

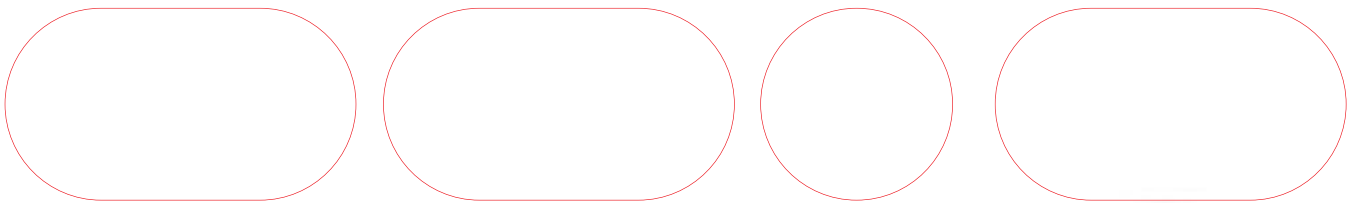
Darwen Aldridge  
Community Academy



...realise  
your  
potential

# Welcome to our

## Message from the Principal



Thank you for your interest in Darwen Aldridge Community Academy. I am very pleased to be able to introduce you to what I believe is a most exciting new development in education provision in the borough of Blackburn with Darwen.

The Academy opened on September 1st 2008. It is an independent non fee-paying school jointly funded by our Sponsor, Rod Aldridge and the Department for Children Schools and Families.

The main aim of the Academy is to provide the highest quality of education for students in the main school from Year 7 to Year 11 and in the new Sixth Form. However, the Academy is more than a new type of school. The Academy will also offer facilities and learning opportunities for engaging with the wider community, including the local business community.

Initially the new Academy is located in the buildings of the former Darwen Moorland High School. It is intended that the Academy will move to its new building adjacent to Darwen Town Centre during the academic year 2009-2010.

I hope that this booklet provides you with a taste of what the new Academy offers. If you would like to hear more about our plans, we will be holding briefing events

for prospective parents and wider community through the school year 2008-2009. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions about the Academy.

Brendan Loughran  
Principal  
**Darwen Aldridge Community Academy  
September 2008**



# Academy...

... where everyone is valued



## Message from Academy Sponsor



I am delighted that you are interested in securing a place for your child at Darwen Aldridge Community Academy. The Academy combines a fresh approach to teaching and learning with first class educational facilities.

I chose to become sponsor because I am fully committed to supporting young people and improving educational achievement and this is reflected in the work of my Foundation. Although Academy sponsors come from a wide range of backgrounds, they all bring a record of success in other fields, which they can apply in partnership with experienced educationalists and school managers. This provides the school with a refreshing and innovative approach to management and governance.

For me, the defining feature of an Academy is its "specialism", which the sponsor is able to choose. I have chosen to focus on entrepreneurship to inspire students to have the confidence

to take advantage of opportunities and to raise aspirations. Embedding entrepreneurship across all aspects of the curriculum will allow students to naturally progress towards shaping their own futures. This will encourage them to develop a sense of responsibility for all aspects of their lives post school – be that work, sport and the arts, relationships with family or the community. Success for me is about creating a positive environment where every student can realise their true potential.

I will take an active and ongoing interest in the future development of the Academy. Above all it is about benefiting the Darwen community and unlocking the talent of its young people.

Rod Aldridge  
**Academy Sponsor**  
**September 2008**



Our mission is



# clear...

...it is to transform children's education in Darwen

The Darwen Aldridge Community Academy encourages its students and staff, and members of the local community, to develop a passion for learning as well as an enterprising spirit. In addition, it seeks to create, develop and maintain an education that focuses emphatically on providing opportunities for success for all, recognising and celebrating the achievements of everyone in all aspects of life at the Academy. It particularly wants young people to

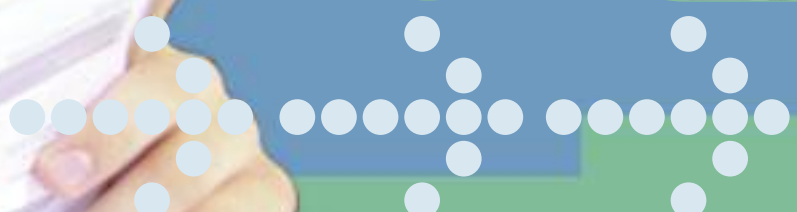
*recognise* the potential that they have, and then to *fulfil* that potential:

## REALISE YOUR POTENTIAL!

The Darwen Aldridge Community Academy will be a Centre of Excellence for entrepreneurial education. It is an inclusive Academy that provides for the students and citizens of Darwen continuous opportunities, in what will be a world-class, high quality environment for lifelong learning. The Academy's

students are committed, successful learners, who are proud, creative and self-confident, showing respect for themselves, the community and for others.

In addition, the Academy places considerable value not only on entrepreneurship, but also on sport and healthy living, partnership working, developing strong links with the community, and promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity.



An entrepreneur goes that **extra** mile

# Our Curriculum

## The Academy Curriculum

Students in the Academy follow the National Curriculum. Our 'core business' is teaching and learning and we ensure that this is of the highest standard. Some of the main differences noticed by students is in how the curriculum is structured, the regular assessment and emphasis on themes of entrepreneurship.

The Academy curriculum provides entrepreneurship both as a discrete subject and as a theme underpinning every area of the curriculum. In addition to the main specialism of entrepreneurship and the second specialism of sport, the following are strong themes in the structure and delivery of the rest of the curriculum:

- Numeracy and financial awareness (in particular through ICT and Mathematics)
- Literacy, communication and international themes

(in particular through English and Modern Languages)

- Creativity (In particular through Expressive and Performing Arts and the Humanities)
- Discovery, Research and Development (In particular through Technology and Science)

Students are supported to progress in each subject area at the rate that best suits them. One of our principles is that students take assessments 'when ready', rather than the traditional expectation of students being assessed when the exam system determines.

There are opportunities for students to progress through the programmes of study at an accelerated rate with early assessment and progression. With the new Sixth Form, there are progression opportunities to commence Level 3 (Advanced) qualifications in

year 11 or to enrich studies with further Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) qualifications.

In addition to the traditional academic curriculum, there are a range of vocational options available for all students as they progress through the Academy, and an emphasis on promoting participation in extra-curricular activities. Our aim is to provide a truly personalised education experience for every student in the Academy.

Learning often takes place in longer lessons or learning sessions. It would not be uncommon for a student's timetabled day to consist of just two extended learning sessions. The timetable is designed with several classes in a subject running at the same time, 'blocked' to enable staff to work creatively with students in terms of how learning sessions are structured and delivered. Student 'down-time' from

moving between lessons is at a minimum, removing any unnecessary distraction away from learning. Longer learning sessions are broken up by a morning break (breakfast) and an afternoon break (lunch) and students have the opportunity and dedicated space for recreational activity at these times. Every student is encouraged to participate in 'session three' of extra curricular or enrichment activity.

There is a dedicated space designated as the Integrated Learning Support Base in the Academy which provides a high level of care and support both within the base and in outreach work across the curriculum for those students with additional learning needs.

An entrepreneur is **determined to SUCCEED**, is not afraid of failing, remains positive throughout and will ultimately win through



... something for everyone

## Structure of the Academy Day

Session 1 (includes breakfast)	8.45	to	11.45
Personal tutorial/assembly	11.45	to	12.05
Session 2 (includes lunch)	12.05	to	15.15
Session 3 *	15.15	to	16.30

\*All students will be encouraged to participate in session three on two occasions per week

## Extra Curricular Activities

Our extra - curricular programme gives students a choice of opportunities which complements and extends their education. These range from sporting, musical, performing, cultural and community activities and form an integral part of the timetable. Field trips, visits and residential visits are planned as a regular feature of the students' education at the Academy.



# The Academy

As an Academy, we are a Specialist College. This means that we place an emphasis on our main specialisms and use them to continually drive up standards of attainment, to promote positive attitudes to lifelong learning and to use them as a theme through which we engage with our 'Family of Schools' and the wider local and business community.

Our main emphasis is through the unique specialism of entrepreneurship. Through this, we promote an attitude in all

who attend the Academy that revolves around a positive approach, a determination to succeed and to achieve the highest standards in any and every area of learning and life.

The Academy develops knowledge, skills and understanding about enterprise activity to support the development of future business and social entrepreneurs. All students experience entrepreneurship themes

delivered across the curriculum, study aspects of entrepreneurship starting in lower school and build and maintain an entrepreneurship portfolio of their experiences, activities and projects undertaken throughout their time in the Academy.

We recognise that there are many aspects to entrepreneurship, but the following framework of six themes is continually emphasised with students in their learning:



# Specialism – Entrepreneurship



**Determination** - being prepared to see a task through to the best of your ability



**Creativity** - continually looking for innovation and original ideas



**Problem solving** - identifying problems in advance and finding the solutions to them



**Risk taking** - calculating risk and evaluating how much risk to take



**Teamwork** - the ability to work with and lead others



**Passion** - putting your heart and soul into something you believe in

Like the existing Business and Enterprise Specialist Colleges, we also place an emphasis on Business Studies and related courses, Numeracy and ICT. However, we also emphasise Literacy, Communication Skills, and an awareness of global issues. We place a particular emphasis on Social Entrepreneurship, for instance creating many opportunities for active citizenship and volunteering as activities where young people take responsibility for the development and well-being of the Academy and their wider communities. We have space designated as an Entrepreneurship Centre in the Academy which is the host for school and community activity, under the brand name of **'DARWENCREATES...'**. Ultimately, we hope to have a national profile for the promotion of entrepreneurship in all schools across the country.

The second specialism that has been chosen for the Academy is sport. This combines well with the philosophy and attitude of an entrepreneurial approach in terms of promoting enjoyment, a determination to succeed, high quality individual performance, teamwork and a positive attitude to healthy living.

An entrepreneur identifies what is **needed**, provides it and then **refuses** to accept failure



# Highest levels of

## Pastoral Care for students

In order to ensure the welfare of students and in supporting them to progress academically in the Academy, we recognise that there need to be in place the highest levels of care and attention.

All teaching staff naturally offer high levels of pastoral care and they all have responsibility as form tutors, offering regular contact and support for students through a daily tutor period.

Teaching staff are assisted in their pastoral role by a variety of pastoral support staff and the Academy's Student Services team including Education Welfare Officer(s), Attendance Officer(s), Learning Mentors and a variety of other partner agencies.

We are determined that our young people feel supported, safe and happy in a quality learning environment, enabling them to achieve the highest standards.

## Parental partnership

Parents are encouraged to be fully involved in their child's education and the parental partnership with the Academy is central to establishing a successful working relationship. A Home-Academy Agreement outlines the commitment of the Academy to its provision of education for the students and the expectation of support from parents.

The Academy reports regularly to parents on their child's progress and provides regular mail drops and newsletters. Parents are encouraged to contact the Academy immediately if they have any concerns on any aspect of their child's education and the Academy contacts parents as soon as possible should either a particularly commendable action or difficulty arise.

Once their task is done, an entrepreneur will seek new **challenges** and **solve** new problems



care ... everyone matters

## Academy Uniform

It is important to us that through the appearance of our students and staff, we send out the strong message that we are proud of our Academy and that we are always ready and equipped to achieve our best. The specialism chosen for the Academy is Entrepreneurship and in many ways our environment, including the new facilities and uniform reflect a business-like approach.

Students were consulted about the sort of uniform that they would like and involved in the design of the uniform. They wanted something distinct that combined elements of traditional uniform with a contemporary business look.

### The uniform for Years 7 to 10 is:

Academy navy blue blazer  
Academy navy blue trousers  
White shirt  
Academy navy blue jade green stripe tie  
Academy navy skirt, navy blue tights or navy blue knee length socks (girls)  
White blouse and Academy jade neckscarf (girls)  
Plain unbranded black shoes  
Academy coat  
Academy ID badge

### The uniform for Year 11 is:

Two-piece black suit with Academy lapel pin-badge  
White shirt  
Year 11 Academy tie  
White blouse and Academy black/silver Year 11 neckscarf (girls)  
Plain unbranded black shoes  
Academy coat  
Academy ID badge

Sports kit (Girls and Boys)  
Academy polo shirt  
Academy sports shirt  
Academy shorts (skorts available for girls)  
Academy sports socks  
Football boots/trainers as appropriate

### Optional items

Academy tracksuit trousers and/or top for PE

The dress code for the Sixth Form is smart, appropriate for work and 'ready for interview'.



# Facilities to be

The Academy will relocate to new facilities located adjacent to Darwen Town Centre during the academic year 2009-2010. The new Academy building has a unique design and it is being purpose built

for the delivery of the Academy Curriculum. It will be fully equipped with first rate facilities to enable high quality teaching and learning in state of the art general teaching areas and modern specialist

facilities for subjects such as PE, Technology, Science and the Creative Arts, all supported by a new ICT framework.



# proud of

## ...a unique design

There will be an Entrepreneurship Centre as the central focal point in the Academy for use by students to support their learning relating to the main specialism. The sports facilities will include a new sports hall, a full size, artificial turf all-weather pitch, a multi use games area, a large dance studio/gym, a drama studio, an aerobics fitness studio and two grass pitches.

All general teaching areas are planned to be located by subject in suites, with easy and ample access to ICT to support learning. The

new facilities will be adaptable to enable some classrooms to be altered in shape and size to accommodate a range of group sizes for different learning activities. There will be large group lecture facilities, private study areas, small group seminar areas and office spaces in all curriculum areas.

Other features of the new building design include a dedicated Sixth Form area, a Vocational Area including an industry standard catering suite, a cafe and Business,

Retail and ICT facilities. The Academy will have a large, central assembly hall, a canteen that can accommodate over 200 diners at any one time and recreation space for students during break times.

The new Academy has been designed as a barrier free building that would enable access for all, to all areas. Corridor spaces have been designed to be wide and bright with ample ramp and lift access to support accessibility through the whole building.



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- a state of mind which strives to solve problems rather than accept defeat

# A new stage of education

## Arrangements for the transfer from Primary school

We recognise that it is vital to ensure that every child has a positive experience on the transition to the secondary phase.

In terms of supporting academic progress, many students will have the opportunity to participate in curriculum-related transition activities bridging the work of their primary school with the offer of the Academy.

Every student who is offered a place at the Academy is invited to Transition Day events in the summer term before they start and Induction Days when they start.

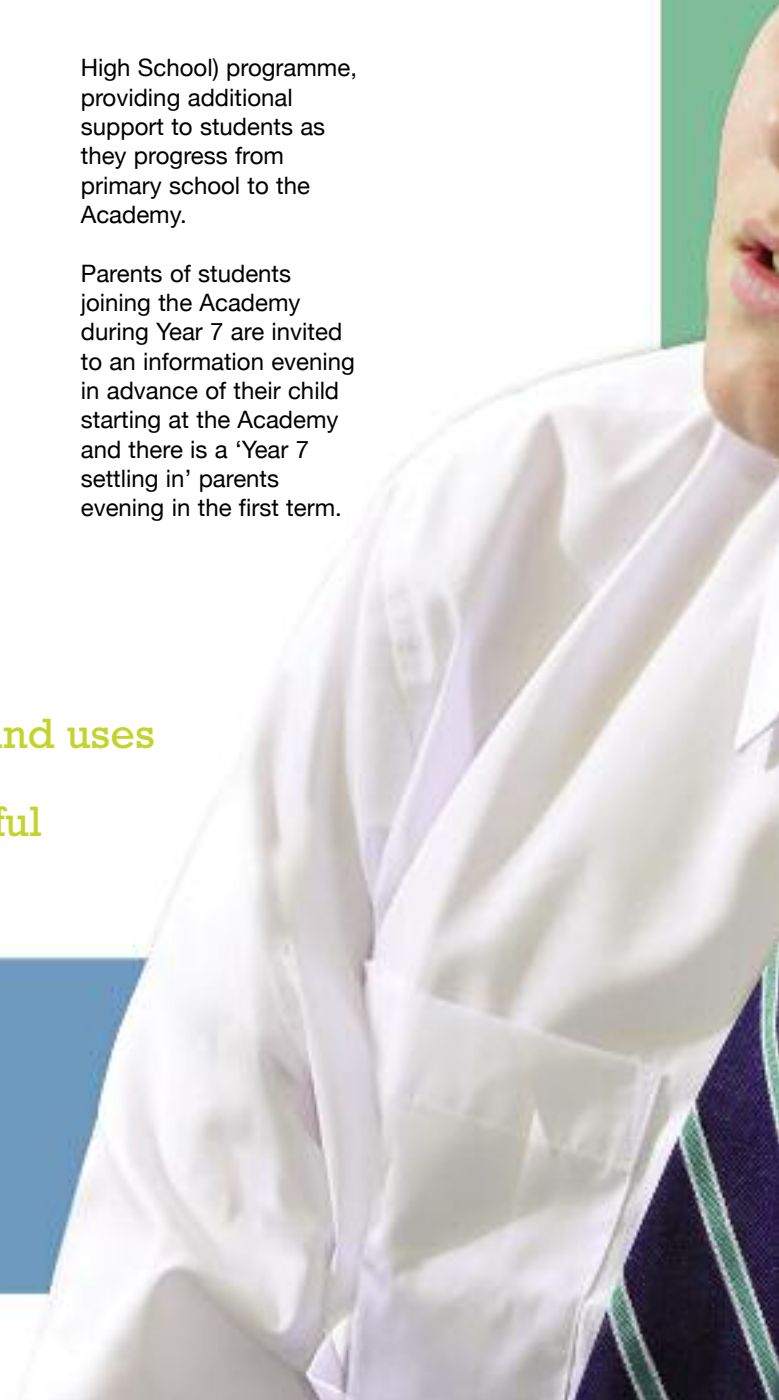
There is a 'Buddy' support system for Year 7 students with older students in the Academy to help them settle in quickly.

The Academy is fully involved with partner primary schools in the MOTHS (Moving On To

High School) programme, providing additional support to students as they progress from primary school to the Academy.

Parents of students joining the Academy during Year 7 are invited to an information evening in advance of their child starting at the Academy and there is a 'Year 7 settling in' parents evening in the first term.

An entrepreneur takes **risks** and uses **initiative** to be successful





## Admissions information

### **Year 7**

If your child is currently in Year 6 of primary school, you should apply for a place in the Academy now. The Academy has its own Admissions Body for admissions to the Academy. However in September 2009, parents are asked to use and follow the guidelines in the Blackburn with Darwen information booklet 'Secondary school admissions for September 2009'. This booklet gives further detail on the Academy and the process of application.

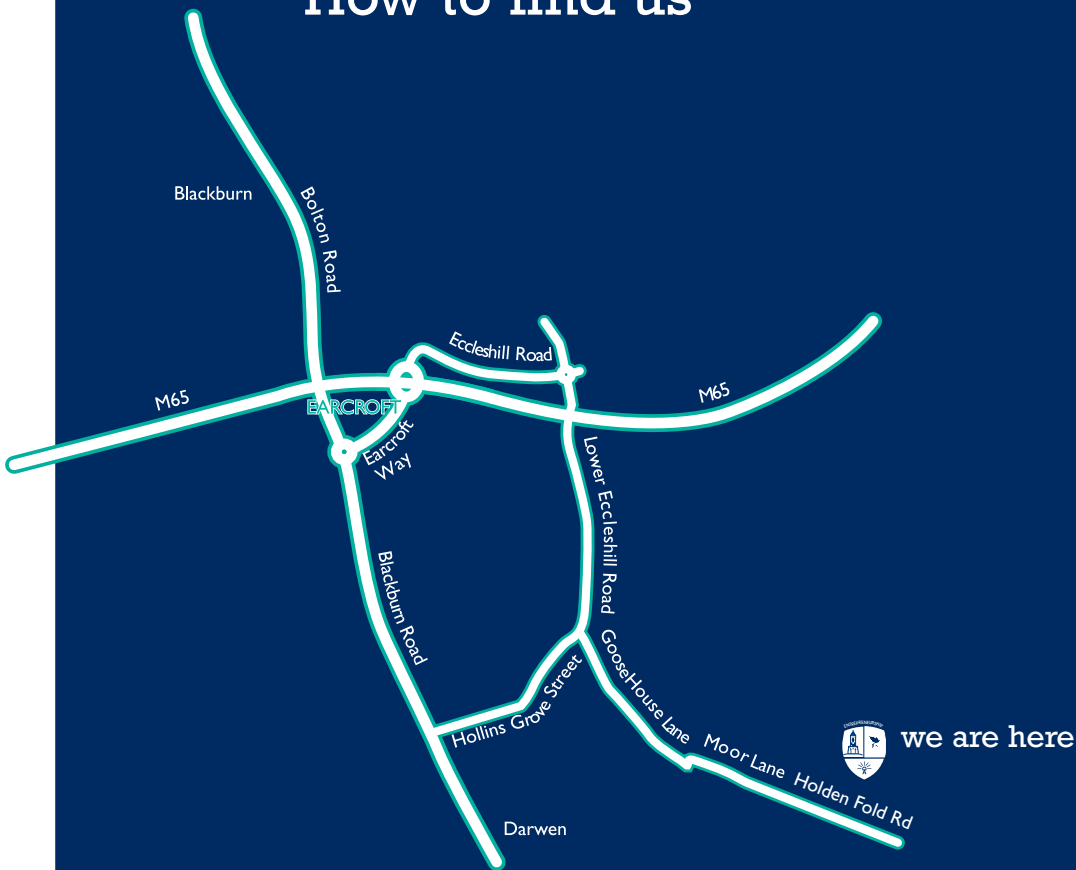
The Academy is offering places for up to 240 Year 7 students in September 2009. In the case of the Academy receiving more applications than places available, the Blackburn with Darwen 'over-subscription criteria' will be used to determine places, in the same way that the criteria applies to Community Schools.

### **Sixth Form**

Students who wish to join First Year Sixth at the Academy should apply for a place now. An application pack and details on the courses on offer from September 2009 are available from Howard McWilliam, the Director of Sixth Form Studies at the Academy. Applications to the Sixth Form will be processed throughout the Academic Year 2008/09.



## How to find us



Darwen Aldridge  
Community Academy



**Contact details:**

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy,  
Holden Fold,  
Darwen,  
BB3 3AU.

tel: 01254 819 500

f: 01254 819 501

e-mail: [admissions@daca.uk.com](mailto:admissions@daca.uk.com)

[www.daca.uk.com](http://www.daca.uk.com)

