



MERCHANT TAYLORS'  
Prep

# Information for Prospective Candidates



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In 2015, we announced that we had joined the Merchant Taylors' family of schools to create, for the first time in Northwood, a 'through school' experience for boys from 3 to 18. This has been a very exciting development and was conceived with the aim of creating a cohesive and seamless curriculum and making the process of transfer from the prep school to the senior school simpler and less stressful.

Since becoming Merchant Taylors' Prep, the admissions system for our pupils to Merchant Taylors' School has been based on on-going assessment at school and not dependent on one external examination (i.e. 11+ or 13+). This has freed significant time in our curriculum, which we have been devoting to 'intellectual curiosity' and the development of higher order thinking skills.

Prior to 2015, we were known as Northwood Prep, with a very successful history since 1910, when the school was founded by Francis Terry. Throughout more recent developments, Francis Terry's original vision of the school has been maintained. A Christian, caring environment has been established where each pupil is valued as an individual and given a full range of opportunities, and all concerned - pupils, staff and governors - strive for excellence. This ethos is summarised by three core values: compassion, opportunity and excellence.

At Merchant Taylors' Prep we are committed to maintaining a strong academic tradition whilst preserving a balance between the academic, spiritual, emotional and physical needs of our pupils. We seek to develop the boys' character through promoting values and dispositions, high quality teaching and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities.

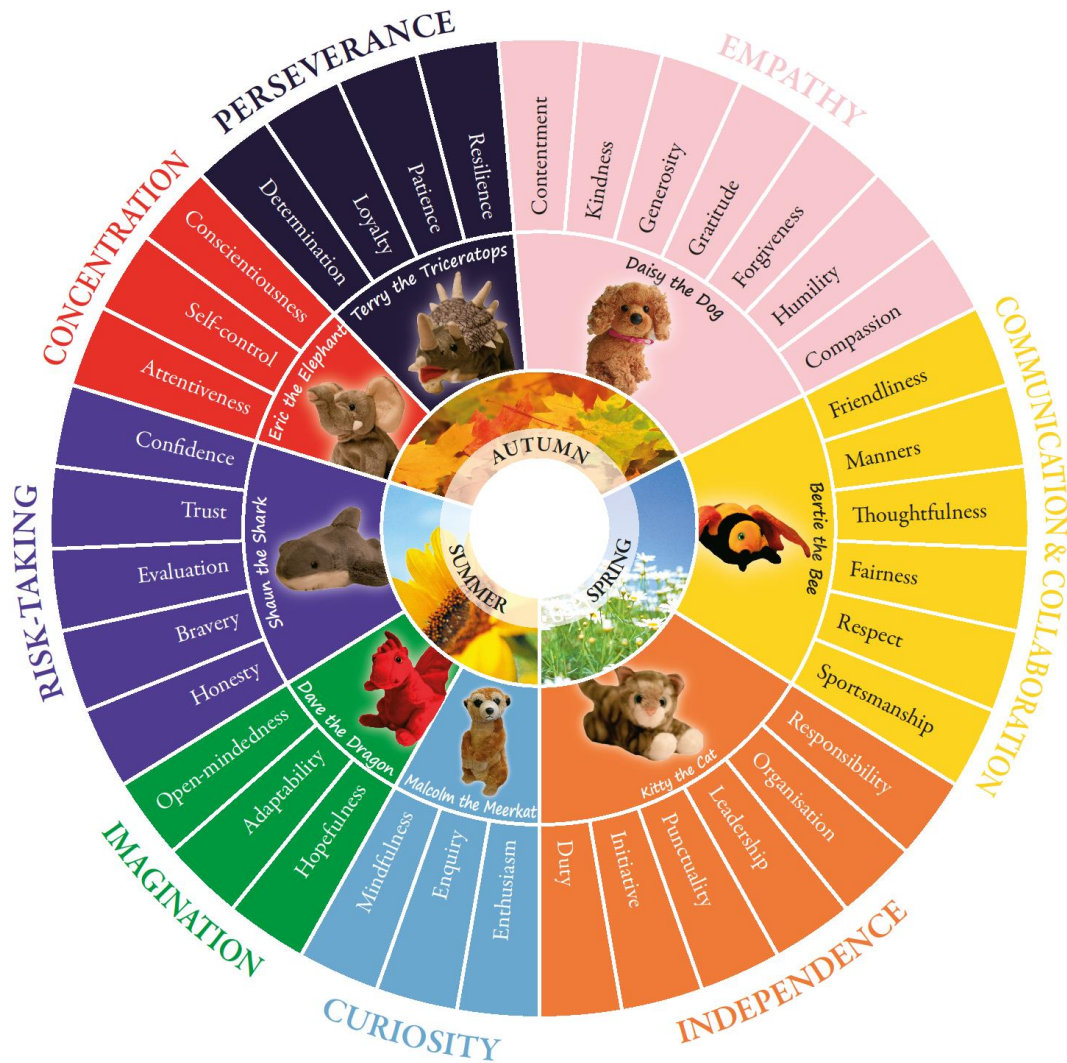
Dr K. McNerney

Head of Merchant Taylors' Prep



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# Our Values and Dispositions



*compassion opportunity excellence*





## Nursery and Reception

Our Nursery and Reception classes are situated at the Manor of the Rose, a building within the Merchant Taylors' School site. They are part of our Pre-Prep Department and are overseen by our Head of Pre-Prep. In Nursery and Reception, our aim is to give the children a happy and positive learning experience that will provide the foundations for effective learning throughout their time in school and beyond. The children are introduced to the following learning dispositions: concentration, communication and collaboration, independence, imagination, empathy, perseverance, curiosity and risk taking. These important characteristics underpin all the activities that the children undertake during their time with us.

The education provided in the Early Years is a very effective, practical and oral curriculum, which is taught through a range of exciting and stimulating topics. The children participate in a wide range of teacher-led and child-initiated activities in all areas of development, in both the indoor and outside environment. They also receive dedicated Music, French and PE lessons delivered by specialist teachers from Merchant Taylors' Prep. Forest School is a weekly activity and an important part of our curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development is given high priority and, through a wide range of experiences, the children develop a positive sense of themselves and a sense of empathy for others. This gives them the best opportunity for success in other areas of learning. Our programme of communication, language and literacy skills (including reading and writing) is designed to give the children the best possible start. In Mathematics, practical activities (including applying knowledge to solve problems) are planned to ensure that concepts are clearly understood.

Our aim is to ensure that children enjoy their Early Years experiences in the care of skilful and sympathetic staff. We lay the foundations for children's future success in a stimulating and caring environment.



## **Years 1 and 2**

Years 1 and 2 are situated in the Pre-Prep Department on the Merchant Taylors' Prep site and are also overseen by the Head of Pre-Prep. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is taught through topics, and there is opportunity to extend the topics that are studied to match the children's interests and excite their imagination. Through topic teaching we cover aspects of the following subjects: English, Science, History, Geography, Art, DT, Computing and PSHE. Mathematics and RS are taught as separate subjects and P4C (Philosophy for Children) is also taught, which promotes thinking and reasoning skills. Forest School continues to be an important part of the Year 1 and Year 2 curriculum.

Our emphasis is on making our pupils feel at home in a caring environment and building firm foundations in literacy and numeracy. From the beginning, each boy receives individual attention in small classes (20 is our maximum class size). Our enthusiastic, motivated teaching staff and their assistants are dedicated to delivering academic excellence and promoting independent working, as well as providing a high level of pastoral care.

This vital blend, of which we are justly proud, is important in confidence building and fulfilling the potential of every boy. The Pre-Prep Department is purpose built and we are constantly expanding our facilities to ensure that our boys have the very best environment for their learning and play. There are extra-curricular activities and additional specialist teaching is offered in French, Music and PE. This leads to a smooth transition to the Prep Department at the age of seven.



## Prep Department

Years 3 and 4 are located at one end of the Prep Department and we have a Head of Years 3 and 4. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' development starts to move from the class-based teaching that nurtures their Pre-Prep lives and prepares them for full subject-based teaching necessary for success in Year 5.

In Year 4, opportunities are offered for residential visits, which give the pupils first-hand experiences of the curriculum, adding an exciting and supportive dimension to classroom teaching.

Years 5 to 8, in turn, prepare our boys for the challenges of their next chosen school and the process of growing into confident and responsible young men. This is done by developing skills, knowledge, values and self-confidence and by equipping them with the right tools to negotiate immediate challenges as well as to prepare for the demands of the future. Lessons are delivered by subject specialists in specialist teaching rooms; the pupils are taught in mixed ability groups.

In a caring and secure environment, lively minds are developed through learning experiences, which are stimulating, challenging and purposeful. A full extra-curricular programme encourages participation in activities ranging from chess to table tennis, developing the pupils' abilities and interests in new pursuits.

The use of our magnificent playing fields and purpose-built Sports Hall is maximised through a full and varied sporting programme. Our boys learn to participate in team games, honing their skills for playing inter-house and inter-school matches. This helps build a healthy team spirit and encourages leadership skills, which are a vital adjunct to the pupils' intellectual and spiritual development.





Our purpose-built Theatre is an excellent resource to promote independence and confidence through timetabled Drama lessons delivered by our Director of Drama, from Year 3 upwards, and annual productions for each year group.

Musical development is a key feature of Merchant Taylors' Prep with a firm emphasis on ensuring that all pupils become musically proficient as well as nurturing individual musical talent. There are numerous opportunities to perform, with many musical events run jointly with Merchant Taylors' School.

Overall, the emphasis is focused on small class size, individual attention and pastoral care. There is also the value-added dimension a dynamic House system that involves and values every individual. House Tutor Groups for Years 5-8 are vertical and offer the opportunity of peer mentoring as well as establishing important relationships.

