

Chigwell School

SENIOR

AGE 11 – 16

"Pupils benefit from a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that promotes academic achievement alongside personal development in intellectual, aesthetic, creative and physical fields."

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE, 2026

WELCOME FROM THE HEAD

When pupils join us in Year 7 there is a well-planned transition programme to enable them to feel comfortable and to integrate fully into Chigwell School life quickly

In Year 7, each form has a Form Tutor who gets to know their pupils really well and there are year heads overseeing both Year 7 and Year 8. During these two years pupils follow a broad curriculum and have the opportunity to experience subjects that they have not studied in the past. They get used to moving between specialist departments for their lessons and there is a wide range of co-curricular opportunities.

The start of Year 9 brings the transition to the Senior School house system. Over the next five years, pupils are members of one of four houses which provide both pastoral care as well as a whole host of competitions and activities centred on the house system.

This is both an exciting and increasingly serious phase, as pupils' development, emotionally and academically, accelerates quickly towards maturity. This phase incorporates the development of skills to successfully pass public exams, embrace university life and make career choices. We work to prepare each pupil to meet these objectives to the best of their ability. We believe that by working together, parents and teachers provide our pupils with the most effective support and direction. Together we help them navigate the challenges presented by teenage life.



Mr Damian King
Head

CURRICULUM

The approach to learning at Chigwell is summed up by our motto, aut viam inveniam aut faciam;

“Either I shall find a way or make one”

ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING OUR PUPILS

We encourage pupils to strive to be the best they can in every way: to be courageous in their approach, even if they make mistakes but then learn from them; to develop passions, to go beyond the syllabus and exam results and to become life-long learners.

INSPIRATIONAL TEACHERS

We want pupils to be inspired by their teachers, with whom they work in close partnership, taking advantage of the enriching programme of co-curricular opportunities.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

Scholarships are awarded in recognition of academic merit, irrespective of financial means and awards are made each year. In summary, the scholarships available at 11+ and 13+ are:

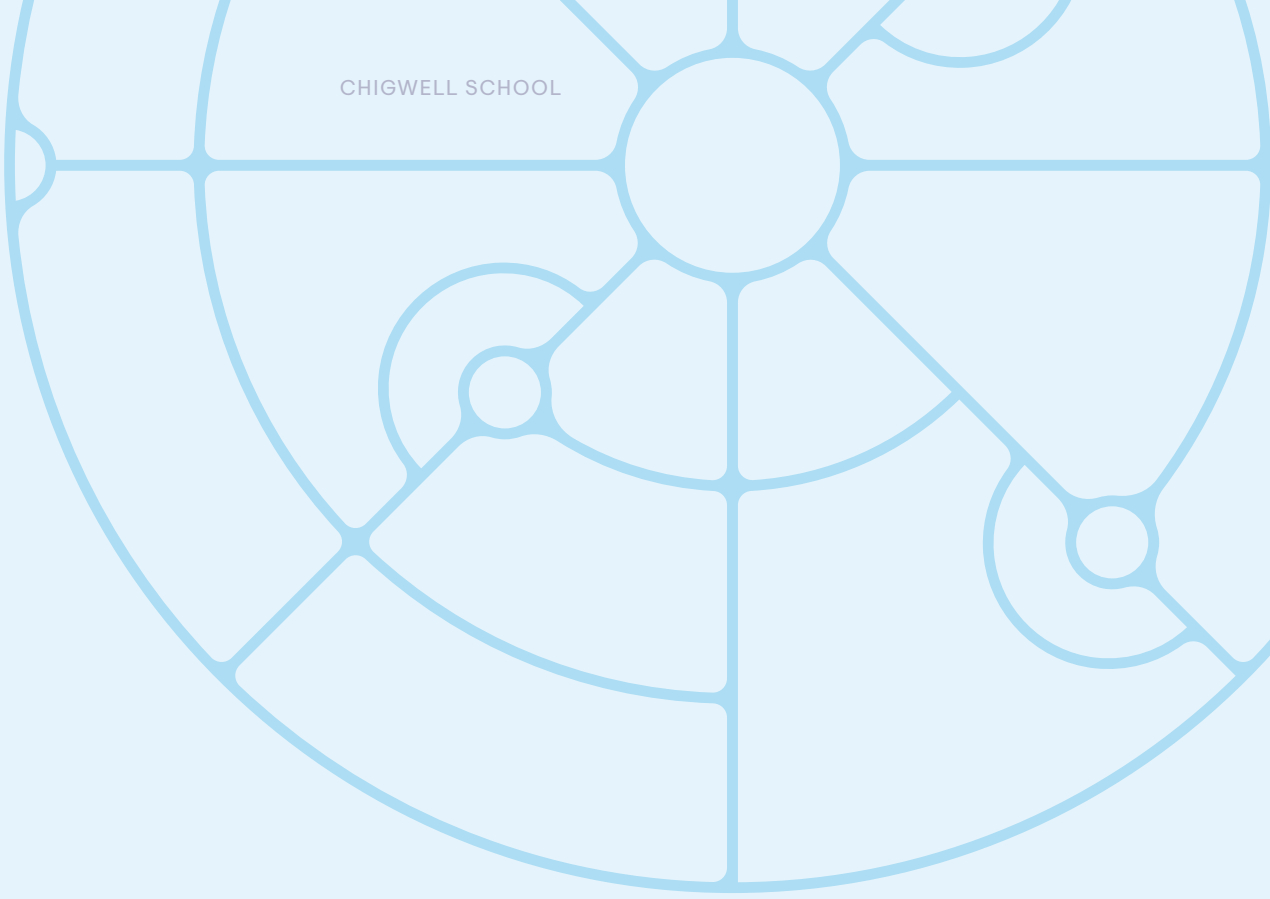
- Academic scholarships
- Music scholarships
- Sport scholarships (11+ only).

CURRICULUM FROM YEAR 7 - 9

The curriculum offered from Year 7 is broad and balanced with a core of subjects with an element of increased choice for pupils as they progress through the School. We aim to be as flexible as we can in order to provide a choice of subjects that is appropriate to each individual pupil.

In Years 7 to 9, pupils study English, mathematics, geography, history, religious studies, art, design & technology, IT, music and drama. Pupils also study at least one modern foreign language in Years 7 and 8. French is taught in Year 7 and thereafter it becomes an optional subject. Pupils also study German or Spanish in Year 7 and in Years 7 and 8 they learn Latin.

In Year 7 science is taught as a single subject, while biology, physics and chemistry are taught separately from Year 8. Each year group has a games afternoon each week in addition to PE.



Across the curriculum, at every stage, we encourage Chigwell pupils to be engaged, questioning, ready to discuss ideas and to think for themselves.

Once they reach Year 10, pupils' core GCSE curriculum consists of:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- At least one foreign language (French/German/Spanish/Latin).
- The sciences (most gain three GCSEs in physics, chemistry and biology, with some taking double award science, gaining two GCSEs).

In addition, pupils choose three other subjects.

While guidance is given over the formation of a sensible set of subjects and university/career implications are discussed, there is no compulsion on pupils as regards these further choices. They may choose any three from art, computing, design and technology, drama, geography, graphical design, history, music, religious studies; in addition to the language taken as a core subject, pupils may take a second, or occasionally third, language. They make their choices and the blocking system is drawn up to accommodate the first choices of as many pupils as possible (rarely do they not get their first choice subjects). All pupils have a PSHE lesson, a games afternoon weekly as well as PE. In addition, some pupils opt to take the Foundation Project Qualification, and later, the Higher Project Qualification.


Scan to hear from Duarte, Year 7

FACILITIES

It takes a village to raise a child... says the African proverb

The interaction that the young person has with their whole community contributes to their development as an individual. It is often said that Chigwell School is a special community, but the cluster of various specialist buildings, most of which look over the extensive grounds, together feel like a little village.

Pupils move between departments for their lessons and time is built into the day to allow for this. Very quickly, they become familiar with the site and visitors often comment that the transition and break times are calm, as pupils move across the spacious campus in the fresh air.

The oldest building, which includes the Swallow Library, dates back to the School's foundation in 1629, but the newest additions are just a few years old and more exciting developments are planned to ensure that Chigwell pupils have the best educational experience possible.

It is often said that Chigwell School is a special community. However, although the facilities are spaced out, it is often when Chigwell pupils come together that they achieve the most. This might be when they play sport in our newly opened Sport & Wellness Centre, or outside in the cricket nets, on the floodlit astro or 3G pitches, the tennis/ netball courts or on the many grass pitches; it might be when they are rehearsing or performing in the impressive Drama Centre, the Walde Music School or perhaps developing work for the display in the Art, Design and Technology Centre or over lunch in the recently refurbished Dining Hall.

There are spaces to work quietly, such as the Library or Sixth Form study space, and places to relax with friends such as the four house common rooms and the Sixth Form coffee shop.

Pupils know where to seek advice from teachers or other specialist staff, such as those in the Health & Wellbeing Centre or Careers Department, but often groups simply like to be together, chatting about matters that are important to them at the time and forming friendships that often last forever.


1629



“Pupils pursue a wide range of co-curricular activities and develop a range of skills, greater confidence and self-esteem and learn to work collaboratively.”

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE, 2026

CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT

Igniting interests

There is a variety of opportunities for curriculum enrichment to encourage pupils to further build upon subject interest developed in the classroom. These include a plethora of clubs and societies, competitions, educational and residential visits, overseas trips and accomplished visiting speakers. Experiences in and out of the classroom gained from inspirational staff can broaden horizons and spark passions which last a lifetime.

More information can be found by scanning the QR code.

DEVELOPING CHARACTER

Pupils are given responsibilities that help them to develop resilience and face the challenges of the world outside Chigwell

In their academic work as they get older they will be expected to take increasing responsibility for their own progress, to plan and execute, with guidance, their own revision programme, and to try new things in their written work. They will also set themselves challenges that will develop character and help them take controlled risks, such as taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme.

LEADERSHIP & CONFIDENCE

In Years 8 and 13 pupils at the top age group of the Lower School and Senior School are given the chance to act as Praefects, further increasing opportunities to exercise leadership. They will have to help younger pupils, supervise the lunch queue, develop their public speaking, become confident in meeting and speaking to visitors, and lead groups that influence policy within the School.

COMMUNITY OF KINDNESS

It is vital that ours is a kind community in which all members treat each other well and learn to value the differences in others, in order to bring out the best in them and ourselves. All of this, we believe, is key preparation to enable Chigwellians to make a really positive contribution to the world.

PASTORAL

Pastorally, children are cared within the Lower School until Year 8, before joining the Senior School house system in Year 9. This provides a gentle continuum of support which eases the transition through the school.

With the appointment of our new Head of Wellbeing, we have further enhanced our individualised support for parents and pupils, enabling them to thrive and embrace all the available opportunities of as well as face the pressures of the 21st century. We also have a school counsellor who is available to pupils five days a week. All appointments are confidential, and take place in the Health & Wellbeing Centre.

HOUSES

The house system creates an identity and sense of belonging within the wider school

Pupils feel loyalty to their house that often lasts well beyond their years at the school. Each house has its own character and customs and pupils appreciate being involved in maintaining and developing these. A key role for the house system is the pastoral care it offers; tutors tend to stick with tutor groups, so know them (and often their parents) really well by the time these pupils leave the School.

Pupils know that they can see their House Tutors if they have concerns, and can trust them to know them and their situations, as they are the contact point for parental worries, academic concerns, safeguarding, or wellbeing issues.

All of the above allows for continuity and consistency in pastoral care.

The house system also allows pupils to mix vertically, and this can build support networks where older pupils can help out younger students and offer their experience. It also offers lots of opportunities for getting involved in activities beyond the classroom, be that house competitions, form trips, or house quizzes.

Older pupils are given the opportunity to develop their leadership skills within the house, for example, leading charities week, organising house teams, mentoring younger pupils, addressing house gatherings and engendering the house spirit.

Together with the Housemaster or Housemistress, Heads of House help to create a positive environment for the younger pupils in the house. Whenever we speak to Old Chigwellians, they still remember their house and argue about which one was the best!

“One of the most important things is the sense of house unity and house spirit.

When you are in a house, you know you can come and talk to somebody.”

YEAR 13 STUDENT



Scan to hear from Lucas, Year 13

TRANSITION TO THE SIXTH FORM

A step-change, with support

The vast majority of Chigwell pupils transfer to the Sixth Form after GCSE and they are able to have a virtually free choice of subjects, taking three at A Level.

They are joined by pupils who come from a variety of local schools as well as our small community of international Sixth Form boarders. Collectively, this produces a fresh feel to the year group and the opportunity to specialise in chosen subjects, some of which are offered for the first time.

Sixth Formers have the Risham Sarao Sixth Form Centre as their base, where Sixth Form-only subjects are taught, careers and university advice is offered, there is a dedicated Sixth Form study space, as well as a coffee shop and social space. We offer an extensive Sixth Form enrichment programme and many pupils opt to take the Extended Project Qualification in addition to their A Levels.

Most pupils are offered places on prestigious university courses in the UK, while others go on to study overseas; some move straight into employment while others opt for the competitive degree level apprenticeships.



Scan to hear from Niara, Year 10


“In my time at Chigwell I’ve been able to develop my biggest passion, which is music.”

ADMISSIONS FOR ENTRY AT AGE 11+

Joining the Lower School

Admission to the Lower School is based on the outcome of a selection process which includes:

- A parent and child meeting
- 11+ Entrance Examination.

In addition, you will be sent a reference form for your child's current school to complete.

MEETING

The 11+ meeting takes place in two parts. Firstly, you will have the opportunity to meet with a senior member of staff and ask questions about life at the school and also outline your child's strengths and interests. Your child will then meet staff separately. The whole process takes approximately 30 minutes.

11+ EXAMINATION

The examination consists of an online assessment with a written element. More information can be found on our website.

KEY DATES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Key dates, including the registration deadline, entrance exams, meetings and acceptance dates, are posted on our website.

Please find out more about 11+ entry at: www.chigwell-school.org/admissions

REGISTRATION

To register your child for a place, please visit www.chigwell-school.org/admissions/11-13-registration-form/ to complete the online registration form and pay the registration fee.

BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

If a candidate performs especially well in the examination they may be called for a scholarship interview and assessment at the end of January

BURSARIES

Since the School's foundation in 1629, we have always given means-tested financial support to a number of pupils who we know will thrive at Chigwell, but whose families cannot afford full fees.

This support is known as a bursary, which may be awarded in the form of a discount of up to 100% on tuition fees, depending on the financial circumstances of applicants. Chigwell encourages applications from pupils who, without a bursary, would not be able to access an education of the highest quality, but would thrive on the academic, extra-curricular and developmental opportunities offered here.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Academic scholarships are awarded in recognition of academic merit, irrespective of financial means. If a candidate performs especially well in the examination, they may be called for a scholarship interview and assessment at the end of January. Candidates have individual interviews in English and mathematics, and take part in a collaborative task.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Music scholarship auditions are also held in January. Successful candidates are likely to possess considerable musical potential. The standard required is usually at least Grade 4 on the main instrument at age 11, with an appropriate adjustment for other age groups. However, candidates who have not reached this level should not be deterred from applying. A second instrument or singing should also be offered, of approximately Grade 2 standard, or above.

SPORT SCHOLARSHIPS

Sport scholarships are available at 11+ to recognise pupils who excel in our school sports or who compete in another sport at county-level. Candidates will need to submit a scholarship application and assessment will be conducted as part of our admissions process.

Applications for scholarships and bursaries can be made on the registration form.

Chigwell School

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THE SUNDAY TIMES
SCHOOLS GUIDE 2025
INDEPENDENT SECONDARY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR EAST ANGLIA

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