



Susan Jowett, Chief Executive of The Spencer Academies Trust, Executive Principal of George Spencer Academy, and National Leader of Education, has been appointed a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in the New Year 2016 honours list.

Susan said “I am deeply moved and overwhelmed by this honour for services to education. It is a privilege to be recognised for something I love and am passionate about. I sincerely believe that education does transform lives. School and university instilled in me a work ethic, drive and passion for learning which helped me transcend a humble background and inspired me to want to do the same for others. I have been in education – teaching, leading and learning - all my life. The roles of Principal and now CEO enable me to influence on a much larger scale, making a difference to staff and students, whatever their background.”

“This is a great accolade for George Spencer Academy, the lead school, and The Spencer Academies Trust. It is also a tribute to all the students, teachers, support staff, leaders and governors with whom I have worked over the last 40 years and from whom I have learned so much”.

With eight year’s Headship experience in Liverpool, Susan moved to Nottingham in 2004 to become Principal of George Spencer School and Technology College. The school was one of the first outstanding converter Academies in 2010 and sustained its outstanding Ofsted judgement in May 2015. New school buildings including an Inclusion Centre, Sports Hall, Maths teaching block and conference centre have enhanced the learning environment for students and teachers. The single Trust has expanded to become Multi Academy Trust of ten primary and secondary schools in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby, Derbyshire and Leicestershire. The mission is

*“To improve the life chances of children and young people by challenging and supporting all the schools within the Trust on their journey to and beyond outstanding.*

*To achieve this by developing world – class system leaders.”*

Susan shares her expertise and experience with the Academy's successful Teaching School Alliance, School Centre for initial Teacher Training and on the Leadership Development programmes for Headteachers and Executives.

She has an interest in international practice and research. She has hosted visitors from education departments and schools as far and wide as Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Brunei, China, USA, and the Middle East. Recently, she has engaged in system leadership development with the Department for Education in Victoria, Australia.

Messages from the previous and current Chairs of Governors of George Spencer Academy who have worked with Susan.

Gill Baggley former Chair of Governors:

"Having worked closely with Susan, for many years, I have witnessed her complete dedication to education and her passion for improving the life chances of all young people. She is always eager to share her knowledge and expertise to ensure the highest quality of teaching and school leadership for the future, whilst fulfilling her desire to continue on her own journey of self improvement. I am thrilled that she is to be honoured in this way. A well-deserved accolade and public recognition of her achievements."

Current Chair of Governors, Jill Wilkinson said:

"Susan is a true inspiration to anyone involved in education. 'Whatever it takes' is one of Susan's mottos when it comes to securing outcomes for our students; nothing is too much trouble. She has taken the school from a single outstanding school to become one of the first academies in the county in 2010, quickly followed by becoming one of the first 100 national teaching schools; and more recently George Spencer has become the lead school in a multi academy trust of 10 schools. Susan's dedication and level of commitment is phenomenal, she is not afraid of taking our school, its staff, students and wider community into 'unchartered waters' to maximise opportunities, always securing the best for us all. I am truly very proud to know Susan and I am absolutely thrilled that she has been acknowledged in such a way - it is well-deserved."

Andrew Talbot, Chair of The Spencer Academies Trust said:

"Susan was previously responsible for turning round an under-performing school in Merseyside. When she joined George Spencer, she was not content to be satisfied with operating at a 'Good' level. Instead she successfully led the school's drive to achieve Outstanding at Ofsted, which has been sustained.

She is hard-working, dedicated and driven and passionately believes that providing an outstanding education to young children can transform their life chances. She is keen to learn best practice from education systems around the globe and apply them to George Spencer and all the other schools in the Spencer Academies Trust.

I am so pleased that her contribution to education over her career is being recognised by the award of this honour."

Fraser Mitchell, the current Principal of George Spencer said:

“Susan’s devotion to young learners and school leaders locally, nationally and internationally goes way beyond the exceptional ‘day job’ that she does. It is always done with humour, modesty and an unflinching conviction that being a Head is, to quote her, ‘the best job in the world’. I am delighted that her work has been recognised in the most prestigious way.”

Susan is married to John a Physicist and they have two daughters Janine and Hannah both of whom are in education. Janine is a Primary school teacher in Nottingham and Hannah is currently doing a post graduate teaching teacher degree.

And the last word: “This is a year of celebrations for the Jowett family. We had our grandchild, Harry, in April. Our youngest daughter, Hannah got a 1<sup>st</sup> class honours degree in International Wildlife Biology and has just been notified of an accolade from the Royal Society of Biology for being the top student on an accredited course. I would like to thank my family for all their love and support, even when my work has taken me away from them. I couldn’t have done it without them.”

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