



# HITCHIN BOYS' SCHOOL

An Academy Trust

Striving for Excellence





"Pupils enjoy their time at school. They care about each other and get on well with staff and with their peers."  
Ofsted 2021



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### Welcome to Hitchin Boys' School

On behalf of my colleagues and the nearly 1,300 Hitchin Boys who walk through our cloisters each day, I want to thank you for your interest in our school.

For almost four centuries, Hitchin Boys' School has provided boys with exceptional educational opportunities, focusing on preparing young men for lives of leadership, purpose, and service. Here, academic excellence and achievement are certainly important, but we particularly pride ourselves on our co-curricular offer and our substantial pastoral support. We know boys succeed when they are engaged, happy, safe, and challenged to reach beyond themselves.

We are rightly proud of our Outstanding Ofsted rating and what we believe makes us stand out is an ambition to ensure that every boy feels known for who they are today and what they can be tomorrow. We want them to leave us as Hitchin Men who can live wisely in a complex, ever-changing, and turbulent world.

People define our School- staff who care deeply about their students and their subjects, and boys who support one another in a continual effort to make it "Great to be a Hitchin Boy". Our community is diverse, and we recognise that there are infinite ways to be a boy, we reject the phrase "boys will be boys" because it is a phrase that limits potential and narrows possibilities and aspirations- we want Hitchin Boys to be uncommon, striving for excellence at every turn.

I hope that once you have perused this prospectus, our website, or even visited us in person you will quickly agree that Hitchin Boys is a remarkable place where wonderful things happen every day, in and out of the classroom.

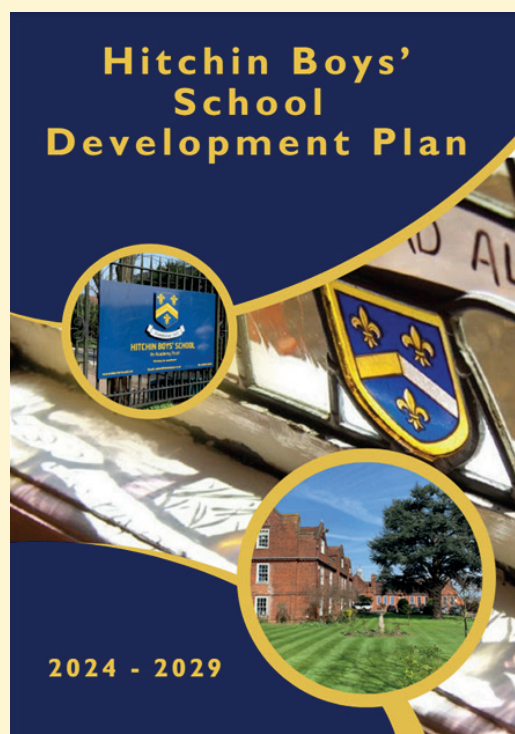


**Tim Bennett**  
Head Teacher



In the first six months of 2024, Hitchin Boys' School has been focusing on our key priorities for the next five years, and the result is our new School Development Plan. We have taken time to consider what 'Striving for Excellence' looks like and in so doing produced a set of values for boys to aspire to and a highly ambitious but exciting plan for 2024 - 2029. This is a shared vision, and we would like to thank the staff, boys, parents and trustees for their regular and well considered input, and feedback

The document highlights ten key areas of focus where we will concentrate our thinking and our resources, and we are now working on the detail behind these key areas to ensure we are able to achieve our objectives. The plan itself can be downloaded below.



"A friendly, values-driven school where boys strive to reach their potential academically, with dedicated teachers to support them at every juncture. Exceptional co-curricular programme too."

**The Good Schools Guide 2024**





## Striving for Excellence

Hitchin Boys' School has been providing high quality education since the 1630s and we continue to support and develop students to achieve their own personal best. Our motto is 'Per ardua ad alta', which means Striving for Excellence. Tradition plays a huge part in the ethos of the school and our expectations are very high in terms of conduct, respect, courtesy and effort.

We always seek to innovate in the classroom, with students benefitting from a wide variety of teaching styles and learning experiences. Our teachers are a professional learning community which is highly dedicated and committed to engaging, supporting, stretching and challenging students to achieve in all aspects of life. We take a Blended Learning approach that takes traditional methods and combines with modern evidence-informed approaches. Students joining year 7 will need a touchscreen Chromebook for lessons and those joining the sixth form are asked to bring a laptop to school (Bring Your Own Device.) Our teaching has evolved to reflect how the worlds of work and further education have become increasingly digital and global.

As well as focusing on reaching high standards of literacy and numeracy, Sport, Music, Languages, Science & Technology, Humanities and the Arts all play a vital role in our school life. Our facilities have been greatly enhanced in recent years, with new buildings for performing arts, humanities, English, and a new Fitness Suite opened in September 2022.

Our curriculum provides a wide, balanced and vibrant range of subjects, available to all students. Every student will have extensive opportunities both within and outside the normal curriculum, both in terms of academic study and also vocational, artistic and sporting activities. We also have a well-deserved reputation for an outstanding provision of extra-curricular trips and outdoor learning.

“The headteacher and his team have maintained an outstanding school. Their vision for the school is shared widely among all staff.”

**Ofsted 2021**

“The school’s curriculum is highly ambitious for all pupils. It is designed very well and ensures pupils not only learn rich subject knowledge, but also grow in their awareness of the world around them.”

**Ofsted 2021**





## Academic Excellence

Exam results at Hitchin Boys' School are consistently well above the national average at both GCSE and A level, both in terms of attainment and progress. This proud record of achievement was endorsed in September 2021, when our latest Ofsted inspection again rated Hitchin Boys' School an Outstanding School in every category. The overwhelming majority of our Year 11 students continue into the Sixth Form, with the majority of Year 13 progressing to university, including competitive Oxbridge and Medicine courses. Students also receive tailored careers support to access employment, apprenticeships, college and other destinations.

Able students are encouraged to achieve their best by means of the school's High Performance Group (HPG) programme, through which departments select the most able and talented students and offer extra opportunities and coaching in their subjects. The school also has a thriving STEM programme, which encourages keen students to further their knowledge in the key subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths through extra-curricular activities and links with local companies.



“Boys told us they are encouraged to be open about feelings and there are ‘plenty of people to talk to’ - from form tutors to peer mentors to the visiting counsellor.”

**The Good Schools Guide 2024**







## Support and Guidance

There are eight mixed-ability tutor groups in Years 7 - 11, with 210 students in each year group. Students have a tutor, a Year Head, an Assistant Head and the Head to whom they can go for advice, support and care. Year 7 tutor groups have two Sixth Formers attached to them, while new students after Year 7 are given a 'buddy' to help them find their feet and we make use of highly trained adults other than teachers to provide guidance and support to those who need it.

We recognise that many students need additional support to overcome barriers to learning. The Learning Support Department provides support for children with special educational needs and disabilities. The department works closely with academic and pastoral staff to provide bespoke support, as well as co-ordinating the work of support teachers and outside agencies. The School's Special Educational Needs Information Report (School Offer), together with the School's policy on Learning Support, is available on the school website or from the school office on request.

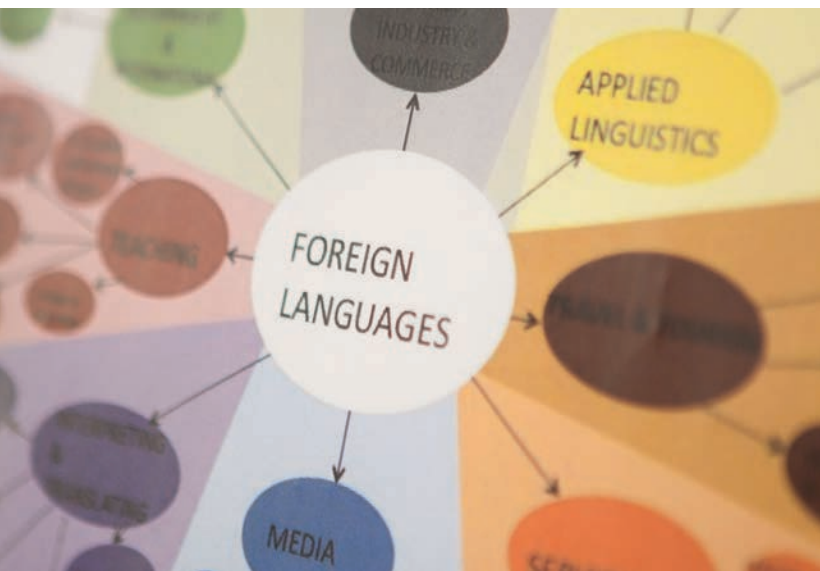
We also have support via Pupil Premium funding to provide additional help to disadvantaged students and the school has excellent provision for the mental health and wellbeing of students, with a range of staff who provide pastoral care and mentoring and academic support and intervention when it is needed.





## Moving up from Primary School

Entering a large secondary school can be bewildering, especially for children from small primary schools. We keep the younger students together as much as possible with all tutor groups based in the recently built 'Junior Block'. Before they join Hitchin Boys', new Year 7 students visit the school and a programme of extra transition sessions (including additional visits, meetings with parents and varied workshops) is offered to help those students who are expected to find the transition harder than others. Our Sports Centre also runs an optional summer camp specifically for incoming Year 7s to allow them to make friends and have fun.



Year 7 students begin the autumn term the day before the majority of students, and have priority access to the dining hall at break and lunchtime in the early days. In their first week they also have a short induction programme including a tour of the school, an introduction to the school library and getting their Chromebooks set up for school use. A range of team-building and House activities are arranged to help students to settle and participating in the varied extra-curricular programme is a great way to discover new passions and make new friends.





"Overall atmosphere is traditional but not stuffy."

**The Good Schools Guide 2024**





“Rare, and possibly even non-existent, is the Hitchin boy that doesn’t belong to one club or another.”

**The Good Schools Guide 2024**

“In all year groups, pupils access a carefully planned, high-quality ‘personal development’ curriculum. This supports pupils to become active, respectful citizens.”

**Ofsted 2021**



## Personal Development

There are many extra-curricular opportunities at Hitchin Boys' School, and students are encouraged to participate in clubs and societies both during the lunch hour and after school. School trips are organized by many departments during term and holiday times.

Music reaches a high standard in the school with an orchestra, four choirs, a Big Band, brass, string, woodwind and classical guitar groups, and many other ensembles, all of which perform in regular school concerts. Instrumental tuition is available on almost any instrument, taught by our many visiting teachers. An annual drama production involves a large number of students from all years, and recent performances have included "Cabaret", "The Wedding Singer", "Sweeney Todd" and "Lucky Stiff".

The school also excels in a variety of sports. Students play rugby, hockey and cricket as the major sports, and the school's dedicated Sports Centre, all-weather pitch, tennis courts and games fields provide outstanding facilities. The school competes at the highest level in rugby, cricket, hockey, athletics, swimming, basketball and several other sports, and all students are expected to represent the school if selected.

The School supports both the Duke of Edinburgh award and adventurous expeditions, which have taken place recently to Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia.

"Trips are gold standard for a state school."  
**The Good Schools Guide 2024**



## Sixth Form and life after school

The prime aim of the Sixth Form is to give students the opportunity to continue their education, strengthening their academic qualifications so that they are able to proceed to the next stage of their life after leaving school. Over 65% of Year 11 students choose to continue their education here after their GCSE examinations. They join a Sixth Form of approaching 300, an important and successful part of the school. Our consortium arrangements with Hitchin Girls' School and the Priory School also allow a wider range of courses to be offered in the Sixth Form. Sixth Form students are able to access online learning materials and make best use of independent study lessons by bringing their own laptops to school.

The school offers a well-established and comprehensive system of careers guidance, which includes access to individual careers advice and a range of employer visits, careers fairs and taster days during their time at school. Students build up a profile of careers-linked activities on the Unifrog platform that is also used for the UCAS university applications process and to find apprenticeships and other destinations. Year 12 students spend the last week of the academic year on a work experience placement.



"A large proportion of students choose to continue their studies at the school's Sixth Form. Students are confident it is the best choice for them."

**Ofsted 2021**

"...leaders have planned a well-considered careers programme. Sixth Form students ... experience a detailed programme of support and advice sessions to help them with their next steps."

**Ofsted 2021**



"No Hitchin type – we met boys who were sporty, scholarly and flamboyant, to name but a few."

**The Good Schools Guide 2024**



## Working with Parents

We need the co-operation and support of parents in all matters concerning their children if we are to be able to meet the high standards we set for ourselves and for our students. We have a Home and School Partnership agreement that sets out clear expectations of parents, students and the school. Parents are kept in touch with what is going on in school through newsletters, a dedicated Transition website, our regularly updated school website, via email and the EdulinkOne parental communication app.

Termly progress reports are sent home and parents are kept informed by formal contact with the school on a regular basis. Consultation evenings take place during the year, in some instances with the form tutor with a focus upon pastoral care and some with individual subject teachers with a focus upon learning in that subject. Consultations are a mix between private, online video conversations and in-person at school, for example, to hear about options choices for GCSE or Sixth Form.

We also have an active Parents' Society that organise fundraising events and we encourage parents to support the school in donating, volunteering and in other ways such as providing work-related experience for our students. The Former Students' Association is a group of alumni who continue to support the school long after they were students at HBS themselves.



"They push for excellence – you get no classroom coasting here."  
**The Good Schools Guide 2024**



“Parents are highly supportive of the school.  
They say the school looks after their children well.”  
**Ofsted 2021**



## Useful Information

**Attendance:** We expect all students to attend school at all times unless there are specific reasons for absence. We ask parents to avoid taking students out of school during term time. Parents should contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.

**School Policies:** Copies of all current school policies can be downloaded from the Information section of the school website, or are available on request from the school office.

**Publicity:** From time to time students may be filmed or photographed for publicity or promotional purposes during school activities. We will ask your permission to do this and be clear about where it will be used. You have the right to change your mind about this permission at any time.

**Access:** The school welcomes students with various physical abilities and disabilities. All but one part of the school is accessible to someone in a wheelchair, and we have some electrically assisted doors and toilet facilities for disabled students. Classes which include a student in a wheelchair are timetabled in rooms which are easily accessible.



“Teachers have a thorough understanding of the subjects they teach. Teachers choose appropriate activities that promote learning and engage pupils’ interest.”

**Ofsted 2021**

“From Year 7 to the sixth form, pupils feel safe to share their opinions and ideas. They are well behaved and enthusiastic about their learning.”

**Ofsted 2021**







To find out more about Hitchin Boys' School, please visit our website at [www.hbs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hbs.herts.sch.uk)

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Exceptional co-curricular programme too."



(Click on the logo above to read the full review)

Striving for Excellence

