



BISHOPSTROW
COLLEGE



Destination School Preparation Programme

Bishopstrow College has been helping students secure entry to leading boarding schools since 2006. We have over 15 years of expertise in preparing applications for entry to boarding schools in the UK and other key Western destination markets.

Established in 2006, Bishopstrow College has a long history of preparing students, aged 7-17 years, for exam success in relation to entry to top boarding schools. We operate like a traditional British boarding school, with students studying the National Curriculum at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, providing excellent preparation for life at a mainstream boarding school.

Applying to Top Boarding Schools

Applying to leading boarding schools is tough! Irrespective of how much preparation a student is able to benefit from, he or she has to be an excellent candidate to be offered a place to study. Only a very small proportion of international students are successful in gaining places at top boarding schools. Securing entry requires many skills, as well as strength in academia and it is the job of the admissions team at boarding schools to decide who is the most suitable at interview.

How can Bishopstrow Help?

Applying to a top boarding school is comprised of several elements. These include performance in specialist entrance tests set by schools, including UKiset (the UK Independent Schools Entrance Test), performance at an interview, school references, predicted or actual grades at I/ GCSE (for those students targeting sixth form entry), and in some cases, a Personal Statement. These are all reviewed carefully before an applicant is offered a place.

Students enrolling at Bishopstrow without a confirmed offer from a destination school are automatically enrolled on the Destination School Preparation Programme, free of charge.

Bishopstrow's tutors are experts in their field and have considerable experience supporting international students through the application process for top boarding schools. The College has an established record in placing students into top schools, including The Cheltenham Ladies' College, Concord College, The Dragon School, Port Regis and St Edward's School Oxford.

The College's ethos is encapsulated by our **'Five Virtues'**, which underpin all aspects of life at Bishopstrow.



Kind



Polite



Organised



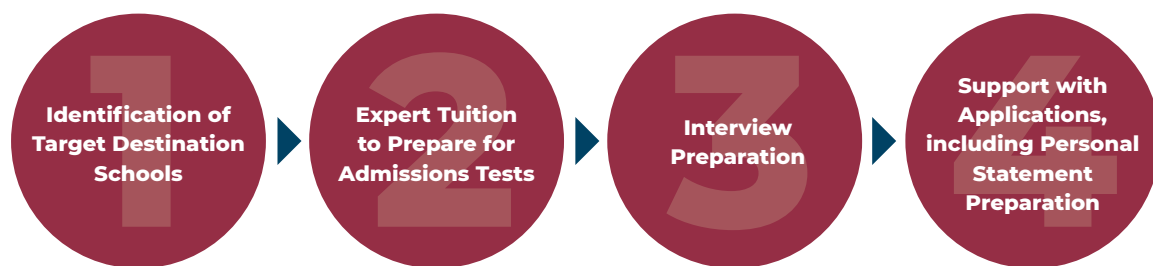
Hard Working



Team Player



Bishopstrow's Destination School Preparation Programme



1. Identification of Target Destination Schools

Upon enrolling at Bishopstrow College, details of the Destination School Preparation Programme and specifically the process and key steps involved are shared with parents (or a student's primary contact). A key priority at the outset is to ensure that the College has clarity on the target destination schools for each student.

Where parents or the student's agent do not have a pre-determined set of target destination schools, the College has a profiling tool, which we use to help build a picture of the student's interests and in turn, potential destination schools.

Students have the opportunity to discuss their destination school choices with the Director of Studies. Time is also allocated in tutorials to discuss choosing a destination school.

For those students aspiring to gain entry to some of the very best schools, there will often be a requirement to register with these schools before arriving in the UK to commence their studies at Bishopstrow.

Once the target destination schools have been confirmed, details are entered into the College's 'Pathway Tracker' which is used to map a student's progression through the key stages in the admissions journey.

2. Expert Tuition to Prepare for Admissions Tests

Most top boarding schools require applicants to sit admissions tests as part of the application process. These may be subject specific tests, an assessment of verbal reasoning and non-verbal reasoning skills or the UKiset (the UK Independent Schools Entrance Test). Experience shows that students can benefit from familiarity with these tests: learning the techniques



required to approach questions effectively and having an awareness of the questions to expect. Practising past papers and time management are crucial preparations for the all-important test day.

At Bishopstrow, the Learning Coordinator oversees all aspects of preparing students for admissions tests.

Students also benefit from support here during weekly sessions with their tutors.

The College maintains a database of hundreds of past papers (admissions tests) organised by age group (Year Group of entry), subject and school. This database is updated on an ongoing basis. Students practise past papers appropriate to their target destination schools. The College is also able to provide an invigilation service on behalf of destination schools, enabling students to sit admissions tests at Bishopstrow.

In addition, within the curriculum at Bishopstrow, Drama and Literature is embedded within our English syllabus. Students also study Skills for Life and have weekly Maths tutorials (one hour) oriented towards preparation for admissions tests. These activities all help ensure that students are prepared as well as possible for admissions tests.

3. Interview Preparation *Why is interview preparation important for interviews to top boarding schools?*

The interview is often the crucial factor in distinguishing between applicants with similar results. It also enables applicants to make a case if their academic profile is strong but is equalled or bettered by other applicants. Students need to prepare thoroughly, as they will not get a second chance, with more practise, resulting in greater chances of success!

What sort of questions could you face at interview?

Questions often tend to be open-ended, so there will be no 'correct' answer. The following are some examples:

- What have you enjoyed most about your time at Bishopstrow College?
- How have you managed to adapt to life as a boarder?
- What have been your favourite subjects and why?
- How have you developed outside the classroom? (activities, sports, responsibilities etc.)
- How have you managed to improve your English, apart from in the classroom?
- What do you think you would like to do when you are older? (job, profession etc.)
- What do you already know about us? (your destination school)
- What are you looking forward to studying with us?
- What do you think will be the biggest challenge for you if you join us?
- What sort of a student are you? (your strengths and qualities)
- Do you have any questions for us? (applicants should always prepare at least 3 questions)

At the interview, students will need to demonstrate:

- Clear communication.
- Good eye contact.
- Appropriate body language.
- Enthusiasm.
- Interest.
- Knowledge of their destination school.
- An ability to describe, summarise, compare and also offer and explain opinions.
- An ability to cope with a challenging situation and any unexpected questions!

How will Bishopstrow's practice interviews help students prepare for the real thing?

Like in many walks of life, practice makes perfect! As students familiarise themselves with the type of questions asked as part of the admissions process, their responses become more confident and fluent. Our tutors have spent many years coaching students for these crucial interviews and know how to get the best from applicants. They are also familiar with what an admissions team at a mainstream boarding school is looking for and the key points that any student might need to improve on.

How does the Bishopstrow interview process work?

All students benefit from coaching sessions with their tutors, with these sessions being a pre-cursor to a mock interview with the Principal. Practice interviews with the Principal provide the sort of atmosphere that a student will encounter at interview.

As part of their preparation for interviews, students have access to a comprehensive selection of prospectuses from destination schools, in the College library. These can be accessed at any time.

4. Support with Applications, including Personal Statement Preparation

Some schools also require students to submit a Personal Statement and Bishopstrow also provides support here.

A Personal Statement needs to convince the admissions team at the target boarding school that a prospective student is worthy of an interview, which is essential as most top boarding schools only issue offers after their admissions team has met with an applicant. Only a small proportion of international students applying to top boarding schools are invited to interview, so it is critical to ensure your Personal Statement stands out.

Planning is an important part of the Personal Statement process, with tutors providing support and guidance throughout the application process. Our tutors have a wealth of experience in this area and provide students with feedback on Personal Statements as these progress from first draft to the finished article. Together with the Director of Studies and the Principal, they are able to offer guidance on what will make the Personal Statement more compelling and how it can be improved.

Support in Organising School Visits

Many destination schools will organise Open Days, providing international students with the opportunity to visit before or during the formal admissions process.

Time is allocated in tutorials to help students prepare for a school visit and the College is also able to support students in confirming attendance and arranging travel to Open Days, in consultation with the families, guardians and agents.

Other Support

If required, the Principal will prepare a reference. All students enrolled at Bishopstrow benefit from regular, weekly testing and assessment, with feedback presented in the form of an Individual Learning Plan (school report) or ILP. ILPs are issued regularly – typically twice per term – with references based on the latest ILP and welfare reports.

Information

For More Information

The Destination School Preparation Programme is managed by Mario Di Clemente, Principal, Greg Jackson, Director of Studies and Kathy Dilworth, Learning Coordinator, who can be contacted at:

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Boarding School Admissions Calendar

The following timings are for illustration and relate to students applying to those schools with an admissions calendar scheduled for the Autumn Term. Many schools operate a rolling admissions process, with the timings below extending into the Spring and even the Summer.

June and July 2022

School and A Level subject selection (for those students targeting sixth form entry)

July, August, September and October 2022

Preparation for entrance examinations and interviews

September and October 2022

Application deadline
Open Days

October and November 2022

Entrance examinations and interviews

December 2022

Review and accept offers

Spring 2023

Applications, entrance examinations and interviews (if required)



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Part of



INSPIRING FUTURES
EDUCATION

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