

Good evening, everyone, and a very warm welcome to Shuttleworth College and thank you for joining us this evening.

Tonight, I'm speaking to you not only as a Headteacher, but also as a parent.

I have three children of my own, with my youngest currently in Year 8. When I look around this room, I can understand how many of you are feeling. I know that choosing a secondary school is both exciting and daunting. I know what it's like to worry whether your child will be happy, whether they'll make friends, whether their needs will be taken into account and whether they'll be supported when things get difficult. And we also want to know that they will be challenged to achieve their very best, with every opportunity available to them when they leave school.

As parents, we all want the same things for our children. We want them to be safe. We want them to be happy. We want them to enjoy coming to school. We want them to leave each day having learned something new, feeling valued, and believing that they can achieve great things.

And that's exactly what I want for every child who joins Shuttleworth College.

What makes Shuttleworth especially meaningful to me is that I haven't simply joined the community as Headteacher. I have spent much of my professional life here. Over that time, I have taught hundreds of students, worked alongside dedicated colleagues, and watched generations of young people grow into confident, successful adults.

Over the years, I have seen first-hand the transformative impact this school can have on a young person's life.

I've seen students arrive in Year 7 feeling nervous and unsure of themselves, and leave five years later with confidence, ambition, outstanding qualifications and exciting plans for their future.

I've seen former students return as engineers, teachers, business owners, apprentices, university graduates and community leaders; members of my family have been treated at hospital by nurses who once sat in my classroom.

And every one of them started their journey exactly where many of your children are today.

That's why I feel so passionately about Shuttleworth. We are large enough to offer a wide range of opportunities, experiences and subjects, but small enough that students are known as individuals. We know our students, we care about them, and we want every one of them to succeed.

That is why our motto is:

"Think Big, Chase Dreams, Succeed Together."

These words capture exactly what we want for every young person who joins us. We want our students to be ambitious, to believe in themselves, to pursue their goals with determination, and to achieve success as part of a supportive and caring community.

As Headteacher, there are three simple things I ask of every student:

Show up. Be kind. Work hard.

If students do those three things every day, they will thrive. They will build meaningful friendships, develop confidence, create opportunities for themselves and achieve great things.

We know that children learn best when classrooms are purposeful, respectful and free from disruption. We have high expectations of behaviour because every child deserves the opportunity to learn in a calm, safe and positive environment.

Showing up really is the foundation for success. We know from clear evidence that students who attend regularly achieve significantly stronger outcomes at GCSE than those whose attendance falls below 90%. Ultimately, strong attendance gives young people more choices, more opportunities and more doors open to them when they leave us.

One of the things I am most proud of at Shuttleworth is the quality of education we provide. We are fully staffed with specialist teachers in every subject area, ensuring that students are taught by experts who are passionate about their subjects and dedicated to helping every child succeed.

Equally important is ensuring that every child receives the right level of support and challenge. We are also committed to ensuring that every student receives the right level of challenge and support throughout their time with us. That is why we set students by ability across all five years of secondary education. By carefully grouping students, our teachers can tailor learning more effectively, ensuring that those who need additional support receive it quickly, while those who are ready for greater challenge are stretched to achieve their very best. Our aim is simple: every child should feel supported, challenged and successful in every lesson.

Alongside this, we continue to develop and strengthen our curriculum. We already offer a broad and ambitious range of subjects, but we are always looking ahead. We are excited to be expanding our provision further with the introduction of subjects such as Engineering and Media Studies, giving students even more opportunities to discover their talents, explore their interests and prepare for future careers.

Academic success matters, and we are proud that our results continue to strengthen year after year. The number of students securing the highest grades continues to rise, and we are proud to achieve some of the strongest English and Mathematics results in Burnley. However, success at Shuttleworth is about more than grades alone. It is about

developing well-rounded young people who are confident, resilient and ready for whatever comes next.

That is why we place such importance on student leadership. From the moment students arrive in Year 7, there are opportunities to make a difference. Students can become Year 7 Ambassadors, Form Representatives, or represent their peers through the School Council. As they progress through the school, they can aspire to join our Senior Prefect Team, helping to shape school life and acting as role models for younger students.

This would now be a timely point to introduce you to some of our senior prefects and new Y7 ambassadors.

Student speeches and interactions.

We know that moving from primary school to secondary school can feel like a big step. That's why we work hard to ensure our Year 7 students feel safe, supported and happy from day one.

In the past 4 weeks our current Year 7 students have already enjoyed a range of experiences. Some have taken part in a Bake-Off competition, others have attended trials for the boys and girls football teams. The whole year group enjoyed a Golden Time rewards afternoon of extra playtime and every day they benefit from a dedicated Year 7 playground area, giving them their own space within the school community.

To make the transition even smoother, our Year 7 students are given early access to break and lunch every day, allowing them to become familiar with routines and facilities before the rest of the school arrives.

As you can see and hear, life at Shuttleworth extends far beyond the classroom. We believe that some of the most important experiences happen through the friendships students build, the interests they discover and the opportunities they take outside of lessons. That's why we offer a wide range of enrichment activities at lunchtime and after school. Whether students are passionate about sport, interested in strategy and storytelling through Dungeons & Dragons, keen to develop their musical talents through instrumental lessons, want to take part in cheerleading, or are interested in the rapidly growing world of eSports, there is something for everyone. We want every student to find a club, team or activity that helps them develop confidence, discover new interests and feel a real sense of belonging within our school community.

Our students can also enjoy a wide range of trips, including Disneyland Paris, Barcelona, and our popular Year 7 PGL residential. Students also have opportunities to

earn rewards for excellent behaviour, attendance and effort through visits to theme parks, the Trafford Centre and trampoline parks.

Keeping children safe is our greatest responsibility. Whether that is safeguarding, online safety, mental health support or ensuring students have trusted adults they can turn to, we work hard to ensure every child feels secure, supported and cared for

To our Year 5 & 6 students here tonight, I want you to know that if you choose Shuttleworth College, you will be joining a school that believes in you, led by staff who want children to work hard and do their best, and have some fun getting there. We are a school that will challenge you, support you, encourage you to take opportunities, and help you become the very best version of yourself.

And to our parents and carers, I can assure you that we will work closely with you every step of the way. We know that strong partnerships between home and school make a real difference, and we are committed to ensuring every child is known, valued and supported. During my first year as Headteacher, we have introduced a number of important changes, all with one clear aim: to help students thrive. As both a Headteacher and a parent of three teenagers, every decision I make is guided by the question, "Will this improve outcomes and opportunities for our young people?" I am grateful for the support that the vast majority of our families continue to show as we work together to make Shuttleworth even stronger.

This is a school on a journey. We are ambitious about what Shuttleworth can become, and every year we continue to strengthen our curriculum, enrich opportunities and raise standards so that our students receive the very best education possible.

Thank you for spending your evening with us. I hope you are enjoying exploring our school, meeting our staff and students, and seeing first-hand the opportunities available here at Shuttleworth College. You will see our fantastic building and facilities and hear about our excellent exam results.... but schools are ultimately about people. What makes Shuttleworth special is the quality of our staff and students. Every day I see colleagues going above and beyond for young people, and I see students showing kindness, resilience and determination. That sense of community is something I am incredibly proud of.

Your children that you have brought with you tonight have enormous potential. Our job is to help them discover it, nurture it and turn it into reality. We would be proud to be part of your child's journey, and I look forward to welcoming many of you into our school family next September.

Thank you.