



KHS Co-Education Information for Prospective Parents

Executive Summary

Further to a period of consultation with key stakeholders in the school, analysis conducted by a strategy sub-committee and information provided by a widely-respected educational consultant, governors in the spring term meeting voted unanimously in principle for KHS to become co-educational in September 2021. This decision was ratified formally in the summer term meeting on Monday 15th June. The target area will be year groups up to and including Year 7 in September 2021 although girls may be permitted to join higher in the school on an informed basis, at the discretion of the Headmaster.

'A Preparation for Life'

Kingswood House School
An outstanding, all-round education up to GCSE

Offering Co-Education from September 2021

*Early applications are advised.
Tours with the Headmaster are available now by appointment.*

**AUTUMN
OPEN
MORNINGS**

Saturday 19 September
Friday 2 October
Friday 6 November

Email: Mrs Helen Parker, Registrar
admissions@kingswoodhouse.org

Tel: 01372 723590

Book online:
www.kingswoodhouse.org

1. Background
2. Considerations
3. Q&A

1. Background

Kingswood House was founded in 1899 and for many years enjoyed an enviable reputation as a well-rounded 13+ preparatory school for approximately 175 boys. Whilst pupils moved on to a range of prestigious senior schools, the vast majority of boys moved on to either St John's, Leatherhead, or Epsom College.

In 2016, given the growing significance of selective 11+ pre-tests, the expansion of the aforementioned schools down into Year 7 & 8 and its effect on pupil retention in Upper Prep, the decision was taken by governors to extend educational provision at Kingswood House up to 16+. Importantly, a precedent has potentially been set for the school to be bold and embrace change.

Furthermore, the school has over time cultivated a special niche by having a well-resourced and knowledgeable study centre on site which offers outstanding support for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). As such, Kingswood House aims to fill a tangible gap in the Surrey and London market by presenting itself as a smaller, supportive environment with excellent pastoral care and emphasis on family values - that may suit many pupils for whom a big, competitive school might be the wrong fit. This concept is equally applicable to girls as well as boys, as well as across the ability spectrum, with opportunities for extension and a robust Gifted & Talented programme.

Whilst there are a number of other co-educational schools in the vicinity, there is no obvious destination for this ilk of female pupil to go. The school's strapline is "A Preparation for Life" and we offer a pioneering life skills programme and emphasis on learning beyond the classroom. Philosophically, it seems the right thing to extend our brand of education across the gender divide.

Financially, it is also a logical decision to open our doors to another 50% of the market. We are currently not a consideration for those families who are seeking a 'one stop drop' solution for their children's schooling, yet all contemporary research is indicative that this is a major factor for families, especially ones in which both parents work. Convenience is definitely a key driver in the decision for many prospective families and co-education would give us a greater credibility in that regard and a broader scope for pupil recruitment in all year groups.

The first small cohort of Year 11 pupils sat GCSE exams last summer with a very good profile of results, reflective of the school's diverse range of intake and with strong evidence of value-added. There is a sound academic platform upon which to build for a co-educational future, with relevant GCSE options.

Kingswood House is affiliated to the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools and the Society of Heads and was judged to be 'outstanding' in its last ISI EQ inspection (2014) and fully compliant in 2018. The school's affiliation to both the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools and the Society of Heads will be unaffected by a move to co-education.

In 2018, the school was short-listed for a prestigious Independent School of the Year award in large part thanks to the development of the "Kingswood House Way", a bespoke tapestry of academic and character-based learning, which also correlates with the strapline: 'A Preparation for Life'. In 2019, the school won the accolade of Best National School Trip award. The fundamental principle of equipping our pupils with the skills they need to negotiate the real world beyond the school gate correlates very tidily with a move to co-education. Girls are going to have a pivotal role to play in the lives of our boys and it seems irresponsible of us as a forward-thinking school not to give them a social grounding in cultivating relationships with the opposite sex based on mutual respect and understanding.

A registered charity since 1963, Kingwood House is prudently governed with sound financial management, and the school has invested in excess of £2M in teaching accommodation in the last five years. Although the site is privately owned by a family, the school has budgeted carefully to meet the projected rental increases and lease arrangements. Playing fields are rented very favourably at nearby Parsons Mead and Ashted Cricket Club.

There is the potential to accommodate girls within the scope of the current site at West Hill with relatively small initial changes, which are cost-effective, as well as to offer girls' games and clubs using the available space both at school or off-site, with effective planning and deployment of resources and personnel.

There is an excellent team of staff, with a good male-female ratio and balanced age range, many of whom have worked in co-educational settings before. Whilst a management role for a 'Head of Girls' will evolve, there is no other significant implication for staffing in the short term. At a time when there is a forecast for an uncertain economic climate, an announcement of co-education is a positive message and shows a determination on the part of governors to act decisively and safeguard the future of the school whilst fielding record numbers on roll.

There is a loyal parental body at KHS. Feedback from current parents following a letter in the autumn term was supportive of co-education at the school and we have seen a number of enquiries about siblings joining the school in the future.

A new, full-time, Head of Admissions & Marketing is joining in September and her primary remit will be to expedite the marketing and recruitment of our first cohort of girls in September 2021, reporting directly to the Headmaster. She will establish new admissions events throughout the academic year with a generous budget and oversee all prospective interest in the school.

2. Considerations

After the spring term governors' meeting, a working party was convened by the Headmaster to discuss key considerations for a move to co-education, with the following conclusions:

- *Academic*

It was determined that the breadth and rigour of the academic curriculum, as well as the assessment and reporting procedures in place, throughout the school are appropriate to meet the needs of girls as well as boys.

Action:

Academic programmes of study will be reviewed and ensure that suitable opportunities for female role models or points of interest are included to replace or appropriately balance the existing male counterparts.

- *Pastoral & Safeguarding*

It was agreed that the current pastoral system, specifically in terms of rewards, sanctions, the behaviour code and ELSA provision, was commensurate for girls as well as boys. In terms of safeguarding, it was noted that the DSL team should always have one or more female member on it. The school rules, and uniform, will need to be refined to include relevant aspects of female attire in due course – e.g. length of skirts, earrings etc.

Action:

The SLT will ensure that there is always one or more female member of staff on the DSL team and check that school rules are updated to include reference to girls' uniform.

- *Sport*

Sport is a major consideration of becoming co-educational because whilst it is entirely feasible to run sports concurrently with boys up to the end of Year 6, it is more complex to manage this situation effectively and safely further up the school.

It is proposed that we might offer netball or another 'girl' sport in addition to unisex sports such as football, tag rugby, hockey, cricket and athletics. Initially, a member of staff or an external coach could run netball as a club. It was noted that the aim of raising a girls' team will ultimately be dependent upon weight of numbers as will the ability to field a side capable of sufficient competition in order to make it a worthwhile experience for all participants. In the meantime, it was agreed that it is acceptable to field mixed gender sides in primary age groups with the caveat that good communication is required with opposition schools in advance of fixtures.

Action:

We will liaise with co-educational, independent prep and senior schools to investigate how they manage their sporting provision and devise a plan.

We will conduct an audit of current female and male staff for sporting experience and utilise existing expertise, supplemented by the recruitment of a female GAP student in September 2021.

- *Co-Curricular*

It was considered that the scope of co-curricular opportunities at the school is broadly in line with co-educational settings, although a review should be conducted and suggestions from potential new joiners be included, where practically possible, to augment existing provision.

Action:

We will conduct a review of activities and clubs as well as day and residential trips.

Budgeted proposals for revisions and future development will be fast-tracked for discussion.

- *Facilities & Logistics*

Initially, the sole expenditure incurred in the move to co-education will be the conversion of existing space to become a girls' changing room, together with lavatories, wash-basins and showers, with external access.

Action:

Approval has been given for the work next summer from the Finance Committee.

- *Uniform*

The Bursar has liaised with Stevensons, our uniform supplier, about the potential for a girls' KHS design, the colours of which have now been chosen. Due to the current situation, it is not possible for us to have a model of the uniform yet but we are investigating the best way forward; a uniform list is being compiled.

Action:

We will liaise with Stevensons about a model uniform for marketing purposes and conclude a completed uniform list for female pupils.

- *Admissions & Marketing*

A strengthened team is in place to follow up the announcement for co-education at KHS. It was suggested that an extra marketing budget should be available next year in order to maximise the launch of co-education together with associated costs to do with the website, literature and events.

Action:

Governors have approved an enhanced 'Co-Ed' marketing budget.

We will pioneer new events, literature and media targeting the recruitment of girls, numbers in Lower Prep and to build upon prospective entry into Upper Prep and Seniors.

- *Staffing*

It was noted that no urgent extra staffing was required to furnish girls at KHS other than a female GAP student in the first instance. In time, an SLT role for a 'Head of Girls' is likely to evolve as well as the need for a designated PE & Games teacher. In the meantime, the recruitment process for staff at KHS will place a greater emphasis on those applicants who possess relevant experience of working in a co-educational environment when decisions for short-listing are being made.

Action:

Recruitment of a female GAP student for September 2021.

Refine short-listing process for interviews accordingly.

Consider the optimum nature and timing of a 'Head of Girls' position.

- *Communications*

A timetable for the dissemination of this significant announcement should be drawn up to inform key stakeholders in the school as well as the wider public.

Action:

A timetable has been drawn up and communications are being acted upon accordingly with internal stakeholders, feeder schools and the wider public.

An advertising campaign will commence in the summer.

Please do contact Mrs Helen Parker, Registrar, to arrange an appointment with Mrs Angela Liu, Head of Admissions & Marketing, or Mr Duncan Murphy, Headmaster, if you would like to talk further about any aspect of admissions or co-educational provision.

admissions@kingswoodhouse.org

Tel: 01372 723590

'A Preparation for Life'
Kingswood House School
An outstanding, all-round education up to GCSE

Offering Co-Education from September 2021
Early applications are advised.
Tours with the Headmaster are available now by appointment.



ISI Inspection:
"A highly caring family atmosphere permeates throughout the school."

Autumn Term Open Mornings

**Saturday 19 September
Friday 2 October
Friday 6 November**



Email: Mrs Helen Parker, Registrar
admissions@kingswoodhouse.org

Tel: 01372 723590

Book online:
www.kingswoodhouse.org

