

# ST EDMUNDS SOCIETY

## ANNUAL REVIEW 22/23

---



**ST-EDS**  
Employability skills for young people



# CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

---

Firstly, I would again like to thank everyone working at St Eds for their continued dedication and commitment. The work of St Eds really does change lives. It breaks the cycle for our students and gives them opportunities that the statutory education sector either cannot or will not.

Our CEO, Lorraine Bliss MBE, decided to stand down in March after a period of poor health. She had been head of the organisation for over 30 years, leading it through the foundation and development of our highly-valued training centre. Both the staff and the Trustees wish her all the best in her retirement. The process of replacing her has started.

I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for their hard work and commitment over the year. All are volunteers and give their time and experience unstintingly.

St Eds had continued to grow and develop this year. I believe that we can ensure that this is sustainable and that our future is bright.



**David Fullman**

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

# CEO

---

The academic year of 2022-2023 has been another one to remember with many successes for the charity including winning the Centre for Social Justice Awards, maintaining our Matrix Accreditation, and further developments of the training centre to enable us to enhance and diversify our curriculum.

We are so fortunate to be supported by many organisations and corporate companies who provide us with generous donations and financial support. Our industry contacts understand the importance of trade related skills and qualifications, offering invaluable work experience opportunities, site visits, and careers advice to develop our students employability skills.

Our alternative provision and pastoral outreach services have continued to be supported by schools, with this year reaching the highest level of referrals we have seen to date. This has enabled many young people to learn how to manage the barriers they have in mainstream education and provide inclusion for all.

St Eds is continuously developing our staff team to ensure that we are able to maintain current and strong expertise to best support the students. This year all staff achieved their Mental Health First Aid qualifications to better assist the increasing Social, Emotional, and Mental Health issues that many young people face, which in turn, can have adverse effects on their education and futures if left unaddressed. Being a trauma informed centre and embedding emotional coaching practices in to our policies and communications with the students empowers them to acknowledge and tackle any issues they are experiencing.

Finally, I would like to thank the trustee board for their ongoing support, the amazing staff team for their tireless commitment and dedication, and to all those who have supported and continue to support St Eds and our students.



**Serena Davenport**

INTERIM CEO

# GENERAL MANAGER

---

What an incredible year we have had! We have seen an increase in the amount of young people utilising our services, our staff team growing from strength to strength, and strong, supportive partnerships being made across multiple services to aid and equip the students.

Reflecting on another successful year at St Eds, we have so much to be proud of this academic year. Our services are ever expanding, and this is reflected in the introduction of new courses, increase in young people using our services and a growing staff team.

Furthermore, our volunteer team has increased this year, and we couldn't have done it without their dedication and commitment to the young people we support. On average, our volunteers are supporting us for 40 hours per week.

We have supported 111 Post 16 students to achieve a vocational course, 159 young people through Alternative Provision placements, and 102 through Welfare Outreach.

We are extremely proud of our achievement of winning the Centre for Social Justice Award 2022, recognising our efforts in improving the lives of some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people across Norfolk. This award celebrates small charities who have been central to supporting the most vulnerable in their communities and doing everything in their power to give vital skills, help and time to those in need. This has opened up new opportunities to St Eds, including being featured on national GB News with Liam Halligan.

Utilising the holistic approach of our welfare, delivery, Post 16, and administration teams has ensured many positive outcomes for our students this year. Our staff team are constantly reflecting and developing on how to improve our service to the young people, whilst establishing a strong rapport, using a student-centred approach.



**Becky Jordan**

GENERAL MANAGER

# OUR COURSES

---

We are proud of how much our centre has grown, since we opened on Oak Street in 2012.

This year we have introduced Level 2 Vehicle Inspection, Level 1 Trade Specific Carpentry, and Plumbing as part of Level 1 Multi-Construction.

We have supported students who have been out of education for a long time, to reengage them via nurture and careers projects.

- Level 1 Multi-Skilled Construction
- Level 1 Bricklaying
- Level 1 Carpentry
- Level 1 Hair and Beauty Skills
- Level 2 Hair and Beauty Skills
- Level 1 Automotive Maintenance
- Level 2 Vehicle Inspection
- Level 1 Catering and Hospitality
- Level 1 Health and Social Care



# FINANCES 22/23

---

The academic year 2022/23 has been one of firsts with a number of changes occurring during the year in terms of the finances. The Charity has just completed its first ever audit and thanks to the changes implemented in the last 12 months we have received an unqualified opinion which is extremely pleasing and is down to the hard work by the staff who have changed the systems to meet the new governance requirements. The year end 2022 is also the first accounts since 2018 that have not been qualified, something we should all be proud of.

Donations remain key to the success of St Eds in meeting its objectives. For every Post-16 student we support, donations of around £1,400 are needed. Thanks to the continued support of our funders the donations are getting close to this target, and we have managed to secure a COVID recovery loan to bridge the gap for this year. Many of our funders have identified they are willing to do more and through the development of a focused business plan aim to identify in advance the support we need and in what areas. Finally, later this year we hope to launch the Friends of St Eds scheme where people can make regular monthly donations to support the charity in its objectives.

The income of the society has continued to grow with the increase in day placements as a result of the support St Eds is providing to local schools and students, for the first time this is over 4200 school placement days. We have also managed to obtain funding to run summer activity weeks which we hope will broaden the usage of the facilities. The need for welfare and wellbeing support has continued with the outreach service now supporting students across the county.

In summary, we have finished the year in a stronger financial position than we started it but we are still on a journey to achieve total sustainability. The current changes in the educational funding system have introduced uncertainties which, although are being addressed, do result in continued financial pressure. It is only through the continued and consistent support of our funders and friends that we can continue delivering what we do, and we thank you once again for your donations especially during these difficult and trying times.



**Dene Heywood**

TRUSTEE TREASURER



# WELFARE

---

Our skilled welfare team have worked with over 150 school students from 54 schools, as well as supporting over 100 Post-16 students this year, helping them reintegrate into education, overcome their barriers to learning, and letting them reach their full potential.

Welfare have also been out in schools this year as part of our Outreach services, helping with attendance and being the lifeline between parents and schools when communication has broken down.

As we have approached the end of the year, we have heard students explain to us that their soft skills have developed, some of the things that the students have told us are “their confidence has grown” and “I feel like I know who I am now”.

We are incredibly proud of the welfare team; each member of the team is driven to making sure every student feels supported and has a voice. The team have worked hard so that the students get to achieve and get to go to the awards ceremony, receive their certificate and feel a sense of accomplishment.



**159 SCHOOL STUDENTS AT ST EDS**



**102 STUDENTS THROUGH OUTREACH**



**Amy Hannant**

WELFARE LEAD

# POST 16

---

This academic year, 111 Post-16 students have received our support to achieve their chosen vocational course, and they have also been supported to achieve English and Maths. This has included careers information, advice and guidance, as well as Work Experience Opportunities for students to progress into apprenticeships, employment or to continue in education. Welfare interventions and enrichment activities have supported students to overcome their barriers to learning. We couldn't be prouder of our students and today celebrates their success and hard work over the last year.

We have continued to grow our network of employers to support the invaluable work of the Society including donation of materials, work experience opportunities and supporting our students to progress into their chosen career. Special thanks to Skills Training UK for enabling us to support our students and making all of this possible.

We are extremely proud to witness our students growing from strength to strength over the last few months and seeing them prepare for their next steps. We wish our students well with their future careers and are extremely proud of their achievements. Congratulations on receiving your certificates and awards today.



**111 POST-16 STUDENTS**



**Amanda Bowie**

STUDY PROGRAMME MANAGER



# TESTIMONIALS

---

“

We are absolutely delighted to be giving the CSJ award to St Edmund's Society. We scoured the country looking for the very best grassroots poverty-fighting charities and this year's winners are all superb. Our independent judging panel were incredibly impressed with St Edmund's Society's impact and their dedication to serving those in their local community. Huge congratulations from all of us at the CSJ Foundation.

**Nathan Gamester, CSJ Foundation**

Volunteering has allowed me to grow as a person, immensely improving my confidence. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at St Ed's and will always be grateful for the opportunities they have given me and the kindness I experienced there. I strongly urge anybody who is keen to gain valuable work experience and expand their CV to volunteer for St Ed's. You will not regret it.

**Lily, Post-16 Volunteer**

I just wanted to thank you for everything you have done for me. I really appreciate you so much. You believed in me when I didn't. I am so grateful that I had you to help me this past year. I really am going to miss you.

**Post-16 Student**

Thank you for all the support you have given my daughter. The extra support she receives has made a massive difference, helping her overcome her problems. School never did half as much as you are

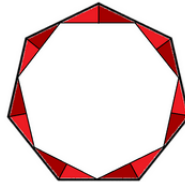
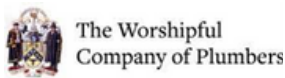
**Parent of School Student**

The students I work with have been offered inclusive interviews, reasonable adjustments and assessments. They felt comfortable, relaxed and positive during their visit and are looking forward to starting a construction course next month. The process from attending an interview to confirming a start date was prompt and in line with their needs. It remains for me to thank you all for your continued support to make vocational study accessible to all.

**EHCP Coordinator**

”

# OUR SUPPORTERS



## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS:

