

# CHARTER ACADEMY PROSPECTUS



# FOREWORD FROM THE REVD DR ALEX HUGHES, VICAR OF ST LUKE'S & ST PETER'S PARISH AND CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

I am honoured to be associated with Charter Academy as its Chair of Governors. Through the dedication of our founding Principal, Dame Sharon Hollows, and her committed staff team, the school has enjoyed great improvement in recent years. We are ambitious for all our students, and we have great expectations for the future.

Over the coming period, Charter Academy will benefit from a multi-million pound project to extend the school, adding a new, purpose-designed modern building and other facilities, as well as the refurbishment of existing accommodation. It is a hugely exciting opportunity to create an inspiring and practical school environment which responds to our needs as a developing Academy.

At Charter Academy, we believe in the potential of every young person and strive to give all our students the best possible start in life. I hope that you will come and look around our school, meet our teachers, and talk to our students to find out more about what we have to offer.

**Alex Hughes**

**Chair of Governors**



# WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parent

I am proud to be the Principal of Charter Academy and am determined to ensure that we provide the highest quality education for all our students. Our unrelenting goal is to continually improve the learning and progress of students and to enrich their experience with exceptional opportunities unique to Charter Academy. Last year we won 'Best school in Portsmouth' and were presented with the award at the Portsmouth News Awards. This award, along with our fabulous Ofsted report, which graded our school as 'Good', with many outstanding features, demonstrates our commitment towards the students, in terms of offering them the best education.

**We are always aspirational for your child and never complacent.**

Our commitment to your child is:

- High quality teaching and learning to accelerate your child's progress;
- A curriculum that will prepare your child for college or other appropriate courses;
- A robust assessment process which enables us to match our teaching to your child's needs;
- High quality enrichment opportunities in music, sport and other areas;
- High expectations of your child in his or her behaviour, attitude to learning and quality of work.

We will challenge and stretch our students and we will praise them when they achieve our expectations.

**Our mission and purpose is your child's success.**

**Dame Sharon Hollows**  
**Principal**  
**Charter Academy**





# ABOUT ARK SCHOOLS

ARK Schools is an education charity and one of the country's top performing Academy operators. Our network comprises both new-start and transition schools that have become ARK academies. Our aim is to create outstanding schools that give every ARK pupil the opportunity to go to university or pursue the career of their choice.

To achieve this, our schools prioritise six key principles:

## **HIGH EXPECTATIONS**

We set high expectations for all our pupils which we reinforce constantly as they go through school. In **secondary school**, at least 80% of pupils achieve five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics at grade C or above. In the **Sixth Form**, at least 80% of students qualify for a good university and all will secure a university place, job or training course.

## **EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOUR**

Our schools have a respectful and orderly atmosphere, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning. We do this through implementing a consistent behaviour policy with clear rewards and sanctions and through ensuring that all staff, pupils and parents sign a home-school agreement, laying out the school's expectations of its pupils and their families as well as its obligations to them.

## **EXCELLENT TEACHING**

Nothing is more important than excellent teaching, underpinned by high quality professional development. We prioritise learning and development and ensure that teaching and operational staff have access to high quality CPD opportunities, at all stages of their career.

## **DEPTH BEFORE BREADTH**

We prioritise depth before breadth, so that all pupils secure firm foundations in English and maths as early as possible. At Key Stage 3 pupils receive above average teaching time in English and mathematics (at least one hour in each subject daily), with more time for students who are working at a lower level. At Key Stages 4 and 5, ARK prioritise academic pathways that will enable the majority of our pupils to go to university and, beyond that, a successful career. For those pupils for whom this is not appropriate, valuable alternative pathways are provided. Our aspirations are no lower for our most vulnerable pupils. Our SEN team work across the network to help

plan high quality provision for pupils with special educational needs. We have also introduced a programme to identify and accelerate the progress of pupils with literacy difficulties.

### **MORE TIME FOR LEARNING**

Our longer school day provides more time to embed core subjects and to extend the curriculum through enrichment.

We want all our pupils to participate in a wide range of activities that will develop their social and personal skills and prepare them for higher education and the working world.

We make sure that every pupil visits a range of universities, so they can make the best possible choices about their future. We also organise interview training and careers' advice and provide scholarships for our most talented pupils to attend summer schools in the UK and abroad, and bursaries to help with the costs of starting university.

We attach particular importance to the performing arts and music, and run a network music programme. Pupils are encouraged to take part in an annual ARK Schools' music gala at the Barbican Centre, in the Shakespeare Schools' Festival and in school performances. We also work with the charity DebateMate to offer public speaking training and competitive debating opportunities.

### **KNOWING EVERY CHILD**

Positive relationships between pupils reinforce a culture of excellent behaviour and commitment to learning. Our schools ensure that all pupils, and their families, are known well to the school so no child can go unnoticed. ARK Schools is part of the international children's charity ARK, which runs a range of health, welfare and education projects in the UK, Southern Africa, India and Eastern Europe.



# “A GOOD SCHOOL ”

Since opening in 2009, Charter Academy's ambition is to offer its students outstanding academic opportunities. Charter Academy is a mixed, non-selective school, offering places to 11 to 16. We will open a Sixth Form when our new buildings are completed, so that Charter Academy's students can continue their studies to age 18.

In May 2012, Ofsted judged Charter Academy to be *“a good school”* in its first full inspection since the Academy opened in 2009.

Inspectors said that *“This is a good school which is improving strongly.”* Ofsted inspectors recognised that *“Achievement is good”* and that *“Students make good and accelerating progress”*. In terms of teaching, Inspectors commented that *“Good teaching is the norm.”* and that *“Teachers' expectations are high”*. Inspectors also commented that: *“Teachers are enthusiastic, work hard and have high expectations of students.”* In terms of progress and results, inspectors noted that *“Achievement in lessons is particularly good.”*

The inspectors singled out that they saw no poor behaviour, commenting on how *“Students say their expectations have been turned around by the Academy's 'no excuses' learning culture and they want to do their best.”* They stated that: *“The Academy is calm, orderly and a safe learning environment. Students speak warmly of the change in atmosphere reflected in the 'be nice' motto on the Academy walls and the mutual respect between staff and students.”* It was also commented that, *“Students behave well and want to learn.”*

They concluded that: *“Under the strong leadership of the Principal, senior team and governors, a very clear direction is set for improvement.”* Inspectors also commented on how, *“senior leaders set challenging targets for the Academy which inform all levels of its work and sustain a brisk pace for developments. Their high aspirations and vision are shared by staff.”*



# OUR VISION

## **Our goal is to provide an outstanding education for your child.**

Charter Academy transforms the educational opportunities and aspiration of all its students. We will provide the highest quality teaching, resources and support to enable them to flourish in a 21st Century global community.

We are a specialist Mathematics and Performing Arts (including Music) Academy. We offer first class tuition and opportunities in these as in other subjects.

We recognise our students' potential and the progress they need to make to meet it. Our targets for their attainment and progress are therefore correspondingly high:

- That every child achieves the rate of progress and grades to enable them to continue their education at high-quality universities or in training towards their choice of employment;
- A curriculum which provides depth before breadth and enables 'deep' learning in English and mathematics, the platform for every student's lifelong learning;
- A small school where every student is well known, supported and can develop into a confident, articulate and well-rounded citizen;
- A safe and harmonious school with excellent behaviour and a stimulating and exciting learning experience.

So we have clear and simple expectations of all our students. All students must:

- Attend school every day and on time. We expect 100% attendance and punctuality;
- Be fully equipped for lessons every day and arrive with the right attitude for learning;
- Display excellent behaviour and determination to achieve their best;
- Respect and value other people, irrespective of difference;
- Show respect for the learning of others;
- Work collaboratively with other students;
- Listen and talk to resolve conflict.

We are a Church of England school and as such promote the ethos of the Church of England. We do, however, welcome students of all faiths and of none. We value our students regardless of faith.



# OUR ENVIRONMENT

We are currently in the process of a major building project. This will provide us with modern facilities for the Performing Arts and classrooms for the 21st century. The whole Academy is undergoing refurbishment alongside the new buildings.

Our current facilities include a twenty metre, indoor swimming pool, boxing gym, a large sports hall, a Multi Use Games Area and a multi-gym.

The pastoral and academic life of the Academy is organised around:

- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
- The imminent sixth form

Every teacher knows each student well, ensuring that every student's academic and emotional needs are met quickly and effectively.

## **Partnership with parents**

**The partnership between home and school is critical to our students' success.**

We work closely with parents to:

- Explain what your child will learn, how and when;
- Inform you regularly about your child's progress and their targets in all subjects;
- Inform you regularly about what your child must do to improve and meet their goals;
- Communicate with you frequently, including through regular parents' information evenings, so that we can listen to each other and work together to accelerate your child's progress.



# ACADEMIC SIXTH FORM

There are currently five academies with sixth forms in the ARK Schools network, five academies due to open sixth forms in 2013 or 2014 and at least four more to follow from 2015 onwards.

## **Outstanding provision**

The core aim of Charter Academy sixth form is to enable students to progress to good universities or aspirational careers of their choice. The sixth form will have a formal and academic ethos, ensuring it offers a real alternative to current state sixth form provision in Portsmouth. Our fantastic new £9m buildings have been designed specifically with the sixth form in mind, which means that all of our courses will be delivered in new and specialist facilities.

## **Outstanding support**

A key benefit of attending our academic sixth form will be the opportunity to access highly individualised support and guidance in a school where every student is well known to teachers, tutors and the sixth form team.

Charter Academy enjoys a strong local reputation for the progress our students make in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and Ofsted recently described the school as "a good school that is improving strongly." The sixth form will ensure our students can maintain their progress within a safe, supportive and friendly environment.

## **Outstanding opportunities**

Universities and employers alike are looking for more than just good academic performance from potential recruits. Sixth form students within the ARK Schools network have an unrivalled range of opportunities for careers and personal development as a result of ARK's excellent reputation and links. Our sixth form enrichment programme will help students develop the key skills of team-working, leadership, communication and problem-solving that good universities and employers are seeking. All sixth form students will participate in this programme, and we look forward to seeing many of them go beyond timetabled enrichment by involving themselves in volunteering within the Charter community or further afield.

In addition to the links academies form with local higher education providers, ARK sixth form students also benefit from national network partnerships with a range of excellent universities, ensuring that students' UCAS preparation is second to none.



# ACHIEVEMENT AND SPECIALISM

## **Achievement**

ARK Schools is one of the best achieving groups of academies in the country and Charter is one of its best achieving schools in the city of Portsmouth.

We are rated as **“Good”** by Ofsted (May 2012). This is a measure of the imaginative and purposeful drive for the success of our students that characterises Charter Academy.

## **Charter is a specialist Mathematics and Performing Arts Academy**

Charter Academy’s mathematics specialism is shared by all ARK academies. Staff and students benefit from network-wide resources, challenges and expertise. We believe children should be at ease with numbers, and we want our students to develop a sound mathematical understanding while enjoying the creative and practical applications of mathematics. Our record in teaching maths is outstanding and our students exceed national GCSE attainment.

We plan students’ progression in maths from Key Stage 2 right through to when students leave. We aim to provide a tailored programme for students with special aptitude in mathematics that will take them on to Further Maths at ‘A’ Level and prepare them for the most demanding courses at University.

## **Performing Arts including Music**

Our music and the performing arts specialism offers every student the chance to build talent and confidence through individual and group performance. Students have the chance to be inspired by and learn from high class professional performers and participate in a high quality performing arts programme inside and outside school hours. We offer free instrument tuition for students

We have links with local arts organisations and theatres. When our refurbishment is complete we will have new specialist music, dance and drama studios.

The ARK music programme helps Academy music departments to build a culture of participation, celebration and success in music making. Charter Academy’s music programme includes:

- Artists and Young Music Mentors in Residence, working with teachers to inspire, motivate and demonstrate excellent learning and music making.
- The ARK Voices singing programme which develops young voices, working with a variety of practitioners and styles.
- Band, choir and an annual musical.



# ENRICHMENT

**Charter Academy has a comprehensive programme of support to enable every student to achieve their full potential.**

The Academy provides residential and personal development activities and opportunities for young people to participate with their local community. Our comprehensive programme of after-school clubs and activities includes drama, chess, basketball, football, netball, martial arts, hockey, athletics, a debating society, dance and art clubs.

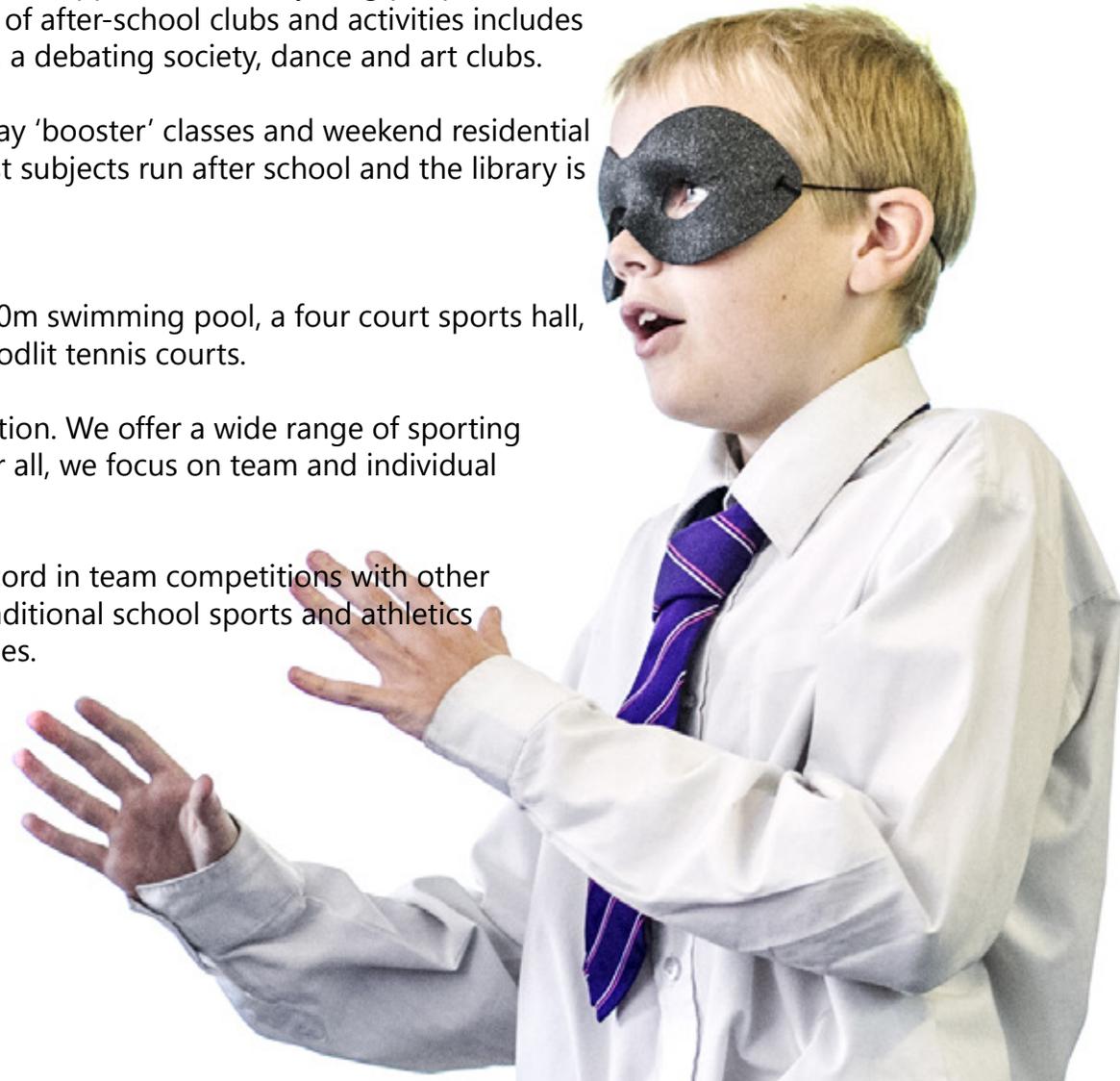
To raise attainment, we provide additional academic support on Saturday 'booster' classes and weekend residential events to focus on study skills and exam techniques. GCSE clubs in most subjects run after school and the library is open, every evening and before school, for private study or homework.

## **Sports**

Charter Academy has excellent sporting facilities including an indoor, 20m swimming pool, a four court sports hall, fitness suite, a boxing gymnasium, with four boxing rings, and three floodlit tennis courts.

Our Physical Education programme provides exercise and health education. We offer a wide range of sporting activities including dance. In sports, as well as ensuring participation for all, we focus on team and individual performance and competition.

We use the Royal Navy pitches in Portsmouth and have a successful record in team competitions with other schools in football, netball, basketball and badminton. In addition to traditional school sports and athletics students can also participate in contemporary sports and fitness activities.



# CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

## **Depth before breadth: a broad curriculum based on secure foundations.**

We ensure that in English and mathematics our students reach the nationally expected levels of achievement for their age as soon as possible. This provides an essential and strong foundation for every other subject and is critical for their success.

We offer individualised support and give all students access to a range of qualifications. We provide further challenges to those showing greater aptitude. Where appropriate, students spend time in smaller groups or nurture classes that focus on numeracy and literacy. While most students will achieve a high standard by the end of Year 9, we will continue to support numeracy and literacy until students achieve target levels.

Our curriculum provides exciting academic and vocational courses which students can follow through to examinations. Our goal is to provide every student with the qualifications to have a real choice at 18 of going on to university or high-potential vocational training.

Our specialist and dedicated staff ensure that lessons are designed to meet individual student needs, supported by high quality information technology, teaching and learning resources.

## **Students are more highly motivated and achieve more when they understand their progress and their goals.**

The Academy uses a variety of tests, including CATs assessments and reading tests to group students and plan effective and appropriate teaching. This helps teachers to identify students requiring specialised support as well as maximising all our students' potential.

In Key Stage 3, students are formally assessed six times each year. After each assessment, we analyse the results so that we can then spot any problems early and tailor teaching to each child's need and provide extra intervention where necessary.

We inform parents of their children's progress through reports, parents' evenings and target-setting activities.

# STRETCHING EVERY STUDENT

## **The best for every student**

We regularly assess students' academic potential and progress. Formal assessments take place at the end of each half term. We place importance on accurate and thorough assessments so that students can be placed in relevant groups with appropriate challenge and support. Our framework of targets and assessment means that every student is fully aware of their goals and what they have to do achieve them. This stretches and appropriately challenges our most able students.

## **Special Educational Needs**

### **An inclusive curriculum for all**

The Academy carefully identifies, assesses and supports students with special education needs in line with national guidelines. Individual Education Plans ensure effective provision, which is regularly modified to meet students' differing needs. Support is given in small groups or withdrawal classes, delivered by a team of skilled teachers, learning support assistants and a specialist behaviour support worker.

## **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

EAL students benefit greatly from our emphasis on the core curriculum, gaining extra support until they reach the expected English attainment for their age. Through careful assessment and a combination of small induction classes, one-to-one teaching and strong support mechanisms in the classroom, our EAL students have full access to the school's learning opportunities.



# PASTORAL CARE

**Charter Academy is a unique learning community aiming for continual progress and achievement. Sound relationships and excellent teaching are at the core of what we do.**

Within our disciplined community, we:

- value co-operation with parents, and
- celebrate and reward effort and achievement.

While every member of staff accepts responsibility for the academic and personal development of the student he or she teaches, immediate responsibility for students' personal welfare rests with their form tutor who monitors academic progress and promotes students' general wellbeing. The form tutors are supported by their Year Learning Managers, and by the Principal and other senior staff.

In all this we aim to work closely with parents. All families have an introductory meeting with a senior member of staff to discuss and sign the Charter Academy Home School Agreement before entry to the Academy.

Rewards create a positive ethos in the Academy. As well as rewarding students for 100% attendance and punctuality, we reward work of high quality, improving on past achievements and consistent hard work and service to the community.

Assemblies celebrate students' learning and other achievements.



# ADMISSIONS

Charter Academy is a non-selective school for local children. If the Academy is oversubscribed, priority will be given to students with statements of special educational needs, where the Academy is named on the statement. The remaining places will then be offered in the following order of priority:

- Children who are in public care
- Children who have a sibling who already attends the school and who will continue to do so on the date of admission (for this purpose "sibling" means a whole, half or step brother or sister, resident at the same address)
- Children who live, or attend a primary school, in the school catchment area
- Children who live closest to the school, using a straight line distance from the main entrance of the Academy to the main entrance of the child's home

The Academy keeps a waiting list which is used to fill casual vacancies occurring if students leave during the year, or withdraw from a place that has been offered.

## **Appeals**

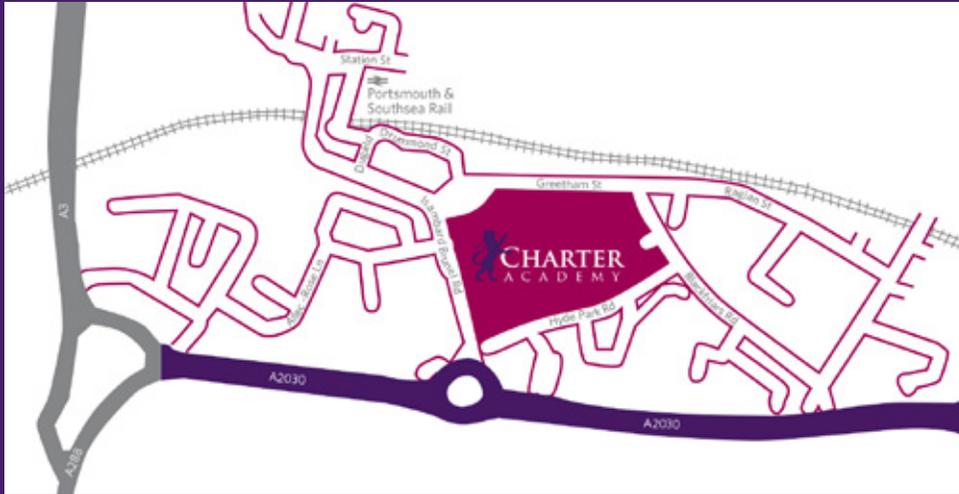
Parents/carers who are not offered a place for their child are entitled to appeal to an independent committee under the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998.

Parents/carers wishing to appeal should contact Alison Kennedy the ARK Governance Manager on 0203 116 6340. She will be able to give advice on the process.

Once the plans for our sixth form are established, admissions information, including a separate prospectus and course guide, will be found on a new Sixth Form area of this website.

Please note that at the time of printing, ARK Schools is consulting on minor amendments to the admissions criteria for the 2014 entry. Information on this can be found on our website under "Admissions". The main criterion of distance from the Academy remains unchanged.

Details correct at time of going to press, July 2013.



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