Queen Elizabeth’s Hospital was founded in 1586 by John Carr. His aim was to provide a quality education for any boy in Bristol regardless of his means. Four hundred years on, QEH remains true to its founder’s vision.

Traditionally known as ‘The City School’, we have close links with the Mayor and Corporation but our reputation goes much wider. QEH is a highly successful independent school, renowned nationally for its achievements in public examinations, sport, music and drama.

We are proud of our history. We are also proud of our boys and privileged to be involved in shaping their futures.

QEH is no ordinary school

We are a medium-sized school. With only 570 Senior and 100 Junior day pupils, we know every boy. Individuals matter; there’s space for a boy to be himself.

Visitors comment on the friendliness and confidence of the boys, and the boys speak about how well they get on with each other and the staff. We encourage self-respect and respect for others, not least through our assemblies which are Christian but which fully involve those of other faiths.

We are academically selective but not socially exclusive. There’s a good mix of people at QEH. With a curriculum specifically tailored to meet boys’ needs, examination results for boys at QEH are second to none in Bristol.

Yet we believe a QEH education should go far beyond high grades; we want our boys to develop all their talents, acquire strong moral values and grow as leaders within our community. All our students also enjoy being part of the wider Bristol community and benefit from being close to the university, galleries, theatres and museums.

The talents and potential of boys in the school never cease to amaze me. It is a pleasure to work in such a unique place and a privilege to play a part in shaping the lives of the young men of QEH.
Boys will be boys ...

... but only if they have the chance to be themselves! Boys learn in a different way from girls and thrive in a single-sex school.

In general, boys like to be adventurous and active in their learning. They love spontaneity and the opportunity to express an opinion. In science they can’t wait to do practical work. In art and drama they can be wonderfully imaginative and creative.

Whatever the subject, they’re eager to ask questions and to take risks. We teach in ways that suit boys. We also understand their foibles and their tendency to leave things to the last minute and we’re pretty good at coaxing them out of teenage blues!

Without girls in class, boys are freer to acknowledge their feelings and be creative, developing self-confidence without the strain and complication of trying to impress the opposite sex. Boys will respond maturely to literature, sing in the choir, act on stage, read a poem in assembly and play for the 1st XV rugby team - all because they are less shy about developing whatever talents they have.

Of course our boys are in great demand. We join with girls’ schools in drama and music, in debating and public speaking and there are trips together with girls’ schools.

Hardly a week passes without girls visiting QEH or boys visiting one of the many girls’ schools. Sometimes there’s combined teaching at sixth form level and the younger ones are popular at the joint discos held with at least three girls’ schools.

So, our boys have the best of both worlds!
Academic achievement is our core activity

A positive work ethic, talented teachers and small classes combine with high expectations from parents and staff to produce success year on year.

We take care to ensure good links with a boy’s previous schooling and experience and we build on his prior achievements. We help him to set targets and give him support if necessary.

All our boys are bright, but they have different academic needs. Some are gifted mathematicians and go on to distinguish themselves in national competitions; others are talented linguists. Many love science and go on to become doctors or engineers; others love reading and writing, expressing themselves elegantly in poems and essays. Some like the cut and thrust of debate in politics and history, whilst others like to work creatively or collaboratively in art, music and drama.

Our aim is to produce well-educated young men. The curriculum is broad but also offers the chance to study subjects in depth, and the creative subjects have room to breathe. We expect pupils to work hard, believing a good education is a voyage of discovery to be enjoyed. Our boys are stretched but not stressed. Above all, the relationship between boys and staff is friendly and professional.

Sixth formers leave with good paper qualifications, but they need more than those to equip them for top universities and life beyond QEH. We want them to have a well-stocked mind and to be able to think. Effective intelligence is the measure of a good all-round education.

“Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and are enthusiastic to share this passion with their pupils.”

Inspection Report
People often comment on how self-assured and well-mannered our pupils are. The boys’ friendly spirit and good behaviour are partly the result of unobtrusive but strong pastoral care.

In a school of 570, we know and care for every boy. Each one has a personal tutor and a head of year. If something goes wrong, we spot it and, most importantly, we work hard to solve the problem effectively and sensitively.

New boys invariably settle in quickly. That doesn’t happen by chance. Each has a sixth form mentor who is trained to listen in a peer support scheme. New boys quickly sense that QEH is a close-knit, caring community where individuals are both encouraged and encourage one another.

Traditional values such as respect for others and good manners underpin our pastoral care. PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) is at the heart of our curriculum and emphasises the importance we place on developing self-respect and respect for others.

We have trained medical staff who offer care and first-aid if needed as well as on-going advice for boys and parents.

Parents play a key role in their son’s education. Support and encouragement from home are vital if a pupil is going to do well. We want to work in close partnership with parents especially if a boy makes some mistakes as he grows up - and many teenagers do! Together, parents and school can pick him up and put him back on track.

QEH boys grow up to be tolerant, socially at ease and self-reliant. Of course we cannot take all the credit - but we would like to claim we played our part.

“Pupils at QEH are very well looked after. Pastoral care is outstanding. There are excellent links with parents ...”

Inspection Report
We encourage and celebrate self-expression

Few schools can boast a 220-seat purpose-built theatre, let alone one equipped to professional standards.

For many boys it is a place where they learn to communicate and express themselves. So many are involved on stage, in the technical crew or as the ‘front of house’ team, and all benefit from the wide range of productions which are attracted to the QEH Theatre.

A brief visit to the art department becomes a fascinating journey into the minds of teenage boys. Here they explore and express their feelings in paint and clay and develop expertise in photography, computer imaging, screen printing and film making. Equally, they can practise their skills and test their ingenuity solving problems in the Design Technology Centre.

Making music is a vital part of school life. We have a rich choral tradition and sing regularly in Bristol Cathedral and the Lord Mayor’s Chapel. Our orchestras, jazz band and ensembles cater for a wide range of talents and tastes, performing frequently in venues around Bristol as well as undertaking tours to Europe and the United States. When a boy joins the school he has the chance to start an instrument and we encourage all boys to have a go!

Once his imagination is fired and a boy has the opportunity to express his creativity, he grows in stature and confidence. It is no exaggeration to say that exciting work in the theatre, art or in music can be a truly life-changing experience.
Boys thrive on the opportunity to compete

Sport is a strength at QEH. With expert coaching and excellent facilities, boys thrive on the opportunity to compete and develop their talents in team and individual sports.

We enjoy a widespread reputation for rugby and football in the winter. Summer sports include cricket, athletics and tennis. Being a good sportsman in every sense is the philosophy that underpins our games.

At Failand, we work in partnership with Bristol City Football Club who use our 23 acres to train. We have exciting plans to extend and develop our existing facilities with Bristol City FC.

Not all boys are good at sport. Some just enjoy taking part and we have teams which are full of enthusiasm but a little short on skill! Others don’t enjoy team sport at all and we offer a range of opportunities from hiking to climbing, which ensures that all can gain exercise without feeling miserable.

Houses give many boys the chance to take part in competitions for sport, music, debating, and chess. There’s even a house academic cup.

Boys can also join a wide range of clubs and societies. In the early years we nudge them into new areas by having an activities slot on the timetable and that still leaves time to explore junior drama, bridge, photography, ornithology, judo and much more.

Every boy is good at something in addition to his academic work, and every boy needs to develop an interest outside the classroom. At QEH he will be able to explore and develop his talents to the full. Old boys often say that their activities at QEH became hobbies for life.
“There is a wide programme of extra-curricular activities which enrich the pupils’ broad education.”

Inspection Report

Boys learn much outside the classroom

Sometimes boys learn as much out of the classroom as in it. Climbing the Himalayas, singing in the USA, skiing in the Alps or just enjoying Bristol zoo - we believe in offering rich and diverse experiences beyond the classroom which complement what we do in school.

Younger boys throw themselves into the annual activities week in Devon, older ones tackle the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award and the annual Ten Tors Competition.

Holidays invariably see a QEHS party abroad historians to World War I battlefields, linguists to Spain, classicists to Italy, geographers to Iceland, biologists to the Galapagos Islands, artists to Barcelona, musicians to Italy or the USA, and rugby tourists to Australia or South Africa. Every year the school offers travel awards up to £1000 to individuals for their own expeditions.

We think of others, too, through fundraising and social work. Regular ‘mufti days’ and Children in Need collections see large amounts raised. Year 7 boys undertake a sponsored hike each year for charity. Recent projects have seen boys working in practical ways to support the homeless and asylum seekers, putting our school motto, “While we have time, let us do good”, into practice.
Bright futures
The Sixth Form & beyond

What are we trying to achieve? Whether a boy joins in the Junior School or at Sixth Form, we hope that he will leave as a well educated (not just well qualified) young man, with a wide range of skills and interests to give him the confidence and inner strength to be successful at the next stage in life.

Nearly all our sixth form students go on to Higher Education, winning places at Oxford and Cambridge, other leading universities and medical schools.

Many of our leavers say their sixth form years were the best in school. They enjoy the freedom of the sixth form centre and the responsibility of becoming leaders in our school community. Academically, they learn to be more independent whilst still enjoying the support of an individual tutor.

Whether or not we’re successful is for others to judge. Certainly we are proud of our former pupils and they seem equally proud of us.
QEH Junior School
The pursuit of happiness

Your son is unique, so choosing the right junior school for him is one of the most important decisions you will ever make.

QEH Junior School shares the strong ethos and values of the Senior School whilst enjoying its own clear identity. We work closely with Redland High School for Girls who accept boys aged three upwards, most of whom will join us in Year 3.

With small classes, each pupil feels valued as an individual. Strong pastoral care throughout Years 3 to 6 is a top priority because we know that a boy learns best when he is happy and secure.

Teachers nurture the personal qualities of each boy, uncovering his gifts and encouraging his spirit of curiosity through a rich and varied curriculum. Learning is active, purposeful and, above all, fun.

Building a boy’s self-esteem in the classroom and through sport, drama, music and other extra-curricular activities fosters confidence as well as equipping him with academic and personal qualities for life in the Senior School. Parents enjoy the peace of mind that comes from knowing their son is cared for before, during or after the school day.

At QEH Junior School boys develop a passion for learning and a zest for life!
“While we have time, let us do good.”

School motto

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