

TRANSFORM | CHALLENGE | ASPIRE



Thomas Clarkson Academy



A valued member of the

Brooke Weston Trust





"We nurture and challenge our students to be the best they can possibly be"



Welcome

Thank you for expressing an interest in our school. Thomas Clarkson Academy serves the needs of approximately 1400 students, their families and the local community as an increasingly successful, vibrant, welcoming and inclusive, non-selective 11-18 academy.

At TCA, our motto is '**Transform, Challenge and Aspire**' as we strive to **transform** the opportunities of young people in Wisbech by providing them with the best opportunities to achieve the academic qualifications and skills to progress to university or the career of their choice. We **challenge** them to be the best version of themselves and expect students to challenge themselves and **aspire** to achieve the best they can. In turn we do all in our power to nurture their ambitions and provide students with a 'ticket for life'.

We take pride in creating a calm, orderly and, importantly, friendly atmosphere in the academy. We have high standards and want our students to wear their academy uniform with pride and be ambassadors for the academy in the local community. Whilst at the academy students can also expect to develop the important skills of leadership, teamwork and co-operation through participation in a broad range of opportunities beyond the classroom such as sport, art, drama and community projects. As part of the Brooke Weston Trust, there are also further opportunities for students to develop, including Trust-wide competitions and events. Please do take a look at the News section of our website to get a taste of life at our academy and read more about our students' successes and achievements.

Thomas Clarkson Academy is a wonderful school and we are extremely proud of our young people. I also welcome the increasing support we have had from the local community in recent years. We always want to be the school of choice in Wisbech and be at the heart of the community. As such, I look forward to working with you in future with the confidence that at TCA we have huge ambitions for all our students, and we will always strive to nurture and challenge them to be the best they can possibly be.

Richard Scott | Principal

Our Vision



T
Transform

C
Challenge

A
Aspire

Thomas Clarkson Academy puts students at the heart of everything it does. The best schools are underpinned by an ethos, drive and behaviours that are understood, respected and valued by everyone across the school community.

Our vision is of a community where our students' learning enables them to realise their academic and personal potential at the highest levels.

We embrace ambition for all, by all, as the means to achieve this.

Our Building

Built on a grand scale, it is set on a large school site, with specifically designated outside areas for students to relax or play sport. The building is light and spacious, and almost all of our indoor facilities are contained under one roof.

Students make use of our impressive facilities as part of their lessons and extracurricular activities. These include: a three-storey climbing wall, a planted living wall, a 450-seater theatre, dance and drama studios, sports halls, all weather pitches as well as specialist classrooms, computer suites, laboratories and workshops.

Library Resource Centre

TCA is a reading school and developing a love of the English language is central to all that we do. As such, the library is at the heart of our school. It houses an impressive collection of books and other resources, which have been carefully selected to appeal to students of all ages, abilities and interests.

The librarian works with teaching staff to support the curriculum, and library lessons are a regular feature of school life for all students, especially those in Years 7 and 8.

The library is open throughout the school day and after school, and students are encouraged to use the library facilities, including the computers, to complete homework and other studies. Experienced library staff are on hand at all times to assist students with their research, their homework or simply to choose a good book to read.

Our building is one of the most impressive and innovative in the area.



Community Lettings

Thomas Clarkson Academy has a wide range of sporting facilities available for hire and many local clubs use our facilities on a regular basis as well as casual bookings.

Our lettings are open 7 days a week with extended opening hours during school holidays. There is parking available onsite, and our friendly staff are always available to help.

All our facilities can now be booked online with each facility page having detailed information about what we have available.

Scan the QR code below to visit our lettings website.



Academic Excellence



Our Ofsted rating shows our commitment to providing the young people of Wisbech with a 'ticket for life'



Students are now securing places at Russell Group universities, including the University of Cambridge



Due to rapid improvement, we have been heavily oversubscribed for more than 3 years

Why choose us?

“Leaders have high expectations of all pupils and what they can achieve.”

Ofsted | Jan 2020



TCA's Oxbridge Students

A number of our students have secured places at Oxbridge Universities. Anna Ivaskevica secured a place at Cambridge University to read English Literature and more recently, Ellie Smith secured a place this year at Jesus College Cambridge to also read English. Many more of our students have secured places at prestigious Russell Group Universities in the last few years.

Our Latest Ofsted Inspection...

In January 2020 the school achieved a 'Good' Ofsted rating for the first time in its history, with inspectors noting that the school is "unrecognisable" compared to a few years ago.

We aim to build on this further and go from strength to strength. We would be delighted if your child could join us on this journey.

Ofsted also noted that the school had "high expectations of all pupils and what they can achieve" and that the school has designed "a curriculum that helps pupils succeed". They highlighted that these ambitions extended to pupils with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.

We are an inclusive school and always endeavour to leave no child behind. Inspectors also remarked on the positive relationships between staff and students and how the students felt safe and well supported.



Our School Day

Tutor Time	8.30am – 9.00am
Period 1	9.00am – 10.00am
Period 2	10.00am – 11.00am
Break	11.00am – 11.20am
Period 3	11.20am – 12.20pm
Period 4	12.20pm – 1.20pm
Lunch	1.20pm – 2.00pm
Period 5	2.00pm – 3.00pm
Period 6 / Session 6	3.00pm – 4.00pm

The academy day starts at 8:30am and is divided into five formal 60-minute lessons with a timetabled 20-minute breakfast break and a 40-minute lunch break. We follow a one-week timetable with all students spending 30 minutes per day with their form tutor.

Year 11 have a bespoke, targeted Period 6 that runs every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. Year 10 may be invited for targeted intervention sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3:00pm to 4:00pm, as directed by Mrs Tarsitano, Vice Principal responsible for Outcomes. These sessions are known as Session 6.

Transport

There are a number of bus services to and from the academy that are organised by Cambridgeshire County Council. Details are available on our website or parents/carers can call the council (0345 045 5208) if they have any additional queries.

Cashless Catering

We operate a cashless catering system around the academy, so students do not have to carry money on their person. Parents/carers can top up their child's meal allowance and manage their child's account from home via ParentPay.

Restaurant and Dining

The restaurant is led and managed in-house by the Brooke Weston Trust, with a dedicated catering team. The restaurant opens daily and serves breakfast and lunch as per the timetabled rotas. There is a varied, healthy and balanced menu to cater for all dietary needs.

Communities & Tutor Groups

All of our students and staff belong to one of our three Communities:

- **King:** Named after Martin Luther King Junior, one of the most prominent leaders in the civil rights movement
- **Madiba:** Named after Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black head of state. His traditional Xhosa clan name was 'Madiba'.
- **Pankhurst:** Named after Emmeline Pankhurst, an English political activist who helped women win the right to vote.

Each student belongs to a tutor group with other students in their year group and has a dedicated form tutor.

Uniform

Our professional and purposeful attitude is encapsulated in our uniform. All students wear a black blazer embossed with the academy logo, formal black trousers and a school tie. Girls can opt to wear a knee-length black pleated skirt. Further details are available on our website.



Our Curriculum

Our curriculum aims to enable our students to...

Develop a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills, to encourage a lifelong love of learning

Fulfil their academic potential

Develop their creativity and talents to the full

Our curriculum is broad and balanced, offering a range of subjects that are designed to develop personal and academic skills. Our curriculum is further enriched by additional services such as our Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)

We have a strong focus on the core subjects; English, Maths and Science and these are complemented with the compulsory study of History, Geography, Religious Education, Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE), French, Physical Education (PE), Dance, Design Technology, Computer Science, Art, Drama, and Music. We are a 'reading school' with a focus on all aspects of literacy and this underpins subjects. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is embedded across the curriculum. Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural (SMSC) and PSHE is delivered through discrete lessons and tutor time.

During Year 9 students prepare for, and are taken through an exciting GCSE Options process which frames their courses at Key Stage 4. Students are encouraged, with detailed careers support, to maximise their academic potential by pursuing the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of qualifications.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)

Our exciting two year Key Stage 4 curriculum, offers breadth and depth across a wide range of GCSE and vocational qualifications. In addition to the core subjects - English, Maths, Science and Core PE - students can choose four option subjects from a plethora of subjects.

Students spend four hours per week in each of their core subject areas and a further three hours in each of their option subjects. Classwork is supported with meaningful homework and independent study in preparation for their end of Year 11 exams, with access to additional help and support via the Session 6 compulsory tutoring programme.

In addition, students are guided by their respective Raising Standards Leaders throughout their Key Stage 4 experience. The curriculum is supported by educational trips and visits, residential trips where appropriate, practical lessons, high quality and bespoke Careers Education Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and a two-week work experience placement in Year 10, helping our young people forge links for life and prepare for the world outside of secondary education. Our programme of study in Year 10 and Year 11 leads on to opportunities in further education, apprenticeships and employment.



Sixth Form

Our wide range of courses allow students to focus and excel in areas that interest them. We offer a largely academic A Level curriculum, and a small number of Vocational courses, to prepare students for university, college or apprenticeships. Our aim is to offer students the best of both worlds – the advantages of studying in an academic environment plus the atmosphere and freedom of post-16 life. Our Sixth Form promotes a highly aspirational learning environment ensuring students work closely with specialised staff, striving for excellence in all areas.

To support lessons and individual studies all Sixth Form students are issued a personal laptop for use at home and in school.

Alongside our general academic provision, we also offer detailed career and higher education advice including specific guidance for those who are aiming to progress to Russell Group universities. All students receive regular workshops, guidance, visits and specific one-to-one UCAS application support to enable successful university applications.

Students are supported by a very experienced team which includes Head of Sixth Form, deputy and form tutors who they spend time with each day. We know all of our students individually and work tirelessly to ensure they reach their full potential, both academically and through extra-curricular activities.



In recent years, we have had record numbers of students securing places at Russell Group universities

Post-16 Enrichment

Our students benefit from a wide range of different experiences so they can develop into confident young people and can manage the transition between school life and early adulthood. These include visits to museums and exhibitions, theatre trips and field trips.

Students have access to excellent Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and numerous opportunities to attend careers conventions, visit universities and explore the benefits of top class apprenticeships. All Year 12 students fulfil a two-week work experience placement as well as access to the PiXL Edge framework to guide their wider skill development in preparation for the world after post-16.

Throughout the year, students take part in a variety of different sessions to build teamwork and communication skills. Our Sixth Form students make a huge contribution to the school community. Their work as volunteers can involve a wide range of activities such as assisting a younger student with paired reading, helping a small group of GCSE students to revise for an exam or even assisting at a local primary school.



Enrichment



CEIAG / Student Guidance

We offer expert independent careers advice, supporting all students through carefully planned and timely advice. Full time CEIAG advisors are in school to support students through all stages of their decision-making processes from KS3, KS4 and KS5. Careful advice as well as high quality, bespoke work experience is provided to all students to help bridge the transition between the world of school and work. We have developed beneficial links with major national companies, such as Anglian Water, which provide our students with a context to their studies and underpin the importance of employability skills.

Extra-Curricular / Clubs

We encourage students to continue with their learning and social development outside of the classroom. We have a Session 6 that runs every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, where we provide a number of sports clubs, enrichment activities and homework clubs.

Student Voice

We believe it is important that students have their say and feel happy in their learning environment. The elected student voice, which is led by the sixth form student leadership team, plays a vibrant role in our community. Our student leadership team represents the student body, shares views, opinions and suggests changes to continuously improve our academy.

Trips and Residential

We run a large number of educational visits, field trips and residential throughout the year led by various departments across the academy. We run a very successful aspirations programme with strong links to business, run by our dedicated CEIAG team.

Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award Scheme

We are proud to run the DofE Award and have a strong track record of success in the region. A challenging programme of activities helps students to learn new skills, help others, experience adventure and provide a great sense of achievement. We offer all three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Welfare

Care & Guidance

Each year group has a network of support staff, whose priority is the welfare and progress of students to ensure their academy experience is a happy one. Students benefit from the twin pillars of support offered by our Student Services team and the Raising Standards Leader (RSL) for their year group. Our attendance team works closely with parents and the Educational Welfare Service if extra support is needed to reach our high standards of attendance and punctuality. The role of the Form Tutor is to develop a relationship with each student, which ensures they monitor, support and broaden the student's education effectively. At the academy we offer a range of personalised support to our students, coupled with close monitoring of their academic progress via the RSLs. Academic mentoring is carried out by tutors with a particular focus on Year 11 students, giving them intense support in their examination year.

Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

EAL students are assessed when they start at the academy in order to establish their skills and abilities. Each student can access a dedicated induction programme designed to equip them for their first days in a new environment. Students, specifically trained as Young Interpreters within TCA, support new arrivals to settle into academy life. They assist with the initial translation on arrival and provide a 'buddy system' for EAL students.

Safeguarding

We take our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students and staff very seriously. We provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. Child protection monitoring and reporting form part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities. We work closely with Children's Social Care, Early Help Hub and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to ensure all of our students have the highest standard of safeguarding and care throughout their time with us.



Inclusion

We aim to raise the aspirations of our young people, celebrate their achievements and help them overcome any challenge they may face throughout their time at TCA. The SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) team focuses on working with young people with a range of different needs. Our team focuses on offering targeted support for our young people to develop their literacy, numeracy, communication skills and wellbeing. Alongside these, we offer a programme of support for students who are identified as having additional learning needs. For the students who have an Education Health Care Plan, we are fortunate to have a specialist educational provision within TCA known as The Cooper Centre. This centre provides students with specialist learning support in addition to accessing mainstream lessons where appropriate. More information can be found on the Cambridgeshire Local Offer.

Mobile Phones

To promote learning, improve concentration and safeguard our students, we have a ban on the use of mobile phones anywhere on the school site and we operate a 'See it, hear it, take it' policy. Phones will be confiscated by a member of staff if they are used in school and will be returned at the end of the school day. If students need to contact parents/carers they are able to do so by approaching the Student Services Team.

Communicating with Parents

Building strong relationships with parents is key to enhancing achievement. We keep parents up to date with news and important updates via email and we send a regular e-newsletter celebrating students' achievements and notifying parents of upcoming events.



Our admissions team is here to help you – please feel free to contact the academy with your questions. Call Reception and ask to speak to admissions.

“Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive ”
Ofsted | Jan 2020

Admissions

We remain heavily oversubscribed in all Year groups in 2023/2024. The academy will consider all applications for places and offers will be made on March 1 2024.

If there are fewer applications received than places, the academy will offer places to all those who have applied. If the academy again receives more applications than it has spaces, the oversubscription criteria will be applied. Please refer to the academy’s Admissions Policy on our website for further information.

We are delighted to invite prospective families into the academy to see the school in action. Please see our website for open evening information.

We look forward to being able to welcome you to Thomas Clarkson Academy in the near future.

What our TCA students say...

Ofsted 'Good' Judgement: Community Feedback

- “Matches exactly with the experience that both my daughters had at the school. Well done TCA ... well deserved.”
- “Excellent news for Wisbech – a massive thank you to all the hardworking staff and students whose achievement this is.”
- “This academy has transformed itself very much for the better. Well done all!”
- “Well done, everyone’s hard work has paid off. My daughter started there this year and I can’t fault it.”
- “Many congratulations to everyone at TCA. I am extremely pleased the school’s hard work and commitment to all students has been recognised. I cannot praise the school enough for their hard work and support of my children. Well done to you all – greatly deserved!”

Community

Community values and considerations are at the heart of our philosophy. We are focused on giving our students opportunities within the academy, the local community and wider world to help them become active citizens.

As a Brooke Weston Trust school we belong to a successful network of schools that strive for academic excellence. Within the Trust successful practices are shared to ensure we are always at the forefront of educational development. We are particularly fortunate to benefit from accessing the Trust’s pioneering Teaching School to improve the quality of our teaching and learning.

Our Governing Body

Our Governing Body, chaired by David Bailey, is dedicated to the success of the academy and works closely with staff and partner organisations to ensure the academy achieves its aims and objectives.



Proven track record:
Over 30 years of making a difference

Thomas Clarkson Academy is a valued member of the Brooke Weston Trust

Our mission at the Brooke Weston Trust (BWT) remains steadfast and unwavering – ‘to transform educational performance in the communities where we work to improve student achievement by removing the barriers to learning and providing opportunities for personal development.’

Lead by our CEO Dr Andrew Campbell for a decade, we have maintained a long-term commitment to high-quality education since 2008. BWT is a family of schools, each with its own unique character, meeting the needs of the local communities we serve.

Our values reflect our culture of high expectations and ambition for all – each of our employees is asked to consider ‘is this good enough for my child’ when making decisions that affect the students in our care.

Our schools, both Primary and Secondary, are based across Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire and as of 2023, all are Ofsted rated as good or better. We work together collaboratively sharing best practice and new ideas, our strengths, and talents to achieve the best for your children, both in education opportunities and enhancing life chances for every one of our young people, encouraging and nurturing their ambitions and potential.

Over each academic year, there are so many opportunities for our students to meet, compete, celebrate their successes, grow, and develop in amazing ways to enter the world as adults who are enabled to shape their own futures.



“Leaders have designed a curriculum that helps pupils to succeed”
Ofsted | Jan 2020

SCAN TO VISIT
OUR WEBSITE



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