



Prospectus

2023 Entry

I can do it and I will do it.

Welcome

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“What makes Watford Grammar School for Girls outstanding is the focus on each girl as an individual and an almost relentless drive to ensure that everyone achieves their very best.”

OFSTED

At Watford Grammar School for Girls, we recognise how significant the choice of secondary school is in every child's life. I know how important it is for them to be in a place that nurtures their particular abilities and I hope that this Prospectus, alongside the Open Evening and our website, provides the information you need to decide if our school meets your own aspirations.

Our vision and aims provide a sense of direction for the school. The pursuit of academic endeavour informs our curriculum and the outstanding teaching in every classroom, laboratory, workshop and sports area.

Students have a passion for learning and we provide a wide range of opportunities for them to develop their interests both within and outside of the classroom. As well as providing challenge within lessons, we expect every student to join in with the extensive and wide-ranging extended curriculum programme.

Our history informs the character of Watford Grammar School for Girls and we continue to value the spirit of giving that Dame Elizabeth Fuller taught us. Each year we celebrate our origins on Founders' Day in May, and our students continue to wear the gold and blue uniform worn by generations of students before them. Sitting in the heart of Watford, our school reflects the vibrant and multi ethnic community which we serve. Every student is seen and treated as an individual while they must actively participate in and contribute towards the life of the school. To create the equal and sustainable society of the future we hope for, we expect all the community to act with kindness and respect, while students learn to make their own moral judgements through continual debate and discussion about the most challenging questions of our day.

I am incredibly proud of this unique school and hope that as you learn more about us, then you are able to make an informed decision about this next important step in the life of any student.



Miss Sylvia Tai
Headmistress





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*This school has built my confidence and shown me how to work within a team
to share ideas with others and achieve my goals*

Ria, Year 7

Welcome from Natalie

Dear Year 6,

My name is Natalie and I am currently a year 7 at Watford Girls Grammar. I still remember being nervous and feeling overwhelmed before school started, as I imagine many of you are. Despite the nerves, I was the most excited I had ever been. I'm going to describe my favourite experiences so far on my Watford Girls journey.

Before school officially began, I attended a summer school. It gave me the chance to meet teachers, make friends in other forms, learn my way around the school and even try out some of the subjects Watford Girls has to offer. In groups, we attempted team building exercises which were so much fun and there were even inflatables on one of the days! We also got to swim in the school's own swimming pool. On the last day of the summer school, there was an ice-cream van and certificates were given out.

When school officially started, I got to meet my form for the first time. All my nerves disappeared when I realised that everyone was feeling the same way. The year 7 building is called Hyde House and its where I met my form tutor and my friends for the first time. We received our timetable, planner, a map of the school and our new seating plan. All the students and teachers are so kind and helpful and instantly made me feel happy at school. After properly getting to know how the school works, I really started to feel like a Watford Girl.

The school has so many clubs taking place during lunchtime and after school. The wide variety includes: many sport clubs, bands and choirs, study clubs, art clubs, language clubs and many more. In some PE lessons, we were using the swimming pool – these were always my favourite. There are two places to get lunch/snacks; the Food Factory (the main canteen) and the Stables (a small food venue outside Hyde House). Watford Girls also has a huge library with hundreds of books in different genres and lots of places to sit.

If you are coming to Watford Girls, you are very lucky. The teachers are so nice and helpful, there are amazing events all the time and you will definitely have the best time. From the moment you enter to the last day of year 7, you'll be smiling the whole time. The community is such a pleasure to be a part of and you will never forget the memories you make. I wish you the best time possible.

All the best,

Natalie, 7F



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I like being a Watford girl, I feel proud of where I go, because of its amazing reputation, and I can get an exceptional education at this school. I also like the diverse community of students and I've made amazing friends here.

Shivangi Year 8

Welcome from our Head Girl

Dear Year 6,

Welcome to Watford Grammar School for Girls. 6 years ago I was in the exact same position as you; I felt nervous, uncertain, and afraid of joining a new school full of new people. I know it can seem pretty daunting, right? One minute you're the oldest year group in a school and the next, you find yourselves the youngest and in unfamiliar territory however let me reassure you, within my first week here at Watford Grammar School for Girls, I felt at home and I'm certain you will too!



Here at Watford Girls, we aim to develop young students like yourselves, into leaders, innovators and drivers of change and the incredible teaching staff will always be there to support you in taking this next step forward. Coming to this school will allow you to explore your interests and ambitions, through the multitude of extra-curricular activities we provide, and nurture them so that you can grow into a unique and well-versed individual full of potential.

Being a Watford Girl has filled me with pride due to the overwhelming sense of community at the heart of our school; the enthusiasm is infectious and I'm sure it will spread to you too.

There's something special about Watford Girls; I can genuinely say the warm and welcoming atmosphere I experienced when I first joined has stayed with me to this day, and the support network amongst students and teachers is truly exceptional.

There will be many opportunities for you to fully immerse yourself in school life as well as make friends so embrace it. You have some exciting times ahead of you so enjoy this next step of your academic journey and I wish you the best of luck.

Your Head Girl,

Alyssa



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The staff are kind and supportive and it will be easy for students to find at least one teacher they can go to about anything.

Aamina, Year 7

History of Watford Girls

In 1704 Elizabeth Fuller founded a free school, which for its age was unusual both for being entirely free and for educating girls as well as boys; the school follows closely her example of service and dedication to this day.

For 178 years Elizabeth Fuller's scholars, boys and girls, were taught under the same roof, but after a brief removal to new buildings on Derby Road, the boys and girls went their separate ways in 1907, when we took up residence in the aptly named Lady's Close. The site has been much added to and developed over the years, but the generosity, selflessness and academic endeavour of the Founder has never been overshadowed. Her portrait presides over us in every assembly and we celebrate our Foundation every year on the day she decreed over 310 years ago.

Earliest records celebrate the achievements of the girls for their hard work and aspiration, attributes the current pupils display in abundance. In recent years the Girls and Boys schools have shared a greater range of activities and come closer together. What remains distinctive about the Girls' School is that it strives for excellence within a caring and dynamic community, something our formidable Founder no doubt would have approved of.





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My favourite subjects are maths and science. I have always enjoyed solving equations and problems and this school has made me enjoy science more and makes it much more interesting

Arya, Year 7

Vision:

As a girls' school with a proud history, we strive to empower our community to become innovators, drivers of change and leaders to create a more equitable and sustainable society.

Academic Endeavour

The vision of the school is based firmly on our record of academic success. We encourage all our students to strive for the highest standards in all they do. We believe that academic endeavour is an essential element of each student's success both within school and throughout her life.

Wellbeing

Being successful as a student means not only achieving your potential academically but also having the tools to monitor and manage your wellbeing, and to seek support when needed. We teach our students about their own mental health, through form times, assemblies and our PACE and FORUM programmes. Students study the Five Ways to Wellbeing, different wellbeing challenges and mental health conditions people face and are signposted to sources of external support should they need them.

Leadership

From Year 7, students have the opportunity to develop their skills as leaders, through taking on roles such as Form Leaders, Charity Representatives and Sports Representatives for their form groups. As students move up the school, they progressively take on more leadership responsibility, culminating in students in Year 12 and 13 being elected to form the Head Girl and large Prefect Team; a team which takes on significant responsibility in leading key school events and supporting in different areas of the school.

Respect and Kindness

The community at Watford Girls is rich and diverse; a microcosm of the society we live in. To function effectively in such a diverse world, we ensure that our students have the opportunity to consider their differences and the views and opinions of others, such that they have the skills to treat others with respect and kindness in any situation.

Making Moral Judgements

Through our curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities, students are taught to understand and make moral judgements. These range from work in PACE and FORUM lessons on topics such as friendships, peer pressure, the equalities act and relationships and sex education to clubs on offer such as Debating Society, Model UN and Eco Club. Enrichment opportunities such as workshops on racism, World War 1 and the Holocaust, along with curriculum choices in many subjects, such as the Humanities and Arts enable students to learn about a diverse range of different situations and cultures and to consider how to make ethical and moral decisions in a safe and supportive environment.

Passion for Learning

Our curriculum is challenging, broad and diverse and is designed to encourage students to love learning, to think, question, explore and research. As such, our students approach their learning with enthusiasm and dedication. An essential aspect of passion for learning at Watford Girls is reading. Reading is just like breathing at Watford Girls. Our students are encouraged always to read for pleasure, and across the whole school. One form time each week is entirely devoted to reading.



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The staff here are very friendly and always happy to help if you're stuck or need help.

Neha, Year 7

The Curriculum

The curriculum at WGS is an academic one. Its aims are ambitious: to provide students with a deep knowledge of the subjects they study; to foster in students powers of analysis, critical thought and creativity; to enable students to make moral judgements, which are informed by their knowledge of their own culture and the culture of others; and to develop students as independent learners, ready to move to the next stage of their education.

Teaching is planned carefully, responding to the needs of individuals, and ensuring that each student is challenged to think rigorously.

Students leave WGS confident in their abilities, with an enduring passion for learning, and as leaders ready to shape their own futures in an equitable and sustainable society.

Key Stage 3

In year 7, students continue their progression from Key Stage 2 where they experience a curriculum that is broad and ambitious for all regardless of their starting point.

Students study Maths, English, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Art, Classics, Computing, Design Technology, Drama, Geography, History, Music, P.E and Religious Studies. To enable our students to live in the global community, they learn a modern foreign language French, German or Spanish in year 7. In years 8 and 9 the majority study an additional MFL or Latin.

Teaching in Key Stage 3 (year 7-9) is delivered in mixed ability groups (except Maths).

Each department develops schemes of work that are carefully sequenced, encourage critical thinking, reflect our diverse community, and inspires deep understanding of their subject and thus creating a platform for learning at GCSE.

The PACE programme (PSCHE) together with an enrichment provision encourage tolerance, respect and understanding.



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This is a fun and enjoyable place, always helping me to be the best I can, with all my friends at my side.

Angeli, Year 7

The Curriculum

Key Stage 4

The Key Stage 4 curriculum is designed to ensure students engage in academic endeavour. All students study a common core of English, Mathematics, Combined or Triple Sciences, a language and a humanities subject, creating a rigorous and ambitious programme of study. The vast majority of students study at least one creative subject, and the wide offer includes Art, Drama, Music, PE and Design Technology. This broad and academic curriculum allows students to move successfully to post-16 education.

The curriculum ensures that students in Years 10 and 11 develop qualities of openness and tolerance, and have the ability to make and understand moral judgements. Latin is offered alongside three modern languages; and RS and Classical Civilisation, History and Geography are offered as humanities subjects. The school has chosen to make these subjects essential parts of the curriculum, as they invite students to engage with, and understand, the thoughts and values of other societies and periods of time. A core RS programme offers further opportunity to reflect on moral issues.

The curriculum aims to develop a passion for learning to be carried throughout life. A key way in which this is achieved is through the structure of the Year 9 options process. The option blocks used to construct the Key Stage 4 curriculum are based on student choices, rather than being pre-determined. This allows students to have a very free choice of options to complement the core subjects, and for the school to be responsive to student interests.



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I enjoy the sport and music clubs, because I enjoy being able to play or perform as part of a group. I also like that there are so many clubs and societies that I can join, depending on what interests me.

Charlotte, Year 8

The Curriculum

Key Stage 5

The curriculum in Sixth Form is academically focused with all students studying a minimum of 3 A levels. There is an opportunity to apply for a 4th A level to broaden their educational experience and also an option to apply for and complete an Extended Project Qualification. The breadth of academic subjects is inspiring and this is maintained by our partnership with Watford Grammar School for Boys. The broad curriculum is challenging, academically stimulating and allows our students to gain an exciting and passionate experience with their chosen subject areas. The skills of independent thought, research, creativity, problem solving and innovation are present and transferable to higher education and the world of work.

The school has chosen Forum and PE to be integrated into the curriculum. The Forum programme (PSCHE) in Year 12 and 13 is bespoke and student centred to ensure they develop the potential to be leaders and drivers of change in society. PE lessons are timetabled for Year 12 for continued focus on student's wellbeing, allowing time for engagement in physical activity and social connectivity.

Opportunities for student leadership are vast and varied, including our Head Girl Team and School Prefects. Sixth Form students are encouraged to take on responsibility for numerous societies and to develop ones, if they do not exist, that harness their own zeal and personal interests. Community service also allows students to think outside of themselves, develop their own moral compass and given generously to others with time and care.



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I think our school motto 'We can do it and we will do it', shows that we have an attitude of never giving up and trying our best in everything.

Darshana, Year 7

Extended Curriculum

Clubs & Societies

Clubs and Societies at Watford Grammar School for Girls aim to enrich and extend the experiences of our students, enabling them to explore and develop new interests. We offer a wide variety of clubs before school, at lunchtime and after school and recommend that all Year 7 students take part in at least three clubs a week to broaden their interests and more importantly, to meet new people and make friends.

Clubs and societies are student as well as teacher led, with students in all year groups actively encouraged to set up or suggest new clubs in line with their interests where one does not already exist. Examples of clubs and societies include World Poetry, Junior Science, Chess, Art, Astronomy (which includes the option to study for an additional GCSE), Junior Classics, Drama and Board Games.

There are clubs and societies that celebrate the diverse nature of students at Watford Grammar School for Girls, and are inclusive to all. Examples include Afro-Caribbean Society, Islamic Society, Jewish Society, Christian Union and Faith and Culture Club and Spectrum, our LGBTQ+ society.

Music is a very important part of the extra-curricular offer at Watford Grammar School for Girls and there is a very wide range of Music Clubs, enabling students with all levels of musical skill to participate and enjoy music collectively. These range from Junior Choir, which regularly numbers more than 100 students from across Key Stage 3, to Glee Club, Junior and Senior Orchestras, Brass Group, String Quartet and the Sixth Form led Acapella Group. Musical performance at all levels is showcased at two extremely popular concerts which take place each autumn and spring and musical groups play an important part in key school events, such as Founder's Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and Prize Giving.

Sports Clubs at Watford Grammar School for Girls aim to encourage all students to find sports that they enjoy and to inspire a life-long love of sport and fitness. These range from Badminton, Football, Catch-up Swimming, Swim Squad and Gymnastics to Hockey, Tennis, Netball, Dance and Bollywood Dance. School teams run in a variety of sports across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 and students in these teams play matches against a wide range of other schools. Team successes are celebrated and losses are used as an opportunity to learn from and to develop resilience in a supportive environment.



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My favourite subject is PE because there are so many amazing facilities such as the swimming pool and the Astro Turf. There are also many sports clubs which are a great opportunity to make friends.

Tanisha, Year 9

Extended Curriculum

Trips

Trips and visits serve to enrich and extend the curriculum and to provide experiences that our students might not otherwise have, challenging them to try new things and move outside their comfort zone. These range from local day trips to once-in-a-lifetime expeditions to remote locations globally.

Trips typically run in Year 7 include visits to Watford Museum and local places of worship, Geography fieldwork in rural and urban locations, a Classics visit to Roman Verulamium and a History Trip to St Albans Abbey. The year culminates with a residential trip which all Year 7 students are encouraged to attend, in order to further develop their teamworking skills and resilience, to challenge themselves to try new and exciting activities and to develop their network of friends further prior to moving into Year 8.

Trips running in other year groups typically include Gallery, Museum and Theatre trips, competitions, such as Year 8 Computing, Year 10 Technology and Year 9-13 Maths, fieldwork trips in Geography and Biology, Sports trips, for example to see professional sports matches or tournament weekends against other schools and overseas trips to Iceland, Amsterdam and World War 1 battlefields, as well as expeditions open to students in Year 10 and 12 to locations such as Vietnam and Sri Lanka.

Across Years 9-13, we run the highly acclaimed Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, with students in Year 9 having the opportunity to participate in Bronze Award, students in Years 10 and 11 Silver Award and students in Years 12 and 13 the prestigious Gold Award. This very popular scheme sees students developing their individual and team work skills, making a contribution to the community and challenging themselves in terms of their physical fitness, independence and resilience on overnight expeditions.

When we speak to former students who come back to visit us or to our Year 13 students, just as they are poised to leave the school, it is these trips which often form the basis of their fondest memories of school life.



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I really like Watford Girls because there are many new and exciting experiences from after school clubs to amazing trips and swimming.

Darshana, Year 7

Pastoral Care and Student Welfare

Pastoral Care and Organisation

The foundation of everything we seek to achieve is the effective pastoral care of our students, upon which wellbeing and academic success are built. We want students to be happy, healthy, safe and to make outstanding progress and to this end all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, work as a team. The focus of all school policy and action is the student: we commit ourselves to fostering her intellectual and emotional growth; the development of her skills and interests and the recognition and celebration of her progress, from the moment she enters the school as a Year 7 student, to the moment she leaves, at the end of either Year 11 or Year 13.

Even before a Year 7 student walks into the building on the first day of her Watford Grammar School for Girls career, she will have been given a form tutor who she will have met the previous July, along with all the other members of her form group. The form tutor is at the centre of her school life, ensuring that she is happy and able to flourish in a supportive and academic environment and preparing her for adult life, by asking her to take on a variety of different responsibilities. The Year 7 forms are based in Hyde House, which does ease the transition from a smaller primary environment into this large, vibrant and bustling secondary school: at break and lunch, they also have sole access to the beautiful Lady's Close garden which provides a place of peace and tranquillity. Students will stay in the same form group from Year 7 to the end of Year 11 and in the Sixth Form the form groups will be reorganised to broaden the students' social vistas and also integrate the many students coming to us from other secondary schools.

The team of tutors is led by a Head of Year and as a general principle, the year team will stay with the year group as they progress up the school: this ensures that there is continuity of care for every student in a strong and supportive social group. We value our relationships with parents and carers, as we see ourselves as working in partnership with home and we ensure that we keep you informed as to what your daughter is doing and how she is doing, on a regular basis.

We know that progressing through secondary school and growing from a child into an adult is not always easy, and as a result have built up our own range of support services in school to help when facing challenges. This includes Peer Listeners, Sixth Form Buddies, School Counsellors, an allocated Mental Health Support Team worker and a full-time Safeguarding Officer. We recognise that not all student needs can be met within school and liaise with appropriate support agencies such as the Local Authority's Children's Services and School Attendance Improvement Officer, GPs, School Nursing, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Chessbrook Education Support Centre and the Educational Psychology Service, ensuring that we are able to secure effective support to children and families when it is required.



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Watford Girls is an amazing place which has helped me build my confidence.

Angeli, Year 7

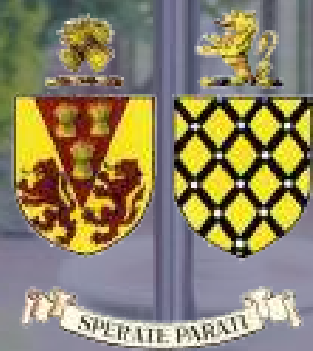
Charity & Service

Charity and service to others is an important focus of school life, with all students encouraged to help the local, national and international community, in as many ways as possible. Every year we raise between £15,000 and £20,000 for a wide range of charities, through a variety of events: we have had cake sales, interform limbo dancing and karaoke and sponsored silences. In all that we do, we encourage students to reflect upon the world in which they live and how best they can help to make a difference to someone other than themselves and their immediate family.

As a school we play an active part in the life of the Watford Community. The Year 12 Community Christmas Boxes involve all Year 12 students in putting together boxes for local people in care homes, to bring them a little joy at a time of year when it may be difficult to be alone. Care Homes have been incredibly grateful of the food, gifts, cards, messages and recorded videos and songs that students have sent, particularly through the isolation that COVID has brought to some of their residents.

Another eagerly anticipated event is the Harvest Festival. Year 13 students promote and advertise the event within the school with a lively, colourful and musical assembly and then organise the collection of harvest food donations. Year 13 students then distribute the donations throughout the community where they are most needed.

As we move beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, we look forward to further expanding the range of ways we can contribute to supporting our local and global communities, and look forward to the exciting ideas our new Year 7 students will bring for how we can do this.



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