

The way forward



"I am really pleased that you have earned an offer to join Bablake School. In this booklet two of our Sixth Formers, Julia and Sam, capture some of what it means to be a member of our happy and inspiring community. I hope you enjoy it."

Mr John Watson, Headmaster



Bablake

Finding your way to the top

The team to guide you on your way from the start...



Second and Third Years (Years 8 & 9)

By now you've settled in so well that Bablake will feel like a second home! That doesn't mean everything's the same as new opportunities are constantly being presented to you. The highlight of the 2nd Year is the form trip to Fousseau in France. Whilst offering the chance for you to practise your newly developed language skills, the week is jam-packed with activities as you bond even more closely with your form. As you travel into the 3rd Year, the school continues to offer a range of activities that will broaden your horizons. Some will enjoy writing for Squash, our online pupil magazine, and will relish the Combined Cadet Force, with its camps and parades! Others will enjoy competing in chess and our successful sports teams and will maybe sing in the choirs, join the Debating and Public Speaking Society or want to perform in the Junior Dramatic club.



"The Form Tutors and I will help you to settle quickly and make new friends as well as encourage you to make the most of your abilities and enjoy the wide variety of activities on offer. There will always be someone to listen to you and help you with any concerns."

Mrs Amanda Jones, Head of Shells

The Shell Tutors welcome you to Bablake, and by taking time to get to know you individually and as a whole new year group, they will make sure you never want to stray from the paths set out for you.

Shells (Year 7)

You may be the smallest in the school, but everyone knows 'all good things come in small packages!' The Shell classrooms are spread across the school which means that no member of Bablake escapes the influence of a brand new face. Shell Formers give the school its vibrancy. In between making new friends, starting your studies and finding time to be involved in everything on offer – whether it is the Shells disco, Activity Morning in the first few days at Bablake, House competitions, trips out, sport, music or drama – you'll never be at a loose end to find little opportunity for being quiet... which is perfect if you want the confidence to move up to the top!



Fourth Year (Year 10)

By the 4th Year, you will have had the chance to choose GCSE subjects suited to your interests and abilities, with guidance available whenever you need it. Forms are mixed up and the year inevitably becomes even closer, aided by the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme which many of you will choose to challenge yourselves with. This creates the opportunity to learn any number of new skills – maybe an instrument as the Music Department at Bablake is always willing to accommodate more musicians to add to their talented array!



Fifth Year (Year 11)

By now, you will be working harder than ever towards those all important GCSEs, with assured support from all your tutors in and out of the classroom, as well as enjoying all those fantastic clubs that you will have joined along the way! This is the time to start making decisions about the future, and here at Bablake we provide individual career advice for every pupil, assisting you with the difficult choice of your A Level options. And as a reward for all your hard work for those exams, you can relish the Crystal Ball, which is organised by the 6th Form which you'll soon be a vital part of.

Sixth Form (Years 12 & 13)

So you've made it to the top of Bablake – and you will be planning how to stay ahead of your competition and live your own dream! If that means enjoying excellent higher education, the advice and support you receive mean that every year Bablake sends students to the best universities; for some that will be Oxford and Cambridge to study everything from Medicine to Anglo-Saxon and Norse; for everyone it will be the best university for them.

You never know what activity you may fall in love with, but in the Sixth Form, you'll have every opportunity to cultivate that interest with the friends who know you best. If you want to act, you may perform in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, as we have done every year for almost a quarter of a century. If you love sport, you may be participating in national competitions, whilst musicians will be playing in the orchestra or bands. If you think science is the way forward, the Gold Crest Award lets you study whatever you want in depth. Many volunteer through Community Service to help in primary schools, charity shops and care homes. Budding journalists can edit and contribute to the school magazines including The Wheatleyan and Stretch, whilst economists can even set up their own businesses with Young Enterprise... so much to list that it might just be easier to experience it first-hand! For pupils who love sport, you may have enjoyed representing the school in regular local fixtures or performing as a team or individually nationally. You may also have enjoyed our impressive fitness suite, dance studio, climbing wall and swimming pool. The wealth of former pupils who've gone on to make their mark on the world proves that the 'Shell' you form at Bablake at the age of 11 will protect you wherever you decide to go.

Our journey so far...

Current Shells Amelia, Ashni, George, Thomas and William discussed their first few months at Bablake with Lower Sixth pupil, Julia Ryland. Here are just a few moments from the conversation.

Julia: So what made you choose Bablake once you had passed the examination?

Will: I chose Bablake because my sisters are here already. They love it and we all liked the feel of the school.

Ashni: I was at the Junior School so already knew a lot about the Senior School. (Amelia says the same.) My original friends are spread across the five Shell forms which I thought was going to be hard but it's been really easy to make new friends.

Julia: How easy was it to settle in?

George: I take the same bus as you, Julia, along with my brother, who is just starting his GCSEs. That meant that I soon recognised friendly faces from other year groups and my brother and his friends all talk to me.

Thomas: I soon met lots of new people in the clubs that I attend and people are really easy to talk to.

Julia: So what have you enjoyed most about Bablake?

Amelia: The freedom! The lunchtimes are long and there is plenty to do.

Will: There are so many more opportunities than at primary school. The resources are brilliant and I can do so many more things, like lots of different sports.

Ashni: Yes, I love the extra-curricular clubs, as there is such a wide range of activities to enjoy. I've been to drama, netball and hockey.

Thomas: I really like my language lessons and you don't even realise you are learning.



George and Amelia both added they enjoyed new activities like cooking and sewing before they starting talking about their teachers.

Amelia: Our form tutors are young and really supportive.

William: Yes, they are friendly and very easy to talk to.

Ashni: I think they are fair which is really important.

Julia: Thank you for telling us how much you have enjoyed your first few months. I am sure you are looking forward to the House Music Festival thos term. I remember loving the House system with its many competitions – it seemed like another home in the first few weeks. Also, I couldn't wait to reach the Sixth Form. How would you describe your Bablake experience in a word or two?

William: Extraordinary!

Ashni: Different.

Thomas: Very welcoming!

Amelia: I was going to say that!

George: Exciting!

This leaflet was edited by L6th pupils **Sam Grey** and **Julia Ryland** who both have a keen interest in journalism (political and sports).



Julia, who is also interested in a career in the police force, has 10 A*s at GCSE, is a national prize-winning public speaker, plays 1st XI hockey, holds Sergeant status in our CCF and is embarking on the Gold Duke of Edinburgh award. Sam, who has a keen interest in aviation and has already gained his Solo Flight recognition, is also a Gold Duke of Edinburgh participant, has 9 As at GCSE and plays 1st XV rugby.



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