

Blue Skies

Academy Transformation



United Church Schools Trust

The best in everyone™



United Learning Trust

The best in everyone™

UCST
celebrates
125 years





Academy Transformation

The ULT approach has always been that delivering transformation in academies is a marathon, not a sprint. The fragility in many of the schools we inherit means that getting the foundations right provides the best opportunity to deliver permanent improvement. And this can take time.

Our GCSE results for 2008, however, demonstrate both what can be quickly achieved and what lasting progress can ultimately deliver. This year, there were three academies in the tables for the 50 most improved schools in the country. Two of these are sponsored by ULT: Manchester Academy and Paddington Academy.

Paddington Academy is the 11th most improved school in the country and the most improved academy of all. In only its second year, its improvements are dramatic, increasing its five good GCSEs including English and maths from 18% in its predecessor school to 38%.

Other impressive achievements at ULT academies include:

- North Oxfordshire Academy which, in its first year as an academy, is the most improved school in its County;
- William Hulme's Grammar School which is in the top 50 highest achieving comprehensive schools in the country;
- Walthamstow Academy which has seen the number of students achieving five or more A* to C grades including English and maths improve from 14% to 32% in two years.

This year ULT's Manchester Academy is the 13th most improved school in the country and the most improved school in the whole of Manchester. Its predecessor school, Ducie High School, was renowned as one of the worst schools in the country. The transformation that is being undertaken at Manchester Academy began five years ago. Here, Kathy August, its Principal and ULT's Executive Director for School Improvement, tells the story of how this transformation has occurred.

The historic election of Barack Obama as the 44th American President struck chords with many at Manchester Academy. The title of his book – 'The Audacity of Hope' – resonated particularly as the words encapsulated the Manchester Academy story. To describe fully what has happened over the past five years though needs more than four words.

The school that became Manchester Academy in September 2003 had been a problem for Manchester LEA for a very long time. When I first became a head teacher in Manchester in September 1988, Ducie High School, as it was called, was acknowledged to be the worst school in Manchester. It subsequently became one of the five worst performing schools in the country.

It is widely acknowledged by those who know that Ducie was in a much worst state than the notorious Ridings. But because it was in Moss Side, and in Manchester, it was protected from too much opprobrium.

By 2001/02, Manchester LEA was under pressure from the DfES to "do something about Ducie". Various plans were suggested, such as making it an annex of Trinity Church of England High School, but there was concern that local children would not all be able to get in, due to the faith criteria.

The inception of the Academies Programme meant there was an option for Ducie that the LEA could not ignore.

The problem was finding a sponsor who would be prepared to make a leap of faith. An assessment of the likelihood of the school being able to be transformed defied rational argument.

In the decade from 1993 the best result that Ducie had ever achieved was 13% 5 A*-C, and this was after a massive capital investment. Year 11 attendance was only 50%, permanent exclusions were very high, behaviour was often out of control and in the year before it became an academy, staff wrote to the DfES to say they felt unsafe at work.

These facts resulted in many potential sponsors refusing to become engaged in the Manchester project. It wasn't until Ducie was visited by ULT in the form of Sir Ewan Harper that a sponsor was found.

In establishing Manchester as the first ULT academy to open and one of the first 13 in the country, there was a lot of learning to be done. The area where there was already a body of knowledge to draw on for the core purpose of the school – teaching and learning – was in school improvement.

We know what works

The messages which have been coming out of this area of study for some years both in the UK and in Canada and the US are, despite the different systems, remarkably consistent. The emphasis on data collection and scrutiny; the importance of monitoring which is rigorous, timely, frequent and regular; the unrelenting promotion of an ethos which emphasises high expectations; strict adherence to uniform; efficient systems which are fit for purpose but kept simple; consistency of implementation; and high visibility of senior staff.

We focused on these factors deliberately and unrelentingly from the start. We continue to focus on them today as, despite the improvements at Manchester Academy, the challenges remain the same as they did on day one of its existence.

Formal English

In addition we emphasise and expect the speaking of formal English. Using a higher register of language and eradicating street argot is a particular focus and has been strengthened by the number of enterprise events involving business partners so that students identify the use of formal English with professional protocols. We believe it is essential that we work to improve students' spoken English and social etiquette skills, as well as their academic qualifications, if we are to be successful in educating for life.

Our mantras of "English is the language of learning", "No excuses", "Education is free here but it is not free and easy" and "Identity is not destiny" are frequently and regularly stated. Since the American election, we have also added "Yes we can" to the list!

Improvement: technically simple but socially complex

All the research into school improvement refers to it being technically simple but socially complex, which is what makes ritual, symbols and routines so important.

Does the approach work? In 2008, the 5 A*-C result for Year 11 was 61%, which compares against the Ducie best of 13%. Attendance is 92%, against Ducie's 50% for Year 11. Our students are proud of their school, and we have no shortage of city centre businesses wanting to work with us. The evidence proves not just "Yes it can" work but "Yes it does."



Five years ago, Manchester Academy welcomed its first students. Where are they now?



Tshepiso Makhoha arrived at Manchester Academy from Africa in 2004, joining half-way through Year 9. In spite of the many challenges she faced, she managed to achieve a superb 12 GCSEs A* - C.

Manchester Academy was a culture shock. I joined midway through Year 9 coming from a culturally segregated African suburban background. I remember thinking on my first day, whilst sitting in the reception of the old Ducie building: "I am going to hate it." However, with the diverse mix of students and teaching staff, I quickly found myself not only adapting but enjoying the cultural, social and educational change.

Manchester Academy provided me with many opportunities and laid the foundations for some of my greatest achievements, as well as those that are yet to come. Whilst at the academy I became the Student Voice representative, chair of the Academy Voice and a leader in charitable fundraising and ambassadorial duties. I was able to explore and hone entrepreneurial acumen and was encouraged to extend my academic boundaries by the teachers. The most valuable lesson I learnt from my teachers and friends was to challenge myself continually, to engage in my passions and to aspire for nothing short of greatness. The academy motto – 'The best in everyone' – is one the academy truly aims to inspire in everyone.

Now an undergraduate at the University of Buckingham, I am studying an LLB in Law with Economics and find that I am still relying on the social and academic skills gained at the academy. I plan to go on to specialise in corporate and commercial law: a dream partially influenced by my time at the academy. I am grateful for the support I have received at the academy and that I continue to receive today.



In the summer of 2008, Wayne Ramwell received 5 A* and 8 A grades at GCSE level. Having left the academy, he is now firmly set on going to university.

In late 2006, the academy encouraged me to start up Golden Moment Ltd along with four other friends in order to enter the Young Enterprise Competition. With the help and support of the academy, we persevered to write 'Easy Money' to help teach other young people about the practicalities of finance. The inspiration for the book came from a BBC news article which stated:



"Eighty percent of all teenagers are in debt by the age of eighteen." This shocking revelation spurred us to pass on our understanding of finance to others. Thanks to the academy, which encouraged us to strive for something that seemingly only others could do, I am proud to say that our book is now available in the shops.

I believe that if I hadn't attended the academy, I wouldn't have been able to achieve as much as I have. It has given me – and others like me – many fantastic opportunities to develop practical, interpersonal and organisational skills. All these have been vital in helping me to deal with the promotional activities surrounding the book, such as media interviews.

I am planning to go into business and management since the experience I gained at the academy has inspired me in this field. I feel that this experience will help me to continue to achieve and fulfil my potential.



Thomas Robinson studied at Manchester Academy as part of the Class of 2006 and received 11 A*-C GCSEs. He is now studying Politics at the University of Sheffield.

Whilst attending Manchester Academy I lived with my grandmother, who raised me on a state pension, as my father passed away with cancer when I was three. As a result, I have always strived to work hard and impress my grandmother and to make her proud of me. The academy gave me so much more than just an education. As a student of Ducie High School, I saw the academy in its primitive

years when it was dogged by a heckling media and close scrutiny from all angles both politically and socially. My abiding memory of the academy is the spirit of all the staff regardless of their positions or responsibilities; they were an inspiration not only to me but to my entire year.

I am extremely proud to say I was a student of Manchester Academy, but I am prouder still to say that the people I met there – staff and students alike – have become fundamental friends in my life. The academy is a truly unique place; it's an experience to be treasured. Whether it's the trial and error of teenage life or the constant obstacle course of further and higher education, I am certain I would be in a far less capable position to tackle them if it wasn't for my time at the academy. Spurred on by the academy and Mrs August, my ambition is to one day become a Member of Parliament representing the community I love.

The Jubilee Fund: a foundation for the children of today and tomorrow



In 2008, we celebrated the past 125 years and the number of children that has benefited from the United Church Schools Trust and, more recently, the United Learning Trust. Now we look forward with excitement and anticipation to the next 125 years.

Most striking is the way in which we have remained true to the original aims of our Founders. Thanks to their initial vision and generosity and the support and passion of our benefactors, we now have nearly 20,000 children in our care at our UCST schools and ULT academies. Extending the reach of good education to all children and driving educational improvement have always been at the heart of our charity. For this to continue, we need your support.

The Jubilee Fund was established for this purpose: to enable us to enrich the lives of some of the most underprivileged children in the country by opening academies and widening access and opportunities to pupils who want to attend our UCST schools.

It covers five areas:

- Sponsoring academies to enable more children to receive a ULT quality of education
- Funding bursaries to UCST schools, where this is appropriate for pupils who will benefit from the style of education which these schools offer
- Enabling both pupils and teachers to travel, to widen their experience and prepare pupils for their lives in a global environment
- Supporting exchange programmes between UCST schools and ULT academies and with schools overseas. We will continue widening contacts amongst other UK independent schools so that some of the exchange programmes may be with schools beyond the Group.
- Spreading our support to the developing world through direct contacts with our schools and central office services.



With your help, we can enrich the lives of thousands of children.

Gift Aid Statement

Yes, I'd like to support the Jubilee Fund

NAME
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POSTCODE
EMAIL
PHONE

Email is a cost-effective way of communicating. If you are happy to receive email from us, please enter your address above.

Gift Aid makes every £1 worth £1.28 and only costs you 75 pence.*

I am a UK Tax Payer, and would like United Church Schools Trust to reclaim the tax on all the donations I have made as well as any future donations.

Yes No

I understand that I must have paid an amount of tax at least equal to the amount that the charity will claim in the tax year.

*Figure relates to a higher rate taxpayer, the equivalent for a basic rate payer would be £1.

- Yes, I'd like more information about leaving a legacy
- Yes, I'd like more information about giving shares

I'd like to give: £25 £50 £100 £250 £500 Other £

I enclose cheque payable to "UCST"
or please debit my Mastercard/Visa/CAFCard/Maestro circle as appropriate

CARD NUMBER

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START DATE EXPIRY DATE ISSUE NUMBER CARD SECURITY CODE

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Maestro only

SIGNATURE DATE

Please amend your contact details if they differ from the cardholder's name and billing address or donate online at www.ucst.org.uk or call us on 020 7681 6476

- I wish to remain anonymous
- I don't wish to be kept up to date with Jubilee Fund news and fundraising

Please complete and detach this form and return it to: Freepost RRRU-BSUR-XKBC, United Church Schools Trust, Kettering, NN14 3DA

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Registered office: 23 Chapel Street, Titchmarsh, Northamptonshire, NN14 3DA

Please give generously to the Jubilee Fund.



Making a gift of shares

Making a gift of shares is a very effective way to support the Jubilee Fund. You can claim income tax relief on the value of most shares, equal to the market value of the shares on the day you make the gift, together with any associated costs such as broker's fees.

So if you donate £1,000 worth of shares, you'll pay £400 less in income tax that year if you're a high rate taxpayer, and £220 less if you pay the basic rate. Also, you will not have to pay capital gains tax (CGT) on any increase in the value of shares since you bought them. In theory, this could mean an extra 'saving' of up to 40% for a higher rate taxpayer. Small packets of shares may be given through Sharegift – see www.sharegift.org.

Please contact **Jonathan Allen**, on **020 7681 6476** or supportus@ult.org.uk to learn more.



United Church Schools Trust The best in everyone™

United Church Schools Trust,
88 Kingsway,
London WC2B 6AA

visit our new website www.ucst.org.uk

What is an academy?

An academy is an independently managed and governed specialist state school, directly funded by the government at the same level as a specialist comprehensive school in the area.

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to set up a new Direct Debit

Please circle the amount you'd like to pay.

Jubilee Fund official use only. This is not part of the Instruction to your Bank or Building Society. Donations made through direct debits to the United Church Schools Trust will be moved to the Jubilee Fund via an internal transfer.

New Direct Debit

Yes, I want to set up a regular gift of £10 £15 £20 a month or my own amount of
£ a month, to be collected on the first banking day of each month

I would like my donation to start in month, year

Yes, I have ticked the Gift Aid box (details overleaf). Please note that the Gift Aid relates to donations to the Jubilee Fund, not to fees payable in UCST schools.



NAME OF ACCOUNT HOLDER

BRANCH SORT CODE

BANK OR BUILDING SOC ACCOUNT NUMBER

REFERENCE for office use only



Originator's identification number 750057

To The Manager

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

SIGNATURE

DATE

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Please pay the United Church Schools Trust Direct Debit from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with the United Church Schools Trust and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

UCST celebrates 125 years

Pupils, staff, parents, governors and other guests from UCST schools and ULT academies gathered at two cathedral services in November to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the foundation of the United Church Schools Trust. Both services were occasions to mark the distinguished history of UCST and to unite its tradition of excellence in education with the current work of its family of schools and academies.

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, was guest preacher at the service at Lincoln Cathedral on 13 November. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu preached at the service at Canterbury Cathedral on 25 November.

"Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu stressed the importance of young people in life and how, ultimately, they will shape the future. The history of UCST proves that this, too, is their belief as they strive in education for 'the best in everyone', valuing each individual and what they can achieve."

Emily Hibbert, Year 12, Wentworth College



Lambeth students tour European Parliament with Robert Evans MEP

Robert Evans MEP welcomed a group of students from several schools, including Lambeth Academy, to the European Parliament in Brussels. The visit was part of a five day trip to Belgium with the Arsenal Double Club. Lambeth students met European Parliament interpreters and even had a chance to experience the interpretation booths.

Mr Evans said: "The students asked many interesting and intelligent questions. The programme highlights the importance of investing in language teaching from a young age, a crucial skill to have if the UK wants to remain a prominent actor in an increasingly globalised world."



Lincoln Minster School constructs café for hospital in India

A group of Sixth Formers from Lincoln Minster School worked alongside local builders to construct a café for the Mission Hospital in Tirunelveli, India. The students spent months fundraising and training to enable the trip to occur.

This was part of an initiative by Adventure Lifesigns, the Diocese of Lincoln, Churches Together in All Lincolnshire and the Diocese of Tirunelveli to promote links with the developing world and to create sustainable projects with a long-term benefit to the local community.

Academy links up with Chinese school for an interactive language lesson

Lambeth Academy students shared live Mandarin and English classes with Houhai Primary School in Shenzhen, China using Promethean Activboards and software. Students exchanged questions and collaborated on the interactive whiteboards simultaneously using state-of-the-art technology. Secretary of State John Hutton, who was visiting Houhai Primary School, observed the interactive lesson.

GUILDFORD HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT IN BORNEO

Sixth Form pupils from Guildford High School spent a productive summer in Borneo. After trekking through the rainforest, the group spent two weeks helping to build a communal house for a small Penang community.



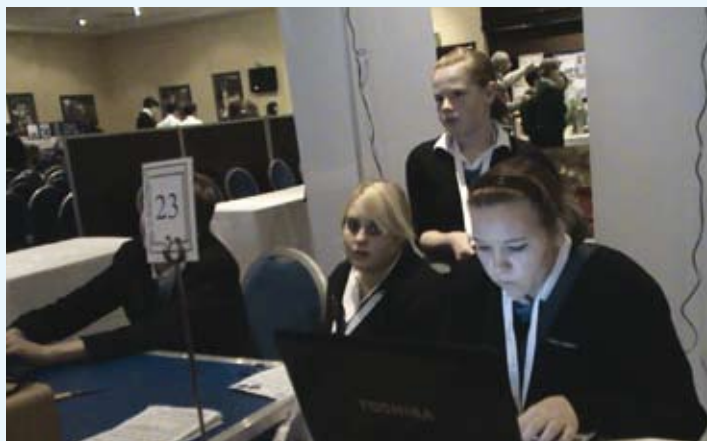
ACADEMY STUDENT REPRESENTS UK AT INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL IN TOKYO

After being selected as the grand prize winner for the UK in the International High School Arts Festival, Anisha, a Lambeth Academy Sixth Form student, travelled on an all-expenses paid trip to Japan. She saw her prize-winning painting on display at the Ueno Royal Museum in Tokyo and met fellow competition winners from schools in Japan, Australia, China, Cambodia, Egypt and Ireland.

Anisha was interviewed by the local media and met Haruhisa Handa, Director of the International Foundation for Arts and Culture, the festival's sponsor. Jason James, Director of the British Council in Japan, also attended the exhibition to congratulate Anisha.

Barnsley student radio station wins grand prize at enterprise fair

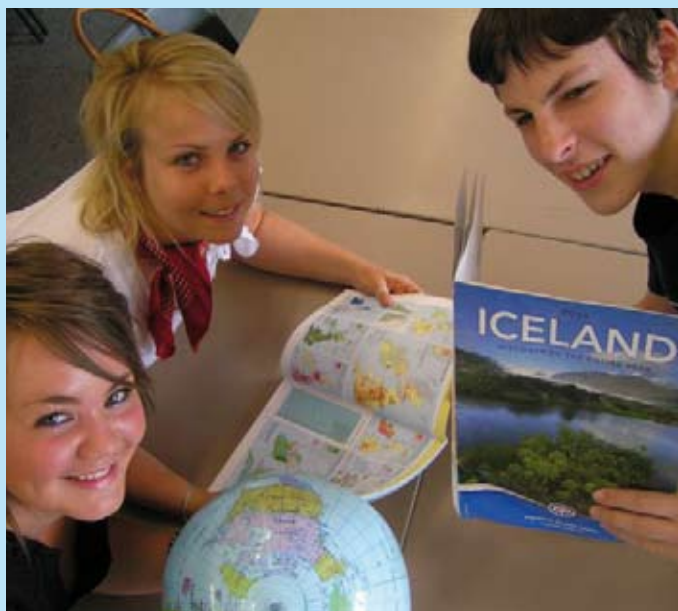
Six Barnsley Academy students claimed the top prize at the Northern Enterprise in Education Programme (NEEP) Enterprise Fair in October. They competed against teams from 35 schools. Teams presented their enterprise projects before a panel of judges. Barnsley students explained how they used enterprise funding to create a successful radio station – Air Academy.



Swindon Sixth Formers finance expedition to Iceland

A-level geography students at Swindon Academy embarked upon a five-day fieldwork project in Iceland to investigate the impact of global warming on glaciers. The students raised thousands of pounds to finance the expedition through various events.

They studied examples of fluvial, coastal and ice geomorphology and utilised their field study skills to enhance their understanding of the processes at work in shaping landscapes.



ACADEMY STUDENTS WORK WITH ENTREPRENEURS IN ACTION TO TACKLE YOUTH CRIME

Young Gifted and Talented Year 10 students from Paddington Academy and Walthamstow Academy worked with Entrepreneurs in Action coaches to tackle the issue of youth crime. The challenge was set by London's Youth Justice Board, facilitated by the Government Office for London.

Two groups were set up as advertising agencies to pitch for an awareness campaign aimed at young people, focusing on the prevention of youth crime. The students spent a week preparing in-depth research and organising their teams to work collaboratively on a campaign strategy. The week culminated in launch presentations that offered insightful approaches to prevent youth crime. Talking about the impact of the project, one Paddington student said: "Now I know that I can be a good leader."

MANCHESTER ENTREPRENEURS FACE PETER JONES

Dragons' Den star Peter Jones heard a pitch from three Year 11 students at Manchester Academy during Shine week – a national festival to showcase young talent. The students presented their business plan for a glossy magazine aimed at teenagers and highlighted their publication's unique selling points.

Peter Jones said: "The students I heard were really entrepreneurial and could teach some of the people who make pitches on Dragons' Den a thing or two." Jones is currently funding an £8 million National Enterprise Academy for teenagers which will be based at Manchester Business School.



Used courtesy of Manchester Evening News

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER PARTNERS ULT ACADEMIES



The University of Chichester is supporting Midhurst Rother College and the proposed academy in Shoreham and plans to work closely with them as an educational partner.

Dr Robin Baker, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Chichester, said: "We are looking forward to developing close links with the academies. We are keen to give the young people in Shoreham and Midhurst the

chance to experience how enjoyable, rewarding and relevant higher education can be."

Midhurst Rother College also has a partnership with Winchester College, which will help shape the curriculum, share teaching materials and best practice and run joint professional development sessions. The 11-18 academy opened on 7 January.



Accrington Academy officially welcomed its staff and students on 16 September at its Foundation Day.



Arnold School celebrated joining the UCST family of schools on 29 September.

Vice-Chancellor of Oxford opens Caterham Sixth Form Centre



Dr John Hood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, came to Caterham School in October to open its new Sixth Form Centre.

Dr Hood said: "Caterham School has an excellent record of sending talented pupils to Oxford. I was delighted to receive an invitation to open the new Sixth Form Centre."



Sheffield Park Academy's new building was officially opened by His Royal Highness The Duke of York on 9 October.

LAMBETH ACADEMY LAUNCHES PARTNERSHIP WITH EPSOM COLLEGE

50 students from Lambeth Academy visited Epsom College in November for the official launch of the partnership between the two schools. Students from both schools participated in a number of joint activities, including workshops, dance classes and a choral concert.

A key element of the partnership is to help develop Lambeth Academy's new Sixth Form in the area of specialist academic study, particularly medicine, as well as to widen the experience of pupils at both schools.

Schools Minister Jim Knight attended the launch and spoke of the benefits of the partnership for both schools.



Mary, a pupil at Surbiton High School, has been awarded a scholarship place at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music.

SURBITON HIGH SCHOOL SKI TEAMS CLINCH NATIONAL TITLE

The Surbiton High School Senior U16A and U19A ski teams were declared national champions at the English Schools' Ski Association National Finals held at Rossendale Ski Slope, Lancashire. The teams competed in the English Open Championships the following day. The Senior A and B teams were placed first nationally, and the Junior team was placed twelfth nationally.

Barnsley and Hull Collegiate take on the Carbon Challenge

Barnsley Academy and Hull Collegiate School have taken part in the Carbon Challenge roadshow – part of BP's Enterprising Science, a national education initiative dedicated toward the issue of reducing carbon emissions.

The roadshow visited both schools and encouraged students to track human activities which cause an increase in greenhouse gas levels. Participants used interactive wireless voting technology to compile a record of their activities. They were challenged to reduce the carbon footprint of their own school by developing a carbon reduction plan. They shared their case studies with others via the Enterprising Science website.

Barnsley Academy was chosen by BP as 'School of the Month' for its contribution to the Carbon Challenge roadshow. Principal Dave Berry said: "We look forward to embracing the Carbon Challenge when our newly built biofuel-powered campus is completed in spring 2009."

ASHFORD SIBLINGS NAMED NATIONAL TRIATHLON CHAMPIONS

Two siblings at Ashford School – Grace in Year 12 and Euan in Year 6 – were named National Triathlon champions. Four Ashford pupils travelled to Wolverhampton for the gruelling two-day competition which comprised running, swimming and shooting.

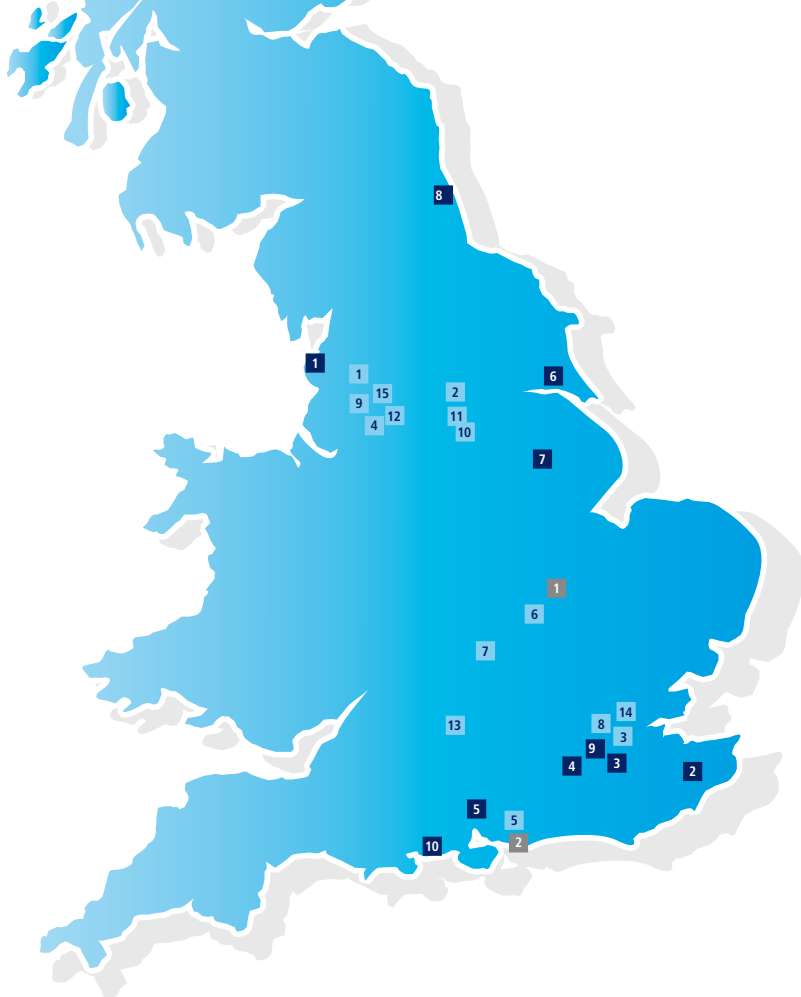


NORTHAMPTON ACADEMY WELCOMES 100,000 VISITORS IN 2008

ULT's aim of establishing its academies at the heart of their local communities is proving successful at Northampton Academy with over 100,000 community visitors accessing its facilities last year.

About 3,400 people of all age groups visit the academy each week during term time to use its facilities or support one of the 27 local football teams it is home to. The activities hosted by the academy for the community take place at evenings and weekends. They include martial arts classes, trampolining, a Gujarati school and dance groups. The Army Cadet Force also uses the academy's grounds for training exercises which are attended by almost 100 children from schools across Northampton.

Local MP Sally Keeble became the 100,000th visitor when she came to the academy in December. She congratulated Northampton Academy on becoming "a flagship for our community in the east of Northampton".



UCST Schools

- 1 Arnold School
- 2 Ashford School
- 3 Caterham School
- 4 Guildford High School
- 5 Hampshire Collegiate School
- 6 Hull Collegiate School
- 7 Lincoln Minster School
- 8 Sunderland High School
- 9 Surbiton High School
- 10 Wentworth College

ULT Academies

- 1 Accrington Academy
- 2 Barnsley Academy
- 3 Lambeth Academy
- 4 Manchester Academy
- 5 Midhurst Rother College
- 6 Northampton Academy
- 7 North Oxfordshire Academy
- 8 Paddington Academy
- 9 Salford City Academy
- 10 Sheffield Park Academy
- 11 Sheffield Springs Academy
- 12 Stockport Academy
- 13 Swindon Academy
- 14 Walthamstow Academy
- 15 William Hulme's Grammar School

Proposed Academies

- 1 Academy in Kettering
- 2 Academy in Shoreham

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