



All you need to know
about Beechwood Park School



Information for Parents
2022 /2023

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"Pupils achieve highly because they are nurtured, engaged and inspired to succeed, in line with School's mission"

ISI Inspection Report, 2019

Location and Access

Beechwood Park is set in beautiful rural parkland outside the village of Markyate, Hertfordshire.

Although rural, the School is only five minutes from Junction 9 of the M1 and 15-20 minutes from Harpenden, St Albans, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead and Tring, all of which have super-fast train links into Central London. Beechwood offers a school bus service morning and afternoon to and from local towns and villages.



An Historic Location

Beechwood Park School, founded in 1964, is a very recent part of the history of the Beechwood Park Estate—a story that begins, as far as we can tell, with the foundation of a Nunnery, later called the 'Nunnery of St Giles-in-the-wood' in Saxon times.

The land and Nunnery were handed to Ralph de Tony by William the Conqueror when he divided up his new kingdom. Ralph had distinguished himself in battle a number of times to William's benefit and Beechwood Park was just one part of his reward.

So begins a rich and varied history that involves Henry VIII, Edward VI, and King Charles I and II (Sir Edward Sebright was a standard bearer for Charles I in the English Civil War). There were 15 Sebright Baronets, some of them Members of Parliament and others equerries to the Royal Household. Lady Olive Sebright was a personal friend of Queen Mary, King George V's Consort. Queen Mary visited Beechwood a number of times and photographs in the School's archive show her at luncheon in the Great Hall in 1948.



The magnificent east front was added to the Jacobean house in 1702. The parkland that we see in front of the main house, by that time a Queen Anne mansion, was designed by Lancelot Capability-Brown in 1753. Copies of Capability-Brown's original survey and plan for the new parkland are held in the School's archives.

Recent archaeological surveys and digs, sponsored by the School, have revealed remains of medieval walls and courtyards as well as artefacts such as brooches and medieval drinking vessels. The School's young archaeologists have been fully involved in making these exciting discoveries.

Beechwood Park School opened on 8 October 1964. The School was formed from the combination of Shirley House School in Watford and Heath Brow School in Hemel Hempstead. Originally an all-boys boarding school, Beechwood first admitted girls in September 1993. Over the years, the Junior and Middle Departments have been added and in 2005 Beechwood extended its provision to include children of nursery age by acquiring the Nursery at Little Cheverells.

Beechwood Park in the 21st Century

The Beechwood Park of today successfully blends the old with the new, innovation with tradition.

Boys and girls swim in our indoor pool complex, and take their learning outside in our fabulous Forest School and outdoor classroom; they create ceramics in the Pottery Studio located in the old wine cellar and fabulous music compositions in the dedicated Apple Music Technology Suite and Recording Studio situated in a former coach house. A major development in recent years was the opening of our on-site nursery, Woodlands, in 2015, as well as numerous classroom and boarding house refurbishments.

From Ancient Greek to Cheerleading or Chess, from Lego engineering to yoga or musical theatre, there is something to captivate every curious mind from our youngest Woodlanders to our talented 13+ candidates who confidently head off to a range of excellent day and boarding secondary schools, both locally and further afield.

The **Capability-Brown** sculpted grounds provide orienteering trails, an indoor swimming pool complex, outdoor classrooms and eleven football pitches where a multitude of matches play out under the watchful gaze of our neighbouring sheep.

Pastoral Care

The provision of excellent pastoral care is at the heart of Beechwood Park. There is a genuine commitment to and care for each member of the community and the happiness of each child is central to this. The School provides children with a safe and happy learning environment in which they can enjoy, building friendships for life and develop their innate creativity, curiosity and confidence within the framework of our fortnightly pastoral values.

Boarding

We offer flexi-boarding as an option to pupils in Year 5 and above. The flexible system gives families the opportunity to choose how many nights a week their child wishes to board.



Boarding is available from Monday to Thursday, with no boarding at weekends. Each evening, once homework and music practice is complete, the children can take part in the many and varied activities and games on offer. See page 11 for more information about Boarding at Beechwood.

Our Mission

Beechwood Park's mission is to be a leading UK preparatory school. To fulfil this ambition, with the support of parents, the School:

- **Nurtures** the happiness, health, safety and emotional well-being of every child, developing in them confidence and independence;
- **Engages** the intellectual, physical and spiritual potential of every child across a broad range of academic, co-curricular and pastoral activities and experiences;
- **Inspires** children, inculcating transferable, lifelong skills and values by which to achieve personally and contribute influentially to society;
- **Enables** inspirational, reflective teachers to provide every child with outstanding teaching, delivering the highest levels of educational pace, variety and challenge.

Beechwood inspires excellence in all its pupils. It achieves this through an outstanding, uniquely child-centred, co-educational and preparatory ethos. All of our pupils are supported and happy in their School lives. As they progress through the School, the children steadily build confidence and independence, learning quickly to bring their own creative talents to bear.

Ours is a holistic education, which educates the whole child across a wide range of academic, co-curricular, pastoral and spiritual experiences. The School's unrivalled facilities and beautiful buildings and grounds provide further transformative opportunities for children to prepare for a future life of learning. The ISI's last inspection report on the School is available on the School website.

Staff Recruitment

It is the School's stated aim to appoint and retain well-qualified, experienced and talented staff who will inspire excellence and discover talents in every child.

Pupil Profile

Beechwood assesses all of its pupils upon entry to the School. Most of our pupils are above the national average in their academic ability and will achieve success in academically selective 11+ and 13+ examinations to Senior Schools. Some receive specific assistance from the Learning Support Department, including those who are more able. The School is proudly co-educational.

"Pupils show rapid development of skills and knowledge because of their excellent attitudes to learning and strong personal skills, which allow them to be engaged learners."

ISI Inspection Report, January 2019

The Board of Governors

Mr A Briscoe

Mrs J Brown

Mrs C Cutler

Mr H Ford

Mr G Freeman

Mr J Gillespie

Mr M Hammond (Chair)

Mr J Hodgson

Prof T Jacques

Mr G Mairs

Dr R Maloney

Mr N Scragg

Ms K Swaine

Mrs J Wadham

Beechwood Park School Ltd is a company limited by guarantee, with charitable status. The School's revenue is derived mostly from fee income. Any surpluses remaining at the end of the financial year are re-invested in the development of the School, in accordance with its stated charitable purposes. The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for running the company in accordance with the requirements of Companies House and the Charity Commission.

The Board of Governors is made up, in the main, of past and present parents, the exceptions being Heads or senior members of schools onto which many pupils progress after leaving Beechwood. New Governors are co-opted on to the Board by the current membership. The Board aims to include within its membership expertise in different areas which may be useful to the School, such as law, and accountancy. Governors do not receive any remuneration from Beechwood Park School; they give their time freely and generously.

The Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is responsible for the overall direction of the School, with day to day management left to the Head and Bursar both of whom they have sole responsibility for appointing. However, Governors maintain close contact with the Head and the Bursar, making themselves available for consultation, should the need arise. Full Governors' meetings are held termly at the School. There is also a permanent sub-committee called the General Purposes Committee that meets termly.

Reporting to Parents

Governors are prepared to discuss their work on behalf of the School with parents and make themselves available throughout the year at School events. Any specific matters relating to their children's education should, of course, be discussed with the Head and relevant staff. Parents should use the School postal address for correspondence with the Chair of the Board of Governors, or the email address: cog@beechwoodpark.com

School Fees

School Fees for the Academic Year 2022 / 2023

(All charges are per term unless otherwise stated)

Day Pupils	
Years 5 - Top Form	£6355
Years 3 - 4	£5130
Years 1 - 2	£5025
Reception	£4390

Woodlands Nursery	
Full Day (per day per term)	£765
Morning (per day per term)	£543
Additional Full Day (if available)	£76.50

Boarding (in addition to day fees)	
Per Term (up to 4 nights per week)	£1510

Optional Extras	
Individual Music (incl. Singing) Lessons	£290 (10 lessons)*
Hire of Musical Instruments	£60 (first year)
	£70 (second year)
	£90 (subsequent years)

After School Care	
1515 - 1645	£120 per day per term £13 occasional (per day)
1515 - 1730	£176 per day per term £20 occasional (per day)
Day Pupils' Tea (from Year 3)	£6 per day
Transport	As notified on timetable

* average per term (or pro rata if commenced after the start of term)

Please pay fees by the first day of each term. The School normally bills boarding fees, music lessons and After School Care in advance, and other items in arrears.

Interest is payable on overdue accounts at the rate of 3% per annum above HSBC Bank plc base rate.

The School cannot remit fees due to pupil illness or any other cause, for either a whole or part of a term.

Standard Terms and Conditions

A term's notice of intention to remove a pupil or to discontinue an extra subject must be given in writing no later than the first day of the term at the end of which notice is to take effect. Failure to give this notice will mean that the full term's fees must be paid for the following term. This is also applicable if you withdraw your acceptance of a place AFTER submitting the Acceptance Form and paying the deposit but BEFORE your child starts at the School. You must give us written notice before the first day of the term immediately preceding the term in which your child was due to start.

The Head reserves the right to request the removal of any child who, in his opinion, has ceased to benefit from the School or whose influence is damaging to the School's standard of work or expectations of behaviour.

A copy of our full **Terms and Conditions** is available on request.



Induction and Communication

Before children join Reception, they attend an **induction afternoon** together with other pupils in their form to give them an opportunity to meet their teachers and to begin to find their way around the School. The Junior and Middle Departments each have a **handbook for parents** which is shared on joining.

Shortly after children start at Beechwood, we invite parents to attend a meeting to discuss how well their children have settled in. We offer similar meetings when children progress to the Middle and Senior Departments.

As well as regular updates on the School website and social media, the School sends issue weekly and end of term e-newsletters. From time to time, we may send home other letters and information by email.

Throughout the year there are both **pastoral and academic meetings** for parents. There will be **two full written reports** each year and depending on the year group, grades and reflective comments at regular intervals.

The School fully recognises its responsibility for promoting the welfare of all its pupils. All safeguarding matters are provided for within the following policies which reflect current legislation and guidance. All of these policies are available on the School website or on request:

Accessibility Plan	E-Safety Policy
Administration of Medication Policy	First Aid Policy
Admissions Policy	Health and Safety Policy
Anti Bullying Policy	Learning Support Policy (including Special Educational Needs)
Bursary Policy	Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
Child Protection Policy	Privacy Notice
CCTV Policy	Pupil Attendance Policy
Complaints Policy	Pupil Supervision Statement
Conduct Policy	Relationships and Sex Education Policy
Curriculum Policy	Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice
Equal Opportunities Policy	Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children

Daily School Routine

Pupils register at School from 0815, with Middle and Senior Department pupils having a Form Teacher period each morning. Pupils join assemblies each day. The timetable varies according to whether a pupil is in the Junior, Middle or Senior Department. Each department has a morning break, and a staggered lunchtime. Pupils eat their lunch either in the main School Dining Room or the Annexe Dining Room. Pupils may opt to take part in lunchtime clubs and activities.



The Junior Department day ends at 1514; pupils may then take part in after school activities, attend after school care, or go home. The Middle Department day ends at 1615 and the Senior Department day at 1645. After school activities or prep sessions are available, and pupils may also opt to stay for tea with the boarders. Many pupils from Year 5 upwards choose to board (maximum four nights per week). Pupils from Reception upwards are able to use our School Bus Service - details of the bus service are available on request.

Homework

Homework is set throughout the School to consolidate and reinforce the work carried out in class. In the Junior Department much of this work will be practical and takes the form of supporting reading and spelling as well as tasks to strengthen the child's skills in Maths and English.

In Year 3, teachers give a range of topic preps with long deadlines explained in advance. In Year 4, teachers give subject prep on three days a week and pupils are expected to hand the work in by the given deadline. In addition to subject prep, pupils in Years 3 and 4 also need to read, practise the weekly spelling rule, multiplication tables and number bonds.

In Year 5 to Top Form, preps last 25 minutes (a double prep lasts 50 minutes) according to the published prep timetable.

Boarding at Beechwood

Philosophy

We aim to give every child the chance to board in a warm and friendly atmosphere that we hope acts as an extension to their family life, giving them a chance to have some independence and yet still maintain the necessary contact with their families. We have always found this experience extremely valuable to children wanting to board at their senior schools at 13. Many of our boarders have built friendships within their year groups and wish to experience being away from home in reasonably short stretches. For some, it may be the only opportunity they have to board before moving away from home in later life.

We place great emphasis on the best use of time and thus homework is closely supervised by staff, music practice is constantly monitored and any free time is structured by providing many evening activities. The children are able to develop in an active and stimulating environment.

Boarding Structure

We offer a flexible system of boarding for children in Year 5 and above based on their age and family circumstances. They may board either for two or three days each week which is an ideal way for any children to start boarding, or on a weekly basis finishing on Friday at the end of the School day.

We are very conscious of family commitments and activities which children may need to continue during boarding time and every effort will be made to accommodate these where possible, providing enough notice is given.

We have a team led by a resident Head of Boarding. In addition, there are six boarding staff who live in the building, all of whom are fully committed to providing a positive atmosphere in the boarding house.



Admissions



We recommend that parents see the School for themselves, before deciding to register their child at Beechwood.

Each term we hold an **Open Morning**; this is an ideal opportunity to visit the School for the first time. Alternatively, the Head is happy to meet parents individually nearer the time of their child's entry. Please ring the Head's Secretary for an appointment.

For **registration**, please complete the **Registration Form** and send it to the Registrar with the appropriate fee.

For entry into **Reception** we will invite each child to attend an assessment test early in the academic year preceding entry in September. For entry into **Year 2 and above**, we will call the child for a short interview and assessment test early in the year preceding entry in September. The School will then, with the help of the child's present school, assess his or her standard of work.

The assessment tests are qualifying, not competitive, and entry then depends on suitable vacancies. A copy of our full **Admissions Policy** is available on our website or on request.



Summary of Key School Events

Hobbies / Clubs

Including Cheerleading, Dexterity Games, Chess, Football, Spanish, Table Tennis, Lego Engineering, Ancient Greek, Pottery, Fencing, Badminton, Swimming.

Music

Lessons in a wide range of woodwind, brass and string instruments; **Groups** incl. Choirs, Big Band, String Quartet, Brass Ensembles, Violin Group, Ukulele Group, Guitar Ensemble, Flute Choir, Saxophone Ensemble, Rock Band, Music Technology.

Chapel and Special Services

Daily Assemblies; Armistice Day Service, Ash Wednesday Service, Ascension Day Service, School Anniversary Service, Advent and Carol Services

Sport

Regular **fixtures** with local schools in football, rugby, netball, hockey, swimming orienteering, cricket and cross country **Sport for All** programme;

Tournaments in athletics, swimming, rugby, football, basketball, netball and hockey; Entry to District, Regional and National Tournaments

Tours and Trips

Year 7 and Top Form Cricket tour to Barbados; Year 3 WellyBoot Camp at School; Year 4 to Norfolk; Year 5 to the Isle of Wight; Classics/French trip to Provence; Year 7 Teambuilding trip; Top Form End of School trip to Devon; Choir tours to Belgium and Holland; Ski trip

Regular Outings

Reception to Woburn Safari Park; Year 1 to Dinosaur World, Roald Dahl Gallery; Year 2 to Windsor Castle, Woburn Safari Park;

Year 3 to Verulamium; Year 4 to Chiltern Open Air Museum; Year 5 to Warwick Castle; Year 6 to Mountfitchet Castle; Year 7 to The Globe and Regents Park Open Air Theatre; Top Form to the Houses of Parliament.

Visiting Workshops

History off the Page; War Horse Puppets; Cambridge University Classics

Recent Musical and Drama Productions

Weekly Lunchtime Concerts; Nativity Plays; Year 3 and 4 Christmas Cracker; Verse-Speaking Competition; Latin Plays, Shakespeare Festival; French Plays; Senior Productions including *The Lion King*, *The Witches*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Private Peaceful*

Charity Events

Fund raising for Keech Hospice Care, Herts Welcomes Refugees, Disasters Emergencies Committee Ukraine Fund, Flamstead Church Roof Fund

BPSA Fundraising Events

Fun Night, Summer Ball, Beechfest, Outdoor Cinema, Quiz Night, Bonfire Night, Christmas Fayre, Junior and Middle Department Discos.



Leavers' Destinations

Girls	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		Scholarships
	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	
Abbot's Hill	1		1		3		3		5		5		4
Aylesbury High					1		1						
Beaumont					1								
Berkhamsted	2		8		3	1	3		2	1	3	1	7
Bradfield										1			1
Haberdashers'			1								1		1
Haileybury			1	1	1	2			1	2	2		13
Katherine Warrington							1						
Keswick School											1		
King's Harpenden									1				
Millfield		1											1
Queenswood	3		2		1		1		2	1	4		9
Oundle										2		1	3
Roundwood	1						1		1				
RMS for Girls					1								
Rugby				1							1		1
Sandringham			1								1		
Sir John Lawes			1		1		2						
STAGS					1				1				
St Albans High	8		3		7		11		4		5		2
St George's					4	1	2				1		
St Helen and St Katherine							1						
St Mary's Ascot	1												
Stowe				1									
Truro High										1			
Uppingham						1				1			

Leavers' Destinations

Boys	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		Scholarships
	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	11+	13+	
Aldenham	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Beaumont			1										
Bedford		5		4		3		9		5		2	5
Bedford Modern							1					1	
Berkhamsted		3		5	1	7		1	1	2		4	8
Bradfield												1	
Cranleigh												1	
Eton								1					
Haberdashers'											1	2	
Haileybury		1		4						3		2	3
Harrow		2								1			
KWS									2		1		
King Edward's										1			1
Kings School						1							
Merchant Taylors'	1	4		2		1		1					4
Marlborough Science Academy											1		
Millfield	1												1
Oundle		1						2				3	4
Parmiter's							1		1				
Roundwood	1	1			1				1				
Rugby				1		1							
Sevenoaks								1					1
Sir John Lawes							1				1		
St Albans		9		13	1	9		9	1	12		10	24
Sandringham					1								
St Christopher										1			
St Columba's	1	1		2				2	1	1		1	
St George's	4	1	3		1		2	1			3		
Stowe								1					2
Uppingham		3		1		4		1					4
Verulam			1										
Wellington					1								2



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