

Virtue Learning Manners

Let's start at the beginning...



Brentwood School

Our Vision Statement

'We enable our pupils to become the best version of themselves by developing Virtue, Learning and Manners'

What makes us Brentwood?

Our values are at the centre of everything we do. Although the words from our school motto – ‘Virtue, Learning, Manners’ – were written in 1622, they are remarkably timeless. They guide our core purpose in helping young people discover and develop their talents with both self-assurance and humility. Our students are kind, ambitious, and seek to make a positive contribution in the present and the future: our role is to help them achieve their successes – in whatever shape they may come – without any sense of entitlement.

To do this, we need to prepare our students for a fast-paced and ever-changing world. They will need to solve problems we don’t yet know about (in addition to those we do) and many will take on jobs that don’t yet exist. Our students are active participants in this journey and distinguish themselves as enterprising young people who always strive to be the best version of themselves.

Of course, they work hard and enjoy great success in and out of the classroom, and once they’ve left us, many go on to use and develop their leadership skills and achieve beyond their expectations, always remembering what Brentwood has taught them.

That’s what makes us Brentwood.

The Foundation of the School

– Sir Antony Browne

The Reformation in England provides a crucial backdrop to the founding of Brentwood School. It was a time when some Christians began to protest against the teachings and practices of the Church in Rome. Unlike the Reformation in Europe, the English Reformation took on a distinctive character, closely intertwined with the personal circumstances of Henry VIII and his perceived political necessity to break free from the Pope's dominance in Rome. Following Henry's death in 1547, a further period of religious turmoil engulfed much of England. During the reign of his son, Edward VI, the Church moved clearly towards Protestantism, but his untimely death in 1553 meant his half-sister Mary took the throne with a determination to restore Roman Catholicism and the authority of the Pope.

Essex was one of the English counties most affected by these changes: its trading connections with Northern Europe brought reformed ideas and the Protestant faith and explains why more people were burned at the stake under the repression of Protestantism by 'Bloody Mary' here than anywhere else in England.

Sir Antony Browne, the Lord Chief Justice, secured the land where our School first stood in 1557 during the reign of Mary Tudor, and as part of the religious turmoil of the period, 19-year-old William Hunter was burned at the stake on his order. A memorial to William Hunter was erected in 1861 at Wilson's Corner just outside the School and a plaque marks the location he was burned.

In 1558 Elizabeth I became queen and set about trying to establish stability after a period of religious turmoil. The great abbeys had fallen into ruin, and the chantry (choir) schools attached to them had been abolished. However, some men of good character, with the future of the nation at heart, helped to lay the foundations of a glorious Elizabethan age by founding schools that widened the religious education and literacy of the country and Brentwood School was proudly part of this new tradition.

1557



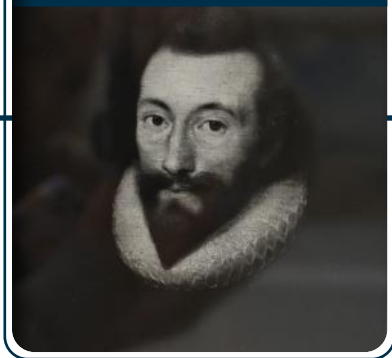
○ School Statutes, first mention of VLM

On July 18th, 1622, John Donne, Dean of St Paul's and one of England's finest poets, signed the School Statutes which said...

“The said schoolmaster shall receive... and him shall teach and instruct in vertue, learning and manners after the orders and constitutions of the said school...”

These three words have come to define the School and to serve as a benchmark upon which we shape our community and our identity.

1622



1682



○ Three purposes of Education

Some of the earliest teachers at our School understood that education was important for several reasons – the personal growth of each individual pupil, the development of an understanding of the created world and our place in it, and to ensure the good of the nation.



○ Dr W West as Headmaster

When Dr West, a graduate of St John's College, Oxford, took over in 1852 Brentwood started to be recognisable as a modern school. Under Dr West the typical Victorian and Edwardian emphasis on sport as character-building became embedded in the culture of our School, alongside a particularly muscular Christianity. All schools at that time were like this because pupils at these schools had to develop the character, skills and determination to assist in the formation and preservation of the British Empire.

1852



1868



○ Chapel Built

Three of Dr West's School precepts or rules stood out as being as relevant now as they were when they were written in 1858:

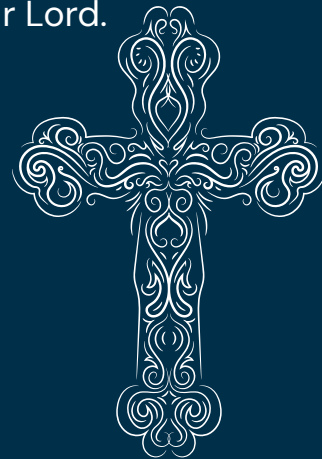
1. Join social games with spirit keen Nor loitering round the porch be see
2. No angry word invade your sport Nor malice prompt the quick retort
3. When older grown protect the young and be not sharp with hand or tongue.

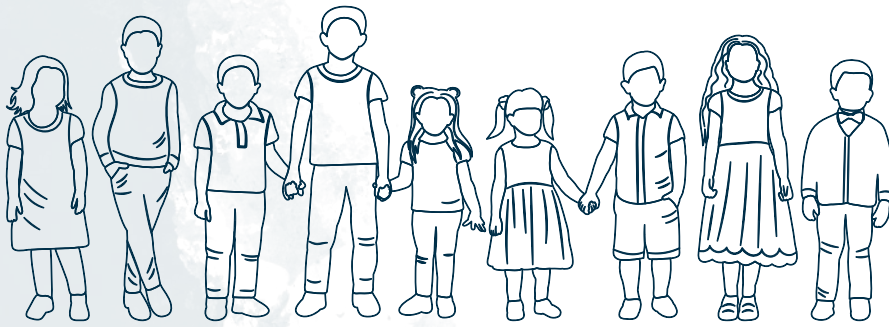
School Prayer

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing upon our School. Give us grace so to order our lives that Virtue, learning and Manners may here forever flourish and abound. Make us diligent, true and faithful in all things.

Help us to give ourselves in love and service to others and to you, that we may be led to know you, whom truly to know is life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

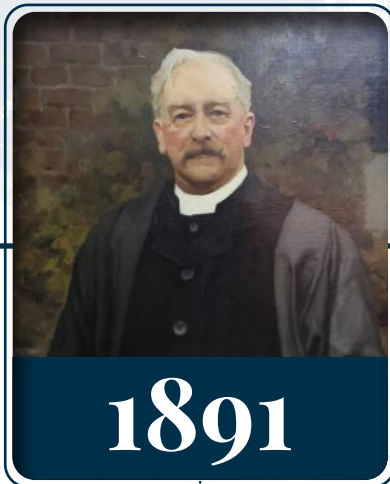
Amen



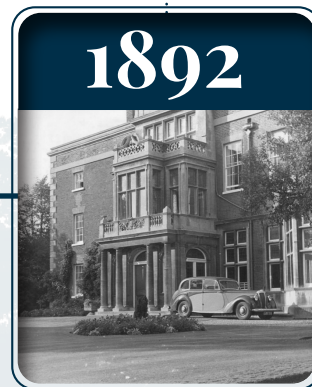


Preparatory School Founded

One of Dr Bean's first innovations was to found the Preparatory School in 1892 and appoint Miss Brimley as Headmistress.



1891



1892

Dr Edwin Bean as Headmaster

Edwin Bean had been a pupil at Clifton College and had spent time in Australia as a master at Geelong Grammar School. He was determined to widen access to Brentwood School and eliminate any sense of exclusivity. He wanted to make sure that boys from local state primary schools should be members of our School in the fullest sense, and in his time Essex County Council started to provide scholarships to students to help him to achieve this vision.

Introduction of the School Song

In 1907, Edwin Bean wrote the words to the School song 'The School Beside The Tree' with music by Gordon Burgess (OB), to celebrate the School's 350th Anniversary. However, the School song we sing every summer at our Promenade Concert, 'The Old Red Wall', was written by his son, Charles Bean.

1907



On the 350th anniversary of the School's founding, the importance of kindness (as part of our mission to teach Virtue, Learning and Manners), was reinforced by a card given to every pupil by Evelyn Heseltine, Chairman of Governors, with the following words:

"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore I can do, or any kindness I can show to any human being, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again"

The Old Red Wall

They bound a lad by a green elm tree,
And they burn'd him there for all to see
And in shame for his brothers and play-mates all
They built them a school with a new red wall.
We may ride by land, we may ride by sea,
Ten thousand miles from the old grey tree,
But the best of days were, after all, To live as
they lived – and, if need should be,
To die as one died by the old grey tree.
We may ride by land, we may ride by sea,
Ten thousand miles from the old grey tree,
But the best of days were, after all,
The days that we liv'd by the old red wall.
The days that we liv'd by the old red wall.
And I wish them this:- Whate'er befall
To live as they lived by the old red wall,

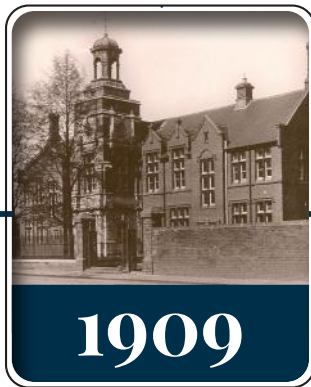


Main School Development

In 1909, Mrs Heseltine, wife of the Chairman of Governors, laid the foundation stone for the new Main School which was thought necessary after an inspection which stated:

“This ancient School is at the turning of the ways. Brentwood, on its healthy, breezy plateau, will in no long time be a large suburban town... there is a need for modern school buildings and playing fields”.

This report provided a catalyst for the developments of the last 100 years, during which land and buildings were acquired, and new buildings erected, often at personal cost to major benefactors such as Evelyn Heseltine, Chairman of Governors from 1907-28 and Headmasters James Hough and Edwin Bean. Another of Dr Bean's legacies and an idea he brought with him from Clifton was to call the prefects “Praepostors”, a custom which we proudly maintain today.

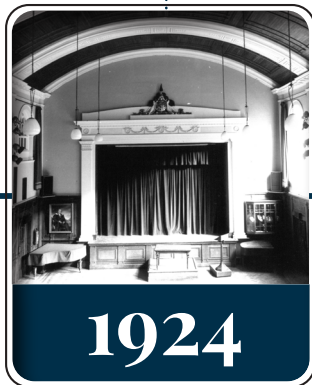


James Hough as Headmaster

James Hough became Headmaster of Brentwood in 1914 with 211 boys, and by his retirement in 1945, the number had risen to 887. Serving as Headmaster during both World Wars, many Old Brentwoods spoke warmly of his Headship, even though they were most difficult times. Mr Hough was even asked to be Chairman of the Brentwood District Council in 1941. As Chairman was given £500 by the Lord Mayor of London's fund to alleviate the distress of the homeless drifting into Brentwood to escape the Blitz.

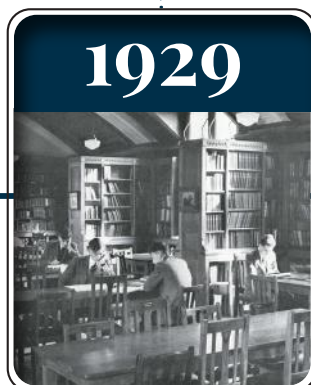
Memorial Hall

The Society of Old Brentwoods opened the Memorial Hall, named in honour of those Old Brentwoods who had lost their lives in World War One. The hall quickly became a popular performance and assembly space, and is still in use in such capacity today.



Bean Library

Brentwood School honoured Dr Bean's contributions with the opening of the Bean Library, inaugurated by Sir Henry Newbolt, also an Old Cliftonian. Newbolt's renowned poem, "Vitae Lampada," reflects the values cherished by Bean and other Victorians, including honour, esprit de corps, and self-sacrifice, which were considered essential in a distinguished public school.



Vivian Rosewarne

Among the 173 Old Brentwoods who lost their lives in World War II was Vivian Rosewarne, a Bomber Command pilot. His picture hangs outside the chapel, and a copy is displayed at RAF Cranwell. Reported missing in 1940, he left behind a letter to his mother, reflecting the enduring values instilled in Brentwood School pupils for over 460 years: duty, self-sacrifice, and service. In his letter, these themes resonate strongly. He writes:

"I have done my duty to the utmost of my ability. No man can do more and no man calling himself a man could do less. I have no fear of death... the universe is so vast and so ageless that the life of one man can only be justified by the nature of his sacrifice".

This rousing letter was printed in The Times in June 1940 leading to the letter being published into a small book. Later on, a documentary-style British propaganda short film called 'An Airman's Letter Home' was produced and used in the Government's campaign to get the public to do their duty during WW2.

○ Ralph Allison as Headmaster

In 1945, Brentwood became a Direct Grant Grammar School, a type of selective secondary school where one-quarter of places were directly funded by the central government. This scheme allowed Dr Bean's vision of access to quality education to become a reality, ensuring that talented individuals from various backgrounds could benefit from the School's academic offerings.

During Ralph Allison's tenure as Headmaster, Sixth Form provision expanded significantly. More subjects were offered at the A Level, resulting in an increased number of teachers involved in Sixth Form education. Consequently, the number of boys entering universities rose substantially.

1945



1955



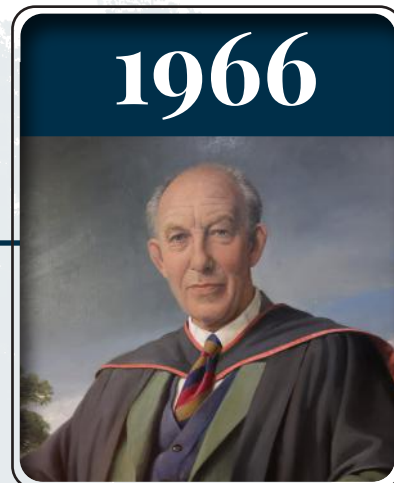
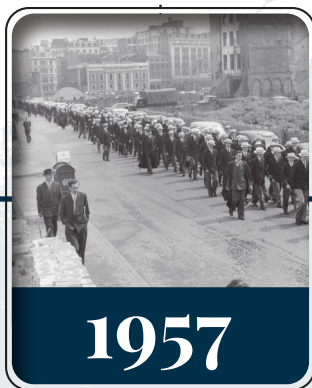
○ Cricket Pavilion



In 1955, the Society of Old Brentwoods paid for the construction of a new cricket pavilion as a memorial to those who died in the war.

400th Anniversary at St Paul's Cathedral

In 1957 the whole School travelled to St Paul's Cathedral to mark the 400th anniversary of the School. Students, parents and Old Brentwoods alike travelled up to London for the memorable experience of a service at St Paul's.



Richard Sale as Headmaster

As was the case with many schools, especially those established so long ago most of the early history of Brentwood School is to do with boys.

It was only in 1974 that the first girl – Lesley Hall – joined our School as a full-time student and by the early 1980s there were 23 girls, all in the Sixth Form.

○ Direct Grant Withdrawal

One of the biggest challenges faced by the School was in 1977 when the government withdrew the Direct Grant, meaning that academically able pupils who could not afford the fees were no longer able to attend Brentwood. The effect of this was mitigated somewhat by the introduction of a Government Assisted Places Scheme in the 1980s, which was also withdrawn in 1998.

The School's Governing Body met this challenge by developing an extensive fund for scholarships and bursaries to enable a significant number of pupils to benefit from an education at our School, whose parents otherwise would not be able to afford it.

1977



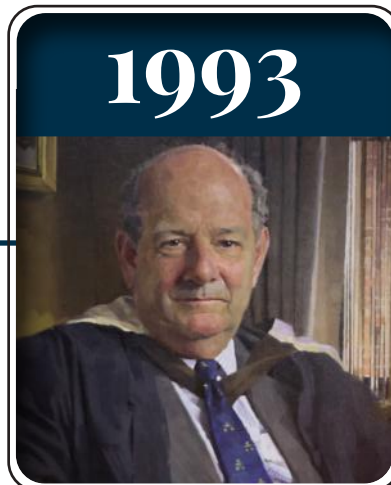
1981



○
**John Evans as
Headmaster**

Girls at Brentwood

The first class of girls joined at the age of 11 in 1988 and Brentwood was the first school in Essex, and one of the first nationally, to follow the 'Diamond Model' structure. This means that boys and girls are taught together in the early years, separately between the ages 11 – 16 and together again in the Sixth Form. In this way, our pupils enjoy the benefits of a co-educational environment with single-sex teaching during the important adolescent years.



John Kelsall as Headmaster

In 1995, John Kelsall introduced a new girls' school uniform designed by Old Brentwood Sir Hardy Amies KCVO, a renowned couture designer. Amies, who attended Brentwood from 1919 to 1927, cherished his time at the school and returned to design the girls' uniform, which is still worn today. After leaving Brentwood, Amies became the official dressmaker to Her Majesty the Queen for 40 years.

Pre-Prep Founded

The Pre Prep is situated in the Higgs Building, named after Jack Higgs who was Headmaster of the Prep School from 1950– 1971.

○ Ian Davies as Headmaster

In 2006, we introduced the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme to our Sixth Form. The IB is a globally recognised and holistic qualification that enables students to study a diverse range of subjects.

The Earl of Wessex, Prince Edward unveiled our Wessex Auditorium and adjoining Otway Sixth Form Center in 2011.

In 2016, we opened the state-of-the-art Bean Academic Centre. Centred around the Cunliffe Building (home to Classics and Learning Support) and the Bean Library, the Bean Academic Centre offers a magnificent multimedia Learning Resource Centre. It features a lecture and seminar space, social and quiet study areas, new classrooms, a multi-purpose assembly hall, and a new cafeteria.

2004



2007



450th Anniversary ○

For our School's 450th Anniversary, we undertook the mammoth task of travelling to St Paul's Cathedral to recreate the service that took place in 1957. More than 2000 of us – mostly Preparatory and Senior students, parents and Old Brentwoods – swelled the congregation on a bright and brisk spring afternoon in March. The 55-minute service featured an inspirational sermon by The Bishop of London

○ The Foundation

The founders of our School envisaged the provision of education to worthy children, and there has been a long tradition here of supporting families who otherwise could not access a Brentwood School education.

“The children of judges and those of mechanics and tradesmen should mix on equal terms.”

Dr Edwin Bean (Headmaster 1891-1913)

Since the demise of Direct Grant and Assisted Places schemes, the School has built upon and maintained the values of its founders and predecessors by providing means-tested bursaries. We now have over 120 students on some kind of bursary, over half of which pay no fees at all. Creating these opportunities truly transforms young lives through a Brentwood education.

2016



Brentwood School
FOUNDATION

The Foundation was established in 2016...

● “to enrich and benefit the School by ensuring that no successful applicant in the Brentwood School Entrance Examination is prevented by financial reasons from taking up a place.”

The Foundation fundraises solely for the benefit of transformational bursary awards, and we are now focusing our efforts on significantly growing the Foundation to ensure we can continue our vital provision of Brentwood bursaries. This will only be possible with the generous support of those in the Brentwood School community.

Michael Bond as Headmaster Values-led School

Virtue, Learning and Manners were written into the Statutes of Brentwood School in 1622 and in 2019 we made a steadfast commitment to ensuring that they actively inform everything we do, from long-term vision and strategy to daily interactions.



Prep Development Opens

The multi-million pound Preparatory School refurbishment and extension, designed to accommodate an increased school population and enhance campus connectivity, features state-of-the-art educational facilities such as a Futures Room for versatile learning experiences, eight specialist classrooms including music, science, IT, art, and design technology spaces, a spacious hall for various events, a modern dining facility, and a new nursery with expanded playground areas. Other highlights include upgraded security measures, landscaping improvements, and age-specific play zones.



Since 2019 this has involved consultation with colleagues, parents and pupils to reach a shared understanding of Virtue, Learning and Manners in today's world; the development of a menu of 'cultural tools' that help us deploy our values; the implementation of Values-Based Interviewing (conducted by a team of volunteers from across the school) as both a safer recruitment and values alignment tool; the establishment of a Values Implementation Committee, whose remit is to explore how and where our values can be seen across our community (and where we need to make them more visible); the establishment of a Parent Sounding Board; and putting our values at the heart of our processes for awarding colours and prizes, as well as our everyday reward systems.

As a result, our values act as a bridge between the past, present and future, ensuring that our community benefits from its deep roots whilst tackling challenges and taking opportunities now, so that we can pass the baton onto our successors when the time comes with the school in an even stronger position.

○ An Estates Master Plan

Following the successful development of our Prep School and a growth in pupil numbers in both Prep and Senior, an ambitious Estates Master Plan – based on a comprehensive space audit – has been developed for the next 10–15 years. An extension to the Lawrence Building opened in September 2024, providing five additional classrooms; an extension to the Queen's Building is due to begin in the Summer of 2024, providing 7 additional classrooms; and a new state-of-the-art 120-bed Boarding House (including a Sixth Form cafe) is due to open its doors in September 2025.

Future plans include a Wellbeing Centre in the heart of the Senior School campus and a multi-purpose building on the site of the current boys' boarding house.



1622 Club and Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation ○

In 2022 – coinciding with the 400th anniversary of the School Statutes – The Foundation launched the '1622 Club', which provided a fully-funded means-tested bursary to a Sixth Form student. This inaugural award paved the way for the launch of our '1622 Corporate' bursary scheme, alongside a partnership with the Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation, which will see our first fully-funded boarder join Brentwood in September 2024, which is all part of the school's vision to provide access at Brentwood based on individual merit, irrespective of socioeconomic background.



VLM

Virtue Learning Manners