



KING EDWARD VI ASTON SCHOOL

Educational excellence for our City

Information pack for applicants



Our ethos and values

At King Edward VI Aston School, we aim to ensure that all students become aspirant, confident and articulate global citizens. To achieve this, our core values of diligence, kindness, honesty and integrity underpin everything we do as a community together.

Diligence - We expect our students to work hard in everything they do at school. Through continuous commitment to self-improvement, with confidence to work outside their comfort zone, and by matching their effort with their potential, our students aim to be as best as they can. Working hard to achieve at any level is the norm at Aston: staff and students themselves are proud of their positive attitude to learning.

Kindness - People often say that when they come to Aston, they are surprised at how friendly the school is. This is a result of continuous work with the boys to celebrate their achievements at the same time as keeping them firmly grounded in modesty and warmth towards others. At Aston, we ensure that our pupils understand that being humble is as important as being successful.

Honesty - Staff are honest with the boys about their progress and achievements, and always seek to point out potential areas for development. In return, boys are expected to be honest about their feelings and to share problems when they arise. In this way, a climate of honesty leads to a culture of care where boys feel safe, well and nurtured.

Integrity - All the boys who graduate from the school should leave with a sense of integrity in everything they do. This ensures they have self-confidence to deal with challenges and a sense of equality and justice in the way they interact with others. In this way, they can become the respectful global citizens as we expect them to be.

Working at Aston



At Aston, we believe that our staff are fundamental to the education provided to our students. Well-qualified and well-motivated employees will unlock the potential in our young people and to this end, we want to ensure that staff professional development is maximised.

Some of the key benefits of working at Aston include:

- Alternate Thursday afternoons dedicated to professional development.
- Fortnightly focus session on pedagogical development
- An architecturally stimulating environment
- A broad and developing NQF programme
- A performance development programme which is genuinely dialogue-driven and based on personal goals.
- A fully-equipped gym which is free to use (including free professional induction).
- A new purpose-built catering facility.
- A commitment to educational visits.
- INSET days which are geared towards professional growth and reflection
- A staff well-being group
- A very supportive IT team
- Frequent social events
- A proactive approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We have fostered a culture in which staff are supported to through challenges in their lives at the same time as expecting the highest professional standards.

Our curriculum intent

At King Edward VI Aston School we believe that the curriculum is the key driver of progress for all students. On leaving the school we expect Aston students to be articulate, well-rounded and well-educated young men who understand the importance of our core values. The curriculum will enable all learners to become independent thinkers with the confidence and resilience to thrive in the 21st century.

Success at Aston rests on three core pillars:

Achievement through the taught curriculum	Enjoyment through the enriched curriculum	Personal development through our shared values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum will have a general ethos of embracing challenge, high expectations and deeper learning. • Learning will often go beyond the specification and challenge students to think tangentially. • Departments will provide a broad and creative curriculum which regularly interleaves prior learning into current learning. • Students will regularly contribute excellent ideas and questions in class, where there is an overwhelming culture of academic achievement; aspiration is seen as the norm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will have access to a varied range of extra-curricular clubs, groups and teams, both within and beyond the core day. • Through student leadership and council, students will offer reasoned views about moral and ethical issues. • Students will take pride in representing their school at all levels. • Students will choose to participate in curriculum enhancement opportunities on alternate Thursday afternoons. • There will be a rich and varied programme of educational visits for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty will drive students' sense of a moral purpose and encourage clarity of thought and deed. • Diligence will drive students' collective understanding of the benefits to be derived from hard work and collaboration. • Kindness will improve students' understanding of different faiths, cultures and orientations. • Integrity will help students understand the importance of values-based decision-making.

Whilst taught lessons are the foundation of the curriculum, all pupils participate in our house competitions and have numerous opportunities to participate in education visits, lectures and practical learning experiences in and out of school. We have an extensive extra-curricular timetable and encourage pupils to extend their scholarly and leadership skills through our in-house Astonian Awards.

More detailed information about the [curriculum can be found on our website](#).

Sixth Form



All of our A Level courses follow a two-year linear format with the final assessment taking place at the end of the course.

We offer flexible option groups to allow students to combine study of arts and sciences. In addition to subjects offered at GCSE, Economics, Further mathematics, Psychology and RE can be studied to A Level as well as a Cambridge Level 3 Technical award in engineering.

Art, music, French, German, and government and politics, are all taught collaboratively with King Edward VI Handsworth Grammar School, King Edward VI Handsworth Boys' and King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy.

All students follow one of four pathways with the expectation that they will sit all of the subjects started in Year 12 in September as A Level examinations in Year 13 during Summer term.

The four pathways are as follows:

- three A Level subjects
- three A Level subjects plus the Extended Project Qualification
- four A Level subjects
- four A Level subjects plus the Extended Project Qualification.

In addition to the above all students in Year 12 will have:

- a weekly fifty minute lesson of Personal, Social, Health and Education.
- a weekly afternoon of games/enrichment.

The EPQ is started in the Spring term of Year 12 and completed during the autumn term of Year 13. Students considering university courses where an interview forms part of the application process are strongly encouraged to study for the EPQ.

Students wishing to study four A Level subjects must have at least five GCSE passes at grade 8 with a grade 8 at GCSE in at least three of their A Level subject choices. No student will be able to study four A Level subjects if they have less than a grade 7 or the required equivalent in the subject at GCSE. The decision to study four A-level subjects must not be because the student cannot make a decision. Students studying four A Levels will be encouraged to do so in order to broaden their academic curriculum.

A Level Collaboration



**KING EDWARD VI
HANDSWORTH GRAMMAR
SCHOOL FOR BOYS**

Educational excellence for our City



**KING EDWARD VI
HANDSWORTH
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

Educational excellence for our City



**KING EDWARD VI
HANDSWORTH WOOD
GIRLS' ACADEMY**

Educational excellence for our City

The four schools of the King Edward VI Academy Trust based in the Aston and Handsworth area have a unique opportunity to develop closer working partnerships. They support each other in delivering an effective, high-quality education both through teachers sharing good practice and students having a wider range of opportunities to work together on projects and taking part in enriching experiences. Also, to work together to ensure as broad a curriculum offer as possible is maintained in a climate of constrained budgets, difficult teacher recruitment and student choice.

House system



An integral part of the ethos of Aston is the house system. In Year 7 boys are placed in one of five forms: 7B, 7F, 7H, 7M or 7T. These forms are part of a vertical house system placing each boy in one of the five houses. These houses then compete against each other throughout the year, in both sporting and cultural and academic activities. Each of the five houses take their name from the first five headmasters of the school.

They also have a house colour and a little-known emblem:

- Brandon's colour is green and its emblem is a fleur-de-lys.
- Floyd's colour is navy blue and its emblem is a lion rampant
- Hawley's colour is silver and its emblem is a shield.
- Manton's colour is yellow and its emblem is a portcullis.
- Temperley's colour is maroon and its emblem is a Tudor rose.

Each house is overseen by a house leader and all have a House Captain and two Vice-Captains. The current staff in charge of the houses (the House Leaders) are Mr M Hodgkinson (Brandon), Mr K Jackson (Floyd), Mr M Smith (Hawley), Mr R Giubertoni (Manton), and Mr S Wright-Smith (Temperley).

The houses compete in a number of sporting events over the school year. They compete to win the Hawkesford Trophy which was first awarded in 1954 and is based on each house's performance in a variety of sports. These range from cross-country and rugby, and hockey to cricket, to volleyball and athletics; the athletics competition being held at Alexander Stadium and watched by the whole school. Temperley House are the current holders of the Hawkesford Trophy.

A similar competition is held for cultural and academic competitions with the winning house being presented with the P Tuck Trophy. Once again houses compete in a variety of activities ranging from events such as mathematical challenges, to competitions such as chess, public-speaking, photography, music and drama. The current holders are Brandon House.

The house system plays a fundamental role in providing students at Aston with a well-rounded education. All boys take an active part in the house competitions and the events are an integral part of their enrichment programme both inside and outside of the classroom. Through taking part in the wide variety of events the students learn numerous life skills including commitment, leadership, and teamwork; and how to be magnanimous in victory and gracious in defeat. You only have to be at the final assembly of the academic year and witness the anticipation of the overall house competitions results and the announcement of the final standings for the P Tuck Trophy and the Hawkesford Trophy to appreciate how important the house system is to our students.

History



The King Edward VI Aston Grammar School was opened in 1883. In 1911, the girls' school moved out to a new building in Handsworth and merged with two smaller Foundation schools (Summer Hill and Bath Row). The whole Aston building was then used for boys. With the departure of the girls, the Pyramus and Thisbe Wall (which had previously served to separate the boys from the girls) was also removed. Aston is the only school in the Foundation that still occupies its original site. The original buildings are still in regular use, but there have been significant alterations and extensions. In 1963, the 'New Building' was opened. More recently, the school has added a sports hall and a building to house the languages departments, and has acquired the part of Frederick Road that formerly bisected the site.

The 1963 building, now known as Douglas House (after a double-fronted Victorian villa that stood on the same site), has been extended and refurbished to provide: four extra laboratories; a teaching kitchen; new classrooms for art, design technology and music; a conference room; a first aid room; and offices. The extension was named the Watcyn Thomas Wing, after a former Welsh rugby international who taught at the school for thirty-seven years. It was opened on 20 May 2008 by Bob Simpson, an Aston Old Edwardian (as former pupils are known) and governor of the school.

The school also has a school song written in the late 1800s to commemorate the stature and honour of Edward VI.

King Edward VI Foundation



KING EDWARD VI FOUNDATION BIRMINGHAM

Educational excellence for our City

Aston School is part of the King Edward VI Foundation of schools. This group is a rare combination of independent schools and academies, both selective and comprehensive, which have come together over the centuries since the establishment of King Edward's School in the 16th century. Our schools are diverse in nature, but we have a common purpose and an absolute commitment to working together to achieve the best for the children and young people of this city. Indeed, it is this diversity that is our greatest strength, as we learn from the excellence that exists in every one of our schools.

Everyone who works for our schools and for the Foundation Office is contributing to our overarching, ambitious mission of "making Birmingham the best place to be educated in the UK" and we are all focused on providing educational excellence for our city.

King Edward VI Multi-Academy Trust



KING EDWARD VI ACADEMY TRUST BIRMINGHAM

The Academy Trust provides opportunities for us to share practice and to offer new opportunities to staff and students. Our vision is to be able to support more schools across the Greater Birmingham area.

All of our schools will continue to deliver the curriculum and to develop an ethos that demonstrates a commitment to supporting children from all backgrounds to reach their potential. All of the schools will continue to provide a caring environment which will be overseen the current Governors, Head and staff.

We remain committed to offering a broad and balanced curriculum, supported by excellent teachers along with an exciting range of extra-curricular clubs and activities.

We believe that our Academy Trust will allow us to achieve these goals by working more closely with our own schools as well as continuing to develop relationships with the primary sector.