



BROMSGROVE SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

For Entry in 2022

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for enquiring about a place at Bromsgrove School for your child. This booklet will help guide you through the admissions procedure and give you some useful background information about the School.

Pupils can gain admission to Bromsgrove School in any year group, but the main points of intake are:

Pre-Preparatory	Nursery and Reception
Preparatory	Year 3, Year 5 and Year 7
Senior	Year 9 and Sixth Form

The Admissions staff are always happy to talk to parents looking for a place outside of these main intake points. They can advise about the availability of places and give guidance about applying for a place. Please do contact them if you require any additional information either before registering for a place or during the application process.

Admissions Contact Details

Email: admissions@bromsgrove-school.co.uk
Telephone: 01527 579679

Mrs Liberty Chance	Admissions Manager ext 347 UK entrants, day and boarding, prep international boarders
Mrs Jo Courtney	ext 273 International boarders Senior School
Mrs Tracey Collard	ext 318 International boarders Sixth Form
Mrs Julie Cross	ext 214 International boarders and Summer School

VISITS

We encourage prospective families to visit the School. Individual visits will normally include a meeting with the Headmaster, the Headmaster of Prep and Pre-Preparatory School (if appropriate) and other senior staff.

We hold regular open mornings for all sections of the school and are always delighted if families visit for an open morning and then follow that up with an individual visit.

We have a full range of videos which give a taste of School life and which can be sent to you on request.

To organise your visit or to book a place at one of our open mornings, please contact our Visits Co-ordinator, Mrs Amanda James, on ext 383 or by email at ajames@bromsgrove-school.co.uk

GUIDELINES FOR ENTRY

All pupils wishing to gain entry to Bromsgrove School must sit our entrance examinations. A registration form must be completed prior to sitting the examination. Following registration, a confidential report from the current school will be requested, this is also taken into consideration. Offers of a place will be based on performance in the examination.

Details of the entrance examination structure are available from the Admissions Office.

For pupils wishing to enter the Sixth Form from other British schools, admission is based on predicted GCSE results. Sixth Form candidates wishing to be considered for an Academic Scholarship should submit a scholarship application form at the time of registration.

All international pupils, including those for Sixth Form entry, sit our entrance tests in their own country by arrangement with one of our representatives, alternatively, they may sit the examinations during a visit to Bromsgrove.

The policy for Nursery and Pre-Preparatory admissions can be obtained directly from Mrs Liberty Chance in the [Admissions office](#).

OPEN MORNING DATES

Pre-Preparatory School	Saturday 11 th September 2021
	Saturday 22 nd January 2022
	Saturday 7 th May 2022

Preparatory School All Years	Saturday 25 th September 2021
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Senior School 13+ Entry GCSE Subject Choices* (Year 8)	Saturday 9 th October 2021 Saturday 19 th March 2022
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Sixth Form Entry Sixth Form Choices*	Saturday 13 th November 2021 Saturday 29 th January 2022
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*The Sixth Form and GCSE Choices Information Mornings, are open to our current pupils and prospective pupils. They are an opportunity to meet the Heads of Departments for each faculty and to learn about the courses on offer for GCSE and in the Sixth Form.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION DATES

All examinations are held at Bromsgrove School

11+ & 13+ Entry (Entry to Years 7 & 9) **	Friday 26 th November 2021
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Prep School Entry (Entry to Years 3, 4, 5, 6, & 8)	Saturday 15 th January 2022
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***Alternative entrance examination dates may be offered at the discretion of the Assistant Head.*

BOARDING HOUSES

Bromsgrove School has recently made massive investments into its boarding accommodation and is proud to offer facilities of the very highest standard.

All the accommodation within the boarding houses is of a very high standard. A rolling refurbishment programme means that all the boarding accommodation is updated and decorated regularly.

Senior School boarding Houses:

Oakley	Girls
Mary Windsor	Girls
Elmshurst	Boys
Wendron-Gordon	Boys
Webber House	Boys
Housman Hall	Boys and Girls, Sixth Form only

Preparatory School Page House

Page House caters for around 100 boys and girls aged from seven to thirteen who are cared for by resident Houseparents, supported by a team of tutors and resident staff.

If you are considering a Prep boarding place we can offer taster boarding sessions, subject to spaces being available.

Pupils board full time, with a limited number of spaces for weekly boarders. The weekly boarding fee includes transport on Monday morning and Friday afternoon. We do not operate exeat weekends, so full time boarders are not required to leave the School at any time during term time, other than for School holidays. This means that there is always a large number of boarders on site and that an exciting activity programme is available to them.

DAY HOUSES

Every Pupil in Bromsgrove Senior School belongs to a House – either day or boarding. Loyalties to the House are strong and there is huge competition between the Houses.

We have three girls day houses and three boys day houses, all with approximately 80 pupils, each is run by a Houseparent and their team of tutors.

The House offers pastoral and academic support and is always the first point of contact for parents with any concerns.

Senior School Day Houses

Hazeldene	Girls
Lupton	Boys
Lyttelton	Boys
Ottillie Hild	Girls
School House	Boys
Thomas Cookes	Girls
Walters	Boys

ENTRY PROCEDURE

WHAT	WHEN	INFORMATION
Enquiry	Any time of the year.	Please contact Admissions by telephone 01527 579679 or email admissions@bromsgrove-school.co.uk .
Individual Visit	At any time during term time	Please contact Mrs Amanda James by email at ajames@bromsgrove-school.co.uk or by phone on ext 383
Registration	After your visit.	Completed Registration Form and payment of the Registration Fee (£100 day place/£200 boarding place) should be sent to the Admissions office; these are needed before we can proceed to apply for confidential school reports from current schools.
Entrance Examinations	November for 11+ & 13+ candidates, Lent Term for all other candidates.	Alternative entrance examination dates may be offered at the discretion of the Assistant Head. All examinations are held at Bromsgrove School.
Scholarship Examination or Interview	November for Sports Scholarships and January for all other Scholarships.	The Admissions office will advise on deadlines for application. Prior registration is required for Sports Scholars attending the Assessment Days. Sports Scholars must meet our entrance requirements and successful candidates (13+) will be required to sit our entrance examinations. For Sixth Form candidates, entry is dependent on achieving specific GCSE grades.
Bursaries	Deadline for bursary applications is the end of the Michaelmas Term (December)	Bursaries are means-tested. Full details and the bursary application form are available to download on the website. The Administration Manager can advise on the bursary application process: mailto:kelyv@bromsgrove-school.co.uk
Taster Days and Nights	Prep boarding candidates may have a taster session (space allowing) after registration and before accepting a place. Taster days are available for Pre-Preparatory applicants.	The Admissions office will advise on the availability of dates for boarder taster sessions.
Places Offered and Accepted	Lent Term for all points of entry.	Acceptance of a place is required within three weeks of the offer being made.

ADMISSIONS DATES 2021 – 2022

2021	September	Saturday 11 th Saturday 25 th	Open Morning for Pre-Prep ages 3 – 7 Open Morning for Prep School years 3 – 8
	October	Saturday 9 th	Open Morning for 13+ entry
	November	Monday 8 th Saturday 13 th Monday 15 th Monday 22 nd Tuesday 23 rd Friday 26 th	Last day for submission of 11+ and 13+ registration forms Open Morning for Sixth Form applicants Last day for registration for Sports Scholarship Trials 13+ Sports Scholarship Trials 16+ Sports Scholarship Trials 11+ & 13+ Entrance Examinations
	December	Friday 17 th	Final date by which 13+ 11+ Scholarship call back will be advised to parents
2022	January	Monday 3 rd Saturday 15 th Saturday 15 th 17 th – 28 th	Last day for submission of bursary applications and scholarship application forms Entrance examinations for Years 3, 4, 5, 6 & 8 11+, 13+ & 16+ Scholarship examinations Music Scholarships (16+, 13+, 11+), Drama (13+, 16+) & Art Scholarship (13+, 16+) auditions by invitation.
		Saturday 22 nd Tuesday 25 th Wednesday 26 th Thursday 27 th Saturday 29 th	Pre-Preparatory Open Morning 16+ Scholarship interviews 11+ Scholarship interviews 13+ Scholarship interviews Sixth Form Course Information morning
	March	Saturday 19 th	GCSE Choices Information morning

NB some dates may be subject to change.

SCHOLARSHIPS

11+ and 13+ candidates whose performance in the entrance examinations is deemed worthy of consideration for an Academic Scholarship will be invited back for interview by the Headmaster and senior staff. All 11+, 13+ and 16+ candidates wishing to be considered for any Scholarship must complete a Scholarship application form.

Full details of all Scholarships are available on the School website. There is much competition both external and internal for Scholarship places, so please do manage your expectations and those of your child. Scholarships carry a very small financial award but carry much kudos and are held until the next round of Scholarship examinations. All Scholarships can be supplemented by means-tested bursaries.

Scholars are recognised within the School community and should be good role models in all areas of School life. A number of Scholar events are organised annually, either within departments or by the member of staff in charge of scholars.

The following awards are usually made annually:

11+	4 Academic Awards, 1 Music Award
13+	6 Academic Awards, 2 Music Awards, up to 2 Art Awards, up to 2 Drama Awards and up to 4 Sports Awards
16+	6 Academic Awards, 2 Music Awards, up to 2 Art Awards, up to 2 Drama Awards and up to 5 Sports Awards

Foundation Scholarships

Bromsgrove maintains a number of places for Foundation Scholars. These awards only operate in respect of day places and preference is given to candidates from Bromsgrove and the surrounding area. Foundation Scholarships are awarded to very able pupils in need of financial assistance. The maximum award is 50% of the day fee (means-tested), which may be augmented by a further means-tested bursary. Candidates wishing to be considered for a Foundation Scholarship should apply in writing to Miss Rachel Scannell, Assistant Head, at the Senior School.

Academic Scholarships (11+, 13+)

Fee remission of between 2.5 – 5%.

Candidates will be invited to sit the scholarships exams based on performance in the entrance examinations. Scholarship interviews will be offered based on the results of the Scholarship examinations.

Academic Scholarships (16+)

Fee remission of between 2.5 – 5%.

Candidates sit the scholarships exam based on their subject choices. Scholarship interviews will be offered based on the results of the Scholarship examinations.

Music Scholarships (11+, 13+ 16+)

Fees remission on lessons for up to two instruments.

Sports Scholarships (13+, 16+)

An annual award of £400 towards payment of sports equipment or sports tour.

Art Scholarships (11+, 13+), Art or Textiles Scholarships (16+)

An annual award to of £400 help with the cost of materials or art associated trips and visits.

Drama Scholarships (13+ 16+)

An annual award of £400 to help with the cost of drama associated trips and visits.

BURSARY INFORMATION

Bromsgrove offers a generous provision of scholarships and bursaries. Scholarships reward excellent performance in academe, sport, music and the arts, and carry little or no financial assistance. Bursaries are means-tested and offer assistance with fees. It is possible to apply for both a bursary and scholarship at the same time.

Bromsgrove is committed as far as possible to helping those pupils who would benefit from a Bromsgrove education but whose parents or guardians cannot afford full fees. Parents and guardians wanting assistance with fees are required to fill out a means-test form when applying for a bursary, which can be found on the School website this should be sent through marked *private and confidential* as the form indicates.

We recommend that a bursary application form is submitted at the same time as the registration form since early submission is advised. Although Bromsgrove has a generous bursarial fund, all bursaries are allocated from a limited fund; and late applicants may be disappointed if they would need bursarial help in order to accept a place when offered. Bursary awards are reviewed on an annual basis.

Bursary recipients are expected to work hard and contribute positively to all aspects of a Bromsgrove education. If a bursary recipient were to fall short of expectations of behaviour and performance, then the bursary award would be reviewed. We want all bursary recipients to make the most of the opportunities offered to them, to thrive and succeed and hopefully in later life think about supporting our bursary funds in order to allow others to also benefit.

Full details of the bursary application process and the bursary application form can be found on the School website.

FEES as of September 2021

DEPOSITS

Registration Fee

Day Place	£100
Boarding Place	£200

Acceptance Deposit

Day Place / Forces Boarder	£500*
Boarding Place	£3,000*

(parents resident in, and fees paid from, Europe)

Additional Deposit

Non-European Boarder	£10,385*
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*this amount is refunded once the final term's fees and extras have been settled.

FEES

SENIOR SCHOOL

All Years		Fees per term
	Day	£5,980 (including lunches)
	Weekly Boarder	£8,870
	Boarder	£13,385

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Years 3 – 6	Day	£4,175 (including lunches)
	Weekly Boarder	£6,345
	Boarder	£8,700

Years 7 & 8	Day	£5,415 (including lunches)
	Weekly Boarder	£7,680
	Boarder	£10,730

Please note that the prompt payment allowance for settlement within seven days of the start of term is £200 per term, applicable to Senior and Prep School fees. The fee shown is net of this deduction.

ADDITIONAL CHARGES

Music Charges

Per 40 minute lesson	£32.00
Hire of Instrument per term	£32.00

Please note that ten teaching weeks' notice is required for cessation of music lessons and such notice must be given to the Director of Music

TRANSPORT

As well as our own fleet of minibuses we contract with companies such as BNC Taxis and Aston Coaches to provide a daily service to and from School. The daily routes are organised to accommodate the geographical spread of pupils and can vary from term to term, depending on the location and numbers of pupils requiring transport and the length of the journey involved. All drivers and contract company staff hold an enhanced DBS Disclosure. School drivers are assessed by the LEA for driving competence and their health is checked on an annual basis.

The School transport service currently covers the following areas:

Halesowen/Edgbaston
Hall Green/Cotteridge/Northfield
Solihull/Knowle
Worcester/Droitwich/Hanbury
Earlswood/Dickens Heath/Wythall/Rowney Green/Alvechurch
Henley in Arden/Danzey Green/Tanworth in Arden/Beoley/Tardebigge
Ardens Grafton/Inkberrow/Redditch
Stourbridge
Hartlebury/Kidderminster/Chaddesley Corbett
Rubery/Barnt Green/Blackwell
Stratford/Wilmcote/Redditch
Hagley/Blakedown/Belbroughton

To secure a place on our daily bussing, a minimum of five journeys per week need to be booked.

The Transport Manager, Mrs Rachel O'Neill, is happy to talk to parents requiring more information. Mrs O'Neill can be contacted by email on roneill@bromsgrove-school.co.uk or by phone on ext 256.

ACADEMIC RESULTS 2021

At GCSE 27% of all entries were awarded the top grade of a 9. With half of all GCSE grades being 8 or above

Half of all GCSE grades were an 8 or above and 70% of all entries were awarded at least a 7.

In the Upper Sixth year group there were a mixture of IB, A levels and BTEC qualifications.

- At A level, 89% of all entries were graded A* to B, with 62% at A*/A and 26% of all entries at A*.
- In BTEC, 42% of all entries were awarded a Distinction star which is equivalent to an A* at A level.
- In the IB diploma, 69 students secured an average of 40.2. 43 students, just under two-thirds of the total cohort scored 40 or more points. Four students achieved the coveted 45 point maximum whilst three fell just a point shy of this. These 7 students gaining at least 44 points represent a tenth of the total IB cohort for the year.

Our sixth form leavers now head off to a wide range of top universities in the United Kingdom, with many going to prestigious overseas universities such as Toronto, Bocconi, New York and Leiden.

Headmaster, Peter Clague, paid tribute to the resilience and steady determination of all candidates and their teachers for having persevered through an academic year fraught with disruption. "Despite the intrusion of repeated lockdowns, quarantining and self-isolation, and the challenges of remote online learning, teachers remained professional, and pupils focussed and positive. That this year's results are in line with Bromsgrove's traditional averages is testimony to the integrity of that process."

BROMSGROVE SCHOOL UNIVERSITY DESTINATIONS 2021

Aston University

Business and Sociology

Arts University of Bournemouth

Visual Communication

Bath University

Accounting and Finance
Architecture
Economics (2)
Sports Management and Coaching

Birkbeck (University of London)

Language and/or with Global Politics

Birmingham University RG

Geography
Physiotherapy

Bradford University

Physiotherapy

Bristol University RG

Film and Television
Law

Cambridge University RG

Economics
Geography
Human, Social, and Political Sciences

Cardiff University RG

Architecture (2)
Biological Sciences
Business Management (Int. Management) (2)
Business Management (Marketing)
Law and Politics (Integrated)
Physiotherapy

Sociology and Social Policy

Cardiff Metropolitan

Sports Media

Courtauld Institute

History of Art

Derby University

International Hospitality Management

Dundee University

Biomedical Science

Durham University RG

Combined Honours in Social Sciences
Economics
Modern Languages and Cultures

Edinburgh University RG

Ancient and Medieval History
Arabic and Politics
Chemical Physics
German and Politics
Psychology
Psychology and Business
Spanish and English Literature

Edinburgh Napier

Quantity Surveying

Essex University

Law with Business
Management Economics

Exeter University RG

Arabic and Islamic Studies
Business and Management (3)
Business Economics
Economics (2)
Economics and Politics
Environmental Science
International Relations and Modern Languages
Mechanical Engineering

Falmouth

Photography

Glasgow University

Economics/Psychology (SocSci)

Goldsmiths (University of London)

Fine Art (Extension Degree)

Greenwich University

Games Design and Development

Imperial College London RG

Biomedical Engineering
Computing
Mechanical Engineering
Medical Biosciences

Keele

Radiotherapy (Diagnostic Imaging)/Radiography

King's College London RG

Biochemistry
Biomedical Science (2)
Business Management (2)
Chemistry with Biomedicine
Political Economy

Lancaster University

Economics
Medicine

Leeds University RG

Business management (4)
Economics (2)
Physics with Astrophysics
Politics

Leeds Beckett University

Sports Business Management

Leicester University

Medical Physiology

Liverpool University RG

Accounting and Finance
Business Management
Geography
International Business (2)
Political science

Loughborough University

Computing and Management
Economics and Management
Geography and Management
Mathematics and Sport Science
Politics and International Relations
Psychology

LSE RG

Data Science
Economics (3)
Management
Philosophy, Politics and Economics

Manchester University RG

Aerospace Engineering
Architecture (2)
Chemical Engineering

Manchester University RG contd

Chemistry
Economics
Fashion Management
Geography
Mechanical Engineering
Medicine
Management (Innovation, Strategy & Entrepreneurship)
Physics with Astrophysics
Social Anthropology and Philosophy

NCH University

Law

Newcastle RG University

Chemical Engineering
Geography
Journalism, Media and Culture
Maths and Accounting
Politics and Sociology

Nottingham University RG

Chemistry
Economics
Environmental Science
Industrial Economics with Insurance
Pharmacy
Political and International Relations

Nottingham Trent University

Business Management and Entrepreneurship
Business Management and Marketing
Fashion Management
Fashion Marketing and Branding (2)
Sports and Exercise Science

Plymouth

Physiotherapy

Queen's, Belfast RG

Medicine

Queen Mary University RG

Business Management
Computer Science
Environmental Science
International Relations with Business Management
Law (2)
Law and Politics
Maths and Statistics

Reading University

Business and management
Investment and Finance in Property
Law
Speech and Language Therapy

Royal Holloway University

Economics and Management
Financial and Business Economics

Sheffield University RG

Aerospace Engineering
Biomedical Science
Business Management

St Andrews

English
International Relations
Management and Spanish
Mathematics

St George's

Biomedical Science

Strathclyde

Human Resource Management

Surrey University

International Event Management

Sussex University

Psychology

Swansea University

Economics and Finance
Sports and Exercise Science

UCFB (Football and Sports Industry)

Football Coaching and Management

UCL RG

Applied Medical Sciences
Arts and Sciences (2)
Chemical Engineering
Civil Engineering
Computer Science (2)
History (2)
Information Management for Business (2)
Language and Culture
Management Science
Medicine
Politics, Sociology and East European Studies
Statistics, Economics and Finance (2)

University of the Arts London

Media Communications

Warwick RG University

International Management
Politics

Westminster University

Business Management
International Marketing
Economics and Data Analysis
Life Sciences/Psychology
Psychological and Health Sciences (co-op and regular)

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES**Amsterdam QS**

Business Administration

Bocconi Milan

Economics and Management
Management Science

Boston, US

Engineering

Charles University Prague Czech

Medicine

George Washington, US

Course Unknown

Georgia Institute of Technology QS

Engineering

HKUST

Civil Engineering/General Engineering

Hong Kong Polytechnic University QS

Physiotherapy

IE, Madrid

Business Administration
Economics

Kent State, Ohio

Fashion Design

Leiden University, Holland

Political Science

Middlebury, US

Liberal Arts

Northeastern USA

Economic and Business

NYU, USA

Liberal Studies

Parsons NY, USA

Fashion Photography

Sydney QS

Psychology

The Hague, Netherlands

International Business

Toronto

Computer Engineering

Toronto QS

Accounting and Finance

UBC QS

Sauder School of Business

UC San Diego QS

Biological Sciences

University of California Davis

Business Management/Political Science

University of Tilburg

BSc in Econometrics and Operations Research

WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management

Arts and Sciences/International Business
Administration
Economics and Data Analysis
Life Sciences/Psychology
Psychological and Health Sciences (co-op and regular)

PREP SCHOOL 7-12 YEARS - 520 PUPILS WITH 99 BOARDERS

SENIOR SCHOOL 13-18 YEARS - 1033 PUPILS WITH 480 BOARDERS

 50:50 DAY:BOARDING **ALMOST 50:50 MALE:FEMALE** 

225
U6 PUPILS

A LEVEL
62%
A*/ A GRADES

89%
A*/ B GRADES



40.2
AVERAGE IB SCORE
(WORLD AVERAGE 33.2)

RANKED #4
UK CO-ED IB SCHOOL

BTEC

42%
DISTINCTION*

EQUIVALENT TO AN
A* AT A LEVEL

GCSE ★
2021

70%
9 / 8 / 7 GRADE
(EQUIVALENT TO A* / A)

★ **193**
GCSE CANDIDATES

 **6TH**
IN THE
COUNTRY
FOR SPORT

TOP SIX OUT OF 26
SPORTS FOR THE LAST
5-6 YEARS

DOUBLE NATIONAL
NETBALL WINNERS

65%

WENT TO A RUSSELL GROUP OR
QS WORLD TOP 100 UNIVERSITY

60+

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY PLACES



362
INDIVIDUAL
MUSIC
LESSONS





Bromsgrove was inspected by the Good Schools Guide in February 2017:

What The Good Schools Guide says

Headmaster

Following a glittering career in New Zealand that embraced the state and independent sector, Peter Clague joined Bromsgrove as head in 2014. Attracted by its sense of heritage and purpose, Peter says it was Bromsgrove's challenge to the traditional public school image that clinched the deal for him. He is a huge supporter of IB and believes that its genuinely international spirit suffuses the whole school, bringing with it a progressive liberalism and excitement about modern educational developments. He has introduced more flexibility in the timetable, with longer lunch breaks for pupils to pursue co-curricular interests, and aligned the prep and senior school more closely, but perhaps the biggest changes are in the importance he is giving to the arts. There is more music and drama than ever before and a huge investment into the building of a new theatre at the prep school and concert hall at the senior school.

'He is not as scary as he looks', said one girl to us, which is more a comment on his height and presence than anything else because he is universally seen as charming and warm. The school is proud of its international leader and feel he mirrors the increasingly global outlook of the

school. They like also the way in which he respects the traditions of the school but helps them all to look critically at what works and change what could be better. He is described as a visionary and also praised for being in touch with reality. 'He's not all idealism – he has his finger on the business pulse and is very data focused', one senior member of staff told us. He is a skilled wood turner and works beside staff and students building stage sets. He is an 'awesome' public speaker, pupils told us: 'we never know where his metaphors are taking us'.

His litmus test for everything is 'Is it good for the pupils?'

Academic matters

This is a school that really does embrace and value the vocational and the academic. A Level, IB and BTec are all on offer in the sixth form and each has its strong supporters. The IB group loves the small, but growing, tightly knit IB community and tells us that they get all the very best teachers – but the other groups said the same, so we assume there are just a splendid lot of wonderful teachers. A Level students assured us they get the breadth through all taking the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification). Geography is 'amazing', politics is 'brilliant' and both attract large A level groups. Science and maths flourish. There are currently nine sets taking single maths and three further maths groups. Results are strong. At GCSE, 64 per cent A*/A grades in 2016. At the end of the sixth form, virtually all BTec results are double distinctions, the average IB diploma score was 38 in 2016 and at A level, 86 per cent are A*-B pretty and 60% at A*/A. The government contextual value added tables put Bromsgrove as the top independent school in the Midlands in 2016.

The only criticism on curriculum breadth came from parents who wanted the school to be offering

much more on the home economics and cookery side of things, but apparently the school is taking this on, and other than that there is an impressive range of opportunities.

Saturday mornings are not compulsory but a large proportion of pupils are likely to be there, not least because that is when some of the additional academic classes take place – whether in the form of catch-up and support 'surgeries' or Oxbridge preparation. There are plenty of other academic interest groups running too for anyone not falling into those categories. For those who miss a Saturday, there are departmental tweets that keep you interested.

Learning support is highly rated, though one parent gave a word of caution that moderate learning difficulties were beyond the scope of the school. There is a very attractive and well used learning resources centre on three levels and we were delighted to hear it is open till 10.00 in the evening and at weekends. This is the sort of opportunity that makes boarding so attractive to the serious student as well as those who want one long sleepover.

Games, options, the arts

Everyone was at pains to tell us that this is not just a rugby school. Well it certainly brings home the rugby silverware, winning the last two national finals, but then the girls' netball team are national champions too. There is genuinely a big variety of sport on offer with D teams that inspire just as much enthusiasm as the A teams. The school was ranked fourth in the country this year in School Sports Magazine. The elite senior rugby players do have to make the sort of serious commitment you would expect at national level, so it is not really an option to be in the U18 squad and play the lead in the school play. Sports facilities are excellent as you would expect, with a particularly impressive new

indoor arena with pull-out seating for 400 where the national indoor hockey finals take place. The pool and gym are open at weekends for boarders.

There is an exciting variety of clubs and societies and the school has invested heavily in staff on the co-curricular side to make a strong offering for all. Everyone was rightly proud of a girl who had entered an international competition to build an electric car and had ended up racing it at Rockingham. Drama, even before the new theatre is completed, is big and lots of departments - including art and DT - contribute to productions. Music is getting stronger all the time with smaller lunchtime concerts as well as the big school showpieces. There is Model United Nations and the school sends pupils to the European Youth Parliament. Pupils and parents were keen to tell us that the school looks for what every individual is good at and helps them find their niche and passion.

All year 10s do CCF. Some continue and others take up Duke of Edinburgh awards separately. There are service projects running so everyone makes a community contribution at some stage.

Boarders

At first the size may be a little intimidating but it is that which ensures the wide opportunities and it is ameliorated by the house system. Each house has its own internal family structure with older pupils acting as mothers and fathers and the younger ones as children. At the end of year 11, students can move to a sixth form house, but some can't bear to leave their first boarding house, home from home, at that stage. Apart from those in the sixth form house, everyone eats in a central dining room. There are some separate day houses and one with day pupils and boarders. A full cycle of impressive refurbishment is just about completed.

House tutors have about eight in a group and, with a 50 minute weekly session timetabled, get to know their tutees well. Sixth formers say that if you act like an adult, tutors treat you like an adult. Houses are good at communicating with parents and pupils – there are house newsletters and blogs as well as balls that help create a strong house identity. House competitions are seen as big bonding experiences and we were urged to get onto the school website to enjoy the full splendour of house music competitions.

The medical centre is highly praised. The nurses visit each boarding house every night to check all is fine and the focus on well-being, which includes bringing in outside speakers, is welcomed. Boarders say it is a 'full on' school. If you want to spend your weekends and evenings on a couch, the Bromsgrove experience would be wasted on you.

Background and atmosphere

Teaching staff come from a range of educational backgrounds – Oxbridge as well as the old polys – and this gives a sense that the school is grounded in the realities of life outside. There is a drive to ensure an authentic connection with the local community, who use the sports facilities and will be enjoying the new performing arts additions. Senior pupils have links with local state schools through CCF, D of E and university preparation. There's a sense of energy and hard work. The days are long for boarders and day pupils but they are full of purposeful activities.

It is a large campus, 100 acres, in the middle of Bromsgrove, a medium sized Midlands town. Buildings vary in age and the overall impression is of a site loved, cherished and very well maintained. Teaching blocks are attractive with wide corridors and big classrooms, all well lit. There is a delightful

little school museum in the old chapel which is just one of a number of reminders of the school's heritage. There are 11 houses, all but one single sex, some in modern buildings, some in charming older ones; the only co-ed house, in a converted hotel a few minutes from the main campus that was once the home of A E Housman, is a real stunner. The 'new' chapel is very prominent on the school site and there are assemblies three times a week for everyone.

There is a popular café, open all day, for older pupils – but we were assured by earnest sixth formers 'it is never a substitute for a proper lunch'.

We were impressed by the careers department where there has been a serious investment in staffing. Year 11 and sixth form pupils have a number of one-to-one interviews and these are supplemented by a Bromsgrove Futures programme of weekly visiting speakers. The contact with ex-pupils is also strong, so current pupils can get advice on careers and university choices and the chance to practise interview technique. There is a diverse intake and the careers department is well aware it is catering for wide range of needs – another example of how, despite its size, the school is interested in individuals.

Pupils clearly feel the school is good at listening. The head boy and girl lead regular school forums with no member of staff present and they told us the very positive results from these meetings. Pupil voice is increasingly bedded into all aspects and creates an atmosphere that pupils really are at the centre of this school.

Pastoral care, well-being and discipline

The pupils do need a degree of self-discipline to flourish, parents told us. They need to manage themselves to some extent especially as they get

older – which is seen as excellent preparation for life beyond Bromsgrove for those who succeed, but some parents knew pupils who had struggled with it. Discipline is seen as being robust and fair and pupils need to be prepared to accept it without arguing the toss. Uniform regulations are enforced strictly. Punishments for serious breaches of school rules ('but it's very rare,' pupils assured us) are consistent and take sensible account of the culprit's previous history, but there is very little debate round drugs or sex – you are out. The underpinning rule is that you must not stop others from learning.

Pupils and parents spoke very warmly and appreciatively about members of staff both on the academic and pastoral side. The overriding sense is that well-being and the whole person really do matter to staff.

Pupils and parents

The school sits somewhere between highly competitive Birmingham and posh boarding school clientele. Families typically have both parents working and are fairly diverse, but probably not a lot of old money and quite a number of military families. It attracts English families who want an international community - there are boarders from all over the world - and a choice of routes post-16. Bucking national trends, there has been an increase in British boarders and prep boarding in recent years. The pupils we met were delightful and genuine. They were articulate and thoughtful and all quite different from each other, which was refreshing. The situation of the school is an asset – it is in a good central England location, easy to reach from all corners of the country.

Entrance

At 13+ tests in English, maths, verbal and non-verbal reasoning and essay writing. The largest

cohort from the school's own prep. No automatic entry, but parents seem to feel that plenty of warning and advice is given if a child is unlikely to be accepted to move through. At sixth form level, entry depends on GCSE results and an interview for UK candidates.

Exit

There is a seriously impressive range of courses, universities and countries in terms of pupil destination that reflects the wide sixth form clientele. In recent years, pupils have gone on to do catering, boat building, digital games study as well as maths at Cambridge, PPE at Oxford and mainstream academic subjects at strong UK and global universities, including lots of future doctors and engineers. Five to Oxbridge in 2016 and seven medics.

Money matters

You are paying for the excellent facilities and opportunities as a boarder or a day pupil. Learning support is included in the fees as is ESL tuition. The head is very conscious of the need to widen access and play a part in promoting social mobility. He is actively building a bursary fund and currently there are 98 children on significant fee reduction. He tells us that past pupils are very receptive to raising funds for bursary support. Scholarships are on offer for academic, sporting, artistic and musical talents.

Our view

Bromsgrove manages to combine the feel of a local family day school with an international boarding school, attracting pupils both for its sporting reputation and also its academic offer and results. It is a carefully crafted hybrid that works. There is a culture of hard work and hard play and an earnestness about the pupils that is beguiling, far from the arrogant outcome some parents fear in

independent schools. The arts side of the school is definitely in ascendancy, both in terms of the huge financial investment and in the mindset of the community. We want to be invited back for the first performances in the new theatre and concert hall - we expect them to be world class.