

Excelsior News

The Excelsior Academy Newsletter

Issue 2 – June 2007

www.excelsiornewcastle.org.uk

Enterprise at Excelsior

By LORD LAIDLAW, Sponsor of Excelsior Academy Newcastle.

This is the second issue of the newsletter and we hope you find it useful.

Excelsior is being built for the children from the West End of Newcastle and their families. It will be free and non-selective, and children from families of all faiths, as well as of none, will be equally welcome.

Our single most important aim is to provide a first class educational experience for all of our students. Each child will have an individual learning plan and a personal mentor to guide their learning to help them reach their potential.

Every Academy has a specialism and Excelsior's is Enterprise. This is not just enterprise in a business sense, though that is important, it also means the Academy will encourage each student to be personally enterprising - to have the confidence, resilience and skills to achieve their goals in life.

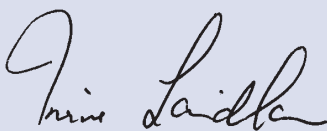
In this newsletter there are details of the organisation of Excelsior Academy – the four 11 to 16 schools and the sixth form – which we believe will deliver both the educational and social benefits our young people deserve.

We have made a good start ready for the opening of the Academy in September 2008.

I am delighted that Mrs Phil Marshall has been appointed to lead the Academy as Executive Principal. We have now appointed two further key leaders, Mrs Judith Futers and Mrs Lynn Aitchison, who will be two of the four School Principals, and Mr Peter Snowdon who will be the Business Manager.

We will be keeping in touch with you on a regular basis through further newsletters as we move towards opening the Academy next year.

Best Wishes,



Irvine Laidlaw

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Amin Wins Academy Logo Competition

Students at West Gate Community College were asked to come up with a logo design for Excelsior Academy.



Lord Laidlaw discussing the logo designs with Amin Kashy.

The winning logo design

The winning design by Amin Kashy, year 10, was chosen because it cleverly represented the Academy organisation – four 11 to 16 schools and the sixth form – in a striking and attractive way.

Lord Laidlaw, Academy Sponsor said: "Many congratulations to Amin. We are delighted with his design which demonstrates creative flair as well as consideration of the practical issues of using a logo. It is stylish, reflects what the Academy stands for and will look good for many years to come."

The winning design will be used on all Academy correspondence, sign boards, the website and the uniform.



What Makes The Academy Different?

By MRS PHIL MARSHALL, Executive Principal



View of how Excelsior will look from Broadmead Way. Image by architects and interior designers Howarth Litchfield Partnership.



Mrs Phil Marshall,
Executive Principal

To create a closer 'family' feel especially for the benefit of 11 to 16 year old students we are organising the Academy into four distinct and separate 'schools within a school' with a fifth school for the post 16 students. Each school will have 375 students, and there will also be 300 post 16 places.

Each of the four schools will admit 75 students into year 7 every year and each school will aim to have a balanced intake based on gender, aptitude and ability.

The different schools will have their own break times and lunch time, as well as their own entrance and playgrounds.

When children transfer at 11 we will work closely with the primary schools, parents and students to allocate them to the Academy schools through a process of guided choice in year 6. Each student will have a personal mentor to guide their learning and provide a link between the school and parents.

Each school will offer a broad and balanced curriculum personalised to meet the needs of each student. Every school will have its own theme which will be developed by the School Principals, their school staff and students. In this way we will develop each school as special and distinctive to give the schools a unique character which the students and staff will identify with and be proud of.

The schools will take the following themes:

- 1 Business and Economics
- 2 Health Related Studies
- 3 Creative and Performing Arts
- 4 Design, Construction and the Environment.

The curriculum in each school at Key Stage 3 (years 7 and 8) will be broadly similar. There will be a strong emphasis on the development of core subjects - English, Mathematics and Information Technology -



Interior view of the main entrance area.

whilst not neglecting the wider curriculum including traditional subjects such as PE and games.

Themes such as 'learning to learn' will be used in each school. The curriculum will be individualised to provide challenging opportunities for all students – including those who are gifted and talented as well as those with special educational needs. As they move on into Key Stage 4 students will be offered a wide range of academic and vocational courses that will challenge and interest them.

We expect students will stay in the school they first join as they will be able to access all courses regardless of the specialism of their school.

Examination results are extremely important at all levels and we want to ensure our students do the best they can to achieve their potential. Their individual learning programme and personal mentor will serve to ensure this.



Main entrance.

Our site will be safe and secure at all times. We think that the lunch break is an important time to extend opportunities for students as well as for them to learn to socialise. We have designed the building so that our dining facilities will enable all the students in each school to sit down together to eat lunch together and for this reason we will expect all of our students to stay on site at lunchtime. We have high expectations for all aspects of Academy life – work, behaviour, attendance, punctuality and the Academy uniform.

Excelsior is an exciting opportunity to provide the very best in education for young people from the West End, and we will work closely with parents, children and the community to achieve this.

Building Progress - Surgo on Site



Year 9 students from West Gate Community College school council have already visited the site. They were met by Peter Fair from the Academy Trust and Jack Downey, Contracts Manager of SURGO Construction. After the site safety training they donned hard hats and high visibility vests to take a look at the site from Broadmead Way, which will be the pedestrian and cycle access route to the Academy.

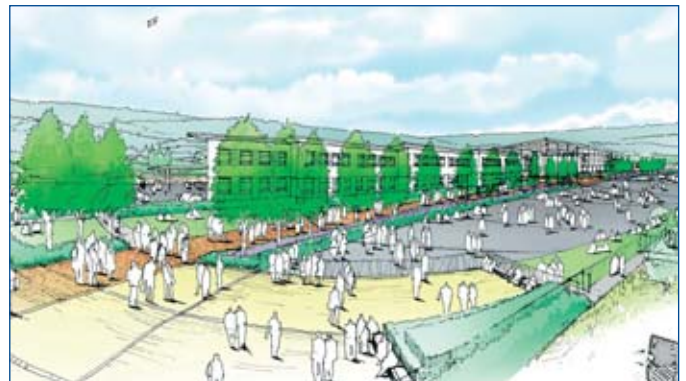
After carrying out extensive ground works and land levelling to prepare the site ahead of construction, our building contractor SURGO, a local company based in the West End of Newcastle, is well on schedule with the 80 week build programme and now has the steelwork necessary to create the frame of the new Academy well underway.

Recent visitors and local residents can now see the project taking shape and get a feel for the size and scale of the Academy and how it will fit in with its surroundings, totally transforming the site.

SURGO's Contracts Manager, Jack Downey said:

"I am delighted with the progress that Ray Lindores and the team are making on site at Norland Road. Ray has taken over the role of site manager having completed another multi-million pound education scheme at Bishop Auckland a speedy 10 weeks ahead of schedule. I am confident this experience coupled with that of everyone else involved in the project will ensure that we remain on track through to completion in September 2008.

"By way of this newsletter I would like to thank the local community for its ongoing support and vigilance pertaining to safety related matters - particularly those involving children. As work progresses and vehicular activity increases in line with materials deliveries we will continue to keep any possible disruption and inconvenience to a minimum."



The Academy building looking south across the river.
Image by HLP/AWP.



Ray Lindores, SURGO Site Manager with Jack Downey.

Academy Offices at Bridgewater

Mrs Phil Marshall, the Academy's Executive Principal, has been in post now since April to prepare for the opening of the Academy in September 2008.

Excelsior has offices at Bridgewater Primary School whilst the Academy is being built.

Two School Principals Appointed

Following a very demanding set of interviews, including an interview by a panel of West Gate students, two of the four new 11-16 School Principals have been appointed and will take up their posts in September.

They are Mrs Judith Futers, currently Assistant Headteacher at West Gate Community College, and Mrs Lynn Aitchison, currently Deputy Headteacher at Monkwearmouth School.

Excelsior Business Manager

Another key appointment to the Academy team setting up the school has also been made. Mr Peter Snowdon will join in August as Academy Business Manager. He is currently Human Resources Manager at Sunderland City Council.

Log On to Excelsior

The Academy's website is now live at www.excelsiornewcastle.org.uk



Key facts on the Academy are available in English, Farsi, French, Arabic, Chinese, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and Hindi.

The website has the latest news on the Academy and a frequently asked questions section.

Why not log on and let us know what you think?

Please e-mail enquiries to enquiries@excelsiornewcastle.org.uk

