



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Free School?

A Free School is independently run and has the freedom to set its own curriculum and policies. Free Schools are free to attend. In law, Free Schools are the same as Academies.

Will Free Schools be able to make a profit?

No. Free Schools can only be set up and owned by charities. The Rural Enterprise Academy will be run by the Principal and her leadership team and they, in return, will be answerable to the Board of the Academy Trust.

Are Free Schools selective?

No – we will be bound by the same admissions rules as the other schools in Staffordshire.

How will the school be accountable?

The Academy will be run by a Board of Trustees, which is accountable to the Rural Enterprise Academy Trust, which oversees the Academy. In addition the Academy will also be accountable to the Department for Education through the terms of its Funding Agreement.

Will The Rural Enterprise Academy be inspected by Ofsted?

Yes.

How do I apply?

Application forms for both GCSE and A Level are available to download from The Rural Enterprise Academy website, or by calling 01827 304445, or email a request to admissions@ruralenterpriseacademy.com. The Academy will operate a waiting list. Our full admissions policy is also published on The Rural Enterprise Academy website.

How are applicants going to be shortlisted?

Applicants will be ranked against the Admissions criteria advertised via www.staffordshire.gov.uk for 14-16 admissions and www.ruralenterpriseacademy.com

What are the school opening hours?

The school day commences at 9.00am. Lessons will finish at 4.30pm. The extended day enables students to undertake homework clubs and enjoy extracurricular activities.

What are the term dates?

Our term dates are in line with Staffordshire County Council dates:

Autumn Term 2012:

Wednesday 5 September – Friday 26 October

Monday 5 November – Friday 21 December

Spring Term 2013:

Monday 7 January – Friday 15 February

Monday 25 February – Thursday 28 March

Summer Term 2013:

Thursday 11 April – Friday 24 May

Monday 3 June – Friday 19 July

How will this school differ from others?

- Students at The Rural Enterprise Academy will enjoy a curriculum focused on land-based, environmental and sustainability sectors enabling enhanced career prospects in these areas.
- The Rural Enterprise Academy is a small school allowing focused support for every student.
- Students have access to outstanding land-based facilities.

- The location of The Rural Enterprise Academy is excellent, set in 180 hectare country estate.
- Students will benefit from a new, modern school with brand new facilities.
- Creative timetabling allows students to work without interruption or the need to change workplace. There are no bells to disrupt the work pattern.
- Students will be encouraged to develop the skills to succeed in business and in life.
- Homework workshops will take place and will be a key part of the learning programme. Our aim is for most homework to be supported and undertaken in school so that our students can spend time when they get home reading or revising to further enhance their grades or simply relaxing and enjoying themselves.
- Our Progression Coaching system enables all students to have group and 1:1 tutorials. This is a key element in personal, social and educational development.
- To keep our students alert and active we will provide sessions such as; Young Enterprise, Personal Fitness, Progression Coaching sessions, Health, Citizenship, Beliefs and Careers Workshops and Environmental Sustainability qualifications.
- All students who need further support to achieve A*-C in English and Maths will receive the tuition and guidance they need. We expect all of our students to achieve at least 5 A*-C GCSE grades including English and Maths.

Will the Academy deliver the National Curriculum?

The Academy will offer a full programme of GCSEs and A Levels (from 2014) designed to develop skills and knowledge in rural enterprise, environmental sustainability and land-based subjects. Students also have the option to study a vocational qualification instead of GCSEs. However, all students will study the core subjects of English Language, Mathematics, Science, ICT and Enterprise to ensure they are equipped with the key skills and qualifications to develop a career in any field they choose.

What GCSE subjects are we offering?

The final curriculum offer is still being finalised but the subjects currently under discussion are:

English Language
 Maths
 ICT
 Business Enterprise
 Science
 Geography
 French
 Sociology
 Plus...

- BTEC Diplomas in subjects like Land and the Environment with options including: Agriculture, Equine Studies, Animal Care or Horticulture
- BTEC Science

What GCSE routes / progression routes to careers are there?

We are currently developing the options but it is our intention that all students will study English, Maths and Science to ensure they have the core skills for whatever choices they make. We will publish more details as they are finalised on this website.

What A Level subjects are we offering when the 6th Form opens in 2014?

The final curriculum offer is still being finalised but it is proposed that from 2014 we will offer:

- Biology
- Maths
- English
- Business Studies
- Environmental Studies
- Chemistry
- Geology
- Psychology
- Geography
- ICT
- Sociology

Students will normally study 4 AS Levels in year 1 and will progress on to 3 A Levels in year 2.

What if I haven't decided on a career path yet? Will choosing The Rural Enterprise Academy limit my choices?

No. We envisage that the majority of our students will have an interest in rural enterprise, environmental sustainability or

land-based subjects, but we will also provide a broad range of qualifications for those young people yet to decide on their chosen career, or for those who change their minds about their future career at any time during their education with us.

What are the employment prospects in rural enterprise, environmental sustainability or land-based industry?

There is currently a shortage of people with the right skills to meet the demand in the sector, so the employment and enterprise opportunities are very positive.

What is on offer outside of the classroom?

In addition to the normal curriculum, students have the opportunity to engage in extra activities during the standard school day including things like; Young Farmers Club, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, riding lessons, Floristry, Zoo training, Grow your own and horticulture club, Angling, Countryside Volunteering and Land Conservation.

From 2014 our 6th Form students will have access to all of the College facilities including a Costa Coffee Shop, use of the grounds, trips and visits to places of interest and enjoyment such as Drayton Manor and Alton Towers. 6th Form students will be able to utilise our wide range of online learning resources as well as excellent library facilities to further their studies.

What are the travel options to and from The Rural Enterprise Academy and how much does it cost?

We will be running a number of mini buses and coaches with pickups in four counties in association with South Staffordshire College. The details of the specific pickups and costs are still being finalised but details will be published on the website.

When will the building work start?

Building works for new and refurbished elements will both commence Easter 2012 with the refurbished element being completed for September 2012 and the new Classroom block being completed for Easter 2013.

How will the school operate with just phase 1 of the building developments completed by September 2012?

The intake in September 2012 will be for a smaller number of students. Once phase 2 is developed 300 learners can be accommodated. Students joining in September 2012 will have access to all necessary facilities either in phase 1 of the building or by utilising the outstanding facilities provided by Academy sponsor, South Staffordshire College.

What IT facilities will be available?

The Academy will have a dedicated IT suite offering a good selection of mobile technology available for students. We will also have technology to enable students to access their work from home. There will also be wireless connectivity throughout the school.

What support is available for my child?

We provide a comprehensive support service for the benefit of all students and parents. These services include;

- Free meals for those who qualify
- Careers support and guidance
- Access to computer programmes for careers guidance
- Homework clubs
- Dedicated medical room with qualified first aiders
- Mentors for all students
- Wide range of food options
- Dedicated support with career action planning, university applications and the preparation of effective CVs
- A dedicated Progression Coach for every student who will undertake regular 1:1 meetings with the student to set and monitor individual targets for achievement.

What support is in place for learning difficulties?

The Academy will have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), who will ensure that all due support is in place.

What are the reasoning tests and what is their purpose?

We will use Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) to determine appropriate choices and where any support might be required. They provide us with valuable performance data which can be used in conjunction with a wide range of information about each student that will normally be provided by their previous school. The assessments will be conducted on a number of dates throughout May and early June. Applicants will be invited to attend on suggested dates and will have the opportunity to select the most convenient time for them. CAT scores are not used to select as the Academy is open to all.

Will standard entitlements such as free school meals apply at The Rural Enterprise Academy?

Yes. Further details will be available shortly.

Is there any support available to purchase new uniform?

Veolia is sponsoring the uniform for 14-16 year old students so every pupil will receive a free blazer, sweatshirt and tie.

How will GCSE students integrate with college students?

GCSE students will spend much of their time in The Rural Enterprise Academy. When operating in College facilities, for practical sessions, students will be accompanied by staff from the school at all times. College facilities such as the coffee shop and library facilities will be available for 6th Formers from 2014; however GCSE students will have their own facilities within the school.