



**MERCIA
ACADEMY**

Lionheart Educational Trust

**Small School.
Big Heart.**

Shaping Futures

**MERCIA
ACADEMY**

PROSPECTUS

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Welcome To Mercia Academy

Principal's Welcome

Welcome to our school, where we equip our students with the academic knowledge, life skills and exciting opportunities that they will need to prepare them for the future.

We are committed to excellence in every area of the school from our vibrant and creative curriculum, which provides a combination of challenging and imaginative learning experiences, to a wide range of stimulating extra-curricular activities and excellent pastoral care.

With the support of our innovative and highly skilled specialist teaching staff, we want to help you shape your child's future and encourage them to flourish by giving them the very best all-round education. Our students deserve the best.



Jackie Cooper
Principal





We are excited about the prospect of seeing young people develop during their time at Mercia Academy and we will work alongside parents and carers to achieve this.

Deciding where to send your child to study can often be difficult. However, we believe that Mercia Academy offers the very best opportunity for academic success and the holistic journey from Year 7 to 11.

Our pledge means that we will endeavour to:

- Ensure that every young person feels safe, happy and valued, so that they can have outstanding academic success and holistic development regardless of their background.
- Provide a pastoral structure consisting of well-trained and caring staff who will know every student individually to meet their needs and support them through their educational journey.
- Teach engaging, challenging and creative lessons which will foster a love of learning, promote leadership and clear preparation for further studies and interests.
- Offer targeted paths for students in order to help them develop their individual talent, whether this be in sports, the arts, science and technology, humanities, maths, enterprise, design or languages.
- Seek to guarantee our young people know the necessary steps to be successful by providing comprehensive guidance on appropriate courses and apprenticeships which feed into the career path they wish to follow.
- Have a wide range of extra-curricular and holistic opportunities, including house activities, charity events, and residential trips, to support with our pledge to develop young people's learning within and beyond the classroom.
- Maintain a consistent dialogue with families ensuring that we work in partnership to allow our young people to flourish, be ready for life challenges and opportunities offered in the wider world.

Our Vision

We believe every student has the right to an outstanding education and can be successful regardless of their background.

All of our young people will leave Mercia Academy as confident young adults who are able to self-reflect, be resilient, be good team players and show resourcefulness. This will lead to strong choices for their next steps and excellent examination outcomes.

At the heart of our approach to education are the 4 Rs:

RESILIENCE

Determination • Ability to bounce back • Persistence • Positivity • Effort •

RESOURCEFULNESS

Self-motivated • Proactive • Organised • Curious • Problem-solver

REFLECTIVENESS

Thoughtful • Reasoning • Questioning • Critical • Imaginative

RECIPROCITY

Collaborative • Supportive • Respectful • Communicative • Approachable

Through embodying these core values, we believe we can help equip our young people to not only succeed academically, but also holistically. We are a school that encourages our students to learn without limits.



Academic Excellence

Our curriculum is designed to ensure that students have a successful, rewarding and enjoyable experience of school that prepares them for further study at GCSE, Post-16 and beyond.

At Mercia Academy our aim is to provide a nurturing, caring and ambitious curriculum that enables all students to be the best they can be, and helps them to develop as successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Our curriculum has been designed in a way that sequences knowledge so that it can be revisited and built upon, preparing students to be successful at GCSE and beyond.

Our curriculum is rooted in a knowledge-engaged approach, that places an equal emphasis on knowledge and skill, and recognises that knowledge underpins and enables the application of skill.

We teach a curriculum that offers both breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding. Students study the full range of the curriculum at Key Stage 3 and we aim to enrich our students' experience by learning powerful, foundational knowledge that builds into their subjects studied at Key Stage 4.

Our curriculum also extends beyond the academic, technical or vocational, and develops students' character, interests and talents. We place a strong emphasis on students' personal development in order to create confident individuals and responsible citizens who are able to contribute positively to life in modern Britain.



ASSESSMENT

To ensure that students are making the right progress we feel it is important to regularly assess and monitor performance. This is done through several subject assessments carried out throughout the year. The results of these are used to track individual performance and provide any necessary intervention as soon as it's needed.

Parents/Carers are updated regularly throughout the year through data snapshots, tutor evenings and parents' evenings.





Curriculum

CORE SUBJECTS

The core subjects build on the learning from Key Stage 2, to develop a deeper level of knowledge that creates the perfect foundation for GCSE and beyond. The diversity of courses also provides all students with the opportunity to explore a variety of ideas, topics, and skills in order to nurture engagement and enthusiasm for their learning. The courses at Key Stage 3 were developed with our primary partners and are taught by dedicated subject specialists.

ENGLISH

In English we are enthusiastic about creating a culture of reading and passing on our love of literature, reading and language. Year 7 and 8 students participate in the Accelerated Reading Programme, designed to improve literacy skills and which students can access at home as well as in school. Along with our wide library events programme, this encourages students to increase their reading and challenge themselves to read a wide variety of books. We also offer many exciting extra-curricular opportunities, such as theatre visits, creative writing workshops and other lunchtime activities.

In lessons, students are encouraged to develop a love of both reading and writing, focusing on developing creativity, comprehension and accuracy. They will become familiar with a wide range of texts, distinguishing between forms and developing a sense of the significance of context. For example, students will study whole novels, short stories, poems and plays. Through this, they will be able to develop key analytical skills, through reading, writing, speaking and listening. English Language skills are developed through all lessons, through: writing creative and transactional pieces, interpretation of writing, explanation of language, and comparison of perspectives. In Literature, students analyse language using appropriate terminology and link texts to their context, developing a personal response and style. Most importantly, students will become motivated, critical and highly effective communicators using language with precision and flair.

MATHS

Mathematics is a relevant activity with links to the world outside school. It is a creative and highly interconnected subject that is essential to everyday life; critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for employment. Our aim is to teach for mastery, which means developing a deep, secure and adaptable understanding that ensures all students have fluency, a growing confidence to reason mathematically, and the ability to apply mathematics to solve problems. The department works to interest and motivate students by using a wide variety of approaches. These include whole class teaching; group work; individualised work; investigative work; practical work; and the use of ICT. Becoming fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics includes varied and frequent practice with increasingly complex problems over time, so that students develop conceptual understanding and the ability to recall and apply knowledge rapidly and accurately. Students will solve problems by applying mathematics to a variety of problems with increasing sophistication. Developing mastery of mathematics, which builds gradually as a student goes through school, is a tool for life.



SCIENCE

"Science takes us from confusion to understanding in a manner that is precise, predictive and reliable. A process that can be empowering" – Brian Greene

In science lessons, students explore key ideas such as the effect of forces on an object's motion or shape, the constantly changing atmosphere and the structure of the Earth. They discover the structures contained within cells, including genes, which determine the development and processes of entire organisms. Through inquiry-based learning, students have the opportunity to use practical skills to investigate scientific phenomena of the natural world in well-equipped laboratories, supported by experienced and enthusiastic staff. In addition, students analyse and develop theories to understand the social, ethical and economic implications of science.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

In computing, students use thinking and creativity to understand how a computer works as well as how to program. The core of computing is computer science, in which students are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Building on this knowledge and understanding, students are able to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that students become digitally literate and safe users of online technologies. We have expertise within Lionheart as the East Midlands Computing Hub and our shared curriculum has been developed using this experience to providing opportunities for students to be expressive and confident users of information and communication technology.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Students study Spanish at Mercia Academy. Our curriculum is designed to help students find their voice and aid them to gain confidence. Students are taught to read, write and listen with fluency and empathy so that they can communicate clearly. Through the study of a range of texts from other eras and places, students can develop emotionally, intellectually and socially. The curriculum offers a broad selection of themes to allow students to expand on their knowledge of the language and the chance to develop a mastery of linguistic competence as well as an appreciation of Spain's culture and traditions. Learning another language is a challenging discipline that requires developing memory techniques, which are transferrable across the curriculum. More than this, learning the syntax and structure of another language supports effective writing and spelling in English and helps students to understand the rules and science of languages. Learning another language is incredibly valuable, opening doors for students to compete in a global world and supports them to grow as confident communicators.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Everything we do at our school builds pupils' experiences allowing them to become successful, confident, and responsible citizens. In Physical Education, we do this by providing opportunity to develop knowledge, confidence and character. All learning will assist health and fitness that will prepare students for life after our school. Pupils will learn how to work in a team, communicate, make effective decisions, and create tactics and strategies, all through a variety of team and individual games, sports and activities such as Rugby, Trampolining and Athletics to name a few. We have high expectations in Physical Education and strive to challenge our pupils to achieve their greatest.



HUMANITIES

The Humanities Department aims to develop students' curiosity and a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

In Religious Studies we define success as 'being ready to take on the world'. Because it is a rigorous and demanding academic subject, it engineers critical thinking and rigour in our students. Our curriculum creates opportunities for our young people to develop their skills of dialogue, interpretation and analysis in a coherent context. All these are vital skills in a modern workforce where communication, cooperation and collaboration are core skills. In Religious Studies, students learn to respect themselves and understand their own identity, to respect others and learn the rights of others as well as the rights and responsibilities of people within our society. At a time when communities are becoming even more diverse there is a need for Religious literacy to move towards a more tolerant society. An education in Religious Studies opens doors to students. It may offer the opportunity to specialise in a specific field of religious studies such as political science, philosophy and the law which lead to a wide range of industries such as business, government, medicine, non-profit, counselling, careers within the law and lecturing

HISTORY

In history they will develop an understanding of the present and past social, political, religious and economic conditions of people, enabling them to live as active and informed members of society. Students will develop enquiring minds through the rigorous interrogation of evidence, a wide variety of activities and the development of their own enquiries

Students follow a Trust curriculum chronological narrative that explores how, why and to what extent the world has changed, in History lessons. We believe good historians need to be experts in six core skills:

- Causation
- Using historical evidence
- Understanding historical world views
- Change and continuity
- Historical interpretation
- Communication

In Year 7, students will study a range of topics including the Bayeux Tapestry, the Ottoman Empire and the Wars of the Roses, in order to develop the core skills.

GEOGRAPHY

In Geography we want students to love learning about how physical and human processes interact in the world we inhabit; how the development of countries can influence the responses to natural hazards and how ecosystems are being changed by the actions of humans. Geography will allow our students to transfer the knowledge acquired at school and engage with their local area as well as global issues such as sustainability. In our school we want students to gain the knowledge and skills needed to be successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. In Geography this can be seen by allowing students to demonstrate their developing knowledge of the world around them and applying this knowledge to the geographical issues that affect us. This effectively prepares our students to leave school ready for modern Britain and a global society.

We believe outstanding geographers need to demonstrate skills which are specialist, yet transferable across many subjects.

They are:

- Use of computer systems e.g. GIS
- Be able to read and confidently use Ordnance Survey maps both in the classroom and out in the field
- Demonstrate map, globe and atlas reading skills
- Collect, analyse and draw conclusions from a variety of fieldwork experiences.

Students will focus on four specific areas: physical geography, human geography, location and place knowledge. These are vital areas of understanding for students wishing to progress onto the GCSE course.

PERFORMING ARTS

Performing Arts is unique in its ability to inspire, stimulate and engage students with both the knowledge and skill base it provides. We believe that every student has the right to access the arts and to appreciate the vast world of theatre and performance. We want to effectively develop students' working relationships and enhance their ability to communicate and collaborate with others. We want students to view theatre and the arts as a vehicle for social change, reflecting on the world around them and critically analyse historical and contemporary works. All students are given the opportunity to engage with Performing Arts in a multitude of different ways – as performers, directors and critics – allowing them to develop their creativity and knowledge base. Ultimately, Drama aims to develop the student as a whole, realising that who we are is just as important as what we know.

ART & DESIGN SUBJECTS

Students experience three key subjects in art and design: art, food and nutrition and product design. Throughout their first few years, learners will study these subject specialities on rotation, where they are taught by highly skilled and passionate teachers.

ART

Students have the opportunity to access a wide variety of materials to create an exciting selection of artworks. They develop drawing and painting skills, investigating the use of tone and colour. Projects are vibrant and varied and are designed to have an element of flexibility for pupils to explore and create their own, imaginative responses. Students will gain an understanding of a variety of artists work and will be encouraged to show their artist knowledge and inspiration within the work they create. Projects are skills based so that students can learn and build on their knowledge. The emphasis is on trying and testing materials and techniques and becoming more confident with drawing.

PRODUCT DESIGN

Students take part in activities that encourage creative thinking, reciprocity and resourcefulness in product design. An active approach is taken to help individuals build their confidence with a range of materials and making methods. Students have the chance to work with a variety of tools and equipment, develop good technique and importantly learn about health and safety in the design studio and workshop environment. Theoretical aspects are tackled, again, through hands on activity via product analysis.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Students learn the essential skills to be safe and creative in the kitchen. Practical activities are a key part of the course and skills will be developed through the preparation and cooking of ingredients to create a range of healthy, nutritious and tasty products. Sensory analysis will extend evaluation skills and students will be encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions both verbally and in writing. Students learn about basic nutrition, analyse the nutritional values of the food they eat and suggest ways food products can be adapted to meet the needs of different groups of people. Topics also include food safety, food provenance and seasonality

School Facilities

We're on a journey to bring a fantastic new school building and welcoming learning environment for Mercia's students!

From Autumn Term 2024, students will occupy a brand-new temporary building on site at Sunnyside, with a longer-term plan also underway to deliver a permanent new school building for the 2027-28 academic year. While the building students will occupy in 2024 is a temporary solution, the school will not feel temporary at all. In fact, students will enjoy a two-storey school building which will include:

- Science labs
- Food tech facilities
- Drama studio
- Classrooms and IT suites
- Music room and practice rooms
- Library
- Canteen and dining area

Next to the main school building will also sit a fantastic new sports hall, with both soft and hard surface outdoor recreation areas close by.



Holistic Development

At Mercia Academy, we aim to develop the whole child, both holistically and academically.

Extending beyond academic, technical and vocational content, our curriculum also develops students' character, interests and talents. We place a strong emphasis on students' personal development in order to create confident individuals and responsible citizens who are able to contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

Care, guidance and support underpins all that we do. Ensuring that all of our students receive timely and appropriate support is a key priority of Mercia Academy. We strongly believe that care, guidance and support is most effective when students receive help early and at a level according to their individual needs.

TUTOR SYSTEM

All of our students have a Form Tutor. Our team of tutors see your child every morning and have an overview of the whole child. They are supported by our fantastic team of Learning Managers and Heads of House. Your child's Learning Manager is the key member of staff to contact regarding any pastoral questions you may have.

These staff work alongside class teachers and non-teaching professionals, including our Safeguarding Lead, Family Resource Worker and SEND team, to identify needs and implement early intervention. We have specifically trained staff who can support students with anger management, bereavement and loss, and low self-esteem, amongst others.



ATTENDANCE & CONDUCT

It is vital that all students aim to have 100% attendance at school. Research shows that even a few days of absence can have a negative impact on students' performance and we know that poor attendance can also impact on wider student wellbeing.

Parents/ carers should report absence as soon as possible. We operate a system where if a student is absent we inform parents by phone call, text, or email. This ensures students are accounted for and kept safe.

We want Mercia Academy to be a positive, respectful, and safe environment for everyone and as such we set high standards for behaviour. Our system of achievement points rewards students for demonstrating our values and our behaviour points system reminds students of our high expectations. For the small number of students who fall below these expectations we intervene with reports home, sanctions, and staff support in order to get students back on track.

SEN & VULNERABLE STUDENTS

Moving to a new school can be especially difficult for students who have specific needs. This is why we seek to work closely with their previous school and to keep a constant dialogue with parents/carers and students. This may involve extra transition days, home visits and liaising closely with relevant external agencies. Once at Mercia Academy, the SEND department works with teaching staff, parents and external agencies to ensure all students access learning in a way that is appropriate to them and helps to build their confidence to ensure they can be fully integrated with other students.



Beyond The Classroom

Mercia Academy offers a range of extra-curricular activities that strive to develop students' individual talents and interests.

Trips, visits and visiting speakers support students in learning about life beyond school and aim to develop the aspiration of all our students.

We encourage all students to take advantage of trips and visits, take part in our reading challenges and participate in our student leadership opportunities.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS

We believe it is vitally important for students to experience a variety of activities beyond the classroom.

While our extracurricular offer changes according to demand, examples include:

- Clubs and opportunities to represent the school in **sporting teams**.
- A range of **Art and Design** clubs
- **Performing Arts** clubs, with performances throughout the year ranging from pantomimes to musicals and concerts.
- **Trips** linked to the curriculum, from geography field trips to museums.
- **Residentials** to support learning and further experiences outside the classroom.

We are also pleased to offer the opportunity – thanks to Lionheart Educational Trust support – for our young people to be part of the **Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at both Bronze and Silver level. Gold level is also available through the Trust's scheme.**

More at <https://dukeofedinburgh.lionhearttrust.org.uk>



Uniform

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- Plain black trousers or skirt of a formal and smart appearance, with a plain black belt – no jeans, skinny trousers, leggings, chinos or any trousers cropped in length. Skirts must be of an appropriate length
- Plain white stiff collared shirt with long or short sleeves. This means a shirt with a fastening top button and suitable for wearing the school tie and tucking into trousers/skirt
- A plain black round or v-neck jumper (optional to have school logo; no other branding/logos are permitted)
- Socks – black, grey or white. Tights – black or neutral
- Plain black polishable footwear
- A school tie in school colours (blue and yellow)

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- A black blazer with school logo can be worn as part of the uniform
- In half term 6 (after May half term holiday), tailored shorts can be worn as part of the uniform; a white collared polo shirt can be worn as part of the uniform, without a tie

PE KIT

Students will also require the following items of kit:

- Plain navy polo shirt
- Plain navy shorts
- White ankle socks or navy football socks
- Trainers (not black soles)
- Your child may wish to also wear the following items (optional not compulsory) as an extra layer to keep warm
- Plain navy tracksuit bottoms
- A round neck plain navy jumper
- Mercia rugby shirt – navy with sky blue stripe reversible with school logo

Further information about school uniform and how to order can be found on the website.

<https://www.merciaacademy.org.uk/about-us/general/uniform/>



Admission Process

It is important to stress that whilst The Mercia Academy is an independent state-funded academy, we have commissioned Derbyshire County Council to manage and administer the application and appeals process.

Full details of the admissions process, including contact details for submitting your application, can be found on our website.



SCAN
HERE FOR
ADMISSIONS
PAGE



Apply for school place by
31st October on local council
website.



Results given in early **March** on the Local
Authority website.

Access by signing into your online
admissions account.



If you are not happy with your child's school
allocation, you may appeal via the Local
Authority website.

OR

Accept your child's school allocation on the
Local Authority website.

CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY

WITH LIONHEART EDUCATIONAL TRUST

THE CASTLE ROCK SIXTH FORM

The Castle Rock Sixth Form, based on The Castle Rock School site, is a vibrant and successful sixth form. We pride ourselves on our inclusive provision as well as our nurturing environment for all students to succeed.

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum covering an impressive range of academic and vocational subjects. We are very proud of our results in all areas. In recent years, students have maintained an impressive record of achievements across the curriculum, from art through to English literature, psychology, performing arts and media studies. Students of all abilities receive unrivalled support from our dedicated and highly qualified team of specialist teachers.

We are proud of the fact that our students go on to a range of universities and employment opportunities.



**THE CASTLE ROCK
SCHOOL**
Lionheart Educational Trust





Our Trust

The Lionheart Educational Trust was founded in April 2014 in order to establish a foundation for the improvement and enhancement of educational provision in the East Midlands.

Our aim is to provide a range of educational experiences that are challenging, equitable, enjoyable and are able to break down any barriers so that all can succeed. This involves seeking to create lifelong learners and offer outstanding provision for our 4-19 year olds.

Our educational mission is simple; any young person from any background deserves an equal chance to be successful in whatever they choose to do. The Lionheart Educational Trust is committed to supporting young people to open doors to their futures and to feel confident that they can thrive in a competitive and ever-changing world.

We pledge this commitment through limitless enthusiasm and optimism to provide a platform for each young person's light to shine brightly. To fulfil our pledge, we commit to the 3 Ps: Pupil Centred, Positive and Professional. We know that promoting this positive and proactive approach that celebrates success unites school communities and breaks down barriers to learning.

As our journey continues, we believe that it is our moral imperative to continue to work closely with a range of educational providers so that as many young people can benefit from the high educational standards we set ourselves. For more information, please visit our Trust website at: **www.lionhearttrust.org.uk**



LIONHEART
EDUCATIONAL TRUST

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