

THE TIME IS NOW



An innovative and inspiring education for all

St Gabriel's
NEWBURY



THE TIME IS NOW

Our future is co-education

Providing an exceptional educational experience for children of families in Newbury and the surrounding area has always been our focus. In the last decade, we have successfully established Sandlesford Nursery and extended the co-educational offering of our Junior School to Year 6.

We are, therefore, both delighted and proud to extend our co-educational offering to the Senior School. Throughout the pages of this document, we will carefully address key questions surrounding this evolution with a view to respectfully informing our current and prospective parents and pupils.

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N O W

With the continuous and increasing demand from families and current parents for their sons to join the Senior School, the decision to become fully co-educational has been part of the school's long-term strategic plan for some years. The work-life balance for families is an ever-present challenge and the opportunity for children, sons and daughters, to embrace the same educational opportunities under one roof at St Gabriel's is a compelling and unique offering within the local area.

The move to a fully co-educational Senior School will be incremental with our first cohort of boys being offered places in Year 7 in 2022. A second entry point of Year 9 and Year 12 (Sixth Form) will be established in September 2024. This gradual move towards becoming fully co-educational will allow the school to evolve in a measured and considered manner.

THE TIME IS NOW FROM SEPTEMBER 2022 WE WILL WELCOME BOYS INTO YEAR 7

While this is an exciting final chapter in St Gabriel's journey to becoming a co-educational school, our values and ethos will not change. Every child's school experience is important. We are a school where the strength of personal relationships supports and develops each individual.

Our approach is balanced and considered; pupils have opportunities to acquire wider skills and qualities that develop their individual talents and character. They have the time to enjoy being part of a vibrant community and are supported to be the best they can possibly be regardless of gender, ethnicity, nationality, culture or religious beliefs.

Our pupils develop a confidence that comes from natural engagement, preparing them not only for academic success but also for life beyond school.

AS OUR WORLD CHANGES SO MUST THE EDUCATION WE PROVIDE

What does the move to a co-educational Senior School mean for St Gabriel's?

Educating boys and girls together will bring different views into the classroom, increase academic competition, provide more social opportunities and support new friendships. It will also better prepare our young people to contribute to a world where we are rightly being challenged to break down gender issues that have influenced society for years.

We are confident that this will build a richer and more varied learning experience for our senior pupils. For our Junior School boys, it will provide a natural pathway to their senior education; for parents in the local area, it offers a choice, which is currently not available, to select the same senior school for their sons and daughters.

How was this decision made and why now?

St Gabriel's is ideally placed to fulfil the need for an independent co-educational day school in the Newbury area and our decision to extend our co-educational offering into the Senior School is based on external market research and our own knowledge and understanding of the market.

The establishment of a fully co-educational school has been part of our long-term strategic plan since the opening of Sandleford Nursery and the extension of our co-educational offering in the Junior School to Year 6 in 2014. As our first cohort of Sandleford boys move through the Junior School, the time is now right to offer all our Junior School children a seamless transition to their senior school education at St Gabriel's.

Was the decision made because there is a demand for a co-educational senior school in this area or is the school in financial difficulty?

We continue to see an increase in demand from parents for their sons to join the Senior School. In addition to the appeal of the one school drop-off and pick-up, we recognise the benefits of school life mirroring the world beyond education, where men and women compete as equals.

We are not in financial difficulty; we have had unprecedented demand for Senior School places for entry in September 2021, our academic results continue to rise, and pupils are benefiting from an ongoing programme of investment in the school's facilities.

Will these changes affect the school's ethos and values?

At St Gabriel's the pupils come first and always will. Education today is more than academic success, we teach our young people to be adaptive; to work collaboratively; to listen as well as to lead; to be confident in their own abilities, and responsible for the decisions they make. St Gabriel's provides that educational experience, one that is both realistic in the preparation of its pupils for their future, but also gives them time to grow, to be children longer, so that they are better prepared to be adults.

The ethos and values that have been embedded within the school community for the last 90 years are equally relevant to the school as it moves forward to a fully co-educational environment. St Gabriel's develops intellectual curiosity, providing the opportunity for individuals to flourish, grow and prosper, both emotionally and academically, whilst equipping them for the world beyond GCSEs and A Levels.

**BY 2026
WE WILL BE AN
ALL-THROUGH
CO-EDUCATIONAL
SCHOOL,
FROM NURSERY
TO SIXTH FORM**

What will be the ratio of girls to boys?

The number of boys in the Senior School will grow incrementally year on year. Taking this measured and considered approach, our aim is to establish a 60:40 girl:boy ratio, but it will take several years to reach this throughout the school.

Are there benefits for the wider community in this change?

St Gabriel's stands out as being the exceptional school in the area. In becoming an all-through co-educational school, we will enable more children to access our excellent educational offering. We will be able to support whole families rather than siblings having to go to different schools due to gender.

Our bursary scheme will also give local families access to an independent school education, which they might not otherwise be able to afford.

SCHOOL LIFE AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

"The Sixth Form at St Gabriel's is a truly unique environment; the teachers are really engaging and passionate about their subjects. They know us well and support us throughout our journeys, challenging us so we can reach our potential both personally and academically." *Elizabeth, Head Girl*



Will this change affect the school's academic standards?

Academic standards across the whole school are high and continue to rise. With our experienced and very able teaching and pastoral team, we are confident we will stay on this trajectory.

Will there be any changes to the academic subjects available?

We constantly review our curriculum across the whole school to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of our pupils. As a result, we believe our academic provision is excellent, offering a broad range of subjects enabling our pupils to have as many opportunities as possible to pursue their aspirations.

How will the girls currently in the Senior School benefit from this change?

For the more senior girls and Sixth Formers, their educational experience will not be directly affected and they will continue to play a key role as mentors and role models to the younger years. For the girls in the Lower School, especially those joining with the boys in Year 7 in 2022, we see this as an exciting time in the evolution of the school. Sharing their educational journey will offer up new opportunities, challenges, and a wider friendship network. The majority of those joining St Gabriel's in Year 7, including our own Junior School pupils, will have attended co-educational primary and junior schools. For them, their excitement will be about starting their senior school education, strengthening and developing new friendships, not if their fellow pupils are boys or girls.

What are the benefits for the first Year 7 Senior School boys who join in 2022?

Boys joining Year 7 will be able to access the excellent educational provision offered by St Gabriel's. As a group, our first co-educational Year 7 cohort will be our pioneers, helping to shape the future of our school, a school with a great history and an amazing future.

Does the academic team have experience of teaching in a co-educational environment?

Many members of staff have taught in co-educational environments previously, but aside from this, all are excellent practitioners as our examination results demonstrate.

Will class sizes increase?

No. We see small class sizes as one of the benefits of the school and one that enables us to provide excellent individual support. The vast majority of our teaching groups have fewer than 18 pupils and it is only in a small minority of cases that the class size exceeds this.

Will girls and boys be taught together?

Yes, our pupils will learn together as this will provide them with a shared and enriched learning environment, where they can develop mutual respect for their different abilities and skills and work together as equals.

Will boys and girls have access to the same sports?

We firmly believe in a strong and balanced physical education provision, giving all students the opportunity to experience a wide and diverse range of sports and activities.

How will competitive sport be structured for boys and girls?

St Gabriel's is part of a local league framework offering opportunities for competitive, recreational and elite pathway based sport. This structure allows for competitions between local independent and state schools in a wide range of activities giving students experiences at different levels of ability.

Will the co-curricular activities change, and will there be separate activities for boys and girls?

We have a diverse offering of co-curricular activities which are based on the preferences of our pupils. We are always open to new ideas, many of which come through the School Council, so if there are new activities that pupils want to engage in and we can feasibly offer, of course, we will.

Will the school uniform change?

We will be working with the School Council, who represent the pupil body, on the boys' uniform, but we do not anticipate any changes to the girls' uniform.



ADMISSIONS

**YOUR CHILD IS TALENTED;
WE WILL DEVELOP THOSE TALENTS
AND FIND MORE**

Why are you only accepting boys into Year 7 in 2022 and not into all the senior year groups?

The single year group entry is designed to ensure a smooth, gradual and carefully managed transition to co-education. As our first co-educational cohort moves through the school, Year 9 and Year 12 will also become main entry points.

You talk about the Senior School, but will the Sixth Form be accepting boys from 2022?

The Sixth Form will accept boys from September 2024 alongside our first co-educational Year 9 cohort.

Will this impact the number of places available at the school?

The school has classrooms and facilities to accommodate a maximum of 60 pupils in a year group (three tutor groups of 20); when this is exceeded, we will put in place a waiting list.

Is there a limited number of places for boys?

We will initially look to achieve a girl to boy ratio of 60:40.

Will the entry requirements change?

No. The entry requirements will remain the same. All pupils will sit our Senior School entrance examinations in English, Mathematics, Science and Verbal Reasoning in the November prior to their year of entry. An interview with the Principal and Vice-Principal also forms part of the Senior School admissions process.

Will boys and girls have access to the same bursaries and scholarships?

At both Year 7 and Year 9 entry we invite applications for Academic, Art, Performing Arts (Dance, Drama & Music) and Sport Scholarships. All pupils will have access to the scholarships and bursaries supported by the school.

Will there be a financial incentive to join Year 7 in 2022?

We will be offering a one year fee discount to those who accept their Senior School place before 31 January 2022.

What support is provided for pupils in the Senior School?

We have an excellent record in pastoral care and encourage our pupils to discuss any concerns they may have. Our Senior School girls find it extremely easy to approach staff with any anxieties they have for themselves or others and this culture of openness and approachability will not change once we are co-educational. We would encourage the boys to be equally open, kind and caring for themselves and others.

How will the school provide sufficient role models for boys?

We believe that our pupils need role models who are relevant to today's world and that these individuals will not be defined by gender; our pupils will find these both within and outside of the school.

Will there be changes in the pastoral care provided to specifically support the boys?

Boys will have the same support network as girls within school, which includes dedicated and very able tutors, Heads of School, counsellors, the school nurse, and the Individual Needs Department. In short, all staff are there to support every individual.

PASTORAL CARE AND SUPPORT

"The level of pastoral care in the school is exemplary and this is central in creating the happy and secure environment which is a significant feature of St Gabriel's." *ISI Inspection Report*



INVESTMENT AND FACILITIES

Is there a planned schedule of investment in the school's facilities over the next five years?

There are some facilities that will need to be boy specific but the ongoing programme of investment in the school's facilities will benefit all pupils. Over the past two years these have included the refurbishment of the theatre, the science laboratories, the Senior School library, and new and improved toilet facilities. In addition, the Oval Room has been restored to reflect its historical importance.

During the summer holidays 2021 and 2022, we will be extending the Sports Hall to include boys changing rooms and toilet facilities. We are also looking at forming associations with local sports clubs to access sport on their grounds.

Looking ahead, on its current site, the school has space to create additional buildings and amenities without reducing existing facilities.

How is the school funding these changes & will there be inflated fee increases to cover the investment costs?

The school is in the fortunate position to have good reserves and we have an excellent relationship with our bank who will assist us in deploying strategies to protect our cash reserves, if needed.

Any increase to the fees will be to cover normal operating costs and we review these annually.

TAKING YOUR NEXT STEPS

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Whole School Open Morning
Saturday 6 March 2021
- Year 5 Senior School Taster Day
Friday 11 June 2021
- Senior School Entrance
Examination Morning
Saturday 6 November 2021
- Academic Scholarship Morning
Monday 13 December 2021
- Year 6 Parents' Senior
School Taster Morning
Friday 21 January 2022
- Start of Autumn Term
Wednesday 7 September 2022
- Whole School Open Morning
Saturday 8 May 2021
- Candidates' Day
Tuesday 12 October 2021
- Art & Performing Arts
(Dance, Drama & Music)
Scholarship Morning
Saturday 4 December 2021
- Sport Scholarship Afternoon
Monday 13 December 2021
- Year 7 Induction Day
Thursday 16 June 2022

To discuss entry to the Senior School in 2022, please contact Admissions on 01635 555 680 or admissions@stgabriels.co.uk

Watch the video at stgabriels.co.uk/coed today.



St Gabriel's offers an innovative and inspiring education
to children from the age of 6 months to 18 years.

St Gabriel's

NEWBURY

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