



GREAT WESTERN ACADEMY

CANDIDATE INFORMATION
DECEMBER 2017



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 will provide a fantastic opportunity for enthusiastic, skilled professionals to progress their career in a vibrant and aspirational setting. Successful applicants will inspire our first students and staff and help to ensure GWA is outstanding from day one.

GWA is currently being constructed on the Tadpole Garden Village Development as part of the rapid expansion of North Swindon and will open in September 2018 with a Year 7 cohort of 150 students and approximately 80 Year 12 students. The Academy will then continue to grow over the coming five years, with a final number on roll 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 will be key to our success and I have outlined 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 it into a reality. If you believe you can contribute to this exciting process and want to be part of the key team of 'founding staff' of the Academy I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Graham Davis, Principal

A SHARED VISION

GWA will provide 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.

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 will also serve as a hub for the new communities in North Swindon. Students and local community groups will work with each other on joint projects and the facilities will be an asset which will be 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.

These values will be exemplified in the following ways:

The learner is at the heart of everything we do

Every student can expect to feel important and will be appropriately stretched and challenged. We will have high expectations of students and will 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.

Excellent teaching and learning

Great learning needs great teachers and great attitudes. Our teachers will be carefully recruited to ensure they model the ethos of GWA. They will be outstanding classroom practitioners committed to generating a culture in which no child is left behind, and they will be supported to continually review and improve their own practice. Our students will 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 will provide daily opportunities for staff and students to enrich their learning. They will 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 will foster 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 (Companies) system will 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 will work with parents to support students to become assured and know where they excel. Our pastoral system and links with external agencies where needed will 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 designed by BAM Construction will provide an incredible learning environment that will inspire and support outstanding achievement in all areas of school life.

State-of-the-art ICT facilities will be found throughout the building, with specialist areas for science, performing arts, design and technology and special needs provision. The sports facilities include a 4-court sports hall, activity studio, large MUGA, and a grass area which accommodates three football pitches.

Curriculum

In Key Stage 3, our students will follow a broad and balanced range of subjects and our themes of enterprise and entrepreneurship will permeate each subject. Lessons will be 50 minutes long and there will be six lessons a day.

In Key Stage 4, all students will take GCSE courses in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science (Double or Triple Award). They will have the opportunity to take at least four further options subjects from a wide range of choices, including subjects reflecting our focus on enterprise.

Our standard school day will extend until 4.30pm Monday to Thursday, with the final 75 minutes used for further study or wider enrichment activities. These will broaden students' experiences and allow strong links with the local community to be developed.

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 and vocational courses. Due to our close links with New College, students will have the unique opportunity to attend New College for additional subjects to ensure they personalise their studies to suit their future plans.

Innovative use of educational technology

The innovative use of technology will support and enhance our high quality learning. We will offer our students access to extended learning opportunities through on-line and digital resources. Students' progress will be tracked electronically and this will be available to students, parents and staff for regular review.

Enrichment

All students will be expected to take part in the Academy's enrichment programme. The range of activities will include sports, arts, academic pursuits, alternative and additional qualifications, extended projects, social enterprise, community service and outdoor education. Classroom learning will be supplemented by many visits and trips to bring learning alive to our students.

Positive attitudes to learning

The Academy will operate in a caring, friendly but professional environment, with clear rights and responsibilities understood by all and conducted in a business-like manner where teachers can focus on teaching and students on learning. Our disciplinary procedures will be firm but fair.

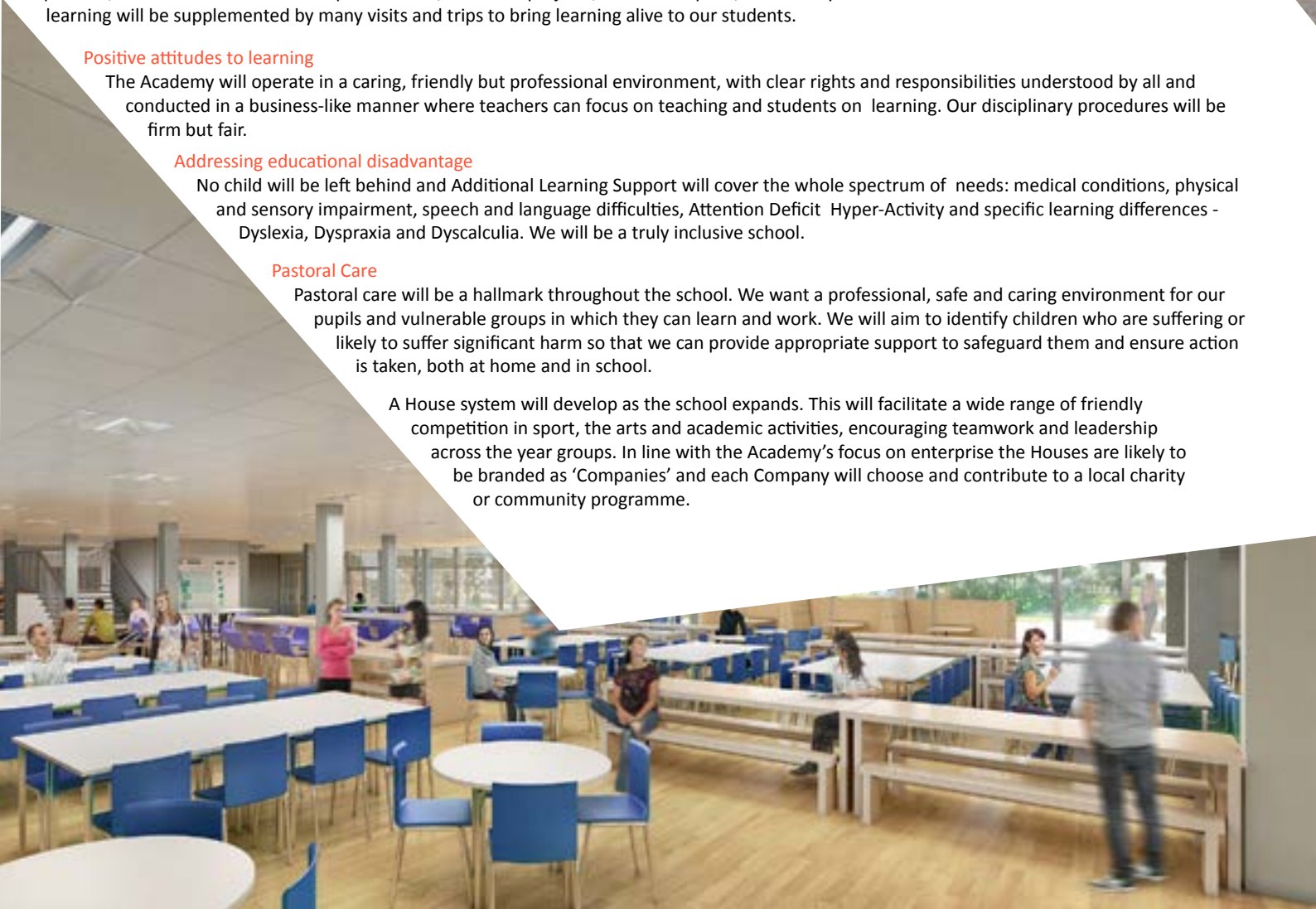
Addressing educational disadvantage

No child will be left behind and Additional Learning Support will cover the whole spectrum of needs: medical conditions, physical and sensory impairment, speech and language difficulties, Attention Deficit Hyper-Activity and specific learning differences - Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia. We will be a truly inclusive school.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care will be a hallmark throughout the school. We want a professional, safe and caring environment for our pupils and vulnerable groups in which they can learn and work. We will 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 will develop as the school expands. This will facilitate a wide range of friendly competition in sport, the arts and academic activities, encouraging teamwork and leadership across the year groups. In line with the Academy's focus on enterprise the Houses are likely to be branded as 'Companies' and each Company will choose and contribute to a local charity or community programme.



WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We are looking for inspirational staff to join our relatively small team in 2018/19. Our staffing structure will comprise a Senior Leadership Team of three (Principal, Assistant Principal and Academy Business Manager), lead teachers of Core subjects, several class teachers, and a small number of student support and administrative staff. This key team of 'founding staff' will have the privilege and responsibility of setting the standard for the Academy's future.

All staff who join the team at GWA are expected to live our values, contributing fully to the life of the academy including our enrichment sessions. They will demonstrate obvious enthusiasm for learning and be able to build highly effective working relationships with staff, students, parents, businesses and other community groups. They will inspire trust and confidence and have the potential to develop their careers quickly as the academy expands, and they will be supported to do so.

SWINDON AND THE COMMUNITY

Swindon is now a high-tech centre of excellence with a thriving business community and commercial centre with 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 will be 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 no other sixth form provision within the immediate area and students currently 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 teachers, parents and residents from North Swindon. GWA will be an Academy not just for its students and staff but for the whole community. We want the Academy to be as alive in the evenings as it is during the day and its great facilities to be 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

