



# St Bede's School

## Pre-Sixth Form Course

## Introduction

In September 2009, St Bede's School launched an exciting new course for overseas students: the Pre-Sixth Form course, which welcomed ten students from all over the world. This one year course focuses primarily on improving the spoken and written English of students, but also offers a range of other opportunities. Students who enrol on this course are fully integrated members of St Bede's, participating in school life to the fullest extent and taking part in the school's renowned activities programme. They live and work within an English school community of 850 students - of whom around 40% are boarders.

After three terms, students are in an excellent position to study for A Levels or other Sixth Form courses within the British system, or to return to their own country with improved English skills, as well as experience across the academic curriculum. This course also satisfies the German requirement to study and be examined in a range of different subjects.

## The Pre-Sixth Form Course - the Academic Programme

The ultimate goal of the Pre Sixth course is not that students should be able to accumulate pass grades in examinations so much as that they should be prepared to move on to a higher level of study in which English is the key language. Those who wish to go on to study for A Levels will be in a strong position to handle the language demands of such courses; those who will return to their home country will do so with much improved English skills. Access to British universities is dependent on the achieving of a satisfactory grade in the IELTS assessment, taken at the end of the Sixth Form study; those who have participated in the Pre-Sixth Form course will be in an excellent position to go on to achieve a satisfactory score in this assessment. At all stages, we aim to tailor what we offer to the needs of the individual student.

The majority of our Pre-Sixth students will, after their first year, proceed to study 'A' levels with us. However, there is no automatic right of entry into the Sixth Form: it is conditional on each student's academic performance and ability to access an appropriate programme of study.

### **English:**

At the heart of the Pre-Sixth Form course is a focus on learning English. One third of a student's lessons are specific English classes; in all other lessons, the focus is on language acquisition as well as on subject-specific learning.

The EAL (English as an Additional Language) Department at St Bede's contains five specialist teachers. Lessons take place in an attractive suite of well-equipped classrooms. On the Pre-Sixth Form course there is an opportunity for students to work at the pace which best suits their needs. This might mean they are able to study for the Cambridge ESOL First Certificate, an upper-intermediate level exam in which students are taught to handle the main structures of the language with confidence, demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and use appropriate communication strategies in a variety of situations.

Alternatively, for some students with a higher level of English, the International GCSE (IGCSE First Language English) may be more appropriate. This examination is designed to develop the students' ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in both speech and writing. Students learn how to employ a wide-ranging vocabulary, use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, and develop a personal style and an awareness of the ways in which English can be used.

In addition to lessons in English, students on the Pre Sixth Form Course will also receive the following classes:

- **Mathematics.** Depending on a student's ability, it may be possible for the International GCSE course to be attempted. Certainly, all students will be given the opportunity to build on their prior knowledge in this subject, and prepare themselves for further study at a higher level.
- **Science.** Students will study for a general course combining elements of each of the three sciences - Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students who may wish to go on to study these subjects at a higher level will not only see their subject knowledge improving, but will also be given the grounding in vocabulary and language which is essential for the successful completion of science A Levels. By the

end of the year, students will have had the opportunity to complete the AQA single award Science GCSE.

- **Information Technology.** Students will embark upon the European Computer Driving Licence - a wide-ranging, internationally-recognised course which provides training in all aspects of IT use. This is a practical course, which equips those who undertake it with all the skills which are required to use IT in an education or work setting.
- **Business Studies.** Students will study the GCSE Course in Business Studies; Business Studies is one of the most popular subjects at St Bede's at A level and this course will put students in a strong position to continue with the A level Business Studies course in the 6<sup>th</sup> form. In the Business GCSE Course, they will be introduced to the world of small businesses and they will look at what makes someone a successful business person. Students will find out how to develop an idea and spot an opportunity, and turn that into a successful business. They will understand how to make a business effective and manage money. They will also see how the world around us affects small businesses and the people involved.
- **Languages.** St Bede's offers students from China, Japan, Russia and Germany the opportunity to complete British qualifications in their own languages. It is possible that students will also be offered the opportunity to study a European language at GCSE level (French, Spanish), providing they have prior knowledge in the language. Students can instead be offered the option of studying Extra English.
- **Art and Design.** On the Pre-Sixth course students will get the chance to work in a variety of media. Areas of study will include fine art, graphic design and ceramics. Drawing and making techniques will be taught as students are made familiar with the assessment objectives common to GCSE and A Level Art.

## Life at St Bede's and being a Pre Sixth student

St Bede's is a busy, vibrant school, located in the Sussex countryside. Students who are studying on the Pre Sixth Form course follow a similar timetable to other students at the school: lessons run from 8.30 am until 3.10 pm, with breaks in mid-morning and then for lunch. In the afternoon students participate in activities of their own choosing - we currently offer over 140 different activity options, ranging from football to jewellery making, from Shakespeare to horse riding, and from animal care to Mahjong. The school is blessed with superb facilities for sport and other extra curricular activities.

While about 80% of our students are British, there are young people from over 40 different countries at St Bede's - from Angola to South Korea, from Bulgaria to Canada, from Lebanon to Turkmenistan. Here, one of them talks about what it is like to be a Pre Sixth student at St Bede's:

Teodora, from Bulgaria, arrived at St Bede's in September 2009, studied on the Pre -Sixth Course and next year she will complete her A Levels in History, Spanish, Russian and Mathematics and EFL at St Bede's. She will then be looking to go to University to study Law. Here she tells us of her experience:

*Eighteen months ago I came to this new world for me. From the very beginning, I enjoyed how the students here lead their life, but I was not confident at all with my English and I could not imagine that one day I would speak it fluently and that I would live like the other students. Now, I can speak without any worries that I might say something wrong. The people around me helped me improve my English. I remember that in the beginning, the friends that I have now had to talk to me quite slowly in order for me to understand what they were saying. But the teachers are really helpful, and not only in lessons; they never refuse you help.*

*The subjects that I chose for A level are based on my plan for the future. I want to study Law in England, so History is very useful. Furthermore, I thought that Mathematics would be both interesting and useful and last, but not least, languages are my strength; I am studying English, Spanish and Russian, because I think that nowadays it is very important to be able to speak more than one language.*

*My time at St. Bede's has changed my life dramatically and I have learned a lot about the English culture, and now, I am part of it! I have learned that if you want to give yourself a chance in life and make your parents proud, you have to give your best and later on, you will see success.*

*The boarding life has contributed to my life experience in that I am now able to survive in a variety of situations alone, without my parents. Living in a boarding house means that you are well prepared for living alone and taking care of your own place.*

*In fact, St Bede's school is my new home and it will be forever in my heart. Unforgettable moments here, which are numerous, will forever be in my heart.*

## Boarding at St Bede's

St Bede's is situated in the village of Upper Dicker. We hold our chapel services in the village church, also giving many musical recitals there. Maintenance of the village cricket and football pitches are carried out by the School and we share our sporting facilities with the local primary school. In addition, we encourage local clubs and villagers to use our pitches, swimming pool, squash courts and drama studio as local amenities.

Above all, St Bede's is a friendly school which helps us to nurture our students so that they can grow as individuals...

Boarders are at the heart of our community, comprising around 40% of the students and they greatly enrich the school. This is due to the diversity they bring and to the many additional recreational facilities associated with a boarding school. On average, 25% of our 850 students come from overseas. Through their presence, we all learn to understand and respect each other's values.

There are five boarding houses at St Bede's, three boys' and two girls' houses. Each house has a Housemaster or Housemistress and a Deputy Housemaster or Housemistress living in. Matrons, who look after the students' general welfare and health and deal with their laundry are on duty from 7am to 10pm. The three boys' Houses are Camberlot, Dorms and Stud, the girls' houses are Crossways and Dorter.

For more information visit [www.stbedesschool.org](http://www.stbedesschool.org) or contact us at [admissions@stbedesschool.org](mailto:admissions@stbedesschool.org)