



# THE WEST BRIDGFORD SCHOOL

## PROSPECTUS



# Dear Parent

I feel very privileged to be the Principal of The West Bridgford School. It is a school with an excellent academic reputation; we have consistently been the highest performing school in the county for many years in a range of important measures and one of the best schools in the country.



# The aims of the school

The primary aim of the school is to prepare each individual to live a full and satisfying life and specifically:



To enable students to experience enjoyment in learning, and to develop enquiring minds capable of independent thought.



To promote an educational culture based on academic excellence, with a scientific, technological and international emphasis.



To develop an awareness of values which encourage students to become responsible and caring members of society.



To promote an understanding and appreciation of the environment.

The vast majority of our students are keen to achieve, resulting in a positive learning environment where success is celebrated. I do not think I can over-emphasise the positive contribution our student body makes to this school and I consider us fortunate to have a student population which can only be described as delightful.

Whilst we are an academically successful and oversubscribed school, our primary purpose is to serve all of the young people in our care. Our aim is to ensure that every child in our charge fulfils and exceeds their potential and we endeavour to do this irrespective of their ability or needs. The evidence suggests that we are very successful in this aim. The OfSTED inspection of 2011 found the school to be 'Outstanding' overall; they observed that all groups of children achieved very well and that they felt safe and secure in their school environment.

We do place great emphasis on our standards agenda: we have high

expectations of our students in terms of their approach to learning, their conduct and behaviour, their uniform and their involvement in the everyday life of the school. We expect our students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner which befits this school and its heritage and we are justifiably proud of the many achievements of our students, be they on the sports field or in charity fundraising activities.

I do hope you decide to become a member of our school community. In doing so, you should feel assured that, whatever the ability of your child, our commitment is to ensure that they maximise their potential in a caring and safe environment.

Yours sincerely,

**Rob McDonough**, Principal

Our consistent academic success owes a great deal to the dedication and hard work of our staff and students over a number of years. We are fortunate to have teachers who are all graduates in the subjects they teach and students who value education.





Central to our philosophy is the belief that an effective education is one which values the culture and contribution of all students.



# Curriculum Experience

Parents can be confident that students will receive an outstanding education that meets the challenges of today's and tomorrow's world.



The West Bridgford School is a centre of academic excellence. Our long-standing success is evident in our public examination results. Teachers set high expectations which challenge students. We aim to create independent learners who equip themselves with the skills and willingness to achieve by taking responsibility for their own work.

The most important factor in securing academic achievement is excellent teaching. We believe in getting the very best from all our students. Our well-qualified and experienced staff work exceptionally hard with all students to achieve high standards.

The school aims to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all our students. The National Curriculum underpins our work throughout the school but flexibility does exist, especially in Key Stage 4, for students to follow optional courses in subjects in which they have a particular interest. In the Sixth Form students choose from a broad range of A-level courses.

Our aim is to provide a personalised curriculum that motivates and challenges all of our students. As part of this commitment to both stretch and support learners, students in Year 9 are given the opportunity to commence Key Stage 4 programmes of study when they are ready to do so. For many students this will mean starting their GCSE work in core subjects quite early in Year 9, giving them the opportunity to strive for the highest grades in examinations. Additionally, our options process has been brought forward so that all students will be able to make an early start to their chosen courses in the summer term of Year 9.

## Key Stage

# 3

**In Key Stage 3 all students study the school's core curriculum which consists of:**

English

Mathematics

Science

Modern Foreign Languages.

All students study French. In addition, students also have the opportunity to study Spanish or German, if appropriate

Performing Arts (Music, Drama, Dance)

Geography

History

Religious Education

Technology

Art

Computing

Physical Education

Personal, Social & Health Education

## Key Stage

# 4

**During Key Stage 4 students follow a core curriculum which consists of:**

English (most will take Language and Literature as separate GCSEs)

Mathematics

Science (a range of courses is available, including triple award, double award and single award, dependent on interest and aptitude)

Physical Education (as a non-examination subject)

Personal Social & Health Education

Students are then able to choose up to four more courses from a broad range of academic GCSEs, vocational GCSEs and other awards including a Certificate of Personal Effectiveness and Link College Courses where appropriate.



Students include a Modern Foreign Language and/or a Humanities subject in their GCSE curriculum.

Citizenship is a compulsory subject at Key Stages 3 and 4, delivered through Personal, Social & Health Education.

At The West Bridgford School we are fully committed to the provision of equal educational opportunity for all students.



We believe that provision for students with special educational needs is a whole-school responsibility requiring a whole-school response involving all teaching and associate staff.

The school buildings have been specifically adapted to accommodate wheelchair users and the visually impaired. No student is refused admission on the grounds of physical, sensory or learning disability. Students with special educational needs will be fully included in all aspects of school provision. Where barriers to learning are perceived, we will look at alternative ways to ensure inclusion. If necessary we will seek specialist advice.

The school's Learning Centre has been developed to promote inclusion and positive attitudes to learning. It supports the wide ranging needs of our learners, for example those students:

- identified as vulnerable
- with learning needs
- requiring intervention support with GCSE studies
- with emotional or behavioural needs
- with English as an additional language
- returning from absence

Students may be supported via one-to-one tutorials, small groups or through personalised learning programmes. The Learning Centre is open daily at breaks and after school, as a drop-in facility to support students.

The school constantly reviews its provision for gifted and talented students. At Key Stage 4, able mathematicians will be

pushed to the higher levels of the new GCSE, and Triple Science GCSE is available for students with a particular aptitude for Science. We also provide a wide range of additional opportunities from national Maths and Science challenges to university visits for students in years 9 and 10.

We believe that homework is important for extending learning and promoting good study habits. Every student is given a planner in which to organise their time and the school uses its Moodle VLE to facilitate on-line homework setting. Parents are given log-in details to the VLE so they can check the work set for their children. Homework is set at regular intervals and the level of complexity will increase as your child progresses through the school. The school strongly believes that homework is a route to students becoming life-long 'independent learners' and will use homework tasks to build qualities such as the ability to plan, prioritise and complete work by a deadline. The planner is also an essential tool to allow parents to communicate with the form tutor and subject teachers.

The Learning Centre is at the heart of the school and has been developed around meeting the individual needs of our students. Within the Centre are two dedicated teams: Inclusion department and Intervention. The Centre operates from 8am in the morning and is also available for homework club after school until 4pm.

# Pastoral Support

We strive to ensure that all students realise their full potential and, as a caring school, we value each student as an individual. We aim to enable all students to make the most of their educational experiences within a supportive environment.

All students join a tutor group and the guidance provided for each young person is the immediate responsibility of the tutor. The tutor is part of a team led by a Director of Learning with the assistance of a Pastoral Support Assistant. We aim to ensure the development of a caring and supportive relationship between staff and students. A very important role of the tutor team is to monitor the progress of all students and enable each student to achieve his/her full potential. The pastoral team keeps in regular contact with parents and in most cases is the first point of contact for parents. Additional support is provided by a range of agencies and dedicated support staff in school.

Systematic tracking of student progress allows us to identify and support any student in danger of underachieving.

We place tremendous value on maintaining a strong partnership with our family of schools. The Year Director (transition) works closely with staff in primary schools to ease the transition from primary to secondary school.

We are developing an increasing range of curriculum links with our partner primary schools. This includes the School Sports

Coordinator Partnership which aims to raise the profile and standard of Physical Education in both primary and secondary sectors.

Great emphasis is placed upon the personal and social development of students by preparing them to take a positive role in society. We have a varied programme led by our Personal, Social and Health Education Coordinator.

The Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision helps students to make informed choices concerning options and future pathways. It prepares them for the demands of adult life and helps them to develop the skills needed to manage their own careers.

Students have access to a variety of computer software packages where they can find out relevant and up to date information. Year 9, 10 and 11 students participate in enrichment days, which have particular focus on options, enterprise education and choices at 16 years.

The school council and year councils enable all students to have a voice about their educational experiences, involve students in the school decision-making

process and provide staff and governors with student feedback. We value all our students for who they are and for their contribution to the developing progress of our school.

We have high expectations of students' attitudes and behaviour and these are clearly stated in our Code of Conduct.

Positive behaviour is encouraged through our reward system, which is designed to reinforce good work and appropriate behaviour in class and promote student involvement in the community of the School. The highlight of this are our Celebration Assemblies, which are sometimes attended by local celebrities and are designed to recognise achievement and effort.

There are occasions when students fail to conform to our standards. In such cases sanctions may include detentions, reports and behaviour plans.

There are clear strategies for dealing with bullying. Staff and Governors apply and regularly review the Anti-Bullying Policy. We have a well-established group of peer mentors who run drop-in sessions after school to provide advice and support to other students.





## Partnership with parents

We place great importance on good communication between school and parents as we share responsibility for the students in our care.

The school now despatches the majority of written communication to parents via email. The 'Intouch' service is also used to send home timetables, results and can even process absence notes. Increasingly communication about homework, grades and reports has moved onto the school on-line 'Virtual Learning Environment'. Parents are provided with their own username and password allowing them to receive customised information about their child such as the regular progress reports.

To further increase transparency the school has also introduced an online mark-book allowing parents to view, not just final 'progress grades' but also the raw marks that allow staff to make the decisions behind the grades they assign.

A consultation afternoon for each year group takes place once a year. This enables parents and teachers to discuss the progress of a student. We like students to be present on these occasions and parents are expected to attend.

The school operates its own systems of internal checks and reviews of student progress and parents will be contacted if it is felt there is cause for concern. The school will send home between 3 and 5 reports per year, dependent on year group, informing parents of their child's progress towards their target grades. This information will also be available online.

Information evenings for parents are organised in conjunction with outside agencies. Previous topics have included: Teenage Pressures and Exam Stress, Tackling Drugs Together and Sex and Relationships Education.

A year-end financial summary is available on request from the school office.

Parents are elected to the Governing Body and play an active role in the governance of the school.



# Post 16

"The outstanding care, guidance and support in the sixth form, which students describe as 'second to none', secure excellent rates of attendance, retention and progression into higher education." (Ofsted Nov 2011)

A student's Post-16 years are amongst the most exciting, inspiring and rewarding of their academic lives. These three adjectives are also the words that best describe The West Bridgford School Sixth Form. We are a large (just over 300 students), inclusive community that

retains the intimacy of a much smaller organisation whilst offering all the flexibility that any student could desire. Our successful bid to expand the Sixth Form Centre to meet the significantly increased demand for places means that we will in effect be doubling the size of the Bradbury Building ready for September 2016.



We believe that we offer a unique combination of academic excellence, pastoral care and enrichment opportunities that further develop our students into the superbly independent, pro-active, hard-working individuals they are. Our results are always excellent; it is a delight to us that the majority of our Year 11 students stay with us into the Sixth Form, and the vast majority of these will attend University at the end of their two years with us.

Our students are our lifeblood, and thus our pastoral care is of particular importance to us. Students have a form tutor that they liaise closely with throughout their Sixth Form lives. This provides them with a point of contact, a "critical friend" and ultimately a referee for university application. All tutors possess considerable expertise with both Further and Higher Education and students profit from a minimum of two in-depth interviews each year with them.



‘ We are proud of our post 16 provision and the outstanding success of our students in examinations. ’



We recognise the importance of physical exercise in maintaining student's overall well-being. Our sports facilities include a swimming pool, sports hall, soccer pitches, tennis/netball courts, all-weather pitch, a gymnasium, fitness suite and dance studio.



The Post-16 years are about so much more than just academia, however. We offer numerous opportunities within school for our extremely diverse student population to express themselves or to contribute further to their community.

Amongst these are our extensive Mentoring programme, where students can positively impact on the lives of select Lower School students, our very popular and successful Young Enterprise group, the NUS Committee which runs Sixth Form affairs as well as our Sixth Form magazine written by, and for, Sixth Form students. All students study General Studies for two years and Year 13 students may opt to also study the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

Both Year 12 and 13 further benefit from an external

Enrichment “digest” given to them once a week as part of Sixth Form Briefing, brimming with details of University Open Days, subject specific lectures and seminars as well as Apprenticeship opportunities. Many educational and cultural visits take place each year, providing the opportunity for students to travel both in this country and abroad.

The school has undertaken an annual exchange with a German school near Cologne since 1976, offering the chance to put a foreign language learnt at school into practice. Ski trips are also offered and are always extremely popular.

Field courses, conferences, competitions on scientific, technological and environmental themes and theatre and museum visits support curriculum studies and enable students to widen their horizons.



## Beyond the classroom

Many educational and cultural visits take place each year, providing the opportunity for students to travel both in this country and abroad.

The school has undertaken an annual exchange with a German school near Cologne since 1976, and trips to France and Spain, offering the chance to put a foreign language learnt at school into practice. Ski trips are also offered. Field courses, conferences, competitions on scientific, technological and environmental themes and theatre and museum visits support curriculum studies and enable students to widen their horizons. Students are also encouraged to take part in 'Giving Nation' activities supporting local charities to improve community cohesion, as part of their Citizenship programme.

The school prides itself on an extensive extra-curricular programme, with a range of clubs every day after school. Traditionally we have been successful in a variety of inter-school sporting activities.

Teams represent the school in netball, football, hockey, cricket, basketball, tennis and athletics. Extra-curricular clubs include all team sports, dance, badminton, table tennis and fitness club.

We participate in the Sports Leaders UK programme. Students volunteer to run sporting activities within the school and wider community and through this activity develop essential life skills such as organisation, motivation, communication and working with others.

Our sports facilities include a swimming pool, sports hall, soccer pitches, tennis/netball courts, all-weather pitch, a gymnasium, fitness suite and dance studio.

There are also opportunities to take part in a range of outdoor activities including an

outward bound day for Year 7 students.

All of these activities are important in helping young people to grow in confidence and to develop the skills of team membership.

Many students take advantage of the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and as a result the school has an extensive programme of musical productions which are a major part of school life.

School productions benefit from a purpose built theatre with modern lighting and sound facilities.

Students organise a number of fundraising events for charities during the year through year and school councils.





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