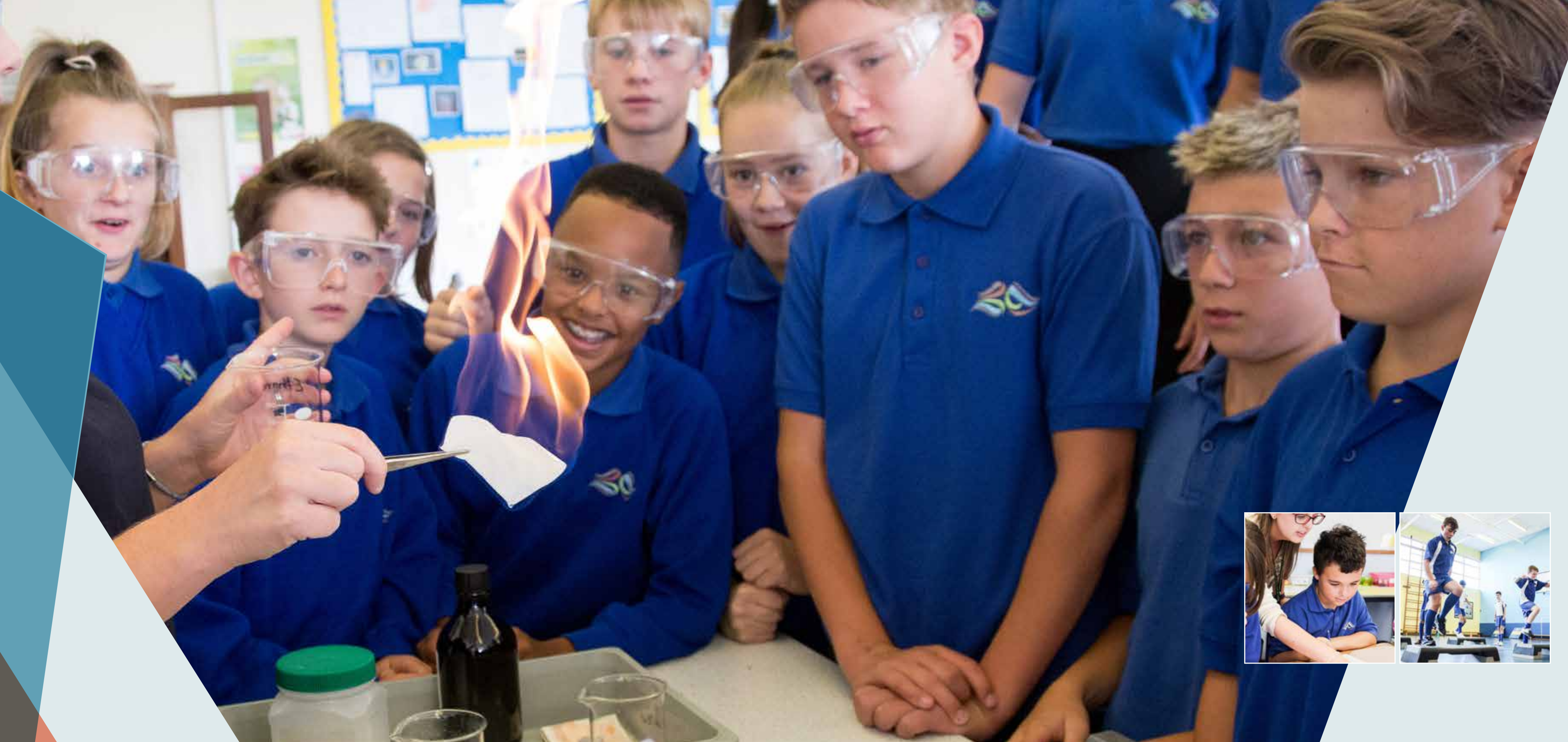




BiggleswadeAcademy

Believe | Achieve | Together



Biggleswade Academy

Welcome to Biggleswade Academy, an independent school for children aged 2-13. Where all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop academically and socially through outstanding teaching and in an environment where they can truly Learn, Innovate, Flourish and Excel.

Children and staff at the Academy share the Growth Mindset philosophy and approach to learning, together with shared school values, joint learning ventures and the luxury to share resources and facilities over the 24 acre site, building a strong, whole school community.

At the Academy we adopt a 'school within school' approach with specific teaching areas for year groups, so to retain a small school feeling where all children are nurtured and developed to achieve their full potential. Individual needs are supported, whilst granting pupils access to the range of facilities and specialist staff only usually accessible to secondary aged pupils.

This single school approach allows for a seamless education journey for children joining us in their Early Years and by eradicating the Year 4 to Year 5 transition point. This allows us greater capacity to welcome, support and focus on children from Lower Schools in Biggleswade and

the surrounding area when pupils move to us in Year 5 making it a smooth and more personalised transition.

In total, Biggleswade Academy provides statutory mainstream education for around 1000 children, as well as having 250 session places at the Academy Preschool and Lawns Nursery. The Academy also includes an eight place provision for pupils with severe Autistic needs and hosts a Mild Learning Difficulty provision from Biggleswade's special school, Ivel Valley, matching our own 2-13 age range.

To support parents with childcare needs beyond normal school hours, there is an extended school service on site, which operates from 7.30am in the morning until 6pm at night, in term time and as a holiday club.

Biggleswade Academy is a thriving and successful school which our children are proud to attend. Feel safe and secure, so they can focus all their efforts on being the best they can, both inside and outside the classroom.



Welcome



from the Principal

Ms S E Flynn,
Academy Principal

As Principal of Biggleswade Academy, it gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome you to our rapidly growing and evolving school. I am delighted that you are interested in joining us and hope our prospectus gives you a flavour of our school and how we put our values into action.

I wholly believe in the tangible benefits of an age 2-13 structure within one school and the 'family' environment that a 'through' school engenders. The 'through' model can work to outstanding effect, particularly with regard to pastoral care, student welfare and the quality of relationships between each member of the school community. Our skills and experience in these areas are crucial and, alongside our innovative approaches and the wide-ranging opportunities we provide for our pupils, help create our unique ethos.

Our aim is to inspire all children with a love of learning and to create special and happy memories of their time with us. Children learn best when they feel safe to take on challenges, are interested and feel valued. Learning is celebrated and openly admired.

Believe

At Biggleswade Academy we encourage everyone to believe in themselves through the development of a Growth Mindset. We are a school with very high expectations of all our pupils and staff and we encourage and celebrate this. However, we recognise that everyone is gifted in different ways. Biggleswade Academy identifies, develops and celebrates all of our pupils' and staffs' achievements in a wide array of areas, which enrich our community and school experience.

We aim to know all our pupils as individuals, know what their dreams and ambitions are, as well as how they best learn and achieve. We want everyone at Biggleswade Academy to feel as though they are looked after, supported and encouraged at all times by each other.

Achieve

We want pupils and staff to reach beyond what they think they can achieve and aspire to greatness. We believe, 'The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark'

- Michelangelo. These words underpin learning and development and enable every member of our school community to achieve excellence and become the very best version of themselves they can be.

Together

At Biggleswade Academy we aim for all pupils, staff, parents and visitors to feel welcome as soon as they enter the School, that they belong to the Academy community and that Academy belongs to them. We aim for everyone in our community to unite together as one and feel proud to be part of our family.

We have a lot to be proud of at Biggleswade Academy. We have well-resourced, spacious rooms and attractive surroundings. The extensive school grounds have been developed to support learning, providing an attractive and safe environment for all children to enjoy. The school is a happy, stimulating and caring place and we expect high standards of behaviour and good manners throughout the school. The Academy Ofsted report in December 2014 cited our pupils' behaviour and safety as being 'Outstanding'

saying that pupils '...are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern British democratic society and they have a strong sense of belonging'.

I would be pleased to show you around Biggleswade Academy, for you to feel the friendly atmosphere here, give you the opportunity to meet the staff and see the children as they work and play together. My staff and I look forward to working with you and your family.





Foundation Stage

Learn - We believe that children are naturally curious creatures; they explore, question and wonder, and by doing so - learn. In the Early Years we nurture and support our children and families to develop inquisitive dispositions and start the journey to become effective, lifelong learners. We teach children that it is okay to make mistakes and that this is an important part of learning. Across the early years department at Biggleswade Academy and the Lawns Nursery we have developed a stimulating, safe and rich learning environment that we believe is vital to maximising learning opportunities. We are lucky to have access to large outdoor environments, enabling the children to have free flow access to an inspiring outside area where they can take part in a variety of activities including forest school. Our Forest School trained practitioners encourage the children to continue their learning in the outside provision where they can develop skills for life in a safe and stimulating environment.

Innovate - In Early Years we relish innovation and are always looking for new ways to improve our provision. We look at the ways we measure the children's' learning and use an online learning journal called 'Tapestry'. This technology allows the staff to assess and record the children's development which can then be shared regularly with parents who can see their child's achievements on an almost day by day basis. Being part of an Academy for 2-13 year olds allows us to have exciting opportunities to join children from across the school to complete activities together. Our Options groups, which run in Year 7 and 8, allows students to develop different skills through the Storytelling and Child Development groups. Through these, older pupils have worked with our younger children to solve stories, plan activities and help out at early years events and our younger pupils get to share experiences and develop a wide range of social skills.

Flourish - We are proud of our transition arrangements as starting preschool or moving onto nursery or reception is an important time in a child's life. To support our new pupils and parents we have home visits, transition visits, coffee mornings, welcome meetings and park meets during the summer holidays. We welcome our parents to stay and play sessions and provide workshops to support the children's development at home.

Excel - We have a wealth of experience amongst our very talented Early Years team. Many of our staff have been trained within our own team; sharing valuable experiences and ideas and enabling our staff to build on already outstanding practice, which in turn enables our children to excel. Year on year we have seen our end of reception early years profile results increase with children achieving the good level of development and achieving the expected or exceeding the Early Learning Goals in writing, reading, numbers, shape, space and measure.

Key Stage One

Learn - Our Key Stage One curriculum builds on our children's Foundation Stage experience and leads them seamlessly into a more focussed Key Stage One approach to learning.

All children have periods of time when they are taught by an adult, but also have closely monitored, self-directed challenge activities, allowing time to develop their independence and self-motivation skills. This supplements the daily use of 'Growth Mindset' tasks whereby children choose their own level of challenge but are encouraged to 'think big'.

Innovate - Our children benefit from a progressive, 21st Century primary approach, remaining with their main Class Teacher for the majority of times. Key Stage One is the first step

where our children are introduced to the use of specialist teachers for certain subjects including Physical Education and Music. Being a 'through school' means there is also access to specialist facilities which are not normally associated within the primary school setting. Such early access to quality specialist resources and staff, combined with our 'through school' approach to transition, allows a more advanced development of pupils' confidence, independence and skills.

Flourish - As the Key Stage progresses, expectations of both independent challenge and focussed tasks increases as children develop their preferred methods and styles of learning. Our children know they are valued and often achieve their personal best or above. We celebrate

children's successes regularly (no matter what size) and to see them shine makes our staff proud. In this way Key Stage One acts as an excellent bridge between the Foundation Stage and later years, ensuring a solid foundation is laid within a seamless and completely personalised learning experience.

Excel - As a result of the approaches taken and consistently high standards of teaching, our children's progress and attainment throughout Key Stage One is significantly above that experienced by pupils nationally. The judgement that we "clearly know our children and their development well" has been independently verified by the Local Authority and this is something we uphold and are proud of.





Key Stage Two

Learn - Our seamless curriculum ensures that the learning journey from Key Stage One is reinforced and further developed as the children begin to become more independent learners. Children benefit from a progressive, primary-centred approach which ensures the majority of their time is still spent with one teacher who understands their ability and develops their learning. Our specialist teaching rooms (science laboratories, ICT teaching rooms, etc) ensure that children in Key Stage Two start to have access to specialist teachers who deliver creative, well-resourced lessons, something they would not normally get until they enter Secondary School.

Innovate - Our school is at the forefront of exploring innovative approaches to using technology to improve children's independence and learning. Our 'flurish' app allows the teaching of quick-fire calculation facts to be both memorable and enjoyable, whilst our use of hand-held devices (such as iPads and Android devices) in the classroom and our 1:1 hand-held scheme ensure that children have opportunities to create and show their learning in unique, original ways. Teachers frequently use ideas such as the 'Google Classroom' to share work in advance and to enable children to access their learning from home through a flipped learning approach.

Flourish - Our state-of-the-art new classroom block has been purpose-built to include the latest technology in bright and roomy

environments; perfect for our children's needs. All year groups have their own individual areas where classes for that year group are found, helping to create an inclusive, primary-school atmosphere and strong team ethos. The care and desire to get to know all pupils during our dedicated transition arrangements mean that when we welcome in additional children from other local schools at Year 5, they 'hit the ground running' and experience a smooth, supportive start to their time with us. In no time at all they feel like one of the family as all pupils work and play together both inside and outside of the classroom. We introduce many sporting and wider curriculum opportunities for our pupils across Key Stage Two, such as Kwik Cricket and Bikeability, which promote other important areas of development such as life skills and opportunities to demonstrate strong teamwork.

Excel - Our commitment to raising standards has ensured that our SATs results are amongst the best in the local area not least because of our 'through-school' approach and the determination to making sure every child is supported in their learning journey for the whole of the time they are with us. Access to specialist resources and specialist teachers results in our children getting a rounded and uniquely broad range of experiences and so leave Key Stage 2 with much higher skills in areas such as music, art and sport.

Key Stage Three

Learn - Learning in Key Stage 3 builds on the experiences of the primary phase and helps all our pupils to become successful learners - learners who are confident and resilient individuals and responsible citizens. Our condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum is fast-paced and pupils are challenged to learn with even greater independence within a more specialised curriculum, focusing on an increased number of specialist subject areas.

Innovate - The innovative range of AQA accredited options in specialist areas such as Engineering, Childcare Development and Youth Leadership provide even greater stimulus for our pupils to engage and delve deep into discovering and nurturing their passion, gaining that critical experience to help them prepare for their move into Year 9 and Upper School, with its associated challenge of external national examinations.

Flourish - Our pupils flourish in a challenging learning environment which provides opportunities for them to become independent learners and to function as part of a team. We encourage all round character development in terms of understanding, thinking for oneself, problem solving, taking initiative and decision making - we nourish their yearning so they flourish in their learning!

Excel - As pupils approach the end of their Academy journey, seeing them excel both academically and personally fills us with

pride! Through innovative teaching and a strong and varied condensed Key Stage 3 curriculum, our results are better than many pupils of the same age in secondary schools. There is a strong focus on helping our pupils excel both within the Academy and in the wider world. Developing their contributions to the local community and allowing them to 'give something back' provides them with the opportunity to get in touch with the real world and to encounter experiences and challenges. Such opportunities are plentiful and lie across an extremely wide range of areas. Whether supporting local and national charities through fundraising initiatives, mentoring younger children through areas such as paired reading, or by taking on positions of authority by becoming Young Leaders (Sports Mentors), Big Buddies, Student Councillors, JANAs (Junior Network Administrators), House Captains and many other remits, there are many opportunities for pupils to excel and experience real responsibilities where they can make a difference to the quality of life and education for others within our Academy - and beyond!



Life Academies Trust

Learn, Innovate, Flourish, Excel

LIFE Academies Trust is an Educational Charity, set up to provide inspirational, high quality education and care for children, young people and their families.

Currently comprising of Biggleswade Academy, the Lawns Nursery School and Biggleswade Children's Centre, the Trust provides the legal and operational framework within which these settings can develop effectively and provides robust support and challenge to ensure that the outcomes for children and their families are as high as they can possibly be.

The Trust's mission is to ensure that 'Every Child, Every Day' receives the best possible experience, no matter where they are located, what age they are, or what their individual needs may be. The Trust's values 'Learn, Innovate, Flourish and Excel' permeate all Trust functions in order to achieve this.

A key philosophy underpinning the development of the Trust has always been to 'Let Headteachers be Headteachers' - allowing the people who need to be focussed on the quality of experiences and outcomes for children to have the time and the ability to do just that. To do this the Trust has a central team who are responsible for running the 'business' side of school operations including Human Resources, Facilities Management and Financial planning.

LIFE Academies Trust believes that the best way to support and develop schools is by fully utilising the possibilities presented by the tiered governance structure used across the charitable sector. By working under a skills-based Board of Trustees, the Trust now has a first-rate governance skills set, with a broad range of knowledge and experience at all levels. This has allowed the development of a compelling educational philosophy alongside a clear short, medium and long-term strategic direction - essential within our current educational landscape, which is constantly changing.

Irrespective of the immediate, local and national context LIFE Academies Trust is committed to delivering on its promise of **'Improving lives through inspirational education'**.

For further information visit our website: www.lifeacademiestrust.org and to speak to us direct please email: enquiries@lifeacademiestrust.org





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