

THE STANDARD

The John Lyon School Newsletter
& Mini-Prospectus

Winter 2005/06



Welcome to JLS: This year's
13+ entrants to the School



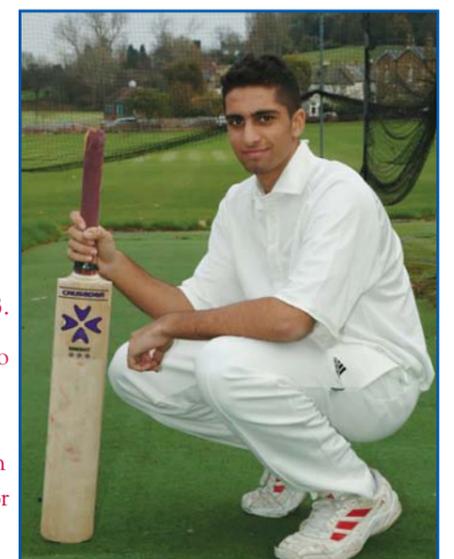
JLS Committed to Entry at 13+

By Kevin Riley, Headmaster

For a successful school such as The John Lyon School, the annual task of recruiting new pupils is by no means a question of simply offering places to all families who apply. We are – and will remain – a selective school, accepting only boys who are likely to maintain and further strengthen our reputation for academic excellence. Indeed, the generous support from the School's bursary funds, the John Lyon's Charity and The Peter Beckwith Harrow Trust, means we can enhance this reputation still further by attracting able boys from families who might not otherwise be able to afford the fees.

Given this position, I know that recent moves into co-education by some former boys' schools in north London have caused a few worries among parents of prospective JLS students. With these newly co-educational schools now focusing on admitting children aged 11, some have been asking if JLS will follow suit and move away from admissions at 13.

In response, I am very pleased to be able to reassure both parents and any prep school heads who may have similar concerns. I can state without hesitation that The John Lyon School is committed to 13+ entry for the foreseeable future. In general, we find that boys joining us at 13 are strong academically and that they prove to be tremendous assets to the School.



Batting for his Country: Congratulations to fifth-former Kabir Toor, who has been selected for the England U16 tour of South Africa in February

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Views from the Inside



I'm **Karan Kapoor**, I'm 13, from Neasden, and I came to the School in September 2005. I was at Clifton Lodge in Ealing before. I didn't come here when I was 11 because my old school was a prep school which specialised in getting boys ready for senior school at 13. My parents and I chose JLS because of the facilities and because it's quite a small school. We looked around three or four, but were most impressed with JLS. My favourite subject is definitely Maths, and I enjoy sport. I play basketball and cricket and I like swimming. I'm also learning classical guitar – I have lessons at School. I was very keen on drama at my old school, but I didn't join the club here straightaway. I wanted to see the production of Hamlet before I made a decision. There's a good mix at The John Lyon School of sport, music, drama and academic. I'm happy with the move at 13. I haven't found it hard to make friends; I don't think I've missed out by doing it this way.

I'm **David Deltchinov** from Greenford and I'm 14. My parents moved to the UK from Bulgaria just before I was born. I was at Northolt High School, but my mum moved me to Orley Farm School. She is sure I will have a better future for having been at JLS, and I agree with her. I won a drama scholarship and have received a bursary. I enjoy all the subjects here, but history is my favourite and I would like to study archaeology at university. I love sport – especially racket sports. I'm learning to play the piano and will take my Grade 2 soon. I wouldn't say I have a favourite teacher, because I think a high standard is the most important thing and I think all the teachers achieve that. But I do find Mr Parsons, my English teacher, particularly inspirational! I did find it a little hard to make friends at first, because I am quite serious I think, but now I feel I'm finding my feet.



Emerging talent : David Deltchinov enjoys the expedition in Buxton

Meet a Teacher - Mr Sam Andon



Anyone who doubts that teaching can still be a vocation, not just a job, should talk to the new JLS Mathematics teacher.

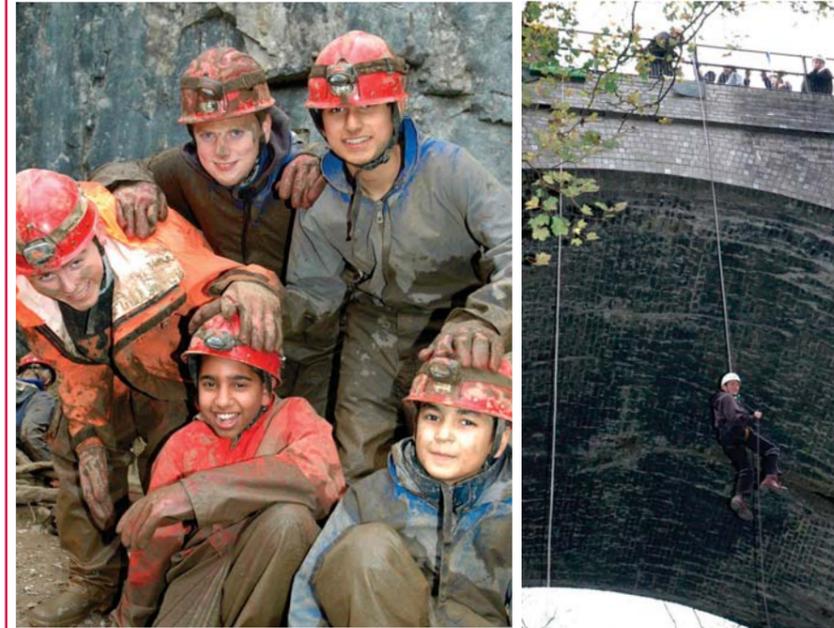
After attending boarding school, Mr Andon had a varied early career, operating a farm grain store, taking a degree in architecture at UCL and even living the glamorous life of a trader on the floor of the Stock Exchange. "I was quite successful, but eventually I found the conversation – always cars, women and property! – began to pall."

Having decided to try teaching, he began as a Newly Qualified Teacher at Featherstone High School in Southall – and was immediately "hooked". He states: "I found that teaching had soul. There is no existential anxiety: you know you are doing something worthwhile." Although he stayed at Featherstone for some time, Mr Andon had little hesitation about leaving it for the very different world of independent education. "I wasn't especially looking for a new post, but when I saw the quality of JLS, it was an obvious opportunity, particularly since my home in Harrow is only 10 minutes away. To be honest, getting experience of a variety of schools is probably a good thing for any teacher. Moving schools means you realise what you are good at and what you have to improve on."

All JLS teachers are encouraged to lead an extra-curricular activity, and Mr Andon relishes the prospect. "One of my ideas is to start a Gifted and Talented Maths Club. Boys would explore the subject in a project-based way, stretching them more than time constraints in normal lessons permit. There is a high percentage of very bright kids here, which means that these boys don't feel they need to watch their backs at all."

• Mr Andon is married to Shelly, an architect. They have two children – Max, aged nine, and Mischa, six, both at Roxeth First and Middle School. His father-in-law is an Indian businessman, who also lives in Harrow.

Great to be in the Great Outdoors! Buxton 2005



The Headmaster joined the 2005 Third Year trip to Buxton in the Peak District. During an action-packed week in half-term, the boys enjoyed daytime activities including abseiling, caving, climbing and raft-building, as well as evening fun, such as a night walk, quiz and sketch show.



Hamlet is Autumn Triumph



A level Drama student Benjamin Shave [pictured left] took on the role of Hamlet with great distinction in the JLS autumn play. The Headmaster said: "Hamlet is an ambitious play, which some schools might hesitate to take on, but this production has proved another triumph for our Director of Drama, Miss Gibbs, and her team. I am proud that JLS is increasingly becoming known for excellence in areas such as drama and sport, alongside our academic achievements."

News in Brief

Commemoration Concert
The John Lyon School and Harrow School's annual Commemoration Concert featured music spanning seven centuries in styles ranging from folk song to symphony. Held in Harrow School's historic Speech Room, it featured JLS groups including the New Music



Ensemble and Male Voice Choir, as well as a joint orchestra from both schools. Headmaster Mr Riley, attending his first Commemoration Concert, said: "I was very impressed: this is an excellent way to celebrate the close links between us and Harrow School." The concert raised money for The Harrow Club, a charity improving the lives of disadvantaged young people in the Notting Dale community of London.

Working (Out) Night and Day
More than 70 sixth-formers took part in a 24-hour event in the School swimming pool and fitness suite, raising around £5,000 for Opportunity International, which provides community loans in the developing world.

Medicine Men
JLS enjoys close links with Northwick Park Hospital's Jenner Ward. Lower sixth-formers hoping to study medicine at university work there on a voluntary basis. Pupils Amol Lotlikar, James Matthams and Jaymit Patel are shown presenting a cheque for £400 to ward manager Helen Chan.



The Nelson Connection
School governors meeting on the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar toasted Nelson's memory in rum. Mr Riley was a pupil at Nelson's alma mater, Norwich School, while the Bursar's old Royal Marines office overlooked HMS Victory.

Meet the Bursar

Mr Jeremy Parker

Mr Parker has joined the School as Bursar after a 27-year career with the Royal Marines.

The Standard: What attracted you to JLS – and why do you think the School chose you for the Bursar’s job?

JP: One of the things that drew me was certainly the Headmaster’s direct, enthusiastic style. Another was the attitude of the lower sixth-former who originally showed me around. He made some very nice, unsolicited remarks, which showed me that JLS is a completely non-threatening environment. As to why I got the job, I think my military experience will obviously have played a part. Military officers have a wide range of experience, because we change jobs every two or three years. More specifically, I am sure the fact that I am a land agent by training - I have a degree in land management - counted in my favour. My last job in the Royal Marines was deputy director of the Royal Naval Estate Organisation, managing the Royal Marines barracks and the Fleet Air Arm air stations, which in some ways was very similar to what I am doing here.

The Standard: So you’re ready for a new challenge. What are you aiming to achieve at JLS?

JP: My main objective is to take forward the strategic development of the School: to work with the governors and Headmaster to come up with a coherent plan, and then implement it. My job will be to pull together all the various threads. In terms of the precise contents, it will be a few months yet before we make any recommendations to the governors. We want to avoid a headlong rush. There is an awful lot here that is good, and we don’t want to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

The Standard: All right, but can you give us any hints as to what the plan might involve?

JP: One thing I can say is that we will be looking closely at our land and buildings – which is where my experience as a land agent comes in. JLS is a very heavily developed site and obviously there are planning constraints. We are having a detailed space analysis done and, without pre-empting the results, it will probably reveal that, for our number of boys, we are not far off the mark in terms of total floor area. The problem is that it’s in the wrong shape.

- Mr Parker is married to Alison. They have three daughters, aged 14, 18 and 21 - he admits to occasionally feeling outnumbered! A confirmed “potterer” at home, his great interest is in sailing: he and a friend keep a small boat at Chichester. His daughters, however, do not share this enthusiasm: “They might be more interested if it were a large yacht in the Med!”



Speech Evening 2005

In a thought-provoking speech as Guest of Honour at Speech Evening, Old Lyonian and leading columnist Stephen Pollard predicted the Labour Government would eventually introduce education vouchers.

The Headmaster also had politics in mind. Outlining his belief that school should be “a place of justice, integrity and fair play”, he condemned “excessive” testing in Britain’s maintained schools.

Head of School 2004-05 John Breakell gave the vote of thanks, while A level Drama students performed a lively sporting drama entitled “It’s The Taking Part”.



Gifted and Talented at JLS

As part of the Headmaster’s drive to encourage excellence at all levels, the School is undertaking a major expansion of its programme for gifted and talented boys.



Mathematics teacher Mr Paul Clarke has been appointed Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, with a brief to ensure that pupils of exceptional ability are fulfilling all their potential.

“In the education world, people readily accept that children with ‘special needs’ such as dyslexia need additional help, and rightly so. But boys who are unusually bright – the top 5% of the population – also have special needs, and it is no less important that they receive the assistance they need,” says Mr Clarke, who has been at JLS since 1990.

“We already celebrate and develop the abilities of boys who are outstandingly good at sport, music or drama (who are officially defined as the ‘talented’ part of ‘gifted and talented’.) Now we are aiming to focus on those who are intellectually exceptional (– the ‘gifted’ boys.) Some will be quite brilliant at just one subject, while others will be very, very good all-rounders.” Mr Clarke is beginning this work by identifying older, gifted boys, using their eligibility to join the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) as a yardstick. NAGTY’s criteria include achieving a high number of A* or A grades at GCSE and a MidYIS score of 126

(MidYIS, or Middle Years Information Service is a widely recognised system of benchmark testing run by the CEM Centre based at the University of Durham). Eventually, he expects to identify around ten boys from each year.

As well as encouraging pupils to join NAGTY, Mr Clarke is currently looking at the best ways of providing additional help within the school. “I am doing a lot of brainstorming with heads of departments. The science department could, for example, run special afternoons for gifted and talented scientists, and we could even invite guest speakers in to such events.”

One priority will be to counter any tendency for gifted boys, especially in the lower years, to hide their light under a bushel for fear of teasing from classmates or of simply being seen as different. “By encouraging them to identify with other very bright boys, especially those who are a little older, we should be able to create some positive peer pressure,” says Mr Clarke.

“The aim is to give them a challenge: often these boys haven’t previously been stretched in lessons quite as much as they might have been. We want to offer them extra opportunities, not only as extra-curricular activities but also perhaps within the normal school day, working on the basis that they are bright enough to catch up with anything they might miss. These are early days, but I expect that once this programme is up and running, much of the initiative for carrying it forward will come from the boys themselves. I also think it will put JLS in the vanguard of work with gifted and talented boys – few of our competitors have anything comparable to offer.”



Gifted & Talented: L-R Benjamin Sehovic; Michael Betts; Mr Clarke; Krishan Patel; Adam Neidle and Nick Hallam are among the boys identified by Mr Clarke.

Michael Betts is 17, from Harrow, and is in the Lower Sixth. He achieved eight As*, an A and a B at GCSE and has been picked out to join the gifted & talented cohort on the basis of his all-round academic ability. He also plays football for the school team and enjoys athletics – he represented Middlesex last summer at 200m. This year he is studying: Philosophy & Ethics; English Language & Literature; Drama; French and Science for Public Understanding.



“The gifted & talented group is quite new, so I’m not entirely sure what to expect. I’m confident, though, that whatever the School does, it will provide challenges – and that’s what I’m always looking for. I think it’s important not to get too complacent or take life too easily. It’s definitely what I like about JLS. I’ve just been in Hamlet and I’ve successfully auditioned for next year’s performance of Grease – I’ve got the part of Johnny Casino. Miss Gibbs [JLS Director of Drama and Head of Sixth Form] in particular represents what I’m looking for – she has great vision and is always pushing forwards. The facilities here and the standard of teaching are excellent. Choosing A levels was quite difficult as the teaching of all subjects is so consistently good. I’m hoping to go into Law when I’m older, but I wouldn’t want to do a Law degree. I will choose another subject, probably English, and follow it with a conversion course.”

Andrew Watters from Kenton is 15 and is a member of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth. A gifted academic all-rounder, Andrew took French GCSE a year early and achieved an A*. He will take nine GCSEs this summer. An accomplished musician, he will sit his Grade 5 piano examination at Easter and is in the Motet Choir. Andrew is taking his Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award and is involved in charity work at weekends.

“I think one of the best aspects of being part of the gifted & talented cohort at JLS will be the contact with boys from other year groups. The school is already very good at encouraging friendships between boys of different ages, but this will give me an opportunity to spend more time with like-minded people. One of the good things about JLS is that we are encouraged to aim for excellence. I know at some schools if you try hard you can be considered a ‘keener’ and be bullied, but that doesn’t happen here. Here it’s good to be good at things – and good to just try, too. I’m not particularly good at sport, but I still receive encouragement to join in.”



In 2005, Andrew was the first-ever JLS boy to attend a NAGTY summer school. The course was on mediaeval history. Here are some brief excerpts from his diary:

“When I arrived at Leeds I had no idea what to expect.

I was pretty nervous of what the other people would be like. However, I soon discovered that the other students were friendly, interesting people who I would easily get along with. We all ate, played and relaxed together - the whole summer school had been engineered to encourage as much socialising as possible.

“Although we had all chosen the course, it soon became apparent that ...we were all pretty much novices. Nonetheless, that very same afternoon the course erupted into glorious technicolor as we were given a tour of Leeds’ awe-inspiring university and its special collections section. We were given the opportunity to study real primary sources, some dating back as early as the 14th century. Although [this] was immensely rewarding, the thing that really struck me about the course was the importance of asking questions. We were constantly kept on our toes by people daring us to question what we had just accepted as gospel truth. A truly worthwhile experience!”

A Welcome from the Headmaster, Mr Kevin Riley

Welcome to the mini-prospectus of The John Lyon School. I hope it and the newsletter on the preceding pages will give you a useful introduction to JLS and some insights into what makes our School so special.

At JLS, which is an HMC School, we are aiming for excellence in all areas, building on our reputation as one of the country's top 20 independent boys' day schools. In the first three years, we give boys a good grounding in all the major subjects. Building on this platform, our pupils go on to achieve excellent examination results at GCSE, AS and A level.

Alongside our academic success, we have a great reputation for pastoral care. We genuinely treat each child as an individual, with individual talents to be nurtured and individual challenges to be met. Drama, music, sports and activities also play a very important part in the development of well rounded students at JLS.

I do hope you will visit JLS or contact us to find out more. Please see our list of contacts on page 2 for further details.

Activities

At JLS, we believe that drama, music, sports and activities play an essential part in the education of our pupils.

In the first three years, boys take part in our extensive activities programme as part of their Friday afternoon timetable, while boys in all years have the opportunity to take part in clubs and societies meeting before and after School, and at lunchtime.

With almost 100 activities available each term, the range is enormous. There are clubs designed to support boys in their studies - for example, the 8am homework club and Medics, which is for sixth-formers planning to go into medicine. Sports are very well catered for, from cricket to badminton. Many clubs cover arts and drama or community service, such as the Motet Choir, funk band or Amnesty International group. Perhaps most of all, the accent is on having fun and pursuing hobbies and interests, from bridge and chess to tap-dancing, railways and karate.

Becoming a JLS Boy

At The John Lyon School, we recognise that when it comes to choosing a school, parents first and foremost want an environment where their child is happy, safe and secure. Only in such an atmosphere can boys develop and thrive.

From the First Form onwards, we focus on creating an environment where everyone is treated with respect. Visitors to JLS are struck not only by the courtesy boys show towards their teachers and towards adults in general, but by the way form tutors and other staff take each boy's concerns seriously, treating every child as an individual.

We also nurture an atmosphere of mutual respect among the pupils: where else would you see a sixth-former hold a door open for a first-former, for example? Indeed, our Sixth-Form prefects play an important part in supporting the pastoral work of tutors in the First Form (known as Oldfield), particularly during the early weeks. As boys adjust from the routines of prep or primary school to life at JLS, prefects are on hand to help out, perhaps making sure a boy's bag is packed with the correct books, or simply providing a friendly, listening ear.



Boys joining at 11+ come from a very wide range of schools in both the maintained and independent sectors, so all are equally well placed to make new friends. Our Friday afternoon activity sessions give boys ample opportunities to develop friendships in a relaxed environment. For the first term only, membership of the First Form Choir is compulsory – we have found the cheerful Wednesday lunchtime practices to be a great way of binding a new JLS year together.

We also take care to ensure that the increasing number of boys who join us at 13+ can fit in easily. After the first two years, all our classes are re-organised, which means the new arrivals are not left isolated and can swiftly make friends.



Right from the outset, we expect boys to work hard and do their best, but at the same time we are careful not to overload them with academic pressure. At 11, a boy receives homework in three subjects each night. However, no more than half-an-hour should be spent on each subject: if their son is unable to complete a task, parents can simply write a note to the teacher.



A First Form parents evening held three or four weeks into the autumn term gives parents an opportunity to check their child's progress in the core subjects. A similar evening is held towards the end of the First Year.

Pastoral Care

We treat every boy as an individual, with his own talents, abilities and needs. We are also proud of the cultural diversity at The John Lyon School. By capping numbers at the School at around 600, we ensure that it remains possible for teachers to get to know every boy in the School. Parents are seen as partners with the School and are positively encouraged to get involved in their son's education at every stage.

The core of our pastoral care arrangements is the tutor system. Form tutors have most day-to-day contact with individual boys and their parents. They are overseen by Senior Tutors, who report to the Heads of Oldfield (the First Year) and the Lower School, Upper School and Sixth Form and, ultimately, to the Pastoral Deputy Headmaster and the Headmaster.

Class sizes of 22-24 in the first three years, around 20 at GCSE level and 12-14 in the Sixth Form help ensure that pupils cannot get "lost in the crowd". Teachers are urged to be firm but fair, and to support, rather than punish, boys who are struggling with their studies.

The Curriculum

JLS is unashamedly an academic School, dedicated to helping boys realise their full potential and go on to secure places at good universities. Many opportunities exist to stretch able students by enabling them to study in greater depth. These boys are supported by our two Gifted and Talented Co-ordinators.

There is a strong academic core to the curriculum for the first five years. Up to the end of the Fifth Form, boys are required to study not only English and Mathematics, but also Science and at least one modern language.

All boys take at least nine GCSE subjects, although we prefer to focus on the quality of grades achieved rather than merely the number of GCSEs taken.

While in the Sixth Form, JLS offers an extensive range of traditional academic AS and A levels, alongside newer subjects such as Psychology, Music Technology and Critical Thinking. The School stands out for its flexible approach: we try not to let timetable clashes prevent sixth-formers from studying their preferred subjects.

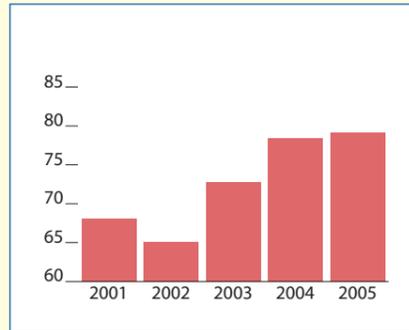
The John Lyon School - At a Glance

Examination Results

From an already strong position, The John Lyon School has improved its academic performance still further in the last few years, with public examination results following a steadily rising trend.

In 2005, well over three-quarters of all papers sat at both A and AS level were awarded A or B grades. Nineteen A level students (26% of the total roll) achieved straight A grades, with a further 16 achieving this at AS level. Individual success stories included Ilia Karmanov, who is believed to be 2005's youngest A level candidate nationally. He gained a B grade in A level Economics, which he sat at the age of 13. Ilia took the course at a

local college, with additional help and support from JLS. Remarkably, it was not even Ilia's first A level: he achieved a B in Computing when he was just 11.



Percentage of JLS students achieving A and B grades at A level

At GCSE, 95% of all boys gained A*, A or B grades in at least five subjects, representing an increase on previous years. Seventeen boys achieved straight A*s or As at GCSE.

The John Lyon School's 2005 productions of the musical, Anything Goes, and of Hamlet amply illustrated the excellence of our Drama and Music. Further justification for our fast-growing reputation in these subjects was provided by some quite outstanding examination results: all 50 boys who took Drama examinations in 2005 - at GCSE, AS and A level - achieved A* or A grades, while all of this year's AS and A level Drama candidates achieved a mark of 100% in their practical examinations.

Subjects available at GCSE, AS and A (A2) level

GCSE (Fourth and Fifth Years)

English, Mathematics, English Literature, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics as a double award), History, Geography, Drama, Music, Art & Design, Religious Studies, PE. Following on from the first three years, all pupils continue with Social, Personal And Citizenship Education (SPACE), activities and games.

Good linguists can take French GCSE a year early and then study for the Institute of Linguists' Diploma in the Fifth Form.

Additional Mathematics, a course aimed at high-achieving mathematicians likely to continue the subject at A level, is taken alongside Mathematics GCSE at the end of the Fifth Year. AS level Science for Public Understanding is offered to a number of able scientists and is taken at the end of Year 11.



AS and/or A level (Sixth Form)

English Literature, English Language & Literature, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, Geography, Economics, Psychology, Critical Thinking, Computing, Drama, Music, Music Technology, Art & Design, PE, Religious Studies, Government, Politics. All boys continue with games and also follow our General Education programme.

Admissions

At The John Lyon School, we usually admit boys at 11, 13, and 16. In September 2006, we expect to admit 60-70 boys at 11, 25-30 boys at 13 and up to 10 at 16.

Our main Open Days are held in October and were very successful in 2005, attracting a total of nearly 350 families. In addition to the autumn Open Days, JLS holds forums for prospective parents during term-time throughout the year. Places must be booked for the forums.

We base our decisions on entrance to the School upon reports from the boy's present or previous school, interviews and entrance examinations. We take special note of potential and achievement in music, the creative and performing arts and sport.

- The normal closing date for 11+ and 13+ applications for September admissions comes in late autumn. However, late applications may be accepted in exceptional circumstances.