...who you can be
Old Swinford Hospital is a happy, vibrant and very distinctive state boarding school where traditions and values sit comfortably alongside innovation.

In 1667, the industrialist Thomas Foley founded a school where boys develop the skills and attributes required to go out into the wider world and make a difference. Today, our pupils continue to aspire to achieve his aim, both in and beyond the classroom. We seek to provide real opportunities and encouragement, and pride ourselves on getting the balance right between academic success, nurturing individual character and preparing our pupils for their future lives.

OSH is a Christian school and we are pleased to welcome children of any faith or, indeed, none at all. We want the very best for all of them because we believe that they all have exciting potential and an important contribution to make.

We understand and respond to the individual and collective needs of our pupils. We help each one to find and develop his or her own voice and we watch with pride as our pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem.

This prospectus gives some insight into the life of Old Swinford Hospital and I hope you will come and visit us. You will be most welcome, and I look forward to meeting you in person.

Paul Kilbride MA (Oxon), NPQH, FRSA
Headmaster
History

Founded 350 years ago, by Thomas Foley, an ironmaster, MP and landowner from the Great Witley Estate in Worcestershire, Old Swinford Hospital first opened its doors to pupils in the late summer of 1670, just four years after the Great Fire of London.

Originally known as Stourbridge Hospital (charity), and occasionally referred to as Foley’s Blue Coat School, Thomas Foley’s vision was for the education of 60 boys from ‘poor but honest’ families nominated by specific local parishes.

Upon Thomas Foley’s death, Old Swinford Hospital was left to a group of trustees, his sons among them, known as Feoffees. This family tradition has survived the centuries and the Feoffees, including several direct descendants of the founder, retain an active involvement as trustees and governors.

Thomas Foley’s original aim, to educate and prepare its pupils for life in the wider world, remains an important part of the School’s ethos today. We take great pride in creating a genuine community from which we send pupils, capable, confident and independent, out into the wider world, ready to make an impact for the common good.

As testament to the School’s long term stability and success, there have been only seven Headmasters since 1882.
Our message to all of our pupils:
“Discover who you can be.”
Admissions Categories

OSH offers a number of admission options.

Year 7 admission is for boys, on a termly boarding, weekly boarding, flexi-boarding or day basis.

Termly boarders return home during the school holidays, while our weekly boarders can choose to go home on a Friday after prep (homework) or on a Saturday morning.

A flexi-boarder does everything that a weekly or termly boarder would do, with the exception of staying overnight regularly. Flexi-boarders are required to stay three or four nights per term. On other occasions they may arrive for breakfast and depart after prep. They can also take part in the co-curricular life. Every boarder has access to the same facilities.

A day place differs from a boarding place as the school day is significantly shorter. Our day pupils arrive in time for registration, which starts at 08:25 and finishes after lessons at 15:45.

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Summary of admission options by year group
Boarding Life
Why Boarding?

As successful parents you may have busy working lives. There are only so many journeys you may be able to make and there is only so much assistance with GCSE and A level homework you may be able to give. Pre-breakfast cricket nets and late evening drum practice may not be an option.

We can give your son the much needed space, opportunities and encouragement to grow so that he can achieve and discover who he can be. He will have full access to common rooms, music, drama, computers, art and sports facilities both before lessons and then until late into the evening. He will also have access to a range of co-curricular programmes.

At OSH, your son will most certainly benefit from being able to run off steam and find his own (possibly loud) voice and from being able to do all this within a safe environment that nurtures and directs him as he becomes increasingly skilled, confident and independent. Also, we’re most definitely a friendly community and our boarding experience encourages our boys to enter into friendships which will stay with them for life.

When your son returns home for holidays or exeat weekends, his prep, laundry and organisation will be in hand and you, as parents, can enjoy precious free time with him, having left his day-to-day management to us.
Benefits of Boarding

Through extended access to our facilities and our teaching staff, specific periods for prep together with the availability of mentoring groups and friends, our boarding experience ought to raise the level of your son’s understanding and achievements, be they academic, sporting, musical, artistic or dramatic.

Places at top universities and rewarding careers require more than academic qualifications. By providing varied and rich experiences, boarding nurtures self-motivation, confidence, tolerance and greater appreciation and understanding, and those all-important other soft skills in a world where academic qualifications alone are not sufficient to guarantee success.

The benefits of boarding are huge: through providing real and repeat opportunities and encouragement, building confidence, independence and ‘learning how to live’, our boarding experience ought to enable your son to discover himself and who he can be, as we help prepare him for life beyond school.

Our boarding experience ought to enable your son to discover himself and who he can be, as we help prepare him for life beyond school.
Scan QR to hear why I chose OSH

Nico
Year 9
Scan QR to hear about joining OSH

Hope
Year 13

focused
Getting to Know Us

As one of the UK’s leading state boarding schools and with teachers who are parents themselves, we understand just how big the decision is to entrust your child’s education, welfare and development to the care of others, however knowledgeable and experienced they may be.

For this reason, familiarisation visits and taster weekends can play a very important part in your process of deciding on a boarding place for your son. Our programme of Open Days and a “Come on Board” evening offered each autumn, provide wonderful opportunities for your son to discover what makes OSH such an exciting and vibrant boarding school.

To help pupils settle in, each June we run an induction programme for all new boys and their families. With a programme of fun-filled activities, your son will be able to get to know the other boys so when he joins us the following September, he will be guaranteed to see some familiar faces.

Also, all Year 7 pupils join the same house for their first year, Prospect House. This is a small, warm and recently modernised house which is very popular with parents because shared rooms enable our boys to get to know each other and make friends throughout their year group. We feel that the rooms provide a good balance between private bedrooms and community living.
Pastoral Care

We know how daunting it can be to move away from home for the first time – for parents and pupils alike – that’s why we work hard to create a safe and secure ‘home from home’ that the boys will love.

We also work hard to create a place where parents will be happy knowing that their sons are receiving quality care, attention and support.

A live-in housemaster, a live-in boarding tutor and matrons are all available to provide an attentive and supportive environment, as well as a sympathetic ear. Further support comes from our Chaplain and our medical centre. There are always people on-hand to help our boarders as they adjust to living away from home.

We understand that to live away from home is a big step but, rather than leaving a family behind, pupils will gain a second family, who will care and support them on their academic journey.

There are always people on-hand to help our boarders as they adjust to living away from home.
Boarding Houses: the Pillars of our Community

A high level of pastoral care is provided through our house system. Boys in Years 8 - 10 join one of five boarding houses: Baxter, Dudley, Foley, Potter or Witley. In Year 13 boarders move into Foster House, which acts as a bridge between school and university or the world of work.

Although every boarding house is different, each house aims to provide a warm, safe and very friendly community in which your son can grow physically, emotionally and academically. Our boys are provided with work stations, storage space and are encouraged to personalise their own spaces and rooms.

Each house has a live-in housemaster, a boarding tutor and a matron and through the house system your son will also be part of a smaller (house) group. These dedicated staff and smaller groups enable us to promote the happiness and welfare of your son and to nurture his individual character and abilities. House mentors and senior pupils also guide younger boys first to help them find their feet and thereafter to help them develop and accommodate new interests and responsibilities.

Boarders are taught the value of time management and the need for personal organisation as well as the need for presentation and self-motivation. The house system encourages a positive and ambitious outlook as well as achievement. Intra-house and inter-house competitions are conducted throughout the year and house groups enable all boys to take part. The dining hall provides boarders with three nutritious meals a day, as well as afternoon tea. Beyond this, all houses have their own kitchens equipped with fridges, toasters, microwaves and kettles, where boarders prepare snacks and light bites under staff supervision.

The benefits of boarding are huge, it’s all about learning how to live in a happy and engaging environment.
community
Keeping in Touch

Communication with parents is a central part of the everyday life of a boarding house.

Each boy is encouraged to keep in touch with his parents by email, telephone, text and other electronic means. However, we recognise that boys are not always as good at communicating with parents as parents would like and thus each housemaster leads a team of tutors who will also keep in contact with you.

We want you to know when things are going well, and we want you to support us if and when we need to redirect the attention and energies of your son.

Through exeats and parent visits, social media and our Virtual Learning Environment, you will have very useful and up-to-date windows into what and how your son is doing in his boarding house as well as in his classrooms. Keeping in regular contact is not only very easy, it is the norm.
Academic Life
Outstanding Achievement

There is a real work ethic and academic expectation at OSH.

Pupils with a wide range of abilities achieve great results at GCSE and A level. One reason for this is our quite intentional single-sex education from Years 7 - 11, where healthy competition and limited distractions get the best out of them.

Central to life at OSH is the stimulating academic programme that balances innovation with tradition. The curriculum is broad, well-adjusted and very lively. Our dedicated teaching staff are on hand to encourage and support your son’s academic progress and challenge him to constantly aim high.

Central to life at our school is the stimulating academic programme that balances innovation with tradition.
Our teachers are not only dynamic classroom practitioners, they are also experts in their subject areas with authors, doctors, polyglots, explorers, composers, artists and sportsmen amongst them. From our newest recruits to the Headmaster, all of the teaching staff at OSH are expected to know their subjects inside out, in order to impart knowledge, understanding and insight to our pupils, as well as to encourage and to inspire.

We also have in place boarding staff and student mentors to assist in the development of effective study habits in the boarding houses.

We provide a wide range of GCSE and A level subjects so, whatever our pupils’ particular skills, interests or future career paths, we have the subjects to support their ambitions. We also understand how important the right combination of subjects is and that’s why we recommend that our pupils engage with us at the earliest opportunity and let us guide their decision making.

Subject choices are only one part of the picture and that’s why we also recognise the importance of learning key skills. Pupils are shown how to learn efficiently and effectively using different techniques. They will be challenged to solve problems, to work in teams, to manage different kinds of information and to communicate their findings in different ways. A careers programme complements and supports their preparation for life after school. Finally, and at all times, we will support and prepare them so that they grow in independence and resilience. For us, this is as important as examination success because exams cannot by themselves prepare young people for the future.
Key Stage 3

In Years 7 and 8 pupils work from a well-structured and exciting curriculum in which they’ll be able to fully explore and develop their understanding of a range of subjects*:

- Art
- Beliefs & Issues
- Computing
- English
- French
- Geography
- German
- History
- Mathematics
- Music
- Personal Development
- PE & Games
- Science
- Technology

In Year 9, and in addition to the subjects listed, they will be able to concentrate their academic efforts and focus more on the subjects they’ll study at GCSE.

*Subjects listed may change, please visit oshsch.com for current information
Key Stage 4

With so many exciting subject options available, it’s vital that we don’t neglect the basics.

That’s why pupils are required to follow a core programme of subjects. These include GCSEs in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics (or Combined Science) Physical Education, Beliefs and Issues and Level 2 ICT – which leaves them with three additional spaces to fill with subjects of their own choice.

Don’t panic; we understand that choosing three additional subjects is not necessarily an easy decision, but pupils won’t be expected to make this choice alone. They’ll have the full support of their tutors, housemasters, year heads and, of course, parents, to give them all the advice and guidance they need to ensure the final decision is the right one. Also, we do not require that all of our pupils are examined in all of the subjects they study, so that if a particular subject proves more problematic than expected, a pupil does not have to follow it to examination.

Our optional subjects include*:

- Art
- Business Studies
- Computing
- Drama
- Economics
- French
- German
- Geography
- History
- Materials Technology
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Visual & Graphic Communication

*Subjects listed may change, please visit oshsch.com for current information
Sport

Sport is not only about maintaining a fit and healthy body, but also about having a respect for rules and training, a willingness to compete and fight for others and, of course, having fun along the way.

We have an impressive range of modern facilities that we encourage pupils to take full advantage of, with numerous sports pitches, tennis, squash and basketball courts, cricket nets, a gymnasium and two climbing walls to name but a few. Trying and appreciating new sports is an important part of the OSH experience.

We take great pride in the sporting reputation we have successfully built over the years. With amazing dedication from all those involved, we are fortunate enough to have outstanding coaching talent, facilities and opportunities available for all our pupils to pursue and develop their sporting talents.

Basketball, cricket, football and netball enjoy considerable strength. We are also well known for our rugby. With strong links to Worcester Warriors RFC we’ve seen our pupils represent OSH regionally, nationally and internationally.

Each year group has one afternoon of sport each week, and this experience is enhanced by regular PE lessons and Saturday fixtures, so whether it’s football, athletics, netball, cricket or anything else that takes our pupils’ fancy, we’ll help them realise their sporting ambitions.
Scan QR to hear about sport at OSH

passion

Jack
Year 12
Music

Music is a huge part of the curriculum here at OSH and we are justifiably proud of the massive contribution our music department makes.

With nearly a third of our pupils choosing to play a musical instrument, there is a real breadth of opportunity for them to rehearse and perform, at school, locally and on tour. Our choirs, orchestras and numerous ensemble groups, from jazz and strings to drums and brass, sustain a popular and year-long programme of events.

The music department has considerable success, with many students going to study at universities and conservatoires. Music still provides an excellent non-career choice for enthusiastic and able musicians – allowing them to develop self-discipline, teamwork, creativity and confidence, all which will prove immensely valuable in later life.

Musicians at OSH will have the opportunity to perform at international concerts and events, whilst the student-organised ‘Battle of the Bands’ still proves to be one of the most popular events on the School calendar. Our links with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Central England Ensemble mean that they won’t be short of opportunities to take their musicianship as far as they can.
Sixth Form Life
Sixth Form

The Sixth Form at OSH provides a fantastic opportunity for our older pupils – both boys and girls – to flourish and develop on an academic and a personal level.

Girls can join the Sixth Form as day students while boys have the option to join as either boarders or day students. Our experienced team is fully committed to providing them with all the support they need, which is why we help them to reach and exceed expectations and to discover who they can be.

Whether they’re in the process of choosing their subjects, looking for guidance as they work through their courses or seeking advice about taking that next big step, we’re here for them.

Our Year 13 boarders move into Foster House which has ensuite rooms and contemporary modern facilities. Whether or not they’re boarders, they will become part of a boarding house from day one and be assigned to mixed tutor groups, with a designated tutor to help them through these two important years.

Our Sixth Form is a springboard to the next stage of their journey. So whether they dream of Medicine at Oxford or an Art Foundation, an internship at a city bank or a gap year coaching soccer in the USA, we’ll be backing them every step of the way.

Our Sixth Form is a springboard to the next stage of their journey.
Rohana
Year 13
Social Life
Co-curriculum

We are rightly proud of our co-curriculum. It offers great breadth and inventiveness.

The boys find themselves stimulated, stretched and introduced to new and unusual ideas and activities with refreshing regularity. We believe that this dynamic and important part of OSH life helps to widen our pupils’ outlook and prepares them for a life of changes and challenges. We want our pupils to live long and healthy lives. We want them to have hobbies and interests which enrich their lives when they leave us.

At OSH, we want them to prove to themselves that they can venture into the unknown and achieve what they once thought was beyond them.

From archery to aerobics, coding to clay pigeon shooting, drama to dance and Model International Parliament to model aeroplane making, some 45 different clubs and societies collectively enhance our academic curriculum.

Both before and after lessons, our pupils are busily engaged in a full programme of sporting, cultural and intellectual pursuits.

In addition, organised activities take place virtually every weekend during term time, with supervised groups of boarders heading off around the country in search of outdoor fun and adventure. With pursuits ranging from narrow boat expeditions to quad biking, paintballing to climbing and karting to off-roading, many involving an overnight camp, our pupils have a genuine reason to look forward to the weekends. With a full range of activities available on and off-site, our students will be spoilt for choice.
With a full range of activities available on and off-site, our students will be spoilt for choice.
Trips

We think pupils greatly benefit from learning both in and out of the classroom. That’s why we organise regular trips to coincide with the ongoing academic curriculum.

With trips to theatres, geography excursions, university maths lectures, science roadshows and orchestral performances, we seek to provide a fully-rounded learning experience which allows pupils to visualise first-hand the information they study in textbooks.

Overseas visits to Rome and Berlin, North America and South East Asia both broaden horizons and build confidence in our pupils. There is no shortage of exciting excursions at OSH.

Whilst other schools are usually winding down during the last week of the summer term, we’re gearing up for a week of adventure, packed full of exciting activities and programmes, with plenty to learn and lots of fun to be had.

We’ve designed a programme which has something for everyone - with lots of happy faces to show for our efforts. From activity trips in the South of France, cricket tours in the West Indies, visits to RAF and Army bases to 3D mask making and debating workshops back at OSH, every year we design a programme which balances great fun with the development of some of our core values, including responsibility, teamwork and problem solving.
Duke of Edinburgh

As one of the most popular co-curricular activities at OSH, The Duke of Edinburgh Award programme allows students to develop personal characteristics and talents outside of the classroom and work towards gaining a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

The programme includes everything from volunteering in the community to going on residential trips; all of which help to develop initiative, leadership, teamwork and responsibility. These are essential life skills which will create the foundation for their future careers.

We’ve designed a thrilling programme which has something for everyone.
Damien
Year 12

proud

Scan QR to hear what I think of OSH

oshsch.com
Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

If you’re looking for something challenging and active, our Combined Cadet Force could be just the thing.

At locations around the UK and abroad, we’ll take you from the classroom to the training field, in preparation for your cadet instruction and we encourage all cadet enthusiasts to get involved.

You’ll need to prepare yourself for a tough but exhilarating training programme, where you’ll master skills including flying and weapons training (all under the careful supervision of our experienced staff instructors of course).

With constant professional supervision available every step of the way, we encourage pupils to become their own person and tackle challenges to develop self-reliance, resourcefulness, endurance and discipline; qualities which will stay with them for life.

At locations around the UK and abroad, we’ll take you from the classroom to the training field.
Admissions

What to do next

1 Find out more

• **Visit:** oshsch.com

• **Contact:** Our Registrar will be pleased to answer any questions you may have concerning eligibility or the admissions process.

• **Tel:** +44 (0) 1384 817325

• **Email:** admissions@oshsch.com

2 Come and visit us

• We strongly recommend that you come and see us by attending one or more of our open events, by making an individual appointment to meet the Headmaster and to have a tour.

3 Register

• Please register using the online form which is available on the website: oshsch.com/admissions.

• Once you have registered, we will contact you with details of the process.

• To be eligible for admission to OSH, all applicants (or their parents/legal guardian) must have full UK or EU/EEA, Swiss, Norwegian or Icelandic nationality or have other approved residential status within the UK.

• Typically, new pupils join us in Years 7, 9 and 12. If your son is starting another year group, do contact us because we do have occasional places. We’re more than happy and experienced at welcoming pupils in Years 8 and 10.

• Admission to OSH is regulated by the Governors’ Admissions Policy and the statutory School Admissions Code, which support our commitment to provide a supportive, stimulating and caring environment in which all our students are able to grow, both individually and as part of a community.

• If you are registering for a place in Year 7, you will need to include OSH on your local authority common application form for secondary school transfer, as well as registering with us directly. This isn’t necessary if you live outside England. You will also need to complete our registration form and communicate directly with us.
For full details of our admissions process, latest fees and open events, please visit oshsch.com
discover
who you can be
FAQ

Are you an independent school?
No, OSH is one of 38 schools in the country that offer a boarding education within the state system.

We share, with all good schools in the state and independent sectors, a belief in high standards of achievement and discipline and a commitment to providing an excellent education in the broadest sense.

Why does the School have ‘Hospital’ in its name?
OSH was founded in the seventeenth century when the term ‘hospital’ indicated a charitable institution rather than a medical one. Hospital meant ‘hospitality’, or board and lodging. We retain the traditional name as part of our unique heritage and because we are a boarding school.

Do you have a catchment area?
We do not have a catchment area. To be admitted pupils must have full United Kingdom or other EU/EEA nationality, Swiss, Norwegian or Icelandic nationality or have other approved residential status in the United Kingdom.

What is a typical OSH pupil like?
There is, of course, no such thing as a typical OSH pupil, but we are pleased that those who visit the School often comment on the genuine friendliness of our pupils and the fact that they are clearly very proud of their School.

Where is OSH?
In Stourbridge, a medium sized town on the border between Worcestershire and the West Midlands. There are excellent rail links, we are close to the centre of the motorway network and just a 30 minute drive from Birmingham Airport and two hours from Heathrow.

Are there fees for “extras”?
There are no additional charges for books or materials. Certain trips, weekend activities and adventure week events are charged for separately, but the cost of these is always kept to a minimum.
Old Swinford Hospital has been recognised by the Ministry of Defence with a Silver Award in its Employer Recognition Scheme.

The Award celebrates organisations that demonstrate and communicate their support for the armed forces community.