



**Hermitage  
Academy**

**2025**

**PROSPECTUS**



# Welcome to Hermitage Academy

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Hermitage Academy, where we are committed to providing an exceptional educational experience for every student.

We believe in fostering a nurturing and inclusive learning environment that encourages academic excellence, personal growth, and most importantly, a love for learning.

I am extremely proud to be leading Hermitage Academy in an exciting phase of our development where we have recently received a 'good' rating in all areas from school inspectors, Ofsted.

Our staff are committed to delivering the best possible education for all students. They understand that every child is unique, with their own talents and skills, and together we celebrate

and nurture this. We are deeply ambitious for the children of this community, and we want each of them to leave us having developed the knowledge, skills and characteristics that will set them up for bright, happy and successful futures.

Choosing the right school is an important decision and I am delighted that you are considering Hermitage Academy for the next step in your child's education.

*L Maughan*

**Lindsay Maughan**  
Head of School



**Leaders are ambitious that**  
*all pupils will be successful.* Ofsted

# The Hermitage *experience*

**Everything we do at Hermitage Academy is tailored to making students feel happy about coming into school, enjoying learning, making good friends and feeling safe.**

Our curriculum is broad and ambitious for all students. It is designed to challenge students' thinking through stimulating and exciting lessons that are adapted to meet all children's needs. We are determined that no student is disadvantaged in their learning. For those students with unique learning needs, our skilled staff work hard to make sure students achieve their potential - just the same as every student in our school.

We have high standards and expectations. The quality of teaching across the school is strong and staff are highly skilled practitioners. Alongside this, we have a vibrant extra-curricular offer that students can get involved in. Essential to our school culture is praise and recognition. Students can be awarded praise points for various positive achievements and contributions

to learning and school life. Students could also receive praise postcards or a phone call home congratulating them on their effort and hard work.

We support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education through our curriculum and, in particular, our PSHE and careers sessions. We host external speakers in school and embark on a range of exciting and stimulating visits and trips both close to home and much further afield.

As students progress through school, they enjoy varied and wide-ranging experiences thanks to our wealth of connections with workplaces and other schools, both here and abroad including local football clubs, businesses and charity groups.



**We collaborate as a team within school and with Trust colleagues to constantly improve the experiences of our students with a new focus and drive."**



“**The school is ambitious that all pupils access a broad curriculum.**”

Ofsted



# Our vision *and values*

**Our vision is simple and shared by all schools in the North East Learning Trust – that every child experiences excellence every day.**

This fundamental goal stands as the cornerstone of every decision we make and is an aspiration that staff at Hermitage Academy are dedicated to delivering.

Our vision is supported by a set of values that set the tone for learning. These start with the important job of encouraging students to aim high and make the most of their talents.

Moving on we aim to provide students with an education that enables each of them to achieve their full potential and learn with confidence in a safe and supportive environment.

We also aim to create a kind, happy and disciplined culture and to nurture in our students a deep love of learning and a strong work ethic. Alongside this, we endeavour to nurture students' sense of social responsibility and their spiritual and personal development.

Our students are taught to respect both themselves and others, and to understand and value our community that is comprised of so many different individuals. Each student is unique and important, and we seek to foster integrity, resilience, creativity, good manners and sensitivity to the needs of others in each of them.

# SEND & *pastoral*

**Our priority is to ensure that every child reaches their full potential by making their safety and happiness our priority. This commitment is at the heart of our school and we work tirelessly to remove any barriers to learning.**

Our pastoral staff work extensively with other staff, parents/carers and external agencies to provide exceptional personal support and ensure that students flourish and leave us as well rounded individuals.

Year managers and form tutors see their students every day with a focus on providing individual support, where every student is well known and cared for.

Form tutors are students' first point of contact. As a team, they deliver our personal, health, social and economic curriculum (PHSE). This well planned and comprehensive curriculum is where all students learn the necessary knowledge and skills to cope with the ever changing, modern world with confidence and resilience.

We understand that some students may have special needs related to learning, health, or emotional factors.

Our committed SEND team works diligently to address these needs through strategies such as in-class targeted support and bespoke support sessions. Their goal is to ensure that every student achieves their best possible progress, both academically and pastorally.

We listen to our students and work hard to build good working partnerships with parents and carers. This way we are able to operate a flexible system of support that breaks down barriers and gives every child the opportunity to succeed.

Ultimately, we want to create an environment where all children feel welcome, and students are fully integrated into the life of the school.



*Hermitage Academy has bounced back stronger than before, under effective leadership there has been significant improvement and commitment to high standards not seen before.*

# Our approach to *extra curricular*

At Hermitage Academy, we offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich students' personal and social development.

Students can get involved in sporting activities, either for the pure joy of playing or in competitions. Our sports provision is excellent, and we offer various sporting activities and events outside of the normal school day.

We also have a huge choice of clubs where we encourage all students to explore their interests and enjoy the full community life of the school.

Our imaginative programme of educational visits has included trips to Borneo, Krakow and the Belgium Battlefields, as well as expeditions closer to home through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Additionally, our school has earned a growing reputation for outstanding public performances, with recent highlights including a production of A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Northern Stage as part of the Shakespeare School's Festival.

Here are just some of our clubs and activities:

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|---|---|--|
|  <b>Hermitage voices</b>    |  <b>Chess and games club</b>  |  <b>Basketball</b>       |
|  <b>Keyboard works</b>     |  <b>Craft and knitting</b>   |  <b>Badminton</b>       |
|  <b>Guitar lessons</b>     |  <b>Book club</b>            |  <b>Rugby</b>           |
|  <b>Musical rehearsals</b> |  <b>Astroturf activities</b> |  <b>Fitness</b>         |
|  <b>Drum practice</b>      |  <b>Netball</b>              |  <b>Trampoline Club</b> |
|  <b>Lego club</b>          |  <b>Football</b>             |  <b>Photography</b>     |





**We aim to provide students with an education that enables each of them to**

*achieve their full potential.."*

## Moving up from *primary*

**Starting a new school is a truly exciting time so we do our utmost to support children (and their parents/carers!) to ensure that their transition from primary school is as smooth as possible.**

It is so important that when your child joins us, they are prepared and ready for new challenges. We want your child to arrive in September feeling excited about this new chapter of their lives.

We understand that starting a new school can feel quite daunting so we do everything we can to ensure children feel as confident as possible about their next steps and settle in quickly to new routines.

Towards the end of the summer term, there is a transition evening which takes place at the same time as the transition days. Parents/carers and children are most welcome to visit the school, meet staff and current students, tour

the building and ask any questions they might have. Senior members of staff, the pastoral team and our special educational needs coordinator are always on hand during our open events.

All Year 6 pupils are invited to attend the transition days during the summer term. This is an important time when many worries are laid to rest. The children spend a few days in their new school, take part in timetabled lessons, meet teachers and most definitely meet new friends and have fun.

They also have the chance to explore the school as a big worry is always getting lost!



# Sixth Form

**At Hermitage Academy, our thriving sixth form offers students the opportunity to complete their 11-18 education in a familiar and supportive environment that offers an unwavering commitment to high-quality higher education.**

At Hermitage Sixth Form we believe in potential. Our team of supportive staff will help all students succeed through a blend of academic focus and exciting extra-curricular opportunities.

Students will be challenged whilst being encouraged to be the best they can be and we will help all students that apply to us make the right choices about their studies and future career aspirations.

We have a dedicated team with a strong commitment and pride in providing high-quality teaching and learning, supported by first-class care and guidance for students.

We have an excellent track record of students gaining first choice university places as well as supporting students moving into higher-level apprenticeships and employment.

## Student council



**We are extremely proud of the student council at Hermitage Academy where representatives from each year group share the views of all students on important school matters.**

**Each year, students are given the opportunity to apply to be on our council and we are consistently overwhelmed with the quality of the applicants and their well-thought, excellent ideas. Not only do our students represent the school, but some of our students have also been representatives on the Durham Youth Council which enables our school voice to be used in a wider context. We value our students and ensuring each student's voice is heard is of real importance to us. We value all of their contributions.**







# British values

**Schools are now expected to focus on, and be able to show, how we work with students to effectively embed fundamental British values into learning. The four key areas children will explore are:**

## **1. Democracy**

At Hermitage Academy, we promote the core values of a democratic society. Through our entire school ethos, PSHE programme and individual subject curriculums, students are encouraged to share their voice in shaping our school community. Students explore historical examples of different styles of government, and they are encouraged and provided with the opportunity to partake in and run mock elections.

Students also have the opportunity to apply for the

roles of head/leading students and be active members of our Student Council, supporting the school with decision making, most recently the selection of the new school uniform.

## **2. Rule of law**

Students are fully immersed in the understanding of rules, and the importance of such for everyday life. Through regular reinforcement across the curriculum, coupled with a strong pastoral team, students are aware of consequences and rewards. Within our PSHE programme, students are

provided with the opportunity to explore the justice system, for example, via active role play in a mock trial. Furthermore, students explore human rights and how laws are made linking to politics and current affairs.

## **3. Individual liberty**

Our school ethos and community is built on strongly supporting our students so that they celebrate difference and their individual, unique, accolades and skills. We invest a great deal of time in creating a positive culture in our school, so that children are in a safe

environment. If we know about it, we deal with it.

Achievements and efforts are highly celebrated with rewards, such as certificates, postcards and praise points – all are regularly celebrated through our varied and diverse assembly programme.

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities which students have the freedom to choose from, based on their talents and interests. Finally, our curriculum allows all learners the opportunity and support to become

independent enquirers and inquisitive young people.

## **4. Mutual respect and tolerance**

Mutual respect is at the core of our school community. Fundamentally, students learn to treat each other and staff with great respect. Our students are tolerant and respectful.

Kindness is of the utmost importance and referred to on a daily basis allowing students to feel comfortable and confident in their own skills /abilities. This is evident when

walking around the school and in the classrooms. Visitors to the school often comment on how polite and well-mannered our students are, as well as complimenting their conduct at open evenings, parents' evenings or during extra-curricular activities. Students are encouraged to discover topics such as conspiracy and fake news, understanding peer pressure and where to access support alongside discussion on discrimination.

Our school is a happy and safe place and our students are our greatest ambassadors.



## Supported by the North East Learning Trust

**Hermitage Academy is part of the North East Learning Trust (NELT), a successful family of schools across North East England.**

NELT is widely regarded as providing some of the best education in the county, and indeed the country, with children making significant progress from their starting points, achieving impressive exam results, and going on to access a range of well-respected further and higher education opportunities.

NELT has grown to 13 schools with an impressive series of rapid school improvements under their belts. Without exception, every school that has joined NELT as 'inadequate' or 'requiring improvement' as judged by Ofsted, has improved by two whole grades to become 'good' or 'outstanding' – this success is a testament to the unwavering dedication of a talented regional network of staff.

NELT is deeply committed to teacher development. It operates North East SCITT, a dedicated training arm for

new teachers, ensuring the highest standards of teaching expertise are embedded from the start of new teachers' careers.

Additionally, as a National Teaching School Hub, NELT is one of 87 centres across England offering teachers high quality training and development throughout their careers.

NELT's founding school, The Academy at Shotton Hall, is also a National Research School, one of just 23 in England that up-skill teachers using cutting-edge research.

NELT is led by outstanding educators, including CEO Lesley Powell CBE, who actively contributes to regional and national educational development. It has also built up a wide network of specialist teachers and other experienced professionals to support schools on their paths to becoming outstanding.



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