



*Joining in Year 7 and 8*

BEDFORD PREP SCHOOL



**WORLD-LEADING  
BOARDING  
SCHOOL**

**INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOLS  
OF THE YEAR**





Boys joining Bedford School in Year 7 or 8 begin their journey at the top of our Prep School. It is an important time in every boy's development, both academically and socially, and the preparations we make with each of them over these crucial years will have lasting benefits as they move through the school and beyond.

A Prep School's fundamental role is to prepare its pupils for the next stage in their education. For many pupils, senior schools begin at Year 7 when they are 11 years old. However, at Bedford Prep School, boys move to the senior part of Bedford School, the Upper School, at 13 to ensure that, having benefited from a specially designed curriculum in Years 7 and 8, from day one in Year 9 every boy at Bedford is fully prepared to benefit from everything the Upper School has to offer.

This carefully structured approach comes with significant and long-lasting benefits. Not only does every boy get to enjoy his crucial and formative years of childhood for that little bit longer, but he does so within an environment that is academically enriching, allowing him to develop socially, physically, creatively, intellectually, and above all, with enduring and deep-rooted benefits for his mental health, wellbeing and self-esteem. What's more, he will develop leadership skills and learn to build the resilience and independence that is necessary for a healthy and successful life, not just during the next stage of his schooling, but for life "beyond Bedford".

At Bedford Prep School, we know boys and have a deep understanding of how they learn and grow. Our tailored approach to Years 7 and 8 ensures they are engaged, challenged, and fully prepared to thrive as they transition into the next stage of their educational journey. Joining us in Years 7 and 8 offers boys a unique opportunity to step into leadership roles and be at the top of the school before they move on at 13. It is a pivotal time where they can develop confidence, independence, and responsibility—laying the perfect foundation for success in the next stage of their education.

We would be delighted to introduce you to some of them, so do please come for a visit and learn first-hand what it's like to be at the top of Bedford Prep School. The boys and I look forward to meeting you.

Best wishes,

**Ian Silk**  
Headmaster

"Simultaneously feels separate from and integral to the Upper School and *offers everything young boys could hope for*, whatever their interests."

The Good Schools Guide

That they be *good* men.


## The Future Skills Curriculum

Learning in Years 7 and 8 sits on the firm foundations of an engaging and enriching curriculum. Bespoke to Bedford Prep School, it is the Future Skills Curriculum, which encompasses the National Curriculum, but goes well beyond it. It teaches not only the content, but the skills, values and character that are needed for success. By liaising closely with Upper School colleagues (several of whom also teach in the Prep School), staff in the Prep School are able to gain a superb understanding of where boys need to get to, resulting in a bespoke curriculum which genuinely inspires, as well as being aligned helpfully and effectively with a strong pastoral care system, and an equally rich programme outside the classroom, so that boys are given the best possible experience, not only across the final two years in the Prep, but of transition to the next stage.

Derived from the five school values (endeavour, responsibility, integrity, curiosity, all underpinned by kindness), the Future Skills Curriculum ensures that each boy has the opportunity to continually learn and practise the skills and competencies within it. Throughout their time in the Prep School, boys continue to learn new skills and knowledge, and as they develop, they understand themselves better, reflect on how they learn, on what works for them, and focus on building on and improving each skill over time. In Year 7 boys prepare to take on roles of responsibility and in Year 8 many become Future Skills Ambassadors, helping to pass on the skills to other boys in the school.

Boys learn within the bounds of the same 50-acre estate as their Upper School classmates. They share many of the same outstanding facilities (such as the Music School, Sports Hall, Quarry Theatre, Dining Hall and playing fields), so gain regular glimpses of the riches that Upper School life offers, but enjoy their schooling in their own part of the campus, which affords them the space to grow and be themselves. In this way they are free to develop within a nurturing, protected environment, while benefiting from dedicated spaces designed specifically for their development. The name of one of the Prep School buildings, affectionately known as 'The Inky' —short for 'Incubator'—perfectly embodies Bedford Prep's commitment to this approach.



A photograph of three students in school uniforms. Two boys are seated at a desk, looking at a laptop. One boy is pointing at the screen. A girl with glasses is leaning over them from the right, also looking at the laptop. On the desk, there is a laptop, a pair of glasses, and a microscope. The background is a colorful mural of a tropical scene with a boat and people.

“Particularly towards the upper end of the school, they *bring out the intellectual curiosity* – you can really see them getting ready for what’s coming in the Upper School,’ reported a parent.”

The Good Schools Guide

“Kindness underlies everything, making the school *a really happy place.*”

Talk Education

## *Holistic education built on unparalleled pastoral care*

Bedford Prep School is founded on the belief in a holistic education. In other words, whilst the ultimate goal is for every boy to reach his full academic potential, the school achieves this by focussing firmly on developing him as a person. Teachers nurture and guide each boy's social, ethical, physical and emotional growth, in order to ensure that every single child is both happy and successful, importantly, in that order.

Integral to this approach is a team of Pastoral Leaders who are passionate about supporting boys and building strong foundations for mental health and wellbeing. For boys, the years from 11 to 13 can be a time of pushing boundaries. This is completely natural, and the Pastoral Team in Years 7 and 8 supports boys, leading them back to the road, with discussion alongside firm and caring guidance, to prepare them as they transition to the Upper School in Year 9 and beyond.

“Pupils play an active role in promoting positive behaviour through taking part in assemblies or in their roles as peer mentors. Consequently, pupils develop *high levels of self-knowledge and emotional maturity.*”

Independent Schools Inspectorate

## *Leadership Opportunities*

Every boy at Bedford will move forward from the Prep School having received specific leadership training. These highly useful skills will help him to navigate complex social situations with his peers and allow him to know himself better and understand the impact he can have in his community. They foster self-awareness and self-esteem enabling boys to grapple better with life's tough challenges, as well as grasp the many opportunities which come their way.

Opportunities to put these skills into practice are many and varied for boys in Years 7 and 8 – a significant benefit of the later transition into the Upper School. Some boys enjoy being House Officers and leading a house of 100 boys from the ages of 7 to 13. House Captains are role models and mentors for younger boys in the house; Drama Captains direct and act in the House Drama competition; Music Captains conduct the entire house at the wonderful yearly House Singing competition and House Charity Officers motivate their housemates in raising money for House or school charities. The Head and Deputy Head Boys lead a team of around twenty-five prefects in Year 8, fulfilling a rota of duties including supervising younger boys, and helping them with any worries or concerns.

The Prep School's focus on oracy affords all boys the opportunity to give speeches to an audience, and the Head Boy has the honour of giving a report of the year at Speech Day. Many Year 8 boys become Future Skills Ambassadors, whose role is to support younger boys with learning and assist teachers during clubs and activities. Year 7 boys are prepared for these leadership roles by Tutors and their Head of Year. Boys in these last two years of the Prep School are also able to earn roles as Young Leaders within the outdoor learning and forest school sessions, leading to the bespoke Young Leader Award for long service, supporting younger pupils and using their initiative to help them build self-confidence, especially in those who might be struggling with some aspect of life.

Lastly, boys in Years 7 and 8 embrace the responsibility of leading prospective families on school tours during Open Morning, enthusiastically volunteering in large numbers – a testament to their pride and passion for their school.



## Co-Curricular Activities

The co-curricular programme is one of the best in the country, with an exciting range of over a hundred activities and clubs for boys to get involved in. As part of Bedford's holistic education programme, co-curricular experiences offer myriad ways for boys to build skills and self-knowledge, whilst thoroughly enjoying themselves. Regular trips throughout the year complement the programme, offering boys the chance to travel to ski, take part in sports tours and other educational residential trips, and many more local options during Trips Week in the second half of the summer term. These are all wonderful opportunities to build skills for the future at Bedford and beyond.

Boys in Years 7 and 8 learn to take on leadership roles within these clubs and societies as part of the Future Skills Ambassador programme. They assist teaching staff, encourage attendance and support younger boys with their learning.

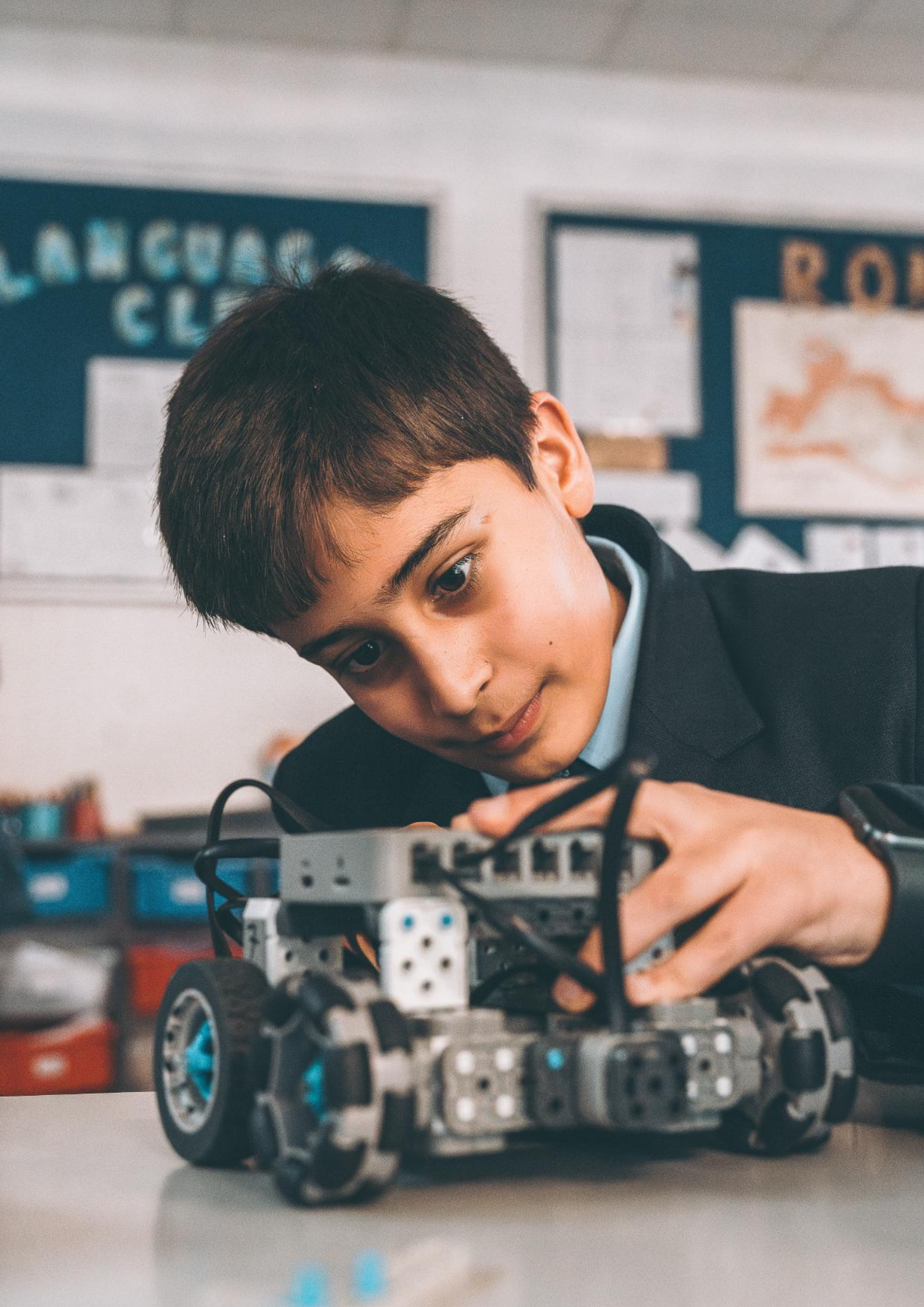
“Pupils have many opportunities within the curriculum and in co-curricular activities to develop skills such as *creative thinking and problem-solving* as part of developing their entrepreneurial skills.”

Independent Schools Inspectorate



### Post Exam Programme

At the very end of Year 8, boys complete their time in the Prep School with an outstanding three-week programme designed to tie together all their learnings from the Future Skills Curriculum. Across the busy schedule, they undertake a varied programme of events, including careers talks, self-esteem workshops, transition classes, leadership tasks and a research project which prepares them for their next stage of learning. Recent examples include a parliament workshop, a first aid qualification, a finance seminar, a holocaust discussion, a bushcraft trip and the hugely popular Come Dine With Me event where boys prepare a three-course meal for their parents! The programme represents not only the culmination of each boy's time in the Prep School, but also a celebration of all he has achieved in readiness for his onward journey into the Upper School.



## Boarding at Eagle House

Bedford is a boarding school, first and foremost, with boarders and day boys alike benefitting from the strong boarding ethos. Eagle House, the specialist Prep boarding house is home to up to 34 boys, boarding on a full, weekly, flexi or just occasional basis. From international boarders living there full-time, to over a hundred day boys who regularly make use of the facilities for morning, evening or overnight care each year, Eagle sits at the heart of the Prep School and offers benefits to every boy.

In Years 7 and 8, boys in Eagle house are learning skills which will help carry them forward to the next stage of their education. They take on positions of responsibility within the house, they learn more independence, managing their time and building a work ethic with the support of their Houseparents and team of assistants, tutors and matrons.

Many boys take up flexi and occasional places in Eagle in order to dip their toes into boarding before becoming more regular boarders in the Upper School. It offers a perfect stepping stone into the full boarding experience by allowing boys to gradually immerse themselves in the rhythms of boarding life, enjoying the camaraderie and independence in a more flexible, comfortable way. By the time they reach Year 9, they are well-prepared and excited for the next chapter, with the confidence and familiarity to thrive as regular boarders.

Parents sometimes worry that the boarding house will become a boy's 'new family', somehow taking the place of the close relationships he has at home. The reality is that rather than losing anything, a boy's family simply becomes larger. The team at Eagle House works in partnership with each boy's parents to deliver the best experience and outcomes for him as a whole.



Eagle House

### Boarding at Bedford in Numbers (Prep and Upper School)



**200** FULL, WEEKLY & FLEXI BOARDERS



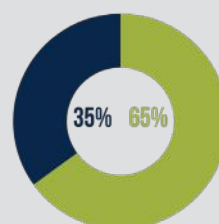
**27** DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES



**40** BOARDING STAFF LIVE ON-SITE



**FOUR BOARDING OPTIONS**



**INTERNATIONAL BOARDERS  
UK BOARDERS**

“It’s [Eagle House] a lovely, light and welcoming, purpose-built house located right next to the main prep school buildings. There’s a *great family atmosphere*.”

Talk Education



## *Transition When the Time is Right*

Moving up to a secondary school can be a daunting (and exciting) prospect, and picking the right time to make the transition, with the appropriate preparation, is crucial if boys are to approach their new setting both thoroughly excited and ready to embrace what is to come.

At Bedford School, the transition comes at the end of Year 8. The two years from the ages of 11 to 13 are crucial years which allow pupils to develop essential study skills, working independently and collaboratively with others, which will prepare them not only for GCSEs which come three years later, but for life beyond school. Once a boy has reached his teens he is much more ready to embrace and fully benefit from what he observes his older schoolmates doing, without feeling the pressure of doing so himself too early.

Bedford Prep's dedicated teachers focus on nurturing each child's academic and personal growth, which helps to provide a seamless transition to the Upper School. These teachers are experts at teaching up to age 13. The chief priority of every academic teacher, sports coach and music teacher chief priority is to ensure that their charges are ready academically, emotionally, physically, psychologically and pastorally for the next stage. They have enjoyed being younger for longer and have benefited from being at the top of the tree, secure in the character-building effects of being the influencers and role models for younger boys, without worrying what older pupils might think of them.

The difference between an 11-year-old boy and a 13-year-old boy is vast, not just in terms of size, but in terms of intellectual development, knowledge, confidence and physical maturity. Boys at Bedford move at a time which is emotionally healthy for them to do so; they have had the chance to learn, grow, fall over (sometimes literally) and be shown how to get back on their feet and keep going.

When the time comes to move up, boys are already familiar with much of their new environment, having shared many facilities across the estate already. They have met teachers, remember older boys from their days in the Prep and learnt about the new day and boarding houses they will be joining. Behind the scenes, Tutors and Pastoral Leaders hand over from the Prep School to the Upper School, ensuring knowledge and understanding of each boy is carried forward over the transition. Year 8 boys and their families attend a special Open Morning to tour the Upper School and at the end of the year, Transition Day, followed by New Boys' Day ensures that everyone is ready, prepared and settled in time for the first day of term in Year 9.

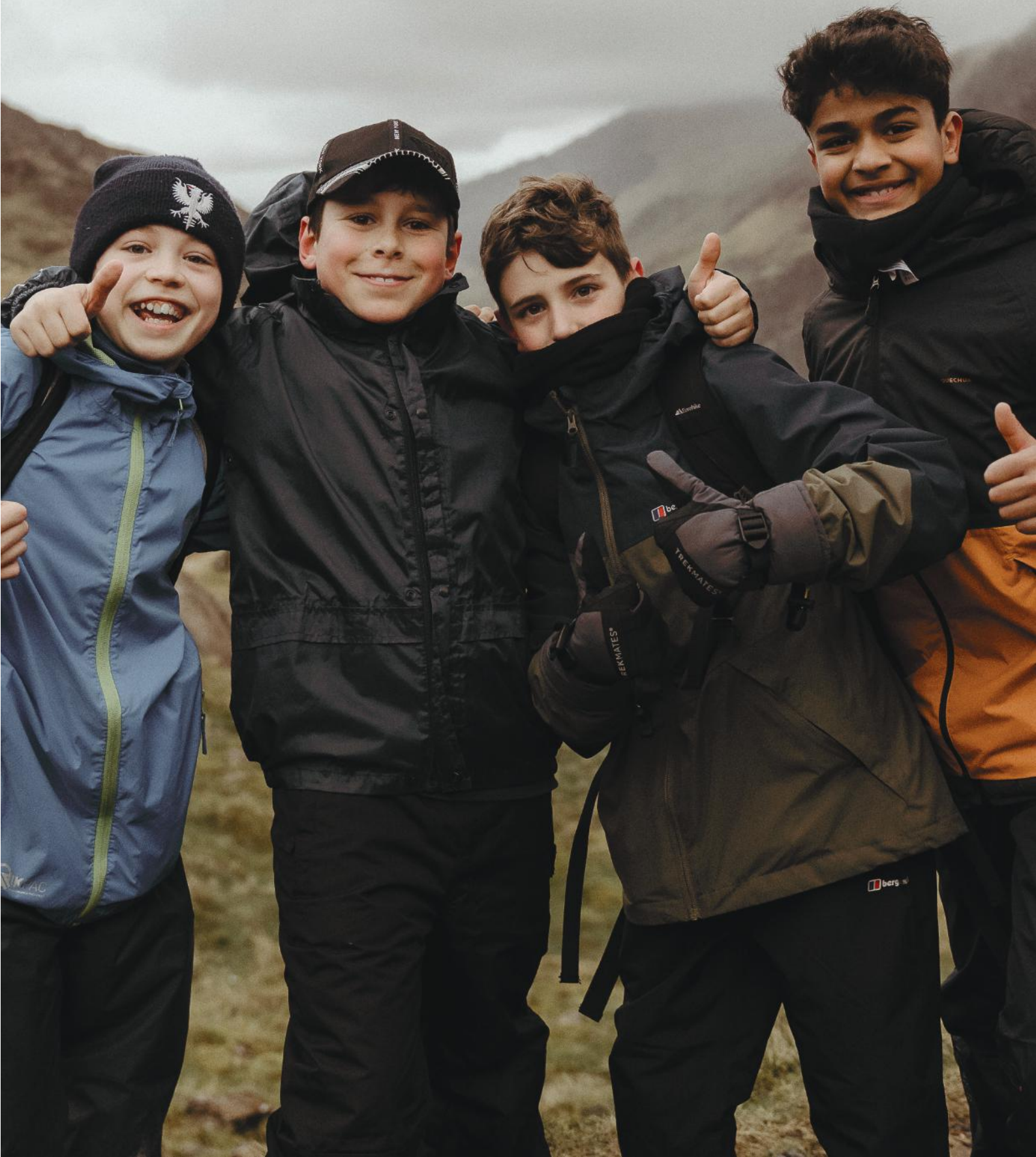


### *Exam Free Route*

It is worth noting that boys in Bedford Prep School, whilst undertaking plenty of assessment practice ahead of GCSEs to come, do not have to sit an entrance test to gain access to the Upper School, as they have already met the entrance criteria to join the school in the Prep.

“With most boys moving up to the Upper School with no Common Entrance to stress about, it offers *an all-through education parents can feel confidence in.*”

Talk Education



# Travelling to Bedford

## School Buses

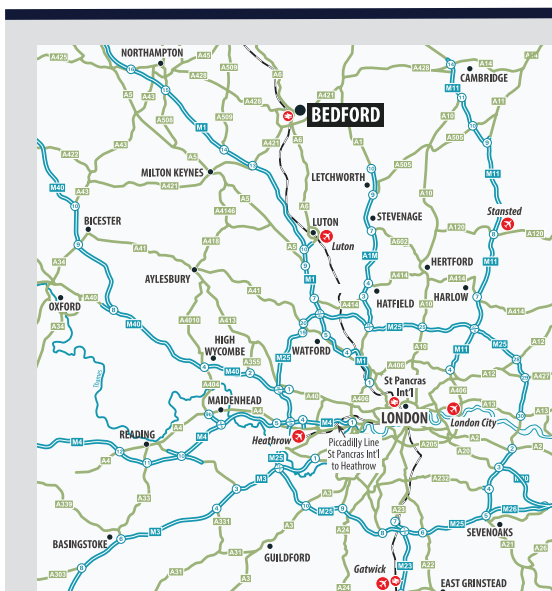
There is an extensive network of school buses operating across Bedfordshire, from Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, including late buses for boys involved in activities after school, available for travel to and from school each day.



Full details of routes and operators can be viewed on our website.

## Trains

Bedford Railway Station offers excellent links into London. London St Pancras International is just 43 minutes away and with trains every 10 minutes at rush hour and two fast trains every hour it is an ideal option for weekly boarders.



## Airports

London's international airports are also easily accessed by both road and rail from Bedford.

*Heathrow*, 70 minutes by road

*Gatwick*, 2 hours by road and direct rail

*Luton*, 15 minutes by direct rail



## *Next Steps*

Our Admissions Team will be happy to guide you through the series of steps towards joining Bedford Prep School. Please do get in touch by phone or email to begin the journey with a visit to meet us.

1

### *Visit*

We warmly encourage you to visit the school to see it in action, to meet the boys and staff and to get a flavour of life at Bedford Prep School. Please do join us at one of our Open Mornings or arrange a personal visit which can be tailored to your needs.

2

### *Register*

You can register your son with us at any time. However, registrations should be made by 1 December in the year before intended entry to allow us to send you all the necessary information about your son's assessment day in the following January.

We recommend registering early, especially if you also wish to apply for a bursary (fee assistance), as extra forms need to be completed and returned by the same 1 December deadline. More information on bursaries can be found on our website.

3

### *Assessments*

Bedford Prep School is a selective school, and all boys are required to sit an entrance assessment and join us for an activities morning. The assessments and activities mornings are held in the January before entry in September.

All boys are assessed in English, Maths and underlying ability. Our aim is to establish your son's readiness to cope with the academic and social demands of the school. We will also request a confidential reference from the Headteacher of your son's current school.

Detailed assessment dates can be found on our website.

4

### *Offers and Welcome*

Results of the assessments in January are sent by email in mid-February for acceptance in early March.

We also warmly invite boys to a move-up day in June. It is always a fun day at school where they can meet their new classmates and their teachers.

We welcome parents to join us for a new parents' evening in June to meet their son's tutor and other key staff, find out more about the opportunities, values and expectations the school has for boys and about the first day of term in September.



More details on the admissions process  
can be found on our website.



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