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Ellesmere College was founded in 1879 by Canon Nathaniel Woodard. It is part of the Woodard Corporation, a group of Church of England schools, and it draws strength from its foundation. Pupils of all faiths are welcome at the College, and all faiths are respected.

The aims of the Woodard Schools are to educate young people for responsibility, leadership and service; and to provide a broad well balanced curriculum and enlightened pastoral care; and to offer an experience of Anglican worship and an understanding of Christian faith and values in a caring community.



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The great difficulty with a prospectus is that it offers the same perspective to every reader. For a school which emphasises the importance of an individual approach to its pupils it inevitably offers at best a snapshot of what the school might be like. The only way to find out what it might be like for you, of course, is to make a visit. If this prospectus encourages you to do that it will have done its job well.

Ellesmere College is a school that values individuals. From its foundation Ellesmere's aspirations for its pupils have been higher

than simply passing examinations: however vital examination success is, it is not enough on its own to prepare young people to be successful adults.

An Ellesmere education is a preparation for living adult life successfully, considerately and with a sense of personal fulfilment. What follows should help you begin to decide if what we offer is what you want for your child.

Welcome to Ellesmere





The College's Lower School has grown dramatically in recent years and moved into purpose-built accommodation costing over £1m, which was opened by HRH The Princess Royal in late 1999. In addition to the facilities within the Lower School building, pupils at this stage also use the specialist facilities of the rest of the College, and so have opportunities in Technology and Science not often available at this age in the independent system.

The Lower School covers the ages of 8-13 (years 4-8) and boarding is available from the age of 10. The majority of the day pupils use the College transport system which covers an

exceptionally wide area: at the time of writing routes cover Oswestry, Market Drayton, Wrexham, Tarporley, Nantwich, Chester, Whitchurch and Shrewsbury.

The class size in the Lower School is usually 18. As with the rest of the College, the heart of the Lower School is in high quality teaching geared to individual needs, and in the strong focus on pastoral care and guidance. The Lower School is part of the whole College rather than a separate school, and children joining at this stage normally progress automatically to the Middle School at 13.

Lower School



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Lower School pupils follow an academic programme that is an enhanced and modified version of the National Curriculum. The full educational package in Lower School goes well beyond the narrowness of the National Curriculum, however, and there is an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities operating on a daily basis. Sport, music and drama all play a significant part in the life of Lower School. There are also plenty of opportunities for more individual activities, such as chess, sailing and shooting, all of which are offered to a very high standard.

There is the opportunity for pupils in the Lower School to complete homework at school, and the Lower School tutor system enables the monitoring of individual work progress and the balance of curricular and extra-curricular commitments. Throughout the College, there is a strong

emphasis on links between home and school. A formal system of monthly reporting on effort and attainment, full termly reports, and parent-teacher meetings is supplemented by the development of a good relationship between tutor and parents.

The College has a reputation for educational innovation, particularly in the field of information and communications technology. In the Lower School this has shown itself through the optional use of laptop computers as part of Microsoft's *Anytime Anywhere Learning* programme; extensive use is made of integrated learning software focused in individualised programmes in the core subjects of Mathematics and English.





Many pupils join the College at the Middle School stage, usually – but not exclusively – from preparatory schools. For pupils in the Lower School the transfer to the Senior School is automatic. Those pupils moving to the Middle School at 13 from the Lower School find it a natural continuation of the working pattern already established in Lower School. There is the same emphasis on breadth of academic education and individually-assessed progress. An even wider range of extra-curricular activities designed to develop the many talents needed for success in adult life is on offer, and

Middle School

the emphasis upon developing an appropriate self-esteem continues.

The pastoral system in the Middle School is based within the House system. All pupils join one of the College's integrated boarding and day houses, and are under the care of a Housemaster or Housemistress and a team of dedicated tutors attached to each House. The tutor-pupil link will normally continue throughout the three years leading to GCSE, and the development of good relationships between tutor and pupil, and between tutor and parents, is given a high priority, as is communication between home and school.



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Academically, the focus falls naturally on preparation for GCSE. Given the College's strong emphasis upon seeking to serve the individual members of the community, rather than offering a "one size fits all" model, it is difficult to generalise about the GCSE programme.

However, in general, pupils usually follow courses leading to nine GCSE qualifications, but a significant number will do more or less than this. The decision as to how many GCSEs to take is made so as to ensure that each individual achieves the best grades of which he or she is capable. The National Curriculum is followed, but greater flexibility is allowed to Ellesmere pupils

based on their individual needs; for example, pupils may do as many as three foreign languages or none at all.

The boarding option is increasingly popular as pupils move up the College and there is a good programme of evening and weekend activities on offer. For the day pupils there is the opportunity to take part in the weekend programme of activities to enhance further the already wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them. There are no formal lessons on a Saturday, but there is an expectation that pupils will represent the College on fixture Saturdays if selected for a team.





The Sixth Form at Ellesmere combines continuity from the GCSE years with the challenge of preparing for higher education. The majority of pupils in the College progress on to the Sixth Form and are joined by a significant number of additional pupils who join Ellesmere as a focused preparation for the university stage of their education.

With a move into the Sixth Form comes greater freedom and responsibility. The pastoral guidance of the Senior School is retained in the Sixth Form where specialist tutors play a major part in providing support and help along the way.

Sixth Form



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The Sixth Form experience is different from that of the Middle School. The need for breadth outside the classroom is achieved through greater freedom of choice within the extra-curricular programme and additional opportunities to study beyond the A level programme. In addition to the three or more A levels for which Sixth Formers are aiming, there are many opportunities to add weight to the curriculum vitae or UCAS form. Sport, drama, music, outdoor pursuits and social services are all prominent in the life of the Sixth Form. There are plenty of opportunities for leadership through the house and school prefect systems, and sixth formers are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their studies.

The career guidance programme of the Middle School is built upon, the emphasis now being very much on university choice and entrance. Many pupils choose to take a gap year between school and university; provided this is properly planned for, such a year can be highly beneficial, and specific responsibilities are allocated within the College's careers advisory team to support such planning. The College has links with a number of schools in Australia and New Zealand in particular: a gap placement in a school as an assistant teacher is a popular option for some students.



Creative arts



Achieving the maximum individual potential in academic studies is the top priority in the College. The extensive network for supporting individuals, whether it be through individual subject "clinics", the Learning Support Department or the tutorial system, bears testimony to this.

We recognise that an important way of ensuring that our pupils achieve their best is through good communications between home and school. In addition to the formal reporting of effort and attainment grades – which takes place every three or four weeks – and the full end of term reports, there are formal parents' evenings at least annually for each year group. These formal structures are supplemented, however, by the informal relationships that develop between parents and the College, relationships which last well after the pupils concerned have been launched successfully into adulthood.



However, a school that seeks only to maximise academic potential will fail its students. The breadth of education at Ellesmere, which goes well beyond that which can be tested, is more than just added value. It is a necessary part of the preparation for adult life.

It would be a hardworking pupil indeed who managed to take advantage of all the extra-curricular options at the College. Music and drama are both represented strongly with many plays, concerts and concert platforms taking place within the year. The College has its own recording studio, and the range of music making encompasses a variety of styles from rock through jazz

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to classical. Drama has a long tradition at the College: the 220-seat theatre is in regular use: school plays, house plays, visiting productions and pieces from the GCSE Drama and A level Performing Arts students ensure that the Arts Centre is always busy.







Sporting opportunities abound at Ellesmere. There is a long tradition of success in team sports with an emphasis upon seeking to develop the talents of all. Much success in adult life is dependent upon teamwork, and learning to work in a team through sport is a vital part of a child's development.

There have been a number of Ellesmerians who have gone on to international success in team sports, particularly in rugby: the former England captain, Bill Beaumont is an old Ellesmerian.



Sport



The team sports usually on offer at the College are:

- Athletics
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Hockey
- Netball
- Rugby
- Soccer

Individual activities

The distinction between team and individual endeavour is blurred. However, the many opportunities provided by team sports are supplemented by a wide range of activities of a more individual nature – many of which are pursued in teams!

In addition to the usual sporting facilities the College is fortunate to possess two shooting ranges and a nine-hole golf course. Canoeing is well-served by our proximity to water and to the Dee at Llangollen in particular, and the College has its own boats at the Shropshire Sailing Club at Whitemere, less than a mile from the school.

In recent years there have been individual successes at national and international level in a variety of activities, including canoeing, fencing, sailing, cross-country, swimming and shooting. Shooting is particularly strong with a large number of our youngest pupils often selected for the England development squad.



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Individual activities usually available:

- Badminton
- Canoeing
- Cross country
- Golf
- Sailing
- Shooting
- Squash
- Swimming
- Table tennis
- Tennis

The range of clubs, societies and activities at the College can seem overwhelming at times. The Combined Cadet Force is always a popular option and has been the springboard for a number of illustrious military careers over the years. Outdoor activities can be pursued in a non-military manner through the College's Outdoor Training Unit and there are opportunities to pursue the Duke of Edinburgh Award through either the Combined Cadet Force or the Outdoor Training Unit.

The popularity of the outdoor pursuit programmes at the College leads naturally to a programme of expeditions both within the UK and beyond: recent overseas expeditions have included canoeing in France and treks in Guyana, the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco, and Ecuador.

Less strenuous, perhaps, but just as valuable is the College's Social Services programme where older pupils provide help to those in need in the local community.

Wider opportunities



Music making at Ellesmere covers a wide range of activities. There is a strong choral tradition, and the College is fortunate to own two fine organs, including the famous Tyne Dock Schulze. Instrumental tuition can be provided for all the standard instruments of the orchestra and there are plenty of opportunities for individual performance.

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A wide range of clubs operates each term. A list of clubs usually available might include:

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| Bridge | Cookery |
| Candle making | French cinema |
| Current Affairs | Jewellery |
| Dance | Photography |
| Debating | Public Speaking |
| Chess | Textiles |
| Clay | Young Enterprise |
| Craft | Wildlife |



The boarding experience at Ellesmere is thoroughly modern. Facilities are good; and the unnecessary division between day and boarding pupils, which can occur in some boarding and day schools, is avoided through the integrated boarding and day house approach. There is an emphasis on communication with parents, who are always welcome.

No boarding room sleeps more than six and in a typical year the majority of boarders will

share with perhaps two or three other pupils. At Sixth Form level, rooms are either individual or shared with one other Sixth Former.

All but one of the Houses are contained within the main building, which enables a real sense of College community to be retained alongside house loyalties.

Boarding



As a result of our commitment to treat pupils as individuals, more than one type of boarding is available. The traditional full boarding arrangements are popular with those pupils based overseas or living some distance away from Ellesmere. Weekly boarding is also available for the many parents who wish their children to benefit from the extended educational benefits of the boarding experience during the week, but want far greater contact with them at the weekends than is allowed by the traditional approach to boarding.

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Boarders should never be bored at Ellesmere. The evening activity programme, the sport and enhanced outdoor activity programme, and the opportunity simply to be with friends mean that they live a very full life – and there is still homework to be done.



Entry points

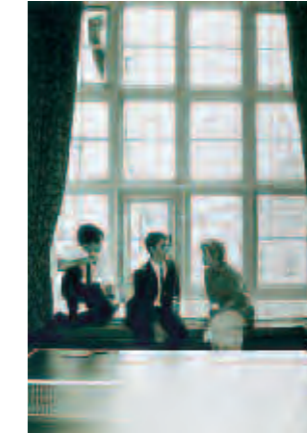


The principal entry points to the College are at ages 8, 10, 11, 13 and 16. However, pupils join at other ages as space permits.

Pupils joining at 13 from prep schools are normally considered through the Common Entrance system, with pupils joining at 16 receiving offers of places subject to expected GCSE performance. At all other points of entry the College sets its own examinations, which are designed principally to ensure that a prospective pupil will benefit by joining Ellesmere.



No prospectus can successfully convey the atmosphere and feeling of a school. This is particularly true of Ellesmere where the education goes beyond a set of facts to be communicated. No prospectus can convey the emotional warmth and happiness that so many visiting parents comment upon.



The best we can hope is that we have encouraged you to visit Ellesmere, preferably on a normal working day when you will have the opportunity to meet the Headmaster and key pastoral staff and to talk to other staff. Most importantly, by visiting on a normal working day, you will have a chance to meet and talk with pupils.

However, if you require any further information before deciding to visit the College please do not hesitate to contact us by telephone, email or letter – we will welcome your interest.