

GRESHAM'S ●●

**Cromer Road, Holt,
Norfolk NR25 6EA**

Website greshams.com

Head Douglas Robb, MEd, since 2014; previously Head of Oswestry School **Pupils** 502. **Day:** 110 boys, 100 girls; **boarding:** 150 boys, 142 girls **Ages** 13–18 **Term Fees** **Day:** £8,380; **boarding:** £12,010

Oxbridge 3% **Admission** School's own exam and interview **Alumni** Sir James Dyson, Olivia Colman, rugby players Ben and Tom Youngs **PREP** **Head** Cathy Braithwaite **Pupils** 225 day and boarding: 125 boys, 100 girls **Ages** 7–13 **Term Fees** **Day:** £6,210; **boarding:** £8,700

There's a real buzz about Gresham's at the moment – a parent describes it as being 'very much on an upward trajectory', perhaps due in part to the state-of-the-art Dyson STEAM building planned to open next year (made possible by *that* famous alumnus). Perhaps, also, the glorious setting of the school aids its 'happy and inspiring' atmosphere, set as it is on the outskirts of a picturesque market town on the breathtaking North Norfolk coast. The weekly boarding is so popular that many local

pupils who live in close proximity to the school choose to board, enabling them to fully immerse themselves in the myriad opportunities on offer. Life here is full, but not frantic, and as one parent explains, Gresham's 'unstressful environment allows students to thrive and grow at their own pace'. Creativity is encouraged, different talents and personalities are celebrated, and the school enables the students to explore their own interests and futures rather than moulding them into a typical Greshamian. 'Visionary and passionate' Head Douglas Robb is a familiar figure around the school, cited as being 'a true leader and not afraid to get stuck in with the troops'. The school never rests on its laurels: there's a new Environmental Coordinator who is responsible for exploring and implementing new initiatives to ensure sustainability. And, to top it all off, results are improving year on year: in 2019, the A-level pass rate increased to 99 per cent (from 98 per cent the previous year) and the IB cohort achieved an average of 34, four points higher than the global average.

KING EDWARD VI HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS ●

**Edgbaston Park Road,
Birmingham B15 2UB**

Website kehs.org.uk

Head Kirsty von Malaisé, MA, from September; previously Head of Norwich High School for Girls

Pupils 610 day girls **Ages** 11–18 **Term Fees** £4,446 **Oxbridge** 16% **Admission** School's own exam

Alumnae Paralympic swimmer Susie Rogers MBE, journalist and newsreader Reeta Chakrabarti

KEHS was sad to say goodbye to Ann Clark when she retired this summer, but new Principal Kirsty von Malaisé, who joins from Norwich High School for Girls, is already a hit with parents and pupils alike, and brings a wealth of experience and a great deal of enthusiasm. The school consistently produces outstanding results: in 2019, 93 per cent of GCSEs were graded 9–7 and 75 per cent of A-levels were graded A*–A. The university places secured are equally impressive, with just under 20 per cent of the girls receiving Oxbridge offers and others heading to Russell Group universities or even crossing the pond to Harvard. But these enthusiastic and vibrant pupils have many more strings to their bow. Sport is strong, with traditional netball, hockey and tennis alongside gymnastics, cheerleading and ultimate frisbee. The recent Upper School production of *Chicago* was first-class, and students organised a fabulous charity Salsa Night – think mocktails, a piñata and, of course, lots of dancing – in aid of the Latin American Foundation for the Future. The girls have also founded a number of their own clubs, including Sign Language and Law Society. Dedicated to community outreach, the school works with local primaries in and around Birmingham (last year sixth formers produced a Physics Roadshow) and 20 per cent of King Edward VI pupils are in receipt of assisted-place funds.

KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM ●

**Edgbaston Park Road,
Birmingham B15 2UA**

Website kes.org.uk

Head Dr Katy Ricks, DPhil, since 2019; previously Head of Sevenoaks School **Pupils** 885 day boys

Ages 11–18 **Term Fees** £4,564 **Oxbridge** 12% **Admission** School's own exam, previous school's report and interview **Alumni** JRR Tolkien,

Nobel Prize-winning pharmacologist Sir John Vane, former Minister for Universities and Science Lord Willetts

In the past 10 years, pupils at King Edward's have received 195 Oxbridge offers. This impressive statistic is a little less surprising when you consider two points. First: alumni include the Nobel Prize-winning molecular biologist Maurice Wilkins, Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones and author Lee Child. Second, its academic results are top of the range. In 2012, King Edward's was the first school in Britain to switch from A-levels to the IB in one go, and since then it has been consistently ranked among the leading IB schools in the world. Last year, 41 per cent of candidates scored 40 points or more (equivalent to more than four A*s), and three boys gained the maximum 45. KES invests considerable energy in its outreach programme, ensuring they attract the brightest boys, regardless of background. More than 90 boys are currently on free places and 19 per cent receive fee assistance. The school's sporting strength is its breadth: it runs 84 teams across 15 sports. In May, facilities were given a boost with the opening of the Andrew Brode Sports Centre, a £5m development that includes a sports hall and a cardiovascular fitness room – opportunity for serious aerobic training proved necessary after the KES family raised £8,000 for Guide Dogs by playing the longest ever continuous game of touch rugby, which lasted an incredible 31 hours.



Gresham's