



Vision and Values of Stone Soup Academy

Stone Soup Academy is an alternative provision free school in the centre of Nottingham, serving students outside mainstream education in an environment that encourages their academic and personal development. We are committed to the education and welfare of our students, with the goal of preparing them for a successful future in our community.

The foundation of our work is the ambition to create systems that equip young people who would otherwise be left behind. All too frequently, students who are deemed to be difficult or disruptive are faced with a future of unemployment or social disadvantage.

The Academy holds at the heart of its work the ambition to create an environment that fully equips students for their personal and academic development. Our goal is to empower each individual student to achieve in practical, functional, and long-lasting ways. To access futures that when they joined us they did not seem possible to achieve.

With this in mind, we aim to:

- Provide a supportive environment that aids the learning and personal development of all students;
- Improve the behaviour and attitude of each student with both adults and their peers;
- Reinforce each student's self-esteem and integrity;
- Instil an understanding of fundamental British values for citizenship.

Vision Statement

'Creating Unimagined Futures'

We believe that every young person has the opportunity to succeed by being motivated and inspired, rather than contained. Our school aims to develop young people into unique, responsible, receptive, discerning human beings with a sense of their own value. Our school is structured to nurture the social development of all the young people we work with, most of

whom experience significant disadvantages which compromise their ability to learn. We facilitate young people's learning, removing the barriers to their learning through a holistic, multi-agency approach and developing their ability to maintain good relationships with each other and with the members of staff, caring for and promoting the school and their community. We apply a multi agency approach involving external and internal support personalised to each child. Case studies of each child support our interventions and impact.

Our vision for Stone Soup Learns Free School offers a broad and balanced curriculum delivered within a family environment using a pedagogic approach rooted in learning by doing, inspiring and motivating, where learning naturally involves exploration, curiosity, failing and learning from mistakes, and a host of associated affective responses.

Our curriculum allows young people to develop their vocational skills, and be given the opportunity to work in real businesses, learning not just the skills associated with their vocational choices, but the long term life skills that are required for the workplace. It is our intention that all young people attending our free school will leave with the skills and motivation to become fully independent, contributing members of society.

Work experience is offered to all students and links with local businesses support our learners development in this area.

Core Values

- Respect: We believe that mutual respect allows us all the freedom to be open and honest and to support each other to success.
- Aspiration: To instill in all of our young people the belief that they can achieve, they can be successful that they can create unimagined futures for themselves.
- Positivity: To overcome these barriers to learning and to instil in our young people that it is not where you have been but where you are going to that is important

Ethos

The school will be underpinned by 7 key principles:

High expectations – Young people excluded from school generally have low expectations for themselves, and this has been reinforced by negative experiences at school. Our ethos is to inspire and raise these expectations, and channel this into high achievement

Respect – Good behaviour and high achievement starts with mutual respect. Our learners should be treated like young adults, and staff expect the same respect. Respect leads to trusting relationships which in turn improve pupil behaviour and achievement, behaviour and attendance.

Individual Learning – No two young people are the same. Challenging behaviour often manifests itself when an assignment is pitched at the wrong level. High levels of

differentiation in teaching allow each young person to progress at a pace that is suitable for them. Teaching is inspirational and enjoyable.

A different approach – Traditional school has not worked for many of these young people, so we approach their education differently. An integral part of learning is failure, learning how to recover, and evaluating what went wrong and how to do it differently. We believe in learning by doing, and supporting the students in developing skills in how to learn for themselves. Projects need to be real, and skills set into contexts showing why it is important that these skills are learnt.

Projects are often real and make use of the business links within the community. Currently these include, Art and photography projects through the Contemporary Art Gallery and Galleries of Justice. Music project with the Police, English, History and design project with the Castle Museum Trust, Performing Arts with Nottingham Forest Trust.

Flattened Hierarchy – The school is small so that all staff know all students. The school will have the feeling of a family, and this will be bolstered by high parental and community involvement. The school still remains small enough in number to provide a highly personalised approach to learning and support. We maintain good parental links via reporting, phone calls home and home visits and events developed with our school community in Mind.

Preparation for Independent Living – Our school will be preparation for life. Financial education, work skills and work experience will be core aspects of teaching. Progression to further learning and into employment will be a key principle of the school. Work experience is offered to each student and different ways to develop these opportunities are always being developed. Our success in this area is evidenced by the Gatsby benchmarks where we are 100% across every measure.

Personal Development – Our school aims to not only improve educational attainment, but to develop young people's life skills and to have an understanding of the world in which they live. Challenging a young person's misconceptions of their immediate society is as important as basic skills achievement. This is an area that is very strong within the Academy and evidenced by the investment in staffing within the Engagement Team.