



# Information for prospective employees

**Whitley Academy, Abbey Road, Coventry, CV3 4BD**



National Teaching School  
designated by



National College for  
Teaching & Leadership

**[www.whitleyacademy.com](http://www.whitleyacademy.com)**

# Welcome from the Chair of Governors

On behalf of our Governing body, I would like to thank you for your interest in the position at Whitley Academy.

Our view of education is a simple one: that each student should be given the support and opportunities needed to help them to realise their potential. Inclusivity is at the heart of our philosophy and practices.

I have been a governor at the school for over 12 years, and it has made me very proud to see the continued growth of Whitley Academy in that time. The dedication and quality of our staff is exceptional, and this has created a culture of high aspirations for our students.

We recognise the importance of being able to offer fresh challenges to talented staff. Our governing body fully supports a progressive approach to teaching practices (for example, our bespoke Opening Minds curriculum at KS3). We are also one of three schools that have created a Teaching school alliance, and are reaping the benefits of developing excellent, 'home grown' teaching talent through that.

Our website and this recruitment pack contain further information about the school, and hopefully give you a flavour of the vibrant atmosphere here at Whitley.

Tim Downing

**Chair of Governors**

## Welcome from the Principal

Whitley Academy is an oversubscribed and expanding secondary 11-19 school with over 920 students on roll (including the Sixth Form).

Whitley Academy strives to not only to achieve excellent outcomes for our young people, but also to provide opportunities for them to be creative, innovative and to enjoy their learning. Our students develop into responsible young adults with high self-esteem and the skills and competences to equip them for success in the future.

Whitley Academy provides a safe and stimulating environment. We have a dedicated, highly skilled and committed team of staff upholding high expectations of, and aspirations for our students' attendance, punctuality, behaviour, uniform and attitude to learning. Teachers have high expectations of students and develop excellent working relationships in the classroom.

We are extremely proud of our strong sense of community, which is carefully nurtured so that every individual can enjoy the rewards of making a positive contribution to our school.

We extend a warm welcome to you and look forward to you joining the Whitley Academy community.

Kathryn Wright

**Principal**

## Our school

Whitley Academy is an oversubscribed and expanding 11-19 school with 920 students (including the Sixth Form).

We believe that all young people are talented, and that with excellent teaching, support where necessary, and an outstanding learning environment, they can fulfil their potential.



We are committed to innovation and creativity in the classroom, whether in terms of teachers' practice or students' learning.

We believe that learning should be made relevant to the students and aim to make connections between subjects and beyond the school gate with employers.

We have developed a very bespoke curriculum, including an Opening Minds framework in Year 7, breadth at KS3 allowing students to experience core learning as well as Humanities, Languages and a range of Arts and Creative subjects, followed by more focussed study at KS4 that equips them for Post 16, academic, or vocational learning and apprenticeships.



Whitley Academy reception



## The history of Whitley Academy

Whitley Abbey was originally an Elizabethan or Jacobean hall and never actually occupied by monks. The house was given the name 'abbey' for extra status and was one of just two grand mansions which were prominent in Coventry during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Abbey was occupied until 1920 when it started to fall into decay.

The current school was built and opened on 13 October 2000, replacing the former Whitley Abbey Comprehensive School built in the 1950s, which was one of the first comprehensive schools in Coventry.

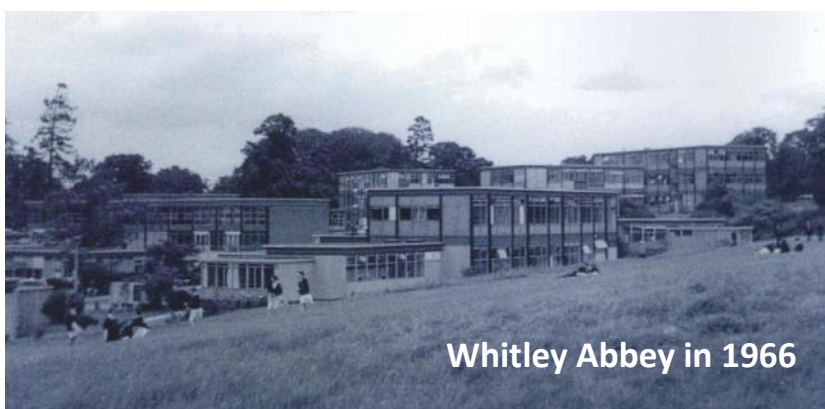
In July 2007, Whitley Abbey Community School gained specialist status in Business and Enterprise and was renamed Whitley Abbey Business and Enterprise College. In July 2011, Whitley Abbey Business and Enterprise College became an Academy and was renamed "Whitley Academy".

Whitley Academy is committed to delivering high quality education for the community we serve. We value everyone that we work with, regardless of their differing needs, abilities and backgrounds. This ethos influences all that happens within the school. Our motto, 'be the best you can be', ensures that we focus on developing the 5 pivotal aspects we believe are crucial to future success:



- High aspiration
- Communication
- An understanding of community values
- Mental security
- Perseverance

As an Academy our expectations are high: attendance, punctuality, behaviour, uniform and attitude to learning should be excellent. In return Whitley Academy provides a safe stimulating environment with high quality teaching designed to ensure motivated and effective learners.



## The Opening Minds curriculum

Whitley Academy is proud to have led the way, developing and promoting the innovative Opening Minds Curriculum. Our curriculum supports transition from primary school to secondary school and provides a coherent learning experience for students, reducing some of the anxieties that can arise during transition.



Opening Minds teachers plan and deliver learning experiences through thematic work

that focuses on developing skills and competences as well as understanding and a breadth of knowledge. Students need to be effective and confident communicators in a range of situations when they leave school and the aim of Opening Minds is to embed these skills. In English, for example; students will learn how to develop their skills in reading a wide range of texts, writing in different styles to suit task and context and take an active role in speaking activities. A firm emphasis on the technical skills of English ensures that attention is always paid to accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Pupils will be expected to read widely both for information and for pleasure. They will have a weekly lesson in the LRC during which they might read individually or in a small group as part of our Accelerated Reader scheme.

Our most recent student voice survey is testament to the success of the Opening Minds curriculum. Of those students asked, 100 % agreed that they learn well and make good progress in their Opening Minds lessons. They also agreed that their teachers help them if they have a problem. The feedback for enjoyment of learning opportunities and variety was overwhelmingly positive.

Beyond the strong foundations of Opening Minds, the KS3 curriculum in Y8 and Y9 allows students to develop their skills and talents in a variety of subjects and disciplines preparing them well for the rigour of KS4 examination courses and further study at post 16.

## Post 16

We offer students a wide range of courses that are suitable to individual Post 16 learning pathways. We ensure that all our students can access nationally recognised training and learning opportunities to support them in their career paths beyond school whether that is employment, apprenticeships or higher education at University.

We believe that choosing the right course is important if students are to enjoy their time in Post 16 and achieve success. We interview all prospective year 11 students and encourage all students to think about their strengths, which subjects they enjoy and their suitability based on their predicted grades. Students will have opportunities to talk to teachers, tutors, Post 16 students as well as parents for advice.

Students in Whitley Academy Post 16 are very successful. The last Ofsted judgement was 'good' for Post 16 provision.



*"Post 16 students make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and wider community. They mature into articulate, thoughtful young adults and provide excellent role models for younger students".*

**Ofsted 2013**



The Post 16 Common Room



## Inclusion

**The BASE** provides support for Whitley students and their families, which includes mentoring, counselling, group work and our Personalised Learning Programmes. We have an experienced team of staff including learning mentors, Inclusion Keyworkers, counsellors, teaching assistants, and a home/school liaison officer. This team works with students to support their needs and break down any barriers to learning students may have. We want all students to 'be the best you can be'.

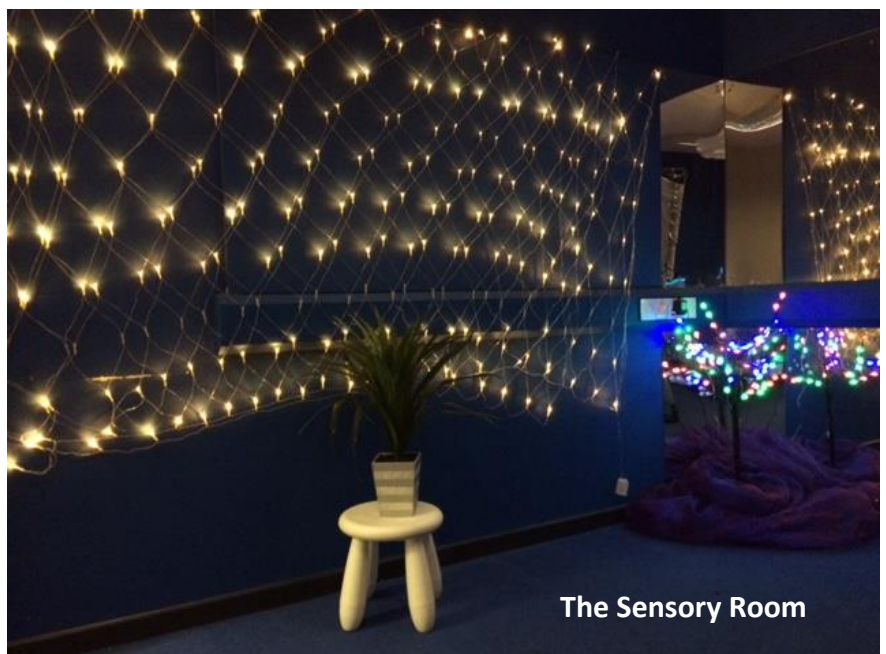


The BASE

### The Inclusion Team

Everyone at some point needs a bit of extra support whether that be emotional, behavioural or academic. The BASE's inclusion team provide that personalised support. This team, which consists of non-teaching pastoral staff and Progress Managers who are based in the main school building, deals with concerns and problems quickly and efficiently. We use preventative measures and early interventions to promote good mental health, emotional well-being and a positive attitude so that students are able to achieve their full potential.

If emotional and behavioural support is required, programmes can run over a 6 week period and might include group sessions on: Anger Management; Motivation - Raising Attitude to Learning; Social Skills; Healthy Wellbeing; Attendance Support; Appropriate Behaviour; Raising Self Esteem; Staying Safe; Transition; Building Resilience; Conflict Management or Anxiety.



The Sensory Room



## Learning support/SEN

The Learning Support team is committed to all students achieving their potential and having access to the support and enrichment which allows them to do this. We offer a range of programmes to assist a variety of learning needs across all of the key stages. These range from support during normal curriculum time to small group work and one to one support. The SEN Department works alongside the Inclusion Department to promote a holistic view when supporting students with learning, social and emotional difficulties.



The Learning Support Team is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy. It co-ordinates support and provision for students with SEN/EHCPs as well as provision for those who are identified as requiring further support.

The Learning Support Team offers a range of services and interventions such as:

- Specialist support from the Educational Psychologist Service
- Specialist support from the Complex Communication Team (CCT)
- Specialist support from SALT (Speech and Language Therapy Service) and the Sensory Team
- Teaching Assistant support in classrooms
- Individual support (1:1 academic support/mentoring)
- Booster literacy and numeracy programmes
- A phonics based literacy intervention
- ASD support groups
- Supported homework club Intervention
- Supported coursework club intervention
- KS4 English/Maths intervention
- Parent support sessions
- Staff and parent training and advice on SEND support for EAL students



## What we offer staff

### **The staff and the school**

There is a collaborative, positive and purposeful atmosphere amongst the team of staff at the school where all expect each other to 'be the best you can be'. The staff room is a vibrant hub of activity for both teaching and non-teaching staff where communication shares this ethos.

The school provides a modern and well equipped learning environment with excellent ICT infrastructure and support. Many classrooms use interactive whiteboards, and other facilities include an extensive library, numerous computer rooms, a gym, a sports hall, a cricket pitch, a running track, tennis courts, and an on-site conference centre.



The wider school site is extensive with plenty of open green space beside a nature reserve, woodland, a lake and substantial playing field.

### **Professional and personal development at Whitley Academy**

We aim to inspire all staff who work at Whitley Academy both professionally and personally. Our extensive internal development programme supports our core goal of providing the best opportunities for our students and has strands for both teaching and non-teaching staff. This programme includes CPD, statutory information and guidance, extensive teaching and learning development courses, and provides opportunities to develop expertise at all levels through mentoring and coaching. We place high value on pedagogical development with department time specifically used to discuss different ways of approaching teaching and learning. We support access to external teaching and learning courses (including extensive opportunities at other schools) such as NQT development, RQT fellowship enquiry projects, subject knowledge specialist training (TSST), and middle/senior leader development programmes. Whitley Academy also places great importance on the development of staff working in Learning Support, administration, catering, cleaning and maintenance, with everyone given the opportunity to access courses relevant to developing their role.

### **Staff well being**

When staff, students and families walk through our gates and onto our site they belong to the Whitley Academy community. In this community, we build meaningful relationships based on trust and mutual respect. Our classrooms, corridors and the school environment are safe spaces where nobody is judged and everybody is valued. In our community, we are proud of our school and are committed to supporting all staff and students to 'be the best they can be'.

## Our Community

### Community Objectives

Whitley Academy works to ensure that all students recognise and respect other cultures, languages, backgrounds, and integrate fully into the life of the school.

We want to operate at the heart of the community which we are a part of, engaging with local events, local residents and businesses.



### Community Engagement

- We work in a variety of ways with our local primary schools, inviting students and staff to visit Whitley. We also regularly have staff and students from Whitley visit primary schools to benefit and share from teaching and learning ideas.
- We run regular inclusion events at the school where members of the local community are invited in to be part of school life.
- Our 'Family Conversation' and 'Parent Council' initiatives have been developed to promote a two way dialogue between the school and parents and carers.
- At our regular Rewards and Awards evenings, we invite families to join us in celebrating the successes of our students.
- We have half termly parental drop in events with our inclusion and SEN departments.
- We have an expert team of mentors, youth workers and counsellors, located within at our Base facility, available for both students and parents.





## Extra curricular highlights

### REGIONAL & NATIONAL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITIONS

Whitley Academy debaters regularly take part in regional and national public speaking competitions including The Rotary Youth Speaks, The ESU (English Speaking Union), The Coventry Magistrate Court Mock Trial and the Benjamin Franklin Speaking Competition (at which Whitley Academy students recently won the Best Speaker and the Best Legal Advisor awards).



### BBC STUDENT REPORTERS

Whitley Academy have a strong and committed team of students working with the BBC School Report Initiative which enables students to see what it is like to work in broadcast journalism. Our student reporters have worked in various projects including contributing to the making of the computer game 'I-Reporter', where hints and tips about recognising 'Fake News' are highlighted, visiting broadcasting house and interviewing BBC staff working in all aspects of journalism.



### INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKERS AT WHITLEY ACADEMY

Whitley has a strong history of inviting inspirational speakers to address students. Recent highlights have included Anna Turney, the double Paralympian, Roz Bird, the Commercial Director of Silverstone Park, and Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England.

### OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The school has a strong commitment to the values of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises through the use of carefully planned educational visits. Each year the school arranges a number of activities that take place locally, nationally and internationally. Recent highlights include winter skiing trips in France, summer sports holiday camps in Spain, visits to the Cheltenham science festival, the Houses of Parliament, Lille, Ypres, the Somme battlefield sites, and Barcelona.

*(see our website and Twitter page for regular updates)*



## Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a voluntary programme of practical, cultural and adventurous activities, designed to support the personal and social development of young people. It encourages young people to undertake exciting, constructive, challenging and enjoyable activities in their free time. The Award is widely recognised by universities, apprenticeship programmes and employers.

Whitley Academy has recently had successful cohorts completing the Bronze and Silver Awards which entail participants completing a minimum of 15 hours volunteering during the year, and undertaking a practice expedition and assessed expedition. Each of these requires two days of hiking and overnight camping which is arranged by the school.

There is opportunity for all staff with an interest to become involved in training sessions, expeditions and in becoming qualified as a Duke of Edinburgh Leader.



## RSA Teaching School Alliance

Whitley is part of the RSA's Teaching School Alliance which recruits and trains new entrants to the teaching profession, identifies leadership potential, and provides support for schools across the West Midlands to transform outcomes for young people and bring about positive social change. The RSA TSA drives action research, undertakes innovations in teaching, and optimises the talents and commitment of staff to develop creative ways of providing education. The Alliance is led by three schools, all of which are designated National Teaching Schools. We have four further members of our alliance 'family' and in excess of 60 strategic and associated alliance partners and members.



Being part of the Alliance means Whitley staff have access to...

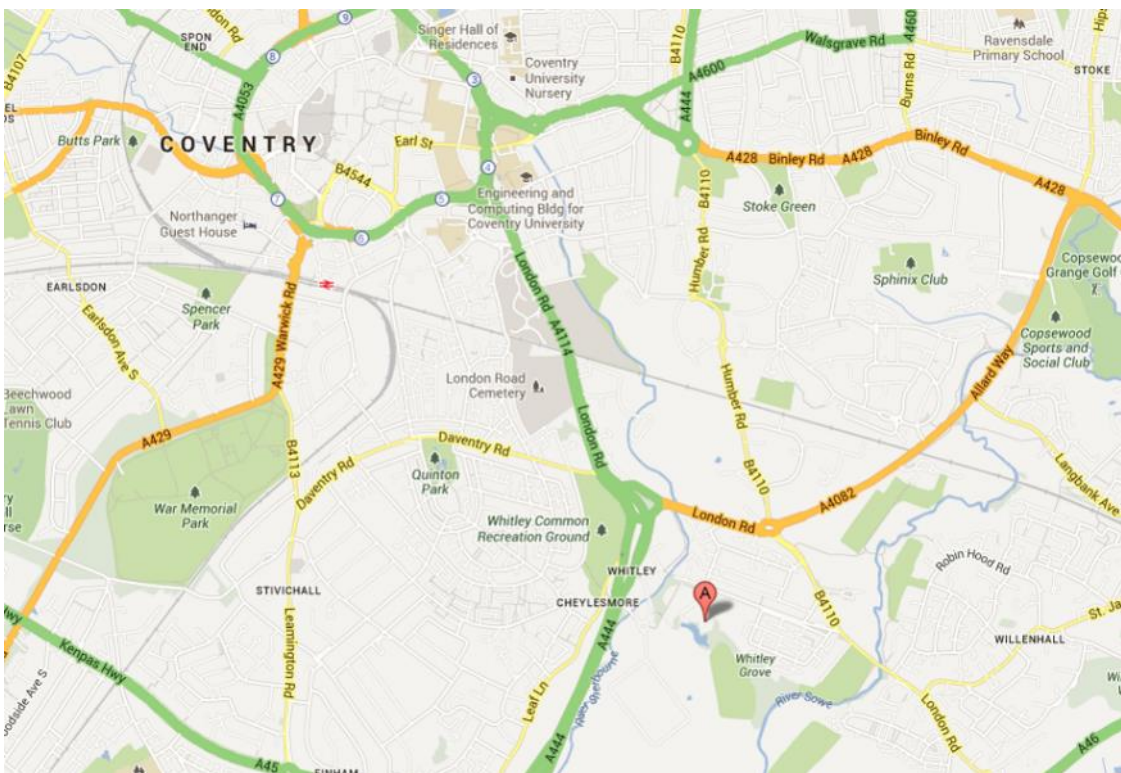
- Continuing professional learning and development:** The TSA facilitates intensive professional learning, ranging from trainee and newly qualified teacher induction programmes to recently qualified teacher research projects and subject enhancement/leadership development sessions.
- School to School Support:** The TSA has a programme which provides schools with a significant and extensive level of expertise. Our track record demonstrates that the support we offer can transform schools' teaching, learning and leadership.
- School led Initial Teacher Training:** Working with Birmingham City University the TSA recruits high calibre trainees to transform student outcomes through challenging and stimulating teaching.
- Research and development:** The TSA was built with research and development at its heart. Effective research and enquiry begins with our students and a drive to improve their learning experience and educational outcomes. The TSA provides support and guidance with action research in schools and with our Higher Education partners.
- Specialist Leaders of Education:** Specialist leaders of education are outstanding middle and senior leaders. They have at least two years leadership experience in a particular specialism (e.g. maths, school business management, initial teacher training).





be the best you can be

## Contact



## Whitley Academy

Abbey Road, Coventry, CV3 4BD

**Telephone:** 02476 302580

**Fax:** 02476 639352

**Email:** [admin@whitleyacademy.com](mailto:admin@whitleyacademy.com)

**Website:** [www.whitleyacademy.com](http://www.whitleyacademy.com)

**Twitter:** @WhitleyAcademy1

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