

TATLER

The 10th Annual Tatler Schools Awards 2013 **Tuesday 10th September at The Dorchester**

BEST SCHOOL FOOD: St George's, Ascot

BEST HEAD OF A PREP SCHOOL: Kevin Jones, St John's College School

Runners up:

Nick Higham, St Martin's Ampleforth

Sally Hobbs, Orchard House

Stephen Ilett, Milbourne Lodge

Jonathan Perry, Lambrook

BEST PREP SCHOOL: Sussex House

Runners up:

Broomwood Hall

Cheam

Highfield

Mowden Hall

POWER BEHIND THE THRONE: Katie Fenwick, Hazlegrove

Runners up:

Susannah Knight, Woodcote House

Emma Leigh, Marlborough

Iori Price, Godolphin

Janie Walker, Abberley Hall

BEST HEAD OF PUBLIC SCHOOL: Clive Dytor, The Oratory

Runners up:

Christopher Barnett, Whitgift

John Claughton, King Edward's Birmingham

Michael Carslaw, St Leonard's

Vivienne Durham, Francis Holland NW1

BEST PUBLIC SCHOOL: Wellington College

Runners up:

The Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School

Magdalen College School

Robert Gordon's College

Wycombe Abbey

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

WINNER: Claire Oulton, Benenden

The Tatler Schools Guide is on sale now with the October issue of Tatler. For more information please contact Melody Rayner in the Condé Nast Press office on 020 7152 3807 or email melody.rayner@condenast.co.uk



Tel 020 8742 8544
Website orchardhs.org.uk
Head Sally Hobbs
Pupils 273 day; 109 boys, 164 girls
Faith Non-denom **Ages** 3–11
Term fees £4,700

PEMBRIDGE HALL

18 Pembridge Square, W2 4EH

Pembridge sent 10 leavers to Wycombe Abbey last year – need we say more? This is a particularly striking statistic given the school's mixed-ability entry. At Wetherby, where he was second-in-command before coming here, new Pembridge Hall head Henry Keighley-Elstob had a reputation for being a disciplinarian, but we found him completely charming and down to earth. 'I am not interested in Notting Hill smart,' he says. He greets pupils on the doorstep every morning and is working hard to raise the academic bar (no more defections to Bute House at 7+, as has been the case in past years). With Mr K-E also doing wonders to up the emphasis on sport, it's no great surprise that there's been an upsurge in applications for places. Miss Gillingham's 'inspirational' science classes sound amazing, as does 'wonderfully eccentric' drama teacher Mrs Nagle.
Tel 020 7229 0121
Website pembridgehall.co.uk
Head Henry Keighley-Elstob
Pupils 398 day girls
Faith Non-denom **Ages** 4–11
Term fees £5,820

PROSPECT HOUSE SCHOOL

75 Putney Hill, SW15 3NT

A smart new lower-school building means Prospect House has expanded to two forms in each year, but head Dianne Barratt assures us that the family atmosphere won't be lost. She emphasises that entry is 'truly non-selective'. Admission is prioritised by date of registration and there's a long waiting list. Once in, pupils enjoy a pressure-free environment, which nonetheless yields great results – destinations vary from Colet Court and King's Wimbledon to Putney High and Wycombe Abbey. IT is excellent – lots of Macs, teacher podcasts and programming lessons. Great learning support too. 'Not a starchy school,' says Mrs Barratt: the school council voted on what colour pen the teachers should use to mark their work (they chose red), and one class did an assembly on 'Brushing your teeth, Gangnam Style'.
Tel 0208 780 0456

Website prospecths.org.uk
Head Dianne Barratt
Pupils 294 day; 147 boys, 147 girls
Faith Non-denom **Ages** 3–11
Term fees £4,945

RAVENSCOURT PARK PREPARATORY SCHOOL

16 Ravenscourt Avenue, W6 0SL

We hear great things of RPPS's new head, Kate O'Shaughnessy. She's been at the school for eight years, latterly as deputy head, and is, says a mother, 'shaking things up subtly – she has really listened to parents' views so people are pleased.' She's recruited a new deputy, Simon Gould, from Thomas's, and is gently upping the academic ante. There's a new specialist science teacher in the white-hot lab – pretty cool for a prep. Lots of sport in Ravenscourt Park, and a choice of 51 before- and after-school clubs. Most pupils go on to London day schools at 11 – any attempt to take boys out at 7+ or 8+ is seriously frowned upon. Register on your child's first birthday – no earlier, no later. Senior school Kew House opens its doors this September with a headmaster poached from the Thomas Telford School, the country's top-performing non-selective state school. We're watching with interest.
Tel 020 8846 9153
Website rpps.co.uk
Head Kate O'Shaughnessy
Pupils 410 day; 205 boys, 205 girls
Faith Inter-denom **Ages** 4–11
Term fees £4,810

REDCLIFFE SCHOOL

47 Redcliffe Gardens, SW10 9JH

You have to love a school that gives an award for 'changing faster at swimming'. Head Susan Bourne is a genius for that and many other things. Parents really listen to her when it comes to choosing the next school and, says one, 'get sucked in' to Redcliffe life – there is even a parents' choir. The boys, who leave at eight, often go on to Wetherby or Sussex House; girls to Francis Holland or Queen's College at 11. Sport is taught at the Hurlingham or on Eel Brook Common. Music is impressive, and the saintly Mrs Bourne oversees a good amount of community work. 'It is a very special place. I feel very lucky to belong here,' says a parent.
Tel 020 7352 9247
Website redcliffeschool.com
Head Susan Bourne
Pupils 161 day; 64 boys, 97 girls
Faith Inter-denom **Ages** 2–11
Term fees £4,440

SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL

25 St Edmund's Terrace, NW8 7PY

Even when we visited on a very wet, cold day, this Regent's Park prep was brimming with warmth and activity – from the colourful and packed jungle-gym playground to the wackily beautiful artwork and polished poetry recitals. Headmistress Nathalie Clyne-Wilson says: 'We are an active and interactive school because happy children make successful learners.' (They were very happy during muffin decorating at lunch.) And there's plenty of success – one Year 6 pupil achieved Grade 7 violin and piano last year (FYI, a new music centre is being planned) and girls won scholarships to Queen's College, NLCS, Haberdashers' and More House. Saint Christina's was founded by the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, so baptised Catholics and siblings are first in line. We love the thought of the bridge club playing with peers in the House of Lords.
Tel 020 7722 8784
Website saintchristinas.org.uk
Head Nathalie Clyne-Wilson
Pupils 220 day; 50 boys, 170 girls
Faith RC **Ages** 3–11
Term fees £3,355

ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL

32 Belsize Lane, NW3 5AE

They've been embracing their eccentric side at St Christopher's in

oh-so-lovely Belsize Park. Guinea pigs are the new classroom cohorts and a dog who listens to children read came to visit. Headmistress Susie West is 'always looking for new ways to make things easier' in today's pressure-cooker world. The 'open-ended and creative' curriculum breeds success and her pupils are high achievers – St Paul's Girls, NLCS and Wycombe Abbey are leavers' destinations. Girls here are encouraged to be curious, so the school's Philosophy Bear might be taken home for existential questioning. Uniform is relaxed trackies and the playgrounds inspire with their *Alice in Wonderland* and Narnia themes. Computer programming is taught through child-focused Raspberry Pi, rather than run-of-the-mill IT. With all this, it's no surprise St Christopher's is oversubscribed – sisters get preferential treatment.
Tel 020 7435 1621
Website st-christophers.hampstead.sch.uk
Head Susie West
Pupils 239 day girls
Faith Non-denom **Ages** 4–11
Term fees £4,150

SUSSEX HOUSE SCHOOL

68 Cadogan Square, SW1X 0EA

'A uniquely interesting and imaginative place,' says our spy. Human dynamo Nicholas Kaye is in his 20th year in charge here; he lives over the shop (literally), teaches up to 13 periods a week, takes creative-writing classes, runs the architecture club and conducts concerts. More than 130 boys sit the exam for 36 places (we're told the English comprehension test is 'the toughest in London'), and all but seven of last year's leavers went to Eton, Winchester, St Paul's or Westminster (two Eton music scholarships among the spoils). Specialist teachers are employed throughout the school; the art, in particular, is nothing short of astounding. 'I defy you to find a central London school where you can do more sport,' says Mr Kaye. (Boys have won lots of awards for fencing, *inter alia*.) Aesthetically, it's sublime: all William Morris wallpaper and mahogany furniture, with a metaphorical whiff of pipe smoke in the air.
Tel 020 7584 1741
Website sussexhouseschool.co.uk
Head Nicholas Kaye
Pupils 186 day boys
Faith C of E **Ages** 8–13
Term fees £5,400