



St George's Harpenden



Come with us on a journey...



Welcome to St George's. It is my hope that this prospectus will convey something of the richness and enjoyment of life at this successful school.

St George's provides an excellent learning environment as a fully co-educational day and boarding school. Visitors to the school are struck by the disciplined yet caring atmosphere and the mature relationships between pupils and all who work and live in its attractive grounds. There is a sense of real purpose and harmony based on Christian principles and our traditions, and revealed in such personal qualities as consideration, service and endeavour.

We value academic achievements highly but appreciate that other qualities are equally likely to lead to success later in life. By offering a wide range of experiences both within the classroom and through extra-curricular activities, we encourage all of our pupils to "Aim Higher".

I am extremely proud of my school and warmly invite you to consider St George's as a special place for the care and education of your children.

Yours sincerely,

N F Hoare MA OBE

Headmaster



In 2007, St George's celebrated its Centenary Year. The school was founded by the Revd Cecil Grant who established St George's as one of the first full co-educational independent boarding schools in England. The founder set out a clear vision for his school and one hundred years on, this vision is still very much at the heart of St George's. We like to think that if the Revd Cecil Grant were to come back to us today, through the aims and ethos of the school, he would still very much recognise the St George's that he founded over a century ago.

St George's aims...

- To encourage all pupils to follow the school motto 'Aim Higher' in all that they do.
- To provide a first-class education in a caring Christian setting where worship and prayer are valued and promoted.
- To promote leadership qualities and roles of responsibility amongst our pupils.
- To provide academic excellence across the curriculum (Teaching and Learning was described as 'outstanding' by Ofsted).
- To enable all individuals to feel valued and to inspire all pupils to value others.

These two photographs show eight pupils at the start and end of their school careers. They have grown from children into young adults. They have experienced all that St George's has to offer. They have learnt with us, played with us and prayed with us. They have been part of the school for seven years and know all that we stand for and all that we are.



So let them take you to the very heart of

St George's...



Annie reflects on her formative years of study at St George's in Key Stages 3 and 4.

Maths was a subject that was really enjoyable and though it became harder over time the lessons remained really interesting for me. I always enjoyed English and the role play was great fun. Though reading was never my strong point, it really improved at St George's. In Science I really loved the Bunsen burners. Everyone in the class looked forward to the experiments but the other parts of the subjects were really interesting too. I really enjoyed all my subjects at St George's and made the most of my learning.



Jessica gives an overview of the 'A' levels that she is currently studying.

Food Technology

"I really enjoy this subject because as well as producing written work, I also get to complete practical work. I learn about many different aspects of food including manufacture, product developments and functions of ingredients in food".

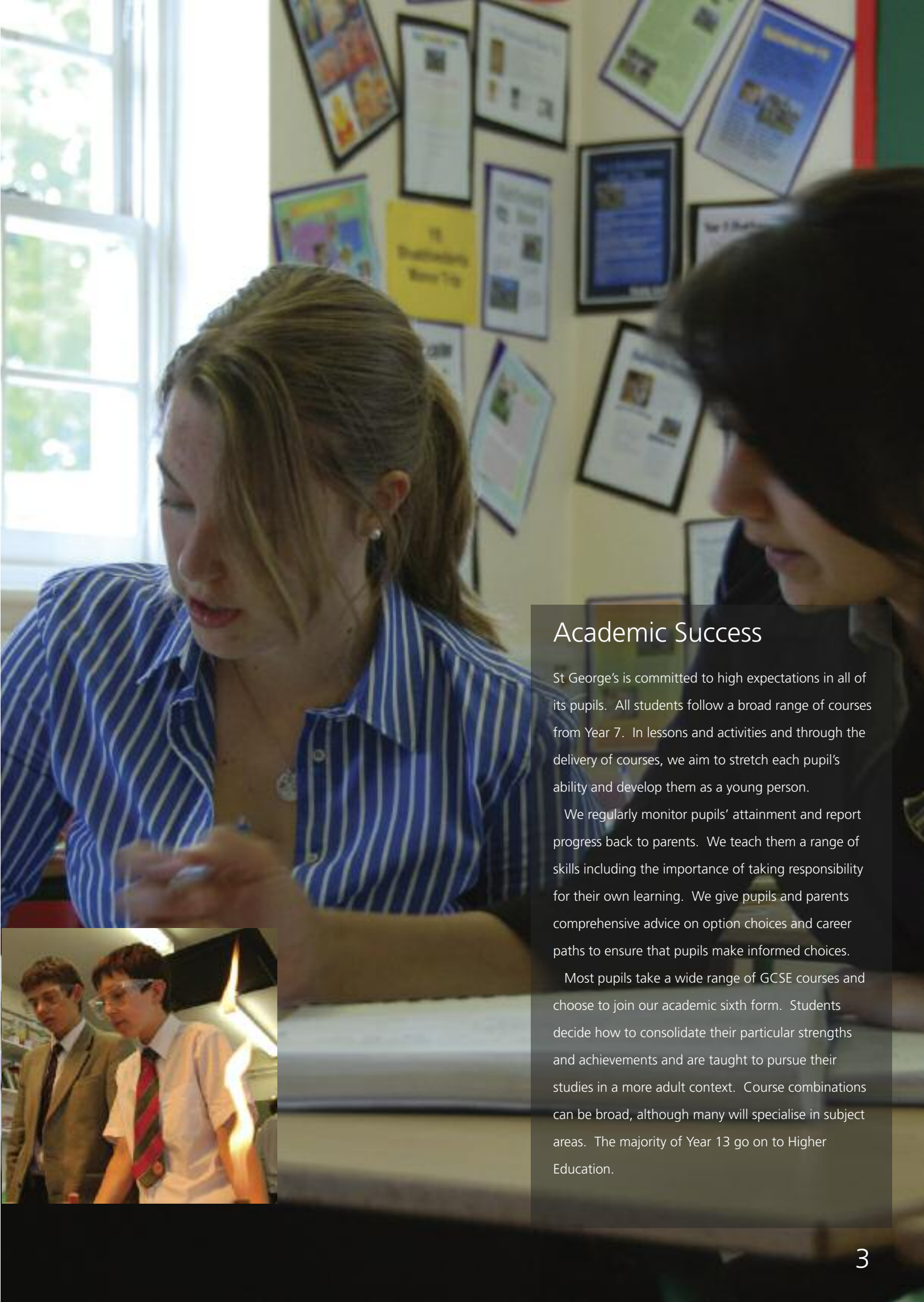
Government and Politics

"This subject is extremely interesting as I have the opportunity to learn about British Government and the American Government. Debates are an important part of the subject which is a great deal of fun".

English Literature

"Although the essay writing side of this subject can sometimes be challenging, I thoroughly enjoy English lessons with great teachers and the reading side of the subject".





Academic Success

St George's is committed to high expectations in all of its pupils. All students follow a broad range of courses from Year 7. In lessons and activities and through the delivery of courses, we aim to stretch each pupil's ability and develop them as a young person.

We regularly monitor pupils' attainment and report progress back to parents. We teach them a range of skills including the importance of taking responsibility for their own learning. We give pupils and parents comprehensive advice on option choices and career paths to ensure that pupils make informed choices.

Most pupils take a wide range of GCSE courses and choose to join our academic sixth form. Students decide how to consolidate their particular strengths and achievements and are taught to pursue their studies in a more adult context. Course combinations can be broad, although many will specialise in subject areas. The majority of Year 13 go on to Higher Education.



Developing the whole person

We believe that education for life means more than academic and examination success. Every pupil is offered the chance to participate in a number of extra curricular activities which reflect the experiences and interests of teaching staff and the curriculum offered. We also provide a comprehensive course to cover aspects of a pupil's personal, physical and emotional development. It offers opportunities to explore the biological, social and moral implications of growing up in the context of the school's Christian ethos and in preparation for life.



Pastoral Care

The school's comprehensive pastoral system encourages and enables pupils to make friendships easily and to develop them through common understanding, shared interests and a sense of both purpose and identity as pupils at St George's School.



Jenny explains the importance of friendships and relationships during her time at St George's and gives some examples and highlights.

"Most of my friends from Primary school went on to different schools so going to St George's was a fresh start. Making new friends wasn't difficult and I settled in really quickly. The girls who I made friends with at the beginning are mostly still my best friends now and I have had a great time with them! It was reassuring to have close friends going through similar circumstances as me, such as struggling with particular subjects. I was able to work together with my friends and they supported me whenever I was in a dilemma. During Key stage 3 and 4, you find that the friends you made are the ones you tend to stick with. However, in the 6th form this all changes as you're in classes with people you may not have mixed with before. It's been really great to mix with more of the year and our studies bring everyone closer together. It will be sad to see everyone go at the end of the year! One of my best memories would have to be our Year 11 Prom".





Music

St George's is proud of its reputation for the high quality and vitality of its music. The department, which is staffed by a number of specialists and includes many instrumentalist teachers, plays a central role in the creative life of the school. All pupils will share in the different kinds of music we can offer. Many are highly talented musicians and play in leading youth groups in the UK. St George's is proud to host Harpenden Musicale, one of the country's largest and most influential private schools within our campus, illustrating the value we place in the creative and performing arts.

Drama

There are many opportunities for dramatists to get involved in both front and back stage. Our productions are always of a high standard and the inter House competitions involve numerous budding young thespians under the direction of talented sixth formers. Events such as these underline St George's commitment to the creative side of every pupil.

Art and Design

We know that with inspirational teaching and encouragement all pupils can express themselves through art and design. Our art teachers do not accept any pupil's belief that they 'can't do art' and the work of this area of the school is fundamental to the development of artistic ideas in young people. They are given an appreciation of the range of media available to work with and how each allows individuals to explore their thoughts and feelings. Knowledge of technical processes is covered and classes build on the foundation of good drawing skills, and understanding shape and colour.

The Art Department is renowned for its frequent exhibitions and the study tours it offers to groups from all years in the school. Study days at such galleries as the Tate and National are arranged for younger pupils and for more advanced work at GCSE and A level, pupils have the opportunity to study and paint in Cornwall, Florence, Barcelona, Paris and Venice.





Sport

The school has a long tradition of excellence in sport, achieving success at district, county and national level. Our ethos is 'sport for all' and whilst St George's provides many talented and skilled role models, the emphasis for all pupils is on enjoyment and participation.

We provide a balanced programme to all pupils irrespective of their ability in order to develop their physical potential and to challenge and develop qualities such as co-operation, leadership and fair play.

Competitive games are important with teams from all years playing House and school matches. These occasions are very important in the school calendar and have a high status and profile, giving the pupils the opportunity to face the challenges of competitive sport, whether they are talented or not.

The main games played are rugby, lacrosse, netball, basketball as well as cricket, tennis and rounders. St George's has a proud history of success in these sports as well as in athletics and cross-country. The Heather Jarvis Sports Centre opened in 2009, and the extensive school grounds provide ideal settings for all sports and activities, and our fixture list is the envy of many other schools.

In recent years, both the senior lacrosse and rugby teams have successfully toured parts of the United States, South Africa and New Zealand. The annual ski trip is another example of how the school seeks to provide opportunities for pupils to extend and enjoy their sport.



Adam looks back on his seven years at St George's and comments on how he was always keen to get involved.

"There are too many memories to write down: all the successes we have had from rugby and the times with friends. I will remember the times when we played football with the older years and the fun I have had in lessons. I have made some good friends and it has been a part of my life that I will always remember. Teachers say that you should enjoy school as much as possible as you are spending on average a quarter of your life in it. This is a statement I thoroughly agree with and luckily for me I have loved school and the sport it gave me".





The Four Houses

We believe that a key aspect of Education is developing the whole child. To further the family atmosphere, the school is divided into four Houses, each with a Head of House, Deputy and a team of tutors. The Houses engender fierce, healthy competition but also offer their pupils support with their studies, academic guidance and pastoral care. Pupils develop strong loyalties to their Houses and take the Inter House initiatives very seriously. Our system of care is one of the strengths of our school community.

Tutor groups are organised into lower school (Years 7 and 8), middle school (Years 9, 10 and 11) and upper school (Years 12 and 13). Sixth Formers are an integral part of the leadership of each House. A pupil will have only three tutors during their seven years. This helps us to know each child better, to guide their academic and personal development and to increase the family feeling within the school. Experience has shown us that this encourages the feeling of closeness and belonging. Boarders are allocated to one of the four day Houses and take part in their own boarding House activities in addition to the day House events,

Each House has a group of sixth form Prefects appointed on merit and these senior pupils play a major part in the organisation of the many inter House activities and competitions. They also play an important part in settling in new pupils. Our pupils are our greatest asset and we do our best to look after them. They repay us by developing strong House loyalties; our pupils have great pride in achieving for their House. Our system of care is one of the strengths of our school community.



Charlie explains the importance of the House system and describes some highlights.

"The House system has been very important to me as a Georgian. As soon as I came to the school, on my first day, I met lots of new friends very easily because of the House system. Throughout school, everybody stays in the same House and this has made me very loyal to the House I have been in. When I leave, I will always look back and remember my time at St George's as being in Watts. Most of my closest friends are in Watts and these friendships have continued to develop and strengthen over my seven years at St George's. The mentoring scheme within the Houses has been very important to me and gave me someone to talk to when I was starting out at school. The biggest memory I have of the House is the competitiveness that it brings and the strong community spirit."



Extra Curricular activities

The school takes pride in the range of activities that are on offer once formal classes have ended. Pupils participate in practices for our highly competitive sports teams, rehearsals for school plays, take part in music practices or prepare for forthcoming House events. In the evening, boarders settle down to complete their evening prep. Pupils often return to school to take part in functions that vary from Curriculum evenings to Music recitals.



Laura describes some trips and opportunities that she has experienced during her time at St George's.

"China, Iceland, Battlefields, St Ives, Malham, the French Exchange and Brittany! As you can see I have been on many trips at St George's and this just shows the huge range of opportunities that you are given as a student here. In particular, Iceland and China have been amazing trips and a real once in a life time chance. In China we got to visit all the landmarks in Beijing - Olympic Stadiums, Great Wall and the Forbidden City as well as staying with a family in the province of Yiwu, something not possible without St George's".



Our Chapel, the heart of the school

The school, through its foundation, is specifically Christian, though not affiliated to any particular religious denomination. The Chapel is very much at the heart of the school, where all pupils and staff come to pray and reflect as a community. Our services represent the various styles of worship of our pupils and parents and are led by the school's own Chaplain. Services are also led by staff, guests and clergy from other Christian denominations.

Major Christian festivals are marked by special services including occasions such as Remembrance Day, Confirmation, Leavers' Thanksgiving and Old Georgians' Association Reunion Service.

We believe that the school's Christian values provide a common code of conduct and standard of behaviour. As our Founder intended, the school's life still centres on the Chapel, which also hosts concerts, recitals and Speech Days.



Matthew explains the importance of Chapel to him as a Georgian.

"Being a Christian and going to a Christian school has been a real blessing, so to be able to worship at school every week has been even better."

"I have grown up in a Baptist Church but I have been able to find God in a different place. I have also experienced a variety of styles of worship including the Praise Services and 'More to Life'. I was a 'More to Life' leader and though you can only reach so many people at the meeting, through the Chapel you can reach the whole school and God has really worked through it. My prayer is that as I have seen God move in my time through the Chapel and the school, he will continue to move and touch people's lives".



Boarders

Parents of boarders only meet the cost of accommodation and care as tuition is government funded in a maintained boarding school. Parents are asked to study carefully the criteria for entry, enclosed in the back of this brochure.

Each year over 100 boys and girls join us from around the UK and overseas to live and work at St George's. They have spacious houses set in the school grounds and a team of staff to care for them. Boarders are fully integrated with the day students and we know that many enjoy developing close friendships with them. Although the boarders have special arrangements for their study and some activities, they are always to be found at the heart of every activity in the school. Often, because of their background and different cultural experience, they bring an extremely valuable element of diversity which enriches our community life. At St George's we believe that we can and must all learn from one another.

After the day has ended, when formal classes have finished pupils will find that there are a number of activities they can participate in. Many staff run clubs and there are regular games, music practices and rehearsals. Pupils are encouraged to join in and to try new skills and activities, before settling down to their evening homework. Boarders have supervised study sessions every evening either in their Houses or in the Library and the ICT suites.



James sums up the most important things that he has learnt from his time at St George's.

"From my time as a Georgian some of the major things I have learnt are to never take your education for granted. I have been very lucky to study at such a great school as St George's. I have understood the importance of needing to work hard in life to achieve your goals. Another major thing I have learnt is how important friends are and the importance of respecting others. I will look back on my time at St George's with great fondness, and I will 'Aim Higher' in all that I go on to do in the future".



St George's and its community

St George's was established as a family school and since the beginning of the last century has prided itself on maintaining the Founder's aim. The relationships we encourage between school, parents and pupils are crucial to everyone's success. Links are provided by frequent Parents' Evenings when staff are available for consultation or when the Headmaster and Senior Staff speak on curriculum and organisational matters. Parents may contact the school to arrange an interview with staff and are directed initially to the Tutor and/or Head of House who have direct responsibility for the pupils' welfare.

We work with parents and, to help you, we publish a comprehensive Calendar each term giving detailed information of dates, major school and parents' events, games fixtures and Chapel services. Every family receives the Headmaster's End of Term Letter which contains a detailed review of the term and forthcoming events. There is also a more formal Headmaster's Curriculum Letter issued with course and syllabus changes and academic, pastoral and organisational developments and our examination results.

The Parent Staff Association is well established. It receives enthusiastic support and has, over the years, contributed significantly to many of the amenities of the school. Many families pledge regular gifts of money each month to support curriculum work and provide facilities such as the school's minibuses, Library and ICT resources. Without this level of support the experience of our pupils would not be as fulfilling or enriching.

The Old Georgian Association maintains links with former pupils and staff. Each year the Association publishes a newsletter and organises the reunion weekend at the end of the Summer Term and the candlelit Christmas Carol service. The OGA also provides items for the School Archive collection which is used by local, national - and occasionally - international researchers!

Links with local industry and commerce have kept the school abreast of modern developments and there are many examples of close co-operation between St George's, local business and the professions. The school participates in social and charity work, has links with the Rotary Club and close association with the different churches within Harpenden.

St George's is responsive to the needs of young people and we have a responsibility to anticipate these and prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead.

Our pupils will have a high profile in industry, business, commerce and the professions. They must also be good people, able to share their strengths with others and to acknowledge their weaknesses. They must also want to continue learning in whatever context they find themselves, and we pray that they will not forget the values we have imparted to them through our daily worship and our Christian ethos.

'....a school does not exist to send out men and women solely to play a part in life whereby they achieve a competence and honourable life of useful work and even a modicum of fame, but it exists to send out for posterity, and for their own generation, men and women who by their character shall leave the society in which they live the better for their presence, and, hence, the world much nearer the Kingdom'.

Dr Watts Headmaster 1937-46

St George's past students reflect



'Throughout my time at St George's I was encouraged to be an individual and to follow my dreams. I never felt under pressure to follow the crowd and was always given the chance to try out new ideas and activities. It's these opportunities that gave me the confidence and self belief to strive for, and to succeed in a career that differs from the norm.'

Belinda McGinley (1989-1997)

Stunt Performer

Doubled for Keira Knightley, Sienna Miller, Patsy Kensit, Samantha Janus

Appearances in Eastenders, Dr Who, Casualty, Emmerdale, The Golden Compass, Atonement



'The School was my home for 7 years as I was originally based in the United Arab Emirates and so boarded in Crosthwaite. The standard of coaching and sporting opportunities on offer attracted my parents to St George's and after finishing school and leading out the Rugby First XV, I moved on to international rugby, representing the Arabian Gulf in the Rugby 7s World Cup and the Asian Five Nations. Undoubtedly, St George's helped me to achieve this: I am truly grateful.'

Johnny MacDonald (2000-2007)

Professional Rugby player - Arabian Gulf Team
Cardiff University (Business Management)



'As both a boarder and then day student in the Sixth form I had the best of both worlds at the school. Now as a Royal Marine I value the bonds of friendship and support St George's taught me and I have remembered and used this when serving in Afghanistan, and on manoeuvres in Europe, the Mediterranean and now the Far East. The school understood me and my needs and never pressurised me to become a certain kind of person: they supported me and even now they keep in contact and follow my career with interest.'

Tom Foster (1998-2005)

Royal Marines

Tours of Service in Afghanistan 2006-07,
Logistical Support Group 3 Commando Brigade



'As a teacher now I appreciate even more the skills of those knowledgeable and dedicated staff who taught me. As a Christian the Chapel and the school's mission meant a great deal to me and I carry the qualities I learnt and skills I gained into my classroom with my own pupils. St. George's and Keswick House was a family for me especially as my brother was also a boarder. I am privileged and blessed to be an Old Georgian.'

Rachel Okrafo-Smart (1995-2002)

Keswick House, Head Girl of the School

Cambridge University BA Religious Studies and Education, MA Education.



'St George's gave me my passion for science spurred on by the Year 8 Science prize and the encouragement of my teachers. The House system taught us loyalty and the importance of making a contribution, however small and being chosen as Head girl is still one of the achievements of which I am most proud. The friends I made at school are my friends for life. Some of the most joyful occasions in my family continue to be celebrated in the Chapel – the marriage of my sister to the husband she met as a fellow sixth form student and the Christening of their daughters, my nieces. St George's is not simply a part of my past; it is firmly rooted in my present.'

Charlotte Stalvies (1990-1997), Head Girl
 Oxford University (Earth Sciences) BA, Palaeontological Prize for Excellence (2001)
 Newcastle University PhD (Molecular Organic Geochemistry)
 Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia



'St George's was the first stepping stone in my lacrosse playing career. Right from the beginning when I watched lacrosse being played at the Open Day, I was completely hooked. Without the excellent coaching, support and encouragement from the dedicated staff, I would not be where I am today. They looked after me and I had every chance to play, study and succeed.'

Laura Merrifield (1999 -2006)
 England Lacrosse Squad, Women's Lacrosse World Cup 2009
 BSc Kinesiological Sciences (Sports Science)
 University of Maryland, USA



'It was a great place to grow up in. Passionate and dedicated teachers always encouraged you to raise your sights and pitch in and give it your best shot- whether it was playing rugby or getting involved through my House in treading the boards, singing in the Music competitions or running cross country in Rothampstead Park. We were a real community which did 'Aim Higher'. I'm incredibly grateful to St George's for the springboard it gave me in life.'

Andrew Cockburn (1990-1997), Head Boy
 Cambridge University BA History & Management Studies
 INSEAD Business School, Paris, MBA (Distinction)
 Strategy Consultant, CEO Wigadoo and Entrepreneur
 Winner of The Observer 2008 Future 500 Award - "The One to Watch"



'At St George's I learnt what could motivate me and what my strengths and weaknesses were. It taught me such a lot and I had great support from my teachers. I was given new opportunities and I gained many skills especially in Technology which I continue to develop. I wouldn't be the person I am if hadn't gone through my own special journey at school. I will never forget each step, especially when the Headmaster showed my GCSE project in Chapel to the whole school – I was so embarrassed but now I remember it with pride.'

Sam Dallimore (2002-2007)
 Barnfield College
 Joiner & Carpenter, Bee Keeper and 'Aspirations for 2012'
 Competitive swimmer

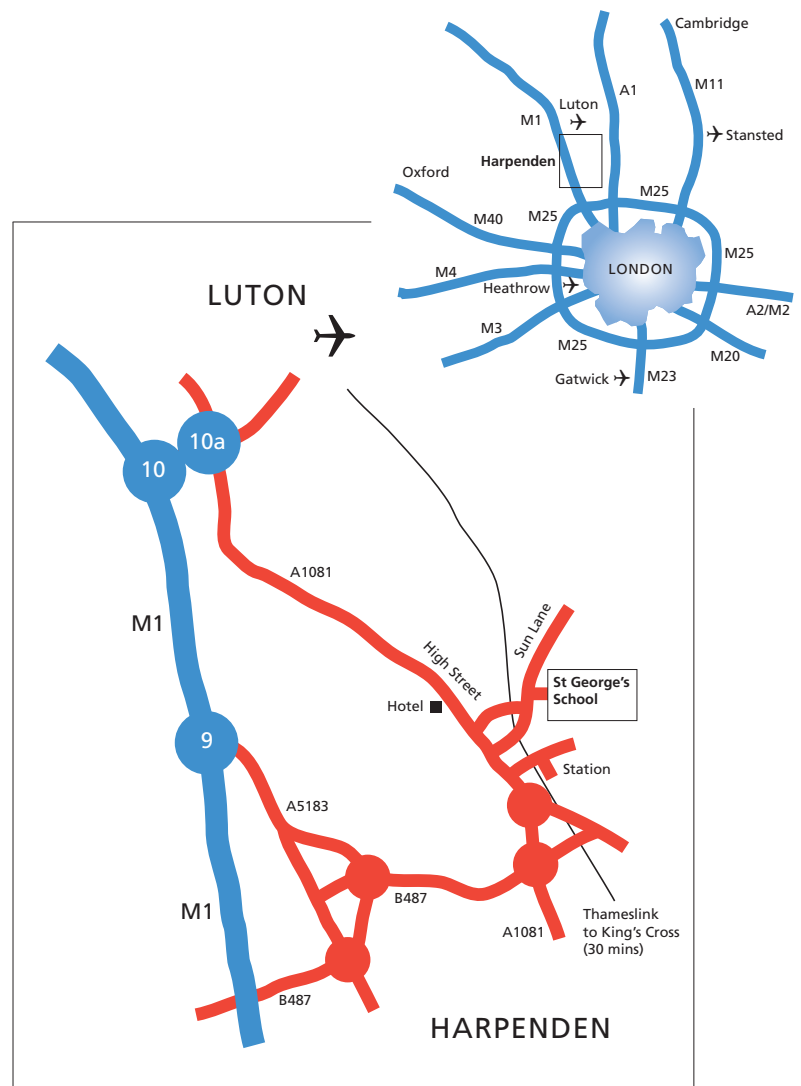
We hope your journey with us has increased your curiosity to find out more about St George's School. Please come and visit us: we are proud to show future parents and pupils our school.

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