



# A CHILD'S JOURNEY

AN INTRODUCTION TO **TOWN CLOSE SCHOOL**

# EXPECT EXCEPTIONAL JOURNEYS

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A Town Close education offers children an exceptional start to their journey through life. They experience academic rigour, intellectual enquiry and an amazing array of co-curricular experiences, equipping them with many of the key skills they will need in later life.

We celebrate our pupils' individual talents and provide a home for each child's dreams and ambitions. The breadth of opportunity enables young people to discover their strengths, foster life-long interests and develop the confidence to persevere when presented with a challenge.

There is a spirit of happiness and collaboration amongst the Town Close family and our idyllic wooded site near the centre of Norwich gives children the space and freedom to play and explore. From the very first discovery-led years, children learn in fantastic indoor and outdoor teaching spaces and have access to high quality specialist facilities on our fifteen acre site.

Senior schools often comment on how impressive the pupils we send them are. They are polite, open and confident and have the ability to think for themselves. Our pupils have an excellent record in senior school scholarship and entrance assessments and the lessons learned in these formative years last far beyond.

We hope you enjoy this glimpse of a child's journey through Town Close and look forward to welcoming you to our School.



# A PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

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At Town Close School, the personal, social and emotional development of every child underpins the entire School's ethos and curriculum. Each individual engages with others within a safe, secure and stimulating environment in a wide range of contexts to develop their personal and social skills and become effective and motivated learners.

From the moment our younger pupils enter the Pre Prep, they are offered real opportunities to develop, grow and learn in a beautiful and nurturing environment. We enable younger children to become independent by providing a scaffold of safe, secure relationships, developing and maintaining close partnerships with parents and by fostering traditional values.

As the children progress through the school they are offered a wealth of opportunities to develop an awareness of their responsibility to others, as well as celebrating their own uniqueness. This is achieved through the house system, small, regular, mixed-age tutor group meetings, the School Council, our learning support department and numerous clubs and societies. All of these aspects complement our children's excellent academic development.

Town Close pupils have an innovative approach to fundraising and are given many opportunities to help others. This supports their understanding of the wider community and their future world.

Our beautiful setting enables children to appreciate the awe and wonder of nature, as we encourage them to develop an inner sense of well-being and a life-long appreciation of the world around them.

Town Close School offers the perfect environment for fostering healthy, well-rounded and happy individuals, ready to embark on their future journeys through life.



# KATERINA AND MORGAN

## A BEGINNING AND AN END

Katerina started at Town Close aged five and is one of the youngest in her Year One class. 'I have loads of best friends at school,' she proudly states. 'Outside in the playground we like finding bugs together. We make homes for them out of sticks and plants. We love the adventure playground too. I sometimes cheat on the monkey bars because I can reach the floor.'

'I really like writing stories and reading non-fiction books about animals, especially cats. I'm thinking about writing a play with my friends about my big cat that ran away. I can't believe how small she made herself to get through the crack in the door. I think she may have been magic.'

The subject Katerina really gets excited about is art. 'My best work was a symmetric triangle and a symmetric circle and we had to make them look like Kandinsky's work.'

Katerina is also busy developing her musical talents. 'I play harp and piano. I love learning both and I am already a Grade Two on the piano. I'm planning on trying the recorder next.'

She is also very proud of being able to speak Italian and Bulgarian and as she puts it 'a bit of French'. 'I can prove it' she confidently exclaims, 'Ciao! Dovijdane! Bonjour!'

For someone at the start of her Town Close journey, Katerina has surprisingly firm ideas about her future. 'I really want to be a vet when I grow up. I would like to work at an animal trust. I could work in Bulgaria because there's lots of cats on the streets in Bulgaria.'

In contrast Morgan is about to start the next phase of her educational journey as she nears the end of Year Eight. She feels proud to be contributing to the School community as School Council Chair. 'My job is to get everyone in the School involved in what they want for the School. Some of the people don't like to speak up so we have class reps for each class to talk to. We have just finished debating about getting soup back on the lunch menu!'

Morgan has introduced digital technology as a communication tool at Town Close. 'I started a radio station that is a podcast on the school intranet so that pupils, parents and teachers can hear it. It's great fun as we try to get every year group involved. I want it to keep going once I've left so I have been asked to choose someone from Year Seven to take it on.' When asked what's been her toughest radio assignment yet she's quick to answer, 'Interviewing the Headmaster.'

Throughout Year Eight, Morgan has successfully focused on her academic work with history, English and especially biology as her favourite subjects. But she feels she will be taking a bigger lesson away from Town Close when she leaves. 'All the teachers have given me encouragement and I have learnt never to give up and always to try your hardest at everything. Even if it's hard in the beginning, you will always achieve in the end. I will leave Town Close with a lot of confidence about the future.'



# AN ACADEMIC JOURNEY

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From their very first day, each child embarks on their own unique academic journey through Town Close. Children are closely supported by highly qualified staff, so that they feel safe and secure and are happy to investigate and explore a wealth of resources and facilities. They are then carefully introduced to a variety of activities and develop a broad range of valuable skills, both in and outside the classrooms.

As the children's natural enthusiasm and curiosity is harnessed, they develop a positive attitude to their learning along with the associated skills of perseverance, concentration, independent thinking and studying. Core skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics are developed, so laying the foundations for future learning in diverse academic areas.

As children progress through the School, they develop an extensive range of learning skills, acquire knowledge in particular subject areas and have a wealth of opportunities to discover where their particular talents lie. From the age of nine years, children receive all their lessons from specialist teachers. It is now that they can develop expertise in one or more of the many individual subjects, aiming ultimately at excellent Common Entrance results or even succeeding with scholarship level work.

All children are assessed, supported and encouraged according to their particular talents and learning needs, ensuring a unique academic journey through the School and complete preparation for future education.



# MOLLY AND ARJUNA

## ENJOYING THE LEARNING CURVE

Molly was awarded an academic scholarship in Year Six which involved exams in science, maths, English and French. 'We sat those in a morning in school,' Molly explains, 'then we had an interview with the Headmaster. He asked me one open-ended question, which was if you could change one thing about the world what would you change? I said poverty.'

Molly is now studying a wide range of subjects at Town Close, 'I quite like maths and I enjoy art. I really enjoy English, particularly when we are doing creative writing and grammar. But I really like speaking, which is probably why I quite like drama. I'm taking part in the Year Six performance of *The Secret Garden*. That means rehearsal after school twice a week at the moment.'

Molly is also a musician and the only soprano saxophonist in the Single Reed Band. 'I thought it was a really cool instrument to play. It's a bit out there and not what people really expect. I'm doing my Grade Four this year.'

'I like maths because numbers are fun and I love working out problems. We're doing conversions at the moment,' states a very confident Arjuna. 'Latin is fun but maths is best. It is either right or wrong so it's easier to learn and I don't have to do all that writing'

Arjuna was Year Five World Maths Day winner, 'I really wanted to do that. It was online and it was great when you can beat people from all around the world in a maths test.'

'Science is really fun here too. I like studying about the human body and I want to be a doctor. All my family are doctors.'

When asked what type of medicine he wants to study, Arjuna is focused but with reservations, 'I want to be something to do with the heart, but I am not sure I would like all the surgery!'



# A TECHNOLOGICAL JOURNEY

'But why?' A question we never tire of exploring and answering in Design and Technology and Computing.

A Town Close child encounters technological challenges and is guided by ambitious staff who embrace technical development and innovation. Consequently, our children never lose the natural investigator within them. They are resilient and confident learners who are given the freedom to explore, to question and to solve.

Our progressive Design and Technology curriculum builds on the children's natural curiosity for the world around them as they evaluate, create and test, whether this is up-cycling materials in our Nursery or engineering a full-size electric racing kart in Year Seven. Progressing through the School, children have access to our well-equipped specialist workshop and to a wide range of tools and materials.

We want our children to feel supremely confident in dealing with the full spectrum of IT equipment that they will encounter from programmable toys to tablets, and to understand how these devices can enrich and support their daily lives. Through engaging with computer programming, considering e-Safety, using software, animation and digital imagery, our children feel supremely confident in an ever-changing digital and technological world.





# ALEXANDRA AND JOE

## ENGAGING EXPERIENCES ALONG THE WAY

'I've always been interested in crafts and sticking things together. It doesn't have to be always just painting,' is how Alexandra of Year Five describes the creative and design work she does at Town Close. 'I love drawing and collage. I made a fish and it is made to be like a Roman mosaic. I was really pleased with it and it has been framed and put on the staircase at home.'

Another piece of Alexandra's work is also on show in School. 'Outside the Headmaster's office there's a large canvas of some cow parsley I did. I was happy with the way it turned out but I was shy about it being put up.'

In Design and Technology, Alexandra says that experimenting with materials is an interesting part of her craft. 'We use lots of different things like wood, plastic, wire and cardboard. We're in the process of making A5 pop-up books. Mine has three double pages that use parallel folds and V-folds. We've learnt all these new ways of working this term.'

'Before that we all made fan-powered cars. We had to make the frame out of wood then cover it with card and then wire it to a battery to make the propeller work. But mine didn't work too well because I put the wheels too close to the body. I'll learn from that next time.'

'I also chose to do textile crafts which are knitting, sewing and crochet. I don't know where I got inspired for that, probably my grandma. She was always crocheting jumpers.'

Alexandra has thoughts on where her creativity comes from, 'I get ideas from lots of things all around, especially from

seeing other people's work like my classmates. You get lots of inspiration and when it comes to doing your own pieces it helps get you started.'

She firmly believes in being original. 'Art is good because you can express yourself any way you want. It doesn't always have to make sense.'

Joe is in Year Six. When Joe gets older he has one ambition: to be an engineer. 'I just like building things,' he says. 'Cars are the best things to design and build,' he continues. 'When I'm older I would love to start by working for Lotus because they are here in Norfolk.'

But every great engineer has to start somewhere, so for the time being at School Joe is engaged in building a ball bearing maze. 'I have set it up on an A4 card, designed and painted a background and then I am creating a route for the maze on top of that.'

'DT and maths are by far my favourite lessons at school,' Joe states. He explains his liking for English and drama and all sorts of sport too, but he is quick to get back to his favourite subject, 'Year Seven are creating go karts from scratch,' he exclaims, 'that's really cool and I can't wait to be involved in that sort of project next year.'

Joe is asked to think what sort of car he would ultimately like to build. 'I would build any car,' he says, but then qualifies that by adding, 'as long as it was a Ferrari!'

# AN ARTISTIC JOURNEY

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Set out on a long walk in unfamiliar country without a map and compass, and it is easy to get lost. The creative journey at Town Close begins with equipping our children at the outset with the necessary tools, and the skills to use them, in order to enable them to reach their destinations with confidence.

There are regular and varied productions - dramatic, musical and poetic - in the Read Hall, where children can experience their moment in the limelight, or alternatively program the lighting itself. In addition, the early introduction of curricular drama develops cooperation, empathy and confidence through group work, games and exercises.

Music at Town Close is exciting, practical and varied. With the emphasis on practical music making, and many different opportunities for performance, the journey explores the history of Western music: commercial, popular, jazz, computer music and world genres. By the end of their journey, our pupils have a broad practical knowledge of music and an understanding of its importance in today's society.

In the early years, our children explore art to develop their awareness through visual and tactile experiences. This awareness is progressively built upon through the learning of new skills and techniques. Children become increasingly independent in the creation of their artwork, empowered to make personal choices, which are celebrated in displays of art around the School.

Whatever their goal, our children are encouraged to focus on their destination and also to appreciate and enjoy the varied landscapes they encounter along the way.



# HARI AND ADAM

## MUSICAL JOURNEYS ON DIFFERENT SCALES

'I like music,' declares Hari of Year Two. 'Since I started school I have been learning the cornet. It's like a trumpet but mine is blue.' Hari's repertoire is growing. 'I can play Jingle Bells and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star but that's too easy. The harder ones are The Birdie Song and The Can Can.'

Hari's artistic journey is fuelling his imagination. 'I like egg racing' When asked to explain this pastime Hari says, 'Well, you usually have an egg on the spoon but in class I made an egg that could walk on his own. I gave him one leg. He's a bouncing egg.'

Painting, drawing and crafts also engage Hari's inquisitive mind. 'The hardest thing I've made is a spider with eight legs. I used a pompom for his body and then four straws on each side for his legs. He's in my bedroom now. I haven't named him but I made him a little house out of cardboard.'

Hari's knowledge of spiders is impressive and comes from his keenness to learn about the world he lives in. 'There are tarantulas and black widow spiders and the wolf spider and banana spiders,' he informs. 'I have seen them because I have been to India and Africa.'

Adam's artistic journey was set to a musical score from the start. 'I started piano aged four and have progressed to Grade Eight. I am Grade Seven violin at the moment and am probably the same standard on the viola. I want to be a professional musician.'

'I play in the National Children's Orchestra, the Norfolk County Youth Orchestra and in the school orchestras.' Playing at this level means Adam travels a lot. 'The National Children's Orchestra has a spring and a summer residence so you go there for a week and then you perform in places like the Birmingham Symphony Hall and the Southwark Centre.'

As Head Boy, Adam recognises how Town Close has helped develop his musical career. 'School has been totally supportive of my music, allowing me to balance everything I do artistically with my academic lessons. And I've always felt that I've been taught in a caring, family atmosphere.'

'I'm leaving Town Close this year and the result of my musical development is that I'm going on to Eton College. I have been accepted as a music exhibitionist.' A fantastic achievement about which Adam is justly excited, 'I'm absolutely thrilled.'

Adam's musical influences are eclectic. 'Lang Lang is my piano hero. He's Chinese and a bit of a superstar when it comes to classical playing. I had the chance to play with him at the Royal Festival Hall when I was ten in concert with a massive piano orchestra of 99 other pianists on 50 pianos. We played Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Wagner's Ride of the Valkyries. I think it was recorded. I also like Olivier Messiaen, a modern French composer, from the early twentieth century.'

And anyone 'old school'? 'Bach, he's cool.'



# A SPORTING JOURNEY

A vital ingredient for a successful education is a child's physical well-being. In the Early Years we start their Town Close journey by concentrating on physical literacy. We encourage the children to use their bodies through swimming, dancing, throwing, catching, using outdoor play equipment and exploring woodland areas. The children have a broad range of opportunities to refine their manual skills and we encourage active learners.

Not only is sport an area in which children gain confidence and develop all aspects of physical literacy and fitness but it is also a medium through which many life skills are developed. These include teamwork, good sportsmanship, self-discipline, respect for others, communication and fair play. Through an inclusive curriculum they are encouraged to develop their own character and personality through early exposure to competitive situations, often leading to regional and national competitions. By fielding numerous teams at each age group, not only are we able to ensure that there is healthy competition for places but also that the majority of pupils will represent the School at various points during their journey through Town Close.

We offer a diverse and exciting programme of co-curricular activities taking place at lunchtimes and after school. From our Adventure and Skills Academy to dance, to sailing, the choice is vast, allowing children to be inspired, develop their passions and achieve success in their chosen field.





# MADDIE AND GABRIEL

## REACHING GOALS IS HARD WORK

Maddie is a Year Eight senior. She has been at Town Close School since starting at the Nursery, aged three.

'I am sports mad, I really enjoy it. For me it began playing tag in Nursery then hockey started in Pre Prep. They didn't make tiny hockey sticks back then so I had to run around carrying a stick that was far bigger than me!'

Since then hockey and Maddie have been inseparable. 'I'm captain of the hockey team and I'm house captain for Filby. I also play at county level for Norfolk and for Norwich City Hockey Club. I consider all of this a big responsibility as well as a great honour.'

Sport runs in Maddie's family and Town Close has been the ideal environment to nurture her talent for it. 'I've grown up with sport. My older brothers play sport and my older sister works for Leicester Tigers Rugby Club. Hockey is my first love but I also play a lot of golf. I get that from my grandad. He plays all the time and he's chairman of his club.'

'I think I always work really hard both on the sports field and in the classroom. Town Close has really helped me with that discipline. If you're not organised you're not going to get anywhere. School is always prompting you to make sure you are on top of everything'

Maddie believes that her hard work and dedication has paid

off. 'I have just been awarded a sports scholarship to the coveted Leys School in Cambridge. It's a huge achievement and very exciting'

'I do a lot more sport at this school than my last one', says nine year old Gabriel. With a sports bag almost as big as himself, Gabriel is still coming to terms with carrying all his kit around. 'There is so much to remember every day,' he says, 'When I play rugby there's a top, some shorts, socks, a skin, tracksuit top and bottoms and boots. Sometimes I have two sports in a day so my bag gets very complicated.'

But he needs all that kit, 'I play centre back in rugby. I've scored two goals as a forward in hockey this year and I've started cricket for the first time. Then there's gymnastics. My mum's a gym coach and I have been training in that field since I was six. I was up on the achievement board recently for best gymnast at my level on the parallel bars.'

As if that was not enough, he casually adds, 'But I like tennis best. It's my favourite sport. I'm in the Norfolk U9's team and I want to be a professional tennis player like Andy Murray. It's my dream.'

But Gabriel has more immediate ambitions, 'Before all that,' he explains, 'I'd like to be a sport captain here at school.'



# TOWN CLOSE SCHOOL

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