

A photograph of two young girls sitting outdoors on a stone ledge, laughing and talking. They are both wearing bright green polo shirts with a small blue crest on the left chest and dark blue trousers. The girl on the left has brown hair in pigtails with blue ties, and the girl on the right has dark hair with a blue headband. They are in a sunny outdoor setting with a brick building and a chain-link fence in the background.

# St Christopher's School

Hampstead







## Introduction

St Christopher's is an independent day school for approximately 235 girls aged between 4 and 11 years. It was founded in 1883, and is a member of IAPS (Incorporated Association of Prep Schools).

The School is situated in a quiet, residential area of Belsize Park, Hampstead, conveniently placed for all forms of transport. It occupies a large Victorian house with spacious garden.

An extensive rebuilding programme was completed in September 2008. The new classrooms have sedum roofs with energy efficient heating and lighting systems in place.

In 1972, a Charitable Trust was formed to take over the school.





## Aims of the school

At St Christopher's we aim to achieve high academic standards by encouraging independent learning in a stimulating and child-centred environment. Creativity, in all its aspects, is integrated throughout the curriculum. The community revolves around respect: for each other, and the building in which we work. The atmosphere is one of mutual trust, tolerance and friendship.

We aim for the pupils to develop over the course of time into responsible, self-confident, aware young people, ready to embrace the challenges of secondary education. The school has a strong tradition and deserved reputation for academic excellence.









## The Curriculum

The school was founded on the fundamental principle that the creative arts be valued in equal measure to core subjects. To meet this aim and to ensure that all pupils are prepared for a world which will be very different from the present day, the school adopts a flexible and creative approach to the curriculum.

The curriculum is designed not only to challenge the pupils but also to prepare them for life. Hence Spanish is taught throughout the school, Mandarin from Reception to Year 3, Latin is introduced in Year 5 and French is available as a club from Reception.

Within the curriculum pupils are encouraged to question and challenge assumptions through the vehicle of Philosophy for Children and to work independently, as well as collaboratively.

Learning to work in groups and teams is given due attention. 'Teams' are identified in sport, in drama and in music. Thus all pupils experience a range of opportunities to learn the importance of taking shared responsibility.

Art and Design Technology are both considered essential subjects. Pupils are taught to draw and to experiment with texture and form.

All pupils learn the basic skills of netball, football, rounders, pop lacrosse, hockey and athletics. Teams represent the school in netball and rounders.

All pupils from Year 2 upwards have 1 chess lesson a week. The school has chess teams who compete locally and nationally.







Music, including singing, is an important unifying factor in the school. All pupils are in one of three choirs and senior girls may audition for the Chamber Choir. Music features in all assemblies. The school has two orchestras and two wind bands. All pupils have a one hour music lesson and a half-hour singing lesson per week.

Individual tuition in a range of instruments is available in school.

The Music and Drama departments work closely together. Each year group puts on a production which always has a musical component.









PE, both games and gym, are taught by specialist staff throughout the school. All pupils have a minimum of 2 hours PE a week and there are a range of before and after school clubs. The older pupils play netball, rounders and occasional football matches against local schools. There are hotly contested inter-house tournaments and a sports day.





All pupils have drama lessons and from Year 4 these are taught by a drama specialist. Every year group performs a play which will always have a musical component. We consider drama to be a fundamental part of the pupils' education. It fosters teamwork and confidence; encouraging pupils to speak clearly and correctly. LAMDA lessons are available for older pupils.











## Clubs

A selection of after school clubs are organized by members of staff. Activities are chosen on a termly basis by staff running clubs and have recently included ukulele, jewellery making, cooking through to science, PE, newspaper club, dance and French.

## Trips

Pupils are taken to the theatre, to galleries, museums, field centres, parks, historic building in and around London.

Years 4, 5, and 6 attend residential trips in Surrey, Wales and Dorset respectively.

## Houses

The pupils are divided into four vertically grouped houses; so that girls from all year groups work together on shared achievements, raising money for charity, merits for work and conduct.

## Catering

Mid-morning refreshments are provided, and a nutritious and well-balanced lunch for all pupils is cooked daily on the premises by professional caterers. A vegetarian option is always available. The school has a healthy eating award.





## **Working in partnership with Parents**

The school values its links with parents and encourages them to support their children's learning. Every pupil has the right to be safe, to learn and to be successful.

## **Parent/Teacher Communication**

Parents are invited to visit the school on open afternoons, and to attend school productions involving the music and drama departments. They are also invited to meet members of staff to discuss their daughter's curriculum at an informal gathering held at the beginning of the autumn term.

Parent/ Teacher meetings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms, offering parents the opportunity to discuss the progress of their daughter with members of staff. Full, written reports are sent to parents at the end of the academic year.

Newsletters are sent out half-termly to provide pupils and parents with a visual record of the events of the previous half term. Weekly reminders are sent via email every Friday.

Additionally, each member of staff has set times in the week when appointments can be made to see them by parents wishing to do so. Appointments to see the Head may be made on most days during term time.

For 2 ½ days at the end of Spring term Special Studies takes over the curriculum when parents come in to deliver an appropriate themed programme of work throughout the school.











### **Attendance:**

The school gate opens at 8.00am with a member of staff on duty. The main door to the inner school is opened at 8.25am. Each child is expected to be in her classroom by 8.30am. The school day finishes according to age groups:

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Reception | 3.00pm |
| Years 1-2 | 3.30pm |
| Year 3    | 3.55pm |
| Years 4-6 | 4.00pm |

### **Friends of St Christopher's**

All parents become members of the Friends of St Christopher's from which a Committee is elected.

This active and flourishing organisation, while taking no part in the management or running of the school, strengthens the close links which exist between parents and school.





## Travel Plan

St Christopher's supports Camden Council's initiatives for green travel as well as the parking voucher scheme.

Our Travel Plan has DfES approval, and all parents are expected to support the school's initiatives to reduce traffic during the school run with car-sharing being actively encouraged.

## Uniform

All items are obtainable from the school's uniform stockists. The Friends of St Christopher's also run a sale of second-hand uniform at school each term.









## Registration and fees

Applications for admission should be made well in advance and should be completed using the online form on the school website. Registration does not, however, guarantee a place.

Details of the fees, means tested scholarships and a current staff list are also included on our website.

Prospective parents are welcome to visit the school at any time before their daughter's assessment. Small groups are taken on a tour of the school and have the opportunity to meet the Head. The Registrar is always happy to deal with any queries relating to entry.

**St Christopher's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.**

Schools that St Christopher's pupils recently attained places at:

### **London Day Schools**

Belmont  
Channing  
City of London School for Girls  
Francis Holland  
Godolphin and Latymer  
Haberdashers' Aske  
Highgate  
Immanuel College  
JFS  
Latymer Upper  
North London Collegiate  
Queen's College  
St Paul's Girls' School  
South Hampstead High

### **Boarding Schools**

Bedales  
Cheltenham Ladies' College  
Downe House  
King's, Canterbury  
Queenswood School  
Sevenoaks School  
Wycombe Abbey

### **Maintained Sector Schools**

Camden School for Girls  
Dame Alice Owen  
Henrietta Barnett



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## St Christopher's School

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