MRS LIZ HEWER
Headmistress
When people tell me how much they have enjoyed visiting St George’s, I always ask them what it was that most impressed them. The lovely buildings? The small class sizes? The impressive theatre? The wonderful sports facilities? The dance and drama studios? The outstanding pastoral team? The professional and kindly teachers? The busy and friendly atmosphere?

“Well yes,” they say. “All of those things. But it’s more than that; it’s the girls – there’s just something truly special about them.”

So what is it about a St George’s girl that is so recognisable and sets her apart as someone special, someone different, someone unique?

There is no such thing as a typical St George’s girl, and while every girl arrives here with her very own set of talents, the school encourages each and every one of them to develop a genuine understanding of who she is.

You will always know a St George’s girl because she is confident, capable and connected.
CONFIDENT

Old-school tradition meets 21st century sensibilities...
- The Good Schools Guide 2018
You can have all the talent in the world, but it won’t be a great deal of use to you if you don’t have the confidence to do anything with it. That’s why at St George’s we work hard from the moment the girls first get here to give them the security to be themselves and try new things.

The size of the school helps, of course: small enough for everyone to know one another, but large enough to give the girls not only a breadth of activities and opportunities, but also a range of friendship groups. Social variety is important; perhaps the most valuable lesson we ever learn is the ability to grow relationships, and I like to think that one of the building blocks of a proper and sustainable education is learning how to get along with a broad cross-section of people. In a very real sense, the girls at St George’s are practising their independence from their early years here, whether they start in First Year or Third Year, or join us for the Sixth Form.
St George's offers both Boarding and Day options, but all the girls benefit from our boarding school ethos and they learn leadership skills from the start. In Markham Boarding House, First, Second, Third and Fourth Years (Years 7 to 10) are together, and this creates the nurturing and aspirational environment which informs the whole school.

The timing of the school day ensures that girls soon develop the confidence to try new activities and to make different friends. Lessons finish at 16.00 but are always followed by an hour of clubs between 16.15 and 17.15, followed by supervised prep at school. St George’s often seems at its busiest and most varied in that hour after lessons.
All girls take part in these clubs and activities and it is a real strength that our after-school clubs are organised across the year groups so that different ages are mixed. Inclusivity is important to us here, as the younger girls learn from the examples of their elders, while they, in turn, learn to lead, nurture and encourage.

The range of our co-curricular programme, which is second to none, is spectacular: from Young Enterprise to Netball, from The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award to Robotics and Coding, Life Drawing to Beginners’ Ukulele, there is something to enthuse, stretch and challenge everyone.
The lasting friendships which are made and the independence and confidence gained are what makes boarding at St George's so special.
What we hold dear is our ability to provide the opportunity and encouragement to allow every girl to become the very best version of herself.
Oxbridge and Medical School success, places at Russell Group and top overseas Universities, and A*s in 13 different subjects at A Level, only tell some of the story when it comes to assessing the achievements of our girls. While we are rightly proud of our headline results, we are equally pleased to celebrate the progress of all our girls: we recognise that although some are academically very capable, there are others whose talents lie in different fields.

St George’s does not aspire to be an academic hothouse but what we do hold dear is our ability to provide the opportunity and encouragement to allow every girl to become the very best version of herself. Wherever a girl’s talents and interests lie, at St George’s she will find the right environment to thrive and flourish, and it is the value we add to the lives of all our girls that makes the most difference of all, and which sets us apart as a school.
SGA girls are nothing if not creative, and their achievements in music, dance, drama, art and textiles not only add to the school’s stimulating and energetic atmosphere, but also allow them to grow in confidence. The showcase performances and exhibitions are stunning, but equally important are the many and varied House competitions. There is always something going on at St George’s, and the school is alive with the buzz that only busy, happy and capable girls can create.

Elite performers are catered for, but so too are those who just want to take part. The girls here can literally have a go at everything, and perhaps our biggest success has been creating a coordinated termly programme that allows them the space and freedom to do just that.
With outstanding facilities, sport is an important feature of school life here and plays a vital role in every girl’s physical, social and emotional development. We take the promotion of a happy and healthy lifestyle very seriously and our girls benefit from the life lessons that sport teaches: the value of teamwork, sporting behaviour and learning to overcome momentary disappointment. Perhaps more than anything, sport can teach resilience and determination as well as developing individual and team performance.
We believe that school does not end with the last lesson of the day and that diverse enrichment opportunities out of the classroom are a very powerful complement to our academic curriculum.
Real connectedness is not living in the often shallow echo chambers of social media, or relying on the internet to provide all the answers: it is about making meaningful connections with others.
In today’s world everybody seems better connected than they have ever been before, and the SGA girls are no exception. An exciting IT strategy across the school, and our judicious use of the latest technology in our teaching and learning, ensures that the education they receive at St George’s is a proper preparation for tomorrow’s world. Our girls learn the skills that allow them to make the most of today’s rapid advances in collaborative learning, whilst also acquiring the confidence and judgement to approach tasks independently, and to differentiate between genuine knowledge and fabricated media.
Real connectedness is not living in the often shallow echo chambers of social media, or relying on the internet to provide all the answers: it is about making meaningful connections with others through play, through work and through service. Learning to step outside her own social circles is an important part of a girl’s education at St George’s, and we have close connections with many local and boys’ schools, with our wider community and of course all the charities that benefit from the work our girls do with them. The careers advice the older girls receive encourages them to seek out work experience and placements, in addition to places in further education. Our girls benefit from the very close connections we have with our amazing Alumnae community, allowing them to make positive connections for the future.
Educating girls to thrive in this new age of connectedness is something we feel is very important. Our girls go on to top universities, training and work placements, which then lead to a wide range of careers. They can draw on the many experiences they have had at St George’s, experiences which have helped turn them into the capable and confident all-rounders that are so recognisably our girls. Above all, a St George’s girl has developed the backbone and strength to know who she is, for we never let the sometimes artificial connectedness of the modern world get in the way of the real development of self. They are, in a very real sense, properly grounded and connected to themselves.
The girls reward us by turning into the confident, capable and connected young women who are so uniquely themselves.
In our most recent ISI inspection, the inspectors noted that “the girls’ personal development is excellent, and that St George's is characterised by a warm sense of community where both boarders and day pupils alike are courteous, considerate and respectful.” It also talked about the way we promote the growth of personal responsibility and the development of self-confidence, before ending by noting how the girls were “virtually unanimous in telling inspectors of their happiness, their pride in the school and their satisfaction with all it provides.”

I am certainly proud of all that they do, and proud of the reputation we have of being a school that makes a difference and takes the time to get to know each and every one of its girls. We give them the space and support they need to become the very best they can be, and they reward us by turning into the confident, capable and connected young women who are so uniquely themselves, but who are also so recognisably Georgians.
I do hope you will come and meet our girls yourselves, and that one day your daughter, like them, will find a place where she can truly thrive.