The Seaford Sixth Form Experience

Inspiring personal ambition and success
As a father of three children ranged between the ages of twelve and twenty one, and of very different personalities and abilities, I understand entirely the importance of finding the right school for your child. It is certainly not easy to interpret the range of options available, nor to know how best to support our children. With this in mind I would like to share with you why I believe the pupil experience at Seaford to be so special.

We are a genuinely warm, friendly school with excellent teaching and learning across all departments. In addition to this very strong academic core we offer outstanding pastoral care and an impressive programme of extra-curricular activities. Other schools make such claims, you may be thinking. However, it is my firm belief that it is the close and supportive relationships that exist between pupils and their peers, between pupils and their teachers and tutors, that form the solid foundations for all our children to grow and learn, to feel safe and be prepared to take risks, in the absolute certainty that we will always be there for them, to advise, guide and encourage. This is what we provide at Seaford.

Seaford is a co-educational, non-selective school and we are proud to offer an inclusive environment where each individual is known and valued, and is given attention and respect. Our aim is to educate the whole person, to find the strengths of each boy and girl and to enable them to succeed. We have everyone here, in a true representation of society; what better preparation for the future can there be?

Seaford College is a school that welcomes the very brilliant (we have many Oxbridge successes) and those who find the examination culture a challenge. We have the academically gifted, and we have those who may have organisational or processing difficulties. Our real strength is that we enable our pupils to achieve their potential – and beyond. In a good school students need to feel valued, trusted and respected. At Seaford we have a very strong academic core and via our new Challenge Grade system, students are encouraged to secure academic personal bests – whilst still keeping a smile on their faces! We look after our students; we inspire personal ambition and success so that personal bests are achieved inside and outside the classroom.

Our aim is to educate the whole person: to nurture individuality and an acceptance of others’ strengths and weaknesses, to develop initiative and an enquiring mind: a hunger for life. A typical Seafordian will be an articulate, confident and well-rounded young person.”

I invite you to enjoy the following collection of insights into life at Seaford’s Sixth Form. We also regularly update our blog at www.seaford.org with news and events to keep you up to date with life at Seaford. I would encourage you to visit the school and see us ‘in action’ during the school day and I am always available to meet with you. Please do not hesitate to get in touch and our Admissions Department will arrange a convenient date for you.

John Green
Headmaster
The transition from GCSE to A Level is a significant time for students. Social pressures from peer groups and social media abound, whilst in the classroom subjects get harder and the careful planning of study time is crucial to academic success. This is the time where individual support and attention can be vital to future success. Seaford’s Deputy Head and Head of Sixth Form, William Yates, focuses on all aspects of life in the Sixth Form and ensures all pupils are on track to reach their potential.

“In a good school students need to feel valued, trusted and respected. At Seaford we have a very strong academic core and we look after our students. We inspire personal ambition and success so that personal bests are achieved inside and outside the classroom.”

John Green, Headmaster

Seaford offers:

- Fantastic facilities and location, individual academic focus and a range of extra-curricular activities
- A breadth of choice in A Level subjects: from more traditional A Levels to Psychology and Music Technology
- Excellent pastoral care and careers advice
- Separate boarding facilities for the Upper Sixth to help prepare students for university life
- Support for the academically gifted to reach their full potential. John Doy, Director of Academic Performance, has set up a mentoring system that stretches students beyond the curriculum and coaches students through the Oxbridge application process.

The Upper Sixth boarding in Heden has been designed to help prepare students for life at University. Breege Jinks, Seaford’s Deputy Head Academic, believes that the support they receive leads to academic success: “We offer what I consider to be a ‘perfect model of parenting.’ The boarders eat good food, exercise regularly, and have dedicated prep time with access to many different subject teachers for academic support. This has definitely translated into students achieving their potential.”

Seaford develops well-rounded, articulate students who have the confidence to succeed. Callum Loeffen-Ames, who plans to read Medicine, said: “Seaford stretches us academically, I really enjoy exploring ideas with my mentor and I feel supported to do well.”
Academic potential at Seaford College

Tracking the progress your child is making at school can often be difficult. Seaford College has introduced Challenge Grades, a reporting system that is updated monthly, to track progress.

At any time a parent, pupil or teacher can log on and instantly review progress. Pupil progress is indicated through a colour coded visual dashboard, which in turn relates to a pupil’s challenge grade in each subject.

If a pupil is working at a level that puts them on the right path to achieving their challenge grade by the end of the course, they will be awarded a green. Platinum and Gold indicate impressive attainment and progress. Amber and red indicate that intervention and positive support are required, coordinated through the pupil’s tutor and Head of Year.

“We are proud to offer an inclusive environment where each individual is known and valued; is given attention and respect. Challenge Grades are, essentially, a measure of potential. It’s what we think a child can achieve if they work hard. Challenge Grades are ambitious but realistic.”

John Green, Headmaster

The aim at Seaford College is to educate the whole person: to nurture individuality and an acceptance of others’ strengths and weaknesses, to develop initiative and an enquiring mind: a hunger for life. A typical Seafordian is articulate, confident and a well-rounded young person. Seaford College provides an inspirational environment which nurtures academic excellence, sporting success and creative talent.

Dominique Chambous, a boarder at Mansion in the Lower Sixth, said: “My Challenge Grades have really helped me. They are realistic, but also really motivating. They showed me that the teachers here believe in me, and so now I am much more able to believe in myself. I’m really motivated to achieve higher things and to fulfil my potential.”
Seaford's Director of Academic Performance, John Doy, helps the academically gifted to reach their full potential, in his role he coaches students through the Oxbridge application process, has set up a mentoring system allowing students to have one to one time with the Head of Department in the subject they are specialising in, and the chance to be stretched beyond the curriculum in their subject.

His role is essentially to stretch the academic scholars at Seaford. Callum Loeffen-Ames, Upper Sixth, who plans to read Medicine added: “Seaford stretches us academically but there is no pressure. I really enjoy exploring ideas with my mentor and the extra work I do beyond the curriculum is really stimulating. I feel supported to do well and achieve my full potential.”

John Doy explained that he sees his role as an SEN role (Special Educational Needs) for the Gifted & Talented students at Seaford. John Green, Headmaster said: “Seaford excels at providing learning enrichment at all levels. The academically gifted need to be supported and stretched to make sure they achieve their potential. The new role reflects Seaford’s ethos: to inspire personal ambition and success so that personal bests are achieved inside and outside the classroom.” John has studied at Oxford University and is in a great position to guide and mentor students.

Seaford supported former student Freddie Miller at both ends of the SEN spectrum. Freddie was identified as a Gifted and Talented student, and was coached by John Doy as part of the Academic Enrichment programme. On the programme he also benefitted from Seaford’s Learning Support department, giving him the strategies to work with his Dyslexia.

John Doy is taking the Gifted and Talented group to Portsmouth Grammar School, for an Oxbridge Conference. He is demystifying the whole Oxbridge application process for the students. John Doy said: “I will guide them through what the university is looking for. All universities want to see that candidates can demonstrate an interest in their specialist subject both inside and outside the classroom.”

John Doy added: “we have 18 months to prepare; I make sure students are saying the right things on their application forms. Alongside their mentor, we make sure they are reading the right books and doing the right things to put them in the best position for success. We stretch students beyond the curriculum.”

Seaford identifies potential students for the programme in Year 11. These students then get the opportunity to be mentored by the sixth form students on the programme. Students feed off of one another’s enthusiasm for their specialist subjects. Teachers who are mentoring also find this extremely rewarding.”
Profile
John Doy

Director of Academic Performance

Education
A Levels – English, History, French
Oxford, Mansfield College, 2:1 English Language & Literature

What did you do after graduating from university?
Initially I worked as a researcher and writer for a legal reference book. I then travelled extensively in the Middle East, before spending three hectic and enjoyable years as a live gallery producer on a TV auction channel.

When did you decide to go into teaching?
I wasn’t using my degree as much as I wanted to in my working life, so I did a PGCE at King’s College London, which led to three years teaching in a state school in Watford. After that, I went to work at The British School of Brussels and was appointed Head of Department after a couple of years. Four years later, I came back to the UK and took up my role at Seaford as Head of the English Department.

Do you think your work experience before your PGCE helps you with your teaching career?
I suppose trying to motivate a sleepy production team at six in the morning to make a pile of towels look interesting is a bit like trying to sell John Keats to Year 10.

Why do you enjoy teaching at Seaford?
There’s a lovely view from my window, and the staff are interesting and friendly. I like the range of students you get here too; it’s satisfying working with really bright students but I also enjoy helping those students who have struggled with English in the past. Also, I grew up in Sussex and always loved the South Downs so I feel very at home here.

What do you do to relax in your spare time?
I love music and used to play in bands, so I like going to gigs with my friends. I still write songs for fun – finding people to play them is a challenge I’m working on. I have two small sons now so most of my spare time is spent messing around with them. I like reading and watching films too.
Aspirations for the future
Emma Brown

Former Head Girl Emma Brown secured a place at Bath University (a Russell Group University) to read psychology after gaining an A* in psychology, an A in maths and an A in physics.

What is the one thing that made you most proud of Seaford?

The sense of individuality at Seaford is what I’m most proud of. There is never any pressure to conform to become the ‘ideal pupil’; in fact, at Seaford there isn’t such a thing. Instead, Seaford encourages students to do the best that they individually can. Being non-selective, Seaford attracts a wide range of students from many different backgrounds, with different talents and abilities, all of which are recognised and rewarded, whether they be academic, musical, sport-based, theatrical and many more.

What extra-curricular activities did you enjoy at Seaford?

Sport was important for me at Seaford. I was netball captain and played hockey. I liked the teamwork and it gave another aspect to school life, as well as allowing me to meet new friends through it.

What are your plans for the future?

At the moment I’m more swayed towards clinical psychology and maybe even psychiatry, but I’m waiting to see where my university course takes me. I’m quite business-minded, so occupational psychology is one option, but because psychology is such a broad subject, I don’t want to pin myself down yet.

If you could be the Prime Minister for a day, what’s the first thing you would do?

I would look to lower the tuition fees for universities. This is something that is directly affecting me and I will come out with the burden of a student loan to repay on my shoulders. I think that the system of paying back student loans is designed well to reduce the impact. However, with a smaller student loan needed due to reduced tuition fees, they could be paid back faster and in full rather than written off after 30 years.

Do you have a role model, and if so who is it and why?

My dad, he will always push himself to go that extra mile. But he enjoys life, he enjoys what he does, and everything I do I want to be doing because I’m enjoying it, not because it’s an obligation.

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing your generation?

The concept of self-worth. If you have a good sense of self-worth you will be more confident in getting good grades, going for that job, aiming higher. Not having that sense of self-worth can really bring you down. Social media projects this perfect image of who you should be, so people don’t think about themselves, they compare themselves to other people who have completely different attributes.

What are you most passionate about?

Pushing myself to be the best version of myself I can be. There’s no point putting in 50%, because you’ll only get 50% out of it.
Aspirations for the future
James Smith

Former Seaford student, James Smith, is passionate about sustainability and helping poorer countries to develop. James is reading Geography at Newcastle University, part of the prestigious Russell Group.

What is your dream job?

My dream job would be working for the United Nations and World Bank in the department of sustainability. Alternatively, I would like to help solve issues relating to poorer countries who can’t develop due to energy issues, or who are exploited by richer countries for fossil fuels. In the summer, I interviewed employees from Statkraft, a Norwegian company, which is the largest provider of hydroelectric power in the world. I also did work experience with High Speed 2 and found out how highspeed rail would impact the UK.

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing your generation?

I would say social interaction. My parents communicate by letters and by going out with friends, but my generation don’t have to do that because of social media. At Seaford, we’re really sociable, but young people outside of Seaford find it difficult to talk to each other. They’re fidgety, they have a limited conversation span. It’s like you’re not in the same room as them. They lack engagement and basic social skills because it’s easier to communicate online.

What is the one thing that really annoys you?

It really annoys me when people don’t put effort in: into football, into lessons, anything. If you have the opportunity you might as well try and make the most of it.

If you could say one thing to the Prime Minister what would it be?

There was a proposal for England to benefit from Norway’s hydroelectric energy, but it was rejected after pressure from England’s existing coal industries. I would really like to have a debate with the Prime Minister about this issue, and about how more sustainable energy can be introduced to the UK.

Do you have a role model and if so who is it and why?

My uncle, Tristan Eves, inspired me to play football. He’s very into health and fitness, and he inspired me to think about well-being and the world around me. I really admire his mind set. If you look after your health and body, you can look after your life. I drink lots of water and exercise, so I feel awake, alive, and this helps me to concentrate at school.

What are you most passionate about?

There are two things I am very passionate about. First, I am passionate about health and wellbeing, because it is so good for the mind and soul. I am also passionate about the importance of sustainability. I want to make people think about their dependence on fossil fuels, which is so damaging to the planet. We need to sort it out, and I feel like it’s my job to help to influence people’s energy choices. I want to help people realise their actions, and it’s so important not to abuse the smaller things like leaving lights on. Also, people really take for granted being able to put a switch on, when people in poorer countries just can’t do that.
Aspirations for the future
Matt Kouris

Former Seaford rugby star, Matt Kouris played for England and gained a professional contract with London Irish during his time at Seaford's Sixth Form. We had a chat with him about his aspirations for the future.

Why did you start playing rugby?
Rugby is in my blood. My granddad played for the Welsh Schoolboys, and so when I was four, I started playing for Farnborough Rugby Club. My nan loves it too. She comes to every London Irish training session, and brings us pasta salad for the journey home. My granddad lived and breathed rugby, so she did too.

When did you start playing for London Irish?
It was through the county side, when I was about 13.

Have you played for any other sides?
I played for England U16s & U18s. It was fantastic, but it was weird to hear the national anthem playing. At national level, there are changes in speed and intensity, it's a lot more physical, but apart from that, you're just playing rugby. I also captained London Irish to victory in February 2016 in the U18 Academy Final.

What are your highlights from your time playing for Seaford?
My first game against Hurst. We smashed them 56-8. It was their biggest loss in 25 years.

How did the training team at Seaford help you?
Mr Bowden (Seaford's Head of Rugby) was a good coach, he's easy to talk to. Mr Bowden is also experienced, which really helps. Mr Green (Seaford's Headmaster) was a good mentor when we're playing the game. He had a really good temperament when he played professionally, and he really helped us to keep our heads and to keep our cool. You don't want to get carried away in rugby. Mr Green loves his lineouts, and he is so passionate when the game comes, he really motivated us all. We had a really good team spirit, all the boys were very welcoming when I joined the team, although I did get some stick for playing for England, which you would expect! Mr Bowden took us to training every week at London Irish and I really appreciated the support he gave me along with Mr Cook (Director of Sport). They both really care about their students and share in our ambition to get professional contracts. They were always there to help me whenever I needed it.

How do you make sure you get the right nutrition?
London Irish force you to put on weight! They say a fistful of protein, a handful of carbs and a thumbful of fat, and all the fruit and vegetables you want. But I just eat a lot! I get seconds at dinner. My mum is very health conscious, and I was always taught to eat everything on my plate. So I'm not fussy, although I hate cheese.

What are your aspirations for the future?
I have been lucky to get a contract with London Irish and play professionally. After my professional career I'd still like to be involved in sport, so coaching would be my fall-back option.

What would be your top tip for other pupils hoping to follow in your path?
Set goals for yourself. Go for it and train hard. Try and get opportunities, contact your coaches, get feedback on what you need to improve on. You have to expect setbacks and bounce back harder; there are always going to be opportunities. It is a hard pathway: lots of people are fighting for the same thing. You've got to be vigorous.

What else have you gained from playing rugby?
It really opens doors, it's amazing the people you meet. When you're playing a match, it's almost like a battle. You play as hard as you can for your brother. There is also a fantastic team spirit. I've made really good friendships. In rugby we have a type of camaraderie that is different from other sports. After the game, we hug and congratulate our opposite number. You just don't get that in football, and we learn that from our coaches.
Former pupil, Holly Graham discovered her talent for singing whilst she was at Seaford with the help of Head of Voice and Choirs Sara Reynolds, and she now aspires to be an opera singer.

**Summary of achievements:**

During my time at Seaford I also studied at the Junior Royal Academy of Music and was presented with the prestigious Elton John Award. At the 2014 Godalming Festival, I achieved 1st in German Lieder, 2nd in Italian Aria, 2nd in Sacred song and 1st in Oratorio. I went on to win the overall Opera trophy for adults and juniors. I won a Music Scholarship at Seaford College, where I was fortunate to be the lead singer at the Gary Barlow concert in Bournemouth. I have also won the Fine Art Prize and Most Promising Musician Prize at Seaford.

**Tell us a bit about yourself:**

I’m very down to earth; my talents have evolved during my time at Seaford. Seaford has given me the freedom to flourish and let me be who I want to be. I’m passionate about music and art. I have been described as having an inner calmness when performing. I’m confident and gutsy; I have 2 brothers who made me do things if they knew I could do them e.g. jumping off of a rock on holiday. I was competitive with them, now I make myself do things that I know I’ll find challenging, I’m scared of regretting not doing something. I like to keep busy and have a get up and go personality; so I fill my life with the Junior Royal Academy of Music, riding, art and running. I’m very relaxed and calm. I’m modest, not a diva, I found it odd to be idolised by younger students at Seaford. I’m not into self-promotion but understand the need for it.

**What is it that inspires you?**

Fashion designers, particularly Dolce & Gabbana and the opera singer Rene Fleming. I’m really inspired watching opera and ballet. My family inspire me, everyone is very creative and there are always lots of creative ideas being discussed. Seaford has a very creative environment, and its students inspired me every day at school. At the Junior Royal Academy of Music everyone wanted to be there and the drive and desire of my peers was very inspiring.

**Where do you see yourself in ten years?**

Working as an opera singer all over the world, I’d love to make my own costumes. I’d love to combine my passion for textiles and music. I love the fact that opera in particular incorporates every art form to the extreme. The make up, wigs, costumes, lighting, programme, amphitheatre, props, set, even tickets have been designed to the highest standard. Finally the creativity in the music, instrumentalists and singers is phenomenal.

**How do you like to relax in your spare time?**

I don’t relax! No seriously I love riding and love horses. My horse is someone I can always talk to and I love spending time in the fresh air and countryside. It’s my zone out time for recharging. I also run which helps me relax. I find I get creative ideas during these activities.

**What would be your top tip for other pupils hoping to follow in your path?**

Keep every door open, try very hard at everything you do to really establish what you like and are good at. Be considerate to other people, build contacts and have as many friends as possible. If you are talented and have people on your side you’ll do well.
TheM say too many cooks spoil the broth, but eight talented young businessmen from Seaford College found the recipe for success.

Team ‘Summit’ dedicated their spare time to the Young Enterprise project, spending hours around their studies on designing a viable product to sell to the public.

Their product was a cookbook, Kidz Cook! with recipes for kids, by kids. Their team work and dedication paid off – Summit won an award for their business plan, and made a profit within a month.

Summit was managed by Tom Newman who was in charge of ‘the big decisions’ and ensuring ‘everyone got their work done’. His colleagues praised Tom for his fantastic leadership, saying they ‘couldn’t have had a better MD.’

Head of design was Jack Jamieson, Keaton Smout was head of marketing and sales, press and publicity, Wolf Labelj was company secretary. Olly Hunt was the sales assistant, and proofread the book and business plan. Sam Lowndes was head of human resources and Freddie Miller was in charge of administration and finance. Having taken his maths GCSE early, he was well qualified for the role.

Team Summit were helped by teachers Fiona Askew and Breege Jinks, Deputy Head Academic.

Keaton said: “It was crucial that all of us were a part of this. We thought it was an important scheme to be a part of and were all very proud of what we have achieved.”

When they signed up to Young Enterprise, the group set about doing market research – asking everyone from schoolchildren to little sisters to find out what would work.

“From the responses we had, they all loved our idea,” said Jack. “Personally, I love the design. We have all worked together and each individual skill from the group has been used 100 per cent.”

Thanks to Jack’s graphic design skills, Summit made a striking book with matching business cards – and they’re hoping their brand will go global. Seaford prep school pupils created recipes then made them in their life skills lessons. “It was really good fun,” said Jack. “They all had the chance to create their own unique recipe. It was good homework for them.” Olly added: “We wanted to encourage creativity.” Tom was given the job of chief food critic. “There were some really tasty recipes. The Malteser cake was great, and the smart phone shortbread was really innovative – you can even make little apps to go on it.”

Summit has sold books to family and friends, and at trade fairs around the area. Seaford headmaster John Green beamed with pride as he praised the efforts of team Summit. “They have done incredibly well, and shown tremendous entrepreneurial spirit and team work,” he said.

Entrepreneurial Success
Seaford Drama

Seaford students presented their production of Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus to huge acclaim. We caught up with some of the cast to find out how they coped performing the notoriously difficult play.

**Freddie Miller:** Dr Faustus  
**Max Jukes:** Mephistopheles  
**Chloe Gooding:** Good Angel; Vintner; Old Woman  
**Violet Nicholls:** Valdes; Robin; Devil  
**George Lawson:** Cornelius; Rafe; Devil  
**Ouli Jagne:** Evil Angel; Lechery; Duchess; Devil

**How do you learn your lines?**

**Freddie:** I learn my lines in chunks. I also draw images to remind me of bits in speeches.  
**Max:** I learn my lines by pacing around the room, or whilst I balance different objects, like a broom, or bounce a ball. Doing two things at once really helps me learn my lines.  
**Violet:** I learn my lines whilst walking around the table!  
**George:** I usually learn my lines by recording my voice. If Violet and I messed up our lines, we could always improvise.  
**Ouli:** I was lucky that I had several small roles. In previous years, I've had loads of lines to learn. But I find that the lines come to me, they seep in during rehearsals, and I go through them before I go on. I will admit I do change the words sometimes, and yes, even Shakespeare's!

**How did you find the language of the play, and was it difficult performing such a complex piece?**

**Freddie:** The syntax was really hard, it was worse than Shakespeare, and there were bits of Latin. But I am always ready for a challenge. Dr Askew is brilliant as well. She's done a PhD and that really helps, she really understands it and explains it very well.  
**Max:** Marlowe's language is not as heightened as Shakespeare's, and there's no iambic pentameter. But there is a lot of Latin, Spanish and Greek in it.  
**Violet:** At first I was a bit overwhelmed, but you keep doing it more and more which helps, you learn it in performance. You remember that you're being someone else. Also, Dr Askew helped by translating it for us. She was very good at bringing us together as a team.  
**Ouli:** I thought all playwrights wrote like Shakespeare - I was wrong.

**How did you handle the dark and complex themes of the play?**

**Freddie:** I wasn't too concerned by them. My Nana was a bit concerned, she's very religious, but I was fine.  
**Max:** We challenge a lot in drama. Back in the day, it was very hard-hitting for Catholics, but would have made Protestants laugh. Now it's different, and the physical comedy makes people laugh.  
**Chloe:** To begin with, I really didn't like 'Dr Faustus'. I didn't connect with it, and I didn't think the audience would connect with it. But then I saw we were doing it in a way that people would understand.  
**Ouli:** I wondered how it would be received when you have kids in the audience from all years. But everyone seemed to enjoy it, and it seemed the kids got more from it than the adults, they found it more humorous.
How do you handle the audience’s laughter?

Freddie: There was a lot of banter for the kissing scene. But I tried not to think about the laughter; I was Faustus, thinking about the beauty of Helen.

Chloe: I bite the inside of my mouth. It’s really hard, it’s something you can’t really prepare for.

Ouli: People were laughing when I went on stage as the pregnant Duchess. It was quite distracting, and I was twitching to stop myself laughing. Behind the scenes, people kept coming up and asking to touch my bump like I was a real pregnant woman, but it was just a couple of bean bags!

Have you always been into drama?

Freddie: I did drama before Seaford. I played Bugsy Malone at primary school. I really enjoy doing plays.

Violet: I love doing acting. I acted at primary school, and I was in a lot of plays. I am very pleased to be part of drama at Seaford, it is very inclusive.

George: I picked up drama whilst being at Seaford. Before, I was really introverted, and it helped to build my confidence. Someone dropped out of ‘A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream’ and Max said I should go for it. Acting is really fun, and can really help introverts. You can be whoever you want to be.

How has drama at Seaford helped you?

Max: When I was younger, I was bullied for taking part in drama and dance. But now, I skip down the chickenwalk and I high-kick wherever I go. It is so accepting. You can really be yourself at Seaford. Mr Green wants it to be an all types of school, so you can really be accepted for who you are. I am very, very dyslexic and I struggle to write all of my thoughts down. My love of drama has fuelled my writing skills, and the fantastic Learning Support at Seaford has really taught me the importance of planning.

Chloe: It really fuels my academic studies, for example it really compliments English. Acting at Seaford has totally changed who I am. Before, I was shy, and hunched over, I was completely different. I was encouraged to come out of my shell, and to develop as a person. At Seaford, you can find your own space.

George: The drama department gives us a lot of freedom to develop our own ideas. At Seaford, you’re not restricted to just possibilities. If you want to create something, and be amazing, you can. Seaford helps you to push the boundaries, and gives you the freedom to do that.
What is the most important thing about your roles as Houseparents?

Houseparents become a very significant person in the life of boarding students whatever their age. As such Houseparents take that privilege very seriously. As Houseparents in Heden we would echo the words of all the school’s boarding house parents when we say that the most important aspect is to create a safe, happy, homely environment that supports and encourages personal and academic development and achievement.

Being a Houseparent involves being the best parent you can be to every child, whether that is guiding their academic studies, helping them solve their problems, or supporting them on the sports field. We aim to be present for the highs and lows and allow our Year 13’s to leave Heden as fully rounded young people.

What do you enjoy about being a Houseparent?

The enormous satisfaction when the students attain a place at their university of choice or succeed in entering their chosen field of study is hugely enjoyable. Moreover, satisfaction comes when a teenager reaches their potential in whatever part of life is important to them, be that guiding their academic studies, helping them solve their problems, or supporting them on the sports field. We aim to be present for the highs and lows and allow our Year 13’s to leave Heden as fully rounded young people.

What do you think is the biggest challenge for the younger generation?

The competitive nature of the world we live in is a huge challenge for young people. If they want to succeed in a competitive world, they have to keep their work ethos strong and their social and cultural impacts positive so that they stand out from the crowd.

What do you think students get from their time in house?

The experiences of being in our sixth form house will never be forgotten. Lifelong friends and memories are made here and academic prowess as well as sporting and creative successes are developed and soundly applauded.

We make time to encourage community life, family values and creative diversity and we impress this upon the students that live life here fully, so that wherever they go, positivity will shine from them and they will know it is because they came from the Heden family.
Fergus Guiry
Deputy Head Heden and 1st XV Vice Captain, plays for London Irish.

Yolanda Gumbo
Boarder at Heden Court, Deputy Head of Choir and member of the School Council

Why did you choose Seaford?

Fergus: The sport is really good, and Seaford’s academic focus and individual attention is second to none.
Yolanda: I love the music department and I’m a music scholar. Seaford is known to be excellent at academic and extra-curricular pursuits as well as pastoral care.

What do you like about Seaford both from an academic and an extra-curricular perspective?

Fergus & Yolanda: There is a massive range of extra-curricular activities, from sport to CCF, music, art, drama and all the adventure stuff; it’s such a bonus. From an academic perspective, the teachers at Seaford actually care about your learning. In the Sixth Form there are smaller classes and everything is a lot more concentrated. The teachers know you very well, they know how you learn and they care a lot, which really helps us to do well. You really feel like you have the freedom to be who you want to be.

How have you found the transition from GCSE to A Level?

Fergus & Yolanda: We’ve really liked it; at A Level there are fewer subjects, whereas at GCSE you study eleven or twelve. It’s a lot more concentrated, and although it does get harder, we’ve really enjoyed it because we love the subjects we study, and you get to go into them in a lot more depth.

Fergus, how do you balance you studies with your rugby? Do you train every day?

During the season I will train every day either at Seaford or with London Irish, and I get a lot of support with my timetable from my teachers. I make sure that I get work done in my free periods. I also have prep for 2 hours in Heden every evening, so I will get my work done. I have been able to balance my workload and my rugby. I really enjoy being Vice Captain, I’ve enjoyed seeing how all the boys have progressed from Year 7 and Year 8, and how different players progress and take on different attributes. My leadership skills have improved as well; I feel really confident in front of a big group, which will help me in the future.

Yolanda, how do you balance you studies with your music? Do you practise every day?

I agree with Fergus, we get a lot of support from our teachers with our studies and this gives me time to focus on my music. I’m in the school choirs and in the Jazz Band. I do my academic work in my free periods and after the 2 hours of prep in the evening I go to the Music department and do 2 hours of practise every day. It doesn’t feel like work though because I love it. I’m also on the School Council and like making a difference to the community. It’s fun and I like being in charge.

What are your plans for the future?

Fergus: I’d like to get a professional contract with London Irish, my back up plan is to study International Business at University.
Yolanda: I’d like to follow in the footsteps of Tom Odell (who studied at Seaford) and I’m going to the same university. I’m going to the BIMM in Brighton to do a song writing course and I want to be a professional singer and song writer.

What are the main benefits of boarding at Seaford?

Fergus & Yolanda: It’s very good from a work perspective. You get the work done, if you’re a day pupil it’s harder, you go home and eat and lounge about. Also, there are all the activities, you’re never bored.

What do you like about Dr Pothecary’s and Mrs Reynolds’ style as a Houseparent?

Fergus: Dr Pothecary is approachable, disciplined, reasonable and treats you like an adult. He listens and will make improvements from our suggestions. He is keen that we enjoy ourselves and work hard. It’s a good ethic.
Yolanda: Mrs Reynolds creates a structured, dynamic and extremely positive environment. She gives us the space we need and it’s good preparation for university. She helps us see the consequences of our decisions. She is friendly, a lot of fun and has a great sense of humour. They also both have experience with their own teenagers and work well as a team to unite the two Heden houses.
Boarding Experience

Angie Prince-Iles

Angie Prince-Iles is Head Houseparent of Mansion, the Girls Boarding House at Seaford College. Parents of pupils have thanked her for ‘all the wonderful care, love, and support’ she has shown to their children, commenting how it is ‘really reassuring knowing that she is a mother figure in our absence.’

We had a conversation with Angie about what it’s like to be a houseparent and to look after the 35 girls in the boarding house, as well as finding out what life is like for the boarders at Mansion.

What opportunities are there for boarders at Mansion?

We have many opportunities for girls here in Mansion, with roles that perhaps they wouldn’t come across unless they were a boarder. We currently have roles such as Head of House, House Prefects, Peer Mentors and boarder’s council reps.

Pupil voice is crucial in a boarding environment and so I invite the girls to air their opinions at the Girls Boarding Meeting, which is run by the Prefects and the Head of House.

We give our girls life skills so that they are ready for university and life after Seaford. The girls work together to keep their kitchen/common area and bedrooms clean and tidy, which in-turn teaches them about responsibility and the importance of collaborative teamwork. We promote other life skills and recently we baked cakes for charity, as well as giving the girls the opportunities to join in evening clubs and events such as Greenpower, Music and Drama performances.

Are there any activities for boarders at the weekends and in the evenings at Mansion?

We provide an exciting range of evening activities throughout the week from swimming, in our newly refurbished heated pool, to Zumba lessons, cinema trips, pizza nights and inter-house quiz nights. There are always trips on both Saturday and Sunday and range from visiting the local shops in Chichester to places of cultural importance such as Stonehenge, National Trust locations and many other places of interest. On Friday nights the students usually go to Sainsbury’s to stock up on their basics. The girls really appreciate the trips, and they have a say in where they get to go. At the beginning of the year we have a house bonding trip, and this year we went to AirHop. It was a great experience that really brought the house together.

What do you think the students get out of their boarding experience?

They know that after their school day, they can return to Mansion where it is calm and relaxed. Pupils are very settled in Mansion and it really does feel like one big family with everyone looking after and supporting each other.

There are staff on duty each evening and on hand to help with prep as well as help guide boarders through any difficulties they may be having. The boarders don’t have a journey home in the evenings, and so can make the most of their time to get their prep done. The older girls really like to help the younger ones; one of our Year 12s is a great mathematician and helps out the other boarders. Also, the girls get a social aspect in the evenings that they just wouldn’t get at home, building some very solid friendship skills.

What is the most important thing about your role as a Houseparent?

The most important thing is to create a happy, safe, homely, and nurtured environment in which the girls can grow and prosper. I want them to be able to get the most out of their time here. My top priority is welfare, whether a full, weekly or flexi boarder, I ensure that we can accommodate the needs of all our boarders.

I was Resident Assistant in Mansion for three years before I became a Houseparent. I quickly realised just how important it was to get to know each boarder as an individual. I love to spend time with all my boarders on a one to one basis, finding out what their interest are and encouraging them to try new things. It is such a rewarding experience knowing that you can make a difference. I feel very privileged to be a houseparent as the relationship you build in the house with pupils is very different to being a teacher.

What’s it like looking after the 35 girls who board at Mansion?

Very busy! I do feel like a mother to all of them. I bear in mind that the girls will be going through a lot in their teenage years, so I try to read a situation before anything develops; if a girl is upset about something, I try to find out what’s going on from all areas of school life. The girls come to chat to me in my office on a regular basis; they know my door is always open.

Mansion also has a fantastic prefect structure and a peer-mentoring system, so there is a really good atmosphere in the house. You honestly wouldn’t know who was in each year when you see them together having fun. Having such a range of ages (Years 9-13) can be a challenge; we have tailored the boarding experience for each age range. So for example, we give the Year 12s a degree of responsibility and privilege because they are that bit older.

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing the younger generation?

I think technology is the biggest challenge we face. It can be an incredible tool, but when used incorrectly, it can be a very destructive force. That’s why we have a lot of policies in place to protect our students as well as informing them of the risks that technology can pose. The girls hand in their phones during prep time, and overnight. They are very much in support of this as they find it helps them to concentrate and get a well rested nights sleep. Social media can also put a tremendous amount of pressure on young people in terms of body image. We educate our boarders about how they can keep safe on the Internet as well as tackling issues that surround healthy eating and making good life style choices. The most important thing is that our boarders are happy.
Dominique joined Seaford in September having previously studied at a school in London. We had a chat with her to find out what boarding at Seaford is like, and how she is finding her A Levels.

**For how long have you been a boarder?**
I joined Seaford in September, so I started boarding then. I am really enjoying it, especially the social side of boarding, as I’m getting to know lots of different people. I feel very lucky to wake up each day to the view from my room in Mansion.

**Why do you board?**
I live in London and I chose to board because my parents work long hours. I wanted to board so that I can take part in all of the extra-curricular activities at Seaford.

**What are you studying?**
I am studying for A Levels in Biology, Chemistry, Art and DT- Product Design.

**What kind of activities do you get involved in at Mansion?**
I do the pilates class and this Thursday we’re having a pizza and movie night, which I am really looking forward to. I’m a full boarder and I enjoy the weekends and taking part in the trips, it feels like a family outing. I went on the trip to Harry Potter World which was really fun. I loved our trip to AirHop in Guilford, some of the girls had never been on a trampoline before so we laughed a lot! I am also a Head of House at Mansion.

**What is it like being Head of House at Mansion?**
I was really happy to be trusted with the responsibility, I really enjoy it! I have a night on duty where I collect electrical items from the younger years before they go to bed, and I have to make sure that they go to bed too. I also have a dining hall duty at supper time and roll call duties.

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**How has boarding at Seaford helped you?**
It really helps with my studies, I get distracted at home. At Mansion, we have set prep hours, so we do prep for 2 hours in the evening. It’s easier to work because everyone else is working around you, and Miss Prince-Iles really motivates you. It’s like a sleepover with all of your mates, and there is never a dull moment.

**Have you seen a change in yourself since you started boarding and studying at Seaford?**
I study a lot harder, and my hard work has really paid off, as my predicted grades are a lot higher. At my old school, I was really demotivated, and I knew I could do a lot better. Teachers at Seaford are friendlier and more approachable. It helps me learn because I feel more relaxed and I’m not afraid to take risks and get things wrong. I’m learning a lot more here and I feel I can ask questions. Seaford doesn’t limit you, I feel I have the freedom to be who I want to be. At Seaford, I’m being predicted good grades and my Challenge Grades have really helped me. They are realistic, but also really motivating. They showed me that the teachers here believe in me, and so now I am much more able to believe in myself. I’m really motivated to achieve higher things and to fulfill my potential. I like the routine in boarding and it helps me plan and get my work done for lessons. I also like helping the younger boarders with their prep and I like to set them a good example by showing them that I’m also working hard. Everyone else is working around you so it motivates you to work too. I also really enjoy being part of a House and having House pride.

**How do Miss Prince-Iles (Houseparent) help you in the house?**
Miss Prince-Iles is really friendly, enthusiastic, and fair. You know if you ever had a problem that she would help you. Miss Prince-Iles gives off this great feeling of kindness, she is so natural. She is very maternal and I feel she is more like a parent than a teacher.

**Do you take part in any extra-curricular activities?**
I enjoy taking part in the weekly community service sessions. I go to the care home and I find it really rewarding. It helps me improve my social skills and patience. I also play the violin, guitar and piano and I’m planning to join the choir. I play the piano at night in the Mansion Garden Room and I use the facilities in the Music department after I’ve finished my prep. I also enjoy my role as a peer mentor.

**What would you like to do in the future?**
I’m keeping my options open at the moment, I’d like to go to University to do Prop Design and Animation. I hope to do the design for the school production. I took A Level Biology and Chemistry because I’m also thinking about going into Stem Cell Research. I plan to do work experience to help me decide which direction to take.
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