



ZOOM!

The Newsletter for The Milton Keynes Academy

A newsletter for Year 6 students who will move up to The Milton Keynes Academy in September 2010, and their parents or carers.

It's amazing, it's massive, it's awesome... it's your brand new school – The Milton Keynes Academy!

The Academy is a fabulous place where you will be able to learn loads of exciting new things when you reach Year 7. The school was brand new last year and cost nearly thirty million pounds. It's a beautiful bright building packed full of the latest equipment to help you learn new skills.

Your chance to visit!

You'll have the chance to visit the Academy after school on Thursday 1 July with your parents or carers.

You will be able to look round the building, meet your new teachers and find out what sort of lessons you will be having when you start at the Academy in September. You'll see:

- The Year 7 Explore Learning Village. This is where you will be based for a lot of the time with students of your own age.
- The Art and Design Village - a really cool area where you can be creative in lots of different ways and try woodwork, pottery and painting.



- The Performing Arts Village with its film and TV recording studio, dance hall and music rooms.
- Great sports facilities such as the huge hall, basketball court and football pitches.
- The science area with seven brilliant labs where you can carry out experiments.
- The brightly decorated restaurant where you can get tasty food to eat with your friends every day.

WHAT DO YEAR 7 STUDENTS THINK OF THE ACADEMY?

Mudau Muwana used to go to Meadfurlong School in Fishermead. She loves having the chance to try new sports. "So far I have done netball, hockey, cross country and badminton. The boys have tried football, rugby, athletics and volley ball." Mudau also likes the clever fingerprint no-cash payment system used in the restaurant.



One of the best things at the Academy is the science lessons says **Lee Wells**, who used to go to Langland Community School at Netherfield. "I like doing tests and experiments in chemistry and doing lots of new things. It is a friendly school and there are people to help us with our work if we need it."



Lucy Brignall went to Falconhurst School at Eaglestone before starting at the Academy last September. "It's much better than I expected. There are lots of rules, but I like the way things are controlled so that people don't mess about so much, so you can get on with learning."



Another former Falconhurst School pupil is **Wesley Bennett** who said: "I like art and design lessons best. There is lots of great equipment to use."



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEW PRINCIPAL

Later this year you will be able to move up to the Academy, and I know that you will already be feeling excited.

You are very lucky to be going to the Academy, as it is an excellent and popular school, where lessons are interesting and fun.

It is also a school with very high standards, and I will expect you to do your best at all times. This means being thoughtful to others, getting to lessons on time, not running in corridors, having the right equipment and always working hard.

In return, I will make sure that you get all the skills and qualifications you need to be successful in your lessons and in your future life.

I look forward to meeting you when you visit the Academy on 1 July.

Lorna Caldicott

Lorna Caldicott
Principal

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Going to a bigger school might seem quite scary, but don't worry, you'll be fine. Here are answers to some questions you might have...

What time do I have to be at the Academy?

You will need to be in the Academy before 8.30am. You can go into the restaurant earlier from 7.30am to do work. Lessons finish at 3.20pm but you might want to stay longer to do homework or go to one of the many clubs.

Will I be in a class with people from the school I'm at now?

Children from lots of different schools go to the Academy, so you will have a chance to meet new people your age. You might not have lessons with your old friends but you will still see them in your Learning Village.

How will I make new friends?

Everyone will be new just like you. As you go through the first few days and weeks you'll soon get to know the people you sit with in lessons. Just smile and be friendly and you'll soon make new mates. You will also be able to join after-school clubs and make new friends there too.

Do I have to wear a uniform?

Yes, you will wear the smart Academy uniform. Boys and girls both wear the special Academy black blazer; black sleeveless jumper and tie. You will also need black trousers, white shirt, black shoes and plain black socks. You must use

the Academy backpack and PE kit including polo shirt with logo, shorts, sports socks and jogging bottoms. You can wear any colour trainers for PE. Black hijabs can be worn. There will be a chance to try on uniform items to make sure you get the right sizes before you start at the Academy.

What if I get lost?

Don't worry, the Academy is big but you will quickly feel at home. You will spend most of your time in the Year 7 Explore Learning Village with children of your age. You will go into other parts of the Academy for special lessons such as science or drama, but you will be given a planner with a map inside to help you find your way around. You will also have a guided tour on your first day. Everyone is friendly and will help if you need to ask directions.

Will I have homework?

Yes. At the start of every term you will receive a homework pack containing lots of interesting activities including puzzles and problems, plus a special homework task we call The BIG Project. You will have six weeks to do this work so you can do it when it suits you best.

Will I have somewhere to put my things?

Yes, you will have your own locker in your Learning Village so you can keep things safely at school.

What happens about food at lunchtimes?

There is a brilliant restaurant which serves up all sorts of tasty food. There is also an eating area outside where you can eat on sunny days. You can bring in a packed lunch if you wish.

What if I get bullied?

This is something lots of children worry about. The Academy will NOT tolerate any type of bullying. The building has been specially designed so that there are no dark corners or areas where you might feel worried. The lavatories are next to the office of the Head of Year 7 and are supervised. In the unlikely event that you are being bullied you must tell a teacher or your parents so we can stop it straight away. We want you to be happy at your new school so you should never be afraid to talk about anything.

What sort of lessons will I have?

There will be all sorts of interesting and different things to do at the Academy. You will be able to study lots of new subjects such as music, food technology, drama and a foreign language. We will also help you develop useful skills you will need in the future when you go on to work, college or university.

Lessons will be two hours long, so you can really get into what you are doing and not waste time moving from class to class. We also make sure that lessons are fun. You will spend a lot of time learning by trying out things for yourself.

What sort of exams can I study when I am older?

You can study from a huge range of subjects at GCSE and A-level. You can also study lots of interesting vocational qualifications that relate to the world of work, such as diplomas and NVQs.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

We are delighted that you have chosen the Academy for your son or daughter, and we will do all we can to give your child the skills and qualifications they need to set them on their path to success.

We want the move to the Academy to go smoothly, so if you feel your child has any particular educational needs you would like to discuss, please contact us to make an appointment. We will also talk with your child's primary school to get detailed information about your child.

We will provide a report to you every term giving information about your child's progress in the Academy. We will also invite you to attend progress evenings so you can talk to teachers.

A Parents' Group and Discussion Forum has been set up and we hope that you might like to get involved. The group provides valuable feedback on how the Academy is doing and how we could do better. There is also a parents' blog on our website.

It's very important that you do all you can to encourage your child to do well at the Academy and to ensure that all of their out of school work is completed on time.

Good communication

In line with our open door approach we would like to hear from you if you have any queries concerning your child. We feel it is far better to get matters settled quickly rather

than let things build up or worry you. The first person to speak to if you have a concern will be Mrs Barkus, the Year 7 Village Administrator. If you feel it is a more serious matter then you can contact the Head of Year 7, Mrs Caines, who will be happy to help. The Principal, Lorna Caldicott, can also be contacted if you are still not happy with the outcome.

We like to get issues into the open and deal with them as soon as possible, and to let parents know exactly how they are being sorted out. If you have a query before September please email [Mrs Castle at dcastle@miltonkeynesacademy.co.uk](mailto:dcastle@miltonkeynesacademy.co.uk) or ring her on **01908 341700**.

Absence, attendance and lateness

Our policy is **ON TIME EVERY DAY**. Students must be able to start their first lesson at 8.30am.

Coming to school every day is really important for students. If a student is not in school then they can't learn along with their friends. Research shows that children with attendance of more than 93% do better at school than those who attend less. We ask parents to make any medical or dental appointments after school please, except in cases of emergency or hospital appointments.

We realise there are times when students will require time off, and if so they will need to complete a leave of absence form. This will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, and each case will be considered on its merits.

Child Protection and Welfare

The health, safety and well-being of every child is very important to us. We listen to students and take seriously what they tell us. On rare occasions our concern about a child may mean we have to consult other agencies before we contact you. The Milton Keynes Child Protection Committee has laid down procedures for us to follow and the Academy has adopted a Child Protection policy in line with this for the safety of all. The policy can be found on our website.

Gifted and talented students

We will meet the needs of every individual student. This includes providing greater challenges in lessons and opportunities for students to develop potential gifts and talents. They can also take part in extra activities designed to stretch and challenge them.

Students with special needs

A group of people known as the 'Upgrade Team' helps children with special needs. Depending on the level of need, each child will be supported individually or in a small group and they will receive support in lessons. Progress will be looked at every six weeks.

School policies

Full policies covering a range of subjects can be found on our website. These include: admissions, anti-bullying, behaviour, charging and remissions, child protection, complaints, disability statement, equal opportunities, exclusion procedure, health and safety, home learning, ICT, safeguarding and promoting student welfare, student attendance and uniform.