





Welcome



Our aim at Wallingford School is to send every young person into the world able and qualified. By being “able” they will be well-rounded and informed, have broad perspectives and great formative experiences; by “qualified”, they will have excellent results which come from the very best teaching and learning.

“Able and qualified” runs through everything that we do as a school. We are comprehensive and inclusive and both are important to us. We passionately believe that every young person will succeed and fulfil his or her aspirations for the future. Our students are fantastic and we are committed to each and every one of them reaching their potential.

There is a limit to how a prospectus can convey the passion we have for our school, so we always advise a visit; you would be very welcome and go away reassured and inspired. But for now, in these few pages, we hope we help you see why students and staff love coming here so much.

“able and qualified”

Academic Strength

The curriculum at Wallingford School is a reflection of our belief that the best preparation for adult life is to succeed in a traditional range of subjects that people recognise and value, while having as much fun and variety within lessons as possible. Visitors will find young people investigating, exploring, discussing, debating, recording, filming, planning, drafting and presenting. Teachers use the good behaviour at the school as a basis for challenging all students to learn for themselves and from each other.

All our students follow a core provision of English, Maths, RS, STEM, Science, PE and PSHE. At Key Stage 3 we continue to offer the National Curriculum to years 7, 8 and 9, comprising Art, Drama, Music, Design Technology, French, German, History and Geography. At Key Stage 4, students continue to follow the core, but also opt for four courses of their choosing. We do not chase a strong performance table position by insisting students study a Humanities subject or a Language; students who feel their strengths and interests lie in the Arts or Technology are free to choose the curriculum that best suits them. If someone prefers to follow a vocational subject, there are also courses in Health and Social Care, Skills for Working Life and Business Studies.

There are young people for whom a full academic or vocational programme is still something of a challenge. A bespoke curriculum is devised for them via our SEND team and M2 provision. We maintain this inclusive approach in Sixth Form, which is open to all our students regardless of ability.

Each year, every student who is capable leaves school with a place at college, university or a workplace. We believe this is the result of a well-constructed curriculum, good careers support and impressive qualifications.

Be it a prestigious university, the professions or the world of work, our curriculum is designed to offer a clear pathway to life after school.





“a clear pathway to
life after school”

Sports



"I am very proud of the lessons my team deliver and the extra-curricular opportunities we provide; they allow our pupils to become passionate about staying healthy."
Head of Physical Education



Everyone benefits from having some exercise in their life. There is also a great deal to be learned about oneself from team games and individual physical challenges. While sport is not a great love for everyone, we aim to ensure each student is involved to a degree that is healthy for their development. Those for whom it is a central passion have a chance to explore their talent as far as possible.

Our Junior Sports Leaders Programme encourages young people to develop their skills as leaders within the context of sport, whatever their level of prowess.

There is an extensive programme of extra-curricular sport that takes place at lunchtimes and after school. Competitive sportsmen and women can also compete in teams against students from other houses or as part of a fixture list against other schools.

Some students find their way to elite sport via clubs, which is a process we are keen to support. To this end we have released elite athletes for premierships football clubs, cycling, rowing, cricket, tennis, diving and martial arts.

Expressive Arts

A photograph of three young boys in school uniforms, likely Wallingford School, cheering enthusiastically with their arms raised. They are wearing dark blue sweaters over white shirts and blue ties. The background is dark with some blurred text, possibly from a poster or wall display.

Performing Arts

Wallingford School has a tradition of high quality public performance, be it through the Christmas Production, Spring Concert, Spotlight Dance Show, or appearances at community events. Some young people with particular talent are released each year to take part in professional performances around the region. Expressive Arts subjects are all available from Year 7 through to A Level.

In Music, students develop an understanding of a wide range of musical styles, genres and traditions, as well as compose and improvise with a variety of instruments. Musicians have the opportunity to take part in the Bigg Band, South Oxfordshire Saturday Morning Music Service, the Oxfordshire Senior Schools Orchestra, County Youth Orchestra and County Youth Big Band. A number of our students go on to read music at universities and conservatoires.

In Drama (Theatre Studies at A Level), students concentrate on devising their own pieces and finding ways of bringing scripts to life. They also use visual and written stimuli to generate mini productions of their own to perform to their peers. There are public performances as part of examination work at GCSE and Sixth Form.

In Dance, students develop their performance skills, working as individuals and in groups. As they move up the school, they focus increasingly on their own choreography. The Spotlight Dance Show is an annual opportunity in school for students to celebrate dance in front of an audience, while many choose to combine their studies with membership of local dance groups and productions.



Creative Arts

The Art Department covers a range of disciplines across the visual arts. We help young people develop practical and technical skills to interpret and represent their world in two and three dimensional form. We support children in their endeavours to become more critically aware of the imagery around them, as well as giving them the opportunity to study the work of famous artists.

Students express themselves creatively in a range of mediums at various scales. These include printing, drawing, painting, ICT, sculpting and photography.

Art is part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, and students have the option to continue at GCSE and A Level, or follow a BTEC course through to leaving Sixth Form. A number of students apply to art foundation or degree courses each year.

The department has an annual exhibition showcasing students' exam pieces, and invites local artists to run skills workshops.

"It gives you the freedom to explore creative ways of expressing your own ideas and respond in different mediums to a set brief." Year 13 Art BTEC

Design Technology



"We get to help students design and make their own innovative products. What could be better?"
Head of Design Technology



The department teaches Product Design, Food Technology, Graphic Design, Resistant Materials and Textiles. Students study each of these subjects as part of their Key Stage 3 curriculum. These are also popular options at GCSE, with some students following them in Sixth Form.

Using a range of high-spec equipment, students learn to understand the components of production for each of the disciplines and to create their own products to a specific brief, aiming to produce industry standard items. The finished items made from textiles or wood are of a very high calibre and are displayed around the school, while the food is rarely around long enough to be as widely applauded!

The joy of Design Technology courses is in gaining an understanding of a material, before skilfully transforming it into something from your imagination. But it is also of key importance to the nation's economy and a student's understanding of the world in which they live. These courses have a strong vocational role. Students studying Food, Textiles or Product Design at A Level can go on to study any of a number of creative and vocationally specific degree courses. There are clear advantages to having studied one of these disciplines when seeking an apprenticeship after school.

Stars

Our Stars Programme gives staff the opportunity to nominate students for their diligence and endeavour, rather than ability. They are celebrated in an assembly, given a Stars badge to signify their achievement and given a special treat by the team that selected them. This can be a trip to a restaurant, theatre, a sports activity or a special activity led in school or off-site.

Our aim is to ensure that every student has their moment when they are recognised and celebrated publicly for their contribution to the school. It is a significant feature of our culture and important because nobody wants to feel their child will go unnoticed.

Grace, Year 8, received her Star in Art:

“I wasn’t expecting to get a Star this year, so I was pleased that the school had recognised my hard work.”





Merchant Taylors' Scholars

Those of us who work at Wallingford School feel lucky to have such a healthy cross-section of the community to teach. Part of this good fortune is the privilege of working with many academically gifted children. They often challenge us with their love of learning, which enhances the joy of our vocation. At times, though, it is easy to take for granted the interests of youngsters who progress relatively easily. This strikes us as wrong and we are keen to avoid it at our school.

The Merchant Taylors' Scholars programme is designed to ensure students enjoy their education, feel challenged and learn to value their intellect. There is also an intention to ensure that when they sit down for an interview in their final year at school they come across as intelligent, confident, interesting and knowledgeable. The programme sits alongside talented provision, for those young people who are exceptional at a particular aspect of the curriculum.

"It provides opportunities to deepen your understanding and further your learning." Finn, Year 10

SEND



“We love supporting students in the fulfilment of their potential and achievement of their goals.” SENDCo



We aim to help everyone reach their potential, regardless of any extra challenges they might face. The majority of students are able to access the curriculum from the outset. There are some who have real strengths but need a little extra help.

The teachers and teaching assistants in our SEND department are highly experienced at directing their expertise and resources to help individual students. Some students are supported in class while others are withdrawn for extra help with elements of learning. The team has an excellent record of diagnosing and supporting young people who struggle with literacy. The aim is to ensure they are able to meet the challenges of GCSE courses by Year 10.

A crucial part of the process is working in partnership with parents. This often begins before joining school. The SEND department holds forum meetings throughout the school year for parents to discuss various issues.

Another important group of students are those who arrive unable to cope with school and sometimes present with challenging behaviour. M2 helps them to manage, develop as people and attain an appropriate suite of qualifications. They are looked after by a dedicated team of professionals who understand the issues such students often face and are skilled at helping them, while ensuring the high standard of whole school behaviour is maintained.



“Our Sixth Form
combines great fun
with impressive results.”



Sixth Form

There are real advantages to a good 11-18 school. Sixth Form students get to develop in an environment they know and feel a part of, and younger students benefit from having the senior students around school. It is also easier to attract teachers keen to teach their subject to the highest level.

It is our aim to send students out into the world not only equipped with excellent academic credentials, but also with the interpersonal, social and intellectual skills to contribute as positive members of society.

Our Sixth Form is a happy place that combines great fun with impressive results. We regularly monitor academic progress and work alongside both the students and parents to ensure that all children reach their potential. We have an excellent record of A Level and BTEC results and help all students to progress to their destination, including on the most competitive courses at university.

There are many trips and events on the Sixth Form calendar, such as the Christmas Ball, Summer Fete, trips to various European cities, a revision week in the Lake District, Enrichment Week, the Model United Nations General Assembly and Sixth Form debates.

Our student leaders and ambassadors, who include two head students, play a magnificent part in supporting staff and the younger members of the school community.



“Seeing everything first-hand really added to the experience.”
James, Year 12

Extra-curricular

The vigour and variety of life outside the classroom are both a cause and a symptom of a happy and thriving community at Wallingford School. The school is very active after lessons with a number of clubs and teacher-led sessions.

Some subjects, such as Geography and History, require field work studies, and we have run successful trips to Iceland, Morocco and Ypres.

The Languages department has a tradition of visits and trips to France and Germany. There is a four-day trip to France offered in Year 8 and Year 7 students spend a summer day in Boulogne or Aachen.

Some trips are just for fun and include days out to theme parks or paintballing, evening trips skating or bowling and residential visits to a number of centres around the country.

We have recently relaunched our Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and it is thriving.

The opportunities for performing Music, Dance and Drama are outstanding and have gained the school a strong reputation. Lunchtimes and after school are filled with practices for the Bass Group, the String Group, Choir, Wind Group and Orchestra.

Departments often receive visitors and outside experts. We take advantage of our close proximity to Oxford, Reading and London universities



The Community

The school is keen to serve the town of Wallingford and surrounding villages. The mix of students is a wonderful one, with the vast majority being well brought-up and ambitious. We are one of the largest organisations in the area and seek to engage with local community groups. The school holds young people to account for their conduct in the community and is keen to help with local events. We are involved with younger children in primary schools and those at the other end of their lives in care homes.

People attend our public performances for the quality of entertainment. Our productions and Spring Concert are part of the community's calendar. Students are also invited to play at local functions, festivals and celebrations over the weekends.

The opinions of students are increasingly important to the direction of the school. They are also involved in the development of teaching and learning. In return, students share responsibility for helping the school run smoothly. This can be as Prefects, School Officers, Student Ambassadors or on Reception Duty.

Parents and carers of students at the school are automatically members of the Wallingford School Association (WSA), and anyone is welcome to join the committee. The main fundraising event is the annual Quiz Night, but they also provide refreshments for the Christmas production and Spring Concert. Committee meetings are held during the school year and the Headteacher, or a representative, is usually present.

This is a cheerful and successful school. You are welcome to visit and explore those elements that interest you. Your child will leave Wallingford School able and qualified to make a difference in the world and, we hope, with many happy memories of their schooldays.



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