

## Sussex House

# PROSPECTUS

Headmaster

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Deputy Headmaster

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### **Aims and Ethos of Sussex House**

At Sussex House we aim to create an inspirational environment in where there is a sense of striving for learning, creativity and sporting achievement and in which pupils can feel a strong sense of ‘belonging’ and personal involvement. The atmosphere is traditional yet highly imaginative and the splendid architectural setting enhances the sense of a family within a house. It is our duty to meet the needs of the boys, whatever those needs may be. We seek to discern ability and talent and provide opportunities for its unhindered development. The school has a Church of England affiliation and the central tenets of its Christian ethos provide a moral fibre. Our aim is to achieve outstanding results of Common Entrance and Scholarship entry to the country’s most demanding senior schools whilst never letting the striving for success lead to over-intensity or a set of value judgements only based on a boy’s academic profile. Boys should feel happy with themselves, happy with each other and happy with the staff. They often feel a reluctance to leave and have a strong attachment to the school after they leave. The school motto is, aptly, ‘*Lead me to the Rock that is Higher than I*’. (Psalm 61)

Founded in 1952, Sussex House is an independent preparatory school situated in the heart of Chelsea. Designed by Norman Shaw, No 68 is one of the finest houses in Cadogan Square. A converted chapel in Cadogan Street, now named The Nicholls Hall, houses the Music Department, the Gymnasium and the Arts and Crafts room. Nearby St. Simon Zelotes Church serves ideally as a school chapel.

Sussex House is one of the few long established boys’ preparatory schools in Central London and it enjoys its own entirely independent character and style. The school has an impressive record of Common Entrance and Scholarship results to highly ambitious senior schools and the Headmaster maintains close links with these schools, enabling him to give detailed advice.

The school is an independent charity and in recent years a considerable number of initiatives and developments have taken place, not least the magnificent restoration of the main house and the addition of new science, art and I.C.T. facilities. The school’s charitable status profoundly influences its priorities. Not dominated by any personal profit motive, it firmly maintains its size of around 180 boys and 24 full-time teaching staff, backed up by a team of visiting sports coaches and music staff.

The style is traditional yet imaginative and within this framework the boys’ considerable academic and creative potential provide the staff with an exciting challenge. If you read our magazine *The Cadogan* in conjunction with this prospectus, you will be surprised just how much goes on here in any one year. As a day school operating within a five-day week, we hope to offer a balance of activity and a sense of community and breadth usually associated with the best boarding preparatory schools. The best way to see for yourself what we are like is to make an appointment to come and view the school in action.

## Academic Life

All members of the school have timetabled classes in English (with a strong emphasis on the study of literature), Mathematics, French (including oral and aural work), Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Music, Art, I.C.T. and Physical Education. From the second year all boys study Latin, and Greek is an option in senior forms.

A thorough teaching of the basics is seen as a priority in the early stages. Imaginative projects go hand in hand with the learning of necessary knowledge and techniques without which any deeper understanding of a subject flounders. There is considerable scope for creative work in English – and much evidence of this in *The Cadogan* magazine. The school's magnificent Library provides an inspiring haven and is constantly being updated. All boys are issued with reading lists and senior boys make use of the 'A-Z of Authors' guide compiled by the Headmaster.

Progress is monitored by grades given in 'Assessments' three times a term: special effort is commended as well as attainment of high standards. Examinations are held twice a year and in the Sixth form, four sets of trials are held before Common Entrance so that a boy is fully prepared. We aim for every pupil to fulfil his potential and the highly successful Common Entrance results to ambitious schools are a testament to this. Whenever required, personal guidance and discussion are available regarding choice of future school. The Headmaster and staff are available at very short notice to discuss boys' progress with parents and close co-operation and communication between staff and parents is particularly valued. There is an annual Parents' Evening for each year group and an annual Exhibition and Open Day.

## Creative Life

The creative life of the school spills over from the classroom into a very wide range of activities. Many of these activities take place several times a week, either in the lunch hour or after school, enabling boys to enjoy a variety of extra pursuits during the course of the week.

**Art** classes are taken by all boys and the house provides an ideal venue for an ongoing exhibition of boys' paintings, as remarked in a recent edition of *The Good Schools Guide*: "Art is everywhere and is prominent, exciting, eye-catching, awe-inspiring". The school is well known for its annual exhibitions when the Ballroom and the Library are filled with large-scale architectural models. Carpentry is highly popular. There is a flourishing pottery club and visits to London exhibitions are an obvious enrichment.

**Music** classes are attended by all boys and include musical appreciation, ensemble work and singing. Pupils are introduced to basic musical forms and given an introduction to musical notation and theory. Over 70% of the school plays a musical instrument and a very wide range of instrumental teachers are available. The Chapel Choir rehearses regularly and accompanies our Friday church services. A Summer Concert of ambitious instrumental and choral works is performed in the magnificent setting of the Cadogan Hall and there is an annual 'Singers and Soloists Concert' in which ambitious soloists, selected from our pupils, are given the opportunity of performing with a professional orchestra. Regular Ballroom Concerts give boys of all ages and standards experience of playing in public.

**Drama.** Ambitious annual Musicals, involving a large number of boys, have become a major feature of the Sussex House calendar. The most recent was a much acclaimed performance of *The Mikado* at the Fortune Theatre, Drury Lane. There are annual 'Drama in the Ballroom' evenings in which boys present a selection of plays, scenes and sketches ranging from Shakespeare to those written by staff, and a 'Divertissement in the Ballroom' in which, most recently, two short plays by Molière were performed. There were eight theatrical productions in all last year. Class trips to London theatre provide a great inspiration.

**Poetry** writing is greatly encouraged by the Junior and Senior Poetry Competitions held in the Lent Term and assessed by a visiting judge, usually an established writer. Many of the best poems are published in *The Cadogan* magazine.

Miscellaneous activities flourish. The Junior and Senior Discussion groups are particularly popular and there is a high level of articulate – sometimes intense – debate on current issues. A series of ‘Tea and Talks’ offer a time for reflection on spiritual matters. Mandarin Chinese Club, Science Clubs, Computer Club, Chess (with annual competitions) and the Architecture Club are all popular.

## **Physical Life**

Sport plays an important part in the life of the school and the notable success of the sports programme in recent years has been due to the highly experienced teaching of basic skills by a team of 12 sports coaches, aided by the proximity of excellent facilities.

**Football** is the principal sport in the Michaelmas and Lent terms and there is an impressive record of success across the age range in matches against a variety of London schools. A popular optional football session takes place on Saturday mornings and after school on Mondays.

**Cricket** is the principal sport of the Summer Term and aspiring team members gain expertise out of season in regular sessions at the indoor cricket school at Lords. There is an annual Cricket Tour to Suffolk.

**Tennis** is a popular option, either during Games afternoons or as an activity after school.

**Swimming.** There are options for swimming coaching at Chelsea Baths and all boys participate in the heats of the Swimming Gala.

**Fencing** Sussex House is justly famous for an unrivalled fencing tradition of national pre-eminence and the school has produced many national champions including the recent Under 14 national champion. Under the direction of four talented coaches, over eighty boys at present enjoy fencing, many of them taking part in competitions with resounding success.

**Cross-country and Athletics.** All boys take part in the Cross-country team competitions in the Lent term (and a Cross-country team competes in inter-school competitions) and the Athletics finals in the Summer term.

**Physical Education** classes are part of every pupil’s timetable and include **Basketball** and **Indoor Football**.

## **Spiritual Life**

The spiritual life of the school is an important, enriching element. All boys study Religious Education (which is examined at Common Entrance), attend Assemblies, which include prayers, and a church service on Friday morning at nearby St. Simon Zelotes Church, taken by the school’s Chaplain. Each term there is a cathedral style choral service. The religious ethos of the school is Anglican, but the boys of all denominations and religions are welcomed. Visiting speakers give talks at a series of lunchtime meetings.

## **Structure and Organisation**

There are two parallel classes of 18 boys for each age group and in the top year the luxury of three small forms. Boys are taught by teachers who are specialists in their own subjects and each form has a form mistress or form master who has pastoral oversight of the class.

The school is divided into three houses for the purpose of sporting competitions. Plus and minus points for conduct and achievement also contribute to the annual inter-house competition. All VIth formers are School Prefects and senior boys elect the Head of School, his Deputy and Heads of House from their peers.

The whole school meets daily for Assembly and for Church on Fridays. Boys bring packed lunches, which are eaten with the Form Master or Form Mistress, enabling a time when the class can meet together socially. At the beginning and the end of the school day, the School Marshal is available to deal with messages, lost property, etc.

## **School Hours and Terms**

The school operates a standard three term year. School hours are from 8:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Boys in the first year (IInd forms) finish at 3:15 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays but may stay until 4:p.m. to do their homework or for activities. Boys in other forms may choose to stay until 5:00 p.m. or later for various activities, but homework is undertaken at home.

## **Excursions and Trips**

There are regular trips on offer. Recent ones include trips to Paris, Normandy, Iceland, Geography Field Trip to the Lake District, a Cricket Tour to Suffolk, an option to join our Skiing Trips. There is an annual Expeditions Day and a wide variety of trips to plays and exhibitions.

## **Admissions**

All admission enquiries should be addressed to the Registrar. Boys are accepted from the age of eight and only later if there happens to be a place available. They may be registered at any age, and there is a registration fee of £125. All prospective parents have the chance of meeting the Headmaster and being shown around the school to see it in action. They are then invited to a Prospective Parents' Evening in the November before their sons sit the test. On this occasion, they meet sixth formers and staff and see various out-of-school activities taking place. Candidates take a test in the January before they enter the school. The test covers basic English and Arithmetic, reading, verbal reasoning and interview, and is designed to measure potential as well as performance. When boys join the school they are expected to remain until the age of 13 when they take the Common Entrance or Scholarship Examination to a Public School.

## **Uniform**

The school colours are dark blue, ochre and mulberry. Boys must wear the school uniform, which is obtainable from the official suppliers: Billings & Edmonds, 112 Chiswick High Road, W4 1PU, Tel. 020 8742 0201. A clothing list is available.

## **Old Cadogans**

The family atmosphere of the school is enhanced by the fact that many old boys keep in close touch. Old Cadogans are invited to a bi-annual reunion and receive a copy of the magazine for five years after leaving.

## **Fees**

The inclusive fee is £5,830 per term. It is a particular feature of the Sussex House fees that there are no compulsory extras at all.

All fees must be paid by the first day of term. A full term's notice is required before a boy is withdrawn from the school or a term's fees paid in lieu of notice. The school tries to give as much notice as possible of an increase in fees. No allowance in fees can be made for absence but attention is drawn to an insurance scheme for their remission in cases of illness, and particulars are available. The Headmaster reserves the right to ask for a boy to be removed in the interest of the school.

## **School Policies**

A number of School policies are available to prospective parents via the school website, or on request from the School Office. The website can be found at [www.sussexhouseschool.co.uk](http://www.sussexhouseschool.co.uk). The policies available are: Admissions, Anti-Bullying, Child Safeguarding and Protection, Complaints Procedure, Discipline and Behaviour and Learning Support.

*The School is a Registered Charity No. 1035806*

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