

CENTRE ACADEMY  
LONDON



*Where confidence grows day by day*

# WELCOME TO CENTRE ACADEMY LONDON



Centre Academy is London's leading independent Special Needs School. Our Mission Statement of 'Providing excellence in education for students with specific learning difficulties', lies at the very heart of our school. In order to provide for the often disparate needs we start at assessment and observation. From this we build a holistic, personalised curriculum, offering integrated therapy together with high academic expectations.

Through experience we have found that academic potential may previously have been masked. What appeared impossible soon becomes within reach. Each student presents with a unique profile, be that autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia or ADHD or a combination. The journey begins when the student enters Centre Academy; we then nurture, guide and provide the right blend of academic opportunity.

The School supports all students to develop their full potential and has a solid academic record. We prepare our students to deal with real life challenges and provide support at each transition level, leading ultimately to college or university applications and the world beyond.

An extensive range of clubs and activities compliments an academic programme, which includes music, chess, computer programming, film, sport, debating and others.

Centre Academy is unique. Come and see for yourself. We look forward to welcoming you.

Ms Natalia Ambridge, MA, BA  
Head of School



## THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES



Key to success at the school is our ability to work closely with all students so that we may understand their learning patterns and needs. This informs the planning of a pathway for each student as they move through the school; it will enable us to plan and achieve successful outcomes for the students at the level that is appropriate for them.

Our programmes are also diverse and varied. For all KS3 students, for example, Occupational and Speech Therapy are embedded in our approach to the curriculum and, depending on the changing needs and requirements of our intake, our provision is adjusted accordingly to ensure that the needs of the whole child are addressed.

### *The National Curriculum*

Academics at CA London are broad and varied. Fundamentally, we follow the National Curriculum from Key Stage 2 through Foundation Learning at Key Stage 4/5 and GCSE. As you would imagine, our emphasis is very much on literacy and numeracy, the cornerstones of and gateway to essential knowledge. In addition to English and Mathematics, we also offer National Curriculum subjects in History, Geography, Science, Foreign Languages, Art, ICT, RS, Media Studies, Drama and PE.

And to help ensure that all our students gain the maximum from their National Curriculum endeavours, we also offer courses in Study Skills. These help students learn techniques ranging from note-taking to careful reading; they also are adapted to enable our students to learn the coping skills they will need to meet their learning challenges.



## The Foundation Learning Programme



Our Foundation Learning programme is set up for Key Stage 4 and 5 students who are not following a GCSE pathway. It is a route which allows students to track and follow their own progress towards a destination agreed between student, parents and school. Qualifications gained are nationally recognised and enable the

development of key social and personal skills required for independent life. The Foundation Learning programme links in with an FE college to promote successful transition to life outside of school for our learners. For some students it is possible to study a programme of Foundation Learning with some GCSEs.

### GCSEs

Our GCSE curriculum is broad and balanced, offering choice options to our students that address a range of skills and interests and giving them the opportunity to earn nationally recognised qualifications. Delivered through a highly supportive programme, the two-year GCSE study will enable them to achieve the outcome most appropriate for their needs, whether this be an onward move to a Level 1 or 2 FE college, or to remain at CA to study for the American High School Diploma. Students ultimately planning on going to university will be encouraged to take a minimum of 5 GCSEs, to include English and Mathematics.

Our core GCSE subjects are Mathematics, English Literature and Language, Science and ICT. Further options include History, Geography, Media, Art, Spanish and Religious Studies.





## *The High School Diploma*

Based on the traditional American model, the Diploma is offered in place of A-levels and is the gateway to university. Recognised by all British universities, the Diploma, unlike A-Levels, is not examination-based. Rather, it uses a system of continual assessment wherein a student earns credit for writing essays, conducting research, completing an Art project and dozens of other subject-based tasks. In essence, the Diploma removes much of the stress and anxiety that students feel when sitting examinations.

Students are admitted to the Diploma programme for years 12 and 13. The Diploma focuses on English, Mathematics, History and other Social Sciences, Science and Foreign Language (although the Foreign Language requirement may be waived for some students). Diploma students generally study each of these subjects and also may select from a coterie of others, including Environmental Science, Psychology, ICT, Art and PE.

*CA London is particularly proud that we have never had a Diploma graduate who has not gone directly to university.*

## TEACHERS AND TUTORS

The heart of CA London is the teaching and tutoring staff. We have a 1:3 teacher-to- student ratio, and in addition to our full-time teaching staff we also have a number of reading and other specialists. As you will understand, all CA London teachers are highly experienced and superbly qualified. Most importantly, all have made the professional decision to commit themselves to the teaching of students who face learning challenges.





## Teaching Practise

Throughout the school, our emphasis is on literacy and numeracy, with other elements of the broad curriculum brought into play as the student progresses. Our students have individual education plans (IEPs) that are con-

tinually reviewed and revised. We use small group, subject-specific instruction, and our teaching methods involve multi-sensory approaches with attention given to visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic elements.

## Speech and Language

The school's Speech and Language Therapist is a full-time member of staff and is available to help students overcome gaps in their oral and other communications skills. Working in classes and one-to-one with individual students, the Therapist also helps in defining and applying levels of differentiation throughout the curriculum.

## Occupational Therapy

Our Occupational Therapist is also a full-time member of staff who is charged with helping students address and overcome a variety of physical and other difficulties that may impede learning and socialisation. The Therapist works primarily in a specially outfitted office that enables students to follow a regime of exercise and related therapies, and also with teachers to enable planning for effective management of organisational difficulties.



## Counselling

CA London's Counsellor is a key member of staff whose major task is to assist students who may be experiencing some social, emotional and/or academic difficulties—and to help them build confidence and self-esteem. Our Counsellor also helps students identify and understand their problems and offers a programme that may feature both short and long-term objectives. Parents may also use the counselling service.

## The Mentor

All our students are assigned a Mentor, that is, a teacher who is responsible on a daily basis for the student's overall work and progress, both academically and socially. Students meet with their Mentors three times each day. As you will understand there is a strong emphasis in all Mentoring groups to promote an *ethos* of care.



The initial meeting is for 30 minutes at the beginning of the day before the first class convenes. During this time, the Mentor does a homework check with each student in the Mentoring group, ensuring that the homework has been done and to a suitable standard; assists all students in the group to organise their book bags so that they all have the appropriate materials for their morning classes; and concludes with a discussion of a current issue or problem.

The Mentor also meets briefly with the students immediately before lunch and again after the last class to help each student organise homework and ensure that students have the appropriate books and materials for their homework assignments. As you may imagine, the bond between student and Mentor is frequently very strong.

## THE HOMEWORK ISSUE



CA London believes homework to be an integral part of the educational process. It augments and reinforces what has been presented in class. It also assists students in developing self-discipline, in organising their work independently and in cultivating the 'homework habit'—essential as they move into increasingly more advanced levels of education.

That said, homework is often problematic not only for students but also for their families. Accordingly, we overcome the traditional problems of a student being given too little or too much homework on a particular night through our Homework Timetable. This spreads the assignments over the course of a week and ensures a relatively level amount of homework on each night. Other difficulties, however, can be more intractable: ensuring that the student receives appropriate help in doing homework, for instance, and the burden that homework may put on the family, for frequently it is the parent who becomes the major 'helper'.



### *The Prep Period*

Our Prep (or Preparatory) Period ensures that homework will be a positive experience by placing the responsibility for assisting a student with homework where it belongs: on the school. Accordingly, following the day's classes, we hold our Prep Period, during which the entire school breaks up into six study groups.

Each group is monitored by one or more teachers, and any student who requires help will receive it either from the teacher in charge or from the subject teacher who originally made the assignment. *Every teacher at*

*CA London is available to answer questions, to provide individualised assistance or to hold one-on-one study sessions during the Prep Period.*



The Prep Period takes place from 2:45 to 3:45 Mondays through Thursdays. Our younger students are usually able to finish their homework during this period. Upper School students working at GCSE or Diploma level will not be able to finish their assignments in an hour but they will get a very good start on the evening's work.

## ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

CA London offers a wide range of activities that complement and reinforce much of the work done in the classroom. Students may hone their computer, writing, editing and photographic skills by working on the Yearbook. Our annual Science Fair gives all students the chance to participate and to present their experiments to a panel of judges.



Art students have a similar opportunity during the annual Art Show. Parents are invited to the Science and Art events to see first-hand what their sons and daughters have produced. And the entire school and parent communities enjoy Sports Day and Prize Day.

### Sports and Physical Education

We believe that sport should be an integral part of a school's curriculum. It teaches individual skills and teamwork, and it also enables students to work on hand-eye co-ordination and other skills. Key goals include improving overall physical fitness, motor skill development and game play.

CA London students participate in a variety of sports: football, basketball, floor hockey, badminton, volleyball, gymnastics, table tennis and self-defence regimes. Many of these activities can be modified to enable virtually all our students to participate.



Our students also participate in a variety of athletic events and sports tournaments, and these are supported by the student body and by the parent community. CA London's annual Sports Day is certainly one of the highlights of the school year, and this event is distinguished not only by the efforts of our students but also by the participation of their parents.

## Clubs and Travel

We offer a range of clubs and activities that are designed to enable students to pursue a variety of interests and to hone specific skills and talents: Art, Drama, Media, ICT, Games and Gardening.

Our students also have the opportunity to pursue interests farther afield.

Throughout the school year, we use our proximity to London to visit many key attractions, including the Science Museum, the Museum of Natural History, the Cabinet War Rooms, the National Gallery of Art, the Globe Theatre and many others.



In addition, our younger students journey each year to an adventure camp for three or four days and nights. And our older students enjoy the cultural and other opportunities through extended trips to European and other destinations.



## Community Service

CA London is not only a community in and of itself; it is also part of the greater London community. Much of the spirit of the school—its *ethos*—asks students to be particularly sensitive and compassionate towards other people.

In this regard, all our students participate in various community service projects. These frequently involve fund-raising on behalf of a local charity, sponsoring charitable initiatives and donating gifts to needy children at holiday times.



## CA LONDON: VALUES AND ETHICS

As we hope has been obvious throughout this *Prospectus*, Centre Academy London is a very special place. Like any school, we are proud of the achievements of our students. But perhaps our pride goes a bit deeper, for our students are engaged not only in learning but also in making a transition in the way they see themselves and, indeed, in the way they see the world.



In this regard, they profit from the pastoral care they receive. They know that none of our students is anonymous; all are viewed and treated as individuals with talents and abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

They know that they can discuss ideas, issues or problems with all their teachers individually, and they also know that the Head of School and the Principal are always available. Our students also profit from CA London's *ethos*, the spirit and values and ethics that are fundamental to everything we do.





## *Mission Statement*

*Centre Academy London is an independent, co-educational school committed to providing excellence in education for students with a variety of learning difficulties. We offer a supportive and nurturing programme for all our students, ages 9 to 19, so that each may achieve his or her full potential.*

*We instil within our students an appreciation of those values we believe essential for an effective education: honesty, integrity, trust, fairness, respect, compassion and civility.*

*We are non-denominational and welcome students of any religious persuasion, any socio-economic background, any race.*

*We promote international understanding within our culturally diverse student population by emphasising community as well as individual responsibility.*

*Finally, we are committed to the belief that excellence in education can best be achieved when a partnership exists between school, student and family.*