

Newsletter

February 2010



Drapers' Academy gets the green light

We are delighted to announce that the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, The Right Honourable Ed Balls MP, has given the go ahead for Drapers' Academy to open in September this year by signing the Funding Agreement.

This clears the way for the final stages of planning and implementation work before the new Academy opens in September 2010. A further announcement on the £27 million new build for the Academy is expected shortly.

“Thanks to everyone for the support and involvement shown during the consultation period.”

Speaking on behalf of the Sponsors, Adrian Lyons, Chair of Drapers' Academy Project, said he was delighted that the benefits of the Academy to the community had been recognised and extended his thanks to everyone for the support and involvement shown during the consultation period.

As soon as the Academy opens its doors work will start on brand new buildings which will take just under two years to complete. Plans are in place to do this in a way that minimises disruption to students, as their education and achievement is paramount. Over the next few years the Academy will expand to its full capacity of 1,100, including 200 Sixth Form students.

Appointment of Principal Designate

Sponsors are also delighted to announce the appointment of Matthew Slater as Principal Designate. Matthew, who has taken up his appointment full time from January this year, comes to Drapers' Academy from Borehamwood in Hertfordshire, where he recently oversaw the building of a new school for students aged 11 - 18 years old. Matthew, originally from Lancashire, has vast experience of improving academic results and is an experienced educator having worked in North London and Hertfordshire, at a senior level, for over twelve years.

Matthew impressed Sponsors with his enthusiasm, commitment and outgoing personality, as well as his skills and experience. Sponsors are confident that he will bring these qualities to the Academy.

Commenting on his appointment, Matthew said: “I am delighted and proud to be appointed as the Principal Designate of the Drapers' Academy, together with Sponsors, staff, students and the community, we are looking to build an exceptional Academy, and to do that means involving everyone. We want everybody to be part of shaping the future of education for the Harold Hill community. This is an outstanding opportunity for us all and I am honoured to be part of it.”

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New Academy Office in the Heart of the Community

Drapers' Academy has taken another step in establishing its roots within the community of Harold Hill. An Academy 'shop' has been opened at 67a Farnham Road in the Hilldene Shopping Centre. This will be the base for Matthew Slater, the Principal Designate, and Stephen Besson, the newly appointed Director of Finance and Administration Designate, until the Academy opens in September.

The office has an open door policy and the local community, particularly parents, are encouraged to 'drop in' and find out the latest news about the Academy and discuss any issues they may have.

When they are finalised, details of the plans for the new building, uniforms, the proposed curriculum and school day will be available at the office. Matthew Slater, Principal Designate says, "We are excited by the chance to establish ourselves in the heart of Harold Hill and are looking forward to becoming a key part of the community. The office gives us a base to meet local people, who I am sure are looking forward to the opening of the Academy, as much as we are."

New Academy Badge

Following consultation with King's Wood School students and staff last term, much work has been done on the Academy's identity and, in particular, the new badge. The badge takes elements from the Drapers' Company's coat of arms, which was originally granted in 1439 by Henry VI. The new Academy badge (see accompanying image) includes three crowns which are integral to the Drapers' Company identity and which, by coincidence, perpetuate the three crowns in King's Wood School's badge. Below the crowns are shafts of light (or enlightenment) shining through clouds. The two lions standing on each side of the crowns represent strength, firmness and constancy.

In the discussions on the new badge with students and staff, everyone agreed that it was important that the strength and rich history of the Drapers' Company is reflected in the Academy's badge which should be a source of pride to the new school and the community.

The new uniform will include the Academy colours of blue and gold which feature in the badge. The new uniform will ensure a smart and professional approach to learning and will underpin and develop students' respect for themselves, as well as for each other, staff, the Academy and the community. Much work has been done on the design of the new uniform and prototypes will shortly be displayed to the school before Sponsors make a final decision.



What's Next?

The Funding Agreement, signed in December 2009, is the document that legally establishes the Academy and sets out the governance arrangements and key policies, such as Admissions and Exclusions. The project is now in the Implementation Stage during which the Academy Project Team will continue to develop its

detailed proposals for Drapers' Academy with the Principal Designate, Matthew Slater. This will include ongoing consultation and communication with students, staff, parents and carers, and the local community.

The coming weeks and months are very

busy for the senior staff joining Drapers' Academy. Matthew Slater is working with the Sponsors to agree on design ideas for the new Academy building which will be constructed on the site of the King's Wood School's north block. During the summer this old building will start to be demolished and the ground cleared. At the same time additional classrooms and changing rooms will be set up in temporary buildings next to the south block ready for the start of the autumn term. As part of the planning process Matthew has visited a number of schools in the south east of England looking at best practice in school design, as well as approaches to teaching and learning.

The Academy will utilise some of the best computer facilities available in any school in the country. Matthew recently visited the British Education Training and Teaching (BETT) exhibition which showcases new developments in educational technology. Talking about the event, Matthew said "I saw some amazing ideas in software and hardware. These ICT developments will allow Drapers' Academy to be one of the best equipped schools in the UK".

For more information on the Drapers' Academy visit:

www.drapersacademyproject.org