




**DARWEN
VALE**

An Aldridge Community Academy 

PROSPECTUS 2023-24



**ALDRIDGE
EDUCATION**

Proud to be part of the Aldridge Education family of schools



Principal's Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to Darwen Vale High School.

As you will see, Darwen Vale is a growing 11 – 16 academy situated in Blackburn with Darwen. We opened in our new state-of-the-art building in 2012 and our facilities are second to none. We currently have close to 1100 students in total in Years 7 - 11.

Our vision at Darwen Vale is to ensure that all students achieve, both academically and socially, beyond personal expectations and prior attainment, that they experience an outstanding and enjoyable education and are able to sustain the life of their choice whilst making a positive contribution to their communities.

We will achieve this ambitious vision through addressing three key areas; firstly, by continually striving to improve outcomes for all young people; secondly maintaining a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning; and finally, by continuing to develop high standards of behaviour, life skills and an entrepreneurial spirit in



DARWEN VALE

An Aldridge Community Academy 

all our students that will equip them for their future after leaving Darwen Vale.

Darwen Vale is a school which has the very highest standards – both in terms of academic teaching and life beyond the classroom. Our staff work tirelessly to ensure students are happy at school and committed to being the best they can be. We demand a lot, setting high standards for students and staff, with a 'no excuses' approach to attitude, work and discipline. At the same time, we also provide considerable support for our staff and students.

We have a strong and lengthy tradition of providing high quality education to the people of Blackburn with Darwen. Our predecessor school; Darwen Grammar school was built on the Blackburn Road site in 1938. As such, we see ourselves as being at the heart of our local community. We have built partnerships with a number of local employers including specialists in engineering, sport and the arts. We are part of the Aldridge family of schools and we are able to

access the significant support and expertise that Aldridge Education can provide as a national multi academy trust.

Prospective parents should visit our admissions pages on the school website for details of how to apply for entry into Year 7.

Please contact the school if you have any questions or wish to book on a tour of the school during the school day.

Mr Matthew Little
Principal





Darwen Vale has been great for my three children. The support from teaching staff has been amazing and the extra sessions that they put on for KS4 students on a Saturday really make a difference!

DVHS Parent

Our Vision and Values

We strive to help every student achieve academically beyond their expectations and prior attainment. By giving young people an outstanding and enjoyable education, we nurture independent thinkers who make a positive contribution to their community.

We encourage all students to adopt this ethos, and embrace the Aldridge entrepreneurial attributes that make an Aldridge education unique.

VALE VALUES

WE AIM HIGH

WE WORK HARD

WE CARE

WE ARE VALE

I love learning at Darwen Vale because you get a lot of support from teachers and all of them are happy to help you improve.

Joshua - DVHS Student

Aldridge Attributes



DETERMINATION

The movement towards a goal, and resilience to difficulties along the way.



RISK-TAKING

Not being afraid to try something new or do something differently.



PROBLEM-SOLVING

The ability to express and interpret challenges, concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions.



PASSION

The drive to achieve and succeed.



TEAMWORK

A co-ordinated effort on the part of a team or in the interests of a common cause.



CREATIVITY

The ability to look at things in a new way, and seek different solutions.



ALDRIDGE
EDUCATION

Our Trust

Aldridge Education is a charitable Trust of enterprising community schools and colleges that help young people to reach their potential. We support our schools' Principals and teachers in rapidly improving the quality of education on offer at primary, secondary and sixth form levels in order to transform the life chances of our students.

Our vision is that every student at an Aldridge Academy will achieve academically beyond initial personal expectations and prior attainment. Our shared belief is that by introducing young people to, and helping develop in them, the core attributes of entrepreneurship, we can provide context and relevance to their learning, fostering creativity, passion, determination, risk-taking, problem-solving and teamwork. These characteristics help our students achieve in their education and acquire further vital skills for adult life.

For more information about Aldridge Education, including the Trust's statutory information, annual report and accounts, please visit www.aldridgeeducation.org

Transition from Primary School

We work hard to create an enjoyable learning environment here at Darwen Vale, but we know that a smooth transition from primary to secondary school is vital in order to give students the best possible start.

I've had such a great day and can't wait until I come back tomorrow.

DV TRANSITION STUDENT

Our pastoral team work closely with primary school leaders to ensure every child experiences minimal stress and disruption during the transfer to secondary school. In doing so, we aim to make starting at Darwen Vale an exciting prospect for all students.

Taking time to visit our feeder Pprimary schools, ensures that we have detailed information on all our students before arriving at Vale.

We have developed a dedicated section of our website to transition, with video tours of the school, up-to-date letters and information about the school to support a seamless transition.

A smooth transition

We begin the transition process from an early stage in Year 6, ensuring that students who are planning to attend Darwen Vale receive the right level of support both before and during their time at our school.

All students are invited to the induction day, with bespoke transition visits available for more vulnerable learners, or those feeling nervous about the move. One-to-one meetings between pastoral staff from both schools makes this process a smooth one.



As every student arrives with different abilities and skills, this gradual transition also gives us time to plan our curriculum to suit the needs of every student. By taking a tailored approach to education, we ensure everyone can achieve and progress.



Our Curriculum

We are constantly reviewing our curriculum to ensure that it provides the best structure of learning for our students. We operate on a 25-period week, with hour long lessons. Our tutor time is 45 minutes and is used for the delivering of our Vale Values programme. This is our vehicle for teaching PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic), Citizenship and statutory RSE.

This approach aims to secure outstanding engagement amongst students, and ultimately ensure that we can achieve great progress for all of our students. From a choice of 19, which include the subjects they studied earlier as well as business, media, sociology, ethics, sports science and textiles. The full range of subjects offered for GCSE is under continuous review.

Key Stage 3: Years 7, 8 and 9

In the first three years of their time at Darwen Vale, students are given a broad and balanced curriculum that opens their eyes to the full scope of learning available to them.

Our curriculum touchstones are as follows:

1. An emphasis on the core subjects of English, maths and science. We must ensure that our students are literate, numerate and understand how the world around them works.
2. A strong emphasis on an academic core including the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (English language and literature, maths, the sciences, geography or history, and a language) that develop cultural capital and prepare students for life in a modern democratic country.
3. A belief that the curriculum should be as broad as possible for as long as possible.
4. A commitment to giving students the opportunity to study the arts and technology

for as long as possible but with a commitment to allow students to personalise their diet as they move through the school.

5. To develop students' personal, social and health education including high quality careers advice and independent guidance.
6. To develop students' entrepreneurial skills and qualities.

A commitment to the arts (drama, music, dance), sport and computing is reflected throughout our curriculum. We have also increased lesson time for english, maths and science, laying the foundations for progression into Key Stage 4.

I love the subjects at Vale. I particularly enjoy art, French and history. The teachers always go above and beyond for us and are happy to help us if ever we're unclear on anything.

Lily - DV Student

Key Stage 4: Years 10 and 11

We operate a 2 year Key Stage 4 and our year 10 and 11 students have an additional "period 6" three times a week to support them in their GCSE studies. We are committed to raising aspirations and ensuring that the school supports students to gain outstanding results in appropriate further qualifications.

Our core subjects include English, maths, science and PE; students also have a wide range of option choices, including full access to other English Baccalaureate qualifications in history, geography and modern foreign languages. Other option choices are more tailored to student's individual interests such as single sciences, business studies, art, photography and textiles.

We give students the opportunity to develop in both their core and option subjects. This aims to pave the way for a smooth transition to sixth form, college or careers.



Our Curriculum

Science

We aim to develop all of our students into keen scientists, and we do this through an engaging curriculum and lots of additional enrichment. Trips, visits and project work is an integral part of science at Vale. Students can expect to receive visits from experienced scientists with different specialities. Other experiences include visits to Jodrell Bank, the Big Bang Fair and Science Live!

Alongside this, all KS3 students develop their communication skills through competing in the Science Fair and working towards their Bronze CREST awards. We offer a wide selection of after-school clubs such as Science club and Astronomy club along with competing in local and national challenges which we encourage all students to get involved in.

Art

Outstanding achievements in art subjects come as no surprise given the expertise of our staff and the excellent facilities we have here at Vale. The purpose-built ceramic studio with panoramic views over Darwen Moors, the specialist photography studio and open plan shop-floor area allow our students to experience a range of creative disciplines.

Design & Technology

In Design & Technology students embody the school values, creativity, determination, risk-taking, problem solving, all of which embed a passion for the subject. We are fortunate that in 2023 our curriculum can be delivered in our newly refurbished Design & Technology workshop and Textiles studio.

Here at Vale, we are inspiring the next generation of engineers, designers and chefs! Our students benefit in experiencing a curriculum that allows them to explore a multitude of material areas including new and emerging technologies such as CAD/CAM; 2D Design software, laser cutter, 3D scanner & 3D printer!

Business

We want to give our students the skills, expertise and entrepreneurial qualities they need to get ahead in the business world. Our students benefit from opportunities including a wide selection of local business links, entrepreneurial skills-based activities and visits to successful, well-known businesses. We are proud of the knowledge students develop that prepare them for life outside the classroom, such as budgeting and developing to product ideas



The sporting facilities at Vale are amazing! One of my hobbies is sports so have loved getting involved with the various clubs on offer.

Rory - DVHS Student



Performing Arts

Darwen Vale is gaining a reputation for its outstanding performing arts department, driven by our extra-curricular activities and facilities such as open air amphitheatre and fully equipped dance studio. Summer dance shows and school productions are just some of the ways in which students express their talents.

Computing

We embrace technology at Darwen Vale, and encourage students and staff to use ICT equipment throughout the school. We aspire towards all students being ICT literate and confident, by the time they leave. To enhance our environment, we have 5 fully kitted ICT suites, enabling all students to have independent access to technology. We also have bookable ICT break-out zones for all curriculum areas.

Humanities and MFL

Experience is at the heart of our humanities and modern foreign languages extra-curricular activities. Our students benefit from opportunities including a wide selection of well thought out educational visits. Our students have benefited greatly from visits to Germany and Poland as part of a study into the Holocaust, Barcelona to support our language provisions and a range of local visits too.

Sport

At Darwen Vale we believe that Physical Education plays a vital role in the development of young individuals, and our department is dedicated to fostering a lifelong love for physical activity and healthy living. Our highly qualified and experienced staff are passionate about their subject. A comprehensive curriculum coupled with state-of-the-art facilities provide an environment for students to thrive. We also offer an outstanding enrichment and extra-curricular offering that offers students the chance to compete at regional, county and national standards.



Literacy

At Darwen Vale High School, we believe that literacy is the foundation on which a child can build the foundation for academic success. We are dedicated to fostering a love for reading and providing our students with a rich literary environment. Our staunch commitment to a literacy rich learning environment is evident in the following aspects of our school:

1. Our school library with a dedicated librarian:

Our school boasts a stunning library facility which is meticulously curated with a wide range of books to cater to the diverse interests and reading levels of all of our students. From Charlotte Brontë to Stan Lee, we have a book to peak our student's interests. Not only this, but our library has a lovely, warm and inviting environment as we have seamlessly integrated the charm of the old grammar school shelves with the clean, modern aesthetic you will see around our school. Guided by our dedicated librarian, this comforting atmosphere encourages our students to explore the wonders of literature and commence their reading journey at Vale.

2. Reading for pleasure:

It is our firm belief that reading for pleasure is essential in developing fluent and lifelong readers. We ensure that every student, through years seven to ten, receive a dedicated form time of reading. During this time, students will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in captivating, diverse short stories, fascinating non-fiction pieces and engaging classical literature. Not only that, students in years seven and nine receive an additional hour a week lesson dedicated to reading! These lessons not only enrich a student's vocabulary and comprehension, but also provide a much-needed break that allows them to relax and enjoy the sheer pleasure of reading.

3. A Comprehensive reading intervention programme:

We understand that students may have different reading abilities and learning needs. To assess every student's individual needs, we perform comprehensive testing that allows us to analyse and target exactly what area our students need to develop. From this, our qualified and experienced reading intervention team work closely with students to foster their reading abilities and enhance their overall literacy development.

By embracing a holistic approach to literacy, we at Darwen Vale High School ensure that our students develop a deep appreciation for literature, strong reading skills and the ability to communicate effectively in all areas of life. We are of the strong conviction that every teacher is a teacher of reading, and every student is a reader.



#TEAM

**WE
AIM
HIGH**

**WE
WORK
HARD**

AVAILABLE

**WE
CARE**

**WE
ARE
VALE**

A Day at Darwen Vale

The Darwen Vale school day consists of five lessons, as well as tutor time and two breaks for breakfast and lunch.

Students go straight to tutor time at 8.30am. This 45 minute session is an integral part of our curriculum offer.

Year 10 & 11 have an additional 6th lesson on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Our 25-period week with the additional 2.5 hours of tutor time provides students with more time to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required for challenging national curriculum and

GCSE syllabuses. The additional time also allows our staff to focus on assessment for learning, ensuring that students are given detailed, specific and focused feedback on how they can improve their work.


Our increased tutor period provides a focused opportunity to deliver distinct lessons on key topics. Form tutors deliver a programme that encompasses:

- Spiritual education
- Moral education
- Social education
- SRE Sex & Relationships Education
- Cultural education
- Citizenship
- British values

DVHS SCHOOL DAY 2023-2024

Time	KS3	Time	KS4
8:30-9:15	Tutor	8:30-9:15	Tutor
9:15-10:15	Period 1	9:15-10:15	Period 1
10:15-10:30	Break	10:15-11:15	Period 2
10:30-11:30	Period 2	11:15-11:30	Break
11:30-12:30	Period 3	11:30-12:30	Period 3
12:30-13:00	Dinner	12:30-13:30	Period 4
13:00-14:00	Period 4	13:30-14:00	Dinner
14:00-15:00	Period 5	14:00-15:00	Period 5
		15:00-15:45	Period 6 (Mon, Tues, Thurs)



A photograph of two young women, likely students, sitting at a table. They are both wearing school uniforms consisting of a dark blazer over a light blue collared shirt. The woman on the left has long, dark hair and is wearing a striped tie. The woman on the right has long, wavy blonde hair. They are both looking towards the camera with slight smiles. The background is a brick wall with a window. A large, stylized quotation mark graphic is overlaid on the right side of the image, framing the text.

I think the tutor sessions are really interesting. We cover everything from mortgages to online safety!

DVHS Student



I love the fact that there are over 25 different clubs running either at lunchtimes or afterschool

DVHS Student

Personal Development

The development of the 'whole child' lies at the heart of everything we do. Our Personal Development curriculum is designed to create learners that are confident, resilient, and independent, who will continue to thrive in an ever-changing world beyond the gates of Darwen Vale High School.

Vale Values

The 'Vale Values' curriculum (which is inclusive of RSE, Citizenship, PHSE and British Values) is delivered by form tutors across the school. We also work with external providers who deliver workshops for students, which relate to the RSE and PHSE aspects of the curriculum. Curriculum content responds to the ever-changing and diverse needs of the local community and Department of Education statutory requirements. Our bespoke programme of study is based on three core themes; 'Relationships', 'Health and Wellbeing', and 'Living in the Wider World'. The 'Relationships' unit focuses specifically on the delivery of RSE, as do some of the more specialised units within 'Health and Wellbeing'. 'Citizenship', 'British Values' and other aspects of PHSE are focused upon within the 'Living in the Wider World' units'.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

A broad and varied extracurricular offer enriches the academic, moral, personal and spiritual development of our young people. We believe that through regular attendance at clubs, our students can develop their 'soft skills' that will enable them to become well rounded citizens. With over 25 clubs run weekly, either at lunchtime or after school, students can experience a genuine variety of enrichment activities run by subject experts. Our extra-curriculum offer allows students to engage with the community via social and environmental action projects that sit alongside their more traditional school subjects.

Trips

We believe passionately in 'learning beyond the classroom' and are proud of our comprehensive trips offer. These trips provide the opportunity for students to further develop their curriculum knowledge and understanding. For example, students in Year 9 studying the Holocaust in history can take part in a residential visit to Krakow where they can meet a Holocaust Survivor. Similarly, our trips to France and Italy are equally popular with our students, and indeed staff! As well as venturing overseas, many trips make use of resources on our doorstep. Examples from 2022-2023 include trips

to the Royal Opera House, UCLAN, Lego Museum, Palace Theatre Manchester to name but a few!

Darwen Vale has an active Student Council made up of representatives from every form who have been elected by their peers. The Council meets fortnightly on Friday lunchtimes with Mr Smalley to discuss matters arising that affect the student body. We also have an effective Ambassador Network. These students represent their school house or a specific subject.

We believe that education should pave the way to the real world, and focus on engaging students with the future from the start of their time at Darwen Vale. The Vale Values programme embeds employability into our curriculum, but we don't stop there.

A 'Go To Work Day' for students is designed to spark students' interest in their careers, something that we build on with enrichment activities and career sessions for all year groups. Our careers library and impartial, informative careers advice aim to broaden students' horizons, along with taster sessions to

give them a glimpse of what to expect when they go on to further education or employment.

As students' progress into Key Stage 4, we offer visits to appropriate colleges, as well as University trips for the most able students. We also regularly bring alumni back to the school, to share their successes and leave students feeling inspired. In addition to this, each student receives a 1-1 careers meeting with an impartial Level 6 or higher trained Careers Advisor.

We ensure that our KS3 students (students in Year 7, 8 and 9) are exposed to a variety of different careers. We regularly have external speakers in from various local employers. These local links have been forged over a number of years. We have recently established a partnership with BAE who have kindly provided us with a new 3D printer for our Create Department.



Lessons for Life...

Engagement, enjoyment and progress – these core principles guide our teaching and learning, and are at the heart of everything we do. Our students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, designed to prepare them for the future.

All students are given the opportunity to take part in challenging activities both within and outside of the formal curriculum. Our teaching and learning brings the real world into the classroom, and takes the classroom out into the real world.



Aspiring for the best

Teaching and learning and a commitment to continually evaluating and adapting our practice is our core purpose. Our broad and balanced curriculum provides the framework to help students make progress, but it is our relentless focus on classroom practice that enables students to make great progress and our teaching staff to strive to continuously improve.


We aim for the highest standards across all aspects of our educational provision, from our cutting-edge facilities and bright, modern learning environment, to the continual professional development (CPD) activities staff undertake throughout the year.

At Darwen Vale, we pride ourselves on the quality of our staff expertise. We build on this through dedicated training, including a teaching and learning research group that works throughout the academic year developing and sharing best practice throughout the school. All our staff participate in 1-1 coaching, observing each other teach on a weekly basis and providing practical strategies to improve pedagogy.



By collaborating with other schools within the Multi Academy Trust and drawing on the experience of the MAT central team, as well as local primaries, we are able to continually increase the capabilities of our staff, and with it the standard of our teaching and learning.

We believe that the explicit teaching of key skills such as our entrepreneurial qualities will help students become more rounded learners. We aim to instill in our students a passion for learning, the determination to stick at problems and the creativity to solve them, whilst teaching them to work in teams and take calculated risks in their learning.



Here at Vale we have so many opportunities to share, explore and develop our passions. The staff are always here to push you further and help you to follow your dreams.

Mia - DVHS Student

Inclusion

At Vale, "We Care" and as such we see Darwen Vale as a team and a family. #TeamVale is something you will hear students and staff talk about. Like all the best families we take great care in looking after each other, providing a safe and happy learning environment where our students can thrive.

We recognise that not all children fall comfortably within the traditional education mould, which is why our pastoral system has been designed to make sure every student is cared for as an individual. The Universal Graduated Response is at the heart of our practice in supporting students who need that extra care and guidance when navigating towards the identification of SEND. We also offer various nurture provisions and other methods of alternative provision such as Aspire to support those students whose mental health can sometimes completely stop them from accessing education altogether.

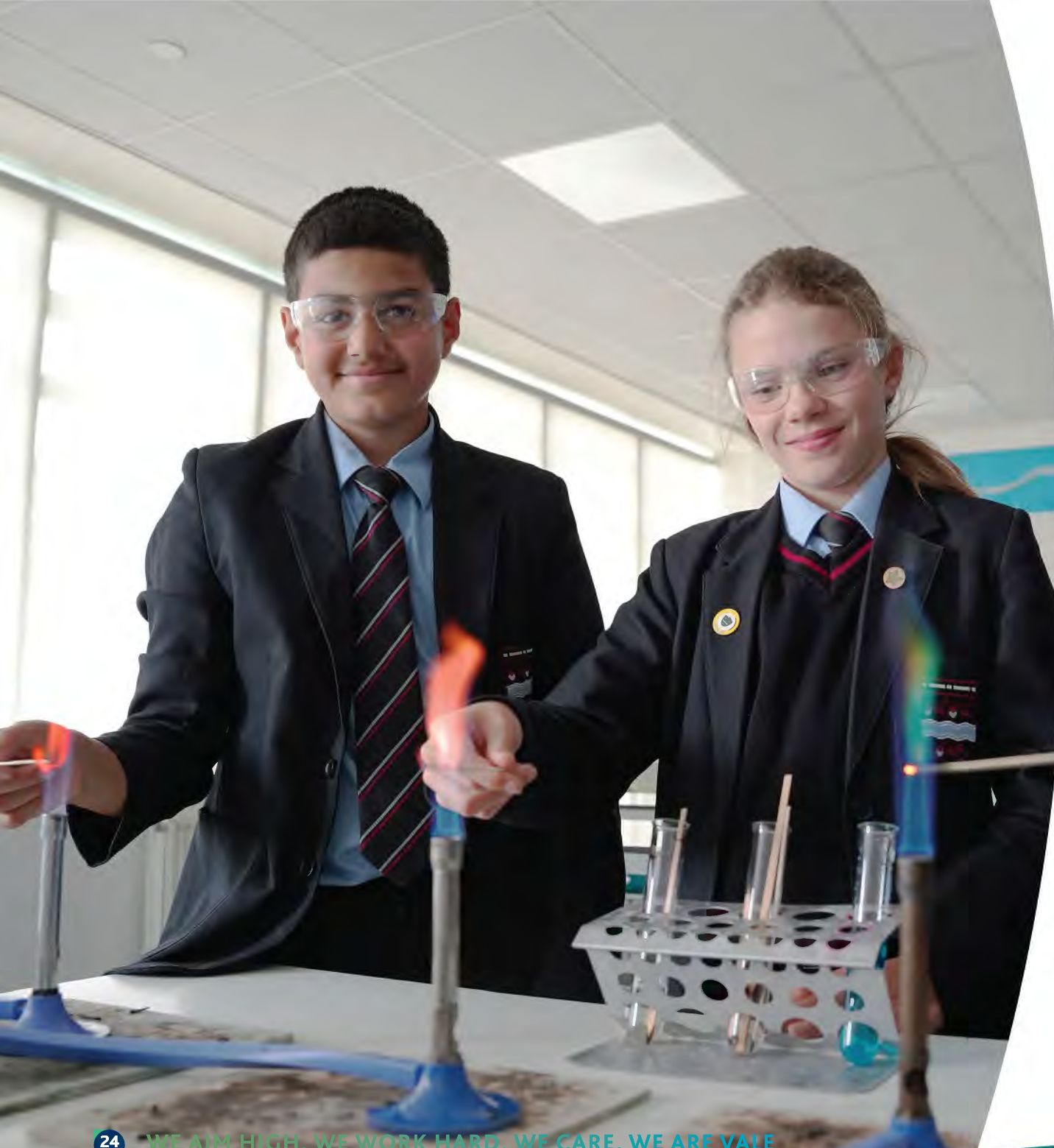
Right from the outset our young people are welcomed into the school by a pastoral team consisting of a Head of Year, and Assistant Head of Year and Form Tutors. Students will be allocated into a house: Curie, Holmes, Shakespeare or Turing and they will belong to this House as part of their tutor group throughout their time at Darwen Vale.

Students will generally maintain the same pastoral team, throughout years 7-11 with all Heads and Assistant Heads of year not having teaching commitments, meaning that they are available throughout the school day to support your child with pastoral concerns.

At Darwen Vale the welfare and personal development of students is discussed at our weekly PDBW meetings, which are led by the Vice Principal for Pastoral Development and the Director of Inclusion to ensure that no learning needs or reasonable adjustments to learning go unidentified, unnoticed or unsupported.







Endeavour

Endeavour is a purpose-built area which aims to support students who would otherwise be referred to alternative provisions. Short term, tailored programmes in small groups enable students to build the skills necessary to be successful in a mainstream school, so that no child is left behind.

Students will access courses such as AQA Open Awards and outdoor education alongside the core curriculum before being prepared for reintegration to mainstream lessons. All students will be offered additional and ongoing support from the facilities within Learning Support from specialist SEND professionals.

Another crucial part of our Learning Support Provision exists within Aspire. Aspire was created with the most vulnerable students in mind whose attendance has been badly impacted on by poor mental health, anxiety and other factors that can harm a young person's attendance to school. Our dedicated team work closely with very small groups of students with the aim of gradually increasing their timetables on a fortnightly basis, until they are ready to fully reintegrate back into mainstream school.


Standards

At Darwen Vale we insist on the highest standards for our learners. We uphold these by setting clear expectations of both ourselves and our students. In doing so, we aim to foster attributes in every student that promote their independence, strengthen our community and contribute to outstanding behaviour for learning. We call these standards 100%, and that's what we expect. 100% in terms of uniform, effort and attitude.

Darwen Vale operates a rewards system of earning 'House Points' and students are regularly given the opportunity to earn house points inside and outside of the classroom, and in the community. Students are regularly rewarded with Golden Tickets, Amazon Vouchers, Pin Badges and Rewards Trips at the end of each half term.

We expect our learners to:

- Show great listening skills to ensure they understand and can access learning in the classroom.
- Show a great attitude to learning by always trying ones best and playing an active role in lessons.
- Be equipped for learning.
- Have a positive and growth mindset.
- Treat others with the respect one would expect to receive.
- Treat the environment with respect.
- Behave in a manner that keeps themselves and others safe .
- Act appropriately outside of lesson times; eating in the dining areas, mobile phones are not permitted at Darwen Vale High School.
- Strive to adopt a healthy lifestyle, taking a full role in our extra-curricular programme, eating healthily and not bringing fizzy or sugary drinks to school.
- Show pride in our appearance by wearing impeccable uniform.



I like Vale as it offers a welcoming environment to everyone that comes here.

DVHS Student



Darwen Aldridge Sixth Form family

As part of the next step in your learning journey with Darwen Vale High School, we're very proud to now be able to offer you the very best of post-16 education, in the form of our newly-created Darwen Aldridge Sixth Form – fondly known as D6.

We are an ambitious and close-knit sixth form, which combines the very best of three Aldridge Education Darwen schools: Darwen Aldridge Community Academy; Darwen Vale High School; Darwen Aldridge Enterprise Studio.

In harnessing the knowledge and heritage of these three settings, we offer a high-quality and highly personalised learning experience for every student. The collaborative nature of D6 will see students based on the campus where most of their subjects are taught. Depending on the options and qualifications they have chosen, students will move between sites to take lessons at the campus which specialises in each subject – making the most of each sixth form's genuine expertise and teaching excellence. This will create a university-style approach to seminars and lectures, where students will move between campuses at breaktimes where needed. Where required, we'll of course assist with easy transport across Darwen at no cost to our students.



At D6, our students can choose from an extensive range of subjects and qualifications which will help them to get ahead. We provide A Level and BTEC qualifications which students can select to suit their personal strengths and interests, demonstrating to universities and employers both academic rigour and sound skills and knowledge. Students can also study the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), which is highly regarded by universities and other institutions. In addition, we support our learners to have the competitive advantage on their peers nationally through hands-on industry experience and engagement, alongside enrichment opportunities and strong pastoral support.

That is because it's vital to us that our students get an all-round and enjoyable experience at D6: we believe that true learning and real success build on great classrooms and offer so much more beyond. Of course, we support students to achieve their desired qualifications; but we will also equip them with the life skills and entrepreneurial spirit to support ambitious next steps, and to live happy and fulfilling lives.

Making the transition from secondary school into post-16 education is a significant but exciting moment, and at D6, we will support you all the way through that journey.

For more information about D6, you can speak to our school directly (using the contact details provided on page 29), or email D6@aldridgeeducation.org – we're happy to help answer any questions you might have, and hopefully look forward to welcoming you into our sixth form shortly.



**The support given
to me has made
me more confident
in my abilities
and allowed me to
progress**

Student, Josh





Celebrating Success

Our rewards system is built around the Aldridge Attributes. Students are given AA points for demonstrating Passion, Determination, Creativity, Teamwork, Risk Taking & Problem Solving. These are communicated to students and parents through Bromcom.

Rewards are linked to school trips, badges and electing prefects, as well as prizes and certificates each half term in our Celebration Assemblies.

We make time to celebrate our students' successes. Whether it is for academic progress, excellent attendance and punctuality, outstanding conduct in school or services to the community – it is vital that we reward and promote these students.



Committed to Outstanding Attendance

There is a proven link between achievement and attendance, which is why we insist that if a student can attend school, they do. Our dedicated attendance team work closely with staff and parents to ensure that students arrive on time, every day, at Darwen Vale.

We know that to do this we must offer teaching that engages learners. Our primary aim is therefore to provide an environment that students want to be a part of, with plenty of educational and extracurricular opportunities for students.

Our first day response system is designed to ensure that any absence is accounted for, and that students return to school as soon as possible. In doing so, we ensure that educational progress and achievement isn't undermined, and that we continue to uphold our reputation for outstanding attendance levels.

Protecting our Students

Students who attend Darwen Vale become part of a family, and we are committed to protecting all students under our care both in school and online. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, and take active steps to promote e-safety.

Our approach to bullying combines strict guidelines for preventing bullying along with student education on how to deal with an issue. All students know who to report to, and student voice shows that they feel safe and confident that any incidents are dealt with promptly and fairly.

While we aim to eradicate bullying completely in our community, we have a comprehensive procedure that includes restorative meetings and processes, encouraging students to see a situation from another person's point of view.





Uniform that Speaks Volumes

In-keeping with our grammar school heritage, we have chosen a smart, clean and traditional uniform for our students. Our uniform requirements are clear and focus on creating one standard for everyone.

As students regularly interact with the local community, we know that appearances count. For this reason, all students are expected to wear school uniform to and from school.

Our school uniform

The Darwen Vale uniform showcases the school logo and distinctive colours for which our Academy is renowned. It is comprised of a blazer and jumper, shirt, tie and tailored trousers or skirt, available from select shops in Blackburn and Darwen.

We encourage students to take pride in their appearance, which extends to neat and tidy hair styles and no make-up, nail varnish or facial body piercings.

More information on our uniform policy can be found at: darwenvale.com/uniform

Our Parent Partnerships

At Darwen Vale we seek to provide high quality support for families. Parental engagement with schools is one of the key components in the success of any young person's education. We aim to ensure that your experiences with the school from your first open evening make you feel a central part of your child's educational journey at Vale.

Darwen Vale provides carefully mapped out opportunities for parents and carers to interact with the school throughout the academic year. These include;

- Parents evenings
- Academy in action tours
- Meet the Principal forums
- A parent forum led by one of our parent governors

We also keep parents informed through regular updates to our website, email and written communication and three designated data drops each academic year. These "data drops" give parents clear guidance on how your child is progressing academically.

Admissions

The Blackburn with Darwen Admissions Body handles all applications to the Academy, ensuring that admissions to Year 7 are in line with the Aldridge Education community school admission guidelines.

www.darwenvale.com

You are also welcome to book a personal tour with a senior member of staff by emailing us at ckenyon@darwenvale.com or calling **01254 223 000**

DVHS's admissions arrangements are the same as those for all local secondary schools within BwD. To find out more information about Year 7 admissions, contact the Schools Admissions Team at BwD.

Telephone: **01254 666 605**

Email: admissions@blackburn.gov.uk

Web: www.blackburn.gov.uk
and search for 'school admissions'.

10 reasons to study at Darwen Vale



**DARWEN
VALE**

An Aldridge Community Academy

1.
**Strong history
of academic
success and school
improvement**

2.
**Excellent,
committed and
dedicated subject
specialist teaching
staff**

3.
**Multi-million-pound
state-of the-art
buildings and
facilities**

4.
**Wide range of
extra-curricular
activities which
are inclusive and
diverse**

5.
**A proactive and
engaged student
ambassador
network**

6.
**Highly successful
sporting
achievements
including multiple
town and county
champions**

7.
**A strong,
supportive and
caring pastoral
team**

8.
**A strong focus on
a great careers
and progression
programme**

9.
**A highly ambitious,
academic
curriculum which is
broad and balanced
for all**

10.
**High expectations
for student conduct
and behaviour**

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