



# HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL

## PROSPECTUS 2017-18



National Support School  
designated by  
  
National College for  
Teaching & Leadership







“Our school really cares about us.”

YEAR 7 STUDENT



## A VERY WARM WELCOME TO HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL.

I am delighted that you are considering our school for your daughter and hope that this prospectus will give you an insight into the school and our values and expectations and encourage you to visit us and find out more about the outstanding education that we offer to our students.

We strive to be exceptional and provide an exceptional experience for all our students. We are also a fully inclusive school where the individual development of our students is paramount. We encourage them to develop independence and resilience in their studies to enable them to be lifelong learners.


We are very proud of our academic successes over many years and celebrate the fact that students of all ability levels make excellent progress in their chosen courses. However, academic achievement forms just part of the story and we offer a wealth of educational

experiences, clubs, activities and opportunities across the year which instil so many of the qualities and skills which our young people need for their future.

We work hard at Hitchin Girls' School and our expectation is that everyone will do their very best in all that they do. The very highest standards of conduct, respect, effort and personal attainment are our goal for all members of our school community.

Our school community is friendly and wholly supportive of all its members and many of our students refer to it as a family.

I look forward to welcoming all new students and parents into our community.



FRANCES MANNING  
HEADTEACHER



# Past, Present & Future

Sharing the same seventeenth century foundation as Hitchin Boys' School, Hitchin Girls' School opened over a century ago as a fee-paying day and boarding grammar school. It moved from Bancroft in the town centre to its present site in Highbury Road in 1907. The County Council took overall responsibility for the school following the 1944 Education Act. The last boarders left in 1960 and the school became a non-selective community school in 1974 for students age 11 to 18.

We were appointed a Specialist Science School in 2004 and have maintained this following the conversion to Academy status in 2011. We are also proud to hold the ICT Mark, International School Award, Arts Award, Secondary Geography Quality Mark with Centre of Excellence status, ISM Gold Award for Achievement in Music, Investor in Careers and the CPD Mark in recognition of our high quality staff

development programme. Hitchin Girls' School is an Ofsted Outstanding graded school. The full Ofsted report can be viewed on our school and the Ofsted website.

In March 2015, the school became a National Support School and is the lead school in the North Herts Teaching Alliance which is working collaboratively with schools in North Hertfordshire to provide training and support to their staff and those moving into the profession.

The school is oversubscribed every year and works closely with many local primary schools on a variety of projects including our Sixth Form Ambassador scheme.

Our Sixth Form is very successful, sharing teaching with Hitchin Boys' School and The Priory School as part of our longstanding Hitchin Post-16 consortium. We also share in the celebration of Founders' Day with Hitchin Boys' School.

# an exceptional education for all

**H**itchin Girls' School is committed to giving every student a broad education and helping to develop their individual talents to the full, in preparation for the demands of the outside world. In doing so, we respect the different religious and cultural backgrounds of the whole school community.

We seek to maintain traditional values in work and behaviour and encourage our students to develop those qualities of character which

help them to make a worthwhile contribution to society. We believe that this can best be achieved with the highest expectations within a firm, yet flexible, caring environment with frequent contact and close co-operation between parents and the school.

Facilities & Resources – an excellent supply of PCs, laptops, Apple Macs, iPads and tablets available to students together with study facilities; department teaching rooms as well as specialist areas

for Art & Design, Computing, Drama, Music, PE, Science and Technology. Our new four court Sports Hall, which also contains a dance studio and fitness suite, is due to open at the end of 2017.

Our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Moodle supports student learning in all subject areas with parent access to view information regarding their daughter(s). Sixth Form students are encouraged to bring in their own devices to connect to our wireless network.





# Academic & Personal Development

**H**itchin Girls' School is proud to provide a dynamic learning environment with high quality teaching that enables each individual to achieve or exceed their potential. The curriculum supports students in building strong, transferable skills as well as supporting their personal development.

### YEARS 7-9

Year 7 students are taught in predominantly mixed ability tutor groups, except for Maths, Science and French where they are set on entry to the school. In Years 8 and 9 we continue to deliver lessons following a similar structure, however, we can adopt a flexible approach to setting at this stage and, where the need arises, we make adjustments to some mixed ability groupings to meet the needs of that cohort.

### YEARS 10-11

All students opt for GCSE courses for the beginning of Year 10 and study the core subjects of English Language and Literature, Maths, Science (Double or Triple), Learning for Life, PE and Philosophy and Ethics.

### THE SIXTH FORM (YEARS 12-13)

A wide range of subjects are offered as part of the consortium with Hitchin Boys' School and The Priory School. Students select from an extensive range of subjects at A Level and BTech. Over 89% of our students go on to university.

### TRANSITION

In addition to Open Days, we invite your daughter to come in for an Induction Day during the Summer term prior to her entry, followed by an Induction Week in September. Heads of Year visit all transferring students at primary school and we encourage communication between home and school.

### HOUSE SYSTEM

We operate a House system, each overseen by a Head of House.

### COMMUNICATION

We communicate progress regularly via termly reports and annual parent consultation evenings as well as issuing newsletters for students and parents providing reports on past events and information regarding

future activities. The school website and Moodle also have information, news and advice.

### CAREERS

Our Careers programme provides students with the necessary self-knowledge and information to make informed and realistic decisions about their future. The Careers Resources Centre includes a range of Moodle based resources that offer careers information, job details, apprenticeships and employment opportunities, Further and Higher Education links and a variety of computer programmes.

### SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Every student at Hitchin Girls' School is supported to ensure they fulfil their potential. This is done on an individual basis, within a small group, as support in the classroom or as advice to subject staff. Various mentoring schemes also operate with older students assisting younger students needing additional support (in academic and non-academic areas) and to extend those who are exceptionally able.



# What we expect

## BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING

Hitchin Girls' School recognises and celebrates success in all areas of school life, providing a structured environment through our Behaviour for Learning system. The school has a long held tradition of using common sense and courtesy in matters of daily routine and of showing care and consideration to everyone involved in the school community. This is reinforced by our Charter of Respect, enabling students to learn, teachers to teach and everyone to feel safe and secure at school. If inappropriate behaviour choices are made, consequences are issued and the student is supported to make the right decisions in the future.

## UNIFORM

Uniform is worn by all students at Hitchin Girls' School until the end of Year 11. Sixth Form students are required to wear business wear. We believe it helps to encourage a good working atmosphere and promotes the feeling of belonging to a particular school. We appreciate parents' co-operation in making sure that students are dressed appropriately. Full details of the current uniform requirements are available from the school or website.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend school at all times unless they are absent through illness. In the event of long term illness, parents are asked to keep the school informed of their daughter's medical progress and discuss her educational needs with our Pastoral Support Team, Form Tutor or Head of Year.

Students are not expected to take holidays during term time. We use Fixed Penalty Notices following the Hertfordshire County Council Guidance for Schools.

# Learning beyond the classroom

## CLUBS

Hitchin Girls' School offers a wide range of clubs and activities encompassing all areas of the curriculum. Most activities take place at lunchtime and after school. Further details can be found on our website and Moodle.



## SPECIALIST SCIENCE SCHOOL

Events include our Science Week and annual Science Fair held as part of the National Science and Engineering Week. We also run an extremely popular Mathematics Challenge.

## SPORT

The school has a strong tradition of offering a wide range of physical activities to all its students. Students are encouraged to adopt a more active lifestyle. The school teams are entered for local, district, county, regional and national championships. The school holds an annual Gym & Dance Display to which parents and friends are invited.

## MUSIC

There are many opportunities for every girl to develop her individual and group musical skills with a variety of lessons and group activities available. A large number of concerts and recitals are given each year to which parents and friends are always invited.

## THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH SCHEME

The bronze level is introduced to students during the Autumn term of Year 10. Many progress to the silver and gold levels.

## EXPEDITIONS, FIELD STUDIES & TRIPS

Many of these take place during school time, in the evening, at weekends and during the holidays and they form a natural extension to the school curriculum. Recent overseas trips include the Classics trips to Italy and Greece,

History trips to Berlin, Business Studies trip to New York, Spanish trips to Barcelona and Granada, a Design & Technology trip to Paris, a Geography trip to Iceland, PE sports tour to Holland and a Biology expedition to Tanzania and Malawi.

## INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES


We are proud holders of the International Schools Award, 2016-19, from the British Council in recognition of the global dimensions of our curriculum and the partnership work that we do around the world. We were the first UK school to be invited to be members of the highly prestigious Student Global Leadership Institute which are two separate, intensive two week Summer programmes in Hawaii and India.

We have an extensive network of schools around the globe with whom we collaborate learning opportunities such as The Chapin School in New York; other countries include Japan, Sweden, Denmark, China, New Zealand and India. We also do much to support international charities, raising money to enable children internationally to access an education.

## LEARNING LEADERS

Our Learning Leader group consists of students from years 7-13. They are involved with many different activities and events throughout the year. Their focus is how best teaching and learning can be achieved at Hitchin Girls' School and they work closely with both student and staff groups on a regular basis.

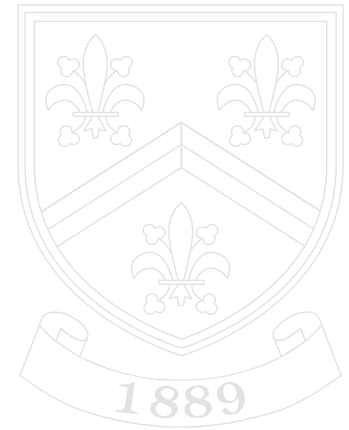




“For years I  
would walk past  
and dream of  
being at HGS  
...now I am!”

YEAR 7 STUDENT





“HGS has allowed me to develop both academically and emotionally since my first day in Year 7... the opportunities and support provided by the school are endless... this isn’t just a school, but a community and a platform where your full potential can be reached.”

HEAD GIRL 2017

## ADDRESS

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