



Able & Qualified

Welcome to Wallingford School



Able & Qualified

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 possess excellent results which come from the very best teaching and learning.

The ethos of Able & Qualified is the foundation of everything we do. It is about obtaining the best results and outcomes for everyone. These results come from great teaching and learning and a commitment to the professional development of our staff; they are also about first class support from our associate staff who play a key role in supporting our young people to reach their potential.

Wallingford School has a clear identity and values, which creates an environment where everyone can thrive. We are comprehensive, inclusive and supportive of our community and this is important to us.

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.

John Marston, Headteacher

“A clear identity and values, which creates an environment where everyone can thrive.”



The Classroom



Academic Excellence

Results at Wallingford School are consistently strong and academic excellence is a hallmark of our school. The quality of education the school provides is outstanding with a broad and balanced curriculum underpinning highly effective classroom practice.

Our curriculum 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. Teaching and learning is highly engaging with lessons characterised by developing skills such as investigating, exploring, discussing, debating, recording, filming, planning, drafting and presenting.

Our students follow a core provision of English, Maths, PRE, 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 study 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 Life and Business Studies.

Each year, every student leaves Wallingford School with a place at college, university or in a workplace. We believe this is the result of a well-constructed curriculum, good careers support and impressive qualifications. Be it a prestigious university, a high level apprenticeship or work-based training, our curriculum is designed to offer a clear pathway to life after school.

“Our curriculum is designed to offer a clear pathway to life after school.”



Beyond the Classroom



“Creating a happy and thriving school community beyond the classroom.”

Trips and Visits

The educational trips and visits offer at Wallingford School is remarkable. In recent years, destinations have included Sorrento, Barcelona, Berlin and Iceland. Language exchange trips visit France and Germany. There are Duke of Edinburgh expeditions to the tops of mountains in the cold, wind and rain and World Challenge trips to...potentially anywhere in the world! Closer to home, geographers explore our Jurassic coast, historians study Cannock Chase and English students see plays and poetry brought to life at the theatre. There are trips to Silverstone and Wembley Stadium, and opportunities provided by the Merchant Taylors' Company, including the Livery Awards competition and fascinating sessions at their Hall. Even towards the end of their time at Wallingford School, Year 13 revise for a week on the banks of Lake Windermere. The vigour and variety of life outside the classroom are both a cause and a symptom of a happy and thriving community.

Sport

Our sporting ethos embraces both competition and participation. There is something for everyone from the playing field to the Astroturf to the climbing wall. Whether it is a sport they are familiar with or something new, we encourage all students to embrace the skills, personal development and fun which sport provides.

Our Active Sports Leaders Programme inspires 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, in addition to regular fixtures and competitions 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 in recent years released elite athletes for premiership football clubs, cycling, rowing, cricket, tennis, diving and martial arts.

Clubs

Our lunchtime club timetable is ever growing with a wide range of interests and subjects represented, including our highly successful Gardening Club, Warhammer Club, Chess Club and Film Club.



Participation & Competition

“There is something for everyone to be involved with and activities are broad and diverse.”



Performing Arts

Wallingford School has a tradition of high quality public performance, be it through our annual School Production, Spring Concert, Dance Show, or appearances at community events. Our excellent reputation for music is well-earned: there are a huge number of ensembles, groups and bands for students to become involved with from the very start of their time at the school. Equally our productions involve students from across the school, be it on stage, playing music, dancing or behind the scenes, and are a highlight of the school year.



Creative Arts

The Art Department covers a range of disciplines across the visual arts with students expressing themselves creatively in a variety of mediums, including printing, drawing, painting, sculpting and photography.

Our annual Art Exhibition showcases students' exam pieces, local artists are invited to run workshops, Sixth Form students take on the challenge of life drawing, students demonstrate their photography skills in the annual Merchant Taylors' Company Photography Competition, and artwork is displayed throughout the town during Oxfordshire Artweeks.



The House System

Every student and member of staff – with the exception of the Headteacher who is required to remain neutral! – is a member of a House. There are four Houses, each named after a historic figure with local connections to the town: Bigg, Blackstone, Christie and Matilda.

The House system is about participation and competition and it is a core part of our school. There is something for everyone to be involved with and activities are broad and diverse, encompassing sports, music and drama, quizzes and challenges, baking, drawing, building and a whole lot more. They often take place at lunchtime and usually involve a large number of students working together and having fun. A highlight of the year is Sports Day which is a wonderful whole school event, but the House system is alive every day in our school and it thrives.



School Programmes

“Recognising and celebrating student contribution.”



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 a reward in the form of a trip to an exciting venue or an inscribed book.

Our aim is to ensure that every student has their moment of recognition and is 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.



Merchant Taylors' Scholars

Wallingford School is a comprehensive school with students who have a wide range of abilities and aptitudes. It is a moral imperative that all of these young people fulfil their potential. The role of the Merchant Taylors' Scholars Programme is to identify students who have certain academic potential, to challenge and stretch them in their learning, and to ensure that our provision caters for their needs in the same way as every other young person at the school. At times 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 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.



“Identifying academic potential to challenge and stretch learning.”



Support & Further Education



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

SEND

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.

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

“Supporting students to reach their potential and achieve their goals.”

Sixth Form

We are very proud of our Sixth Form which combines a sense of fun and community 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, trips to various European cities, a revision week in the Lake District, Futures Week, the Model United Nations General Assembly and Sixth Form debates.

Our student leaders, ambassadors and peer supporters play a magnificent part in supporting younger members of the school community.



“A bright and successful school at the heart of the community.”

Our Community



Local Community

The school is keen to serve the town of Wallingford and surrounding villages. 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.

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 Pat Granados Biodiversity Garden is a project that welcomes the link between the local community and school community. Our Garden Development Team have been working with a number of local volunteer groups, so watch this space as the garden grows!

School Community

Our students play their part in the school community - which is really important to us - by sharing opinions and responsibilities, and making the school environment a happy and proactive space. This might be on Reception Duty during KS3, a Prefect in Year 11, or a member of the Student Leadership Group or Subject Ambassador in Sixth Form.

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 WSA are valued members of our school community and support fundraising events throughout the school year. This might be a quiz night, raffle or providing refreshments for the School Production and Spring Concert. We are very grateful for the significant contribution they make to the life of our school.

Please visit us "in action" to get a feel for what we believe makes Wallingford School so special.





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