

### **Why have Year 9 places been offered at Great Park Academy rather than Gosforth Academy continuing to take students over their PAN?**

For several years, Gosforth Academy has agreed to admit more than its published admission number (PAN) of 360 to ensure that all middle school students could be offered a Year 9 place. Over time, the extended delay in the Great Park Academy building programme has meant that the number of extra places required has grown. A further increase in the size of the September 2024 Year 9 cohort to 490 students meant that this was no longer a tenable option.

In response, the Trust has worked very closely with the Admissions Team at Newcastle City Council to ensure that all Year 8 students in a Gosforth middle school have a Year 9 place offer within the Gosforth three tier system. As part of this, Gosforth Academy has made 19 offers above PAN to provide the required number of places. Without this, some families would not have been offered a place in any school on National Offer Day.

### **When was the Gosforth Academy admission policy set out and when was it consulted on?**

Full public consultation and reviews of the Gosforth Academy Admissions Policy were carried out according to statutory requirements in the autumn of 2021 for admissions in 2023 and subsequent years.

The use of random allocation as the 'tie-break' process within a category has been in the Gosforth Academy admissions policy since at least 2019.

### **Has the Gosforth Academy Admissions Policy been applied correctly?**

We are confident that the Gosforth Academy Admissions Policy has been applied correctly. As part of its statutory responsibilities, the City Council manages the coordinated admissions process for all National Offer Day offers for secondary transfers and ensures that the criteria published in different schools' admissions policies are applied to the offers and allocations process.

### **Can a complaint about the policy still be lodged?**

The Office of the Schools Adjudicator has received a number of objections to the admissions arrangements for September 2024. The date for submitting objections was 15 May 2023. As this deadline has passed, we have been informed that objections to the arrangements for 2024 cannot be considered. This is because the allocation of school places for 2024 has already been made and an adjudicator's determination does not, and cannot, affect the offering of places.

### **Will the Gosforth Academy Admissions Policy be changed for future years?**

The Trust is committed to carefully monitoring and reviewing the policy's impact, especially the random allocation tie-break criterion. This is the first time the tie-break has had to be applied, and the Trustees are paying close attention to the feedback we have received from families, particularly those we've received since National Offer Day.

We will gather more data over the next few weeks to inform our internal review process. The review may reveal the need to propose a change to the Gosforth Academy Admissions Policy, and if so, the wheels would then be set in motion for the required statutory consultation process. The consultation would have to be completed by January 2025 to apply changes for the September

2026 intake. If appropriate, there is an option to write directly to the Secretary of State to request a change for September 2025.

In addition, a number of objections to the policy for admissions to Gosforth Academy in 2025 have been submitted to the Office for the Schools Adjudicator. We have been informed that these are being dealt with according to the statutory process.

### **Is the temporary accommodation at Great Park Academy suitable for Year 9 teaching and learning?**

The temporary accommodation is suitable for Key Stage 3 lessons in the core subjects, arts, computing, humanities, languages, and technology subjects. To accommodate this, work is planned to expand the school over the 2024 Easter and summer holidays. Six additional classrooms will be added, as well as a large practical learning space for Science and Design Technology (DT), toilets, and a science/DT prep room.

Year 9 students will be mainly taught in this additional block of classrooms moving to, and between, specialist subject classrooms for subjects such as ICT, Art, PE, DT and Science.

The specialist science and DT room ensures that Great Park Academy will offer a full science curriculum across all KS3 classes next year. This has been carefully modelled and planned for. A significant portion of KS3 science lessons do not require specialist science facilities, and priority will be given to the needs of Year 9 classes. Additionally, Great Park Academy students can also access science facilities in Gosforth Academy and other Trust schools if needed. Once Great Park Academy students move to their new school building in September 2025, they will benefit from new, specialist teaching and learning facilities.

### **Which subjects will Great Park Academy students study in Year 9?**

Year 9 pupils will follow the full Key Stage 3 National Curriculum and study the following subjects:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Drama
- History
- Geography
- Religious Education
- Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)
- Design and Technology
- Art and Design
- Music
- Physical Education
- Personal Development
- Computing

### **Why are German and Mandarin the languages offered at Great Park Academy?**

Gosforth Group is a participant in the Swire Chinese Language programme, which has significantly contributed to language teaching across our Trust. Thanks to SWIRE's sponsorship, we have been able to employ more language specialists and offer various opportunities, including the heavily

subsidised trips to China for Pupil Premium students. The selection of German and Mandarin is part of the comprehensive language programme across all of our schools, which feeds into our Sixth Forms. This programme is part of the Trust's aim to promote language learning in a region where Modern Foreign Language (MFL) is not a strength. The choice of Chinese and German was part of the Education Brief that was submitted and agreed upon with the Department for Education as part of the pre-opening process.

In response to feedback we will offer some extra-curricular French or Spanish classes next year with a view to fully integrating a third language into the curriculum as the school grows.

### **Will the number of KS4 courses on offer at Great Park Academy compared to Gosforth Academy disadvantage Great Park students?**

Great Park Academy's curriculum is comparable to schools nationally. It is a broad and balanced curriculum that provides students with the opportunity to take qualifications in languages, the arts, humanities, design, or technology, in addition to the compulsory core subjects. These qualifications can lead to A Levels, vocational courses, apprenticeships, and work post-16.

The options offered will be tailored to the cohort's needs and be reviewed before the final guided choices are made in the spring term of Year 9. When a specific level of interest arises to study a subject that is not offered, the Trust can draw upon its expertise and resources to offer additional extra-curricular qualifications.

There is an example on the school's website of the likely option choices to give an idea of what we expect the KS4 curriculum offer to look like.

Students will follow the Key Stage 4 National Curriculum. All students will study and take qualifications in the following compulsory core subjects:

- English
- Maths
- Science (both combined and triple science courses will be offered)

All students will continue to study the foundation subjects of:

- Computing
- Physical Education
- Personal Development and Sex and Relationship Education

In line with the Key Stage 4 National Curriculum, Great Park Academy will also offer a choice of at least one subject from each of these areas:

- Arts
- Design and Technology
- Humanities
- Modern Foreign Languages

### **Will students from Great Park Academy be able to join the Sixth Form at Gosforth Academy?**

Trustees are committed to ensuring that students attending a Gosforth Group school will be offered an appropriate place at a Gosforth Group Sixth Form of their choice.

### **Can Great Park Academy offer a worthwhile extracurricular programme while it is still in temporary accommodation?**

Great Park Academy is very proud of its vibrant and wide-ranging extracurricular programme. Over the course of this academic year it has offered 32 different extracurricular clubs. Last term, 87% of students attended at least one of these a week. The leadership team is already looking at how the programme might be expanded and developed further from September 2024.

### **Will Great Park Academy students be able to socialise with their friends/siblings at Gosforth Academy, given they share the same site and some facilities?**

Both Great Park Academy and Gosforth Academy will be located on the same site for the academic year 2024-2025. However, they will operate independently with their own unique timings for the school day, including lunch breaks and lessons. Even though some facilities will be shared, they will be used at different times.

### **What will happen if the Great Park Academy new school building is delayed in opening?**

The building programme is on target for completion in the summer of 2025 as planned, ready to welcome students in September 2025. Although we are not anticipating any further delay, now that construction is underway, the Trust is discussing several contingency possibilities with the Department for Education in case the unforeseen should happen.

### **What support will Great Park Academy students have when joining to ensure they successfully transition?**

All students who have been allocated a place at Great Park Academy will receive an invitation to a transition day during the summer term. This event will allow them to meet staff and try out various subjects in taster lessons. The day's activities will be specially planned to encourage social interaction among new students. Key staff members will also visit middle schools to speak to students and their teachers, gathering information about how best to support students in transition.

Once they start in September 2024, all students will receive continued support during their transition and will be taught in a nurturing and supportive environment. Experience has shown that students develop new friendships and grow in confidence quickly once they begin their time at a new school.

### **In the case I am still unhappy, how do I appeal?**

If you have been refused a place at a school, you have the right to appeal against the decision. You are not able to submit an appeal until you have been formally refused a place. If you are considering submitting an appeal, you are advised to contact the school PA to the Principal of the school concerned.

### **What should I do if my appeal is unsuccessful?**

If your appeal is unsuccessful, another appeal for the same school in the same school year is not allowed unless there is a significant change in circumstances (for example a change of address).

Contact School Admissions for advice on places at other schools:

- Telephone number: 0191 278 7878
- Email: [admissions.information@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:admissions.information@newcastle.gov.uk)

In the meantime, you will be placed onto the school's waiting list.