



## **Statement regarding the changes to admissions at Merchant Taylors' School**

The decision of Merchant Taylors' School to transition to an exclusively 11+ entry school, will have a significant effect on the prep schools in Northwood. Merchant Taylors' Prep will move to a 11+ model as a direct consequence of this change and St. John's have already made public their decision to do the same. Here at St. Martin's, the Governors and the Leadership Team have been considering these issues and how best our school can be shaped over the coming years. There is much to discuss as this change in the local schools' market comes against a backdrop of an evolving political and economic situation nationally. All independent schools are considering their longer-term strategic goals which in itself provides a context for the decisions made by MTS.

St. Martin's is a strong school with over one hundred years of providing a high-quality educational and pastoral experiences in the context of a traditional prep school. We are truly independent of any other school or organisation, financially well-resourced and we value the freedom that this offers. We also value the variety of schools that we are able to send our boys to at 11+ and 13+. We are committed to providing a distinctive voice in the local offering with a clear set of values and excellent outcomes for our boys. We work in partnership with our parents to achieve these outcomes and together this makes for a strong and vibrant community. The school believes that parents should have the widest choices available to them in making important decisions that affect the course of their sons' lives. Every child is different, and every family situation will have its own priorities and contexts and our role is to meet the needs of the boys and their families in the best way possible.

It is therefore with confidence that I can say that St. Martin's wishes to remain a 13+ school and that we believe that having provision for our older boys at the top of the school will give local families a choice of routes to follow. We know that there are differences in maturity levels between girls and boys and this is very apparent when considering transferring to a much larger school at Year Six or Year Eight. The advantages of staying in a familiar environment are many; they include small classes, leadership opportunities and educational experiences that a senior school would find difficult to replicate. We also have an impressive record of outcomes for these boys at the end of Year Eight, with passes for a range of schools at the 13+ entry point. This year alone, we have achieved eight passes at 13+ for St. Albans and two additional passes for Habs' Boys. We have boys entering for the top London academic schools and the traditional boarding schools such as Eton and Harrow. We will continue to strengthen our links with these schools and promote this route for those boys who wish to do so. None of this comes at any expense of the outcomes at 11+, which will continue to be our focus in achieving excellent results for senior schools, including Merchant Taylors', and also the local selective grammar schools.

Continuing to offer boys the Year Seven and Eight experience will make us distinctive, and we will stand alone in offering something that is different. We are confident that, moving forward, this will be an attractive proposition for independent education in our area. Whether you are considering the start of your son's educational journey at 3+, or if they are older than this and you are considering a move, then please do come and visit. We will be encouraging families to join us who are wishing to keep the widest range of options open whilst enjoying everything that a 3 – 13 prep school can offer.

**Simon Dunn**  
**Headmaster**  
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