

**Sixth Form Open Evening October 2021 –
Heads' Introductions and Student Senior Team Speech transcripts
Choice, Opportunity Success**

Welcome - Mr Nick Law

Good evening to all of you this evening and welcome to The Robert Carre Trust. My name is Nick Law, Executive Headteacher of the Trust and Head of Carre's Grammar School. I have with me Josephine Smith, the Head of Kesteven and Sleaford High School, and together we are delighted to welcome you to the Sleaford Joint Sixth Form Open Evening. In the next few minutes, we hope to give you a flavour of what studying as part of the SJSF is all about with a little help from those who know best – the students.

Many of you will already know the schools and have picked up a feel for them. For those that have not, tonight is an opportunity to talk to staff and students; find out about A Level study, BTecs, CTecs, and ask questions.

We want you to leave feeling well informed and surer about what it is you want to do after GCSEs. We hope we can help you find out about the different courses, their entry requirements, and the next steps you need to take if you would like to study with us.

I hope very much that you will be able to fit in time to visit all three schools this evening. If you choose to study in the SJSF you will have access to over 50 courses across 3 sites, which is the broadest offer you will find in anywhere in the county. Across the two schools in the Robert Carre Trust (RCT) these are mostly A Level courses, but we do offer other courses and most of our students will study 3 subjects over 2 years and access 5 hours of teaching time in each subject per week. The Extended Project qualification worth UCAS points and DofE programmes are available and are encouraged. Across the Trust we have had some outstanding results and students who have a fantastic array of skills. We know that universities and employers really value these things, and it is no coincidence that our students go onto some of the top Universities, top apprenticeships, and top jobs.

So what is the Sleaford Joint Sixth Form about?

Firstly it is about **Choice**

- Academic
- Vocational
- Flexibility
- Majority of combinations can be accommodated (e.g. 3 MFL, drama, computing, range of Art, Science, Sports qualifications ...all delivered by specialists)

And then it is about

- **Opportunity**

The students will talk to you about some of the opportunities they have here, but all three schools are absolutely committed to making sure that Sixth Form is a time of personal growth, and good fun with lots of chances to discover new strength

And of course, the SJSF is about

- **Success** and that means success for all.

Welcome - Mrs Josephine Smith

It is a real privilege to help young people to achieve their aspirations and we endeavour to help students achieve in whatever forum; day in day out we help them achieve the absolute best grades, but just as importantly we aim to help all our young people find personal satisfaction and pride in what they do.

We are always looking for ways to help SJSF students love learning whether that is in the classroom on the sports field, on stage, as part of a musical ensemble, at work experience placements or taking part in the various leadership roles for which they can sign up.

We are expected to deliver exam success and do for all our students. Our academic success places us high in both county and national rankings. We are proud of their achievements. Typically, over 85% of Robert Carre Trust students go on to university ... the vast majority being accepted into their first choices. Every year we have students who go on to Oxbridge and/or Medicine or Vet Medicine degrees. Many select Russell group universities to continue their studies.

The landscape is shifting for young people though and many of our students choose alternative routes, earning a salary whilst they gain professional qualifications via sought after apprenticeships, other enter employment; some even develop their own businesses. We have close local links with the Armed Forces and our students are placed perfectly for careers in any of the Services. Even in Covid times some of our students have become decorated athletes with the most successful looking at scholarships to study in the US next year. Some of our students choose to travel for a year before studying further– we are here to advise and counsel, whatever their ambitions, but also to make sure that doors are kept open, so the world really is their oyster.

For many of you this evening those decisions rightly seem a long way off still. Our job is to imagine your future with you and prepare you for it. That means that grades matter; but finding your passions, staying mentally well and healthy and supporting you as you navigate the next two years matters more. We want to help you unlock your potential and prepare you here for life.

Some of you may be sitting here excited about the next challenge beyond GCSEs and the rigour of post-16 study, whilst other may be nervous about meeting the criteria for A Level study. The beauty of the range of courses across the SJSF means there is something available here for everyone. Our different pathways and our entry requirements make post 16 study with us attainable for everyone. You will hear Mr Smith and Miss Chant talk more about that in just a moment.

Some of you may want to find out more about choosing a base school for Sixth Form. Very simply your base school is where your tutor base will be; staff in your base school will write your references, they will support you through the next two years. Wherever you base however, your studies are likely to be across more than one site and are dependent on the combination of options you choose. Where you study each subject ensures you get the best teaching in the best facilities.

But please do not take Mr Law and my word for it. I am delighted to introduce you to 4 of our Year 13 students, based at both schools in the Trust, who can share their experiences with you.....

Matthew Bolton (Year 13)

Good evening everyone, my name is Matthew Bolton and I am the Head Boy here at Carre's Grammar School. I study History, Ethics and Philosophy and Business A Levels.

My journey at Carre's began in a similar fashion to many of you, 6 years ago in 2015. A blazer a size too big alongside a more than spacious school bag. As a student at Carre's for the duration of secondary school, I can say without hesitation, that Year 7 and Year 12 hold many parallels. For some, being the new student in a new school may well remain the most prominent theme.

However, something universal for all is the new chapter of your education in the form of Sixth Form study. The significance of Sixth Form is often largely associated, solely, with achieving high grades alongside the mounting pressures of doing so. A Levels at the Robert Carre Trust are in an environment which encourages both academic success alongside individual growth. Many colleges and Sixth Forms focus solely on student university applications which limits the chances students have to find their genuine pathways and opportunities after Sixth Form.

Here at the Robert Carre Trust though, you will be given advice and mentored by members of staff to find the right steps for you, upon completion of your courses.

From a personal perspective- I researched my options for study at university and decided that it wasn't the best choice for me. I was fully supported with this and was aided in my research into other career pathways which led to me applying for a number of apprenticeships and the Royal Navy, the school providing any references/ application advice that I required.

As a student at Carre's from Year 7, a significant dynamic which does change in a positive fashion is your relationships with your teachers and form tutors from the younger years of the school. The progression from a set school uniform to a suit from Next does reflect the change from a student at GCSE and a student at A Levels. You are now in most respects an adult; teachers and the Sixth Form alike repay this compliment with out of lesson time support and the implementation of free periods to promote your individual study.

The staff across all three sites are excellent and have a vested interest both in your results alongside your wellbeing, creating a good 'give-take' working environment which really does promote and inspire success.

Some of you may be nervous in beginning a new chapter at a new school, there is no need to be. No matter which school you base at, what your hobbies or interests are, you will have an amazing experience here throughout the two years of your studies.

Jessamy Adamson (Year 13)

Good evening,

My name is Jessamy Adamson and I am the Deputy Head Girl here at Carre's. Two years ago, I was sat where you're sat right now, as I contemplated moving from my old school, KGGS, to Sleaford. I loved my old school, but I knew that I wanted a change of environment, and after coming to the Open Day and speaking to some of the students, I knew Carre's was the place for me. I can confidently say today that I made the right decision.

Everybody here, both students and teachers alike have been so welcoming and supportive, and I felt as though I fitted in here immediately. The friendly, community environment of this Sixth Form makes it so easy to settle in and to know that there is always support available. I've found it so easy to gain a good balance between education and enjoyment, as I get to socialise in times like enrichment, as well as engage during my lessons. All of the teachers are very helpful and supportive, especially when it comes to planning for the future. Each form tutor can help you to read over and improve your personal statement when applying for uni, and class teachers are always happy and available to help you out with any subject specific areas, such as work experience or online courses to add to your application.

Not only do both Robert Carre Trust schools work hard to provide the students with support in education, but also within areas of mental health. This year, the staff have coordinated with the Sixth Form prefects and students alike, to form an ethos of de-stigmatisation around mental health, so there is always somebody available to go to. Both schools have trained sixth formers as Wellbeing Ambassadors who have formed a student-to-student support system, in addition to our trained staff counsellors up in the house. Some of the Sixth Formers have trained in mental health and wellbeing to provide an extra layer of support to students who may find it daunting to speak to an adult. I think this is so important, and the caring attitudes of all the staff have honestly made my time here so much better, and the transition much smoother. If you're thinking about moving, it is definitely something worth considering. A fresh start, new friends and new opportunities are things you won't regret finding.

Thank you for listening and enjoy the rest of your night!

Molly Burrell (Year 13)

Good evening everybody, my name is Molly. I am based at the High School where I am Deputy Head Girl, I currently study A Levels in History, Psychology and Ethics and Philosophy, and after completing the early application process, I'm hoping to go on to study History and Politics at university next year. This is something the school have been incredibly supportive of, always making sure we get the best opportunities to strive for what we want to achieve post-secondary school.

Studying at the Sixth Form has allowed me to come into my own and gain a wealth of independence, confidence and overall happiness. The freedom that being a member of Sleaford Joint Sixth Form provides has offered the chance for my peers and I to gain a level of maturity that just isn't possible in the lower school. I think one of the main reasons for this is the movement between the three school sites. One of

the unique things about the Joint Sixth Form is that there is the opportunity to study at three different schools, the High School, Carre's and St. George's, while still being a part of one student body. This, of course, depends on your subject options, some of you may end up having all of your lessons at the school you are based at but most people, and study at least two of the sites maybe all three depending on your options. Due to my options, I am one of the students with lessons at all three sites, and I have really enjoyed this experience.

I started at the High School in Year 7 moving up through the years and by the end of Year 11 I was ready for a change, but I didn't quite feel ready for a change like moving to a completely new school. Being based at the High School not studying across The Joint Sixth Form was the perfect fit for this.

At first, I was nervous to walk between schools and try to find my classrooms, but everyone was helpful and accommodating. My first ever lesson in Year 12 was actually at St. George's, and I had only been to the school once so the idea of getting to my class was very daunting. However, much to my relief, Miss Chant was there to guide us to where we needed to be, and everything went smoothly. These nerves about walking across Sleaford quickly became excitement and I loved the freedom it gave me, especially because it meant I could get a Greggs sausage roll on the way back from my lessons.

Another worry I overcame was figuring out who I would walk between sites with as most of my friends didn't share my subjects. This was easily resolved because you make friends in your classes so quickly and I'm now never at a loss for someone to walk with.

Overall, I think my time at Sleaford Joint Sixth Form has been a wonderful experience full of freedom and growth. It's given me the skills to find my feet in my future education and whatever may follow that. Although I would recommend checking the weather every morning in case you need your broly.

I would also just like to add that Jess and I will be heading down to the High School after this and would love to help anyone in need of directions. Catch up with us in this hall after the talk if we can help!

Jess Reed (Year 13)

Hello Everyone, I'm Jess and I'm Head Girl of KSHS and I have been at the High School since Year 7. I take History, Geography and German for my A Levels.

We thought you might like to know a bit about Sixth Form life outside of lessons. Most people take 3 subjects and so you have 15 scheduled lessons out of 25 a week. The rest of the time is divided between supervised independent study, free lessons and sessions that give you other opportunities to prepare for life after Sixth Form. We have something called Enrichment for 2 hours every Wednesday afternoon. In Year 12 you sign up to at least two activities, including cooking, textiles, sport, music, debate, reading and so much more. I personally did debate club and music enrichment and absolutely loved both. Enrichment is such a great way to build confidence and make new friends, but it also gives you a break from constantly working all the time (as I'm sure that's what everyone does in their free periods).

Trips, Covid permitting, are another huge part of SJSF. Our Geography department goes to Iceland for 4 days which I know my entire cohort is very upset about missing out on. However, we were compensated with a trip to Boston and Skegness so we clearly didn't miss out on much. There are numerous trips to London for history, English and drama, but I can't mention every trip, or we'd be here all day!

VESPA is an opportunity that the school has bought access to in order to try and support their students to achieve their potential. It's a programme that all students undertake in tutor time and hear about in assemblies which helps students build a positive mindset and manage workloads, with effective and researched methods.

Positions of responsibility are another significant opportunity in the Sixth Form. There is a senior team at all three schools, and I know I speak on the behalf of all of them when I say that it is so rewarding, being able to talk to your teachers and fellow students and make a difference. The students are such a massive part of our community and I think it really shows just how much we are respected in the Sixth Form with the number of positions available. There are House captains and subject prefects, as well as Wellbeing Ambassadors. If you are a student who is passionate about making positive changes in your school environment, then I strongly encourage you to look into these roles.

The last thing I would like to say is that I know how daunting this open evening can seem. There are so many people and subjects and teachers, and I know I had no idea what I was doing, or what I wanted to do in the future. I went round all of the subjects I was interested in and I believe that my mum and I were the last ones to leave, which is something we have become known for at KSHS. I also remember when I came to this Open Evening, I would have loved to hear someone say "I have no idea what I want to do in the future". So, I'll be that person today: I have no idea what I want to do in the future, and that is perfectly okay. You don't need to have your entire life figured out just yet, I certainly don't!

What I do know however, is that I would like to study History and German at university and that the Sixth Form has played such a massive part in encouraging me to follow my dreams, even if I am just figuring them out as I go along. There are so many options out there, so be brave and bold and work hard, but remember to have fun and be kind to yourself. Good luck, and I look forward to seeing you in the future!