

ACHIEVEMENT, CARE AND EXCELLENCE AT

# GREAT WESTERN ACADEMY



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# SIXTH FORM

## GREAT WESTERN ACADEMY

# OPEN EVENING

Thursday 12th October 5:30 – 7:30 pm



A Levels and  
Vocational Courses  
available

Small Class sizes

Leadership  
Opportunities

[www.gwacademy.co.uk/sixth-form](http://www.gwacademy.co.uk/sixth-form)

Email: [admissions@gwacademy.co.uk](mailto:admissions@gwacademy.co.uk) Tel: 01793 209700



## Welcome from the Principal



It is a privilege to be the first Principal of Great Western Academy, leading the school from its beginnings to the 950+ students now on roll. My ambition is to continue to lead a thriving forward-thinking learning environment which is inspiring. Using the fantastic facilities in our award-winning building, we want to see students progress and flourish, gaining excellent results and developing into influential citizens of the future. The progress made by our first cohort at GCSE in 2023 was excellent suggesting we are succeeding with our ambitions. Our Sixth Form is flourishing with students securing places at top universities (including Oxford and Cambridge) and on prestigious apprenticeships. Students can stay at GWA until year 13, and most choose to do so.

The Academy encourages high aspirations and expects the very highest standards of both staff and students at all times. Students enjoy learning and staff enjoy teaching them and inspire them to make the very most of their talents. GWA is a centre of excellence and a key asset to the local community; we welcome parents and businesses to support our learning and we provide facilities for use by the community. We are also proud of our Eco-School status.

The Academy's approach is based on the belief that students should become enterprising people ready to embark on new adventures full of boldness and initiative. Adults of tomorrow need to be independent thinkers and lifelong learners since their careers may include many different jobs - some of which have not yet been created. Our curriculum and extra-curricular enrichment opportunities are the foundation of this.

I am looking forward to welcoming new students to Years 7 and 12 in 2024, to join our fantastic current cohorts.

Graham Davis - Principal

ACHIEVEMENT  
AR  
EXCELLENCE



# VISION AND ETHOS

Great Western Academy is an exceptional school that radically improves our learners' career chances. We want every learner to do well enough to go on to university or pursue a fruitful career via an apprenticeship or other training route with most doing so by staying on into GWA's Sixth Form. Students enjoy learning and our fantastic staff enjoy helping them to realise their dreams. To achieve this, we embed the following principles across Great Western Academy:

## 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 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.

## POSITIVE ATTITUDES TO LEARNING

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

## EXCELLENT TEACHING AND LEARNING

Excellent teaching, underpinned by high quality professional development and learning resources is vital. Our staff have been carefully recruited to ensure they meet the aims and ethos of the Academy and are excellent classroom practitioners. We personalise learning and make good use of data to improve teaching and to ensure that no child is left behind. We draw on evidence and experience of the best ways to achieve excellent outcomes for all children.

## ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

No child is left behind and Additional Learning Support covers the whole spectrum of needs: medical conditions, physical and sensory impairment, speech and language difficulties, Attention Deficit Hyper-Activity and specific learning differences such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia. We are a truly inclusive school.

## INNOVATIVE USE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Every student is provided with a laptop for their personal use in school. The inventive 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' progress is tracked electronically, and this is available to students, parents and staff for regular review.



## LITERACY & NUMERACY

A strong command of English and Mathematics is a vital foundation for the whole curriculum. We prioritise this so that all students can prosper and include a timetabled reading session daily. Progress made by KS3 students in English and Maths is exceptional, as evidenced by standardised tests and by the very strong progress made in English and Maths by our first cohort of GCSE students

## EXTENDED DAY - MORE TIME FOR LEARNING

We have a longer school day to give more time to embed our enterprise skills and to extend the curriculum through enrichment. Our curriculum is planned to provide pathways from any level at entry to high achievement in external exams at the end of Years 11 and 13.

## ENRICHMENT

All Key Stage 3 students take part in the Academy's enrichment programme. The range of activities includes sports, arts, academic pursuits, alternative and additional qualifications, extended projects, social enterprise, community service and outdoor education. Classroom learning is supplemented by many visits and trips to bring learning alive for our students. In Key Stage 4 students can continue with clubs and activities but enrichment time is also used to support academic progress.

## ENTERPRISE SKILLS

It is crucial that all of our students are well prepared for life outside school. Working with employers and business partners, we ensure that academic and skills-based learning are seamlessly combined in curriculum planning to stimulate students' interest and motivation and demonstrate how studies are relevant to career prospects and the world of work.

## A COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Built for the benefit of the community, we work with many local groups. Local leaders and parents are encouraged to interact with the school and its student body. A wide range of activities are offered by local groups in the evenings to help provide opportunities for all.

## PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is facilitated by our House system. We are proud of our professional, safe and caring environment which helps students to learn and work. We identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm so that appropriate support and action can be taken to keep them safe, both at home and in school.



# ACADEMY INFORMATION

## THE ACADEMY DAY

Learning at the Academy starts at 8.30am and we expect students to arrive by 8.25am. For those parents and students who require it, there is a Breakfast Club running from 8:00am.

On Tuesday to Thursdays, the school day ends at 4.15pm and on Mondays and Fridays finishes at 3.10pm. The day is structured as follows:

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 8.00 – 8.30 am                                       | Breakfast Club (Optional)           |
| 8.30 – 8.50 am                                       | Registration / Form time / Assembly |
| 8.50 – 9.40 am                                       | <a href="#">Lesson 1</a>            |
| 9.40 – 10.30 am                                      | <a href="#">Lesson 2</a>            |
| 10.30 – 10.50 am                                     | Break                               |
| 10.50 – 11.40 am                                     | <a href="#">Lesson 3</a>            |
| 11.40 – 12.30 pm                                     | <a href="#">Lesson 4</a>            |
| 12.30 – 1.10 pm                                      | Lunch                               |
| 1.10 – 1.30 pm                                       | Reading Time                        |
| 1.30 – 2.20 pm                                       | <a href="#">Lesson 5</a>            |
| 2.20 – 3.10 pm                                       | <a href="#">Lesson 6</a>            |
| (Tuesday to Thursday) 3.10 – 4.15 pm Enrichment Time |                                     |

On Tuesdays to Thursdays all Key Stage 3 students stay until 4.15pm and can choose from dozens of enrichment activities or work on their homework. Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form students are provided with extra academic support in this time.

## TUTOR GROUPS & HOUSES

Students are placed into mixed tutor groups of approximately 25 students. Their tutor is the key point of contact for them and for their parents and is responsible for monitoring their academic and pastoral welfare. They also lead the tutor group in House competitions against others in a variety of activities.

The House system facilitates 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 will choose and contribute to a local charity or community programme and some House competitions have a focus on business and enterprise.

Our Houses are named after leaders within the British space industry – Aderin, Peake and Sharman – to reflect our high aspirations and our focus on technology, enterprise and hard work. Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock opened GWA in 2018 and Helen Sharman formally opened our Sixth Form in September 2019. Tim Peake visited in November 2021, and, all three have inspired our students to aim high. We hope to have them visit again in coming years.

## PERSONALISED TUTORING

Each student will have a regular 1-to-1 meeting with their tutor and will have a Personalised Learning Plan. The 1-to-1 sessions will be spent discussing the plan, setting and reviewing goals. GWA pastoral arrangements underpin our key purpose of learning. The tutor is the hub of the pastoral care of all students and:

- ensures students feel supported and know where to seek help and advice if needed
- includes provision of clear, independent advice and guidance
- reflects our stated ethos and positive attitudes to learning
- ensures students feel appropriately guided, engendering a 'work-based' atmosphere.

## ENRICHMENT

There is an unrivalled opportunity for students to be involved in enrichment activities which run on Tuesdays to Thursdays after the school day. These sessions run alongside an opportunity for independent study and it is expected that students will balance their enrichment and independent study appropriately across the week. There is a wide range of activities on offer including sport, performing arts (including our annual school show) and a variety of clubs. Some reflect the Academy's focus on entrepreneurship and others may be led by members of the local community.

## UNIFORM

Years 7 - 11 wear our smart uniform which picks up the school colours. All students wear a grey blazer with the school logo and school tie (in house colours). Students wear black trousers or a school skirt. School branded items are kept to a minimum to keep costs low to parents, and support is available if needed. Our parents also run a second-hand uniform shop where good quality items are sold at much reduced prices.



## CATERING FACILITIES

Lunch time is an important opportunity to develop social skills and create a sense of community sharing together. All students up to Year 11 are required to stay on site throughout the school day and provision is made for students to buy food during lunch and breaks. We offer a cashless system where parents can top up student accounts through ParentPay.

## GETTING TO SCHOOL

With the very large majority of our students living within a mile of school we expect that they will walk or cycle wherever possible. Students can store bicycles and helmets safely on site during the school day. There is no space for parents to pick up by car at the end of the day and parents should not expect to do this.



# CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

## EXCELLENT OUTCOMES FOR ALL

Our core aim is to ensure excellent outcomes for all. We achieve this by fostering a high degree of independence in our students and developing positive and resilient attitudes to their learning.

A key focus is on enquiry-based learning, encompassing a wide range of entrepreneurial skills and competencies. Students are set by ability for most subjects to ensure appropriate stretch and challenge from day one.

## PERSONALISED LEARNING

We believe that personalised learning and teaching means taking a highly structured and responsive approach to each student's learning. All students have a [Personalised Learning Programme \(PLP\)](#) which is designed to adapt their learning and study regime to their particular talents and challenges as they become apparent. We continuously monitor our students' individual targets through their PLP to counteract underachievement and ensure no student is left behind.

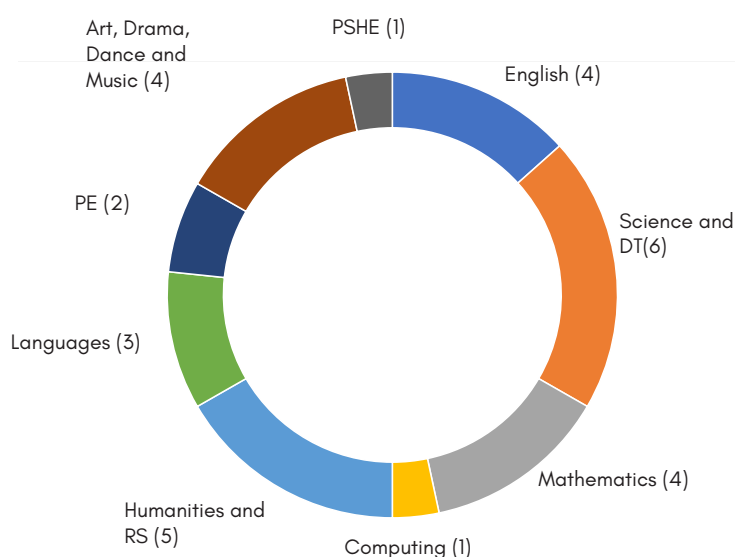
## CURRICULUM

Our students follow a broad and balanced range of subjects. Lessons are 50 minutes long. There are six lessons a day plus a 20 minute daily reading time. Students study in groups of approximately 20-30 students, with smaller groups accommodating learners who require additional support.

As students progress through the school, it will be appropriate and beneficial for some to study in smaller groups with close supervision whilst for others to have a more open and independent structure.

### Key Stage 3

Students' time is split across the following lessons during Key Stage 3;



### Key Stage 4

All students will take GCSE courses in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science (Combined or Triple Award). They have the opportunity to take at least four further subjects and these include:

Art  
Business Studies  
Computer Science  
Creative iMedia  
Dance  
Drama  
Design Technology  
French  
Geography  
History  
Hospitality and Catering  
Music  
PE  
Philosophy and Ethics  
Spanish



## SIXTH FORM

Our Sixth Form opened in September 2019. All students take three or four subjects in Year 12 and at least three subjects in Year 13. This is driven by what best suits the needs and abilities of each student.

We offer a wide range of popular A-Level courses and the Extended Project Qualification. With our Year 11 students joining the Sixth Form for the first time in 2023 we have added vocational courses to our previous offer of A-levels to help provide opportunities for all to stay at GWA for Year 12 and 13.

Further information about our post-16 offer is available on our website.

## ENTERPRISE SKILLS

Students actively study Enterprise skills of Creativity, Problem Solving, Leadership, Team-working, Listening and Presenting. These are developed by all subjects in our curriculum and students' development of their skills is assessed regularly.

## EXTENDED READING

We believe that the importance of reading cannot be overestimated. A daily reading period of 20 minutes is built into the timetable. Parents are encouraged to support further reading at home.



## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Our approach to SEN will be driven by the following core principles:

- All students, whatever their needs have access to a broad, balanced curriculum and are included in every aspect of school life
- No student is excluded from any activity because of their special need, although a student may be temporarily removed if their behaviour is placing themselves or others at risk
- The needs of most students will be met within the classroom environment through a differentiated curriculum, unless it is demonstrated that a withdrawal group will have more impact than class delivery
- All students will develop a sense of belonging and pride in their school
- The abilities and personal strengths of all students will be recognised

Our experienced SEND Co-ordinator is in place to lead these actions.

## GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

We are committed to providing a challenging curriculum for all of our students. We will provide opportunities to identify and nurture those who are more able. This doesn't just include high achievers but also refers to investigative learners who approach tasks differently.

GWA has a particular focus on the more able and gifted and talented students in line with our stated principle that all students will be challenged to meet their full potential at all times. Our Talent Programme includes strands which focus on high potential in academic, sporting, arts and leadership activities. Students with talents in one or more of these areas have opportunities highlighted to them through their PLP and parents are made aware of our provision. Students aiming for top A-Level grades are actively supported to apply for prestigious universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

# ACADEMY FACILITIES

Our state of the art facilities provide an incredible learning environment to inspire and support outstanding achievement in all areas of school life. The building won Educational Building of the Year in 2019.

The school design creates a stimulating environment for learning that revolves around the heart of the building. The three wings are arranged around a central heart space. The building frames a landscaped, south-facing external courtyard which is well connected with the internal functions of the school. A brand new All-Weather Pitch opened in January 2023.

The Academy has a clear philosophy of promoting openness and transparency throughout. The heart space is therefore central to the massing and circulation of all floors, creating visibility between floors and zones, including the external areas. The Academy design allows related subjects to be located close by e.g. Science and Mathematics are co-located on the second floor.

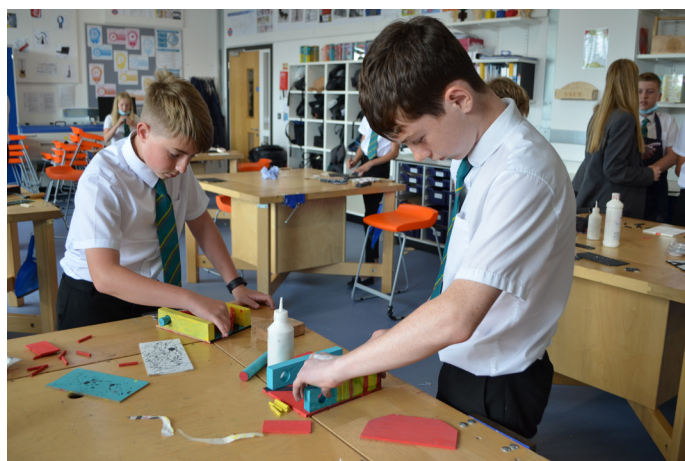
The ground floor accommodates the central dining, social and enrichment space. Our library and SEN facilities are on the first floor. The heart space also contains the main staircase and lift.

The courtyard is a well contained and sheltered south-facing space for outside dining, play and socialising. Seating areas are provided throughout the courtyard, including covered spaces for more formal learning, play and performance activities.



## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Based over three floors there are extensive science and technology facilities including ten science laboratories, five of which are designed for specialist use. The technology facilities include a general teaching area and specialised classrooms for Resistant Materials, Textiles and Food Technology. The wing also houses classroom teaching areas for English and Humanities.



## ARTS AND MEDIA

The Academy has excellent facilities for the teaching of all arts including 3D Design, Music, Drama and Dance. There are two classrooms dedicated to music with five practice rooms. The wing also includes classrooms for teaching Maths and Foreign Languages.

The Special Educational Need (SEN) facilities are also located in this wing on the second floor, containing group rooms and a SEN therapy room.

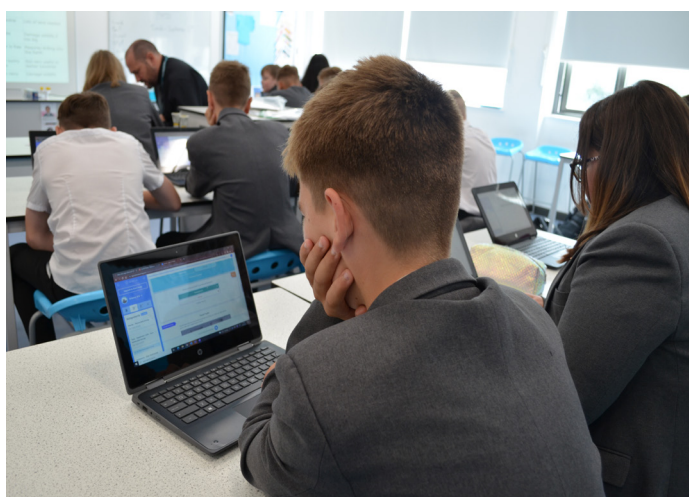




## SPORTS FACILITIES

Inside the building, the Sports Wing contains a large Sports Hall and Activity Studio with adjacent changing rooms. The wing has a separate external access to allow use outside school hours by local community groups.

Our outdoor facilities contain three large sports pitches and a three court multi-use games area (MUGA). Our new All-Weather Pitch, which opened in January 2023 further enhances our sports provision.



## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Academy uses extensive IT facilities and e-learning materials to support high quality learning. Students have access to their own laptop via a parental contribution to allow them to benefit from the most up-to-date learning resources and to develop independent learning approaches. Every classroom has audio-visual facilities. Students are able to access their work from home via a school portal and this also provides parents with key information.





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