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And let us know what you think!

Ramadan

As we approach the end of another school year with the GCSE and A level exams in their final stages, we are enjoying the Euro 2012 Football tournament and trust our England team can do something unexpected, especially as the expectations this time have been very low. We then have the London 2012 Olympics from 27 July and Paralympics from 29 August. The fasting month of Ramadan of year 1433AH is likely to begin on 20 July (see page 9 for more information about Ramadan) with Eid Ul Fitr being celebrated at the end of Ramadan.



Rafiq Raja, MPA Chairman, with Lord Carrington, at a dinner to launch the All Saints development Appeal Fund in High Wycombe (Photo by David Knighthouse)

Free Literacy Classes

It is very pleasing to inform you that we have FREE literacy classes for all mothers at various venues in High Wycombe. A class for mothers in the Totteridge area is to start at the Highcrest Adult Learning Centre, from the beginning of the new school term at the end of summer. These one-day-a-week literacy classes for mothers have a simple aim to improve the mother's own literacy and boost her confidence so that she can be in a better position to help her children with reading and homework. It is thus important that contact details of the likely candidates for these free literacy classes are sent to the editor (r.raja@mpawycombe.co.uk) so that the classes can be organised as efficiently as possible.

News Brief

The MPA has arranged a number of meetings to increase the level of interest in matters to do with schools and education. There is one scheduled at for Saturday, 23 June and an all women event is being organised at Highworth School on Sunday 1 July about philosophy for children. If anyone is interested in attending either of the two forthcoming events then please get in touch with the MPA to book your place.



*Cressex students making a splash in the Olympic Park
- Full Story on Page 3
(Photo By Dave Marriott)*

Contact the MPA:

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HP13 6XX

E-mail: rafiqraja@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 07956 622 469

...News Brief continued from Page 1

The MPA has joined hands with the Parents Forum for children of African and Caribbean Heritage and have set up an umbrella organisation called BMEC (Bucks Minority Education Concern) and BMEC hopes to work for all disadvantaged children and thereby help to raise standards. For more information please contact the MPA.

Many of us are concerned with recent changes in Highcrest's Admissions Policy and how these might affect children of High Wycombe. An outside body, the Office of Schools Adjudicator, is dealing with these concerns. If you want to express a concern, please go to:
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator/decisions/obj>, you have 'til the end of June.

With best wishes for a peaceful Ramadan, great Olympics and better summer weather. In the meantime it is important that those of you who are prepared to write short educational stories, or are prepared to share experiences about education, please do not leave it 'til the autumn, but let the editor have your copy as soon as possible.

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To Place an Advert in our newsletter, please contact the MPA on **07956 622 469**

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In common with everybody else, we at Cressex are wondering when the summer is actually going to start! Nevertheless students and staff are keen to make the most of all the opportunities available to them, whatever the weather.

A high point for the members of the student sports council earlier this year was the chance to be one of the first groups anywhere to descend the newly built white water course in the Olympic Park at Stratford. In order to acclimatise themselves to the speed and strength of the water, the students had to take their courage in both hands, jump into the racing current and allow themselves to be swept along the course before being pulled out by venue staff. They then had a wonderful time riding the waves in an inflatable boat. We are very grateful to Wycombe District Council for enabling the students to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

We also again have great reason to thank our friends at Johnson and Johnson for providing excellent support to Cressex students. A team of their staff has been working with our able scientists in Year 9 on a project based on the research and development and marketing of a new drug. This project provides the students with a unique opportunity to gain insights into the pharmaceutical industry and the business skills needed for success in the workplace. (Page 3 has a brief report, written by two of the students involved).

In addition, Johnson and Johnson played host to the Iain Rennie Accumulator Challenge, a charity fundraising competition. The Cressex team of four Year 7 and Year 8 students, very ably supported by Mrs Maxted-Bailey, raised almost £1,000 to go towards providing specialist nursing support for cancer sufferers. This made them the leading school team of the four who took part.

Year 7 students have been to Oxford Brookes University to take part in a maths problem solving day and have learnt more about mediaeval history at Warwick Castle. Year 8 and Year 9 students will soon be benefiting from joint activities with students and staff from Wycombe Abbey School. Year 10 students have had two weeks' work experience in a very wide range of settings. We were delighted to receive such positive feedback from so many employers, some of whom even made a point of writing to say how impressed they had been by the young people. Girls from across the years have been really making their sporting mark in activities as diverse as football, badminton and rock-climbing.

But we well know that for all the good work we do in helping the young people at our school develop into confident, well-rounded individuals, the outcomes of the summer examinations are crucial in opening doors for them to the next stage of education and the employment opportunities they aspire to. The staff at the school have worked very hard to give the students the best chances of success and we keep our fingers crossed that the results in August are a good reflection of all the time and effort put in by so many people.

Any reader who would like to visit us to find out more about life at Cressex is welcome to contact me either by phone (01494 437729) or email (office@cressex.bucks.sch.uk).

David Hood
Headteacher

Cressex Students tell us about their visit to Johnson and Johnson

On Friday 20th April we visited Johnson and Johnson. They gave us a tour of the site, showed us what they do and explained that our challenge was to design and market a new drug. The following week three scientists from Johnson and Johnson came into our science lesson and gave presentations about the different diseases we could research: tuberculosis, cancer and diabetes.

Our winning team, 'Medz R Us' decided that diabetes is an increasing problem because more people are being affected by Type 2 diabetes. It is expensive to treat and daily injections are unpleasant. Our drug design is a chewing gum that will give slow release insulin. Johnson and Johnson were very impressed when we presented our pitch in their Dragon's Den and we are now looking forward to learning more about how drugs are tested thoroughly and then marketed.

Jasmine Lowe and Angharad Goodwin

MPA Vice Chairman Cllr Chauhdry Mohammed Shafique MBE becomes Mayor of High Wycombe



We are delighted to offer our hearty congratulations to Chauhdry Shafique on assuming the role of the first citizen of High Wycombe.

By all accounts he has taken to the role like duck to water and has launched his Mayoral appeal to raise funds for the Wycombe Homeless Connection charity and Gulshen-E-Wycombe, (An Islamic type garden in High Wycombe to bring communities together and to leave a worthwhile legacy for the future generations).

Pictured here at the All Saints Development Appeal Fund launch. (Photo by David Knighthouse)

Catch Taleem Ki Duniya with MPA Chairman Rafiq Raja

An informative insight into the British education system, offering unique experiences from students, parents and teachers, as well as advice for the Asian community ranging from primary education through to university. The World of Education is presented by Rafiq Raja who is a longstanding school governor and is currently chairman of the Muslim Parents Association, High Wycombe.

Sunday 10am – 12pm – Awaaz Radio 107.4FM

Do you have something to write about?

If you wish to write about something then please e-mail your contribution as soon as possible. Articles should be or about 500 words; however, if there is something of a more serious nature then please limit it to one page of this Newsletter and e-mail it as soon as possible.

Does your child need help with his or her school work?

If YES, are you willing to get him or her some help with not just the school subjects but about study/learning techniques. If YES again, then please email the child's details to Rafiq Raja (rafiqraja@hotmail.co.uk).

Register for free school meals to help your child and help your school. (Don't worry, no one will know. Schools keep it a secret. And it is very easy to register...)

If your child is eligible for free school meals, you must register them even if they're not going to have the school lunch. This is because schools receive a 'Pupil Premium' - an extra payment for each eligible child which they can spend on useful services. Registering might also get you extra help for things like music lessons or school trips.

Registering for free school meals - extra benefits

Registering for free school meals doesn't mean your child will have to eat the school lunch - there are other benefits. Some schools and local authorities offer extra support to children who are registered - for instance, help with the cost of school trips or music lessons.

Schools also receive a payment, or Pupil Premium, for each child who is registered for free school meals - £488 for this school year and £600 next school year. This money helps them to provide extra support like extra tuition, learning assistants or after-school clubs.

You can apply for free school meals if you or your child receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income of £16,190 or less
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

How to apply

Easy – Just give your school your National Insurance number. They will do the rest.

Any problems, contact me, John Bajina, through the Editor

Steve Baker MP tells us about his recent trip to Kashmir and believes that 'Democratic self-determination is a basic right: Kashmir should have referendum'

After Easter, I spent a week in Pakistan and Kashmir, visiting Islamabad, Thara, Sava, Dadyal, Mirpur and Skardu. It was my first trip to this beautiful country. The people I met were wonderful, kind and generous and I was deeply touched by the welcome I received. However, it was clear during my time there that this country has been ruined by its relationship with India and the conduct of some of its politicians and others in authority. It made me all the more grateful that in the UK the public, politicians and judiciary all insist on the rule of law. During my stay I made a video diary, and you can view this on my website (www.stevebaker.info).

One day, during a live news conference with Kashmir's Prime Minister, I was asked why I take the time to support the cause of democratic self-determination for Kashmir. In my reply, I said there are three reasons.

First, the essence of representative democracy is representation. I entered UK politics in 2007 when, thanks to the transformation of the EU Constitution into the Lisbon Treaty, I thought our political system had reached a new low. Perhaps it had, but the expenses scandal took it lower. I was and remain determined to do things differently.

I promised my Kashmiri constituents that I would represent them on the issue of Kashmir. In securing a debate in Parliament and following up with a visit to consider our next steps, that is what I have done.

Second, we have a common cause. One of the newest ideas in human history is that political power has no legitimacy apart from that bestowed at the ballot box. Democracy is certainly imperfect, and it may be the worst system apart from all the rest, but it is has the prime purpose of enabling the public to dismiss their rulers without recourse to violence, which is bound to interrupt the smooth development of civilisation and prosperity.

continued on Page 5...

In the long and bloody history of Kashmir, we see why the plebiscite required under UN resolutions is so essential, whatever difficulties there may be. The people of Kashmir should certainly have a referendum to determine their future. Finally, I support democratic self-determination because it is right. As Pakistan's Foreign Minister confirmed, the conflict over Kashmir is a substantial impediment to prosperity across the entire region of South Asia. Of course there is much else that must be changed, but British people descended from anywhere on the sub-continent deserve British representation on what is substantially a legacy of the British Empire. Of course India and Pakistan are independent nations, but there are thousands of British people who demand, and are entitled to, representation on this issue, an issue which harms their extended families and naturally weighs heavily on their minds. I was delighted to learn that India and Pakistan are working towards making progress. I hope the British Government will provide, with due humility, all the support it can.

Introducing ALOHA Mental Maths

A revolutionary new way of teaching Maths to four-to-fourteen year olds is being launched in the UK. The ALOHA programme goes 'back to the future' teaching children to perform advanced mental Maths by fully engaging both left and right hemispheres of the brain through the use of their fingers and then moving onto an abacus.

ALOHA stands for Advanced Learning of Higher Arithmetic and consists of a two-year programme of two hours' teacher-led learning per week which takes pupils from a first introduction to numbers right through to highly complex mental Maths calculations accomplished at lightning speed. It does this through a unique teaching methodology that combines visual, auditory and kinesthetic inputs to engage the child fully in the learning process.

Through a tried and tested methodology developed and refined into a comprehensive curriculum that promotes not just fluent mental arithmetic but also improved concentration, memory, reflexes, analytical skills, creativity, imagination and self-confidence. What parent would not want to provide their child with such a broad set of advantages in life?

Founded in Malaysia in 1993, the ALOHA programme is now in successful use in more than 20 countries around the world. The humble abacus has fallen out of favour in the West, giving way to successive waves of new teaching theory. Meanwhile numeracy levels have fallen to the point of becoming a source of national concern, embarrassment and competitive disadvantage.

But now ALOHA is helping to raise awareness of the huge benefits of introducing a tangible three-dimensional aspect to the teaching of mental Maths.

Pilot projects are currently up and running in an after school environment with a number of UK primary schools and the dramatic early results are attracting huge interest and enthusiasm among teachers, pupils and parents alike. Head teacher Lubna Khan of Berrymede Primary School in Ealing (recently rated outstanding and described as 'excelling against the odds' by Ofsted) says she is very excited about the programme and hopeful of seeing its eventual inclusion in the mainstream curriculum.

Established UK education provider Training Connect is rolling the ALOHA programme out via its nationwide network of 21 training centres. Training Connect director Pawan Srivastava says: "As soon as we saw ALOHA and the amazing results it produces, we knew we wanted to be involved. It has been a revelation to see how quickly students gain mastery and confidence and I can see this taking off in a big way."

Zeeshan Nadeem, CEO of ALOHA Pakistan and Oman added: "I am delighted to be working with Training Connect on ALOHA's UK launch. Pawan and his team have put some excellent contacts, enthusiasm and resources behind our UK rollout, and initial indications suggest that concerned parents up and down the country are crying out for something like ALOHA."

Training Connect Education Director Semida Haji adds: "There's a huge amount of excitement building around the ALOHA programme. We are already busy training up new teachers to meet the growing demand created by early classroom demonstrations that have shown how quickly the ALOHA method makes a dramatic difference to kids' maths performance and confidence."

Talha Habib from ALOHA will be demonstrating the ALOHA technique at the MPA meeting on 23 June.

Would you like to get involved with the MPA? Do you have an article you would like to submit? Then please get in touch via our website mpawycombe.co.uk



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Workshops Schedule

- ❖ Mondays 10 am -12 pm
- ❖ Tuesdays 4 pm – 6 pm
- ❖ Fridays 10 am -12 pm
- ❖ Last Saturday of the month 11am -1pm

The Workshop Incorporates

- Presentation & College Tour
- Speed networking with staff
- Face-to-face interaction with Accountants and Teachers in the college
- Question and answer section
- Brief practical accounting work – a teaser into what a finance employee does!!

These workshops are being held only between **18th May – 31 August 2012** and are a great opportunity for students to get an insight into the Finance sector

Do not miss this fantastic opportunity and book your **FREE** place now and goody bag!!!

We Teach - We Train - We Connect

For further information:

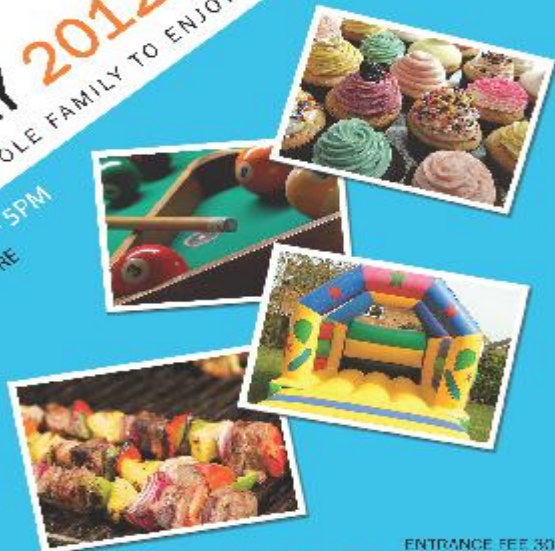
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Taqwa

Islam lays strong emphasis on the development of one's character and manners to improve one's Taqwa (consciousness of the divine). The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings upon Him, His Family, His Companions) said:

"Piety and Righteousness is being of good character." (Muslim)

**"The believer with the most complete Iman (faith) is the one with the best manners/behaviour."
(Ahmad & Abu Dawud)**

"There is nothing heavier in the scales (of your deeds) than good character." (Ahmad & Abu Dawud)

Imam Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (may Allah be pleased with him) eloquently explained:

"The Messenger of Allah (peace & blessings upon Him) established a relationship between the fear of Allah, and good character; because fearing Allah (most exalted) improves the relationship between the servant and Allah (most merciful), and good character improves the relationship between a person and others. Therefore, fearing Allah (most merciful) makes it possible for Allah (most exalted) to love him, and good manners makes it possible for people to love that person. (al-Fawa'id)

May Allah swt give us all the blessings of Taqwa, and allow us the opportunity to do that which is loved by the Most Merciful, and His people. Ameen.

Bismillah

Muslims traditionally use *Bismillah, ir'Rahman ni'Rahim* – In the name of Allah, the most beneficent, the most merciful, before doing any work, multiple times throughout the day. Both names '*Rahman, Rahim*' are from the root Arabic word '*Rahma*', which roughly translates to mercy, compassion, kindness and love.

With that in mind, the following is a beautiful hadith (sayings of the holy prophet) from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings upon Him, His Family & His Companions):

"The merciful are shown mercy by the Merciful. Be merciful to those on earth, and He who is in heaven will be merciful to you."(Sunan al-Tirmidhi no. 2049, Kitab al-Birr wa'l-Silah)

May Allah swt guide us all to the path of mercy, kindness and compassion.



**Raja Yousaf
Thames Valley Muslim Police Association**

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Dear friend and Colleague

Raising the Educational Achievement of Muslim Pupils

You are cordially invited to the seminar looking at the reasons for low Educational Achievement levels of Muslim Pupils, at Cressex Community School, Holmers Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 4QA, on Saturday, 23 June 2012, at 9.45 AM for a 10 AM start.

Rafiq Raja - Chairman

Agenda

09.45	Registration
10.00	Welcome & introductions - Rafiq Raja (MPA Chairman)
10.05	Talawat
10.10	Chairman
10.15	Tahir Alam, Director of Muslim Parents Association (Birmingham), Specialist in Muslim Education, a School Governance Consultant and Trainer.
11.15	Break
11.30	ALOHA – Advanced Learning of Higher Arithmetic
11.50	Tahir Alam
12.30	Parental Concerns & lessons from today's seminar
12.50	Closure & refreshments

Please remember:

- 1 To contact the MPA if you have any ideas about reducing the achievement gap.
- 2 To speak to young professionals and invite them to future events.
- 3 We have Taleem Ki Duniya/The World of Education programme on Awaaz Radio (107.4FM) every Sunday, from 10AM to 12PM. Please join in discussions and share your success stories and good practices as well as concerns. (Tel: 01494 521297).
- 4 To advise the MPA of the email addresses of school governors and teachers from the Muslim community.
- 5 That children only get one chance to have a go at a better future; please join us and make a difference.

Please email or telephone and let me know if you intend to join us.

Web: www.mpawycombe.co.uk Mob: 0795 662 2469 Email: rafiqraja@hotmail.co.uk

Ramadan

Ramadan Mubarak – *This year Ramadan starts around 20 July and lasts during the London 2012 Olympic Games, with Eid Ul Fitr (at the end of Ramadan) celebrated a week after the end of the summer Olympics. Here is a personal view of Ramadan.*

The holy month of Ramadan, of year 1433AH of the Islamic calendar falls once again during the school holidays. (AH stands for After 'Hijra' and Hijra in Arabic means flight and refers to the flight of Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) from Makkah to Medina in the early days of Islam, when the local populace took exception to the teachings of Islam, as it believed in **ONE GOD** and abhorred idolatry, which was the practice of the time in that part of Arabia.).

During Ramadan Muslims, all over the world, fast daily from dawn to dusk and take as much time as possible for praying, reciting the Holy Koran, giving to charity and doing other good deeds, as during Ramadan, the faithful believe, the doors leading to the blessings of God are opened, whilst those leading to hell are closed. Fasting during Ramadan, one of the 5 tenets of Islam, (the others being 'Kalma' the declaration that there is only **ONE GOD** and Mohammed (peace be upon him) is his prophet, 'Nimaz' (regular 5 daily prayers), 'Zikat' (giving to charity) and 'Hajj' (pilgrimage to Makkah) is not just mere abstention from eating, drinking and smoking during the period of the fast, but also forces the observer to refrain from being untruthful, unkind, cheat or gossip otherwise the merit gained through fasting is negated. The fast therefore, is a very strong regulator of the believer's behaviour, without the need for a police force to monitor the situation.

Ramadan imposes a special discipline on the faithful for at least one month, which can often lead to moral improvement and spiritual uplift during the rest of the year. The purpose of the fast is to obey the command of God, who ordained fasting in the Koran. It also makes one empathise with the poor and needy as your worldly status is unable to offer any protection from going without food or drink throughout the hours of sunlight.

Apart from making an extra effort to attend prayer sessions, as part of a congregation in a Mosque, a Muslim organises his or her day around the fast. It is often the only time in the year when the whole family sits down together for the early morning meal called the "**Sehri**". The fact that the pre-dawn meal is not only allowed, but also encouraged suggests that fasting is not meant to be simply a feat of physical endurance. It's more about changing ones daily routine by controlling the appetites. Depriving oneself of, say, the bar of chocolate at break-time is a small exercise in self-discipline. The idea is that slowly through the month one is able to generate enough self-discipline and control, that dealing with serious character flaws, such as envy and jealousy, becomes possible. At the same time, virtuous qualities of patience, generosity and love are to be developed. Fasting is a spiritual tool; it unlocks the psyche and gives the individual a practical methodology for changing and becoming a better person.

During the month of Ramadan, the Muslim faithful also give freely to charity and make special donations, as well as host "Iftar" (breaking of the fast) parties for friends and relatives. Ramadan therefore is a very special month for Muslims, who endure the lack of food and water (and indeed any medicines and even smoking) for the sake of God. It should be understood that abstaining from food and water during the period of the fast is not enough. All Muslims are expected to conduct their daily lives without giving cause for concern to a friend, work colleague or neighbour, nevertheless you feel better for having followed the Ramadan routine. During the month of Ramadan, the Mosque becomes the hub of the community with largest congregations for the late evening prayers, which during Ramadan will be performed at about 10PM.

Fasting in the middle of winter, with very short days is not a problem but **fasting in the middle of summer with the fast to last from around 3.45AM to 9.15PM in the first few days will be challenging**. Thus, very good wishes for a happy and joyous Ramadan to all!



A little light relief in these times

"Spain is not Greece." *Elena Salgado, Spanish Finance minister, February, 2010.*

"Portugal is not Greece." *The Economist, April 2010.*

"Greece is not Ireland." *George Papaconstantinou, Greek Finance minister, November, 2010.*

"Spain is neither Ireland nor Portugal." *Elena Salgado, Spanish Finance minister, November 2010.*

"Ireland is not in 'Greek Territory.'" *Irish Finance Minister Brian Lenihan. November 2010.*

"Neither Spain nor Portugal is Ireland." *Angel Gurría, Secretary-general OECD, November, 2010.*

"Italy is not Spain" *Ed Parker, Fitch MD, 12 June 2012*

"Spain is not Uganda" *Spanish PM Rajoy. June, 2012*

"Uganda does not want to be Spain" *Ugandan foreign minister June 13th 2012*

Did you know that:

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987, 654,321$

If a statue in the park of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle. If the horse has one front leg in the air, the person died because of wounds received in battle.

If the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes

Only two people actually signed the American Declaration of Independence on July 4, John Hancock and Charles Thomson. Most of the rest signed on August 2, but the last signature wasn't added until 5 years later.

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts.. So in old England , when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them 'Mind your pints and quarts, and settle down.'

It's where we get the phrase 'mind your P's and Q's'

The Great Learner Project

10-12noon on Sunday 1st July 2012

**At
Highworth School
Highworth Close
High Wycombe
HP13 7PH**

Are you looking at
ways to make
your child a
better learner?
Then come along
to this **FREE**
workshop
Ladies only

**9.45 – arrivals and refreshments
10.00 – Introduction to The Great Learner Project
10.15 – Workshop 1 – Philosophy for Children
11.15 – Workshop 2 – Mindsets
11.45 – Consolidation of the day and networking**

Places are limited so make sure you reserve a place!

You can confirm with a representative -
Text or Call: 07917 913337
Email: saullah@bucksgov.uk

**Sure Start
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Buckinghamshire **Children and Young People's Trust**

Family Information Service

Specialist advice for academies

Whether you are thinking of converting to academy school status or have already done so, we can help you with the complex array of issues you will need to deal with from best value audit and accounts preparation to fundraising and VAT issues. We will provide you with an independent opinion on your financial situation and recommend any necessary adjustments or improvements to your controls and processes for future years.

We are able to support you with a full range of specialist services, including:

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Nationally we are one of the leading auditors to academy schools, with a number of academy clients across the country, and our London office also has extensive experience in the charities and not-for-profit sector.



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