries. The joy of being part of a trust is the opportunity to work collaboratively, share expertise and learn from the best of what is happening at the other schools – something we are keen to do to ensure that the experience for Rushcliffe pupils is the best it possibly can be.

Our published admission number for year 7 in 2021 is 270. We continue to work closely with the local authority to grow the school but this takes time and significant capital investment. We are committed to serving our local community and will continue to do all we can to offer as many places as possible to meet that community's needs.

Our admissions policy is on the website and this contains full details of how we allocate places in the event of oversubscription. This is important as we tend to get in the region of 850 applications.

My advice is to ensure you have read our admissions policy carefully, that you make use of the Nottinghamshire County Council website to confirm which secondary school you are in the catchment area for (it will only be one) and that you check whether your child attends one of our feeder schools or not. When you complete the form, ensure you put down four choices – don't leave one blank. And do be sure to get the form completed on time – the deadline is 31st October.

After offers have been made in March, we will ask for proof of residency for any pupils who have applied from catchment area addresses. The evidence we ask for must cover the 31st October 2020. We're sorry if this causes any inconvenience for people but, because of the number of applications we receive and the possibility that some pupils in catchment may not get a place, we do need to ensure that places are being offered fairly in line with our admissions policy.

If you have any Rushcliffe-related admissions questions, please do get in touch with our admission team – but please be aware that we can't make promises or guarantees about admissions as we have to follow very carefully that admissions policy and the 270 places offered will, of course, depend on who applies. For more general queries about the admissions process, please contact Nottinghamshire County Council.

Thank you for taking the time to watch this video. I hope that you've found it useful and that, along with all the other information available as part of our virtual open evening, it helps you to make a well-informed school choice for next September. Do get in touch if you have any questions and I look forward to welcoming many of you into the Rushcliffe school community.