



Junior Department

/ What will you find?



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE





Welcome

A very warm welcome to St Helen and St Katharine's Junior Department, where our students can explore, discover, achieve and reflect. A friendly, happy and vibrant place to learn, buzzing with activity and positive energy, this is the ideal environment in which your daughter is nurtured and supported to find out what she likes to do, what she is good at and find the best way forward.

We are very lucky to be nestled in the heart of the school with our own learning space, but connected to the bigger school. Our specialist, experienced and inspirational teaching and support team devotes time to get to know all of our students. Individuality is cherished and celebrated and knowing each student's strengths and potential allows us to recognise what delights and motivates her. This helps us to adapt learning to extend and inspire your daughter and to enable her to become an independent, confident and enthusiastic learner.

We encourage the students to be themselves, to be curious, to embrace intellectual challenges in an environment where the process of learning and participating is celebrated alongside overall achievement. In Year 5 and Year 6 your daughter will benefit from a faster pace of lessons and from being involved in a range of exciting activities, events and innovative projects both in the Junior Department and in the wider school community.

There is an exciting and enriching learning adventure ready to begin.

Miss Nina Talbot (*Mrs Nina Bass from October 2018*)
Head of the Junior Department

Pastoral

Your daughter's happiness, health and social and emotional wellbeing are a priority while she is in our care. We recognise and understand the essence of childhood and we make sure that every step your daughter takes is a confident one, in an enriching and happy environment.

Our Junior Department is uniquely positioned to provide a seamless transition between the junior and senior stages of school life. Helping our students to develop a growing sense of confidence and independence, self-belief and a 'can-do' attitude, thus taking more responsibility for their own learning, ensures they are ready and keen to take that next step to senior school – positively and fearlessly. Girls joining the School in Year 5 or 6 are assured transfer into Year 7; already being a part of the wider school community furthers a smooth transition.

Your daughter will feel safe and secure and happy – the very best foundations upon which to make progress. Our department and our classes are intentionally small (one Year 5 class of up to 16 and a Year 6 class of up to 24 students), allowing the teachers to get to know your daughter really well and to bring out the best in her.

We have a strong pastoral team throughout the School and this network, which includes class teachers who lead weekly Personal Development lessons, dedicated school counsellors and a team of well-trained Sixth Form mentors, is always available to listen and support.

Our classrooms in the main school building provide a central base for the students as they establish their identity within the whole school context. Students in all year groups are organised into one of four Houses (Benedict, Duffield, Hayward and Paterson) for inter-House competitions and social activities. This means they can mix with older students, who can act as role models and mentors and everyone, at whatever age or stage in the School, helps to create House spirit and a sense of belonging.

The Junior Department is a very special place, in which your daughter can do her best in work and play.





What will you find?

A supportive pastoral network throughout the School

Curriculum

At a glance

- The school day is split into eight periods.
- Homework: students are expected to complete two pieces of homework per day.
- Languages: Year 5 learn Spanish and French whilst Year 6 study German and Mandarin.
- Maths: in Year 6 we divide the class into two ability groups which allows us to ensure the teaching is at an appropriate pace for each individual.
- Art and DT: the Year 6 class is also split for art and design technology, allowing students the benefits of high levels of support and easy access to equipment.

A day in the life (timetable example)

- 8.40am** Registration followed by assembly or form time
- 9.10am** Double maths
- 10.25am** Break time
- 10.45am** English
- 11.25am** Religious studies
- 11.55am** Lunchtime (clubs/activities)
- 1.15pm** Double art
- 2.35pm** Break time
- 2.45pm** Double PE
- 4.10pm** Registration and end of the day
- 4.20pm** Buses depart



What will you find?

A curriculum designed
to excite, engage
and inspire



In our dynamic and friendly Junior Department we value the special spark in each student and work with her to develop her skills, capability and a love of lifelong learning.

Our curriculum offers depth and relevance, not only to meet the needs of students in the short term but to prepare them for their future roles in society. Our aim is to help our students recognise their academic strengths whilst challenging them to take risks and become resilient learners.

The curriculum is designed to use exciting, inspiring lessons and a breadth of subjects to engage our students, allowing them to take part in practical activities where relevant, as well as more traditional classroom-based work. The majority of lessons are taught by a member of the Junior Department team and this is complemented and enhanced by senior school teachers in art, DT, modern foreign languages and PE. With an exciting curriculum and sharing in the exceptional facilities and resources of the senior school, we are committed to making learning hands-on, ambitious and rewarding.

We understand that coming to a new school can be a big step for your daughter and a big step for you too. We value the relationships we have with our parents so we make sure that our communication with you is as open and as frequent as possible, with regular opportunities for you to keep in touch with us and with your daughter's progress.

Your daughter will flourish here.

Extracurricular

Above...

Life beyond the classroom is integral to a rich learning experience and to help your daughter flourish. There are lots of opportunities to explore new activities and to extend existing ones that will provide individual and team challenges and the discovery of new skills and talents. Everyone is encouraged to join in and have a go to find something they love doing.

Clubs run before and after school, as well as during the extended lunch breaks which allows plenty of time for eating, play and a chance to have fun.

Sports clubs are always popular. In the winter students can enjoy netball, lacrosse and cross-country and we have regular fixtures against nearby schools. In the summer there's the chance to get involved in rounders, athletics and tennis clubs; gym and swim squads run throughout the year with the opportunity to represent the School at regional and national level. Students can also try out a new sport with an external coach: riding, ballet, sailing and tennis are all on offer.

There is bound to be an activity that strikes a chord in music, with opportunities to become involved in everything from bands and ensembles, choirs and chamber groups, sacred choral to contemporary popular music and the chance to make a song and dance about things in our fabulous concerts and musical theatre productions.

If your daughter wants to try something a little different, there is always a colourful array of activities ranging from drama and art to gymnastics, book club and even Minecraft!



What will you find?

28

extracurricular
activities





and going beyond...

At St Helen and St Katharine we take students further in their learning.

In the Junior Department we like to get out and about to take students on enriching and educational trips, locally and further afield. Visits to the Oxford Story Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford Castle, Oxford Botanic Garden and Bletchley Park all enhance topics covered in our curriculum, whilst our first aid programme provides valuable life skills.

For many students, a highlight of the year is the annual residential visit. We alternate between a cultural city trip and an outdoor adventure centre, giving students the chance to experience both during their time with us. Our city visit involves spending three days exploring top tourist attractions, including museums and a trip to the theatre. We contrast this with a visit to the PGL centre on the Isle of Wight, full of action-packed outdoor pursuits. Everyone comes along and these external visits, amongst others, provide an excellent opportunity for exploring subjects and themes beyond the curriculum and celebrating friendships.

A focus on...

Performing arts

Junior students at St Helen and St Katharine make the most of the wonderful performing arts facilities available in school, using a variety of performance spaces within the Music and Drama Departments. Weekly lessons in both music and drama are taught by a member of the Junior Department team. The curriculum focuses on the students' skills in composing, developing, performing and appreciating music and drama and also fostering confidence and teamwork. In music lessons students learn some musical theory and history, but concentrate on using their skills and experience in composing music based on a variety of traditions and cultures. The drama programme of study includes both scripted and improvised work, including filming their own TV news programmes and writing, directing and recording radio plays.

Music

The Music Department offers individual voice and instrumental tuition to all students, with visiting specialist music teachers covering a wide range of different instruments. Students are entered for ABRSM examinations, consistently achieving excellent results.

Years 5 and 6 also join together for weekly singing sessions led jointly by a member of the Junior Department staff and the Assistant Director of Music. As well as developing their proficiency in singing as a group, these culminate in performances in school concerts and at local music festivals.

Junior production

Each summer everyone in the Junior Department works together to produce a performance showcasing their musical and acting abilities. Students are encouraged to audition for more major roles and are part of the whole process: they help to develop the staging and choreography and to create costumes, scenery and props. This is a highlight of the year for many, with performances to local schools, parents and staff taking place in the school's Studio Theatre. Recent productions include *The Tempest*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Scheherazade*.

What will you find?

Opportunities to
compose, choreograph,
direct and perform





So much more...

We hope you've enjoyed a dip into what the Junior Department at St Helen and St Katharine has to offer. We are very realistic in our approach, recognising that individuals have different strengths. We provide a wide range of opportunities for our students to make the most of their particular talents both within the curriculum and in the many exciting activities which take place outside the classroom. Underlying everything that we do is a set of simple but far-reaching values: an understanding and respect for others and for the world around us, a sense of responsibility, the importance of self-belief and a realisation that we all depend on each other.

This is an important time for your daughter. Lasting future successes will be based upon her developing confidence as well as an open-minded and creative approach to life and learning. We believe this is the best place for her to do just that.

We look forward to welcoming you for a visit.



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE

Independent day school for girls aged 9–18

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