



SEE TOMORROW GROW

Our Vision to 2025

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: Why has the school decided to make these changes and why now?

Education is at a point of evolution. We need to prepare our children for a future where knowledge-based learning alone will not be enough. Creativity and collaboration will be important skills in the workplace of tomorrow. Now is the right time for a bold move forward with a fresh curriculum that offers greater breadth and balance and allows the children, as they leave us, to be 'Real World Ready'.

The Governors and Senior Leadership Team carried out an in-depth strategic review, stimulated by the arrival of the new Head Master, investing in market and parental research and taking time to engage the school community prior to making any decisions.

Q2: What is the Pre Senior Bacculaureate and why has it been introduced?

Across the education sector, schools are seeking broader exam options to suit all pupils. For some time the Common Entrance (CE) has been under review, with many senior schools deeming it no longer necessary as the assessment route to their schools.

Leading senior schools, including Wellington, Westminster and St Paul's, have abandoned Common Entrance, with their Heads encouraging Prep schools to develop their curriculum in ways that prepare pupils for Year 9 in terms of independent learning and inquiry, whilst retaining the rigour suitable for 11-13 year olds.

The Pre Senior Bacculaureate (PSB) is based on the National Curriculum, like Common Entrance, but the mode of delivery and emphasis is different. It allows considerably more freedom, in order to encourage individual and focused study, and provides a cross-curricular approach that integrates music, drama, art, design, ICT, wellbeing, food technology, PE and sports. The aim is to develop a passion for learning – not just the need to acquire enough facts to pass a test.

Currently 27 highly successful junior and prep schools already use the PSB. This number is expected to rise to 50 in the next two years.

Senior schools accept the PSB certificate for entry at 11+ / 13+ together with their own entrance tests or core ISEB examination papers. Since its inception in 2012, PSB pupils have progressed to schools including, but not limited to: Eton, St George's Ascot, Bradfield, Canford, St George's Weybridge, St Mary's Ascot, Wellington, Windsor Boys and Wycombe Abbey.

You can find out more about the PSB by visiting www.psbacc.org

In summary, our aim is to develop a curriculum that is inspirational and innovative, suited to the 21st Century, and the PSB provides the freedom and framework to deliver that, whilst still ensuring pupils will continue to transition to leading senior schools.

St George's is very proud of its outstanding reputation for preparing pupils for entry to the leading schools in the area and across the country. These changes will ensure that the school's exceptional education and teaching standards are further strengthened.

Q3: What if PSB is not accepted by our preferred senior school?

Prep schools running the PSB currently send pupils to over 110 leading senior schools, at both 11+ and 13+. This includes every school we send pupils to and are likely to in the future. IAPS (Independent Association of Preparatory Schools) and HMC (Headmasters / Headmistresses' Conference), the leading associations, work with the PSB, as does the ISEB (Independent Schools Examinations Board), who run the Pre-Test and 13+ exams.

Some schools, such as Eton, Radley, Harrow and Hampton, ask for Common Entrance for core subjects. This is largely for 'setting purposes', and, like other schools running the PSB, we will still prepare pupils for these exams. There will be no disadvantage to pupils requiring Common Entrance, as our teaching will remain as rigorous, and indeed we expect the skills the pupils will have acquired in independent and self-regulated learning to benefit their preparation for these exams, and beyond to GCSEs. We are currently seeing a considerable shift in the 13+ entrance procedures, so expect more schools to follow Wellington's lead in making their 13+ exams optional.

Our decision to adopt the PSB will not affect pupils preparing for the 11+ entrance tests to grammar schools, and we will continue to support this examination.

Q4: Is the PSB the same as the International Bacculaureate?

The PSB is not the same organisation as the IB, although many of the benefits of the IB are incorporated into the PSB. Central to the IB is the 'Learner Profile', and we will be creating a St George's 'Learner Profile'. We will also be reviewing how our departments work with each other, with the intention of creating faculties, similar to the IB. This will allow our teachers to work with each other and create further opportunities for cross-curricular learning.

Q5: What other changes are planned?

With this announcement, the school now enters the first phase of the implementation of a five-year plan, realising a vision for the school to 2025. As part of this there will be extensive investment in career development and innovative training for the school staff, so that they are empowered and supported as they deliver the new approach to learning.

The wellbeing of everyone - pupils and staff - is vitally important to us. There will be a full school rollout of the MindUp programme, and mental health training for all staff and parents.

Music has always been at the heart of St George's and we want to embrace a "music-for-all" approach, with more opportunities to enjoy, play and perform music across all genres: classical and pop, jazz and show tunes. There is much evidence that music-making is good for the brain!

Our school enjoys a unique location within the College of St George in Windsor Castle. We will be strengthening the links to the Castle over the coming months - as a resource, as a venue for school events, and to collaborate with St George's Chapel and St George's House staff.

The new approach will enable us to maintain the existing high academic standards across the school and provide a facility to further strengthen standards in some areas. Further plans include:

- A refreshed sporting approach, including updated facilities and broader opportunities for girls and boys;
- A dedicated programme of senior school preparation;
- Focus on wellbeing, including access to the Mind Up programme for all year groups;
- More drama throughout all year groups;
- The introduction of outdoor learning within the grounds of Home Park Private;
- The school's PSHE provision will be enhanced. This will include support from a clinical dietician, including advice for pupils and parents.

On a practical level, we are looking at providing transport to and from school for day pupils and weekly boarders. Mini-buses and / or supervised train journeys are being considered.

Q6: Will this change the school's aims, ethos and values?

The school's aims, ethos and values have been established for more than 700 years and will remain unchanged. The school will continue to nurture pupils academically, creatively and spiritually, encouraging them to be the best they can be, preparing them for their future schools and life beyond education.

Q7: How will staff be supported as changes unfold?

Whilst these changes, especially to the curriculum and approaches to learning, will have a profound impact on the school, the teaching staff will be fully supported by high-level training. The PSB is a network of schools, and curriculum planning meetings between the schools within every subject is very important. Our teachers will be visiting other schools over the next two years to work with colleagues across the sector. The sharing of best practice and resources is also an important part of the curriculum, and we will take full advantage of this.

The training will have no impact on our current teaching in terms of staff absence. Ongoing professional development is a vital part of any outstanding school, and as we embed this training, we will see exciting initiatives brought into the classroom.

Q8: How will these changes impact the older pupils in the Prep School?

The current Year 5 (Year 6 in September) will be the first cohort to experience the new curriculum. As we begin to embed the changes to learning and teaching, all pupils will benefit from our new approaches, outdoor learning and focus on independent learning.

There will be no adverse effects for those pupils entering Years 7 and 8 in September, as they will continue to be prepared for Common Entrance. This will also apply to all pupils whose choice of school requires them to sit Common Entrance in the future. This will remain a priority for the teachers who are all highly experienced in this examination preparation.

Q9: How will the facilities be changed?

The aim is to develop a multi-functional, innovative educational environment at St George's School. A full 'estates plan' is being created to ensure we can maximise the opportunities of the limited site. We start work this summer with a new multi-sports surface in the playground. An outdoor classroom and a wellbeing 'pod' are being planned. We are also looking at scoping bigger projects which include covering the central courtyard to fashion a heart of the school and enhanced performing arts and indoor sporting facilities.

Within the next 12 months, this estates plan will be presented to all stakeholders.

Q10: Will the changes affect the school's admissions system?

Entry into the school will continue exactly as it has always been. The current system of registration and taster day, leading to a formal offer, will remain exactly as it is now.

Q11: Are any changes planned to the school day?

As we plan for the new curriculum, a review of the current school day and subject allocation will occur during 2019-2020. As a result of this, minor changes might be made to the school day.

Q12: How will this move affect the school's standards of care?

St George's is well known for the very high level of pastoral care. Pupils all benefit from a system of having form tutors and boarding staff involved in their daily life. As is the case currently, day pupils benefit from the same high level of care as boarders, with access to the school's matrons, medical team and, of course, teaching staff. These high standards will remain in place.

Q13: If facilities are being updated and teaching resources enhanced, will fees be impacted by these changes?

There is no impact on fees as a result of these changes.

Q14: Will bursaries be available?

The school continues to offer a range of bursaries to pupils and their families, alongside the Choristers who are supported by the Dean and Canons of Windsor. It is the intention of the governors that this level of assistance should continue.

Whilst all bursaries are and will continue to be means-tested, any family that wishes to apply, or to find out more initially, is welcome to do so. The school has a proud tradition of supporting pupils from all backgrounds and one of the school's stated strategic aims is to increase the number of bursaries available.

Q15: How will the community be kept informed of the developments within the Strategic Plan?

A dedicated section of the school website will be created for the community to be kept abreast of the plans.

Q16: How can I find out more and to whom can I talk about the changes?

The Head Master will be happy to answer further questions you may have regarding the changes. Please contact him via his PA, Shelley Wall - headspa@stgwindsor.org.



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www.stgwindsor.org