



# THE EARLS HIGH SCHOOL

AD 1652



EXCELLENCE | CARE | PARTNERSHIP

# WELCOME

## TO THE EARLS HIGH SCHOOL

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We are delighted that you are considering entrusting the education and care of your child to The Earls High School.

The parents of Halesowen and its surrounding neighbourhoods have been sending their children to The Earls High School for well over three hundred and sixty years. We started as a small grammar school and the proud traditions of high standards in behaviour and high expectations of academic progress have stayed with us in the school's present form as a thriving, innovative comprehensive school.

At The Earls High School we believe that people really do matter the most; our school is made a very special place by the students and staff who come here together to learn. Our key values of excellence, care and partnership can be seen running through everything that we do. We challenge students and staff to achieve excellence every day so that they fulfil their potential. Students and staff are successful because as they strive for excellence they

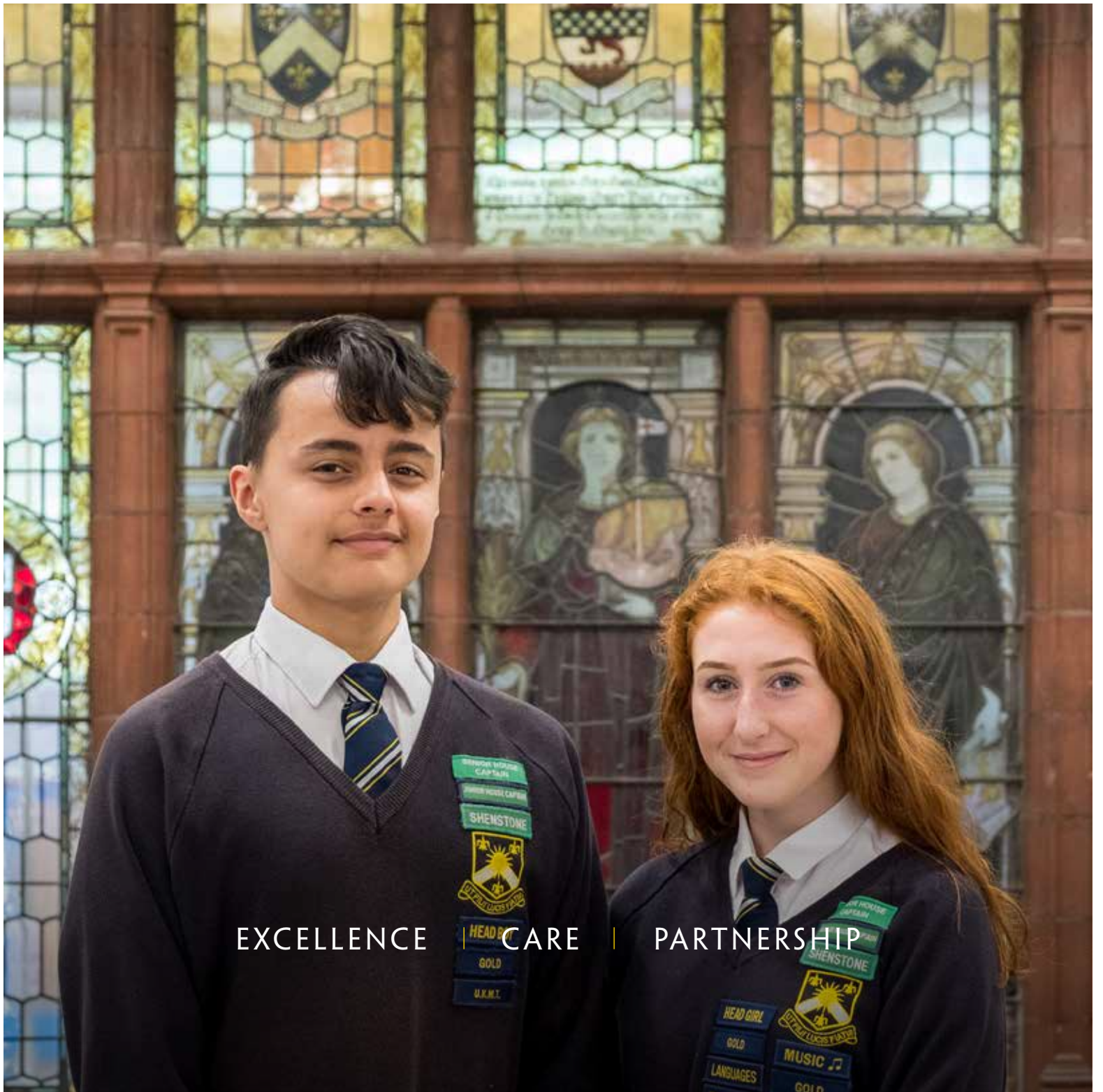
feel cared for and supported to be their best. As a school we cannot do this alone, so the partnerships between staff and parents, between students and staff and between the staff are built carefully so that they form a firm foundation on which to build aspiration.

One main cause of our success is our drive to appoint the very best staff in all areas and at all levels who demonstrate enthusiasm for their area of expertise, passion to help develop and nurture the whole child and a commitment to continual self-improvement.

I hope that you will visit the school so that you can see for yourself our wonderful, motivated young people, the high quality of the work they produce and our excellent facilities.

Headteacher

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# PERSONAL GROWTH IN ALL AREAS

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We believe that everyone can get better at everything they try if they want to.

Research tells us clearly that our brains change throughout our lives and we can grow and mould them in many different ways. Students and staff work hard to develop a positive *Growth Mindset* which focuses on three key attitudes:

- Accepting that getting things wrong can lead to great learning
- Hard work and effort are the keys to success
- Learning is a skill that everyone can develop and matters more than anything else

A *Growth Mindset* will help students be successful academically but will also help them thrive in a world that is changing faster than we can imagine.

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## HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL

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Our main priority is to develop the character of our students in a supportive culture so that they achieve academic success.

We all need a challenge to bring the best out in us, which is why we set personalised, ambitious but realistic targets for each student. We reward students for working hard and taking genuine care in their studies with house points or flashes to be worn on their jumpers, with many striving to achieve the much sought-after 'Earls Gold Award'.

Our high expectations mean that all of our students make excellent progress during their time with us and our Key Stage 4 examination results are always substantially above national and local averages.

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We strive to create a safe, positive atmosphere, insisting on the best standards of behaviour at all times and for students to respect each other's right to learn. We expect students to wear their uniforms with pride.

Our staff are passionate about the subjects they teach. We all believe in lifelong learning, and we meet regularly for training and to help each other become even better teachers.

# CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT **INSPIRES**

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Our curriculum has been carefully designed to deliver an exciting and stimulating learning journey through the five years students spend with us, building on the skills, knowledge and aptitude they have gained in primary school, and ensuring that they leave us with everything they need to be successful as young adults moving onto level 3 qualifications and beyond.

We believe that reading is a vital part of everyday learning at The Earls. We dedicate curriculum time to fostering a love of reading in years 7 and 8, and our well-stocked library can inspire even the most reluctant reader.

We recognise our responsibility to prepare our students for the issues affecting young people today, and so our curriculum includes a robust PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) programme that runs throughout all school years.

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## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ENRICHMENT

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Students at The Earls High School participate in a wide variety of activities and residential opportunities, many of which are not available in other schools, and which are vital in developing their skills, confidence, independence and collaboration.



Music is a vibrant part of school life, from beginner instrumental and choral groups, to playing in prestigious locations such as the Vatican on tour with the orchestra. Dance provides a range of opportunities for students to participate in clubs at all levels and drama clubs thrive, providing a real breadth to the extra-curricular life of the school.

We offer a fantastic range of after-school sporting activities, with opportunities to play competitively or as part of a healthy lifestyle. The popular Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme sees over a third of Key Stage 4 students achieve the prestigious Silver Award. Film club, creative writing and a flourishing chess club prove that there is something for everyone.

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## FACILITIES

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At The Earls High School history and innovation sit side by side, and new teaching blocks and the extensive refurbishment of existing buildings ensure that students have access to excellent facilities.

IT facilities are superb and comprise four full sized computer rooms, several clusters in classrooms for students along with a large number of laptops and iPads. Technology rooms are fitted with specialist equipment, and in PE, students make regular use of the astro pitch, sports hall, gyms and fitness centre. In addition we have tennis courts, large playing fields and a cricket square, with a pavilion that many clubs would envy.

The recently opened music block includes a suite of practice rooms and an excellent recording studio, which enable students to experiment, create and reach their potential. For the performing arts, a large stage with a professional standard lighting and sound system greatly enhances performances and shows.

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# TRANSITION TO SENIOR SCHOOL

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The transition from primary to secondary school is a very big step.

For this reason we take our responsibilities for demonstrating care and partnership with parents and students seriously. Through our extensive transition programme we seek to ensure that students have the confidence and social skills to make friends quickly.

Our lower school team will visit all new students in their primary school to talk with them and their teachers, to find out about their strengths and interests, and discuss any concerns about moving schools. We will invite parents and their children in to meet their form tutor in June, and the students will have a day in school in early July learning more about the school and The Earls way of doing things. For those students who need more nurturing, we provide extra sessions in July to support them with any anxieties.

We prepare our new students for the new challenges of the secondary curriculum by setting them project work to complete over the summer holiday. This work is marked by our staff so we get a really good idea of students' best work as they start with us.

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Several places on our Governing Board are reserved for parents, giving an opportunity to take part in strategic decision making. In addition we are one of the few secondary schools to still maintain a thriving parent teacher association, called Friends of The Earls. They organise a wide range of fun events in order to raise funds for the little extras that enhance a student's journey through school.



## PASTORAL CARE

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To allow students to reach their full potential, we recognise that a mutually supportive partnership between home and school can guarantee the learning environment that we know you will want for your child.

We work hard to maintain effective communication between home and school through a range of media including email, text, a new parent app and the telephone. Reports are issued throughout the year, and parents are welcome to contact school at any time. Face to face contact between home and school is powerful in supporting students' progress, and so we hold regular parents' evenings, two in year 7.

Students are placed into form groups in which they will stay throughout their time with us. During form time each day, students have the opportunity to read, discuss current affairs and contribute to school life. With this daily contact, form tutors get to know their students well, and play a key role in promoting their wellbeing. The Heads of School and Year Co-ordinators will oversee not only the progress but also attendance and behaviour of individuals; they are inextricably linked.

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## HOUSE SYSTEM

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The ability to work collectively with others is one of the most vital skills that we seek to nurture in our students.

To this end, the school runs a highly successful House system which encourages students to take part in House competitions and charity fundraising whilst supporting each student's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The House system also provides opportunities for students to take a leadership role as junior and senior house captains, helping heads of House lead assemblies and organising competitions and fundraising events.

Students belong to one of four Houses – Abbey, Cobham, Hingley and Shenstone – each with its own distinctive character and history. Each year our House calendar gives the opportunity for our students to participate in House events in a variety of sports, as well as performing arts, engineering, literacy, chess and even a bake off!

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## PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS

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The Earls High School is a founding member of the Stour Vale Academy Trust (SVAT) along with Olive Hill Primary School in Halesowen, and Redhill School in Stourbridge.

The Stour Vale Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT) in which schools work together under one shared company. The essential principle for the Trust is that each school will have its own distinctive and individual identity whilst working in close partnership.

The MAT will continue to grow over future years with other secondary and primary schools joining us, which will enable us to draw on different expertise and experience, and continue to develop, lead and model best practice in education.

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