



Bringing co-operative values to education

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Sutherland Business and Enterprise College

Sutherland Business and Enterprise College in Telford is a small but growing secondary school, with just over 600 pupils. The school is in a challenging area, with OFSTED describing it as 'having a higher than average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, attainment on entry below average, and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties above the national average'.

The OFSTED Report described Sutherland as 'satisfactory and improving, and with a determination to eliminate weak teaching and provide professional development for school'.

In 2007 the school successfully applied to become a Specialist Business and Enterprise College, with Midcounties Co-operative Society as its main sponsor. It is now an active participant in the network of co-operative Business and Enterprise Colleges. Head Teacher Steve Wall is currently encouraging a cluster of at least eight schools, possibly more to become involved in a co-operative Trust, adding 'I am confident that the trust will enable us to embed the co-operative values driven approach that we have adopted. We see the trust as providing a method to improve on the way we work and improve the quality of life for our school, our community and its residents'.

Sutherland Business and Enterprise College, together with Sir Thomas Boughey Co-operative Business and Enterprise College in Staffordshire recently attended the Co-operative Party annual conference where Ed Balls made the announcement of support for Co-operative Trust Schools - interviewing participants and Ministers.

"Coop party Congress has been really Fun!" - Toby Hayward - Year 11 pupil.

"I was a bit worried at the start of the day when interviewing ministers.....but by the end of the day I couldn't wait to go into the conference room and grab the next one of stage! It made me far more confident and ready to face the adult world when I leave school next year" - Jaskarandeep Brar - Year 11 pupil.

"I've never been to London before....and to be right in the centre was very exciting...and so close to the Houses of Parliament. Meeting Mr Balls and presenting him with a school T-Shirt was the highlight of the day for me. He asked me what I was studying and what I wanted to be when I left school...meeting so many people who were interested in what we were doing made me feel active and involved in something that affects other peoples lives." - Victoria Handley - Year 11 Pupil





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"Attending congress and actively involving themselves in the day helped our pupils develop self-confidence and build their capacity to make decisions and take responsibility. It has also helped give them a voice in the life of their school, in their communities and in society at large. As a result they have come back far more aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, more informed about the social and political world, more concerned about the welfare of others and more able to articulate their opinions and arguments. The whole experience has improved their ability as citizens to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives and their communities." - Carl Ward - Director of Innovation & Development, Sutherland Co-operative Business & Enterprise College.