



Applicant Information Pack



Headteacher's Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining us at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School.

Borlase provides a fantastic community in which our students and staff thrive. Borlase is not just about exam results; we are proud of our students' outstanding achievement, but even more proud of the rich opportunities students enjoy in sport, the arts, co-curricular clubs, and beyond. What makes the school special is that we are a

place where every student can find their passion whether in academics, sport, the arts, or leadership and be celebrated for it. Borlase students enjoy a fantastic education through the far-reaching academic curriculum, range of sports practised, the extensive Performing Arts programme, and wealth of co-curricular opportunities including trips and visits in all subjects and host of student-led societies. Some students will excel in one area, others in two, and a talented few in all!

The school's motto of *te digna sequere* (Follow Things Worthy), underpins everything that we do. Our aim is to send good people into the world, equipped with the qualifications, skills and experiences to allow them to make a positive difference in the world. The school's values of Aspiration, Courage, Enthusiasm, Integrity, Kindness, Respect, and Responsibility run deeply through the school while the pathway we lay out for our students is encapsulated in the words Participation, Responsibility, and Service. We want all of our students to discover their areas of interest and excellence while they are with us.

Borlase is a school steeped in history but it is also a school where we embrace the present and the future. We are committed to inclusion and to sustainability and strive to demonstrate our awareness of this not only in what we say but also in what we do.

I hope that you will find all the information you need about the school in this pack, on our website, and via our social media channels on Facebook and Instagram. If you have any further questions, please contact us at enquiries@swbgs.com.

We look forward to receiving your application!

Ed Goodall
Headteacher



Key Information

Borlase is a co-educational, academically selective school in the centre of Marlow, a beautiful town on the banks of the Thames. 1,200 students from the age of 11 to 18 study at Borlase. 150 students join us in Year 7, the vast majority of whom continue into our heavily oversubscribed Sixth Form when almost 100 more students join in Year 12 from local schools. Entry in Year 7 is based on achieving the qualifying score in the Bucks Secondary Admission Test (commonly known as the 11+) with 20 places held for Pupil Premium students achieving a lower score. Entry in Year 12 is conditional on achieving an average GCSE points score of 6.4 and the subject entry criteria for chosen courses, typically a Grade 7 in the subject or a related subject at GCSE.

Our students progress to an exciting range of destinations: from Oxbridge and medicine to Russell Group universities, dance and music conservatoires, and prestigious apprenticeships with organisations such as KPMG, Rolls Royce and Goldman Sachs. What gives us the greatest satisfaction is that, for the last three years, well over 90% of students have gained a place at their first choice destination.

You can find out further information about our school on our website, www.swbgs.com, and via our social media channels. You can also read the school's Ofsted report from May 2024 [here](#).



The History, Character and Culture of Borlase

The school was founded in 1624 on the same site occupied today and shares Marlow's West Street with the cottage where Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, TS Eliot's house, and the original site of the Royal Military College which is now at Sandhurst. The school has grown almost immeasurably in the last 400 years:

- Brick and flint Cloisters were added in the 19th century, now housing the Drama Studio and pastoral offices.
- Although the school does not have a religious identity, the chapel is used to host fortnightly assemblies. Built in 1914, it houses the war memorials to the school's fallen in the First and Second World Wars and is a focal point for the school's remembrance commemorations.

- A purpose-built theatre and dance and drama studios to support the thriving Performing Arts offer at Borlase with regular concerts, plays, musicals
- A state-of-the-art Sports Hall, fitness suite, practice astroturf and netball/tennis courts were added in 2021 when the school expanded its Year 7 intake.
- Subject areas like Computer Science, Art, Design & Technology and Cookery enjoy their own specialist teaching areas with an extensive Library staffed by the school's Literacy Coordinator
- In 2024, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the school's founding, Centenary Hall was opened to provide a stunning social study area for our burgeoning Sixth Form, as well as a refurbished and extended Canteen for students in Years 7 to 11.

We have an ambitious plan to install solar panels across our site, as well as adding a mezzanine level in the Old Gym which will allow us to co-locate the Performing Arts subjects and create a well-resourced Student Support Centre for those in our community whose need is greatest.

There is a well-established house system that provides further opportunities for participation and the formation of communities within the wider Borlase community. The role of House Captains is just one of the positions within our very active student leadership body and house assemblies provide an opportunity for celebration and positive reinforcement.

We place a great degree of trust in our students, encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions. Our Behaviour Policy is clear, consistent, and designed to support a positive learning environment; serious incidents are very rare.



Staff Benefits:

- A welcoming and supportive staff community.
- Two-week October half term.
- Membership of *Health Assured*, the school's Employee Assistance Programme.
- Preferential treatment for the children of staff under the school's Admissions Policy, subject to meeting qualification criteria.
- Use of the school's fitness suite and sports facilities.
- A calendar of staff social activities including Christmas and Summer parties, canoeing on the Thames, pickleball, a Friday running club, and end-of-the-week social gatherings.
- A Professional Development Programme which develops individuals' knowledge and experience through learning from members within and beyond our school.
- The opportunity to attend trips and visits including day trips to Windsor Castle, a full calendar of evening productions, and more exotic destinations including Iceland, Cambodia, Washington and established exchange programmes to France, Germany and Spain.
- A school-wide commitment to valuing people's time and effort by carefully monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of everything that we do.
- A willingness to work with staff to accommodate flexible working requests

What do staff say they enjoy most about working at Borlase?*

On Community & Culture...

- *"The collective spirit of doing the best for this school – being part of a community that genuinely cares about the students and about each other."*
- *"I love the feeling of community between students and staff. The whole school feels like a big family!"*
- *"Lovely people, trusted to do my job without large amounts of intervention, and my views are listened to and acted upon."*
- *"The colleagues, the students, the positive learning environment and energy."*

On Students...

- *"The students are engaged, polite, and enthusiastic – teaching here feels rewarding."*
- *"Generally very cooperative, polite and motivated students who are a pleasure to teach."*
- *"The wonderful students, the beautiful location and the culture of the school. I really cherish the quirky traditions."*

On Staff & Support...

- *"Fantastic colleagues, lovely students, and senior leadership who are aware of workload pressures."*
- *"Colleagues are incredibly talented but also kind, which makes every day worthwhile."*
- *"Senior leadership are very approachable. I feel valued and part of a community."*
- *"Staff are listened to and treated like professionals – I feel trusted and supported."*

On Professional Satisfaction...

- *"It's just an inspiring, fun, buzzing, constantly evolving place to work!"*
- *"The chance to learn, get involved in different things, and share my enthusiasm with pupils."*
- *"A sense that we are really trying to get the balance right which will actually improve our overall performance."*

* Quotations are taken directly from our anonymous 'Welbee' staff wellbeing survey in January, 2025

