



James Allen's Preparatory School 7-11
James Allen's Pre-Preparatory School 4-7

Japs



James Allen's pre-prep and prep school

Welcome to the world of JAPS!



Our pupils are open-minded and we encourage an independent spirit. We teach them to think for themselves and to trust their own judgement. We foster the values of hard work, thoughtfulness, and generosity. Laughter is an essential part of the school day and each child feels valued, happy and stimulated.

Finola Stack

Finola Stack Head of JAPS



Warmth, happiness and vitality are at the heart of everything we do at JAPS. Children are encouraged to work to the best of their abilities. But we also want them to play, to have fun along the way - understanding nature by planting flowers and vegetables in our garden, or connecting with the past by interviewing a fictitious Roundhead soldier.

Most of our children join us when they're either four (at the pre-prep) or seven (at the middle school). We value and celebrate all faiths and cultures; we invite parents to talk to the school about the Jewish religion and other family cultural and religious experiences. We look after the whole person at JAPS, and promote their spiritual, moral and cultural development alongside the academic, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that life offers.

All subjects are taught to a high standard throughout JAPS from the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) to Year 6. Our children try their best and teachers support their determination and celebrate their success - with Certificates of Excellence in the middle school and 'Gold Leaves' for effort and achievement in the pre-prep. From Year 2 upwards, particular improvement, or work which has been completed with flair or exceptional attention to detail, is rewarded with House Points - the Year 6 House Captains enjoy entering these on the database each week. This all adds to the spirit and energy of our school environment. Visitors are often delighted by our vibrant, buzzing classrooms, the inspiration which exudes from the art work on walls and in corridors, and the smiles on the faces both of children and staff.

To enrich our exciting and diverse curriculum, we also offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities, available to girls at every stage of their school life. Cookery class is particularly popular with younger children - they enjoy eating the fruits of their labour, though there are other enticing options like karate, jewellery-making or pottery.

In the middle school activities include portfolio club, gardening club, a host of language clubs, dance, digital photography and electronics, as well as all the sport, music and art available. If only there were more hours in the day! We seize every opportunity to develop and extend the girls' own interests, teamwork and leadership skills, and simply to provide enjoyment and relaxation. Life at JAPS should be fun!



A wonderful journey starts here

The journey at JAGS begins in a large, family Edwardian house, full of life and laughter. Set in its own impressive grounds, our pre-prep school is just a short walk from the middle school. Here, children aged four to seven are introduced to school in a relaxed but purposeful manner. A Teddy Bears' Picnic in their very first term gives them the chance to show their parents their growing love of their new world and their fast-developing friendships.

Although most days are spent in our pre-prep, children use some of the JAGS facilities too, including the swimming pool, the cove and ICT suite. It's great for them to be part of the big adventure of the larger school, enjoying the support of the sixth form girls with their reading and in clubs.

The prep school runs two classes in each year group with approximately 18 in each in the pre-prep and 24 in each in the middle school - sometimes taught in half-classes.

The children at the pre-prep enjoy a variety of classroom activities to focus on developing key skills. Games and critical thinking projects encourage them to take risks in their learning, as well as promoting positive attitudes and dispositions. In addition, lessons include specialist French, ICT, music and PE. Our scope broadens in the middle school; we encourage curiosity and growing independence with lots of opportunities for problem-solving, both practical and theoretical. How can we save energy at JAPS and how will we know we have done so?

Questions like these challenge and stimulate beyond curriculum boundaries, sometimes answered in presentations to the whole of the senior school.

JAPS is a very happy place where we're totally dedicated to providing first-class pastoral care. Pupils feel confident that they are liked and respected. They learn how they can help each other in their personal and social development. And we know that for

little ones the world can at times be challenging, so we're always there with a friendly word and a smile.

Everyone, including Nursery Nurses and Classroom Assistants in pre-prep, is involved in the pastoral care of every pupil at JAPS. The class teachers' focus on the overall welfare of each child ensures that pupils feel happy and valued. They're also quick to get to know the children's parents and are regularly available for one-to-one meetings.

Middle school Buddy Groups meet once every half-term for further personal and social development in creative activities. Girls stay in the same Buddy Group with the same Buddy teacher. This enables the development of a high level of care, individual understanding and a true sense of belonging. The journey is everything at JAPS; its achievements, its surprises, its joys. Because they know they belong, we believe our children will truly enjoy every turn of the road.



Because life is their blank canvas

JAPS is a selective school with a difference: children are unique so we choose varied and exciting learning challenges to match their specific needs. Our teachers set goals that build on individual strengths and even our youngest children love the sense of success that comes with achieving them.



Throughout the school, children's work is regularly monitored and assessed, and our Learning Support department is integrated throughout the school to offer extra help, either for a child who may lack confidence, or to provide highly able children with interesting extension activities.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is followed in the Reception classes at the pre-prep and is delivered through indoor and outdoor activities. Here the children often learn through spontaneous play and our designated outdoor area becomes a creative extension to the classroom. Through absorbing, fun-packed activity outside, the children transport themselves to imaginary worlds.

Inspired teaching embraces all learning styles, building on the previous successes of pupils and engaging them fully in their development. It's not always with pen and

paper! 'Pass the Rhyming Pebble' is a hot favourite with the Reception classes, and 'Tens and Unit Toast Off', a big hit in Year 1. Our children also benefit from vibrant, specialist teaching in French, ICT, PE and Music. We know how best to motivate and engage, be it small xylophone ensembles in music or energetic mass participation games in PE!

In the middle school, girls enjoy specialist teaching for most of their subjects, although they are still regularly taught by the Form Teacher. A well-equipped science room, design technology room, art room and ICT suite enable the girls to enjoy practical activities - something not often available at this age.

All our pupils take the National Curriculum tests and we're proud of their outstanding results. We adapt the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for all our talented pupils, but are not

confined by them; for example, we provide an exciting 'Immersion French' programme in which the teacher speaks only in French to children, from Reception onwards, and we offer individual instrument lessons from Year 2.

In music, which is so important throughout the school, the legacy of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, the first Director of Music at JAGS, lives today. There are many opportunities to perform in assemblies, concerts and plays, or with JASSPA, James Allen's Saturday School for the Performing Arts. Book Week, music-theatre productions, local and national art exhibitions, poetry festivals, inter-school sports matches and competitions are all wonderful opportunities for girls to discover their passions and their strengths. We make space for children to be the best that they can be - whatever their talents.

Together the journey's much more fun



At JAPS we know we're at our best when we learn from each other. That's why everyone's contribution is encouraged and valued and why we come together regularly to celebrate achievement and endeavour; through assemblies, Buddy Group meetings and our special Leavers' Service. Wearing Jeans for Genes in charity week and House events and sports galas also inspire loyalty and togetherness - even if supporting fellow housemates on the sports field causes a few hoarse throats!

We encourage the girls to give their time to others. Whether it is the choir singing at the local senior citizens' Day Care Centre, or for the Dulwich Helpline Christmas lunch, our girls love doing their bit for the community. RE lessons, PSHCE, charity work and morning assemblies all help children to develop clear moral values, a true sense of care for others and respect for other cultures as well as their own. The School

Council, which meets weekly, makes recommendations and the pupils choose which local and national charities they would like to support.

At JAPS we want parents to be involved. We recognise that their positive contribution complements the efforts of the children and their teachers. What's more they often play an important practical role in the life of the school, making costumes for school productions, or helping with the walking bus during the annual Walk to School Week.

The pre-prep parents also help with French Week, assisting in the French Café, French Storytelling, the Dégustation, and travelling with the children on a day trip to Lille.

The Parents' Association is vital in co-ordinating this effort. As well as supporting the work of the school, it hosts special events for parents including Wine-tasting Evening, Quiz Night and the

Summer Term Dance. Sometimes themed social events are organised to raise funds for the school or for charities; for example the Glitterati Party and La Vie en Rose evenings raised £1450 for Kingfishers, (the children's part of King's College Hospital), and a Quiz Night raised £400 for Capital Radio's Help a London Child. At Christmas, the PA organises the children's Christmas Party, including a disco, refreshments and small Christmas gifts for all the JAPS children.





Finding their place in the world



At JAPS we believe in developing active, articulate people who take responsibility for what goes on around them. We encourage them to express their opinions confidently and appropriately and guide them to take the next, positive steps.

Our School Councils in both the pre-prep and middle school encourage everyone to participate actively in school life. The vision is to give every child at JAPS a 'voice' and help to improve the school. As a result the pre-prep now has a daily litter patrol with all the latest gadgetry and uniform as part of its eco drive!

Weekly middle school council meetings are chaired by the two Head Girls and attended by the Form Captains from each class. The Head Girls prepare the agenda, discuss suggestions placed in the suggestions box and delegate responsibility for the chosen course of action. Together they learn the art of tactful negotiation and the importance of

communicating with everyone involved in the school – from the Head Teacher, the teachers and non-teaching staff, the Parents' Association to the girls themselves. Vital skills for the journey through life.

To complement lessons and school clubs, fun swim and sports days, we organise many day trips and visits to theatres, galleries, museums and other places of interest. Pre-prep children visit Greenwich, Kew Gardens or the Natural History Museum. Our four year olds had a day to remember at the local fire station and despite much fun with the fireman's hose, surprisingly managed to stay dry! Children from Year 4 and above get the chance to spend a week away with staff in Bude, Swanage or in Paris. These trips do much to develop independence and knowledge of the world.

The scope widens in the middle school. In the summer, girls compete in Inter-House

Sports, London and National Athletics and Swimming Finals (hosted here). There is inspiration from visiting writers and poets, an Indian Drama workshop, a Taster Day at JAGS Senior School, French Assembly, Dulwich Festival Gala Concert, an outing to the British Museum, and, for Year 6, to a West End musical following their own triumphant performance in the JAGS theatre. Such energy!

What next? senior school Entrance Exams are certainly a focus for the older JAPS pupils, but they usually meet this challenge very confidently. The almost universal guarantee of a place in the senior school helps to calm any nerves. Many pupils are very successful in gaining scholarships, but JAPS is also proud of the fact that our pupils go on to their senior schools confident in their abilities across all subjects and with a burning curiosity about the world and a determination to understand and shape their role within it.



Come and see us soon

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