

GREAT WESTERN ACADEMY



WELCOME TO GREAT WESTERN ACADEMY

WELCOME FROM PRINCIPAL GRAHAM DAVIS

Thank you for your interest in applying to join the team at Great Western Academy. Working at GWA provides a fantastic opportunity for enthusiastic, skilled professionals to progress their career in a vibrant and aspirational setting. Successful applicants will inspire our students and staff and help to ensure GWA continues to be an exceptional school as it grows over the coming years.

GWA opened in September 2018 on the Tadpole Garden Village Development as part of the rapid expansion of North Swindon. Our first, oversubscribed cohort of 155 year 7 students will be joined by new year 7 and year 12 students in 2019, and the Academy will then continue to grow over the coming years. The final number on roll is planned to be 1210.

The GWA building is a fantastic design, full of light, space and modern technology. However, it is what goes on within and around the building that is key to our success and I outline our vision and values for this below.

We are seeking staff who share our vision and have the skills, drive and determination to help turn vision into reality. If you believe you can contribute to this exciting process and want to be part of the growing team of exceptional staff at the Academy I very much look forward to hearing from you.



Graham Davis, Principal



A SHARED VISION

GWA provides an outstanding, enterprising education for students, leading to academic excellence. Through the application of our values, mutual respect, supportive pastoral care and inspirational teaching, we will help every student to find and realise their talents, for the benefit of all.

Attending GWA will radically improve our learners' career chances. We want every learner to do well enough to go to university, or pursue a fruitful career via an apprenticeship or other training route. Students will enjoy learning and our staff will enjoy helping them to set and achieve their aspirations.

GWA also serves as a hub for the new communities in North Swindon. Students and local community groups work with each other on joint projects and the impressive facilities are well used outside of normal school hours.

SHARED VALUES

The values of GWA are summed up in the acronym ACE: Achievement, Care and Excellence.

- Achievement in academic, artistic, cultural and other forms with a focus on teaching and learning
- Care for students, staff and others beyond the Academy community
- Excellent standards, manners, honesty, personal integrity and uniform.

The learner is at the heart of everything we do

Every student can expect to feel important and is appropriately stretched and challenged. We have high expectations of students and encourage them to have high aspirations for their learning and their future. We believe that every child can realise and maximise their potential with the right teaching and support.

These values are exemplified in the following ways:

Excellent teaching and learning

Great learning needs great teachers and great attitudes. Our teachers are all carefully recruited to ensure they model the ethos of GWA. They are outstanding classroom practitioners committed to generating a culture in which no child is left behind, and they are supported to continually review and improve their own practice. Our students experience and contribute to a professional, safe and caring environment in which a positive and business-like approach to learning is the norm.

Outstanding wider opportunities

Our longer school hours provide daily opportunities for staff and students to enrich their learning. They work with and for the local community in sporting, artistic and enterprising pursuits as well as having opportunities to extend their academic learning.

A focus on business, enterprise and entrepreneurship, and good citizenship

GWA develops the enterprise-related skills that all students will need to contribute most effectively to their future communities, through a focus on numeracy and literacy, innovative use of ICT, and a range of links with local businesses and community groups. The curriculum and House system facilitate this and also encourage ethical thinking about rights and responsibilities.

Care which generates confidence

Possibly the greatest trait we can develop in our students is humble confidence. We work with parents to support students to become assured and know where they excel. Our pastoral system and links with external agencies where needed help to break down barriers to achievement and excellence, particularly for vulnerable or disadvantaged children.



ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Leading edge facilities

Situated in Tadpole Garden Village in North Swindon, our state of the art facilities provide an incredible learning environment that inspires and supports outstanding achievement in all areas of school life.

State-of-the-art ICT provision supports learning, with each student using their own laptop and every room equipped with top quality AV facilities. There are specialist areas for science, performing arts, design and technology and special needs provision, each with high quality resources. The sports facilities include a 4-court sports hall, activity studio, large MUGA, and a grass area which accommodates three football pitches.



Sixth Form

We intend that all students will take three or four subjects in Year 12 and at least three subjects in Year 13. This will be driven by what best suits the needs and abilities of each student. We will offer a wide range of popular A-Level courses and support students to aim for the highest possible outcomes in terms of university, higher apprenticeships, careers in sport or creative arts, or employment.

Innovative use of educational technology

The innovative use of technology supports and enhances our high quality learning. We offer our students access to extended learning opportunities through on-line and digital resources. Students and parents can access information through online portals, such as home learning tasks, progress data, reports, attendance and rewards figures.

Enrichment

All students take part in the Academy's enrichment programme. The range of activities is extensive and includes sports, arts and academic pursuits, social enterprise, community service and outdoor education. In the future we will add alternative and additional qualifications, extended projects, and similar opportunities. Classroom learning is supplemented by many visits and trips to bring learning alive to our students.

Positive attitudes to learning

The Academy operates in a caring, friendly but professional environment, with clear rights and responsibilities understood by all. Days are conducted in a business-like manner where teachers can focus on teaching and students on learning. Rewards set the tone, with ACE points awarded for achievements, showing care, or demonstrating excellence. Our disciplinary procedures are firm and fair.

Addressing educational disadvantage

We are a truly inclusive school and seek to ensure exceptional progress for all: no child is left behind. Our Additional Needs team is led by an experienced SENDCo and addresses the whole spectrum of needs: medical conditions, physical and sensory impairment, speech and language difficulties and social and emotional aspects of learning. We work closely with local agencies to provide the best possible support for students to flourish.

Pastoral Care

Strong pastoral work underpins the 'Care' aspect of our ACE values. We run a professional, safe and caring environment for our pupils and vulnerable groups in which they can learn and work. We always aim to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm so that we can provide appropriate support to safeguard them and ensure action is taken, both at home and in school.

A House system is in place to give structure to our tutoring and wider pastoral care work, with Heads of House to be appointed as the Academy grows. The Houses are named after British space explorers – Aderin, Peake and Sharman – to embody the high aspirations, hard work and innovation that we also aspire to.

The House system also facilitates a wide range of friendly competition in sport, the arts and academic activities, encouraging teamwork and leadership across the year groups. Houses also choose and contribute to a local charity or community programme and embody the high aspirations, hard work and innovation that we also aspire to.



SWINDON AND THE COMMUNITY

Swindon is a high-tech centre of excellence with a thriving business community and commercial centre. It has an international reputation as a centre of innovation, science and technology. It is home to many well-known companies such as Intel, Zurich, Honda, BMW, Thames Water, The First Group, DHL Exel, npower and Nationwide.

Swindon is one of the most productive towns outside of London with a successful local economy which thrives on IT, business start-ups and the M4 hi-tech corridor. When measured against most economic indicators, Swindon performs well above average with relatively low unemployment, high business start-up rates and a high level of the population being economically active.

North Swindon, where the Academy is based, has grown substantially over the last decade with new housing developments, an increased population and growing shortage of school places driving the need for this new school. There is limited sixth form provision within the immediate area and students have to travel some distance to access post-16 education.

The original bid to develop GWA as part of the Government's Free Schools initiative was made successful by support from New College, Swindon, and from teachers, parents and residents in North Swindon. GWA is an Academy not just for its students and staff but for the whole community. We expect the Academy to be as alive in the evenings as it is during the day and its great facilities are made available to local people.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

An applicant's briefing pack with full information about the role is available on the Great Western Academy website at www.gwacademy.co.uk

