

MIDLANDS

Ellesmere College

Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9AB ●●

Website: www.ellesmere.com

Head: Brendan Wignall, MA, since 1996; previously registrar and head of English at Denstone College, Staffordshire

Pupils: 417

day: 134 boys, 61 girls; boarding: 141 boys, 81 girls

Faith: C of E

Ages: 13 - 18

Term fees: day: £5,712; boarding: £9,996

Oxbridge: 2 places

Registration: No deadline; £50 fee

Admission: Assessment day and interview

Alumni: RFU chairman Bill Beaumont, Lady Edwina Grosvenor

Prep Head: Sharon Owen

Pupils: 144 day and boarding; 100 boys, 44 girls

Ages: 7 - 13

Term fees: day: £3,927 boarding: £7,773

Ellesmere is a new addition to the guide, and we've been hearing some good things about it on our well-developed grapevine - located way up in north Shropshire, it's a bit of a hidden gem. However, its achievements are far from parochial. They offer A-levels (67 percent A*-B) and IB (31 points in 2014). In last year's IB, one pupil scored the top 45 marks and won a place at Cambridge, but leavers are just as likely to go to Oxford Brookes; 'One size fits all does not apply to this school,' say Ellesmere. Sport is super and fostered by academies: they have one of the best swimming teams in the country and were placed sixth in a national adult league. The girls' tennis team have been Aegon National Champions three times in the past four years; the mixed-doubles squad represents Team GB at international level. There are some well-known all-girls schools that would kill for that kind of success.

The Arts Council awarded Ellesmere an Artsmark Gold for excellence in art, music, dance, drama and media, and they take their stage productions on tour in the USA. What's more, a parent describes it as 'a jolly place' - and we say it's jolly well worth a look.

