



Ellesmere

Lower School





A stimulating environment where children thrive, working hard and playing together

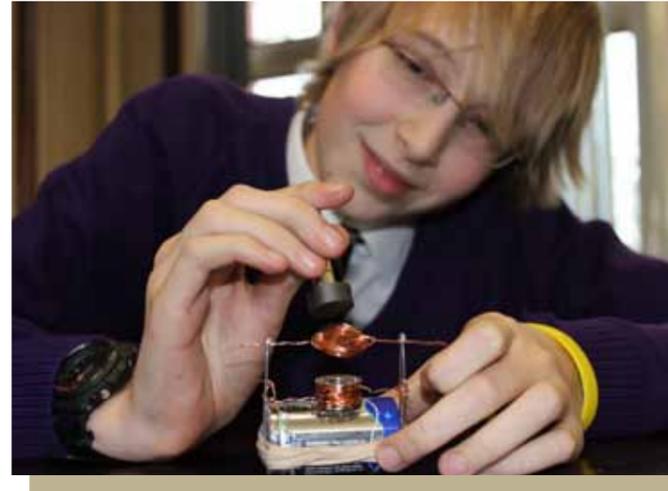


Lower School pupils enjoy their own purpose-built, fully equipped part of the College, which is an age appropriate, child friendly environment set apart from the busy main school. Lower School pupils have exclusive use of an ICT suite, music room and junior science laboratory. Specialist Mathematics, English and language classrooms are situated in Lower School. Pupils also benefit from the use of main school facilities: covered heated swimming pool, sports hall and fitness suites, extensive tennis/netball courts, Arts Centre, Art Department, music and performance areas.

The Lower School grounds are well equipped for safe, outside play. Pupils enjoy football, rounders and tennis pitches. Badminton, table tennis and basketball can also be played – and there is an adventure playground. We appreciate that pupils also want to relax and the wildlife garden and tree shaded seating areas allow 'quiet time' too.

Our aim is to provide a safe and stimulating environment where children can thrive.

The broad curriculum aims – both in and out of the classroom – to enhance essential skill development: vital in a changing world.



Key Stage 2 (age 7-11/Year Groups 3-6)

Ellesmere College junior section consists of mixed ability classes for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. There is a strong sense of community as members of a form, a year group and as members of our Lower School. We take pride in the achievements of all our children and encourage a positive attitude towards work and reward effort, achievement and behaviour accordingly.

The classrooms are situated on the first floor of the Lower School building. Alongside spacious and well equipped classrooms the children have access to a dedicated ICT room. This is added to by a suite of laptops which enables easy access to our online Accelerated Reading Programme that we use with every class to promote higher level reading skills.

The children are largely taught by their own form teacher who is also responsible for their pastoral care. They follow a wide and varied curriculum with a strong emphasis on Literacy and Mathematics. They are taught French, Music, Art, P.E. and Sport by specialist teachers.

There are opportunities for the children to extend their musical ability through participation in an orchestra and choir alongside individual extra tuition for those who wish it, specifically focusing on their age group. Games are considered important and opportunities for participation in teams are extensive. We offer several after school hobbies, which include a swimming squad, shooting, dance and a drama group.

Academic progress follows the National Curriculum as a route map, although it is modified and extended appropriately. There are teaching assistants utilised in our youngest classes and this enables group setting, which allows us to more readily meet the needs of the individual learner.

The children are prepared for SATs at the end of Year 6, which act as a useful assessment tool as well as aiding their transition to Year 7.

Key Stage 3 (age 11-13/Year Groups 7 & 8)

As the pupils move into Year 7 they change form tutor and move from the Key Stage 2 first floor and onto the ground floor of Lower School for most of their lessons. Teaching is all undertaken by subject specialists through Year 7 and 8 and their form tutor provides their pastoral care and monitors their progress. We seek to build good relationships between parents and tutors so they will be the parent's first port of call if they have a query on any issue. The curriculum continues to include English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, RS, Art, ICT, Music, P.E and Games but new subjects enter the Year 7 and 8 curriculum: Spanish, Latin and Design Technology.

Reporting Progress

Effort and attainment grades are sent home twice a term, known as period grades, which reflect progress in current topics. We report to parents every term, either via a parents' meeting or a written report. Regular assessment and clear communication of results ensure that progress is closely monitored and appropriate targets set.





Pupils, Parents and Teachers in Partnership

English

We aim to instill a love of the English language in all pupils so that they have the confidence to express themselves and to equip them with skills that will support them through all their learning in life. Children are taught the full range of English skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening, encompassing the Key Stages of the National Curriculum.

In Years 3 to 6, English is taught by form teachers who are supported by the Learning Support staff based in the school. In Years 7 and 8 the pupils are taught by specialist English staff. Throughout the school, children who may benefit from extra Literacy help can opt for extra lessons in individual or small group lessons from our Specialist Support Department.

Mathematics

It is essential that pupils are taught to recognize the power of Mathematics and that a positive attitude to, and enthusiasm for, the subject is promoted throughout the school. Throughout all Key Stages at Ellesmere we believe that children should be given every opportunity to develop their mathematical understanding. This will be reinforced through practical tasks and by encouraging children to explain their thought processes, which will enhance their understanding. Extra support is offered via lunchtime Maths Clinics, and extra one-to-one help at breaks and lunchtimes. A weekly Maths Club provides the brightest pupils opportunities to stretch their thinking with interesting, challenging problems

Science

The areas of study through Key Stage 2 focus on: energy, movement and forces; the environment; earth and solar system; life and living things. In Year 7 science is taught as a combined subject encompassing Biology, Chemistry and Physics and covers themes such as: organisms; behaviour and health; the environment; earth and universe; energy; electricity and forces; chemical and material behaviour – all taught by science staff. As pupils move into Year 8 the sciences are taught separately, each being delivered by the relevant subject department.



Art & Design

Art and Design Technology can empower pupils to make well informed value judgments as well as aesthetic and practical decisions whilst becoming actively involved with shaping their environment. All pupils will study Art and will explore ideas, meanings and expression within the world of artists, crafts people and designers. Ellesmere pupils will learn about the diverse roles and functions of art in both contemporary life and at different times and within diverse cultures.

In Years 7 and 8, pupils will also study Design and Technology where they will tackle a range of projects from wooden toys to iPod speakers. In Year 8, all pupils have the chance to put their work forward to the National Star Pack Awards.



Languages

We regard it as important for children to be familiar with languages: we take every opportunity to promote other cultures and countries. Pupils are taught in form groups by language specialists and although the speaking element remains hugely important there is increasing coverage of the three other elements of the language – reading, writing and listening. The department is well-equipped with audio and visual technology as well as with interactive whiteboards. Children will study French in Years 3 to 6 then experience the addition of Spanish and Latin in Years 7 and 8 whilst still continuing their French. Pupils with learning difficulties that impact on literacy may be withdrawn from some languages to enable individual support lessons where appropriate.





Drama

Drama is very popular at Ellesmere, whether it is accessed through the many varied productions throughout the year or academic lessons. Lower School Drama is experienced through our Wednesday afternoon Survive & Thrive Programme, by participation in the productions that Lower School pupils produce each year, and our Drama Club. As pupils move into Year 9 they can then opt for it as an academic subject, having gained practical experience whilst in Lower School.



Geography and History

Geography and History are taught by class teachers in Years 3 to 6 and then by specialists from the senior departments of Geography and History in Years 7 and 8. In Geography the focus is to provide a practical, enquiry-based approach to learning, which encourages pupils to achieve their geographical potential through making use of our excellent resources and field trips. In History pupils will study a wide range of periods including Victorians and Life in World War II Britain. In Year 7 and 8 pupils study a broadly chronological syllabus that covers the period of the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 up to the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

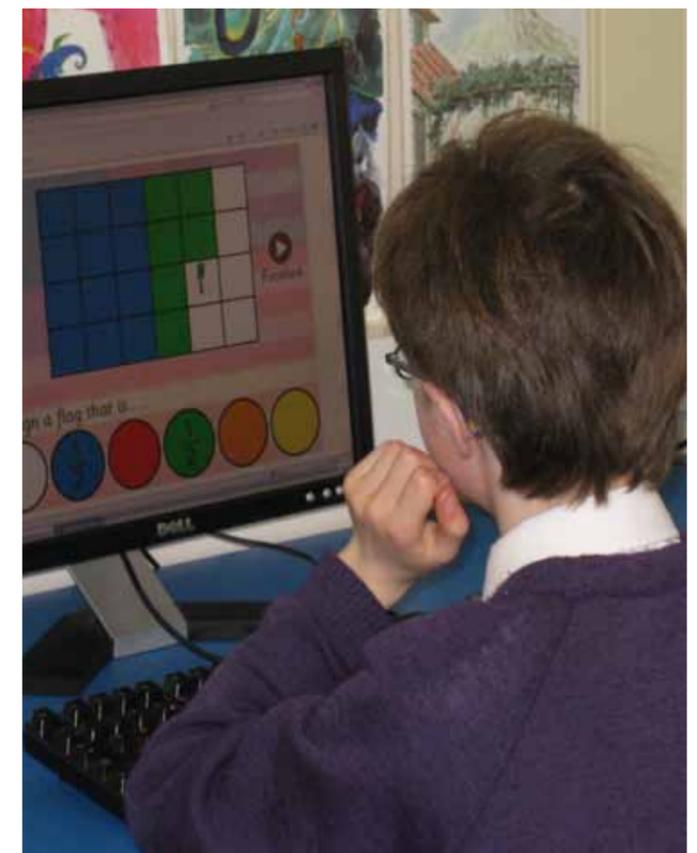
Music

The College very much values the imagination and character that makes each person an individual, and its Arts Programme has been structured to encourage self-expression and confidence. Music plays a pivotal role in this philosophy. All pupils have access to a weekly music lesson and can opt to take additional music tuition in the instrument of their choice. Opportunities to play to an audience are provided through recitals, assemblies, drama productions, open days and competitions such as the Oswestry Music Festival.



Information Technology

The Lower School programme in ICT aims to enable each child to achieve a minimum standard of computer literacy; to be confident, competent computer users by the end of Year 8, so that they can take advantage of these vital skills in their future studies. They will experience using computers to support their other subjects and learn more advanced skills each year in the use of software such as Publisher, Word Processing, Excel Spreadsheets and PowerPoint.





Physical Education & Games

All pupils at Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 will have one double P.E. lesson per week, which is 70 minutes in duration. The P.E. curriculum ensures that all pupils follow as wide a range of activities as possible. The department strongly believe that young people should be given the knowledge to help them lead a healthy active lifestyle whilst in school and in the future.

During Key Stage 2 pupils will experience the following activities:

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| Fundamental Motor Skills Programme | Gymnastics |
| Games Skills | Indoor Athletics |
| Net Games | Athletics |
| Swimming (additional double lesson per week) | |

As pupils move into Year 7 & 8 they will experience the following activities:

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| Games Skills | Swimming |
| Fitness and Fitness Testing | Badminton |
| Basketball | Squash |
| Tennis | Athletics |
| Volleyball | Indoor Athletics |
| Rounders | Baseball |
| Golf | Table Tennis |

Games is given two afternoons a week and encompasses Rugby, Football, Cricket, Hockey, Netball, Rounders and Tennis through the year.

Religious Studies

In Key Stage 2 pupils explore the life of Jesus and the great Old Testament stories. As pupils move through into Year 7 the emphasis is on Christianity and in Year 8 they study an exciting course on the world's great religions; exploring Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. The course of study for each year group is a combination of stories, visual information, looking at artefacts and visits to the chapel and other religious buildings by use of our designated visit days we refer to as Expeditions or Expos.

Curriculum

The academic curriculum for our pupils reflects the National Curriculum but it is wider in scope and is aimed at providing a broad education, whilst at the same time preparing children ultimately for GCSEs, A-levels and the International Baccalaureate.



Extra-Curricular Activities

There is a rich and varied extra-curricular programme within the Lower School at Ellesmere. Pupils are busy and happy. They are encouraged from an early age to develop leadership skills, and are encouraged to value each person's contribution in a task or team. Pupils are expected to be kind to others.



Performing Arts

Pupils in the Lower School have the opportunity to use the College's excellent facilities for Art, Music, Theatre and Dance. There are weekly Spoken English, LAMDA, Ballet, Drama and Street Dance classes available for those pupils who elect to take part in extra experiences. Many children elect to have individual music tuition or singing lessons. There is a string group, orchestra and Lower School choir. There are opportunities to perform. All of the Lower School pupils take English Speaking Board examinations in Year 6 and 8.

Survive & Thrive and Weekly Activities

Survive & Thrive is a wide ranging activity programme that takes place on Wednesday afternoons. It aims to enrich a child's character through experience and challenge. Leadership and self confidence are also developed. The programme was recently deemed an outstanding provision when inspected. Activities include Dance, Cycling, Shooting, Media, First Aid, Sailing, and Archery to name but a few.

Pastoral Care

The pastoral care of pupils has been deemed 'outstanding' in a recent HMI Inspection.

Throughout their time at Ellesmere each child is cared for by a personal tutor. The tutor is the first point of contact for both pupils and parents.

Chapel services, assemblies and PSHE Focus days (Personal, Social and Health Education) help to reinforce the sense of community and promote social and moral development based upon kindness, respect and honesty. Such values are deemed extremely important to make school life a positive experience for every child.

Sport

We are proud of our sporting tradition at Ellesmere and to represent the school is seen as an honour.

The principle sports for boys are Rugby, Football and Cricket and for girls, Hockey, Netball and Tennis. Pupils also take part in Athletics, Swimming, Rounders, Cross Country and Gymnastics.

We have academies for Cricket, Rugby, Tennis, Swimming, Shooting and Golf, these academies are available for outstanding athletes.

There are regular inter-school fixtures in all major sports throughout each of the academic terms.

Losing graciously but winning with respect for our opponents is integral to our competitive philosophy.

Parents are warmly invited to support their children.

Expeditions

Ellesmere College places great focus upon the individual in the educational setting. We encourage pupils to develop personal skills, self reliance and leadership through a wide and varied extracurricular programme.

Ellesmere recognises the tremendous impact and social value that is gained outside the classroom environment.

Both day and residential visits are arranged to broaden pupils' experiences. Visiting speakers also enrich the education of our pupils.



Boarding at Ellesmere

St. John's House is Ellesmere College's junior boarding house, in which a safe and happy environment is provided for children aged seven to thirteen. Our supportive and experienced team of House Staff look after the children, providing a warm and caring family atmosphere.

The boys and girls are looked after by a committed team of staff led by the Housemistress. She is supported by a resident tutor and a full-time Housemother, who all undertake duties throughout the week. The resident tutor's flat adjoins the dormitories, ensuring that all pupils have around the clock access to a familiar member of staff. Our team are committed to the well-being of each and every child in our care; ensuring that boarding in St. John's is a happy and fulfilling experience for every student and that they are supported as they look to progress into the senior school houses.

At the end of a full school day children are able to relax with their friends and enjoy some of the benefits that come with living on our beautiful 144 acre site. Evening prep sessions are supervised by teaching staff, providing any extra help and support that children may require. The boarders often comment on how helpful they find this additional support with their academic studies. Prep is followed by activity time, when pupils can take advantage of the range of after school activities that are available on site. These activities include swimming, dancing, golf, tennis, baking, drama, shooting and even a party night on special occasions! The evening finishes with some quiet time when children get the opportunity to relax with a hot drink, read a book, write or call home or watch television, in preparation for a good night's sleep.

At the weekends there are often school matches that our boarders are involved in. They also have use of the College library, swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts and tennis courts. Most Sundays the pupils get a chance for a bit of a lie-in followed by a mid-morning brunch. On Sunday afternoon's there are various outings such as: ice-skating, bowling, cinema, paintballing or a visit to a place of interest.



The building and grounds have many facilities including:

- A lounge with a comfortable leather suite, DVD player and large television.
- A fully equipped and newly refurbished kitchen
- An I.T. suite with skype for those all important calls home.
- A games room with a Pool table, table tennis and Nintendo Wii
- Washing machines, tumble dryers, ironing board
- Each bedroom has its own wash stand and accommodates up to 4 children
- Golf course
- Swimming pool
- Shooting range
- Gym and sports centre
- All weather pitch
- Climbing wall
- Tennis courts
- Squash courts



From the Housemistress...

As well as my role as Housemistress of St. John's I am also a teacher of History at Ellesmere College, based in the Lower School building. This gives me the advantage of being able to see our boarders regularly during their school day, providing them with any extra support and guidance that they may need. I run the House with the support of our full time Housemother, a residential tutor in St. John's and a Lower School Tutor.

We are lucky here at Ellesmere College to benefit from excellent facilities, all of which are used after school and at weekends. This ensures that the children benefit both from the open spaces and lots of fresh air, and also the activities programme that we put together for the weekends.

Our key aim in St John's is to provide boarders with a happy and secure environment that has a real sense of family and community. I feel very privileged to work with such a fantastic group of young people and it is incredibly rewarding to watch them develop in to well rounded young adults.

Pupils' Voices

“The staff here are really kind and always try their best to help. It is sometimes difficult living so far away from home so it's important to have people like this around you.” **Year 8 boy**

“It's lovely to be able to unwind with a hot drink and toast when you get back to house after a long training session. It's really homely and cosy in St. John's.” **Year 5 girl**

“I enjoy getting free time to relax and socialise with my friends, but at the same time I like the fact that there aren't too many people in each dorm so that you get your own private space and a good night's sleep. Living in St. John's also makes it much easier to get my prep done because there are always teachers around to help.” **Year 8 boy**

“I like knowing that there are people – both staff and kids – who will support you. As a swimmer who trains for up to eighteen hours a week, it's good to know that there are people who you can turn to when things get tough.” **Year 7 boy**

“I really like all the different activities that we get to do at the weekend; my favourite was when we went paintballing! House outings are great fun too and we always have a good party when it's someone's birthday.” **Year 8 girl**

“I love living in St. John's because I get to make lots of new friends and see them throughout the week. It's a really supportive place to live. I get lots of help with my prep and everyone looks after one another. The Housemothers are very kind and willing to help too.” **Year 8 boy**



The Registrar

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