



RUSHMOOR

WHERE INDIVIDUALS MATTER



Welcome

I am delighted to welcome your interest in Rushmoor School. I appreciate the importance you attach to selecting the right school for your son or daughter; childhood is something which can be experienced only once. With this in mind, and the belief that children learn best when they feel happy and secure, we aim to develop in our pupils a lifelong interest in learning – one which encompasses the full range of intellectual, cultural, artistic and sporting achievements of our society.

Unlocking an individual's potential means fostering a culture that encourages successful learning and creative thinking while rewarding initiative and independence. Learning should be fun and from the earliest years takes place both in the classroom and elsewhere around the school.

Pupils joining Rushmoor School find a small, friendly environment where individuals really do matter. There are small class sizes with an average of 16 pupils, and classroom support is excellent.

At our last inspection particular praise was given to the superb pastoral support we provide. We work closely with parents to ensure their child has an enjoyable and rewarding education. The School receives overwhelmingly positive responses each year from the parental questionnaire. One of my favourite quotes recently was "I think the school is very special - it has a wonderful atmosphere and enthusiastic and caring spirit. The teachers take a real interest in their pupils and work hard to help them". Our ultimate aim is to give our pupils the support and freedom they need to flourish into balanced, fully-rounded and confident adults.

The best way to appreciate our unique school is by visiting us so that you can have the opportunity to speak to pupils and teachers. Prospective parents and pupils can tour the school at any time and 'taster days' can be arranged. By visiting the School you will be able to understand how we encourage children to develop the confidence and flexibility which allows them to face the demands of modern life. I look forward to meeting you.

Ian M Daniel
Head Teacher, BA (QTS), NPQH



Past & Future

History

Rushmoor moved from London to Bedford in 1918 and has occupied the site in Shakespeare Road since then. Up until 1965, the School was privately owned and educated children in the age range 8-13. In 1965, the owner announced her retirement and the closure of the School.

At this time a group of parents and friends persuaded her to allow them to take on the running of the school and Rushmoor School Ltd, a charitable trust administered by a Board of Governors, came into being. Under their guidance, the School has expanded over the years to encompass the age range of 2-16 for boys and 2-10 for girls and, of course, to extend both property and facilities.



Building for the Future

The School is always looking to improve and has invested greatly in providing excellent facilities. Recent years have seen the building of Owen House, which houses our Learning Resource Centre, Art Room, Drama Studio, general classrooms and one of our ICT suites. We have also had a new Pavilion built on our games field and had a Food Technology room installed. This has allowed us to offer GCSE in Catering and Hospitality, which has proved popular amongst the pupils. The Junior School playground has been our most recent improvement to the school. Thanks to the PTFA our junior pupils have a safe and interactive environment in which to play.

From September 2013 the Governors of Rushmoor School are working closely with the Governors from St Andrew's School to oversee the governance of both schools for their mutual benefit.

Aims & Ethos

Through our pastoral care system we aim to help each child to develop their potential in academic and extra-curricular areas by encouragement, understanding and a close working relationship between school and home.

Encouraging Confidence & Enthusiasm

At Rushmoor we aim to enable pupils to acquire the knowledge, wisdom and self-discipline appropriate for life-long learning, employment and adult life. To achieve this aim we ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their intellectual, physical and creative gifts, across a broad and balanced curriculum. We cater for the academic child, those that are gifted and talented and also those who have specific learning requirements.

We promote the personal development of pupils, encouraging lively and enquiring minds, respect for themselves and others and a high regard for truth. We encourage self-confidence, integrity, social responsibility and awareness in pupils. Pupils learn to show respect and active concern for their school surroundings and for the wider environment.

High Standards

Our aim is to provide an environment in which every pupil can achieve the highest standards in all aspects of school life in preparation for the challenges of the future. The stability and security of continuous education on one site, spanning the age ranges from 2 – 16 years, is a major factor in helping us achieve this.



Developing the Individual

We place a major emphasis on the individual, recognising that all children are different, and we value each and every one in their own right. Each child has his or her own talents and abilities, and we aim to encourage each one to develop their own special strengths and to grow in confidence and self-esteem to find their role in the community. Being happy at school is essential.

Whilst every effort is made to draw out the academic potential of each individual, we consider it equally important that the children should grow up to be confident, caring, honest and responsible young people, capable of making a positive contribution to the society in which they live and work.

We welcome children of all religious denominations and we strongly uphold moral principles in regard to the way in which we behave towards each other. In practice, it means that we teach our children honesty, integrity, compassion and a true respect for all around them.



Teaching and Learning

From the EYFS onwards, most pupils attain good or excellent standards in their learning and achievement

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the National Curriculum although as an independent school we retain the freedom to modify and adapt the guidelines. We constantly review and update the curriculum to ensure that it provides for the needs of children growing up in the twenty-first century. We aim to equip our pupils with the fundamental skills essential for academic work while encouraging creativity and practical abilities. Our teachers are highly committed, sharing their enthusiasm with their pupils. Their teaching approach is varied to cater for the wide range of learning styles of our pupils.

Rushmoor Robins - Early Years Foundation Stage

Our Nursery and Reception classes are small and we are therefore able to provide generous adult to child ratios which are essential in the Early Years. Within our nurturing environment, children make secure attachments and become confident learners. We treat each child as an individual, build strong relationships with them and recognise the importance of working closely with families to ensure a positive learning experience. We respect the individuality of each child and understand how vital it is to meet their individual needs to ensure they reach their potential.

The children learn through a combination of child initiated and teacher directed activities that take place both indoors and outside. The children also enjoy weekly swimming and library sessions. Specialist teaching is introduced in Reception.





The school's curriculum is balanced, stimulating, accessible and suited to all pupils. The best teaching has high expectations and stimulates many aspects of pupils' intellectual, physical and creative development

Juniors - Year 1 to Year 5

During the Junior years the children consolidate and expand their endless thirst for knowledge. At this stage the children take large strides forward socially and academically. They continue to develop their reading and communication skills and are encouraged to take responsibilities within the class. In the early Junior years most subjects are taught by the class teachers, but as the child moves through the Junior department increased use of specialist teachers is made.

In the Junior department, the children follow a full range of subjects including: art, design technology, drama, English, French, geography, history, information & communication technology, mathematics, music, personal, social & health education, religious studies and science; together with physical education, swimming and games.





Middle Years - Years 6, 7 & 8

We offer a balanced curriculum which is based on the core requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils study English, mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics, art, design technology, food technology, drama, French, geography, history, information and communications technology, music and physical education and games.

All pupils are encouraged to develop good habits of independent study of which homework is an essential part. Our most important objective is to equip them with the skills, qualifications and sensitivity that they will require not only to succeed as individuals but also to appreciate the needs of others in their lives beyond Rushmoor.

Seniors - Years 9, 10 & 11

In Year 9 children continue with the courses followed in the Middle Years. However during the year much consideration is given to possible option choices for the GCSE years. In Years 10 & 11 the curriculum is made up of Core Subjects, Option Choice Subjects as well as other additional study areas.

Most children at Rushmoor follow a nine-subject programme of GCSE courses. These must be carefully selected for each individual to best match his aptitudes and abilities. All children study English and mathematics together with biology, chemistry and physics or science and additional science. These are the core subjects.

In addition children choose a further four or five Option subjects. These vary from year to year and are chosen from: art, design technology, drama, English Literature, catering and hospitality, French, geography, history, information and communications technology, leisure & tourism, media studies, music and physical education.

Rushmoor provides its pupils with a broad curriculum which allows them access to a wide variety of disciplines and experiences, enabling them to make informed choices in their further education, career and lives.

As a result of good and frequently excellent teaching, pupils make rapid progress and perform at least in line with their abilities, and in many cases beyond.



Care & Support

The School believes that every pupil should be allowed to embrace any aspect of the curriculum that their aptitude allows. Enabling pupils to receive support without undermining their confidence amongst their peers is of primary importance.



Learning Support

Rushmoor recognises that every pupil has strengths, abilities and talents which are capable of being realised. Difficulties may arise at any stage of a pupil's education and support is given to meet an individual's particular needs. If a pupil enters the School with a known specific educational need, arrangements can be made to work alongside an existing tutor, or recommendations made regarding suitable support for the particular difficulties the pupil is facing.

The Learning Support Teachers have additional specialist qualifications to teach pupils with special learning differences. Support for learning takes many forms with specific and targeted help for learning needs, study skills (particularly for senior pupils) and assistance in developing organisational skills.

Specific Learning Differences

The School has become well known for the work and success achieved in helping children with Specific Learning Differences. One-to-one and small group tuition within the normal school day, together with sympathetic help and care within the classroom, has enabled many children to make excellent progress. We pride ourselves on our ability to integrate children with Specific Learning Differences within our main stream school life.

Pupils who have a particular need have an Individual Education Plan which is agreed with the pupil and their parents and is communicated to mainstream teachers for actions. Pupils at Rushmoor achieve in several ways, academically, through drama and music, through sporting activities and through raised self-esteem.





Learning Resource Centre

The School is supported by a friendly, up to date, comprehensive Learning Resource Centre with access to computers, laptops, net books and ipads, where pupils can address a whole range of information resources, lively and interesting reading material, and support for their learning needs. A Homework Club is available 5 days a week, providing support and access to resources outside the normal school day. To provide a stimulus to creative thinking and to showcase pupils' work, a programme of exhibitions, displays and events delight pupils throughout the year.

Pastoral Care

The school aims to provide the highest possible level of pastoral care to all pupils at all times. It is intended that pupils feel happy and secure within a firm and fair framework of discipline which promotes responsible behaviour. The school endeavours to develop in the pupils an understanding of moral principles which allows them to tell right from wrong, to respect other people and to respect truth, justice and other people's property. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of cultural differences, whether religious, social or ethnic, and to reject all forms of discrimination. Strong pastoral care is essential to ensure that children grow up happily in a secure and positive environment.

Children at Rushmoor quickly develop confidence and trust in their teachers and all the adults who support them in their learning. This confidence and trust comes from our concern for each individual so that they do feel valued by us, and the consistent behaviour and values that we demonstrate to them.

Teamwork & Responsibility

Sport

Sport is a very important part of the pupils' lives at Rushmoor, whether it is through the competitive side or purely for enjoyment and experience. We offer a variety of traditional sports and have a high pedigree in rugby, football, cricket and athletics, competing on a national stage for cross-country and rowing. Although small in size we are big in stature with sport and regularly compete well with much larger schools. Every child has regular swimming lessons up to the age of 12 taken by fully qualified swimming instructors and the pupils take part in competitive swimming galas and charity fun swims. The priority is to ensure that all children can swim safely.

Away from the competitive side, we run an extensive sporting programme in Physical Education as well as extra-curricular activities; offering volleyball, dodge ball, surfing, horse riding, badminton and rowing. Individuals really do matter, so if there is a sport or activity your child wishes to do and it is possible, then we try and run it.

The sporting ethos is all about working to the best of your ability and progression. The staff and outside coaches are experienced in developing the best from individuals, whether it is the first team players or complete beginners. It doesn't matter where you start it is how you get to where you want to be.

House System

Pupils belong to one of three houses: Randall, Richardson and Owen. Inter-house competitions take place throughout the year and pupils gain house points in recognition of good effort, work and helpfulness.





Rushmoor boasts a highly successful sporting record with a number of pupils gaining county and national honours in cricket, rugby, cross-country and athletics.





Our broad programme of performing and creative arts provides children with excellent opportunities for self-expression.



Creativity & Performance

Drama

Drama lessons are held in the purpose built Drama Studio which is bright and spacious. Drama is taught by a specialist teacher from Year 4 and pupils are introduced to a variety of plays and are encouraged to improvise from an early age. As an extra-curricular activity Junior and Senior pupils compete in the annual Bedford Festival of Music, Speech and Drama and have the opportunity to become involved in the Arts Award. Senior pupils have gained much success in the Independent Schools' Drama competitions and the Cambridge and Beds Drama Festivals. Productions are held throughout the year for Junior, Middle and Senior pupils to experience performing in front of an audience.

Drama is a very popular subject at Rushmoor and the subject boosts a pupil's self-esteem and confidence.

Art & Design

The Art & Design curriculum encourages self-expression and the development of personal ideas. It enables pupils to produce individual work successfully by teaching a broad spectrum of practical skills from hand tools to state of the art machines and processes. The department also has two computer packages and a range of media. This increases the pupils' visual awareness of the world around them, both natural and manmade, and strongly encourages focus on environmental issues that designers and engineers face. The subject also enables them to become familiar with the work of a variety of artists, craftsmen and designers.

Food Technology

GCSE Pupils will prepare a wide range of food commodities, cooking a variety of sweet and savoury dishes. They will learn service and presentation techniques and be introduced to the idea of co-ordinating and planning events. They will be given an insight into understanding the Catering & Hospitality industry. Pupils across the whole school will participate in Food Technology lessons on a rotational basis and will develop key skills in food preparation, cooking and presentation, nutrition menu planning, costing and portion control.

Music

Music is an important feature of school life with children of all ages encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities according to their abilities and interests. The department is supported by a wide range of dedicated peripatetic music staff. Every year music pupils are given the opportunity to participate in concerts, festivals and graded examinations. There are several extra-curricular music groups in school including an orchestra, two choirs and even a hand-chime ensemble. They perform in every concert as well as in the local community. Music is taught with the aim of being enjoyed. It also develops the whole child, raising confidence, ensemble, listening and accuracy skills. Every effort is made to ensure pupils enjoy music in school and reach their musical potential.



A young person, likely a cadet, is shown in profile, wearing a dark blue beret and a camouflage jacket. They are looking down at a large map or document spread out on a surface in front of them. The background is slightly blurred, showing green foliage.

Challenge & Adventure

Pupils discover exciting opportunities, make new friends, experience team work, problem-solving and decision-making, increase their motivation, enhance their self-esteem and develop their communication skills.

Clubs & Activities

These are run by staff who have a special interest in or enthusiasm for a particular activity. They enable children to practice art, sing in the choir, play instruments, play chess, or do anything else useful or interesting which may enable individual talent to be discovered and to be nurtured. These activities and clubs run before and after school or at lunchtimes. These vary from year to year, but recently have included chess, drama, gymnastics and dance, computing, war hammer, football, basketball, photography, mathematics and swimming.

There is a Before and After-care system for children up to Year 3, and a supervised Homework Club available above Year 3.

Combined Cadet Force

A large percentage of Rushmoor pupils have an opportunity to join with another local independent school's Combined Cadet Force. After training the cadets get to choose which section they want to join, Army, RAF, Navy or Royal Marines. The cadets have many exciting opportunities, particularly on the camps and trips. The Navy cadets have sailing excursions, the RAF cadets have opportunities to go flying and gliding and the Army and Royal Marines cadets have training weekends away.

Trips

There are a number of exciting trips and activities throughout the year for different year groups and many of these are based around the curriculum subjects to enhance the learning experiences of our pupils. A range of organised cultural, activity and social trips have also taken place in recent years. These have included the popular annual skiing holiday, drama trips to Italy, Spain and Greece and cultural trips to France.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

There is the opportunity to take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, starting in Year 9. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a voluntary, non-competitive and flexible programme of cultural and adventurous activities for all young people, whatever their background or ability. The Award is a programme of personal and social development. The benefits to young people include developing self-confidence and self-reliance; gaining a sense of achievement and a sense of responsibility; discovering new skills, interests and talents and developing leadership skills and abilities. Pupils discover exciting opportunities; make new friends; experience team work, problem-solving and decision-making; increase their motivation; enhance their self-esteem and develop their communications skills.





Moving On

Careers

There is a careers programme, starting at the upper end of the Middle Years and continuing through to the end of Year 11. This includes visiting speakers, visits to places of work and work experience opportunities.

Education For Life

Education for Life (EFL) is the programme of learning which incorporates much of the careers work and also gives pupils an opportunity to explore their options for further study post GCSE. The programme aims to provide information about the world of work and encourage an individual's interest so that pupils may ultimately choose appropriate careers. We aim to promote self-awareness, and encourage pupils to take personal responsibility for career choices.

Furthering Education

Our pupils continue their education after leaving Rushmoor in a variety of independent and state maintained schools. Advice on choice of schools and colleges, as well as guidance with careers, is part of the EFL programme.





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Pupils of all ages are confident and articulate and value strongly their own and others' achievements. Pupils' personal development is a strength of the School. They have a strong moral code, which is upheld by staff and permeates the daily life of the school.

Independent Schools Inspectorate Report

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