



# Elstree School

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Coeducational day and boarding school  
for children aged 3-13

NURTURING  
THE FUTURE



# Moving positively with the times

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At Elstree, we believe that a great school is a school that maintains its relevance and place in an ever-changing world.

In recent years, it has become clear that both our current and prospective parents are looking for a family focused school: one that offers the same opportunities and ambitions for their daughters, as it does for their sons.

We are therefore delighted and proud to announce that, as of September 2020, Elstree will become a coeducational school, welcoming girls alongside boys.

It means that girls and boys will be able to receive an Elstree education from the age of 3 (Nursery), all the way through to 13 (Year 8).

Set in idyllic grounds of 150 acres, only an hour by car from west London, Elstree offers a secure and stimulating environment for children to be nurtured and inspired.

## An education that lasts a lifetime

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Girls have been enjoying an Elstree education up to the age of 7 for over 20 years. By extending our coeducational experience into the Prep School, Elstree will provide an environment where both girls and boys can develop the skills necessary to thrive in a 21st century world.

Elstree's ethos and values will remain unchanged. We are proud of our rich history and reputation as a school with high academic, creative and sporting achievements. While we know that success is something to celebrate, we recognise that being open,



compassionate and tolerant of others, is equally important.

At Elstree our pupils lead fulfilling and purposeful lives, benefitting from an all-round education based on Christian values and a strong sense of community. We aim to provide an education that lasts a lifetime, and Elstree will remain a preparatory school in the broadest sense of the word.

## Ensuring a smooth transition

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To ensure the smooth transition to becoming a fully coeducational school, places for girls beyond Year 3 will be offered incrementally from September 2020. As this cohort moves through the school, Elstree will grow organically.

The gradual process will allow class sizes to be kept small and staff to pupil ratios low. Any girls wanting to join further up the school will be welcomed on a case-by-case basis.

*Headmaster and wife, Mr Sid and Mrs Olivia Inglis*



# Questions and answers

## ***1. What are the benefits of moving to coeducation at Elstree?***

As family life is becoming busier, parents are increasingly looking for logistical convenience for their children's education.

By extending the coeducational provision at Elstree beyond Year 3, we will be able to give families the opportunity to share their children's educational journey in one setting and have a school for all their children.

Girls already benefit from a huge number of opportunities in the Pre-Prep, and it is a logical, sensible and exciting



move for them to be able to continue this to the end of the Prep School.

We will be able to continue to offer a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including netball, hockey, tennis, cricket, rugby, football, and swimming, and enhance our offering of drama, music, debating and art. All these activities can only be enriched by the presence of girls and boys.

## ***2. Who has taken this decision and how was it made?***

This decision has been led by the Headmaster and his wife, but only after extensive discussions and planning with the Governors and senior staff, over a period of two years.

The question of extending the provision for girls beyond Year 3 has been asked by numerous prospective parents.

Many are disappointed that Elstree has not been able to offer their daughters the same opportunities as their sons.

## ***3. Why has the decision to take girls been made now?***

Since the arrival of Mr and Mrs Inglis six years ago, the school has developed and evolved to keep in touch with an ever-changing world. We have enhanced the facilities, improved the curriculum and extended our extra-curricular. Mr Inglis, with the support of the Governors, now feels that it is an exciting time for the next strategic development for the school.

Girls have been educated in the Pre-Prep for over twenty years and it is now the logical and natural step to extend this provision throughout the Prep School. It is becoming increasingly clear that the world, and parent views, are changing and it is time to adapt accordingly.



#### ***4. Why have parents not been informed about this move sooner, and why have they not been consulted?***

We have announced the decision as soon as we have been able to. The announcement has been made a year in advance of the change, and following extensive discussions amongst Governors and senior staff.

#### ***5. You have been selling a single-sex educational setting for many years. Do you not believe in this anymore?***

We have made a point of not selling the school based on the fact that it is single sex. By extending our current coeducational model from Pre-Prep in to Prep, we are certain that Elstree will be enriched by boys being educated alongside girls. We believe that parents should base their decision for their child's education on the setting, the academic profile, the extra-curricular offering, the ethos, the 'product' and, importantly, the people who live and work there.

#### ***6. What will be the impact of this change?***

Very little. Elstree has always been a school that has a very community-centric/family



atmosphere, educating girls to the end of Year 3. Now brothers and sisters can be educated together until they are 13.

The aims and ethos of the school will remain unchanged, and they lend themselves well to coeducation. All pupils - boys and girls - will be valued as individuals and feel part of a family. We want them to discover and nurture their instincts and talents within a supportive, friendly environment.

#### ***7. My son is further up the school. Will becoming fully coeducational change his experience and opportunities at Elstree?***

No. We will continue to nurture every child, continue to be academically ambitious, and continue to support and develop extra-curricular participation. Whatever a child's talent, we will help them maximise their potential.

Our pupils will have the same opportunities to gain places at leading senior schools - whether single sex or coeducational.

#### ***8. Is the plan to grow the school in the future?***

Elstree will inevitably grow but not significantly. It remains our priority to value and celebrate each individual child. We will maintain our personal approach, with Elstree children and families at the heart of our care.

Class sizes will remain small and we will maintain the high academic ambitions that we currently have. We will remain small enough to be personal, but large enough to compete well with our competitor schools both inside and outside of the classroom.

#### ***9. The Headmaster has only ever worked in single sex schools. How is he going to familiarise himself with all-girl senior schools?***

The Headmaster has a daughter, so has done extensive research on both all-girl and also coeducational senior schools. With many former Elstree boys going to coeducational senior schools, he already knows the ethos and strengths/weaknesses of many of these schools. He will visit the major girls' schools from September 2019, so there is plenty of time for him and other staff to familiarise themselves with these schools before September 2020.

***10. I want my daughter to join the school higher up the school (Year 4 upwards), how ready is the school to accommodate her?***

Girls, particularly siblings of current pupils, wanting to join the school higher up the school will be welcomed on a case-by-case basis. They will be looked after in the same way we care for boys in these years.

The only difference is that, because we are becoming a coeducational school gradually, there may not be sufficient numbers initially to have an all-girls sports team. Girls will however, be able to get involved in all the sports currently offered to boys, and be selected for teams.

***11. At which points can girls enter the school from September 2020?***

Girls will be able to join the school at any stage from Nursery up to Year 3. There is no change here. The only difference is that these girls will be able to continue their Elstree journey up to the end of Year 8.

***12. Will there be provision for girls to board in preparation for their senior schools?***

As we do not offer boarding in Year 3, neither girls nor boys will be able to board. From 2021 we will be able to offer boarding to girls with the same 'conditions' as we currently have: - they may board any number of nights in Years 4-6, and will then need to move up to a minimum of three nights in Years 7 and 8.

***13. Where will the girls board?***

Initially there will be a boarding provision for girls in Home Farm Cottage. This will change as numbers grow.

***14. Is the intention for girls to remain at Elstree until the end of Year 8 and take 13+ Common Entrance/ Scholarship?***

Yes, and with many senior schools making their decisions for places at the end of Year 6, we have some exciting plans for our Year 7 and 8 curriculum. This will include the introduction of new languages, an exciting programme of skills-based activities from debating, critical thinking, curriculum drama and a global exchange programme.

These developments will better prepare children for the modern workplace and enhance their creativity, public speaking skills and awareness of the world outside the walls of Elstree. It is therefore our intention for our girls to remain at Elstree until the end of Year 8. The last two years of Prep School are, in our view, the most rewarding and enjoyable.



***15. Will there be sports provided which specifically cater for girls?***

Yes, netball will be offered, alongside all the other sporting and extra-curricular opportunities that celebrate the strengths of both girls and boys. These include football, rugby, and hockey, as well as the summer sports of, athletics, swimming, cricket and tennis.

***16. Will there be opportunities for girls to have sport matches against other schools?***

Absolutely. Our girls will compete against girls from other coeducational and all girl schools. We may also have mixed teams in some key sports including cricket, hockey and tennis.

***17. Will staff undergo any training in preparation for the school going coeducational, particularly in relation to pastoral care?***

Yes. We already have a healthy mix of both female and male staff (almost 50/50), many of whom have worked in coeducational settings. We shall also be speaking to other schools that have already made the transition



to coeducation, and undertake any necessary training.

***18. Are further changes planned and will these be communicated to us?***

The Governors and Headmaster are continually reviewing the strategic direction of the school. There are some exciting plans for the development of the curriculum, particularly in Years 7 and 8. These will be communicated during the

course of the academic year.

***19. What are the aims of the school in the future?***

Our aim is to provide an unrivalled environment in which all our pupils can flourish. We unashamedly set out to be the best coeducational boarding and day school in the country. An Elstree education endures long after a pupil leaves. Its breadth and impact will last a lifetime.





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