



Wimbledon College

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wimbledon College was founded in 1892 by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) to provide education and preparation for university entrance at a time when Catholic children were barred from such opportunities.

Today, the College is a voluntary aided comprehensive secondary school for boys ages 11 to 18. The school is in the London Borough of Merton and remains in the trusteeship of the Society of Jesus.

The school is accommodated in striking Grade II listed buildings on Edge Hill, above the Jesuit parish church of the Sacred Heart, on a spacious green site in a conservation area.

The College currently (September 2010) has 1264 boys on roll including 263 in the Sixth Form. There are seven tutor groups in each year (known as *lines* in Jesuit schools). The College operates a House system for sport and competitions.

The teaching staff of the school is well established with a small annual turnover. All teachers are specialists in their subjects and there are no long-term vacancies. Teaching Support Assistants are assigned to faculties and provide cover for absent staff and practical support to departments and individual teachers.

The school operates a Sixth Form in partnership with the neighbouring Ursuline High School and also with Richard Challoner and Holy Cross schools. Classes in the Sixth Form are co-educational. The Sixth Form offers a wide range of A Level and Cambridge Pre-U courses, preparing pupils for university entrance. We also offer three BTEC Level 2 courses (in Business Studies, Science and Sports Science) as a one-year post-16 route for pupils whose GCSE results are below the standard required for A Level.

Wimbledon College has a strong system of pastoral care and discipline. All teachers are form tutors and work with Heads of Line to ensure that every boy is supported, cared for and challenged to progress academically and become involved in the wider life of the school. The school's intake is truly comprehensive academically, socially and economically and ethnically.

It draws from across southwest London and from Surrey and north of the Thames also. We have over 50 feeder primary schools. Places in Y7 are oversubscribed threefold.

Wimbledon College is fortunate to have a strong Special Needs Department staffed by three full-time specialist SEN teachers and supported by some 15 Learning Support Assistants. The department has its own base with teaching rooms and a treatment room. There are around 10 boys with Statements of Special Needs in each year group of 200. Needs vary from the physical and medical, to emotional and behavioural needs, and learning needs. There is an extensive programme for incoming Y7 boys to catch up on numeracy and literacy skills.

The Jesuits have a distinctive approach to education. This approach is summed up by St Ignatius Loyola's vision for Jesuit schools as being "for improvement in living and learning to the greater glory of God and the common good." There are some 3,400 Jesuit schools, universities and educational institutions worldwide educating 2.5 million students in 68 countries.

The work of the chaplaincy is a core feature of the school, judged outstanding in two recent diocesan inspections. There is a full time lay chaplain, currently assisted by two Jesuits. The Jesuit community in Wimbledon provides priests to celebrate the sacraments and to assist in chaplaincy activities. There is a full programme of liturgy marking the seasons and great feasts of the Church's year.

Private and public funds have facilitated a substantial development of the facilities of the College. A new sports hall, learning resources centre and computer centre were opened in May 2002. A new dining room, sixth form centre, entrance hall, drama studio and classrooms were opened in May 2003. An appeal launched amongst parents, former pupils and friends of the school has been successful in raising funds for the refurbishment of the swimming pool and the building of a new Music School which opened in May 2005. Extensive renovations of the historic parts of the school have seen significant upgrading to classrooms. There is now IT provision in every classroom. The College has a small playing field on site with additional fields a 30m walk away.

The school day is divided into six teaching periods of 50-minutes each. The day begins with morning prayer and tutor groups at 8.30am. In the Lower Line (Y7-9) teaching groups generally have around 28 pupils. This number reduces in some subjects in Higher Line (Y10-11) and the Sixth Form. Subject departments are grouped into faculties with a Head of Faculty (who is a member of the School Leadership Team) and separate faculty staff rooms. Extensive work has been done in recent years to create an online resource for learning (called The Knowledge) which provides clear guidance to parents and pupils on homework and assessment tasks.

Boys are academically set by subject (initially by CAT test scores on Y7 entry and thereafter by regular grade reviews). Report cards are sent home every half-term.

Pupils at all levels of the school are formally assessed in every subject every fortnight. Grades are recorded electronically and aggregated to provide a detailed and current assessment of individual pupil progress. Intervention by Heads of Line, and through an assertive mentoring

programme for boys in Higher Line and Sixth Form, have led to significant improvements in attainment and achievement in recent years.

Examination results are excellent and well above national averages. Full details of examination results are available on our website and included with this information pack.

Wimbledon College became a specialist science and mathematics school in September 2008 building upon a science faculty which was judged outstanding by OfSTED in a subject inspection in February 2006. Specialist status has already brought new resources to the school and it is planned to emulate the success of the sciences across the curriculum. A first step in this is an innovative curriculum development for Y7 boys called *Figure It Out!* Led by science staff, boys take a double period each week to follow a cross-curricular theme demanding teamwork, thinking and problem solving skills, and a very different way of learning, accompanied by their teachers rather than led by them. The outstanding science provision was recognised in 2009 when Wimbledon College became an Associate School of the Royal Society, the UK's academy of science.

The school has a strong tradition of drama and music. There is a well equipped auditorium with tiered retractable seating, a stage with revolve, and full lighting and sound rigs. Recent productions have included *Guys and Dolls*, *Toad of Toad Hall*, *Galileo*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Mysteries*, *The Mikado*, *Les Misérables*, *Black Comedy* and *West Side Story*. The English and Drama Departments organise frequent visits to plays and invite theatre companies into the school. The *Strings Project* is an innovative collaboration with the London Mozart Players which each year challenges forty Y7 boys to learn a string instrument and perform in two teatime concerts. Many go on to join the orchestras, bands and ensembles. A large number of boys learn musical instruments and take singing lessons and then participate in the school's choirs and ensembles. The College runs a Saturday Music School, open to all, which currently has 165 students.

There is a very extensive sports programme in the school, financially supported by parents' donations to the School Fund. There are five major sports (rugby, basketball, swimming, athletics and cricket) which put out teams every week against other schools and have regular training. In addition, there are more than a dozen minor sports which are open to all and encourage participation and enjoyment. In many sports, the school performs at the highest levels, the U13 Rugby Sevens, for example, winning the national sevens competition in 2010.

In addition to sport, music and drama, the school has an extensive list of extra-curricular activities and all boys are encouraged to participate. Over 90% do so.

Innovation balanced by a thoroughly traditional approach to school life and learning is the hallmark of success at Wimbledon College.

Please see our website for further information: wimbledoncollege.org.uk