



# The Kings of Wessex Academy

Getting the best out of everyone

## Information for Candidates:

### Welcome to The Kings of Wessex Academy

The Kings of Wessex is an Outstanding Academy with a strong commitment to excellence. There are currently over 1200 students on roll aged 13 to 18, including a flourishing Sixth Form of 330.

Kings is an exciting and rewarding place to work and the Academy prides itself on its academic success and wide range of achievements, enjoying an excellent reputation in the community and beyond. As a result demand for places is high and the Academy is oversubscribed in all years.

### History of the Academy

The Kings of Wessex was opened in 1976, although the origins of the Academy in fact date back to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century when Hannah Moore founded the first school in Cheddar. The remains of an important Anglo Saxon Palace were discovered on the site, hence the name of *'The Kings of Wessex'*. The outline of the site of the Palace and also the ruins of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Chapel of St Columbanus today enhance the setting of the Academy.

Kings has Church of England Voluntary Controlled Status, which is reflected in both the composition of the Trustees of The Kings of Wessex Academy Trust and the ethos of the Academy. On 1 September 2006 Kings became a Foundation School and on 1 June 2011 became an Academy under the Government's fast-track scheme for Outstanding Schools. In 2010 Kings was designated a National Lead Behaviour School, in recognition of its excellent work in behaviour management.

Kings is situated in the thriving village of Cheddar, at the foot of the picturesque Mendip Hills. Cheddar is, of course, famous for its Gorge and cheese and is within easy commuting distance of Bristol, Bath, Wells and Weston-super-Mare. The Academy serves a predominantly rural area and receives students from Cheddar and the surrounding villages.

### Academy Aims

The Academy's mission is: *'To get the best out of everyone'*, and to achieve this we aim:

- ❑ To strive constantly for excellence.
- ❑ To make effective learning the focus of the Academy.
- ❑ To teach in a way that both inspires and challenges each student to become responsible for their own learning.
- ❑ To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which is relevant to students now and in their adult lives.
- ❑ To promote an understanding of the meaning, significance and values of the Christian faith.
- ❑ To promote an active partnership between the Academy, parents, the communities of the Cheddar Valley, and our international partners.
- ❑ To foster a caring and orderly environment for learning in which every student can feel secure and valued as an individual.
- ❑ To provide equal opportunities for all.
- ❑ To value and professionally develop all staff.
- ❑ To promote responsible citizenship and lifelong learning.

## **Exam Results 2011**

In 2011, our students achieved fantastic examination results at both GCSE and 'A' Level.

At GCSE, a record-breaking 91% of students achieved five or more grades A\* to C, with 74% achieving five grades A\* to C including English and Maths. The overall pass rate was 99.7%, with 32% of these being awarded the top grades of A\*/A.

At 'A' Level, the pass rate was 98% with over one quarter of all these being awarded the top grades of A\*/A. At AS Level, Year 12 students attained a record overall pass rate of 89%, and over 60% of all grades awarded were at grade C or above with a total of 104 grade A's.

## **Ofsted Inspection 2010**

Kings was inspected by Ofsted in February 2010 when the overall judgment was Outstanding.

*"One student summed up The Kings of Wessex as 'amazing' and inspection findings endorse this view. It is an exceptional school with excellent performance".*

The Church of England inspection (SIAS) in March 2010 also judged Kings to be Outstanding.

## **Academy Leadership Group**

The Academy Leadership Group is composed of the Headteacher, a Deputy Head, four Assistant Heads and the Bursar with the following responsibilities

- **Headteacher – Strategic Leadership**
- **Deputy Headteacher – Student Services and Safeguarding**
- **Assistant Headteacher – Curriculum and e-learning**
- **Assistant Headteacher - Examinations and Assessment**
- **Assistant Headteacher - Teaching and Learning/Continuing Professional Learning**
- **Assistant Headteacher - Sixth Form**
- **Bursar - Finance and Premises**

In addition, the ALG has a number of shared responsibilities that include policy formulation and evaluating the work of the Academy. ALG are linked with Year Leaders and Subject Leaders for the purpose of communication and accountability, and monitor the work of the Academy through performance data, subject reviews, lesson observations and the scrutiny of students' work.

ALG meet three times each week to plan and evaluate the work of the Academy.

## **Academy Development Planning**

The Academy has a two-year development planning cycle.

An opportunity is provided for all staff, students and parents to contribute to the Academy Development Plan. Priorities are also informed by the outcomes of inspection, performance data, and academy self-evaluation. All Subject Teams are required to prepare an Action Plan that reflects the Academy Development Plan priorities and is monitored by the Academy Leadership Group. A termly report is submitted to the Governing Body on the implementation of the Academy Development Plan.

The priorities of the current Academy Development Plan are as follows:

1. **Improving Standards of Achievement**
2. **Developing Outstanding Teaching and Learning through High Impact Learning**
3. **Ensuring the Efficient and Effective Operation of the Academy**
4. **Investing in our Teachers, Support Staff and Leaders**
5. **Building Confidence and Raising Aspirations for our Young People**

## **Teaching and Learning**

Effective Teaching and Learning is central to the work of Kings. Teachers make an enormous difference to the success, or otherwise, of students, and it is for this reason that we are constantly striving to improve. The Academy has a Teaching Framework to which all staff are expected to adhere, setting out the minimum expectations in terms of pedagogy and classroom management.

High Impact Learning is an integral part of Teaching and Learning and teachers deploy various strategies to make lessons exciting and enlightening, including a series of key rings. A team of Learning Coaches work closely with colleagues to support them and enhance good practice.

Good planning is central to good teaching and all teaching staff plan their work on a daily basis on their laptop identifying learning objectives, teaching and learning activities and homework.

Sharing good practice is important and all Subject Team meetings commence with a brief opportunity for colleagues to share an aspect of their teaching that they feel went particularly well. All teachers are involved in peer observation and are required to observe the lessons of colleagues across the Academy.

## **Curriculum**

All students benefit from a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum up to the age of 16. Our young people are entering a world marked by rapid technological, globalisation and social change, and in their adult lives even greater demands will be made on them needing adaptability, self-reliance, confidence and high standards of education.

The curriculum is organised within Subject Teams with support provided by Learning Support. There are five 60 minute lessons in the academy day, as well as a 20 minute assembly/tutor period.

Students in Year 9 study the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Design Technology (*either Food Technology or Product Design*), Information Technology, French or German (or both), Geography, History, Religious Education, Physical Education, Art, Drama, Music, Personal, Social and Health Education, and PSHE/Citizenship.

Year 9 commence their GCSE courses in English, Maths, Science and Religious Education. In Science approximately 70% of students study Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate Sciences. The remainder take dual award Science or BTEC Sciences.

All Year 9 students commence a two year course in GCSE Design Technology and DIDA Information Technology which is completed at the end of Year 10.

In Year 10 and 11 students choose three additional GCSE or BTEC courses from a list that includes: Art, Textiles, Music, Business Studies, PE, Sport, Music, Drama, Performing Arts, French and German.

Students who are capable of progressing to University are advised to take a Humanities Subject (History or Geography) and a Modern Language (French or German) to be able to achieve the English Baccalaureate.

All students study non accredited courses in PSHE/Citizenship and Physical Education in Years 9 to 11.

## **The Sixth Form**

Students in the Sixth Form at Kings can study the following AS Level and 'A' Level courses:

- Art
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- History
- ICT
- Law
- Mathematics

- Computer Studies
- Design Technology
- Drama and Theatre Studies
- BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Performing Arts
- English Language
- English Literature
- French
- Further Mathematics
- Geography
- German
- Media Studies
- Music
- Photography
- Physical Education and Sport Science
- Physics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies & Philosophy
- Sociology
- Textiles

Students can also undertake a Sports Leadership Award.

Year 12 students have the opportunity to complete the Extended Project Qualification as an extra A2 Level qualification. Each student is assigned a Staff Supervisor, and completes a 5,000 word dissertation over the summer holidays. Whilst the Extended Project is entirely optional for the students, they are actively encouraged to undertake the important independent study project. Supervisors meet with the students, but are not required to mark the dissertation. It is the students' responsibility to organise the meetings and to complete their dissertation.

The Sixth Form have their own Common Room for use at free time. In addition to the Sixth Form Study Room, students also make use of our Learning Resources Centre for private study. A large number of Year 11 students chose to continue their education in the Sixth Form and a growing number of students are opting to transfer into the Sixth Form from other local Schools and Academies.

The students play an important role in the Academy, organising the student council, charity events and attending academy events. The Head Boy, Head Girl and Senior Student Team are selected every year from the Sixth Form.

### **Assessment and Reporting**

All students are assessed at regular intervals by their teachers and the assessment pattern is dominated largely by public examinations. GCSE, A/S and A2 Level examinations take place in November, January, March and June and there are also a limited number of internal examinations in some years.

Students in all year groups are made aware of their target grades at the beginning of the year and receive regular assessment feedback from their teachers in the form of predicted grades.

All teachers record assessment data electronically using SIMS Assessment Manager. This "electronic mark book" is also used to distribute prior attainment data and to support the monitoring of students' progress against their targets.

### **Celebrating Achievement**

Celebrating our students' achievements is important at Kings. Throughout the academic year, students receive merits for their work and contribution to Kings leading to Special Achievement Awards: Bronze (*five merits*), Silver (*15 merits*), Gold (*25 merits*), Platinum (*50 merits*) and Double Platinum (*100 merits*).

Praise Post cards are also sent home to parents to celebrate students' work and end of term presentation assemblies are held to celebrate students for their achievement and contribution in academic and enrichment subjects, colours and attendance.

A special highlight on the academic calendar is the annual Awards Evening in September, when we welcome parents, Governors and friends of the Academy to celebrate our students' success, which is attended by all

staff. This year's VIP Guest Speaker was Stephen Moss, author, former BBC TV producer, lecturer, broadcaster and naturalist.

## **Setting Arrangements**

In Years 9 – 11, students are set according to their ability in Maths, Science and, to a more limited extent, in English and Languages.

The rest of the Year 9 curriculum is taught in mixed ability groups. In Years 10 and 11 students are taught in groups that are determined by their option choices.

## **Staffing**

Kings' greatest asset is, of course, its staff and we are committed to supporting fully both teachers and non-teachers. The Academy currently has over 80 teachers organised in Subject Teams and Year Groups and over 40 support staff across the Academy.

Staff enjoy positive and supportive relationships, and a teamwork ethos. An induction programme is provided for all new staff, and there is a strong commitment to professional development. All teaching staff are provided with a laptop computer.

Job descriptions are issued to all staff and are reviewed as appropriate. All teaching staff are involved in Performance Management with an annual meeting to review and set targets. Meetings are held regularly with a weekly briefing for all teaching staff, half termly Subject Leader meetings, followed by team meetings and Year Leader meetings.

All staff appointed to The Kings of Wessex are expected to support the aims of the Academy and uphold high our professional standards. The Academy has a staff dress policy and is a non-smoking environment.

## **Continuing Professional Learning**

We are committed to the professional development of all staff and provide training, which supports colleagues at all levels of the organisation in their work. Staff who are new to the Academy are supported by an Induction Programme and are assigned an individual mentor.

A wide range of Continuing Professional Learning sessions is on offer to support staff in improving their teaching, assessment and leadership skills. These include external training, in-house training, visits to other Schools and Academies and time off timetable to work with colleagues. A Continuing Professional Learning programme by teachers for teachers runs throughout the year in twilight sessions.

The Academy has a strong commitment to leadership training through programmes that include NCSL Leading from the Middle and NPQH.

Kings works in partnership with five other Somerset Academies to provide joint training and professional development opportunities.

## **Academy Evaluation**

The work of the Academy is evaluated by the Academy Leadership Group (ALG) and Subject Leaders Team. Performance data is monitored on an on-going basis. All teaching staff receive data that shows the Value Added progress made by students in their teaching groups. ALG undertake reviews involving lesson observations, scrutiny of students work, and discussion with students. This helps to inform priorities for future work, and also helps to monitor the implementation and impact of new initiatives.

Subject Leaders complete individual Team Evaluations, undertaking lesson observations, student voice and scrutiny of work. This information is then discussed with their ALG Link and contributes towards the evaluation of the Academy.

## **Welfare and Guidance**

To ensure students develop their full potential, it is vital that they are given the support and guidance that enables them to get the best out of their learning. On entry to the Academy, the students are placed in mixed ability tutor groups, in which they generally remain throughout the Academy.

This academic year, there are currently ten forms of entry in Years 9, 10, and 11, each with a Tutor who looks after day-to-day matters and monitors the progress of students.

A Year Leader has overall responsibility for each year group in the Lower Academy and the Assistant Headteacher is responsible for the Sixth Form. Each year has its own student committee and representatives are elected to sit on the School Council. The School Council is an excellent student voice for the Academy and meets every half term, providing an opportunity for the discussion and debate of Academy issues. Successful projects to date include a road safety campaign, a green transport debate and additions to uniform.

All students follow a programme of PSHE/Citizenship (Personal, Social and Health Education) to help them cope with the demands of life in and out of the Academy. The course includes areas such as Health Education, Sex Education, Study Skills and Careers Education and Guidance.

The successful Mentoring Plus programme supports all Year 11 students. Mentors meet with students five times during the academic year to review progress and set new learning targets. The Mentor liaises directly with subject staff to ensure students are kept on track and that any missing work is caught up. Any student falling behind, or needing additional support attends compulsory extra sessions at lunchtime and after school.

## **ICT**

The Network Manager and team of ICT Technicians, and Web Developer oversee the network, which provides access for administration and curriculum use.

Our Virtual Learning Environment “The Kings Learning Platform” (KLP) provides teachers and students with anytime, anywhere browser access to online educational resources and services. Through the KLP, people can share their ideas and knowledge, and communicate and collaborate more easily.

Teachers can set homework and add resources which students can then access from home. Students can also save their work onto the KLP whilst in the Academy and access it at home.

All subject areas have access to ICT provision with computer suites serving most subjects. The majority of classrooms are equipped with data projectors and Kings has over 500 PCs. Extensive use is made of ICT for both teaching and learning across all subjects.

All teaching staff have a laptop computer linked to a wireless network, used for lesson planning, registering attendance, recording assessment data and communication by email.

## **Careers Education and Guidance**

A dedicated Careers Adviser works with our young people to provide careers information, advice and guidance. The emphasis in Year 9 is on helping young people to make decisions and explore career opportunities. Whilst in Year 10 students undertake a period of work experience in the Summer Term and work in the Academy focuses on helping students to prepare.

Throughout Year 11 students receive guidance and support in helping them to make decisions about Post-16 options. In the Sixth Form the emphasis is on helping young people through the application process for Higher Education or in entering the workplace.

Careers education also forms part of our PSHE/Citizenship Programme and young people receive individual support and guidance in response to their specific needs.

## **Facilities**

The Academy is sited on an attractive campus close to the centre of the village of Cheddar, with views across the Mendip Hills and Somerset Levels. Each Subject Team has its own suite of rooms with a teacher planning room, and there are specialist facilities in Design Technology, Science, Languages, Art, Music, and ICT.

The Academy has a state-of-art Kings Theatre and modern Learning Resources Centre, which houses the Academy library and is equipped with a suite of computers and study area.

Also on the campus is a large sports centre 'Kings Fitness and Leisure' which is owned and operated by the Academy. With a membership of 1000 the busy centre provides a wide range of classes and access to facilities which include a Sports Hall, Studios, squash courts, fitness suite and swimming pool.

'IT for the Terrified' a community drop in IT centre is sited on campus along with Cheddar Arts@Kings Theatre, who run a lively programme of theatre, film, music and comedy events. Both are run by a team of committed volunteers.

## **Finance**

As an Academy, The Kings of Wessex manages its own annual budget in excess of £5 million, with funding for capitation devolved to Subject Teams on a formula basis and Subject Leaders are responsible for its effective management.

The Academy has been successful in attracting significant additional funding over recent years.

## **Parent Partnership**

The Academy works very closely with parents and is committed to an effective partnership for the benefit of our students. Parents are welcomed into the Academy and we are in regular contact with home to report on progress and broader academy issues. Tutors phone home to parents at the start of term to inform of tutees' progress and keep in close contact during the year.

Every half term parents are kept informed through our newsletter, *The Kings' Messenger*, which is also available on the academy website, along with other news stories.

## **Parent Teaching Association (PTA)**

The Parent Teacher Association is very active at Kings, and provides valuable support and an important link between the Academy and the Parent Body. The PTA gives generously to Subject Teams and raises money from providing refreshments and raffles at academy events and donations by parents to the Enrichment Fund.

## **Learning Support Department**

Our Learning Support Department provides excellent support for our young people, and is based in a dedicated support room, well equipped with computers and support materials. In addition, there are two separate therapy rooms with facilities for delivering physiotherapy programmes.

Students identified as requiring support may have access to the following, depending on their level of need:

- In-class support
- Withdrawal to the Learning Support Department to develop basic skills
- Paired Reading, which is well supported by our Sixth Form students
- Individual programmes

Where required, a diagnostic assessment, using a wide range of standardised tests, may be undertaken to inform teaching and plan the way forward.

There is opportunity for students to attend lunchtime study support sessions in the Learning Support to help complete homework and catch-up on coursework.

The Department was recently successful in achieving Dyslexia Friendly Schools Re-Accreditation.

### **Resource Base for Hearing Support**

The Resource Base provides specialist support to students with hearing difficulties and the staff work with students to develop their speech and language skills and consolidate the content of their main lessons to enable them to achieve their full potential at Kings.

The Resource Base is linked closely with other bases at Weare Academy First School and Hugh Sexey Middle School and is supported by Somerset Hearing Support Team. Students spend the majority of their time in main lessons, sometimes with additional staff support. On occasions, they are withdrawn from main lessons to work within the Resource Base.

### **Enrichment Activities**

Kings has a wonderful tradition of providing students with an exciting programme of enrichment activities, ranging from sports, to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and a Kings and Queens News Team. There are termly musical concerts and two annual productions involving a large cast of students. This academic year, the main production will be an exciting performance of Road Dahl's '*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*'. In the Summer Term Year 9 students perform their own production, and last year gave a wonderful rendition of a reduced version of Shakespeare's '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*' in the Kings Theatre.

In the Autumn Term Year 9 are introduced to the enrichment programme at the Freshers' Fayre and also enjoy a Sports and Arts Taster Day.

Enrichment Leaders for English, Maths, Design Technology and Science lead a variety of exciting activities throughout the academic year.

International visits have included France, Disneyland Paris, Germany, New York, Poland and South Africa.

The Academy has a House system with four Houses: *Avalon, Camelot, Lyonesse and Tintagel*, which operate on a vertical basis. There are inter-house competitions with awards presented each term for the winning houses.

It is expected that all staff will assist in providing enrichment opportunities for our students.

### **Cheddar Valley Partnership**

The Cheddar Valley operates a tier education system and within seven miles of the Academy there are nine First Schools (aged 4-9) and two Middle Schools (ages 9-13) that all feed into The Kings of Wessex Academy. The Schools work closely together to give children in the area continuity in their education from five to 18.

The 12 Headteachers meet regularly to plan provision within the Cheddar Valley and operate together as an effective team.

Subject co-ordination is excellent, with teachers involved in an established programme of cross-phase curriculum planning. The Cheddar Valley Schools come together on occasion for joint training days and opportunities are also provided to involve students in shared activities.

The Cheddar Valley Schools celebrated thirty years of the successful Cheddar Valley education system in 2007 by fundraising together to raise money for Schools in the Masindi District of Uganda, Africa, working with the international charity Link Community Development.

## **Teacher of Maths**

We are seeking to appoint a Teacher of Maths to join our team from September 2012.

We are looking for an enthusiastic Teacher of Maths who is passionate about their subject and who has a commitment to running enrichment activities and would wish to make a real difference to the lives of our young people. As one of the core subjects Maths enjoys good exam results and a large number of students chose to study Maths and/or Further Maths at 'A' Level.

The Department is involved in some exciting and innovative teaching and learning, and provides inspiring enrichment opportunities to enhance students' learning experience, including visiting speakers, trips and visits and recently celebrated over 250,000 hits of their online problem-solving demonstrations on YouTube. There is also opportunity each year for students who excel to take the Maths Challenge.

## **The Maths Department**

- There are currently seven full-time members and one part-time member of staff working specifically with borderline GCSE students, including the Subject Leader for Maths.
- The Maths Department is accommodated within dedicated classrooms equipped with data projectors, and also shares an IT suite with the English Department.
- The Department currently follows the AQA Exam Board at both GCSE and 'A' Level.
- Since this academic year, Year 9 are taught six lessons a fortnight, Years 10 and 11 seven and Years 12 and 13 eight lessons a fortnight (shared between two teachers).
- Classes are taught in ability sets in Years 9, 10 and 11.

## **Main Responsibilities of the Post**

- To keep up-to-date with developments in the teaching of Maths.
- To plan lessons and sequences of lessons.
- To teach according to the educational needs of the students using a range of strategies.
- To make use of a range of resources in the classroom.
- To provide regular opportunities for the use of ICT in learning.
- To make effective use of homework and other opportunities for learning outside the classroom.
- To ensure all marking of work is completed at regular intervals.
- To supervise and where practical teach students whose teacher is not available.
- To use information about prior attainment to set targets for students.
- To mark work carried out by students.
- To use assessment to monitor student progress.
- To report to parents and staff on student progress.
- To maintain high standards of behaviour and discipline dealing promptly and effectively with misbehaviour and bullying.
- To undertake supervisory duties.
- To promote the general progress and well-being of students.
- To provide guidance and advice to students on educational and social matters.
- To maintain records of and report on the personal and social needs of students.
- To register and monitor student attendance.
- To communicate and consult with the parents of students.
- To take responsibility for professional development and use the outcomes to improve teaching and learning.
- To participate in arrangements for Performance Management.
- To attend meetings as required.
- To evaluate your work as a teacher.
- To participate in arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.

- To safeguard the health and safety of students.

*All posts at The Kings of Wessex Academy require an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check*

### **Your Application:**

If you wish to apply for this post, please complete the Teacher Application form and Equal Opportunities Recruitment monitoring form, which are both available on our website.

You are also asked to include a letter describing your experience to date, professional strengths and what contribution you believe you could make to the post of Teacher of Maths here at Kings.

**FAO: The Headteacher**

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**The closing date for applications is Monday 5 March 2012.**

*Thank you for your interest in this post and in our Academy.*