



DITTON PARK  
ACADEMY





# Welcome

## Our future lies in the present

I am very proud to be the Principal of Ditton Park Academy. Since being appointed to the position in October 2013 and beginning my work on the Academy in January 2014 I have been struck by the energy, enthusiasm and collaborative nature of all of those people involved in leading the education for young people in Slough. The Academy comes from a unique, innovative and collaborative partnership involving the head teachers of all of the thirteen existing secondary school providers in Slough.

We are a local, co-educational community Academy serving the young people and their families in the South-East of Slough. All visitors to our Academy will notice how proud the students and staff are of our Academy. They will notice how well the students behave in this very friendly Academy and how smart they appear in their distinctive uniform.

I am delighted to lead an Academy that genuinely believes in putting the needs of its students and the community first. This means we will always work hard to make sure we have the right

curriculum for our students with a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities available.

All of us at Ditton Park Academy are enthusiastic and ambitious. We are working together to build an exciting new Academy, which will learn from the remarkable successes of current Slough schools.

In September 2014 we will be in temporary accommodation on Wellington Street and then we will move to a multi-million pound purpose built brand new building in September 2015 off Upton Court Road. I know that the Academy will become as popular and oversubscribed as the rest of the schools in Slough.

Leadership at the Academy is very experienced and it has a proven track record of delivering outstanding provision and outcomes. I hope our website provides you with the information you require and visitors are always welcome and should contact the Academy to make an appointment.

**Nick Caulfield, Principal**

# Vision & Ethos

**Our vision for Ditton Park Academy is that it is a forward thinking outstanding Academy inspiring learning.**

It develops confident young people, who excel in their educational, personal and social development, achieving more than they believed possible.

All of our students are “active citizens”. All students will be encouraged and given the confidence to participate in decision making, providing support and/or creative input across the three areas of family well-being, public service and economic sufficiency. Through this we develop self-confident and responsible students who contribute to the local community of Slough.

An expectation that lifelong learning not only underpins success in adult life but that it will be a necessity in order to actively participate in the future economic world underpins the culture and curriculum of the Academy.

The Academy provides outstanding teaching and learning opportunities that ensure the achievement and success of the students that enables them to move on with confidence into work, further training or higher education.

We provide an inclusive learning environment where all learners are welcome and able to succeed. Learning pathways are tailored to suit the interests and aptitudes of individual students. A personalised approach to

planning the curriculum ensures that teaching and learning is differentiated in a way that maximises each student’s attainment and achievement.

We recognise the need for all learners to have the skills to be able to adapt to and use fast changing global technologies that will be relevant to their future employment.

We aim to become an “International Thinking School” highlighting the importance we attach to enabling our students and staff to understand and engage in effective thinking and learning that will support both their success in learning and teaching and ability to adapt to changing educational or workplace requirements.



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# Teaching & learning

There is a rigorous, comprehensive curriculum with a social and academic approach to education.

It is designed to develop the character, mind and resilience of the whole child and incorporates the core beliefs and values of the Academy. The main drivers for the curriculum:

- A strong drive on improving learning and engagement in the local community underpinned by the principles of: equality and diversity; respect for local people, local culture and local values; citizenship in the local, national and global context;
- Building students' repertoire of spoken and written language so that they become confident and effective communicators;
- Specialism in business and enterprise (including IT) to develop skills for learning, life and the future economy;
- An aspirational ethos so that every child: wants to succeed; knows how to achieve well academically and become socially competent; participates, is creative, is able to express their voice, contributes responsibly and has a sense of what it means to be a democratic citizen; believes that they are on the road to college, university or a good job;
- A strong focus on the whole child and their physical, social, spiritual, cultural and emotional well-being that means that they: are well placed to learn; will make good progress; will develop the emotional resilience to succeed even in the face of adversity.

For the curriculum to fully engage the students and promote high achievement there must be exceptional teaching and learning. In order to ensure this there is a programme for self-reflection; nurturing and extended research projects developing teachers so that students have high quality educational experience.

Teachers will plan meticulously to provide a detailed 'learning plan' for each theme, ensuring that all areas of the curriculum are fully covered. They will begin with an explorative question to discover the knowledge and understanding of the students about the theme/topic and then set the scene using expert knowledge. They will identify clear learning objectives, learning outcomes, activities, differentiation, specified groups, resources and assessment opportunities in every lesson. There will be a close working relationship between staff to ensure progression of learning skills through the years and across subject areas.

Teaching strategies and resources will be varied and appealing to ensure that they will engage the students' interest and cater for a range of learning styles. All members of staff will prepare carefully and in good time for each lesson so that lesson time can be used highly effectively. We also know that students learn more effectively in a safe environment that is tidy, bright and inviting each day.

# The Curriculum

At Key Stage 3 we ensure our students start their Academy life by experiencing a wide range of subjects.

In their first two years students will explore Maths, English, Science, PE, ICT, Design Technology, Music, Drama, Art, Geography, History, Languages, Religious Studies and PHSCE.

Subject teachers and Academic Mentors work closely with students and parents to identify the best combination for each student, with long-term goals and career choices in mind.

Towards the middle of Year 8, students will start to consider their GCSE/BTEC options ready to begin in Year 9.

# Parents as Partners

We know that high achievement is much more likely if relationships between students, parents and the Academy are strong.

This is why we foster an excellent rapport between students and staff and why we want to work closely with families. Clear and frequent communication helps parents and carers to understand how their children are progressing.

Personal study away from the Academy, in the form of home learning, is an essential component of being successful. In addition to giving parents and carers the opportunity to support their children, it helps

students to develop research abilities, independent thinking and self-motivation, all of which are crucial skills for higher education and the workplace.

Ditton Park Academy is an inclusive community and listening to the views of families and students is very important to us. We have an open-door policy, encouraging parents and carers to contact staff to discuss any issues or concerns.





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## Enrichment Opportunities

**Opportunities abound at Ditton Park Academy and all our young people are encouraged to engage fully with the tremendous range of experiences available.**

The enrichment programme, which is a vital part of our curriculum, enables our students to learn a range of skills to supplement their academic studies. Activities will include; first aid, gardening, rock climbing, martial arts and languages.

There is a vast range of extra-curricular sporting activities – such as gymnastics, football, table tennis and orienteering – as well as drama and music clubs, plus home learning revisions groups. Numerous day visits and residential trips locally, nationally and globally form an important part of the Ditton Park Academy experience.

We are dedicated to ensuring that all students develop the digital literacy, life skills and global outlook required to thrive in today's fast-paced world. Through the use of interactive whiteboards and laptops in classrooms and use of ipads, digital cameras and a range of educational software, we use technology to engage students in their learning and help them to develop independent thinking and study skills.



DITTON PARK  
ACADEMY

Wellington Street  
Slough, Berkshire SL1 1YG

T: 01753 537594

F: 01753 538618

E: [office@dittonparkacademy.co.uk](mailto:office@dittonparkacademy.co.uk)

[www.dittonparkacademy.co.uk](http://www.dittonparkacademy.co.uk)

