



Heathfield School
Ascot

Frequently Asked Questions

Academic

How many girls are in each year group?

We currently have 30 pupils in Forms I and II. Currently in Form III, where there is an additional intake, there are 45 pupils; senior year groups are currently between 20 and 30 in size.

What are the class sizes?

The capacity in the majority of our classrooms is 18. In GCSE option subjects and at A Level, class sizes are usually around eight but they can be smaller than this.

Do the girls have a personal academic tutor?

Every pupil has a personal tutor for academic and pastoral matters.

Do you have sets for all subjects? How do you assess ability and how often?

We have ability sets for English and Mathematics from Form 1 onwards. In Forms I and II, students are taught in mixed ability classes.

We have ability sets in Modern Foreign Languages and Science from Form III onwards. In Form III we also stream for Humanities (Geography, History, RS and Latin/Classical Civilisation), which enables the higher tier to take Latin while the foundation tier takes Classical Civilisation. Other Form III classes are mixed ability.

Thereafter, we have sets in Forms IV and V for English, Mathematics, Science and Modern Foreign Languages. All other subjects are mixed ability at GCSE. All subjects are mixed ability at A Level.

When students enter Heathfield, regardless of their age of entry, they take a nationally standardised test run by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring [CEM]. While these tests all differ slightly, they assess each student's

verbal, mathematical and non-verbal reasoning skills. Based on these results, we will initially set our new entrants.

We know that students progress at different rates and that this can change over time. Consequently, we hold a formal assessment in every taught curriculum subject in every year group termly. If, following an assessment, we feel that a student would benefit from moving up or down a set, we will discuss this with the student and parent concerned.

What subjects do you offer at GCSE?

A wide range of over 20 subjects is offered at GCSE. Please see <https://www.heathfieldschool.net/academic/gcse/> for full details. All pupils take Mathematics, English Language, English Language, English Literature, Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and a Foreign Language. Three or four additional options are also selected.

How many GCSEs or A Levels do girls take and is there a minimum or maximum?

The norm is nine or ten GCSEs. We would not recommend fewer than eight subjects or more than eleven unless circumstances are exceptional.

We recommend that students take three A Levels along with one of our Progress Pathways subjects (EPQ, Maths for Scientists or Massive Open Online Course [MOOC]) in the Sixth Form. In most cases, we would not recommend that students study four or more A Levels. We would, however, make exception in certain cases, for example, to study Natural Sciences at Cambridge where Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics would not be an unusual A Level combination.

Pupils choose their GCSE option subjects in Form III after February half term. We build our GCSE option blocks

around their choices so that we tailor our curriculum to the needs of each cohort. There are no pre-set option blocks.

Which foreign languages do we offer?

French, Greek, Latin, and Spanish. In addition, we have peripatetic teachers for Arabic, Italian, Mandarin, Russian and Japanese as a paid extra for both GCSE and A Level.

What STEM subjects are offered?

Biology, Chemistry and Physics, Psychology, Mathematics and Further Mathematics to A Level; ICT to IGCSE.

How often do you have parent and teacher meetings?

We have one meeting per year, except in the case of Form I, where we have an initial meeting in the Michaelmas Term to let parents know how their daughters have settled in followed by another one later in the academic year.

What is the retention rate of girls transitioning from GCSE to A Level?

On average, over 90% of pupils stay on at Heathfield for Sixth Form.

How many male teachers do you have?

23% of our teachers are male.

What Special Education Needs provision do you offer?

Spectrum, our Special Educational Needs department, offers support for dyslexia and dyscalculia as well as provision for English as a Foreign Language. All support is provided through one-to-one tuition in the Spectrum department's teaching rooms and is billed as an extra. There is no provision for in-class support.

Creative Arts

What Creative Arts subjects do you offer?

Our curriculum includes Art and Design, Drama, Music and Photography. All these subjects can be taken at GCSE and A Level.

Art and Design includes Animation, Constructed Textiles, Drawing, Digital Photography, Embellished or Stitched Textiles, Fashion Design, Film, Illustration, Installed Textiles, Jewellery, Land Art, Mixed Media, Painting and Printing.

Creative events take place throughout the school year including our famous biennial Fashion Show, Art and Photography Exhibitions, Concerts, Competitions, Musicals, Plays and Workshops. We have a fully equipped theatre, digital recording studio, photography studio and dark room, drama rehearsal rooms, dance studio and soundproof music rehearsal rooms.

Boarding and Day

Do girls board in year groups?

The girls board in their year groups. Forms I and II are together in Brontë House, Forms III, IV and V are together in Wantage House. Lower Sixth board in an area of the school known as Phoenix and Upper Sixth in Wyatt House. Single rooms are available to girls from Form IV onwards.

How many girls stay for the weekend?

It varies, but approximately 75%.

How long is the usual day for day girls?

Day girls should arrive at 08:00 in time for registration at 08:10 but may arrive earlier for breakfast if they wish. Lessons finish at 16:00 with co-curricular options and clubs starting at 16:15. Day girls are welcome to leave at 16:00 or stay for activities. They may also attend supervised Prep sessions. School buses leave most days at 18:00 but girls are also welcome to stay for supper at 18:15.

How flexible is the boarding?

Heathfield offers weekly and full boarding and we are supportive to the needs of today's families. Weekly boarders may leave on Friday afternoon and return on Sunday evening but are expected to honour any weekend school commitments such as sports fixtures. For full boarders, there are two optional leave weekends each term, but girls can opt to stay in school. In-school care is not provided for half-term or holidays.

In the lower years, what is the proportion of day to boarding?

In Forms I – III, the split between day girls and boarders is approximately 50:50. In the upper years, the school is predominantly boarding.

Pastoral

What is your mobile phones policy?

We try to educate pupils about how to use their phones and the pitfalls of teen behaviour on social media. The restrictions are eased as the pupils mature and progress through the school.

Form I – III are not allowed their phones during the day or overnight, they are permitted for short windows of time each afternoon to have their phones to call home.

Form IV are allowed their phones during the day but not allowed to keep them overnight.

Form V and above are trusted with their devices, but should behaviour, pastoral or academic concerns be raised by the school or parent we will bring in restrictions on an individual basis.

No pupil can use their phone around school, they can only use their phones in their common rooms and bedrooms. Any phone seen being used e.g. in the corridors or in lessons without permission, will be confiscated.

How often do girls go to Chapel?

The Chapel provides a space for the whole community to use at any time. Chapel services are held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. There is a hymn, a reading, and a thought for the day. In normal circumstances, girls participate through reading and serving. On Thursdays, the birthdays of the week are celebrated. On Friday, the school week ends with Compline – a service of music, reflection, and prayers. On

Sunday the whole school community gathers for a Eucharist. Every year, girls (Form IV and above) are offered the opportunity to be prepared for Confirmation. In addition, there are special services throughout the year which include Remembrance Day and Fellowship Day.

Co-Curricular Sport

Do the girls have socials with boys' schools?

Each year group has at least one Social per year with a boy's school: Papplewick; Eton; Harrow; Sunningdale. Form I have sporting activities and BBQs whilst older year groups, have discos and formal dinners. Our Polo team plays against Eton, Harrow and Marlborough.

How many activities do we offer and what are they?

Academic Lunchtime and Evening Clinics – Business, Drama, Dutch, French, Maths, Science and Spanish. Clubs and Societies – ARTiculation, Athena Society, Book Club, Cookery, Debating, TED Talks and Tech Club. Creative Arts Clubs and Clinics – Art, GCSE and A Level Art Clinics, Photography, Textiles.

Music – Band, Junior and Senior choir, Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Top 12 Vocalists.

Do day girls have access to the same co-curricular activities as boarders?

Day girls have access to all co-curricular and extra-curricular activities as well as being able to and encouraged to participate at the weekends.

Do we offer Ballet?

Ballet, tap, jazz, street, and modern dance are all offered and take place in our dance studio. Girls can take grades or simply dance for pleasure.

Do we do Model United Nations?

This is a new club at Heathfield this term.

Do you do the Duke of Edinburgh Awards?

Girls in Form III start with Bronze and we offer both Silver and Gold. This year 40 girls are participating in the Bronze award and 8 at Gold level.

What curriculum sports do you play?

Students are offered Lacrosse, Netball, Swimming, Cricket, Rounders, Athletics and Tennis.

A successful new addition has been our Activity Week at the end of each Half Term. During Activity Week students have an opportunity to participate in some non-traditional sports, including Water Polo, Hockey, Basketball, Rugby, Synchronised Swimming and Badminton.

External coaches teach both curriculum and extra-curricular sports: Tennis, Personal Training, Trampolining, Spinning, Equestrian, Football, Polo, Dance (Ballet, Street Dance, Contemporary, Tap, Acrobatic Arts, Yoga and Pilates).

We also support several students training at external clubs, for example, Eton Excelsior Rowing Club, WSEH Athletics Club and Windsor Swimming Club. We also have close links with Ascot United Football Club, where students have received coaching and watched Ascot Ladies play.

Both Dance and Physical Education are offered at GCSE.

What Sports Clubs do you offer?

Our co-curricular programme is extensive and ever changing to suit the needs and interests of our students. We currently offer the following sports;

- Acrobatic Arts
- Athletics
- Cricket
- Dance (Ballet, Street Dance, Contemporary, Tap)
- Equestrian
- Fencing
- Football
- Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Netball
- Multi-Sports
- Pilates
- Polo
- Rounders
- Spinning
- Swimming
- Taekwondo
- Tennis
- Trampolining

What sport facilities do you have?

- 25m Swimming Pool
- Sports Hall
- Fitness Suite
- Spinning Studio
- Dance Studio
- 5x Lacrosse Pitches
- 5x Netball/Tennis Courts
- Long Jump Pit and Throwing Circle

Will you add Hockey to the sport curriculum?

We are currently developing a change of plan to the curriculum for 2021 to include Hockey. Hockey was taught to senior girls last year and there is a Hockey club for the younger students. Pre-COVID we used a local Astroturf in Bracknell to teach Hockey and held friendly training matches with nearby schools.

Do you offer horse riding?

Students represent the school nationally in show jumping, dressage, eventing, and Polo. Mrs Glimmerveen, our Equestrian Co-ordinator organises all our Equestrian and Polo activities. As part of our Co-curricular Programme, students play Polo with HK Polo School and the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club and Heathfield is the only all-girls school that competes at Guards Polo Club in Windsor Great Park. Weekly riding and show jumping lessons take place at the Berkshire Riding Centre. Students can also keep their own horses in a nearby livery yard.

Do you have a swim squad, and do you compete?

We have a very committed and successful swim squad. Swimming training is offered twice a week as part of our Co-curricular Programme as well as Swimming lessons within the curriculum. Several of our girls also swim for Windsor Swimming club, who have a squad training session at our school pool.

What Sports do girls in Sixth Form do? Is Lacrosse compulsory?

Lacrosse is not compulsory in the Sixth Form. We offer our Sixth Form students a wide range of activities to choose from including Athletics, Badminton, Cricket, Cross Training, Lacrosse, Netball, Pilates, Spinning, Swimming, Tennis, Trampolining, Rounders, and Yoga. During our Activity Week at the end of each half term, the Seniors also have the option to try something a little different, Ice Skating and Rugby were amongst the favourites last year.

Do you offer rowing?

There are several students who attend Eton Excelsior Rowing Club. We have recently purchased Indoor Rowing equipment to support the girls' training programme.

Any support for martial arts?

Our Co-curricular programme currently includes a Taekwondo club with an external coach, and we are happy to support students if they attend external clubs. Our activities are based on student feedback so it may be considered for our curriculum and/or co-curricular programmes in 2021.

Admissions

What is the admissions process?

We recommend that prospective applicants and parents visit the school or attend an Open Morning (subject to COVID restrictions) when their daughter is in Year 4 or Year 5. To be considered for a place at the school, candidates must be registered, and the registration form can be completed online via our website, www.heathfieldschool.net/registration-form. A £200 registration fee is payable.

Assessment takes place in November of the year before entry for 11+ and 13+. Candidates are assessed in numeracy, literacy, and non-verbal ability via the online CEM (Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring) test and will also attend an interview with the Head. Successful candidates receive their offers in December.

Entry into the Sixth Form for external candidates is dependent upon success at GCSE. Candidates attend for interview following their mock exams and successful applicants are made a conditional offer.

Is Heathfield an international school, where do girls come from?

Heathfield follows the UK National Curriculum. Currently, 20% of pupils are from overseas and represent 16 different nationalities. 24% of pupils are from London, the remainder come from other areas of the UK.

How many girls join Heathfield at 13?

We have an additional intake at 13+ and typically between 10 and 15 girls join the year group of 30 at Form III. We have a few girls who join us in Form II and Form IV and a larger intake at 16+ for Sixth Form subject to availability.

Head

Do you provide transport?

Heathfield currently operates three daily local transport routes:

Route 1

Weybridge, Addlestone and Virginia Water

Route 2

Gerrards Cross, Cookham and Littlewick Green (Marlow/Maidenhead)

Route 3

Slough and Windsor

On a Friday, a bus departs Heathfield to Queensgate in central London and returns on a Sunday evening.

We look carefully at the routes every Summer and the viability of each route is dependent on the number of pupils that use the service, although we are always happy to discuss alternative or additional routes and pick-up points with parents who would like their daughter to travel to and from school by bus.

What is your staff attrition rate?

Last year, our staff attrition rate for both teaching and support staff was 12%.

What interaction is there with Governors?

The Head and Bursar meet with all the Governors every term. Each department also meets termly with their dedicated team of Governors. They also attend school events such as Parents' Day and visit on an ad hoc basis as required.

What are the new Headmistress' priorities for Heathfield?

Ms Wilson has been spending a lot of time at Heathfield this term. Her priority in January will be to familiarise herself with all aspects of Heathfield including the pupils and staff. There will be no immediate changes.

What is the ambition for Heathfield in relation to Boarders and Day Pupils?

Heathfield continues to offer Boarding and Day options; we are supportive to the needs of today's families. Day girls can be dropped off from 07:30 for breakfast or at 08:00 for registration. They may be picked up when lessons finish at 16:00 or stay later for Clubs, Prep and Supper.

Do you intend to increase the size of the school?

Heathfield is growing every year; however, class sizes will remain at a maximum of 18.

What qualities should a girl have to come to Heathfield?

We are looking for enthusiastic, motivated girls who will join in with all aspects of school life. We pride ourselves on finding and nurturing every girl's talent and passion, and we have high expectations for their outcomes.



Heathfield School
Ascot

Heathfield School
London Road, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 8BQ, United Kingdom
Incorporating St Mary's School Wantage

T: +44 (0) 1344 898342 E: registrar@heathfieldschool.net W: heathfieldschool.net