



EDGBASTON
HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Preparing Girls for the Future

The world of work is changing, and it's estimated that up to 65% of today's students will be employed in jobs that don't even exist yet.

In recent years, society has over-emphasised the value of academic success across a limited number of subject areas. The result has been a narrowing of the curriculum and young people missing out on opportunities to develop key life skills like confidence, resilience, critical thinking, creativity, communication skills and problem solving. Often referred to as 'soft skills' these are attributes that the World Economic Forum and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) say will be critical as we move into the fourth industrial revolution.

Civil rights activist, Martin Luther King Jr famously said 'intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education'. At EHS that translates into nurturing the 'whole person'. Combining a broad and inspirational academic curriculum with a co-curricular and enrichment programme that recognises the vital interplay between intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development.

Employers already complain of a skills shortage crisis and 92% now place as much, if not more, value on these soft skills as they do on hard skills and academic qualifications. Here at EHS, however, we have never lost sight of our core mission: to nurture confident, considerate, and intellectually curious young women.

Head of Careers at EHS, Jacqueline Shutt, says: "Academic rigour underpins everything we do but we are resolute that it is only part of the picture - or person. From sports, music, the arts, Young Enterprise and community outreach work to the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, gardening, working backstage, debating and public-speaking societies, overseas trips, and cultural visits, we aim to expose EHS girls to as wide and varied a set of experiences and opportunities as possible during their time with us. These experiences, whilst undoubtedly fun, do a number of important things: they broaden horizons, provide opportunities for girls to pursue individual interests, develop new friendships, new passions and find out what does (and crucially what doesn't) make them tick. They also encourage social and personal development, teaching vital life and work skills like team building, co-operation, communication, tolerance, and empathy".

As an all-girls school, the phrase 'you can't be what you can't see' carries particular weight. At EHS girls are, and always have been, surrounded by successful female role models. Yet in the wider world women are still underrepresented in boardrooms.

Deputy Head Curriculum, Jessica Crimp, is proud of the breadth of the school's curriculum and is clear about the benefits: "Making sure that girls leave EHS armed not only with the grades and qualifications they need but the confidence that anything they set their minds to is possible, defines what we do as a school. At every stage of a girls' journey with us we aim to raise aspirations and broaden horizons by providing regular exposure to a huge range of possibilities and positive role models. The majority of our senior leadership team is female, and girls have a number of opportunities throughout the school to take on leadership, advisory and mentoring roles. At EHS we offer choices; we don't want girls to be subjected to a narrow set of expectations, so we deliberately

offer a range of traditional subjects like Latin, sciences, and history alongside more specialist subjects like dance and PE at GCSE. At A level girls are offered an unrivalled choice of 30 subjects. If they have a passion for it, we'll try and accommodate it wherever we can."

That spirit runs across all aspects of life at EHS, and every effort is made to help the girls develop in all areas. For example, service to the community, citizenship and personal responsibility are a key part of the enrichment curriculum with opportunities to help others featuring prominently in Sixth Form Life. Students can choose from helping in local schools, hospices, and residential homes for the elderly or to help in other departments of school, gaining real-life experience and new capabilities along the way. Elsewhere focussed careers education is integrated into the school's PSHEE programme from Year 7 all the way up to Sixth Form.

The school also secures regular guest talks by experts and professionals from political, entertainment and professional backgrounds. The 4,500 strong 'old girls' network is another rich resource and members from all over the UK, Europe, Canada, the US and Australia willingly share their experiences through the EHS Careers Talks programme and via the popular @EHSCareers Instagram account. During the pandemic, increased use of video communications such as Zoom had really advanced the school's ability to connect with alumnae and continues to benefit pupils today. From medics, pilots, members of the armed forces and stage performers, to musicians, lawyers and media executives, these fascinating sessions provide girls with first-hand accounts of university and career choices and offer an invaluable insight into the breadth and variety of career options open to them.

Jacqueline concludes: "There's no one size fits all approach and no typical 'EHS girl'. Each year we never fail to be amazed by the range of interests and talents reflected in the destinations of our Year 13 leavers. From neuroscience, law and medicine to sports science, economics, criminology, psychology, music, engineering, business, fashion and drama, the possibilities are endless. So, while we may not know the sorts of jobs that will be available in the future one thing is certain: our job is to harness the individual talents of each girl, show her what's possible and help her develop the skills and attributes she needs to get there."

Edgbaston High School,
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