



BENENDEN
A COMPLETE
EDUCATION

Sixth Form

Learning for Life





Welcome to Benenden Sixth Form

Benenden's Sixth Form offers students – (boarders or day) – the perfect bridge between school life, university and beyond. The following characteristics are frequently cited to us as some of the benefits:

- Outstanding academic success
- A forward-thinking curriculum
- Preparation for the workplace, university and life
- Independence in a supportive environment
- An array of wonderful opportunities
- Friends for life

Sixth Form life offers students a highly distinctive experience from the Middle School. The most visible distinctions are that the Sixth Form have their own uniform, they live in their dedicated Houses – collectively known as 'Founders' in recognition of the School's founders – and the Upper Sixth, or Six Two, are allowed to navigate the site on scooters!

Benenden's Sixth Form provides students with increased independence and responsibility in a supportive environment, and is the ideal bridge for their next step in life.



Academic Success

Benenden is proud to have a superb record of success at A Level, and frequently outperforms even the highly-selective Kent grammar schools. Some of our academic highlights include:

- In 2024 an impressive 93% of all grades were at A*-B
- Students typically study three A Levels (four in exceptional circumstances) as well as the Extended Project Qualification, a dissertation-style project which universities favour
- Our full-time Careers Department is supported by a US admissions adviser
- We run a dedicated Oxbridge preparation programme

Benenden students go on to study at renowned higher education institutions around the world. Of our 2024 leavers:

- 90% gained their first choice institution
- 80% are at Russell Group institutions
- 26% at a Top 10 World University
- 40% at a Top 10 UK University
 - ◇ The most popular destinations include Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Durham, LSE and Imperial among others
- 9% are studying overseas
 - ◇ Benenden Seniors are currently at Yale, MIT, NYU, McGill, Boston and the University of Virginia among others
- Students study a wide range of higher education subjects:
 - ◇ Top choices include Economics, Law, Mathematics, Physics, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Modern Languages.



A Forward-Thinking Curriculum

Some of the benefits of Benenden's Sixth Form curriculum include:

- Small class sizes (typically around 14 students per class)
- Rigorous expectations from teachers
- A wide range of subjects available at A Level
- Ongoing support from teachers and Tutors outside of lesson times

Electives

In addition, Benenden offers an Electives Programme in which students choose to study short courses in a range of topics – designed to encourage learning for the love of learning. These are not marked or assessed in any way; instead they are designed to provide students with additional skills and knowledge in areas of interest, especially beyond the A Level curriculum.

More than 60 courses were on offer during our latest Electives Programme. These included:

- Sign language
- Investments for beginners
- Decrypting crosswords
- Meteorology
- Metacognition
- Journalism



Speaker Programme

Through both the Futures Programme of careers-focused talks and the Sixth Form Lecture Programme, Benenden is fortunate to regularly provide students with external speakers who are experts and leaders in their field.

We welcome speakers from a wide range of sectors, with recent speakers including chef Marcus Wareing, politicians Baroness Barran and David Lammy, scientist Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and the team behind the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine.

Well-known figures from the screen to have also spoken at Benenden recently include, presenters Ben Fogle and Clare Balding, actor Charles Dance and Chaser Shaun Wallace, who challenged a team of Sixth Form students in a general knowledge battle.



Life in Sixth Form

The Houses

In Founders, boarders are mainly in single rooms. There are four Sixth Form Houses:

- Beeches
- Elms
- Limes
- Oaks

There are also dedicated areas in Founders for our day students so they have their own workspace and personal area.

Our boarders can choose to go home each weekend (with the exception of the first and last weekend of each term, when we run whole year or whole school community activities), although most stay in School to enjoy the outstanding Weekend Programme.



Facilities

Founders is a modern, vibrant atmosphere and is the perfect place for students to relax with friends. Its facilities include:

- Two large communal spaces, including The Founders Bar, which is complete with pool table, games consoles and coffee machine (Students can even enjoy a glass of wine in the bar on a Saturday evening – with parental permission, of course!)
- A kitchen for ten students per floor to do some of their own cooking
- Laundry facilities enabling students to carry out their own clothes washing, if they wish
- The central Founders Kitchen, a larger space used for cooking events and gatherings

Support

There is a wide range of support for our Sixth Form, with each House benefiting from:

- Its own Housemistress/master
- Resident Matrons
- Academic Tutors
- House Domestic Staff
- Each student also has a Tutor and additional support from the Academic Department
- Counselling Team
- Medical Centre

“Although almost all aspects of starting Benenden were completely new to me, I still felt at ease when I arrived.

Every student was welcoming and eager to find out more about me, and it was easy to feel at home straight away – I never really felt like the ‘new girl’.”

Flora, Sixth Form Student



Taking Responsibility

Sixth Form students become increasingly independent and self-reliant and have the opportunity to develop their leadership and management abilities and to take responsibility for other people and activities, including:

- They are heavily involved with the rest of the School, remaining as members of their original Houses (new Sixth Form students are paired with a Middle School House on arrival).
- Some will hold major House responsibilities and all Sixth Formers help in some aspect of running their Houses such as through sport, drama, charity fundraising and social events.
- Students become what we call a 'Big Sister' to a student in the Lower and Middle School, looking after her and inviting her to Founders for tea.
- They help to run a wide variety of School teams, societies and activities.
- They also run the Pupil Forum and have positions on School committees, such as the Food and Uniform committees, to channel students' views back to School management.
- Each year a team of prefects (known as Grey Jumpers in recognition of their different uniform) are selected from the Sixth Form and they are instrumental in day-to-day School life.



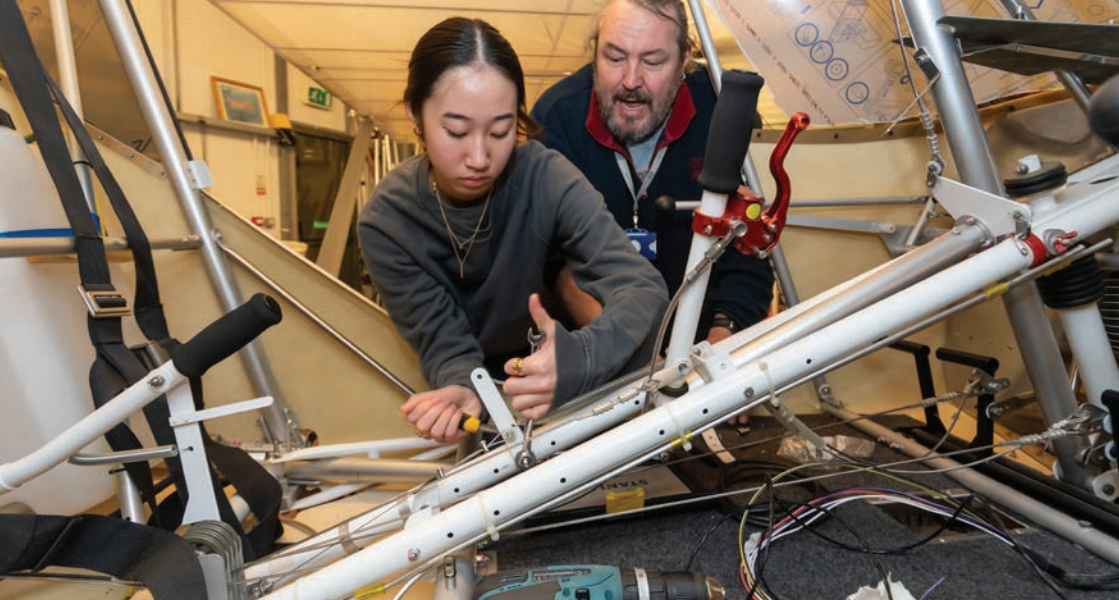
Ready for the Workplace and Life

Benenden runs a highly regarded Professional Skills Programme – an innovation that sets it apart from most schools in the UK. This Programme is dedicated to teaching students the general skills they need to thrive after school, including:

- Teaching practical skills such as teamworking, developing business plans, marketing and branding skills, reading complex financial information and learning the principles of inclusive leadership and presenting.
- The course features guest speakers and industry experts who run workshops and sessions and has been developed in collaboration with senior figures in business.
- Students are set practical tasks, including being filmed for mock job interviews to help them improve their interview technique.

“We went in-person to our customers... a personal approach is key.”

Sixth Form Student



Two major parts of the Professional Skills Programme are:

Enterprise Challenge

Students work in groups to launch a business using a start-up fund and are responsible for maximising their profit. This challenge involves:

- Researching supply chains
- Understanding teamwork and personal responsibility
- Developing viable business plans
- Developing a marketing strategy
- Launching a website and running digital marketing
- Running profit and loss management
- Learning customer service skills
- Pitching to a panel of judges

The students' businesses are always inventive and wide-ranging; those from recent years include groups selling Benenden branded clothing, dog leads, pizza delivery, car washing and bespoke jewellery.

Life Skills

The Life Skills element of the Programme provides our students with practical skills including:

- First Aid
- Cooking on a budget
- Financial management
- Basic plumbing and DIY skills
- Car maintenance



A Community and Global Outlook

The increasing responsibility and independence that Sixth Formers experience extends beyond Benenden, with students engaged in a whole host of volunteering opportunities.

These include:

- Reading to children at local primary schools
- Helping at the village café
- Working in a charity shop
- Socialising with residents at a care home for adults with learning disabilities
- Helping volunteers at the historic Sissinghurst Castle.

Our Six One students also mentor younger children at the state school that Benenden sponsors, The John Wallis Church of England Academy in Ashford.



A Supportive School Forever

Our alumni – or Seniors, as we call them – are part of a warm and closely connected network which exists to support Seniors and to help them keep in touch. Its benefits include:

- Regular reunions around the UK and abroad
- Business networking events
- Supporting Seniors to progress their careers by sharing opportunities and expertise
- Benenden Connects, a Facebook-style platform which connects Seniors with current and former parents and Sixth Form students. Connects creates an online Benenden network which proves invaluable for socialising, work experience, mentoring and business networking opportunities.

One of the best boarding schools in the world

Spear's School Index 2024



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Find out more

Please do not hesitate to contact our Admissions Team who will be delighted to answer any questions you might have about Benenden.

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