

ERASMUS DARWIN ACADEMY  
EXCELLENCE FOR ALL





*EXCELLENCE FOR ALL*



# WELCOME

I am delighted that you are considering Erasmus Darwin Academy as your child's secondary school. At Erasmus Darwin Academy every student has the right to learn and every teacher has the right to teach. Our Academy motto is 'Excellence for All' and we are passionate about providing a truly excellent education for all of our young people. Therefore, not only are students taught the academic knowledge and skills required to prepare them for examination success; they will be also given endless opportunities and huge encouragement to broaden their horizons and develop broader personal, social and emotional skills through participation in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, through the continual promotion of our core Academy values, students will be actively taught key life values such as manners, gratitude, appreciation and respect.

My pledge to our families is that we will do all that we can for every single child, every single day that they walk through our gates. Your children will always be at the heart of every decision that we make and we will endeavour to provide your child with the best well-rounded education possible to ensure they are ready for the challenges that life presents. Erasmus Darwin Academy continues to be a high performing schools locally, regionally and indeed nationally. This is down to our incredibly committed and dedicated staff who go the extra mile for our children on a daily basis.

We are passionate about working with all of our families and we understand that strong relationships between the school and families are crucially important. Thank you for taking the time to read our prospectus and attached information and I look forward to welcoming you in September 2023.

Phil Walklate BSc (Hons) PGCE MA NPQH  
Headteacher





# ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Erasmus Darwin Academy, we are incredibly proud of our student outcomes. Our school trend over the last five years indicates that our students achieve significantly higher standards than national benchmarks for all key progress and attainment indicators. Our fantastic team of staff teach and support our students to achieve the aspirational targets we set for them. It is our student focussed curriculum, our high expectations, our dedicated subject leaders, our amazing staff and our supportive families that all contribute to our GCSE outcomes, which consistently feature in the top schools regionally (the top 10% of schools nationally). Furthermore, our student destinations highlight that they leave Erasmus Darwin Academy academically prepared for the next steps of their lives.



"THIS SCHOOL IS EXCELLENT. MY DAUGHTER IS IN YEAR 10 NOW AND WE HAVE BEEN NOTHING SHORT OF IMPRESSED BY EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS SCHOOL; FROM THE SPORTS AWARD ASSEMBLIES TO THE APPROACH OF ALWAYS CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO DO BETTER. WE HAVE RECOMMENDED EDA TO LOTS OF PEOPLE AND WE FEEL LUCKY THAT OUR DAUGHTER ATTENDS SUCH A FANTASTIC SCHOOL."

Parent





*"THE SCHOOL TRIPS THAT WE HAVE AT EDA ARE AMAZING. THEY SEEM GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY AND WE DON'T MISS OUT ON ANYTHING"*

*Sixth Form Student*



# BROADENING HORIZONS

Erasmus Darwin Academy offers all students an incredibly enriching learning experience beyond the daily classroom timetable. Our motto of 'Excellence For All' incorporates all the additional activities that any parent or carer could wish their child to experience during their school life. The Academy has an outstanding reputation for the highest levels of achievement in the performing arts, in the visual arts, music and in sport. Our annual production brings staff and students from all these areas together as they create memorable performances enjoyed by friends, family and the local community. At concerts and on other occasions, our bands and choirs are a showcase for musical talent. Furthermore, our specialist P.E. staff ensure that our teams are highly successful in a range of sports such as; football, rugby, handball, tennis, netball and rounders and we strongly encourage all students to participate in such extra-curricular activities.

Outdoor education and educational visits are an integral feature in the Academy calendar. All students in Year 8 are invited to participate in an amazing 'Challenge Week' at the Outward Bound Trust Centre in Snowdonia National Park in Wales. The annual Academy ski trip is also very popular amongst our students whilst visits to places such as New York, Iceland, Eastern Europe, Austria, Paris, Italy and the Azores have recently featured in our full Academy visits calendar. In addition, many subjects offer visits and trips within their curriculum offer.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is well established and increasingly popular with students from Year 9 onwards and we teach the value of community service and charitable fundraising by providing our students with opportunities to be actively involved in making a real difference, with students able to reach Gold Award status.







# CULTURE AND ETHOS

We believe that a fundamental factor for our ongoing success is that we have extremely high expectations of both students and staff, within an incredibly friendly, caring and nurturing environment where we want every individual to flourish and succeed.

We explicitly teach students how we expect them to behave and consider that the behaviour curriculum is as important as the Academic Curriculum for preparing students for their future.

On a daily basis, via the implementation of our 'EDA Way', we expect everyone in our Academy to demonstrate our Academy values, which follow the Olympic and Paralympic values. Our key value of Excellence is underpinned and supported by the other Olympic and Paralympic values of Respect, Friendship, Equality, Determination, Courage and Inspiration. By adopting and trying to embody these Olympic values, we pursue 'Excellence for All' in a way which sustains positive and healthy relationships between all members of the school community.

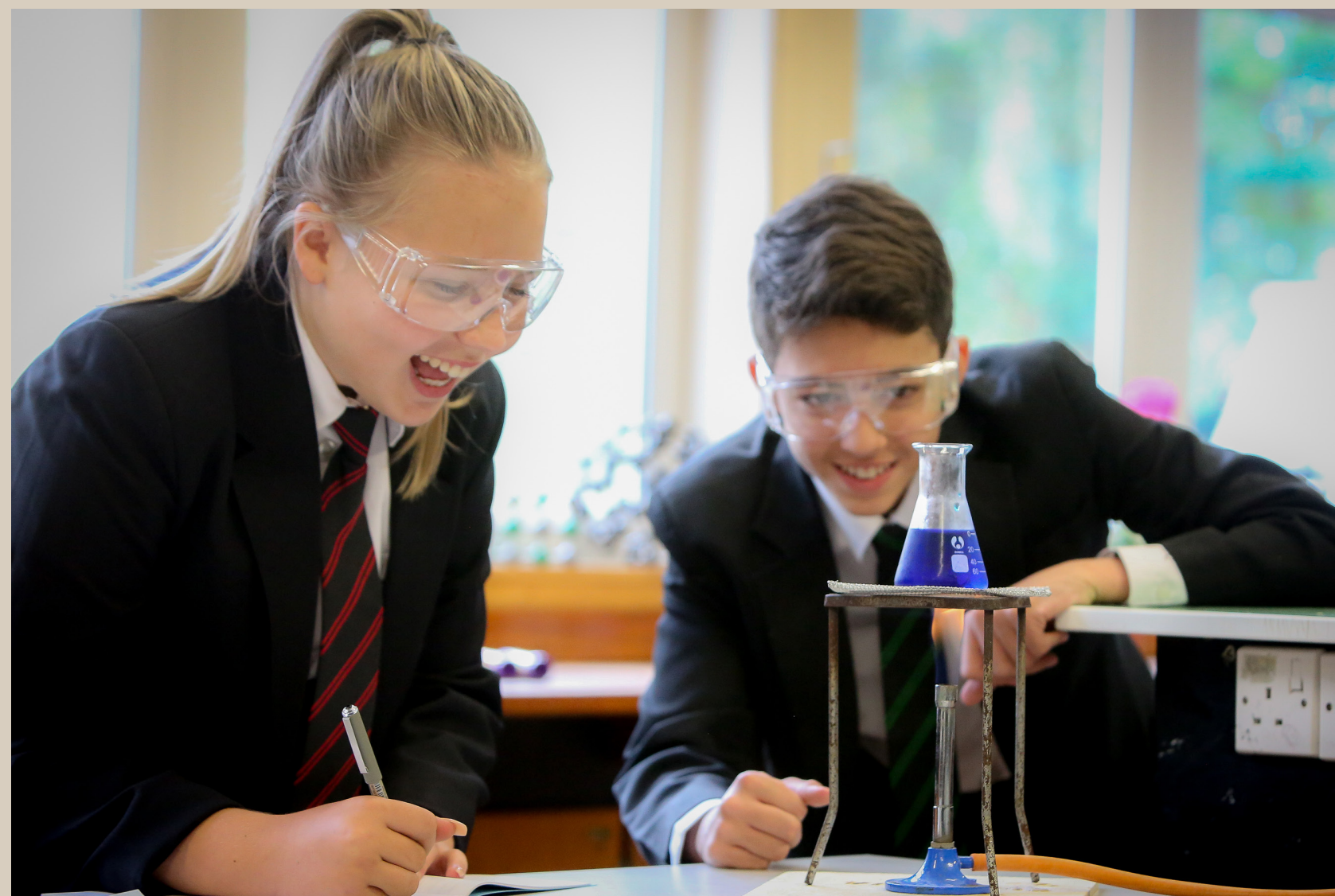
We recognise our students achievements through the Olympic Rewards system, which is based upon and reinforces our Academy values. The active promotion of these values does not only benefit the learning of the students, but more importantly shapes them into adults with excellent interpersonal skills and strong moral characters. In doing this, we seek to inspire and equip our students to become productive members of society who make the world a better place.

We set the highest of standards for everyone at the Academy with regards to everyday appearance, manners, punctuality and organisation, which we believe to be the fundamental building blocks to a successful life. We refer to this as the 'EDA Way' and through our three key messages of Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Safe, we reinforce crucially important virtues and life-skills.



*"SEEING STAFF OUTSIDE THE GATES AS STUDENTS GO IN AND OUT IS SO REASSURING AS PARENTS. THIS MAKES ME FEEL THAT SCHOOL CARES ABOUT HOW THEIR STUDENTS ACT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL AS WELL AS INSIDE."*

Parent





*"THE SCHOOL'S ETHOS OF 'EXCELLENCE FOR ALL'  
AND THE QUALITY OF CARE STANDS OUT."*

*Ofsted report 2018*



## DEVELOPING FUTURE LEADERS

Erasmus Darwin Academy provides young people with a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills as future leaders. In Year 7 and Year 8 we recruit Peer Buddies to support Year 6 students on entry to their secondary education. In Year 10, we appoint Prefects to serve as positive role models and ambassadors in the Academy community. Prefects will often act as hosts at official functions, be present at Open Evening and support major Academy events, such as the annual production. Wherever possible, we use our students to promote the Academy for prospective students, often participating in supervised tours of the school.

When a student moves into our Sixth Form, the opportunities for leadership become more extensive. Our Head Boy and Head Girl lead our Sixth Form student leadership system; they address the students and staff in assemblies, speak publicly for the Academy in events such as Open Evening and promote academy values on a daily basis in school and in the community. We also use Year 12 students to be senior prefects and support the Academy's day to day running.

Our Academy is proudly democratic within the student body. We have an elected Academy Council who represent their peers in half-termly meetings, led by the Sixth Form Leaders. The Academy Council is supported by three house councils, comprising at least one member from every tutor group in the Academy. This system ensures that the voice of every single child is heard and that our student body is actively involved in decision making within the Academy.



# ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Our Academy is part of a vibrant local community and we seek to engage positively with our neighbours. Students who join the Academy in Year 7 have arrived from over thirty different primary schools and we pride ourselves in fostering good relationships with each school. For example, our masterclasses, which are open to all students in local primary schools, continue to be increasingly popular. Furthermore, many of our staff regularly visit and engage primary schools to obtain a better understanding of how to work with our youngest students. We also offer a full induction week for incoming Year 7 through our 'EDA Starters Week (Summer School)'.

As soon as students enter Year 7, we teach them the value of serving the community. Many students choose to learn a musical instrument through our work with peripatetic teachers, which then opens doors to the wide range of choirs and bands at the Academy, which regularly perform at community events. Our annual school production continues to draw those from near and far with the incredible quality of our student performances. Through the dedication of our compassionate students and families, we are able to donate thousands of pounds annually to local and national charities. Often, ideas for fundraising and charity beneficiaries come from our student body, with our highly successful Christmas and Summer Fayres, being examples of this. These events allow students to develop both their enterprise skills and to make meaningful, positive difference to those in need. We also have strong links with members of the local business community who regularly come into the Academy to provide our young people with a variety of valuable career activities and experiences such as careers talks and work experience placements for older students.

Our Sixth Form students regularly assist with the Live at Home Scheme, where they engage positively with the older generation and teach meaningful skills that assist the elderly with day to day living. We also work very positively with our local parish church, with our Christmas concert continuing to be a most popular event in our calendar and more recently serving as a key partner in the Burntwood 'Be a Friend' scheme. Parents and alumni of the Academy have also played an essential role in supporting us through our volunteers programme. As a non-faith and fully inclusive school, we are keen to ensure that we promote our Academy as a place where all students, regardless of any difference, can flourish and achieve. We believe in a harmonious community and work hard to promote equality and eliminate any form of discrimination.



*"I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE STUDENTS WHO SUGGESTED A PRIDE AWARENESS DAY AND THANK EDA FOR RESPECTING THIS REQUEST"*

*Parent of Year 7 Student*







*"I WANT TO THANK EDA FOR THEIR  
CLEAR PLANS, AS A PARENT IT GIVES ME  
CONFIDENCE TO KNOW THAT MY CHILD'S  
LEARNING IS BEING TAKEN CARE OF"*

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*Parent of a Year 7 student*



# FACILITATING LEARNING

## **The Academy Curriculum**

We offer a varied and balanced yet ambitious curriculum which inspires and challenges our students and instils in them a lifelong love of learning. Our schemes of learning are pitched to the top and require our students to aim high. However, effective subject-specific support also ensures that all students can access our full curriculum offer and succeed in their learning. Our curriculum is incredibly well-planned and well-sequenced, with regular checkpoints and assessments which evaluate whether students require further support with their next steps.

At the heart of all subjects is our continual development of literacy, oracy and numeracy, which aims to ensure that all students can access our ambitious curriculum. Reading is tracked and reported in Years 7-10 and intervention groups are created for appropriate students as we recognise the importance of our young people becoming 'word and definition rich'. We are proud to say all students receive dedicated Personal Development lessons, covering age appropriate PSHE, Careers and Citizenship.

## **Key Stage 3**

In Years 7-9, students follow a curriculum consisting of a wide range of different subjects, which follows the National Curriculum where applicable. All students follow a timetable comprising of English, Mathematics, Science, Modern Foreign Languages (French or German), Geography, History, Design Technology, ICT, Art, Music, Drama, Physical Education, Religious Education and Personal Development.

## **Key Stage 4**

In Years 10 and 11, students follow a two-year course in the vast majority of their examination subjects. Students study GCSE Courses in English, Maths, Science (Combined or Triple) and Religious Studies. In addition, students also study Personal Development and core Physical Education. Students are also provided with the opportunity to study a Modern Foreign Language, History, Geography or Computer Science. Students are able to exercise an element of free choice during the options process and can opt for further EBacc subjects or any other GCSE subjects such as Art, Business Studies, Music, Photography, Design Technology, Food and Nutrition, Social Sciences, Sociology, BTEC Sport, BTEC IT and Physical Education. These GCSE courses are also complemented with Vocational BTEC Courses in varied subjects such as Drama.

## **Key Stage 5**

In Years 12 and 13, our A Level Curriculum is offered based on student demands for courses. We offer an extensive range of A-Levels with an increasing number of BTEC National qualification in addition to other 'Level 3' courses, or A-Level equivalent. In addition to studying for qualifications, students take part in an extensive non-qualification enrichment programme, which includes Careers based provision looking beyond Sixth Form, with tailored provision for those students who are applying to university as well as support for those who are seeking to take an apprenticeship/employment route. We also offer age appropriate Personal Development is delivered via the tutorial programme, which is delivered by senior staff.

## **Homework**

For the majority of subjects, homework at the Academy revolves around the principle of retrieval practice. Many subjects often provide a Knowledge Organiser which reflects the current curriculum content, which students are asked to recall. Parents are also provided with guidance on how to support students in their learning. For more details, please access the school website.



# OUR SIXTH FORM

Students who continue to study at Erasmus Darwin Academy in the Sixth Form can access a wide range of courses, including A-Levels, BTEC Nationals and Level 3 Applied Diplomas as well as a variety of non-qualification courses which enrich the students' experiences and develop wider employability skills. The A-Level curriculum is organised in consultation with students, and it includes weekly Personal Development tutorials, sessions to improve personal and study skills, careers education and guidance which assist students in applications for higher education, training or employment options. In addition, our Sixth Formers take advantage of opportunities to extend their learning through work experience, community service, Duke of Edinburgh or other worthwhile activities. We are proud of the exceptional contribution that Sixth Formers make to the wider life of the Academy: they are superb role models for younger students and wonderful young leaders who give back so much to our Academy.



*'WE RECOGNISE THE SUPPORT OUR CHILD HAS BEEN GIVEN BY EDA WHEN TIMES WERE DIFFICULT. OUR CHILD IS FACING YEARS 12 & 13 WITH A NEW CONFIDENCE, OPTIMISM AND SPIRIT!'*

*Parent of student in Year 12*





# FINAL THOUGHTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

Erasmus Darwin Academy was one of the first schools in Staffordshire to become an Academy, converting in July 2011. And, as part of this process, we proudly adopted the school motto of 'Excellence for All' as a statement of our intent to provide the very best education for every single young person we have the honour of working with. And since then, we have worked incredibly hard to live up to this motto, securing sustained improvement and achieving exceptionally high standards in all areas of school life. We have also worked hard to make sure that we go about our business of delivering 'Excellence for All' in the right way; i.e. by retaining high expectations of each other whilst being genuinely friendly, encouraging, caring and supportive.

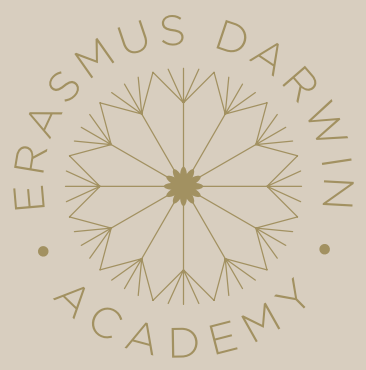
I am incredibly proud of the school that we have become and there are many accolades and indicators of our success that I could mention. However, I would just like to draw your attention to a few things that I am particularly proud of:

- We have become firmly established as a high performing school, regularly in the top ten percent of the country for both attainment and progress.
- We are regularly approached by the regional press to feature in their 'Elite Schools' publications.
- We have been asked to feature in national publications and contribute to national education forums.
- We regularly and actively demonstrate that we are a school which has the capacity to help others improve.
- We pride ourselves in our high quality and extensive extra-curricular provision.
- We have gained recognition for our work with the DofE Award Scheme and the Outward Bound Trust.
- Our retention rate for teaching staff is incredibly high, thus providing stability and quality in the classroom.
- Parent survey results show exceptionally high satisfaction rates.
- Pupil attendance rates have consistently been above national benchmarks, showing that our young people really enjoy belonging to and attending the Academy.

Since I arrived in 2010, I feel truly privileged to have been part of EDA's incredible journey as Vice Principal, Principal and now as Executive Headteacher of Primitas Learning Partnership, the Multi Academy Trust which is exponentially growing with more partner schools continuing to join us.

The Academy has clearly come a long way in the last ten years and we are now extremely well-placed to enter the next, exciting phase of our development by being part of Multi-Academy Trust which has a clear vision of "enabling and empowering schools to work together to provide the kind of education that our children need and deserve." Indeed, I am genuinely excited about the positive benefits and exciting opportunities that we are seeking for our students, staff and the local community by this venture.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this prospectus and for considering EDA for your child's secondary education.



Mark Maydew  
Executive Headteacher





