Willingdon

COMMUNITY SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS

2026-27

DEVELOPING PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

AMBITION
RESPECT
COMPASSION
COURTESY
HONESTY

PHYSICAL EDUCATION LESSON



LIBRARY



IS WILLINGDON THE SCHOOL FOR ME ?

Dear Parents / Carers,



Your child will spend the next five years of their life developing into a young adult and their chosen school will play a significant role in shaping their identity and their future. Therefore, choosing a secondary school most appropriate for them is a huge but very exciting decision you and your child will make. We know the priorities will be your child's safety, happiness, and where they can be the very best version of themselves. We believe that is with us, at Willingdon.

Every decision we make is based upon what is best for our students. We want our students to strive to achieve their personal best in everything that they do. We value the importance of parent, staff and student relationships and feedback in order to do the very best for our learners. We believe all stakeholders need a voice if we are to drive Willingdon Community School to greater heights.

Teaching and Learning will always be our top priority. We know that if children have consistently excellent lessons that ignite curiosity, they want to come to school and they make significant progress. Our OFSTED report evidences how all students of all abilities make outstanding progress with us and are able to access their post-16 first choices. There is no typical Willingdon student. We celebrate the talents and interests of all and endeavour to create life-long learners who will thrive in a competitive world. We pride ourselves on the academic achievements of our students and consistently help each and every one to reach their potential by having uncompromisingly high expectations. Our staff help empower students to strive for 'Personal Excellence'. These key values underpin everything we seek to do in order for students to become socially responsible, celebrate diversity and value individuality.

We are very fortunate to have some incredible facilities for our students to use. Year 7 have their own bespoke area called 'Our Space', which has their own canteen pod, although they are very welcome to use the whole school canteen. They also have their own toilet block right by their area. The sports hall has proven very popular with our student body who are enjoying a better space dedicated to a range of sporting activities. We have designed the Dance Studio and are looking forward to growing this subject area. We have a wonderful Drama studio which has its own stage lighting. Our library in the heart of the school has also shown students how reading for pleasure is part of our ethos at Willingdon. We also have fantastic technology facilities with a Food and Nutrition suite as well as a well-equipped Design Technology space. Finally, our SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) area which is in a prominent part of the school build is versatile and can allow us to fully embrace our values of nurture and inclusion.

Although this prospectus will give you an insight to Willingdon Community School, I invite you to attend our Open Evening and Open Days to appreciate for yourselves the benefits our school can provide. It is important you get a feel for the school and sign up to the values and ethos we stand for. I look forward to meeting you all soon and I wish your child the very best in their Year 6 studies and with their decision.

Mrs Emily May
Executive Headteacher

Annual Production 2026



Christmas Concert 2025



Sponsored Walk 2025



WELCOME FROM OUR STUDENT COMMUNITY

It is a privilege and a joy to be the Head Students here at Willingdon. It is also a great responsibility, which we have genuinely enjoyed undertaking over the past few months. We want to support every student here, encouraging everyone to thrive and reach their full potential. We also want to continue making Willingdon a vibrant, inclusive and friendly community.

We have many aims that we hope to achieve this year, with lots of exciting new projects planned for our school. One of the things we are most looking forward to organising and taking part in is our very first Winter Sports Day. Another area that we are hoping to improve at Willingdon is student voice. We want to make sure that we hear from a wide range of students so that everyone in our school community has the opportunity to be represented.

We are incredibly lucky to be surrounded by an outstanding Student Leadership Team, supported by our six Deputy Head Students, each of whom leads a specific area of school life, alongside our Assistant Head Students and Prefects. Together, we are a strong team who are committed to making a positive difference in our school and creating opportunities for everyone.

A very warm welcome to all of you who are considering Willingdon as your secondary school option. We cannot recommend it highly enough and have all thoroughly enjoyed our time here. We hope that each and every one of you will come to love Willingdon just as much as we do.

Harry Robinson-Ash, Honor Baldwin & Sophie Pocztarek

Head Students





VISION STATEMENT

We are a united, vibrant community which demonstrates personal excellence in all that we do. Learning at Willingdon transforms lives by igniting curiosity and expecting the very best from staff and students alike. We value opportunities, aiming for success today to prepare for challenges and opportunities tomorrow. We are respectful, honest and courteous to empower each other on our unique learning journeys.

We look after ourselves and each other, show empathy, respect and compassion to all people and our environment along the way. We encourage tolerance, resilience and reflection, which in turn allows everyone to make progress every lesson. We work together as a harmonious community to be the very best versions of ourselves. This makes us Willingdon.

GCSE RESULTS 2026

We are above local averages in every measure.

	Willingdon School	East Sussex Average
English & Maths Grade 4+	66 %	63.2 %
English & Maths Grade 5+	49 %	44 %
Attainment 8	45.2	43.5

SUPPORTING STUDENTS ON THE JOURNEY FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

At Willingdon Community School, we pride ourselves on the level of support we offer children and parents throughout the entire transition process. It is important to us that we work with the local primary schools in advance of students choosing their secondary school. There is a huge range of activities offered so that during their time at primary school, students start to become part of the Willingdon family. We have a specialist pastoral team fixed in Year 7 that are experts on transition and work closely with each and every feeder school. This includes the Heads of Year and a non-teaching Pastoral Support Leader.

Once your child has selected Willingdon Community School, they will receive a visit from key staff to begin the transition process. A programme then follows which is full of transition events, helping students become familiar with our expectations, our systems and giving them a chance to form positive relationships with their peers and staff.









Transitioning from primary to secondary school can also be a new and daunting experience for parents too. There are many opportunities in Year 7 to help parents with this change and these range from Parent Forums to regular Positive Progress Evenings, along with an in-person Meet the Coach Evening in Term 1.

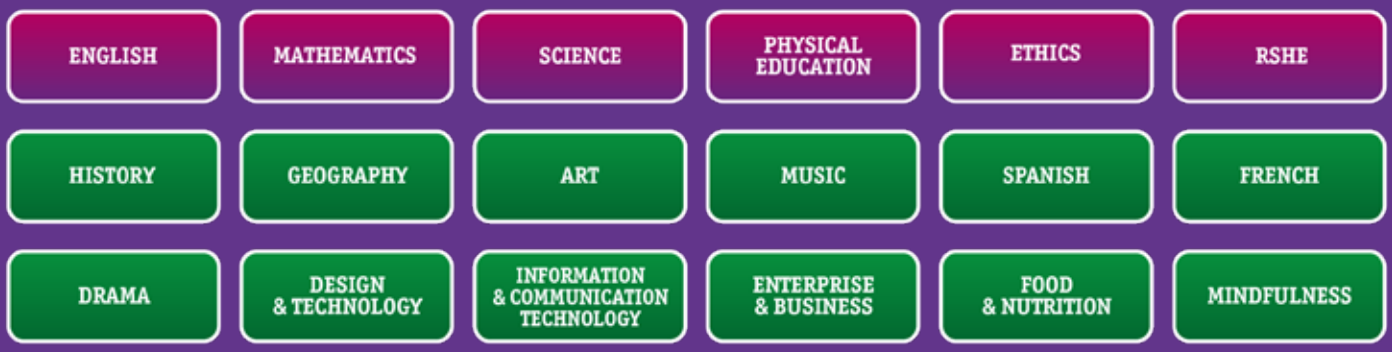
IGNITING CURIOSITY

At Willingdon Community School, your child will experience a curriculum that ignites curiosity and expects the very best from every learner. In Key Stage 3, students study the full range of core and foundation National Curriculum subjects, with teaching adapted to meet the needs of every individual. We are proud of the breadth we offer, giving students the chance to explore a wide range of subjects across a full three years. The curriculum is reviewed annually to keep it vibrant and relevant.

This breadth leads to deeper learning across subjects from Drama to Design Technology, separate Humanities (Geography, History and Ethics) to Music, Art, IT and a choice of language, all alongside the core subjects of Maths, Science, English, PE and RSHE.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 - 9)

CORE SUBJECTS & FOUNDATION SUBJECTS



In Year 9, students make their option choices for Key Stage 4, shaping a bespoke curriculum built around their potential. As a fully comprehensive school, we have developed a system flexible enough to reflect the needs, interests and talents of every learner, and we use student voice to help design our GCSE offer. In recent years this has brought Astronomy, Business Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Statistics, Travel and Tourism, and Child Development into our options menu, alongside subjects already studied at Key Stage 3.

Careers education runs as a golden thread through the whole school curriculum. Students learn about a variety of workplace settings, with careers education embedded into lessons and extracurricular activities offered by staff throughout the school.





Key Stage 4 (Years 10 - 11)

In Key Stage 4, every student follows an examination course in English Language and Literature, Mathematics and Science, together with four other subjects of their choice.









"Leaders have created a curriculum which is carefully planned and sequenced. Content is ambitious for all pupils including disadvantaged pupils and those with Special Education Needs and/or disabilities (SEND)"

OFSTED 2023

SUPPORTING YOU THROUGHOUT YOUR JOURNEY



"Pupils say that bullying is uncommon and dealt with effectively. Pupils say they feel happy and safe."

OFSTED 2023





The key to our success as a school is ensuring that every child feels safe, secure and happy.

Our safeguarding and pastoral welfare system underpins everything we achieve. Throughout their time at Willingdon Community School, students are supported by a coach who sees them on a daily basis during the coaching period and, as far as possible, stays with them throughout their five years here. The coach acts as the first point of contact for parents or carers and monitors the overall progress and wellbeing of those in their group.

We place great importance on a strong pastoral system, as students need support to develop and overcome any hurdles whether emotional or academic. Each year group is led by a Head of Year (HOY) and they will support the transition the students experience as they progress through each year group. Also, they have a Pastoral Support Leader (PSL) who works alongside the HOY. These are non-teaching members of staff offering additional help and guidance for students. Further support is provided by the Inclusion Team and the school has invested in the services of a counsellor. Additionally, referrals can be made for Behaviour Intervention to our county advisors (TASS). We are also very proud that well over half of our staff have been trained as Mental Health First Aiders. We also have an extensive safeguarding team, which also supports schools locally to drive excellence in this area.

PROUD TO BE AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

Inclusion is at the Heart of Willingdon

At Willingdon Community School, we believe that every young person has the right to belong, achieve and flourish. Every child brings their own strengths, interests, experiences and individual needs, and we are committed to ensuring these are recognised, understood and celebrated.

Our approach to inclusion is rooted in our ambition for every student. We have high expectations for all and believe that additional needs or barriers to learning should never limit a young person's opportunities or aspirations. Our goal is not simply to ensure students can access education, but that they feel valued, confident and successful as members of our school community, developing the knowledge, skills and independence they need to thrive in life beyond school.



Inclusion is everyone's responsibility. It begins with excellent teaching and a curriculum that is ambitious, accessible and responsive to individual learners. Our teachers use a range of strategies and adaptations to remove barriers whilst maintaining consistently high expectations. Where additional support is needed, we work closely with students and families to understand strengths, identify needs early and put the right support in place.



Our Inclusion Team works alongside teachers, pastoral staff, families and specialist professionals to provide a graduated range of support. This may include targeted interventions, small-group or one-to-one support, adjustments to the learning environment, specialist advice and carefully planned additional provision. We continually review the impact of support to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of each young person.



We are particularly proud of our Deaf Support Facility, which enables deaf students to learn alongside their peers whilst benefiting from specialist support from a Teacher of the Deaf and Educational Audiology services.

We also recognise that inclusion extends beyond SEND. Students may face challenges linked to disadvantage, social, emotional or mental health needs, care experience, attendance difficulties or family circumstances. Our pastoral and inclusion teams work closely together to identify concerns early, provide appropriate support and ensure every student feels known, valued and able to succeed.

"Pupils are kind and caring. They look after one another."

OFSTED 2023

“Pupils are considerate of one another.”
OFSTED 2023





Our annual sponsored walk encapsulates everything which we hope to achieve with inclusion and building a sense of belonging: a strong community, comprehensive support throughout the journey and full participation, irrespective of background or ability.

Working together with families

We believe that parents and carers are essential partners in understanding and supporting their child. We listen carefully to the views of students and families and work collaboratively to build a shared understanding of strengths, needs and the support that will make the greatest difference.
Transition is a particularly important part of our work. We collaborate closely with feeder primary schools to understand each child’s individual profile before they join us. Information is shared with teaching and pastoral staff so that support, relationships and routines are established from the very beginning of Year 7, helping students feel secure, confident and ready to learn.

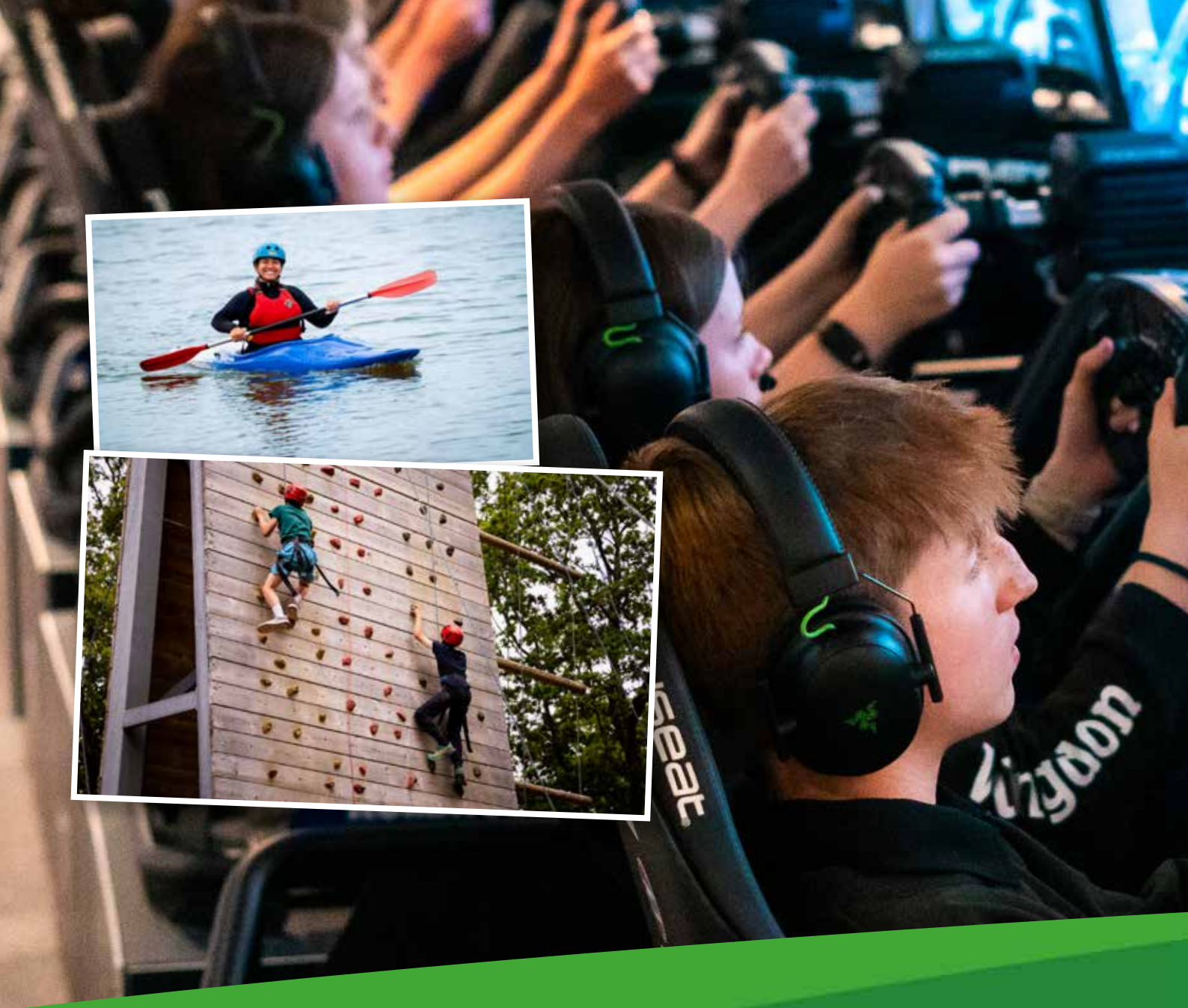
Nurture, Belonging and Participation

We know that children learn best when they feel safe, understood and connected. Alongside our high expectations for behaviour, learning and achievement, we provide a nurturing environment where students can develop resilience, confidence and a positive sense of self.

Our ambition is simple:

Every student known. Every student included. Every student supported.
Every student challenged. Every student able to thrive.

This is what we mean by Personal Excellence at Willingdon.



ENRICHING YOUR SCHOOL LIFE

At Willingdon Community School, we believe that learning extends far beyond the classroom. Therefore, we offer a comprehensive enrichment programme designed to broaden students' horizons, raise aspirations and enhance their learning experience. Our aim is for every student to discover new interests, develop their talents and build the confidence, independence and skills they need for the future. Every subject area provides opportunities to learn outside the classroom, alongside a wide range of clubs and activities covering sport, STEM, the arts, music, technology, languages, and outdoor adventure. Our aim is for every student to take part in at least one club or extracurricular activity and one school trip each academic year.

Clubs and Activities

There is something for everyone, whether students want to develop an existing passion or try something completely new. Through our enrichment programme, students can pursue their passions, discover new interests and develop skills beyond the curriculum. Examples include:
• Duke of Edinburgh • Robotics • STEM • Coding • Maths Challenge • Creative Writing • Public Speaking & Debate • School Band • School Choir • Drama • Art • Textiles & Dressmaking • Cookery • Young Enterprise • Football • Basketball • Athletics • Tennis • Gymnastics • Netball • Gaming PC Building • Minecraft Education • Chess



"Extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities are extensive."

OFSTED 2023

Williams F1 Team HQ 2026

Trips and Visits

Our programme of educational visits brings learning to life and allows students to experience places, people and cultures beyond East Sussex. Students take part in local, regional, national and international experiences, helping them to develop their cultural capital, broaden their understanding of the world and raise their aspirations.

Recent Day Trips and Educational Visits include:

• London Science Museum • Natural History Museum • Tate Gallery • Towner Art Gallery • The Globe Theatre • Hampton Court Palace • GCSE Science Live

Residential and International Experiences include:

• Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions • Oxford University & Williams F1 Racing • Morfa Bay • Austria Ski Trip • Belgium WW2 Battlefields • Paris • Valencia • Canada • Sri Lanka

Wider Experiences

Throughout the year, students benefit from themed learning days and Activity Day, as well as opportunities to explore careers, develop life skills, take part in challenges and contribute to the wider community. These experiences help students to develop confidence, resilience, leadership and independence, while encouraging them to think ambitiously about their future.

Examples include:

• Activity Day • Themed Learning Days • Careers Fairs • University and College Visits • Workplace Experiences • STEM Challenges • Robotics Competitions • Regional and National Sporting Events & Competitions • Community Projects • East Sussex Youth Voice • Charity and Community Performances

EVENTS



Phoenix Festival 2026













TRIPS

Morfa Bay Trip
Wales



Imperial
War Museum



Nepal Trip







Ypres Trip
Belgium

YOUR JOURNEY BEYOND WILLINGDON



At Willingdon Community School, we are committed to ensuring that every student leaves us with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices about their future. Alongside achieving their academic potential, we equip students with the transferable skills, resilience and ambition needed to succeed in further education, apprenticeships and employment.

Our commitment to outstanding Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) has been recognised through the Investors in Careers National Quality Award, with the school achieving full accreditation against the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance.

Our careers programme begins in Year 7 and is carefully planned to support students throughout their time at school. Through a combination of careers lessons, curriculum-linked learning, access to up-to-date labour market information, employer encounters and workplace experiences, students gain an understanding of the wide range of opportunities available to them. By the time they leave Willingdon Community School, students will have explored over 200 different career pathways.

"External examination outcomes are extremely strong."

OFSTED 2023









We have established strong partnerships with local employers, colleges and universities to help raise aspirations and broaden horizons. Students benefit from careers fairs, guest speakers, college taster days, university visits and encounters with apprenticeship and industry professionals, enabling them to explore the many routes available after Year 11.

All Students participate in meaningful workplace experiences, aspiring to complete two weeks worth of progressive experiences of the workplace across Key Stages 3 and 4. These experiences help students develop valuable employability skills, build confidence and gain first-hand insight into the world of work.

By combining academic success with high-quality careers education, we ensure that every student is well prepared for the next stage of their journey and ready to embrace the opportunities and challenges of the future.

OUR LIBRARY



Our library is at the heart of our school building. An inclusive and accessible space to allow study, reading for pleasure and the opportunity for students to fulfil their potential.

Use of the Library

KS3 students have one dedicated 'Reading for Pleasure' lesson per week as part of their English lessons. Across the school year, students will: visit the school library to browse and read for pleasure, engage in online author book talks, share reading in groups, write book reviews, and take part in termly reading conversations. Year 7 and 8 students are also involved in BookBuzz from the BookTrust, thanks to the sponsorship of the Friends of Willingdon School.

Our enticing books are grouped in themes linked to the #inmyshoesWCS challenge so that all students can find something to capture their imaginations. Each term students build their empathy skills using the feelings wheel vocabulary to enrich their book talk.

Current sections include: about life, adventure, animal stories, based on real life, comics, crime, dystopian and scary, fantasy, funny, graphic novels, mythology, non-fiction, poetry and plays, sci-fi, sport, dyslexia friendly super readable, war, quick reads, and study zone guides.

Students have the opportunity to enhance their scope of reading and to engage with new texts through the Southern School Book Award and the UKLA Book Award. Each year we develop our stock with new and enticing texts from a range of genres to ensure there is something delicious to read for everyone. A study zone area allows KS4 students to revise and study calmly and quietly with the resources they need to support them.

Library resources

Our library is equipped with a bank of laptops to aid revision and study, a wheelchair accessible desk and SEND friendly seating including wiggle cushions and variety of seating to help everyone concentrate and enjoy the space quietly. Our study zone area includes a range of study resources and text books that students can use to support their revision whilst working in the library.

THE FOREST SCHOOL & BEACH SCHOOL

The Forest School

A key part of this provision is our on-site Forest School, which offers an immersive outdoor learning experience that complements traditional classroom teaching. Working alongside specialist off-site opportunities, students participate in regular outdoor sessions and hands-on sensory activities that encourage creativity, teamwork, problem-solving and communication.

Forest School nurtures curiosity and exploration while helping students develop resilience, self-confidence and emotional regulation. It provides opportunities for students to connect with nature, strengthen their physical and mental wellbeing, and develop valuable social skills in a supportive environment. Guided by trained staff, students learn to respect and care for the natural world while gaining life skills that extend far beyond the classroom.

The impact of Forest School is often best described by our students themselves: *"It helps me concentrate", "I feel it improves my focus", "It helps me calm down", "Allows me to work with different students", "It helps me to open up for learning", "It makes me want to attend school"*



The Beach School

We are also incredibly proud to be leading the Beach School initiative across Eastbourne, creating opportunities for children and young people to benefit from the unique learning environment provided by our coastline. Beach School uses the natural coastal environment as an inspiring and engaging classroom. Through carefully planned experiences, students deepen their understanding of subjects including science, geography, mathematics, art, literacy and physical education, while developing curiosity, creativity and practical skills.

The benefits extend well beyond the curriculum. Time spent by the coast supports mental health and wellbeing, offering opportunities to connect with nature, be physically active, build confidence, develop resilience and experience a sense of calm. By combining meaningful learning with wider personal development, Beach School helps young people grow academically, socially and emotionally.



Our official launch is planned for June 2027 and marks an exciting step towards our ambition of making beach-based learning accessible to children and young people across Eastbourne.



FRIENDS OF WILLINGDON

The Friends of Willingdon are a group of parents, carers and supporters who seek to provide a link between the school, home and community through the organisation of a wide range of events which are not only a great deal of fun and a fantastic way to make new friends, but also an opportunity to fundraise for school projects to enhance and enrich all our children's school lives.

In recent years, they have been very proud to present a new minibus to the school, a vision that seemed all but impossible a few years ago! They have also given the school a new laser cutter for the DT department, table tennis tables for PE as well as supporting the purchase of various curriculum based items that would not have been affordable for the school. The Friends have for the past two years funded Bookbuzz, a reading initiative for all our Year 7 students. The Friends have also supported many activities of the school, including sponsored walk, Christmas concert, school play and Phoenix Festival in the summer. The Friends also organise and host a very successful firework event, in conjunction with a local primary school, and regularly raise over £2,500 for the school each time. We already have a date in the diary for this event to take place this Autumn. The Friends also host the annual Christmas Fayre as well as supporting other school events throughout the year and are always looking for new members and new ideas to further support the school. The Friends email address is: friends@willingdonschool.org.uk





OUR AMAZING SPORTS FACILITIES

Supporting Physical Wellbeing

The PE Department is proud to have achieved the Gold School Games Award 2025/26, recognising our commitment to sport, physical activity, leadership and inclusion.
Students benefit from outstanding facilities, including a four-court Sports Hall, purpose-built dance studio, extensive outdoor spaces, a 400-metre athletics track, full-size football and rugby pitches, and a fleet of 25 mountain bikes. These facilities support a broad and engaging curriculum, alongside a wide-ranging extracurricular programme that encourages every student to develop confidence, resilience and a lifelong enjoyment of physical activity. Willingdon has a proud sporting tradition. Our teams compete successfully across a range of sports and regularly achieve league titles, county cup success and tournament honours, providing students with opportunities to challenge themselves and excel.

Leadership is central to our sporting provision. Students develop communication, teamwork and organisational skills through competitions, festivals and School Games initiatives. Our Sports Leaders also support primary sporting events and festivals, helping younger children build confidence, enjoy physical activity and develop positive relationships with our school before transition. Beyond the school day, our facilities play an important role within the wider community. We host sporting events and competitions for local schools and provide high-quality facilities that are used extensively by community groups and clubs.
Set against the backdrop of the South Downs, PE and Dance at Willingdon offers inclusive, ambitious and enjoyable opportunities for every student to participate, achieve success, develop leadership skills and discover their personal excellence through sport and physical activity.

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Willingdon
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