Year 11 students achieve fantastic progress in their GCSE examinations
PROGRESS 8 +0.2

The Academy opted into the new government measure “Progress 8” in the 2015 summer GCSE examinations. Scores are calculated based on National Average performance. This means that individual school will either get a + or – score based on progress from students' starting points.

Our students gained a +0.2 score, showing that they made good to outstanding progress during their time at the Academy. This continues the positive trend over recent years. Key Stage 4 value added scores have been significantly positive for 2012, 2013 and 2014, placing the Academy in the top 100 schools nationally for student progress.

This outstanding progress has been recognised in letters from David Laws (Former Minister of State for Schools in 2013 and 2014) congratulating the Academy for being in the top 100 schools nationally for student progress.

The current year 11 are working hard to better our first Progress 8 score. With the support of families, Trustees and high quality teaching, we look forward to improving our outstanding progress in 2016.

GDA’s production of Oliver took place in December 2015, well done to everyone who took part!
Academy Councillors have been elected!

New year, new Academy Council! Each year, Councillors are elected by you, the students. I was elected this year to represent Year 8, but before you become a Councillor, you have to be voted in as a Form Rep and there are two of these (1 boy, 1 girl) for each form. Form Reps keep their form groups updated on what is happening around the Academy, as well as feedback their form group’s ideas to the Council.

When you are a Form Rep you have lots of responsibility, but when you are an Academy Councillor, it’s a bucket load! The qualities you need to have to be an Academy Councillor are:

- Willing to share ideas
- Be a good listener
- Be fair and honest
- Finish tasks on time
- Follow Academy rules

Please see me, or any other Academy Councillors with any ideas you may have!

Jenecha, Year 8 Academy Councillor and Student Journalist

Academy Council Charity Update

Children in Need

For Children in Need, GDA held two events. The first was Crazy Hair Day, staff and students alike paid £1 each to take part and the results were amazing! Next, the Sweets in a Jar competition was a big success as usual, it was also promoted by the Academy Council at the Year 7 Tutor Evening on 12 November. The winner was Miss Kyriacou, who guessed 180 (the actual amount was 179)! The total raised for Children in Need was £201.27.

Sixth Form Leavers

YEAR 13 Current year 13 students are focused and making great progress. Applications to university are under way with two already submitted for Medicine, the most competitive of courses. Applicants from the Academy are supported by a close relationship with the University of Birmingham through the A2B scheme and with mentoring and support provided by many local universities – Aston and Birmingham City University have visited to speak to and support students in September.

YEAR 12 We were pleased to see many of our most able and motivated students come back to year 12 after success at GCSEs, including some who came back from college in September when they realised the strength of community, relationships and support that the Academy gives. We started the year with induction and team building at Blackwell Adventure and an informative and motivating day at the University of Birmingham. We have built on this to energise and direct learning on our A level courses.

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Sixth Form Update

We were proud to see our year 13 students in the summer achieve great results and move on to high quality courses and careers. The average grades attained show steady improvement since the Sixth Form was re-launched four years ago, as we continually stretch, challenge and support our students.

Almost all year 13 leavers secured places at university, with three going to the elite Russell Group universities and one student gaining the first A* grade in A level Mathematics – quite an achievement and indicative of the quality of teaching at the Academy.

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SMSC Update

SMSC at GDA aims to help students understand and reflect upon their own opinions. Pupils' moral development involves acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. In all subjects, students are encouraged to research, do homework on the computers or just relax and enjoy a book. We have a variety of books like Diary of a Wimpy Kid or Tom Gates. To get to the LRC at break or lunch, you have to get a pass before school otherwise you can't come in to do your homework!

LRC Update

In the LRC, there are 25 volunteers who help other students to find books, sell stationery or assist with any kind of request! To become a volunteer, you have to answer a very hard quiz about books and前后nextcultural traditions and ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences. Students explore multi-cultural Britain and appreciate the variety of cultures that have contributed to everyday life in Britain.

Pupils' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their willingness to achieve. In all subjects, students are given opportunities to reflect upon their own opinions. Pupils' moral development involves acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. In all subjects, students are encouraged to investigate independently.

FACE Update

On Thursday 12th November, we hosted our first FACE (Family and Community Engagement) evening for Year 7 parents. It was an extremely successful event with families finding out about the subjects their child studies. The aim of the evening was to provide families with information, advice and guidance on how they can best support their child at home. We thank all the families who enthusiastically signed up for departmental workshops that will be running throughout this academic year.

The Umbrella Project

On the 21st September 2015, David Graham (a singer) came to the Academy to talk to Year 7 about a Natural High. He began by singing 'Let it Shine' and told us that drugs are not professional. Some people think that pop stars that do drugs are awesome, but in reality they are not. He explained to us how smoking is illegal and can damage your health.

David then sang a song that he wrote in secondary school, called 'Natural High'. He gave us Childline cards and said the most important people in our life are our parents or guardians and that everyone can get a Natural High by having fun and showing off your talent. Everyone has got a Natural High!
On Thursday 8th October 2015, four students from Year 8 visited the School Nurse Ambassador Day with Ms Nicklin, the GDA Academy Nurse. As we arrived at the hall, we were given drinks and a welcome talk then we all took part in many different activities, like a Community Clinic Design or posters about how the Academy Nursing Service can be improved. This event is so important as students develop their skills and it improves the Academy Nursing Service! All the students and nurses from the Birmingham District enjoyed the day (and the delicious lunch!).

Nayera, Year 8

Meet the Year 7 Football Team

A few weeks ago, the Year 7 football team started again with a whole new team of passionate, talented and young football players. I spoke to Mr Horner (team manager) about what he thinks about the Year 7 football team:

How does it feel to be the manager of the football team?
I am honoured to work with such young fantastic footballers and it is a privilege. I feel that there are lots of fantastic players in my squad.

What do you think of the football team?
They are keen, amazing and a powerful team. We just need a little more practice on how to work as a team.

How would you feel to win the season cup?
I would be over the moon; I would be very happy and proud of the team.

What have been the scores of the matches we have played and what are the upcoming fixtures?
The first match we played was against SK Kingston and unfortunately we lost 4-1 but then we played Perry Beeches and luckily won 4-2. We are going to play both St John Wall and Broadway soon.

How one of our footballers feels playing for the team:
"Playing in the school football team is a pleasure, I feel so lucky" - Henry

Aman, Year 7 Journalist