





## A Warm Welcome to Cotham School

Cotham School is an 11-18 school which is unique in Bristol. Ours is a culturally rich, academic and creative school in which no child is left behind.

At Cotham we take pride in the success of our students achieved over many years. However, whilst we are proud of this success we are never complacent. We strive to secure the best possible achievement and outcomes for every student and work tirelessly towards achieving these goals every day.

Cotham students are highly aspirational and have positive attitudes towards their learning and achievement. These qualities, in combination with the school's strong emphasis on creativity and academic progress, have led to impressive examination results at GCSE and A Level. At Cotham, students also excel in the Performing and Visual Arts and Sports and develop as well rounded young people.

Your child's education is as important to us as it is to you. We recognise that making the transition between primary and secondary school can be an anxious time for students and their families. At Cotham we really invest in this process and, as a result, build good partnerships with families from the start.

Do please visit. It is always a pleasure to show visitors around the school and seeing us 'at work' is the ideal way to decide upon Cotham's suitability for your child.

We really look forward to meeting you and showing you our school.

*Ms Jo Butler*

(Headteacher)





## High Expectations, Inspirational Teaching and Motivated Students

Learning is our purpose and our passion. At Cotham School every student is challenged and supported to achieve their very best. Every lesson is structured with achievement in mind and students work with excellent focus on their learning. The school's highly encouraging and aspirational environment enables students to flourish and make great progress.

Our climate of high expectations complements the nurturing and respectful ethos of the school. We believe that classrooms are the most important places in the school and it is there that we place our emphasis on challenge, creativity and independent learning. We expect all students to treat our classrooms as calm and purposeful places of learning, in which study takes place with minimal disruption.

Strong relationships between students and staff are valued features of Cotham and we ask students to demonstrate genuine respect for themselves and others at school, at home and in their communities.



*“Governors and school leaders have a strong commitment to serving the needs of their diverse community. They are determined to make sure that the needs of all their pupils are met so that all can maximise their potential.” (Ofsted)*



## Understood, Nurtured, Safe and Happy

Our approach is personal so that all our students feel valued. Students tell us they feel safe in school and there is little bullying. Just as importantly, parents and carers tell us that their children are very happy at Cotham. Within this environment students feel encouraged to reach their potential.

Student Voice is a real strength of the school and students share with staff, parents and carers a drive to ensure that everyone realises their potential, whatever that might be.

The school's pastoral systems provide excellent care, guidance and support so that when a student does meet a problem they know that there is always someone there to help. The form tutor is the key person in a student's experience of school life. The tutor oversees both the academic and personal development of their tutees and provides an invaluable link with parents and carers.

Cotham provides a safe and calm environment in which young people can learn, work, play and grow up together. We use every opportunity to foster a positive community ethos, with shared values. All of our students and staff are very proud of the school community they have helped to create.

*“Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive the support they require to make good progress.” (Ofsted)*



*“Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils are respectful when talking with adults and courteous to visitors.” (Ofsted)*

## Taking Responsibility

Responsibility is valued in every aspect of school life including academic progress, care for each other and care for the environment. We inspire our students to aim high and to take advantage of every opportunity. We also expect them to take responsibility for themselves and for their own actions. It is understood that they must work hard and show consideration for others in all their actions at all times.

There are rules, which have been co-constructed by our students, but these alone have not created Cotham’s culture. Supported by our highly effective House System our students have extremely positive relationships across the year groups. Every student has a part to play in creating and maintaining the vibrant life of the school. We see this in the curriculum enrichment programme where students have opportunities to shine and have fun outside of the classroom.

Achievement at Cotham is broad and whether through our extensive performing and visual arts programmes, outdoor education and adventurous activities, sports or Sixth Form community service, we expect all students to contribute to the wider life of the school.

Our students are supportive of each other. They understand our rules and boundaries and respect our culture of self-responsibility and success. Behaviour is very good and visitors always comment on the calm and purposeful atmosphere that pervades the school.

*“Teachers are well-qualified subject specialists who make sure that they highlight key points and set appropriate work to reinforce them. They use questioning skilfully to make pupils think hard.” (Ofsted)*



## Focus and Motivation

At Cotham we wish to instil an enjoyment of learning and you will find an unwavering commitment from all staff to the highest ambitions for every student. The school has very high standards and we ask our students to be focused, motivated and attentive to their studies at all times. We encourage them to take pride in their achievements and to have clear goals.

It is essential that parents and carers are involved in this process and we expect their commitment and support at every stage of school life. When it is necessary to do so we will provide support to achieve this.



*“Pupils are keen to take part in lessons. They answer teachers’ questions enthusiastically and they want to do their best. They are keen to respond to teachers’ advice and correct and improve their work where they can.” (Ofsted)*

## Educating Future Citizens

Cotham has a long history of preparing young people to step out into the world. Nurturing the development of the ‘whole child’ and future citizen is of key importance to us. We believe the character, life skills and confidence to be gained from this approach are beyond measure in terms of their real-life application.

Our purposeful, creative and academic school climate supports the high levels of engagement common to lessons at Cotham. The school builds spirit and determination through a unique combination of challenge and support.

Students are expected to take the lead in their learning, developing the skills of perseverance and resilience and the skills of independence, collaboration and team working.

Cotham enjoys active and enthusiastic links with schools in France, Germany and Spain. Regular student exchange visits are organised and prove to be a very popular way to learn about other cultures as well as improving linguistic skills.

At Cotham we seek to provide an education that both enables our students to gain university places of their choice and the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. Our ambition is for students to leave us well prepared for a globally changing future and ready to take their place in society.





*“ Students in the sixth form make better progress with their A levels than students in other schools. They are achieving well across a broad range of subjects. (Ofsted) ”*

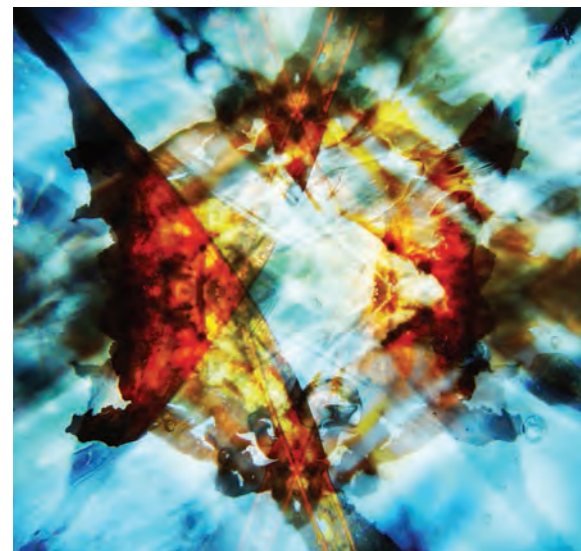


*“ Pupils behave well around the school site. They enjoy coming to school and the atmosphere in the playground and in social areas is positive and friendly.” (Ofsted) ”*



*“Pupils are respectful and courteous to staff. They welcome those from different backgrounds or who hold different beliefs.” (Ofsted)*

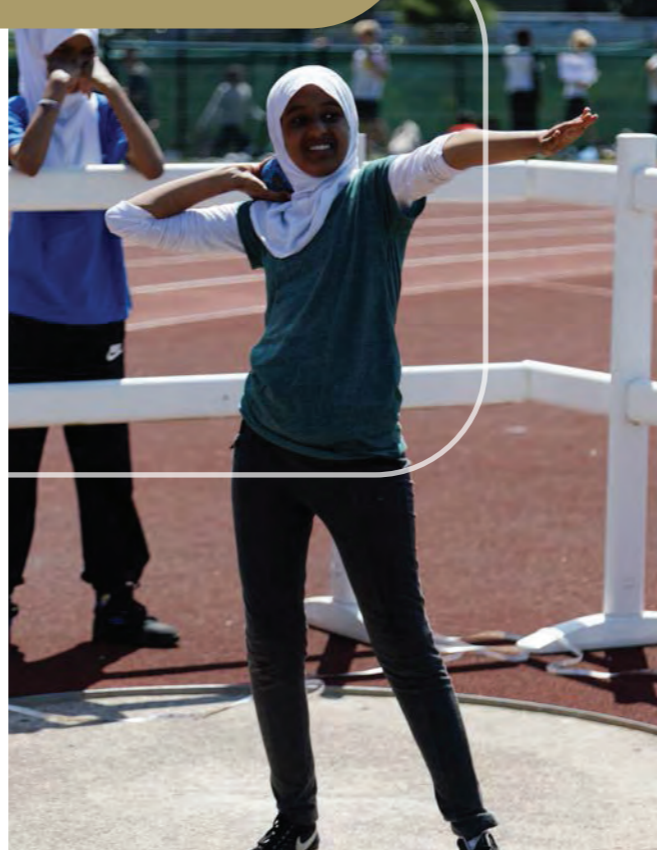
## Learning through the Performing and Visual Arts and Sports



Creativity and performance are at the core of Cotham and dance, music, drama and art are real strengths of the school’s curriculum. We are proud of our performing and visual arts provision and our aim is to offer our students a quality of experience that will enrich their lives. Our whole school productions are legendary and are almost professional in quality.

Sports are another strength of the Cotham curriculum. We offer a broad range of activities that ensure that all students find success and enjoyment. All major games are offered as well as some more individual and health-related activities.

Extra-curricular opportunities are excellent and all students are encouraged to participate.



## Success for all

At Cotham all staff and students value and celebrate the richness of our school community and its cultural diversity. We embrace the opportunities this provides to capitalise on the rich variety of backgrounds and experiences that our students bring to the school for educational purposes.

At Cotham we wish to instil an enjoyment of learning and you will find an unwavering commitment from all staff to the highest ambitions for every child. Our school culture is one where the full range of success - creative, sporting, academic, practical support for others and triumph over adversity is celebrated.

All students benefit from the best trained and qualified staff and major investment

in new facilities and resources. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and a stimulating range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits to support wider learning.

As students move through the school the formal curriculum is increasingly tailored to the needs of individual students. This contributes to the high level of engagement within lessons. Teachers plan to differentiate activities so that every student makes progress to their next level of learning.

We believe that excellence will be achieved by constantly challenging students, raising aspirations, and by insisting that good behaviour enables great learning.





## Our Cotham School ‘Learner Identity’

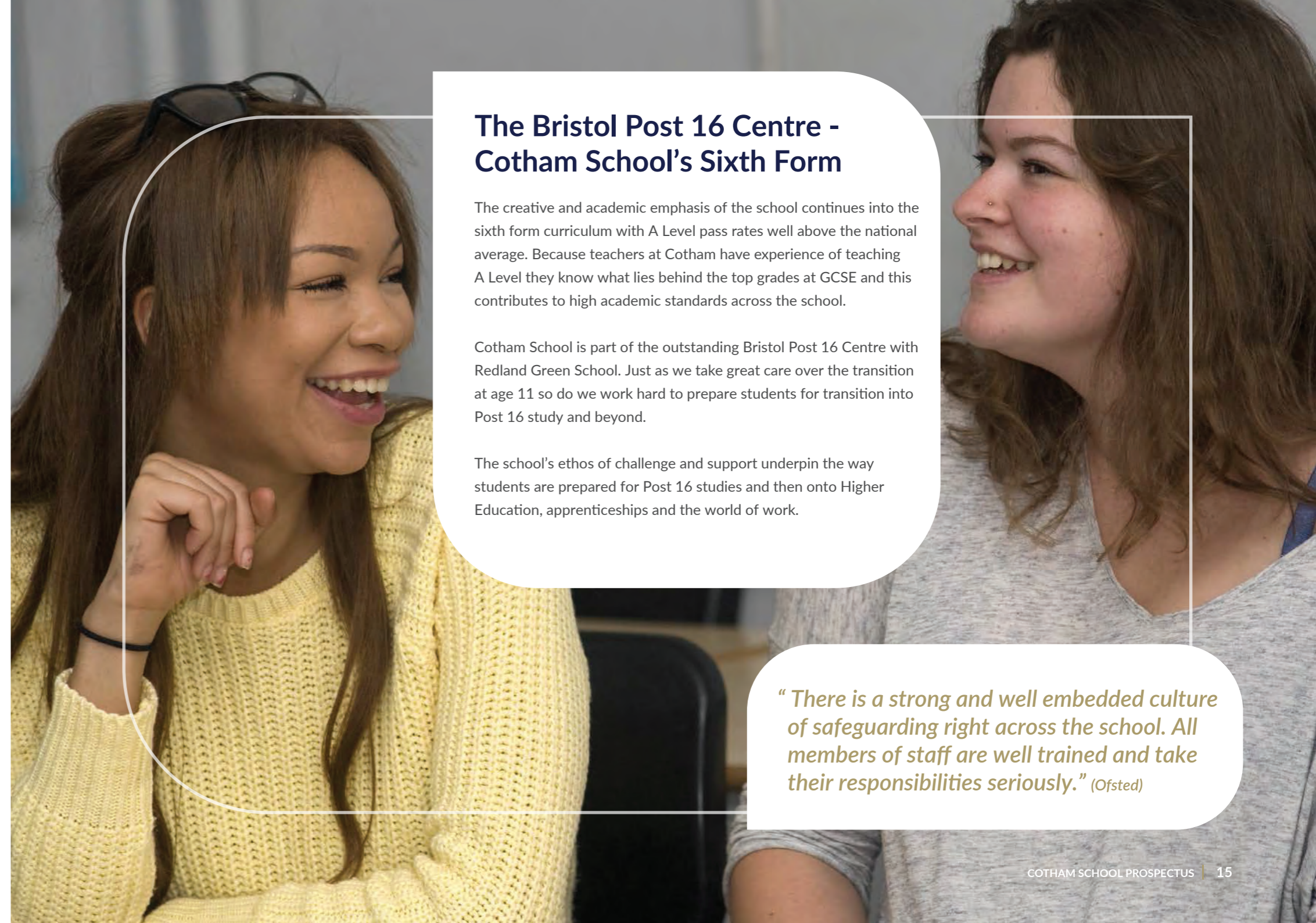
Knowing our students is vitally important to us here at Cotham. We fully appreciate the value of understanding the varied needs of the “culturally, linguistically and academically diverse 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom”<sup>1</sup>. We believe that identifying the different approaches and styles that contribute to being an effective learner is crucial to maximising learning.

Cotham School has agreed with student representatives a clear ‘learner identity’. We have a shared expectation across our school community that ‘learners’ are self-regulating, self-aware and sophisticated individuals who can identify and implement the various factors that contribute to excellent learning.

**Cotham students are learners who know that school is more than just about ‘the learning’. They are:**

- Valued Individuals who value each other and every member of the wider school community.
- Happy and Emotionally Intelligent young people who are tolerant and caring members of society.
- Confident Communicators who can clearly express and share their ideas.
- Engaged Learners who enjoy contributing to our exceptional learning environment.
- Diverse Achievers who work hard and have a clear sense of possibility about their own and group potential.
- Respectful Individuals who value good manners and celebrate the values of our culturally and socially diverse community.
- Proud Participators who represent both themselves and the values of the school in a positive way.

<sup>1</sup>How To Teach Now - William Powell and Ochan Kususma Powell (ASCD, 2011)



## The Bristol Post 16 Centre - Cotham School’s Sixth Form

The creative and academic emphasis of the school continues into the sixth form curriculum with A Level pass rates well above the national average. Because teachers at Cotham have experience of teaching A Level they know what lies behind the top grades at GCSE and this contributes to high academic standards across the school.

Cotham School is part of the outstanding Bristol Post 16 Centre with Redland Green School. Just as we take great care over the transition at age 11 so do we work hard to prepare students for transition into Post 16 study and beyond.

The school’s ethos of challenge and support underpin the way students are prepared for Post 16 studies and then onto Higher Education, apprenticeships and the world of work.

*“ There is a strong and well embedded culture of safeguarding right across the school. All members of staff are well trained and take their responsibilities seriously.” (Ofsted)*





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