



ABOUT US

The Perse is Cambridge's oldest secondary school. It was founded in 1615 by Dr Stephen Perse, a medic and fellow of Gonville and Caius College, who wanted to give Cambridge children an excellent education such that they could gain places at Cambridge University.

As befits a school in a university city, The Perse has always been committed to intellectual curiosity, scholarship and innovation. In the early 20th Century, The Perse pioneered new methods of teaching, including the direct method for languages (speaking only in the target language) and the play way (learning by doing, for example, acting out plays or performing science practicals). Today, The Perse achieves the best academic results of any independent school in the East of England and has a national and international reputation for the quality of its 3D – academic, pastoral and extra-curricular – education.

Central to The Perse's success is employing outstanding teachers who really know their subject and their students. When these excellent and hard-working teachers are combined with talented and conscientious young people, learning magic happens in the form of a school culture where it is cool to be curious, work hard and succeed. The Perse benefits greatly from the cosmopolitan nature of Cambridge and the resulting diversity of our students who learn from each other. The richness of different cultures, nationalities and faiths create an educational melting pot that promotes the acquisition of emotional and cultural intelligence.

The Perse is conscious that it was founded to provide an educational ladder that allowed children from disadvantaged backgrounds to access an excellent school and university education. Four-hundred years later our commitment to social benefit and mobility remains and The Perse spends over £1million each year on means-tested fees assistance, so that children can attend the school on a partial or no fee basis, as well as funding partnership programmes with local state schools to create new educational opportunities and raise attainment.

Although The Perse is proud of its academic history, which includes educating two Nobel Prize winners for Science, and the Founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company, we know that a true education is far more than a string of top exam grades and impressive university destinations.

An outstanding education fosters personal development and gives pupils the inter and intra-personal skills and confidences needed to live happy and successful lives. For this reason, The Perse places great emphasis on the benefits of extra-curricular activity and supportive pastoral care. Children are encouraged to join clubs and societies, participate in music, sport, drama, and outdoor pursuits so they can acquire essential life skills such as teamwork and endeavour, whilst also having fun and making happy memories. We know that for children to realise their potential, they need to be happy, at ease with themselves, and be in a good state of wellbeing. We invest heavily in our proactive and reactive pastoral care systems so that pupils can become self-confident, resilient and responsible, whilst receiving specialist pastoral help if they need it. However, we also understand the

importance of not doing everything for children and ensuring young people have the space to make mistakes, overcome challenges and find themselves, which are all essential for their personal development.

The Perse benefits from being a 3-18 school on three sites. This means children enjoy age-specific campuses (the Pelican for those aged 3-7, the Prep for ages 7-11, and the Upper for 11+), whilst also benefiting from being part of a larger school with outstanding facilities and a joined-up 3-18 curriculum, pastoral care system and extra-curricular provision, which ensure a smooth transition from Pelican to Prep and Prep to Upper.

The Perse is a very special school which achieves highly whilst being down to earth, and which stretches pupils in and outside the classroom whilst caring for them as individuals. We recognise that children only have one education and that the effects of that education last a lifetime. We want to give all our children an enduring love of learning, a moral compass to guide them through life and happy memories and good friends from time well spent in school.

Ed Elliott