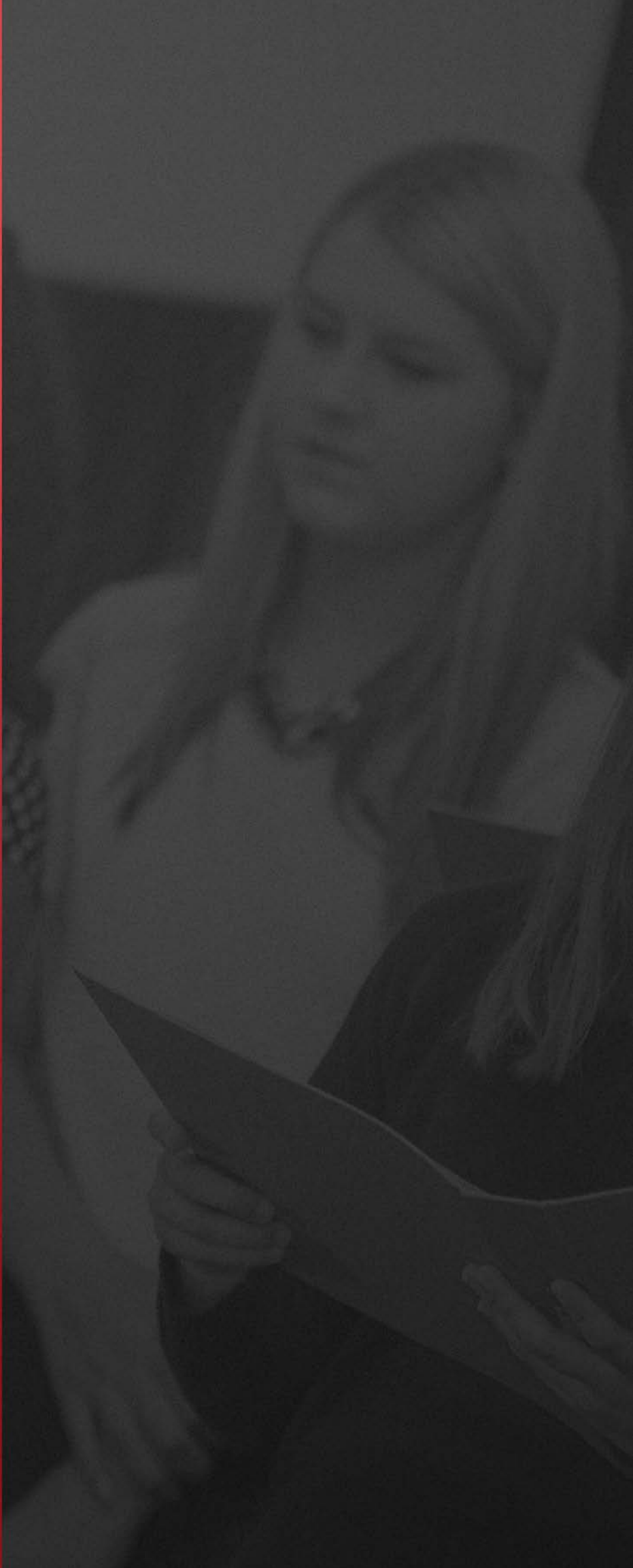




LITTLE HEATH SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS





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WELCOME

Dear prospective students, parents and carers,

On behalf of staff, governors and students, we would like to welcome you to Little Heath School's online prospectus. We hope that this serves as a useful introduction to our school and to its traditional values and aspirational ethos. As an educational community, we are extremely proud of our school, and want to share our vision for future success with you.

We are confident that, as you read the prospectus, you will develop a clear sense of the unique features of the school and the reasons why it has such a positive reputation locally. We hope that it will inspire you to come to our Open Evening in the Autumn term, and to apply for a place with us at Little Heath School in Year 7.

We are proud to say that Little Heath is a traditional school founded on traditional values. Although we also pride ourselves on our modern and innovative approaches to teaching and learning, we recognise that "old-fashioned" values of respect, politeness, honesty and integrity are just as important in the modern, fast-paced world of the twenty-first century as they were in the past. We are very much a large school with a small school ethos, valuing a sense of community and respect that is shared by students, parents and staff alike.

Much of our work at the school is centred on a long-standing tradition of high academic achievement, coupled with a caring approach where every student matters. We want to ensure that students leave Little Heath School with the skills, knowledge, understanding and personal characteristics that will serve them well in the next stage of their learning, whether in employment, at college or at university. We know that they will need a strong academic record in terms of qualifications, but we are also proud to see them move on from school as rounded and grounded individuals able to succeed on whatever path they choose.

If you would like to know more about our school, please do not hesitate to contact us and arrange a visit.



Our Open Evening and Open Morning events are highlights of the early Autumn term in September; and we look forward to meeting you there. In addition, we are always happy to arrange tours of the school should you wish to visit on an alternative date.

David Ramsden, Headteacher

Lynsey Barry, Chair of the Governing Body

“(Parents) were particularly appreciative of the high-quality pastoral care, inclusive ethos and rich curriculum that the school offers.”

(OFSTED 2018)



VISION OF THE SCHOOL

At Little Heath School, we believe that everyone matters. Young people only get one chance at education and we believe that it should be an outstanding one, tailored to their personal needs. For this reason, students are encouraged to aim high in order to achieve success.

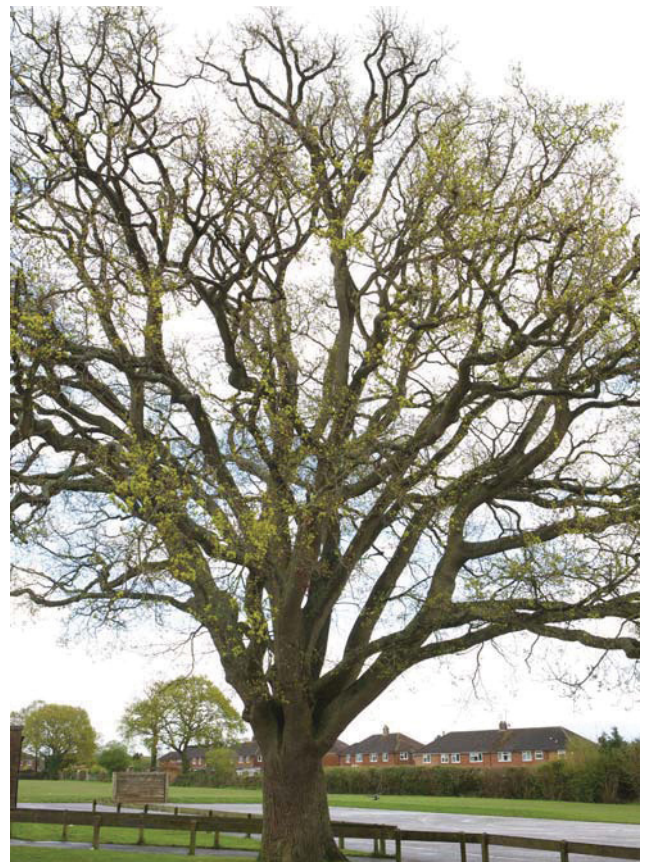
Through a shared partnership between teachers, students and parents, we can help young people to improve their life chances and to progress successfully in their chosen educational pathways or careers. We want all our students to become confident and well balanced citizens, prepared for life in the twenty-first century. In short, we want all children to fulfil their potential at Little Heath School.

This ambitious vision is underpinned by the following educational principles:

- we believe that young people are capable of achieving great things, and that they deserve to be inspired by their education;
- we raise achievement in partnership with students and their parents;
- we value a curriculum which fosters an enjoyment in learning, one that challenges and supports all students equally so that they make outstanding progress;
- we want all of our students to be safe and to enjoy their education;
- we recognise that each student is an individual and deserves to be treated as such;
- we believe that the views of students and parents are important and we listen to them carefully;
- we expect everyone, as part of the school community, to be ready to learn and prepared to take responsibility for their own learning, growth and development.

As you can see from these principles, at Little Heath School we are ambitious for all students - there is a commitment to excellence at the school that means we refuse to be complacent, constantly striving for more effective and innovative ways to stretch and challenge young people so that they can succeed. We want Little Heath to be a school where every parent can be confident that their child will be happy, supported and successful. Our school badge - an image of the iconic oak tree at the heart of the site - is representative of the idea of nurture and growth that is so important to us as a school.

We hope that you share this vision for success and want to join us at the school.





“When young people compete for jobs and enter the workplace, they will be expected to communicate precisely and effectively”

(WOLF REPORT, 2011)

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

We have very high expectations for all of our students at Little Heath School.

Teachers, students and parents alike know that hard work is a vital component to academic success, and similarly understand that much of the success that comes in later life, through GCSE courses to Advanced Level and beyond, is based on an early foundation of academic rigour at Key Stage 3. We are fortunate to work closely with so many successful feeder primary schools - students enter Little Heath School with excellent skills for learning, ready to succeed. We take seriously our responsibility to challenge students further from the moment they join us in Year 7. Whatever their starting point, we want students to make as much progress as possible in their time at Little Heath School. We have extremely dedicated staff who are committed to maintaining high standards at the school. Their passion for their specialist subject and for learning in general is part of our continuing success - they want to inspire young people to enjoy their learning.

Examination success is important, of course, but we want students to enjoy their learning from Year 7 to Year 13. As a school, we want to ensure that all of our students strive to achieve the very best results they can, with the knowledge that the skills they have gained along the way are ones they can take into the wider world. Each year we celebrate the success of our Sixth Form students who move on to exciting courses at university or college, or on to rewarding careers in the world of work. Little Heath School students applying to Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, have very high success rates in obtaining a place on their chosen course.



Academic standards are also high for students with Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those who are eligible for Pupil Premium (separate funding available to support the progress of disadvantaged children). Our Inclusion Team works effectively to support the learning of all students, with in-class support and additional out of classroom provision coordinated carefully in order to close any gaps in knowledge and skills. We provide a wide range of additional services for those students who have specific needs and who require specialised support for their learning. Each year, we celebrate the progress of students for whom learning has not been so easy, recognising their effort and positive attitude to learning.

Classroom teachers, senior leaders, support staff and the governing body work together to ensure that Little Heath School delivers a unique experience for every child and not only encourages them to reach their own personal goals but to be prepared for the ever-changing, competitive, modern world.



CARE, SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

At Little Heath School, the care, support and guidance of every student are of the utmost importance to us.

At our latest inspection, OFSTED noted that we have “systematic and well co-ordinated pastoral support that provides comprehensive guidance for students”. We are rightly proud of our reputation for superb pastoral care. We want students to be able to thrive academically, emotionally and socially at the school.



Much of this reputation is due to the commitment of our pastoral team at the school. We are a large school with a small school ethos, with each year group feeling like a close-knit community within the wider school. Tutors build trusting relationships with students and their parents, and this is fundamental to the high levels of care that permeate every aspect of school life. Pastoral staff work hard to develop a strong sense of responsibility and community spirit in their year groups. Students develop good morals, values and respect for each other.

We are proud of our reputation as a “listening and telling school”. In their recent report in 2018, OFSTED noted that the school works effectively to keep students safe and secure, and “has robust procedures, well-understood systems to manage safeguarding requirements and a culture of vigilance.”

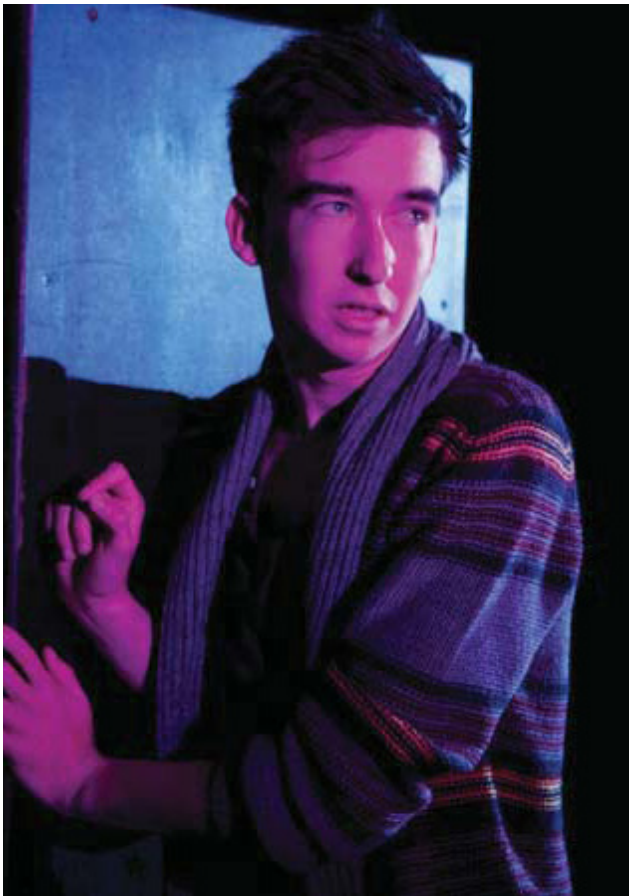
We have a peer mentoring programme (SMILE) that supports students on their arrival at the school in Year 7. We insist that students treat each other with respect, and we respond very seriously to bullying, including cyber bullying. We use assemblies and other school events to remind students of the necessity to take care whenever they are online. This was recognised in our recent OFSTED report, which stated that “students have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe when they are online”.

We have a thriving Student Voice programme that allows all students to become fully involved in school life. In recent years, students have been directly involved in teaching and learning developments, working with us on key issues such as homework, curriculum and even the design of our school buildings.

TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our strong pastoral care begins even before students arrive with us in Year 7. We work hard with our Primary feeder schools to discover as much as we can about students before they arrive with us, and our transition events in the summer term allow us to meet the students properly and to establish high expectations from the start about their work and behaviour. We believe that transition from primary school should be natural and seamless, building on the good work done in Key Stage 1 and 2 so that our students immediately aim high. Students bring their best written work with them from primary school in order to set these early, high expectations. We provide a range of summer school opportunities, including one targeted at specific students who might find transition to secondary school more difficult.

Once students arrive with us at the start of Year 7, our induction period allows students to learn the school routines, appreciate the importance of our values, make new friends and explore all that the school has to offer.



“There is a sense of pride in Little Heath School that is shared between staff, governors and pupils.”

(OFSTED 2018)





CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is one that has breadth and balance; it encourages our students to enjoy their learning, building confidence in their own abilities in a range of disciplines. We want our students to challenge themselves, becoming resilient and determined individuals who are able to reflect on their learning experiences in order to develop their skills further.

We strive to keep our curriculum relevant, innovative and engaging. The high quality of teaching ensures that students can develop their knowledge and understanding of a range of traditional and modern curriculum subjects. We also encourage them to learn independently, for example through research at home or enquiry based projects, in order to enrich their school-based experience. Independent enquiry not only allows students to expand their knowledge and understanding, but also ensures they are able to think in a more creative way, thus encouraging independent challenge and the setting of personal goals.

Our curriculum also develops effective skills for learning for all students, by:

- encouraging them to participate effectively in their own learning;
- supporting them to become self-managers of their learning and their own time;
- providing opportunities for them to reflect on their learning and in turn share this reflection with others;
- ensuring that teaching activities allow them to develop team working skills.

The most fundamental skills of all, of course, are the ability to read and write confidently and the use and understanding of number



skills. These crucial elements are at the heart of our curriculum at Little Heath School and we want to ensure that no student leaves us without the ability to transfer these skills into later life. Employers comment regularly on the pressing need for students to be equipped with strong communication skills so that they can operate successfully in the world of work, and we take our responsibility in this area very seriously. We want all students to have functional communication skills by the time they start Key Stage 4.

For more information on our innovative curriculum, please refer to our accompanying Key Stage 3 curriculum booklet.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

At Little Heath School, we believe that education is about the nurturing and development of rounded individuals. Thus, a great deal of emphasis is placed on extra-curricular activities and the development of personal skills beyond the classroom.

Students are able to access a full and enriched extra-curricular programme, including year round sports fixtures, whole school productions, and a number of exciting and interesting lunchtime and after school clubs. Our music department has an especially varied musical performance programme, including a Soul Choir that has performed to critical acclaim at Douai Abbey, the Reading Hexagon and the Royal Albert Hall.

These experiences outside the classroom are vital. A recent landmark report from the influential Confederation of British Industry (CBI) noted that employers want students to develop broad and sophisticated skills for learning as well as more academic knowledge and understanding. They value skills that have been developed through participation in sport, music and drama. As the report declares articulately: "Skills have become the global currency of the 21st century".



Lessons are brought to life through a wide range of trips to places of cultural and historical interest. Examples include our annual Battlefields trip to Belgium, regular trips to the theatre, ski trips, watersports residentials in France, weekend expeditions to wild country in Britain as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and even an Upper School expedition to a far-flung destination (such as Borneo, Nicaragua and Botswana). Individual departments also host a wide range of events within school, including talks by visiting speakers.



PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The partnership between parents and the school is crucial. We encourage all of our parents to engage fully in their child's education from the moment they join us in Year 7.

We know that parents want to share in their child's learning and to monitor their progress. We value parental support with homework, project-based research and independent study, but at the same time recognise the key role played by the school in reporting on progress in a timely and constructive way. We report home formally on an annual basis, as well as undertaking checks on progress throughout the year. Subject teachers also monitor students' reading and writing skills, in order to provide a firm foundation for success at GCSE and Advanced Level. We are delighted that parents recognise the importance of reading and writing, for example through encouraging reading for pleasure at home. It is vital that parents feel able to approach the school whatever their query or concern about their child's progress or welfare.

The Governing Body take their role in developing a supportive partnership with parents very seriously. The Chair of Governors communicates regularly in order to keep parents up to date with school news, welcoming any comments or suggestions about ways to improve standards.

Similarly, partnership with students through our Student Voice provision is at the very core of what we do at Little Heath School. We believe our students are partners in learning; students are valued and their views are taken seriously.

We have a thriving School Council that allows representatives of the student body to drive the future of the school, working jointly with teachers and governors to make further improvements to our work. Our annual Student Voice Conference allows a large section of the school community to come together and discuss the progress that the school has made, so that they are fully involved with the next phase of its development.

We very much believe our young people are the best representatives of our school, and our greatest ambassadors.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I apply for a place at Little Heath School?

All applications to Little Heath School are processed by West Berkshire Local Authority. As a Year 6 parent, information about admissions is distributed to Primary schools before parents choose to apply for a secondary school place. Applications are now made directly to the home authority, for example Reading, who will then pass the application to West Berkshire Local Authority. For in-year admissions, applications are made directly to West Berkshire.

Where can I find the school's admissions policy and additional information?

Our admissions policy is available for download on our school website. Guidance for over-subscription to Little Heath School is available from West Berkshire Local Authority.

How will I find out about my child's progress at the school?

Regular progress checks take place in every subject throughout the year. We ensure parents know how well their children have settled into a new academic year at Little Heath School through an Introductory Review. This is followed by a formal Performance Review at a specific point in the year. End of Year recording is designed to ensure that students are on track and making at least the expected level of progress.

In addition, parents are welcome to contact the school at any time if they wish to discuss their child's progress.

How do I find out about the curriculum at Little Heath School?

All curriculum subjects at Little Heath School are led by a Subject Leader or Head of Department. Queries about subject delivery can be addressed initially to Heads of Department. A brief summary of each of our curriculum areas is also available on our website. Any formal comment about curriculum delivery, for example in relation to Sex Education lessons, can be directed to the Headteacher. Of course, parents are welcome to contact their child's classroom teacher if there are any specific queries about the curriculum that relate to their lessons.

The associated Curriculum Information booklet provides an additional overview of our Key Stage 3 curriculum.



I have been used to a close partnership with a primary school where I can contact the class teacher at any time. How will that relationship work in a large school like Little Heath?

The first contact for any parent is a student's form tutor. The form tutor will be available to guide and support them throughout their time at Little Heath School. There are two tutor periods each day, also used to complete formal registration. For more important matters, it is entirely appropriate to contact your child's Head of Year or Senior Leadership link directly. In July, parents of new Year 7 students will receive an information card including all important information regarding their child's tutor group, including email addresses.

To improve further communication with parents, our Main Office staff act as a first port of call for most enquiries.

Little Heath School's attendance officer is available to help with any absence issues.

During the school day, Student Reception is a dedicated area for students should they feel ill, need help finding a member of staff or for general school enquiries.

What is your policy on school uniform?

We have a straightforward Uniform Policy at Little Heath School and continue to ensure that the uniform is both easy to obtain and affordable. We maintain a number of suppliers with this in mind.

If you have any further questions, or any difficulties in obtaining school uniform, please contact the school on 0118 9427337.

What is the school's policy on anti-bullying?

Little Heath School has very clear policies on anti-bullying and e-safety and all new students are issued with an anti-bullying leaflet containing information to help them should they ever need support in their time at the school. We aim to make the school an environment where students do not suffer from bullying, and with this in mind we make sure that there are clear systems for reporting bullying should it occur. Our Student Voice staff take a leading role in this area.

I am worried about my child's access to the internet and social networking sites, especially in terms of bullying. What is the school's policy on e-safety?

In an increasingly digital society, we have a joint responsibility as teachers and parents to ensure that students are safe online. The school has a very strict policy on internet use and students' on-line activity is monitored within school. All our students undertake e-safety training to remind them of their responsibility online. Students and parents must be aware of the impact of social networking sites and smart phones as this access is beyond our control outside of school but still remains everyone's responsibility. We provide guidance and support for those parents who want to learn more about e-safety.

How can I find out more information from home?

Our school website contains a wealth of information about the school.



“Leaders are passionate about wanting the best for every pupil,
and relationships between staff and pupils are strong.”

(OFSTED 2018)



“Education is not the filling
of a pail, but the lighting of
a fire”

(W. B. YEATS)



LITTLE HEATH SCHOOL

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