



Upper Prep & Senior School  
The Journey to GCSE



**DURLSTON**  
PREP & SENIOR SCHOOL





“If you are looking for an exceptional school, then look to Durlston.”

Durlston has a long standing reputation for all-round educational excellence – combining academic, creative and sporting opportunities with the pastoral support to help children grow in ability and confidence, to ultimately achieve their very best. We are thrilled that we can now offer children the opportunity to continue their education at Durlston through to Year 11 and to GCSE examinations.

We have wonderful facilities and grounds but it is our dedicated staff team that makes the biggest difference. The Durlston staff inspire the children to make exceptional progress in their learning and will always go the extra mile to ensure that children thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. P. May".

*Richard May, Headmaster*







# Why choose Durlston?

We have a strong reputation for providing a high quality education. Over the years we have proved that we know what is necessary to enable children to thrive, to make exceptional progress and to succeed. There is no magic formula for this. It is down to a number of factors, and it is this combination of factors that we believe makes Durlston the best choice for GCSEs for your child.

- **A highly professional, hard-working, loyal and dedicated staff.** The people who work at this school are absolutely committed to providing the best educational experience possible for your child.
- **Small class sizes.** Pupil progress can be closely monitored with support or extension offered where appropriate. We can ensure that we are able to teach each child as an individual and enable them to reach their full potential.
- **Pastoral support.** High adult to pupil ratios allow us to provide exceptional pastoral care. Children change dramatically between the ages of 11

and 16 and by limiting the number in each year group we can be aware of any potential issues and provide whatever support is necessary to allow your child to thrive and be happy.

- **A wide-ranging curriculum.** We offer a broad range of optional subjects and the strong core of essential subjects. Children are able to follow their interests and select GCSEs that will allow them to follow more specialised options at 6th form and beyond.
- **Co-curricular and enrichment activities.** This will range from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme to careers guidance, work experience, lectures, visits, leadership opportunities, trips home and abroad and much else besides.
- **The quality of relationships between peers and between staff and pupils.** Our decision to limit the numbers at the school allows us to retain the family feel of the school. In practical terms, this means that the older children can always have a part to play in helping look after

the younger children. The children enjoy being part of a real community where they are valued and important. It also means your child will develop the ability to interact with staff and adults more than in other schools. We, as a staff, genuinely enjoy building a connection with pupils. The quality of this relationship leads to a maturity amongst children that you seldom find in bigger schools.

- **Designated senior facilities.** As well as having a role to play with the younger children in the school, we recognise that the older children also enjoy spending time with their peers and having their own space. We provide facilities and areas, such as the Senior Common Room, to allow this to happen.









# Years 7 and 8

We recognise the importance of these key years of education and use our extensive experience in delivering an inspiring curriculum to instil a positive attitude to learning which our pupils carry with them throughout their future. Our designated Form Teachers are there to encourage and support the children. Our specialist staff are passionate about their subjects and have the knowledge and expertise to deliver teaching at an exceptionally high level.

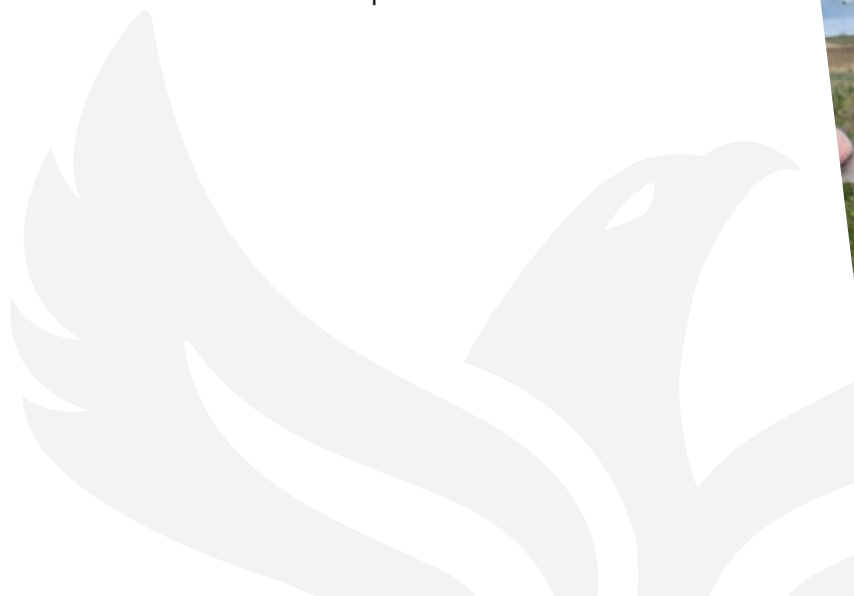
We encourage every pupil to become confident, hard-working, kind and not afraid to push themselves to the limit, whether in the classroom, on the sports field, when performing to a large audience or when bog running on Dartmoor!

In English, Maths and Science, pupils follow the ISEB Common Entrance syllabus. This provides them with an excellent preparatory curriculum for their compulsory subjects at GCSE. Formal, certified examinations in these subjects take place in the final half term of Year 8 to complete these courses of study.

Humanities and Languages curricula are broadly based on the high standards of the

Common Entrance syllabus but incorporate a greater degree of flexibility, allowing staff to move beyond CE by including even more diverse, engaging and aspirational topics. End of year internal examinations take place in these subjects.

Alongside the examined subjects listed above, we continue to offer a plethora of wide-ranging learning opportunities throughout the timetable with Art, Design and Technology, Music, Drama, Computing, PSHE and Games lessons. The overarching aim of these lessons is to broaden our pupils' knowledge and skills and to give them the best possible preparation and experience from which to select GCSE options that motivate and inspire them.







# Years 9 to 11

The Year 9 curriculum is similar in structure to that of Year 8 and includes the same range of subjects, thus maintaining the breadth of provision ahead of pupils selecting their GCSE options in the spring term. These options are chosen in close collaboration with their teachers. Our small cohort sizes allow for individualised guidance, ensuring that pupils are selecting subjects that best suit their needs and interests.

During Year 10 and 11 pupils follow a course of between eight and ten GCSEs. The core offering includes English Literature, English Language, Mathematics and the Sciences. We then expect the majority of pupils to choose a language – French or Spanish.

The range of GCSE options are likely to include:

- Geography
- History
- Religious Studies
- PE
- Music
- Art and Design
- Drama
- Business Studies
- Computer Science
- Second Language

Learning Support is available as an 'option' to ensure that there is dedicated time for this provision.

“Durlston has strong values and is aspirational for all pupils.”









# Extended Curriculum

## **Sport**

The School enjoys a fantastic track record in our provision of sport, and we remain fully committed to continuing this offering in Years 9–11. As well as the GCSE in Physical Education option, all pupils in Years 9–11 have Games and PE lessons and the chance to take part in fixtures against other schools. In addition to providing opportunities to participate and compete in the main team sports, we also aim to ensure that every child will understand the importance of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. As children move through the school, we introduce individual and small team sports such as fitness, basketball, badminton, volleyball and handball. We also continue to foster links with clubs and other local sports organisations.

Throughout the senior years our programme allows the pupils to experience a variety of leisure opportunities. Activities such as clay pigeon shooting, boxercise, multi gym, aerobics, climbing, dry-slope skiing and rowing, aim to broaden horizons and encourage pupils to find pursuits that they may wish to follow in future.

## **Community and Responsibility**

We are proud to support our community – in school, locally and further afield. Our senior pupils have the opportunity to organise fund-raising and awareness events and involve themselves as volunteers and Durlston ambassadors in a variety of community and charity projects. Our key aim is to foster a sense of awareness of life outside school, helping children develop a sense of community and responsibility so that they, in turn, can become good citizens in our rapidly evolving world; children and citizens driven by a desire to make their world a better place.

## **Co-Curricular Clubs and Activities**

Durlston is fortunate to have wonderful facilities and a staff committed to providing opportunities beyond the curriculum. Our active clubs programme continues for the older children. Pupils will be able to take part in a variety of clubs and activities offering a changing selection, from supported prep sessions to learning new skills such as screenwriting, music technology and beyond.

In addition, there are lots of opportunities to be involved in creative, dramatic and musical productions, and a wide range of trips and excursions, whether at home or abroad. At all times, pupils will be involved in the wider life of the school.

## **Life Experiences at Durlston (LEAD)**

Our 'LEAD' programme is aimed at pupils in Year 9–11 and helps develop skills such as debating, business and enterprise, career awareness, public speaking and 'student survival'. Pupils are also encouraged and supported through the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

We provide careers guidance following the Gatsby Benchmarks, helping pupils explore options for their future. They will also take part in work and volunteering experiences, as well as being introduced to a variety of guest speakers from the world of work. When it is time to think about moving on from Durlston our staff will be there to discuss choices and progression options. We are on hand to support and facilitate introductions from 6th form providers and industry professionals.







# Pastoral and Well-Being

From the moment our pupils arrive each morning the Form Teachers provide a supportive environment to ensure that our pupils receive the very best pastoral care on a daily basis. Our Form Teachers are supported by a dedicated pastoral department with access to a full-time qualified counsellor, who is ELSA\* and TALA\*\* qualified. This means that our support extends well beyond the academic to truly care for the 'whole' child. Through our dedicated PSHE programme we encourage pupils to learn about themselves in the world around them, to develop healthy friendships and relationships, as well as encouraging emotional resilience to help them deal with any challenges they may face. Pupils can discuss and share in a trusted setting, supporting their physical and mental well-being.

The term 'Durlston Family' is embedded in our culture and both children and parents regularly comment on the sense of belonging that they experience here.

- Each pupil has a dedicated Form Teacher whose primary role is to build positive relationships with them and look out for their well-being.
- Form Teachers are carefully chosen for their expertise in the age they are supporting. As well as discreet PSHE lessons for every pupil, the form teacher also covers pastoral topics as and when they arise with their form e.g. dealing with conflict, growth mindset, mindfulness, etc.
- Our dedicated, full-time Pastoral Care Manager works closely with Form Teachers, SENDCo and other staff. Pupils can seek emotional support directly, or be referred by teaching staff.
- Regular and open communication between staff, parents and pupils is a vital part of our pastoral care.
- Well-being awareness is promoted throughout the school through assemblies, World Mental Health Day, PSHE and cross-curricular days, to name a few.
- We provide dedicated quiet areas that can be used for both emotional and well-being support or to provide an additional quiet study area if needed.
- We have links with visiting professionals within areas of well-being and mental health.

\* Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

\*\* Therapeutic Active Listening Assistant









# Next steps

We hope that you will want to find out more about joining Durlston and we welcome visits from parents and pupils. If you would like to apply for a place, please complete a registration form and return to us together with the registration fee. We will then invite your child to join us for a trial day where they can experience a little of Durlston life. This will also give staff the opportunity to make an assessment to help with setting, option discussions and identify any additional requirements. We will then confirm an offer of a place. If you wish to accept then you will need to return a contract and deposit.

## **Scholarships and Bursaries**

We encourage excellence and welcome talented pupils who wish to apply for Durlston Scholarships. These cover a wide range of disciplines across the school. In addition, we offer bursarial support for families who, without assistance, may not be able to access a Durlston education.

Please contact us for further information.











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