

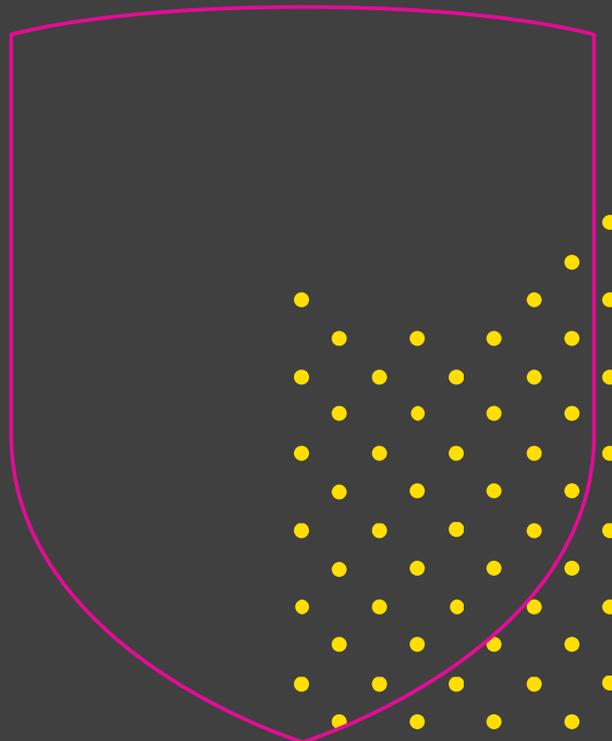
William Edwards School

'Inspirational learning with a strong sporting ethos'



Prospectus

2021/22



Welcome to William Edwards!



“ Hello, my name is Jay and I am a student at William Edwards School. I have really enjoyed my time in year 7 as the school and teachers are supportive and help us achieve to the best of our ability. The lessons are great fun. Tutor and our CC lessons also allow us to focus on our emotional growth too. I would definitely pick William Edwards as a choice for my secondary school. ”

“ My name is Kershawn, I'm in year 7 and what I like about William Edwards School is that teachers try to make lessons fun for everyone, also they make sure that we are okay and that we achieve our full potential. I love English, History and Geography, where the teachers make it fun to learn about different places and the past. ”



“ My name is Aiste, I am in year 7 and I believe that William Edwards School is a wonderful school, as it provides a fun way of learning and many sport activities, such as badminton, cricket and rounders. ”

Our school is about us developing into the people we want to be. It's about learning in classrooms, but also beyond the classroom. It's about making friendships, and learning how to manage those relationships when they hit barriers. It's about finding out what our passion is, and developing the confidence to be ambitious. It's about understanding risk, and not being afraid of failure, but also keeping safe.

Come inside and see our school as we do...



Firstly, let us introduce you to Mr Bell.



He's our Headteacher, and he'd like to welcome you:

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this prospectus and William Edwards School to you. We are all immensely proud of the school which is a large, successful, harmonious and thriving mixed 11-16 comprehensive school.

Pupil outcomes across the school are historically strong. However, attending William Edwards is about so much more than just GCSE outcomes. We firmly believe that your school days should be the best days of your life and that schools have a moral purpose to extend the life experiences of their pupils. That is why we boast the largest Duke of Edinburgh cohort of any school in the East of England and are one of only a very small number of secondary schools nationally to hold both the Artsmark Platinum Award and the Youth Sports Trust Gold Award for our work in these diverse fields. We were delighted that our last inspection report noted that “pupils who spoke to inspectors were effusive about their experience in school” and that “the breadth of curriculum opportunities available at the school is a real 'gem' in the school's offer to its pupils”.

The school is a proud founding member of the South West Essex Community Education Trust which runs three secondary schools and three primary schools across Thurrock and the London Borough of Havering. Continuity and stability are crucially important during these times of uncertainty and change and both the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Trust are former Headteachers of William Edwards.

We were delighted that our last Ofsted inspection captured our considerable strengths in teaching, pastoral care, behaviour, pupil support and curriculum. We are pleased that these 'cornerstones' of high quality education remain strong at the school.

I sincerely hope that you choose William Edwards for the next five years of your education and look forward to welcoming you next September.

Simon Bell
Headteacher





“ We come to school to learn, so we need teachers who care and work hard for and with us, and we need access to resources that support our learning.

Our teachers are great. Inside and outside the classroom they encourage you to be the best you can.

Our teachers use a range of teaching methods because we all learn differently, and when they give us feedback it is personalised to make sure we can make progress at our own pace. It's always challenging, but always supported. ”



We firmly believe that the greatest resource to our pupils is a caring, professional and well qualified staff. Our teaching and support staff have the highest expectations of themselves and each other. All our staff are committed and will always provide opportunities for pupils to develop their learning or support pupils in dealing with life events. In 2019 OFSTED said of our teachers:

“ Pupils feel that staff are vigilant and dedicated, and ‘go the extra mile’ to support pupils’ personal and academic needs. ”

We have invested significantly to ensure our staff are trained in the latest teaching strategies and are subject experts in what they teach and deliver. This is why we are fully staffed with highly qualified and experienced teachers. We have a team of outstanding teachers called Lead Practitioners who work with individual, groups and the whole staff in order to ensure our knowledge and practice is up to date and innovative. Indeed, in 2019 OFSTED commented:

“ Teachers have a thorough understanding of their subjects and the age ranges they teach. They use this knowledge to plan learning that helps pupils to develop new knowledge and skills. Teachers plan assessments and activities that allow pupils to practise their learning in a variety of ways. ”

Lessons are dynamic, creative and informative experiences. We use a range of strategies to ensure each pupil can make great progress. We use recall activities, discussions, debates, independent research, group work, presentations, teacher explanation and modelling to ensure lessons are engaging, accessible and interesting. Our teaching rooms are spacious, can be arranged in multiple ways and have the specialist equipment required to deliver our curriculum via five one hour lessons per day. We have recently built a new Science laboratory and a new Maths classroom.





“If you’re thinking of coming to William Edwards, then you’ll want to know how our teachers have designed a curriculum that meets the needs of all of us, and gives us all the best opportunities now and for the future.

We are all encouraged to be the best that we can be and pursue our interests. To make sure we go on from WES to achieve success in our further education, our work and our lives, we follow a broad and balanced curriculum that gives us the opportunity to become whatever we want to be. ”

The curriculum is one of the most important features of our school. Our philosophy is that every pupil is given as many opportunities as possible to develop a broad and detailed knowledge of multiple subjects. In addition, we want every pupil to participate in and experience as many extended and enrichment opportunities as possible to broaden their understanding of our society, to develop their passions and to ensure that they are well-prepared to be successful in a competitive global economy. For example, our pupils have numerous opportunities to engage in sport to a borough, regional and national level. Some pupils have participated in musical and dramatic performances and others have danced at different venues including some in different countries.



Subjects pupils study in Year 7 are:

- Art
- Creative Curriculum (CC)
- Drama
- English
- Food
- Geography
- History
- IT
- Maths
- MFL
- Music
- PE
- PSHE (Personal, social and health education)
- RE
- Science

Another core component of our curriculum is innovation. For example, our CC course for Year 7 is designed to use art, discussion, trips and visits from external speakers and performance companies to encourage critical thinking, teamwork and creativity. We are certain that we can meet the needs and aspirations of every pupil and we are constantly striving to improve.

“Here is a summary of some of the subjects that you will study when you join us in Year Seven! We have really enjoyed doing these this year, and are excited to join Year 8 ourselves.”

Geography

We answer interesting questions such as: What happens when land meets the sea? OR Does climate change affect me?

Drama

We really enjoyed learning about pantomime and stock characters ... oh yes we did ... (did you see what we did there?!)

English

is important, challenging and enjoyable! We became detectives solving a case when we studied Sherlock Holmes.

Science

at WES is exciting and awe inspiring! We love doing experiments – in the labs and out on the playground.

Modern Foreign Languages

We started learning days of the week and colours, but now we can have simple conversations with each other in our new language – and we learn a lot through games which are real fun!

History

It makes us think! From bloody medieval battles to the impact of slavery on the modern world, we are making sense of our world by learning about the past.

Religious Education

It is all about respect – and we have loved learning about the amazing festivals that different faiths celebrate!

Maths

We investigate and solve problems – it’s always fun working in groups to do this.





‘Inspirational learning with a strong sporting ethos’

Sport is fundamental to William Edwards School. As a core subject and a popular GCSE and BTEC qualification, PE is a significant part of our curriculum. It is important for pupils’ physical growth and well-being, their understanding of the human body, enjoyment and the opportunity to develop the key skills of working in a team, leadership and communication.

Annually up to 10% of available places are awarded to Year Seven based on ‘Sports Aptitude’. Please see our website for guidance as to how to register for your child to participate in this process. **Applications need to be made by 23rd September 2021.**

Our facilities are excellent and include an eight court badminton centre, an Astro-Turf pitch and a modern gym. We have access to a range of external facilities too such as Thurrock Rugby Club, rock-climbing centres and athletics tracks.

We have a thriving extra-curricular programme across a range of sports such as badminton, netball, football, cricket, rugby, table tennis, trampolining and basketball for every level of participant.

Our sports teams are a source of great pride to our community, with numerous examples of success across a range of sports and borough, regional and national competitions. For example:

- 13 years consecutive District Athletics champions
- Year 8 Team champions District Football League
- District Cross Country champions
- Year 7 girls District 5 a-side champions
- Year 9 Netball team won District Rally
- Year 7 Athletics – District Sports Hall champions
- Year 8 Athletics – District Sports Hall champions
- Year 7 Athletics – Lee Valley Cup finalist



“ We are all different, and have different needs at different times. There are lots of adults in addition to our teachers who support us as we move through the school. ”

Special Educational Needs & Disability:

Many young people fall into the SEND category. This means that they will, at some stage in their education, need additional or alternative support in accessing some aspects of their curriculum. At William Edwards our SEND planning is entirely child centred, involving the child and family in reviewing needs, setting targets and planning support. The graduated approach of ASSESS – PLAN – DO – REVIEW is used as the model for ensuring that support is reviewed and updated regularly in line with the child’s progress and changing needs.

Our SEND team is committed to pupil wellbeing and progress. It consists of a range of adults with a diverse set of skills, all focused on delivering high quality support and intervention through rigorous and innovative practice. The relationships this team builds with pupils is what enables them to help youngsters overcome difficulties and give them the confidence to have high aspirations.

Pupils with medical Care Plans are also supported by the department.

Behaviour and wellbeing support

Behaviour for learning is the key to pupil achievement, and taken very seriously at William Edwards. For the majority of pupils our behaviour policy is focused on rewards and personal development, and like in all schools, for the few who do present some behavioural difficulties, support is in place in the form of evidence based intervention programmes and mentoring. Sanctions are clear for misdemeanours such as lateness, off task behaviour and lack of effort.

Pupils’ wellbeing has always been a priority at William Edwards and never more so than on our return from ‘lockdown’, which is why we have the Pastoral and Behaviour teams working alongside each other. We have two Pastoral Managers and a Youth Worker who work across the 5 Houses, providing social, emotional and mental health support for young people who may be experiencing difficulties in their lives. In addition, they support young people’s development in aspects such as friendships and social integration, and run nurture groups and mediation sessions for those who may have a friendship breakdown. Bullying is never tolerated at William Edwards, but we recognise that it does occur and have strong systems in place to address it.

We use an online facility – an app called TooToot – to make sure that pupils can report a safeguarding matter at any time without needing to speak directly to a member of staff if they prefer. This is then followed up and support can be put in place quickly.



“House competitions are exciting! We are all placed into one of 5 houses when we enter the school, and this provides us with a team of adults who are there to support our personal and emotional wellbeing and safety.

Tutors oversee our day to day lives in school, and they are the first people we go to if we need help. Our House Leaders make sure everyone in the House is making the progress they should, and our Pastoral Team helps with any tricky issues we might have, such as friendship issues or worries and concerns we have.

And then there are the House challenges – ranging from Sports Day at Blackshots to baking and art competitions.

Tutor is wonderful – everyone is there for you, and we have loads of fun doing the activities every day. ”



Within the House system, many aspects of personal development are achieved. Our pupils are placed into vertical tutor groups on entry to William Edwards, which means alongside 5 other Year 7, they will attend tutor every morning and afternoon in form groups of pupils from all year groups. This gives them the chance to be mentored by an older pupil, and their ‘family groupings’ within the tutor group provide peer support and relationships with a wide range of other pupils that they might otherwise never have met. It builds confidence, allows pupils to take responsibility for each other, and results in well-rounded young people who are more confident and understanding of others.



Tutors are the first port of call for parents. They see your child every day, twice a day. They will monitor their general academic progress, but also their attendance, behaviour and wellbeing. The 5 year relationship they have with a pupil is key to pupils making a smooth journey through school. They will also deliver aspects of the personal development programme, as well as the SNAP literacy and targeted vocabulary initiatives.

House Leaders promote a strong behaviour, learning and wellbeing ethos across the school, whilst also engaging pupils in leadership and extra-curricular activities, and a rewards programme. House competitions occur in sports, the arts and a range of other areas, and pupils are encouraged to support each other in an environment of fairness and fun.





“*Aiste says:*
We have lots of opportunities to take on leadership roles in our school – I would love to be on Student Exec when I’m older.”

Our pupils enjoy a wide range of activities that extend their experience and help them develop into interesting and confident young people. For instance, we encourage all Year 9 pupils to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme at Bronze level, and many then go on to complete Silver, and even Gold, at William Edwards. The scheme involves them in voluntary work, learning a skill, engaging in a physical activity and also taking part in an expedition – some of our Gold Award pupils even trekked across frozen Norway!

Pupil leadership opportunities are important at William Edwards. From Year 7 our pupils can be involved in school council and house leadership roles. As they move through the school they may apply to be a PAL (Pupils as Listeners), a member of the Student Executive (who wear business dress and work alongside staff on school improvement matters) or House Captain. Sports leaders, Wellbeing Champions and subject prefects also enjoy leadership roles in their chosen areas, and we also encourage pupils to get involved in local leadership roles such as the Youth Parliament.



Whenever we can we encourage pupils to get involved in working with external agencies, whether they be from the local community or beyond. The opportunities offered to schools by The Royal Opera House have resulted in some fantastic outcomes, and pupils also engage enthusiastically each year in the Dora Love project, a history competition based on knowledge and response to the Holocaust. We also welcome back students from previous years to carry out mock interview days and give presentations about their experiences since leaving William Edwards; these talks inspire our youngsters, and demonstrate how possible it is to achieve success, whatever that means to each one of them.

Our Year 7 CC (Creative Curriculum) project in Term 3 leads to a wonderful carnival where dance, music, the arts and cultural learning can be exhibited and performed for the local community. It makes a stunning end to Year 7’s first year at William Edwards.



What parents and pupils have to say...

We keep in touch with ex pupils because we love to follow their journeys into the world after they have left William Edwards, and we always welcome them back to contribute to the next cohort's experience – here are a few things they have to say...

Paige:

Behind every successful academic is an enriching and rewarding education. William Edwards School has provided me with this; helping me to realise my full potential. I am studying for three A levels, Sociology, Maths and Psychology and I aspire to become a psychologist.

Parent:

As a parent, seeing my child flourish and develop both academically and emotionally during her time at William Edwards reassured me we had made the right choice sending her to the school. The help and support she received was second to none and has helped her to achieve things we never thought would be possible and we are eternally grateful to the staff at William Edwards.



Parent with two children in the school:

I have trusted you with the two most precious things I have and I would do it all over again. William Edwards has and will continue to guide them, allow them to develop, pick up on their mistakes, push them, challenge them and allow them to experience as many opportunities as possible. I have confidence in the team you have created to do this. I thank you all, for impacting so positively on my children's lives.

Megan:

Being a pupil at William Edwards gave me different opportunities and experiences which helped build my confidence and self esteem. The staff are friendly, helpful and supportive and nothing was ever too much when I needed help. My future and ambitions are so much brighter now and that's all down to the support I received from being a pupil at William Edwards.

Morgan:

Whilst I was at William Edwards the staff were supportive and helped me to achieve my best. They helped me to instil faith in myself, making me believe that I could achieve academically and move onto the next step. After laying the foundations at school I have since gone on to achieve my Masters Degree in Mathematics – and got a 1st!



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