

Adult Learning College University Primary School Secondary School Pre-school

Your guide to

Guardian
Series Newspapers

"Education" ²⁰⁰⁷ »



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KATIE HARRIS
Former pupil of Birchwood High School. Studying Maths. Further Maths, Law and Chemistry



DAN MEADOWS
Former pupil of Culcheth High School. Studying Chemistry. Computing, Biology and Maths



SEHREEN SHAFaat
Former pupil of Bridgewater High School. Studying Law, Politics, Maths, French and English Literature

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6.00–8.30 pm

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Sweet 16 and the world is your oyster!

Sixth form, further education, apprenticeship, travel...the choice is yours

Once you reach 16, you have a few decisions to make about your education and future. The choice is between do you want to stay on and study or are you ready for the world of work? Whatever your plans, there's a lot of thinking to do.

But exactly what are your options? After Year 11, there are many ways of gaining further qualifications or if you have decided on a particular career, gaining more skills and work experience. These include continuing full-time education, either at school or college, starting work or work-based training as well as voluntary work or work abroad.

To help you make the choice that's right for you, think carefully about what suits you, and talk to your parents, carers and friends – the people that know you best.

The careers teacher at your school should have lots of advice on hand; you can also ask a Connexions personal adviser or a Connexions direct adviser. Another good place for information and inspiration is the 'It's your choice' website and booklet. Remember that whatever you choose, it pays to keep learning. Research shows that there is a substantial increase in weekly earnings for people with qualifications.

If you are staying in full-time education whether you stay on at school, or go to a sixth form college or further education college, you'll find a wide variety of subjects on offer.

Remember, further education isn't just about A-levels – you can choose from a range of qualifications such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), City and Guilds, GCEs in applied subjects and BTECs. These can be important steps towards qualifying for a higher education course.

It's important to gain nationally recognised qualifications so that they mean something to an employer or another learning institution.

BTECs

There are several different types of BTEC qualifications in a wide variety of vocational subjects.



There are a number of BTEC short courses in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). There are other BTEC short courses of varying sizes and levels outside the NQF. By their nature, BTEC short courses concentrate on relatively small blocks of learning within a specific focused area of activity, employment sector or skills area. The BTEC Introductory Certificates and Diplomas are designed to widen participation and improve performance at Level 1 of the NQF.

Applied A-Levels and GNVQs

If you're daunted by the prospect of having your nose in a book for another couple of years but don't want to enter the world of work just yet, there are several vocational (work-related) qualifications you could take.

The Applied A-Level is equivalent to ordinary A-levels. Aimed at developing skills and understanding as well as specific knowledge and GNVQs, Applied A-levels are appropriate for subjects such as art and design, catering or engineering.

Applied A-levels consist of six units and normally take two years to complete but like A-Levels, you can take a three-unit AS Level over one year.

If you want to take the subject further, you can take 12-unit Applied A-Level Double Award which is equivalent to two A-levels. GNVQs are also comprised of units pitched at intermediate level and can be taken as a first step to NVQs, Applied A-levels or as a qualification in their own right.

If you think you may not be able to go into full time study for financial reasons, there's help available – including the Education Maintenance Allowance – which could give you up to £30 a week.

Apprenticeships

For many 16-year-olds, the thought of staying on to pursue further education simply isn't an option – especially if there's a career you have set your heart on and just can't wait to get on with learning the skills.

Luckily for those who want to enter the world of work, apprenticeships are a popular option. You can acquire qualifications and all the essential skills needed to carry out tasks efficiently.

You will also have the opportunity to start networking with fellow colleagues, accumulating contacts and building up a wealth of knowledge and practical experience that hopefully will further your ascent up the career ladder.

Practical experience these days is invaluable and for most teenagers, getting stuck into the job as quickly as possible makes perfect sense.

A further option is to take time out to travel, usually called a gap year, or to work abroad or to make a difference through taking part in voluntary work.

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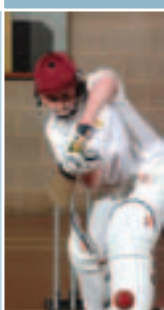
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Where Individuals Count

Education 2007

A diverse range of courses to suit students and workers

THE University of Chester's compact and friendly campus in Crab Lane attracts a cosmopolitan mix of students from the immediate area, throughout the UK and overseas. With a range of popular courses and financial support available

to help meet the cost of studying, applications have been rising steadily. Offering the flexibility of part-time degrees in certain subjects at both undergraduate and postgraduate level in subjects including business, computing, sport and health care, the university has brought new possibilities for many people, whose outside commitments would have made study difficult otherwise. Innovative foundation degrees are being expanded on the campus, developed in partnership with employers to enable working students to gain the knowledge and skills to enhance their careers. There is a long tradition of providing the highest quality grounding in vocational subjects such as teaching and nursing and midwifery (for which practical clinical expertise is perfected in a well-equipped training ward). Perhaps the most high profile courses are media-related. The campus's North West Media Centre incorporates sound recording, radio and television studios as well as post-production facilities with dedicated journalism and web suites. The relationship with ITV Granada Television in terms of training, funding and advice is a major advantage and the university has forged strong links with other local

industries with a formal student placement programme and an excellent graduate employment record.

Investing in the future

More than £9 million is being invested in offering 21st century teaching and recreational accommodation. Plans are well advanced for a £3 million Business and IT building and the well-equipped library will be extended to provide a £2.5 million Lifelong Learning Centre to provide a versatile learning environment, encompassing a café and multi-media study facilities. Whether sport is a hobby or a potential career (and the campus has produced rugby league internationals) there are amenities to suit. A new football pitch, running track, floodlit all-weather pitch and changing rooms complement existing facilities. The £800,000 new Students' Union building forms a focus for social activities and refreshments can be enjoyed in the modern and relaxed surroundings of a restaurant and café.

What the students say:

A survey of first years included comments which praised the 'close knit nature of the campus' and 'close proximity of surrounding facilities'. Students also found tutors 'very enthusiastic' and identified 'excellent support services on both an academic and personal level.



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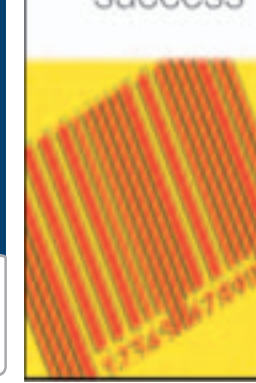


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Where will your young child be happiest?

A GREAT deal of learning and development takes place before the age of five, and your child can learn in a number of settings. These include:

- ☐ Nursery classes, nursery schools and day nurseries
- ☐ Pre-school playgroups
- ☐ Reception classes
- ☐ Accredited childminders who are part of an approved network
- ☐ Children's centres

All three and four-year-olds in England are entitled to a free, good quality, part-time early education place. The entitlement consists of a minimum of 12.5 hours per week for 38 weeks a year. It begins after your child turns three (the exact date depends on when their birthday falls). It ends when they reach compulsory school age. Nursery classes and schools fall into two groups: state and private. Most day nurseries are privately run. Most nurseries will take your child between the ages of three and five, although many day nurseries take younger children. They are also open throughout the school year. Private day nurseries open during the school holidays. Nurseries operate a core day of 9am to 3.30pm, although many private nurseries offer longer days. Most nurseries offer five half-day sessions and nursery schools and classes

have a minimum ratio of two adults to 20 to 26 children – one must be a qualified teacher, the other a qualified nursery assistant. Day nurseries have more intensive staffing ratios and different rules on qualifications of staff depending on the ages of children being cared for. Your child can also take part in a pre-school playgroup which are often non-profit-making. They may be run by volunteers, often including parents. Most playgroups will take your child between the ages of three and five, although some will take two-year-olds. They usually offer half-day play sessions, although some are not always open all week, and others may be able to provide you with longer hours. Another form of early child learning takes place with a childminders. Childminders usually look after children in their own home. Some childminders work as part of a network to offer early years education. All childminders who care for children under eight agree to meet certain quality standards and must be registered, checked and inspected regularly to make sure they are suitable to look after children. A childminder can look after your child from a few months old up to the age of five and some will also look after school



age children after school and in the holidays. They can often be flexible about the days and times they work; however every childminder will be different so you will have to discuss this with the childminder.

To find out what's available in your area, contact your local Children's Information Service (CIS) by calling 0800 96 02 96.

Visit www.dfes.gov.uk if you need more information about pre-school learning

Answer – Monday, the day of Merchant Taylors' Schools' Entrance Examinations.

Entrance Examinations 29th January 2007

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Education 2007



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MGS is a diverse community and welcome boys regardless of social, cultural, religious or financial background.

Indeed, it is very proud of its bursary scheme which enables more than 200 boys, who would not otherwise be able to study at the school, to enjoy life at MGS.

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Know your options?

PRIESTLEY – MORE THAN A SIXTH FORM

- 100% pass rate in 34 out of 38 GCE A levels
- 99.3% overall pass rate – value added for AS in top 10% nationally
- 100% pass rate in 14 out of 15 advanced vocational qualifications

Don't miss out! Join us at our

OPEN EVENING

Wednesday 31 January 2007

6.00–8.30 pm

PRIESTLEY
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01925 415415

www.priestley.ac.uk

Priestley campus enjoys a £7m transformation

PRIESTLEY College is the leading provider for 16-19 education in Warrington. It offers students a range of courses at advanced, intermediate and foundation levels. In 2006 the college A-level results were outstanding with an overall pass rate of 99.3 per cent; 72 per cent of A-level students achieved A-C grades while 34 out of 38 A-level subjects had a perfect 100 per cent record.

The college was also delighted with its performance at advanced vocational level with 14 out of 15 subjects also having a 100 per cent pass rate.

The ALPS performance also showed the college to be in the top 10 per cent for AS and top 20 per cent for A-levels in the entire country.

ALPS is a national system for measuring the performance of schools and colleges.

Meanwhile the college campus is currently going through a radical transformation with £7 million invested in a project which will be completed by August 2007.

The first phase of the project has seen the refurbishment of the existing main building, greatly improving access for the disabled and also work on the college grounds and on the entrance to the site.

Work has just begun on the second phase which will see a new building come into existence for teaching.

The building will also house a large student services area and a high street standard food court.

Changes are afoot too in the area of the creative arts which will see the formation of a new and high profile performing arts and media centre.

The changes will only go to reinforce the reputation of Priestley for being able to offer world class teaching in world class buildings.

In October 2006 the college had its annual visit from Ofsted. The college was delighted with the findings which included the following comments:

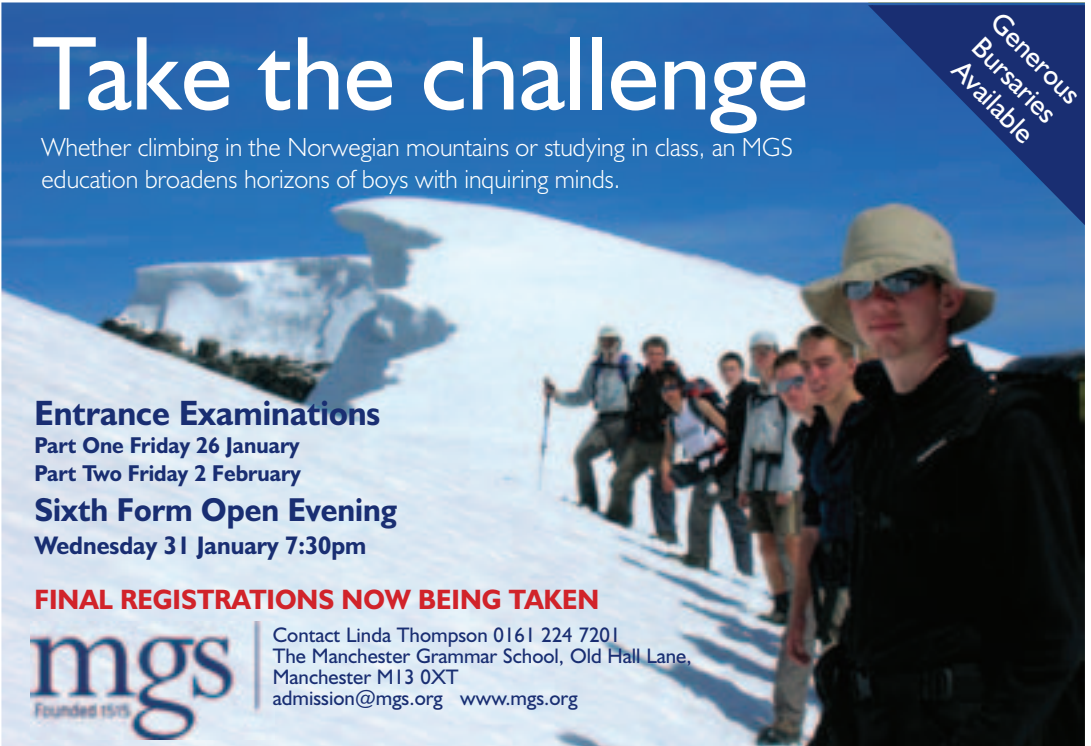
- Some excellent work undertaken by National Diploma in art and design has led to the college being nominated for a Beacon National Award. Outstanding links with relevant professionals and local employers have been established by the course team. These have enabled stimulating and realistic project briefs to be developed in partnership with external agencies which have inspired students to produce and exhibit work of very high quality.
- Current students value very highly the opportunities provided by the college to obtain information and advice on the courses which are offered.
- Students at the college frequently take the initiative in providing information to younger friends and siblings about their very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of their Priestley experience.
- Priestley College offers the widest choice of sixth form courses available in the area and the opportunity for students to create their own programme based on their interests, career aims and existing qualifications.
- Good progress has been made in ensuring the existing premises are accessible for those with limited mobility.

Why not visit the open evening on January 31 to find out more?



Take the challenge

Whether climbing in the Norwegian mountains or studying in class, an MGS education broadens horizons of boys with inquiring minds.



Entrance Examinations
 Part One Friday 26 January
 Part Two Friday 2 February

Sixth Form Open Evening
 Wednesday 31 January 7:30pm

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Question – If Valentine’s Day is a Wednesday, what day is January 29th?

Juggling a career and a family?

Learn how to make it work for you at a free work-life training session near you

HOLDING down a job and running a successful home can be a constant struggle for many people as it becomes increasingly more difficult to switch off and leave the office behind each day. With 24-hour shopping, communication opportunities and an increasing need to spend more than your contracted number of hours in at work, it's becoming even more difficult to cope with all the different demands on your time. Taking control and trying to strike the right balance between work and home life seems to be the key and researchers at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) have developed Equilibrium, a new project which provides a free training package for women and employers keen to understand the 'work life balance'. The LJMU research project, funded by the European Social Fund, looked



at combining work and family life in the UK and the Netherlands and how women juggle work and childcare. It showed that part time and flexible workers in the UK are predominantly female and clustered in low paid jobs with few possibilities of progression.

With work guidelines and policies constantly changing, it becomes increasingly more difficult for employers and their staff to be aware of current policy and legislation.

The Equilibrium project is a free training package aimed at raising awareness of policies as well as the benefits of working practices to both female employers and employees.

Included in the training session will be information about accessing family friendly and flexible working practices for women and there will also be advice on work life balance practices and how they work, as well as techniques on how to manage the conflicting demands of home and work. There will be a training session at Paddington House Hotel, Manchester Road, Warrington on Thursday, February 1 and more information is available by calling 0151 231 3610 or by visiting the website at www.ljmu.ac.uk/SOC.



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