



**The Kings of Wessex Academy**

*Getting the best out of everyone*

# **Year 8 Open Evening**

## **Wednesday 12 October 2016**

You will have opportunity to look around our Academy, meet with staff and students and listen to a welcome given by our Headteacher.

The welcome will take place in the Main Hall at 7.00pm and will be repeated at 7.30pm.

### **We understand the transition for your child to The Kings of Wessex Academy is an important stage in their schooling.**

Whether your child is transferring from Fairlands or Hugh Sexey Middle Schools.

Or whether you are moving to the Cheddar Valley area. Or perhaps you are considering provision at Kings as an alternative to your child's current school...We understand this is an important transition for you and your child.

The Open Evening marks the beginning of an Induction Programme throughout this academic year so that we can ensure the move to the Upper School is as smooth as possible for you and your child. We work closely with both the Middle Schools and there is a series of parent information meetings during the year and also an Induction Day for all Year 8 students in July.

You can find out more about our Academy at the Open Evening on **Wednesday 12 October 2016**, which will commence with a brief introduction by myself, followed by an opportunity to visit our Subject Departments where you can meet our Subject Leaders.

In advance of the Open Evening, I would encourage you to browse our academy website, which will give you a flavour of life at Kings, and we are pleased to bring you some more information now...

The Kings of Wessex is an exceptional Academy for children aged 13-18, with 1200 students on roll, including a large and vibrant Sixth Form. Kings is a forward-thinking Academy, and we are proud of our traditional values, commitment to academic success, and excellent reputation within the community. We strive to foster a happy and caring environment in which children flourish with emphasis placed on learning, good behaviour and respect towards each other. We inspire our young people to "stand out from the crowd" in our globally competitive world and to be the best that they can be. Our most recent Ofsted inspection in March 2015 judged us to be Good and our SIAMS inspection judged Kings to be an Outstanding Church of England Academy.

*An Outstanding Church of England Academy*

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Our motto is 'To get the best out of everyone' and our examinations are amongst some of the best in the South West and place us in the **Top 100 schools in the country**. Indeed, this summer's GCSE results were a school record for Kings: our best ever! 82% of students were awarded five or more grades A\* - C and 76% achieved five or more Grades A\* - C including English and Maths. The overall pass rate was once again 99%, and a quarter were the top Grades A\*/A. Similarly, results at A level were outstanding and amongst some of the best in the country and the overall pass rate was 99% with more than 50% of our students awarded Grades A\*, A and B.

We are proud of our students and their achievements and inspire an ethos of enthusiasm for learning and hard work, supported by our team of dedicated and committed professional staff. We also work closely with our parents and continue to be grateful for all their support and encouragement behind the scenes at home.

After the hard work are celebrations. End of term achievement assemblies are a lovely occasion when students are recognised for their accomplishments and our annual Awards Evening in September is a highlight on the academy calendar, looking back on the last academic year when students are presented with their awards in front of parents, staff and friends of Kings. Beyond the classroom, there are more celebrations when Years 11 and 13 students don their party dresses and suits for their proms at an external venue, both of which are always sparkling events.

Students at Kings have an impressive record of gaining places at top universities, including Oxford and Cambridge and are supported in this process throughout the year with talks and conferences, led by both our Head of Sixth Form and Careers Adviser. Working with eight partner schools, Kings is part of HE+ (Higher Education Plus), a collaborative project developed by the University of Cambridge as part of the university's commitment to seek the brightest and best students from all backgrounds and encourage them to apply to research-led universities, such as Cambridge.

Pastoral support is an integral part of life at Kings and students have a Tutor and Year Leader who are always willing to meet with parents by appointment and help with any issues. Parents are provided with an annual A-Z handbook, which is an informative guide of academy policies to ensure consistency.

Kings has a strong and consistent rule that bullying is not tolerated in any form, and measures will always be taken in the unfortunate event that a student feels vulnerable.

Our team of Student Ambassadors play an active role in the life of the Academy in showing round visitors and are also involved in special projects, including creating the 'Thoughts for the Week'.

Students study a wide range of GCSE/BTEC courses. In Year 9 students begin a three-year Key Stage 4 GCSE curriculum. All students study English, Maths, Science and R.E. and choose History or Geography and French or German to qualify for the E-Bacc. Those students who need additional support in Maths and English do not study a Language. In addition, students choose three options from a list that includes Art, Craft and Design (GCSE), Business Studies (GCSE/BTEC First Award), Computer Science (GCSE), Cooking and Nutrition (GCSE), Design and Technology (GCSE), French (GCSE), Geography (GCSE), German (GCSE), History (GCSE), Information and Creative Technology (CiDA), Music (GCSE), Performing Arts (BTEC First Award), Physical Education (GCSE) and Textiles (GCSE). Students take non-examined course in Personal Social and Health Education.

Year 11 students work with a Mentor and benefit from six one-to-one meetings during the year in order to support them in achieving their best grades and feeling confident in their learning. Subject Teams run extra lunchtime and after school study sessions to give that further boost, and we also offer an extensive Easter Revision programme. Every year, the Headteacher and his Academy

Leadership Group meet with Years 11 and 12 for a one-to-one Futures Meeting, which motivate students in orientating them towards their goal after all their hard work and study. We also run a series of inspiring job talks thanks to parents and friends of Kings who talk to students about their career, which greatly encourage students.

To enhance student' learning, the Academy provides a wide range of exciting enrichment activities so that students can try something new or practise a favourite interest. There are termly music concerts and annual Drama and Performing Arts productions that involve many students. Last year, students performed the lively production of *"Guys and Dolls."*

Many students take up the challenge of the highly successful Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and enjoy other clubs, sporting sessions, trips and visits locally and overseas. Recent trips include the Operation Wallacea Biology trip to Mexico, the Auschwitz concentration camps in Poland; the Battlefields of Northern France and Belgium, and Language study trips to France and Germany - and closer to home trips to Bristol Zoo; as well as art and theatre trips and a top secret trip to Bletchley Park. *To name but a few...*

We remain very grateful for the work of our community champions – not least our PTA, the Mendip Rotarians, Star Reader volunteers, Cheddar Arts@Kings Theatre and other members of the public who share their experience and knowledge with our students.

We work very closely with the other 11 Cheddar Valley Schools and the Headteachers meet every term to ensure a smooth transition to the benefit of all the children. In September 2016 the Academy joined together with seven other Cheddar Valley Schools to form a Multi Academy Trust called the Wessex Learning Trust. This encourages a true sense of our young people growing in their education.

A big and exciting annual highlight is when students and staff join forces for Charities Week towards the end of the Autumn Term plotted by the Head Boy and Girl and Senior Student Team. Last year's action-packed week on the theme of *"On the Box"* when students raised over £10,000 with a unique extravaganza of fun fundraising activities held at break and lunchtime. Favourites fun fundraising events to raise money for the students' chosen charities are pie eating, waxing, egg throwing, staff pantomime, auction, as well as the great Kings tradition...Rock and Roll years.

The Christian dimension flourishes through our lively assembly programme, and active Christian Union Engage led by our Christian Leader. Harvest, Christmas and Easter church services are held at St Andrew's Church here in Cheddar – as well as the over 100 year-old traditional Ascension Day service, which celebrates our Year 13 students as they prepare to take their next steps symbolically reflected in climbing the church tower to represent Jesus' ascension. Meanwhile, the Year 9 students feast on sticky buns down below in the vicarage garden.

Our students benefit from fantastic facilities at Kings, which we are constantly maintaining and improving to ensure a stimulating, secure and modern environment. Last year we opened the Kings Café – a large, light dedicated space for students to eat the range of exciting meal options and which is proving to be very popular. Subjects are taught in specialist classrooms with state-of-the-art IT equipment, with the popular dual purpose keyboard/smart desks and students enjoy P.E. lessons in our on-site Kings Fitness and Leisure with modern changing rooms.

## **But, this is only a snapshot of Kings...**

We invite you to discover more for yourself when you visit on our Open Evening on **Wednesday 12 October 2016** when our staff and student ambassadors will be delighted to tell you more.

Should you wish to visit Kings during the school day, please contact our Main Office and they will be pleased to make an appointment.

Once again, we very much look forward to welcoming you to  
The Kings of Wessex Academy.