

# NEWSLETTER

*for parents and students*

## WELCOME

**Welcome to our first newsletter for parents, students and the community. There will be a further update before the Academy opens in September.**

As part of Hull City Council's £465m Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme there are exciting plans to develop three new academies across the city. The BSF programme aims to transform learning and teaching in Hull and consultation undertaken showed great support for the setting-up of three academies as centres of excellence.

Pickering High School is set to become one of those three Academies and will be officially known as Sirius Academy at the start of the new school year in September 2009. This is a significant change for our students, parents and the community - and a very exciting one.

When we open our doors as Sirius Academy, what will be different?

The most obvious sign will be all-new branding and signage, including our fantastic Sirius Academy logo. Over the summer holidays, the PHS building will undergo some refurbishment (more details in the next issue). And, of course, students will be wearing a very smart and business-like new uniform. There will be a big difference in the way students learn. Sirius Academy will be an exciting place to learn, with plenty of opportunities for getting really 'hands on' in lessons.

The Academy will have two specialisms - Environmental Science and Sport.

The new Principal will be Dr Cathy Taylor and while there will be some teacher changes, most of the staff will be the same.

By 2011, Sirius Academy is due to have a brand new state-of-the-art building with leading-edge facilities and resources that will transform your children's educational opportunities.

**“Our objective is to transform educational opportunities for our students.”**

Dr Cathy Taylor, Principal

## Why Sirius?

Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky. The name was chosen from hundreds of entries in our naming competition.

Year 7 student Dez Greenwood suggested Sirius. He is a great fan of astronomy and wants to work for NASA when he's older.

The name also has a link with super-wizard Harry Potter. His godfather is Sirius Black.

Sirius is the perfect name for the Academy. We want all our students to be bright stars of the future.

## New Principal for Sirius

Dr Cathy Taylor will be Sirius Academy's first Principal. Dr Taylor was born in Withernsea and grew up in the Hull area. She has a degree in Chemistry and a PhD in Microbiology from Hull University. As a trainee teacher, she did her teaching practice at Kingston School, which became Pickering High School and will soon become Sirius Academy.

**She said: 'I am really looking forward to joining Sirius Academy. I am passionate about providing students with opportunities to enable them to achieve their individual potential.'**

## What will Sirius Academy offer?

- **Reward**  
Hard work and achievement are celebrated
- **Key skills**  
There will be strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy
- **Technology**  
Leading-edge e-learning for all
- **High Aspirations**  
Students aim high for themselves and their communities
- **Choice**  
An appropriate balance between academic and vocational learning
- **Involvement**  
Lessons that really come alive, and plenty of out-of-school activities to get involved with
- **Health lifestyle**  
Personal health and the environment are priorities
- **Personalised learning**  
Real choice, backed by staff and resources
- **Identifying talent**  
Every student's talents will be identified and developed.

## Our Values

- Teamwork
- Excellence
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Integrity
- Future-focused
- Innovation
- Celebration



## Our Sponsor

All Academies have sponsors. The Sponsor is responsible for the Academy's vision, ethos and development. Sometimes the sponsor is a business, or linked to the Church.

Our sponsor is **Hull College**. The College has 'Beacon' status, which means it is among the best in the country.

Our link with the College gives our students access to a wealth of extra resources, including post-16 and vocational education.

## Governing Body

The Governing Body is key to the success of Sirius Academy. It has complete responsibility for running the Academy.

The advantage of this is that decisions can be made quickly by people who are focused entirely on the needs of the Academy.

## Myth-busters

Academies are a relatively new concept and their purpose is sometimes misunderstood. To set the record straight, here are a few truths about Sirius Academy and Academies in general.

- **It's not a private school**  
It's a state school, but it is funded differently. It's inclusive so any child in the catchment area can come here, regardless of ability. There are no fees.
- **It's well regulated**  
We will be inspected regularly by Ofsted and the Dept for Children Schools and Families, just like any other state school.
- **Academies work**  
The statistics show that Academy students do better academically than their non-Academy peers.

**'OUR NEW  
UNIFORM IS  
SMART, COOL AND  
BUSINESS-LIKE'**

## In the next issue...

Environmental Science and Sport - our specialist subjects \* More about the link with Hull College \* Building refurbishment \* House names and colours

## Smart!

Our new uniform is smart, cool and business-like. From September, students will be wearing black jackets emblazoned with the Sirius Academy logo, teamed with black trousers, white shirt and a tie in house colours. Sports and PE kit will also carry the Academy logo.

You may already have been to a fitting at Rawcliffes, but if you haven't yet seen the new uniform, check out the Sirius Academy website.

**Parents:** please note that the Academy will support purchase of the new elements of the uniform. A uniform policy will be sent out shortly.

## Looking ahead

Designs are being drawn up for a new Academy building, scheduled to open in 2011.

It will be ultra-modern and very well-equipped. At the moment, plans include **contemporary science facilities**, a **recording studio**, **performing arts suite** and a **hair salon**.

More information will follow as these exciting plans take shape.