BENENDEN

A COMPLETE EDUCATION

Lower School Scholarships

for September 2027 Entry

Lower School Scholarships for September 2027 Entry

Benenden enjoys a thriving programme for Scholars which includes the academic awards listed below, and our most accomplished musicians, artists, actresses, designers and sportswomen.

At Benenden, scholarships are given to recognise talent, and we are delighted to identify and reward that ability each year.

All scholarship awards will be full in status and recipients will be invited to take part in our extensive Scholars' Mentoring Programme. The Programme provides access to a range of specialist enrichment activities to inspire each Scholar and extend her knowledge, a mentor to guide and encourage her on her journey and important leadership opportunities.

Being a Scholar is a position of honour at Benenden. Whilst it does not carry any remission in fees, it does allow pupils to play a key role in the life of the School and opens a world of opportunities from which she can expand her learning.

Financial assistance with fees, in the form of a means-tested bursary award, may be available. Please see separate information on bursary applications.

The information below sets out the range of Lower School Scholarships available and, importantly, all the key dates you need to know for examinations, interviews and other assessments. Thank you for considering an application for a Scholarship for your daughter.

Scholarship Eligibility at 11+, 12+ and 13+

The level of examination will be determined not by the date of birth but by the intended form of entry (Fourth Form 11+, Upper Fourth Form 12+, Lower Fifth Form 13+). The following Lower School awards will typically be available:

At 11+ (Fourth Form) Entry and 12+ (Upper Fourth Form) Entry

Sports and Music awards. Academic awards may be made based on the entrance assessment.

At 13+ (Lower Fifth Form) Entry

Academic, Music, Art and Design, Sport, Drama, Creative Technology and an All Rounder award.

Candidates may be invited to apply for Scholarship exams following a strong performance in pre-test papers or on recommendation by their current school. Parents may also apply for a Scholarship on behalf of a candidate. Please note that we cannot provide overnight accommodation for candidates wishing to sit Scholarship assessments on consecutive days.

Academic Scholarships

12+ and 13+ Entry **Friday 29 January 2027**

Academic Scholarship examinations will take place at Benenden. Examination papers will be set by Benenden School as follows:

12+ (Upper Fourth Form Entry) – English and Mathematics **Friday 29 January 2027**

Candidates will also undertake an interview.

13+ (Lower Fifth Form Entry) – English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Languages. **Friday 29 January 2027**

Candidates can expect to be at Benenden during most of the day and to undertake one or more interviews as well as participate in group activities. Examples of past Academic Scholarship papers are available from the School website.

Music 11+, 12+ and 13+ Entry **Audition Date: Tuesday 26 January 2027**

Music Scholarship auditions will take place at Benenden School. We will primarily be looking for musical potential and qualities of self-motivation as well as high achievement, rather than evidence of past exam results.

Applicants will normally have reached Grade 4/5 level for 11+ and Grade 5/6 level for 13+. A pre-audition with the Director of Music is strongly advised to determine whether an application is appropriate for the candidate, and also to help her feel familiar with the department before she comes for the audition. This can take place between one and three years before the year of entry. Overseas candidates can be pre-auditioned via Teams or can send over videos of performances.

Please contact the Registry to arrange a pre-audition ahead of the Scholarship application.

On the day of the audition, candidates will be given time to practice both individually and with the School accompanist. The audition itself will be comprised of an interview, aural tests and the performing of three pieces, normally but not necessarily two contrasting items on the main instrument and one piece on any other instrument. Rather than traditional sight-reading, each candidate will prepare a 'quick study' during their practice time which they then perform at the audition.

In addition, candidates will be required to show that they have reached the general academic standards of any entrant.

The award of a Music Scholarship includes two 30-minute lessons per week of free instrumental or vocal tuition, plus 30 minutes with a Scholar coach / accompanist. Music Exhibitioners receive 30 minutes free tuition per week.

All Music Award holders are expected to maintain high standards of musical excellence and to be ambassadors for Music within the School through personal practice, regular performances and enthusiastic participation in ensembles. They are also expected to strongly consider Music as an academic option at GCSE, though it is not a strict requirement.

Drama 13+ Entry

Audition Date: Tuesday 26 January 2027

A strong candidate for the Drama Scholarship should:

- Have proven involvement in Drama activities: either as a performer or backstage – although not necessarily in a main role. Commitment is more important to us than having played lots of lead roles.
- Have experience of having seen a mixed programme of live theatre (although this can include filmed versions of live performances), along with the ability to talk about productions seen and to offer some evaluation. Demonstrate evidence of having read (or being familiar with) a variety of play texts in different styles and from different genres.
- Be a strong performer who is willing to take risks in performance to develop their practical skills and/or be a committed technician or designer, who appreciates how production values (lighting, sound, set, costume and performance) work together to create theatre.
- Can work creatively within a group – be able to offer ideas and to lead others in the development of both their own ideas and those of others. We value good listening skills as well as good performance skills.
- Have the commitment to take Drama as an academic subject to (at least) GCSE level and, through independent learning, work beyond the level set by the teacher in the classroom.
- Be an ambassador for the subject, can motivate others and enthuse them about Drama Department activities.

Expectations of a Drama Scholar

You should ensure you are aware of events within the Department and be prepared to promote those events within the School, acting as part of the School's wider ambassador system. You should keep yourself informed about theatrical trends and developments through an independent programme of theatre visits and play reading. From the LV (exceptions are made for the UV and VI.2 taking exams) you will be involved in the drama Scholars' play which takes place each year during the summer term. In later years you will be involved with assisting and supporting the Lower School Drama activities, for example the Junior play and helping to mentor and advise younger students.

Art and Design 13+ Entry

Audition Date: Wednesday 27 January 2027

A strong candidate should:

- Have a record of involvement with Art activities, both in and out of school
- Evidence of attending exhibitions and events linked to Art leading to an understanding of the importance of the context with which Art is created; must be able to discuss fluently a favourite artist beyond those taught in lessons.
- Display a passion for Art beyond that which is set by a teacher and be able to show examples of independent work and creative projects.
- Enjoy working with others on projects and sharing their passion and skill as an ambassador for the subject.
- Have the ambition and dedication to continue to study Art as an academic subject to (at least) GCSE level, working independently beyond the level set by the teacher in the classroom.

Expectations of an Art Scholar

We would expect our Scholars to continue to study with the Department until the end of GCSE and hope that they will be excited by the opportunities to continue their studies in the Sixth Form. Gaining a Scholarship from the Art Department is the beginning of an exciting journey and not the end of a process. Scholars must lead by example in participation and enthusiasm for creative explorations and help engender a love and respect for the subject. Scholars are not expected to take part in every Art opportunity, but we do expect you to be involved in at least one extra project a year, for example helping with an Open Morning or working with the trainee Scholars. In later years you will be expected to help mentor and support younger students. Scholars are expected to keep up to date with what is happening in the Art department and use the studio space respectfully during allotted times, as well as promoting this to others. Understanding creative diversity is important to the Department and Scholars should continue to keep themselves up to date with the Art world, attending exhibitions independently and continuing to develop their skills and knowledge.

A Benenden Art Scholar should strive to show independence and initiative, developing their creativity inventively and fluently, realising their intentions, and assisting others to succeed.

Creative Technology 13+ Entry

Assessment Date: Wednesday 27 January 2027

The Candy Chanyavongse 13+ Creative Technology Scholarship

In the Creative Technology Department at Benenden we aim to stimulate pupils' interest, curiosity, creativity, and enjoyment when developing solutions to improve the world around them. We provide an integrated Creative Technology curriculum, combining both IT and creative computing with design and making.

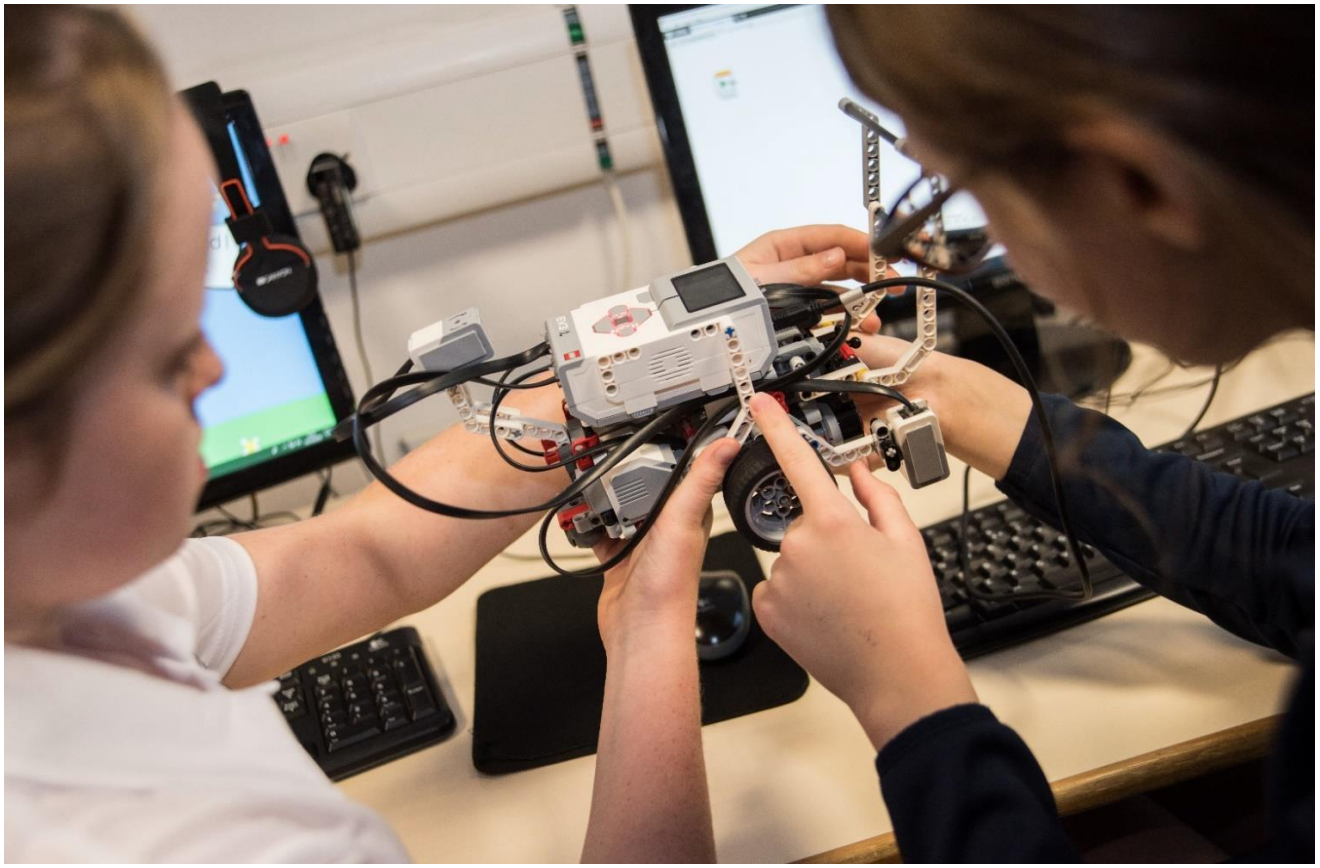
A strong candidate should:

- Demonstrate creativity by devising solutions to problems they see around them.
- Think creatively about how to solve any issues they encounter
- Be excited about committing to the development of new skills to produce projects.
- Be willing to investigate and make mistakes, which should be learnt from.
- Display a passion for working on their own projects and ideas, in discussion with the staff team.
- Have a desire to understand how things work and apply that understanding to developing new solutions to problems.
- View achieving the Scholarship as a starting point to help solve problems in the world around them.

Expectations of a Technology Scholar:

A Scholar in Creative Technology should be willing to spend additional time in the workshop and innovation suite, developing their skills with the various tools available to them, both physical and digital. They should also be interested in developing a better knowledge and understanding of how technology links with the products we develop. Each Scholar will be expected to develop their own project during the year, and they will be given access to the workshop during the week as well as the software (Windows based) to complete design work in their own time. During the project work they will need to develop resilience, independence, and creativity to bring their project to fruition. Creative Technology Scholars are expected to promote the work of the Department around the School and within the wider community.

We would expect our Scholars to continue to study with the Department until the end of GCSE and hope that they will be excited by the opportunities to continue their studies in the Sixth Form.



Sports 11+ and 13+ Entry

Assessment Date: Thursday 28 January 2027

A strong candidate should demonstrate the following sporting, commitment and behavioural characteristics:

- Show a real passion and talent for their chosen sports.
- Can make a significant impact when representing the School.
- Have the ability and aspiration to compete at a representative level in one sport.
- Be fully committed to all aspects of Sport at Benenden.
- Demonstrate a proactive attitude to engage in wider sporting opportunities and inspire others to do the same.
- Seek opportunities for leadership and personal development.
- Seek every opportunity to always improve and be a role model.
- Show character and resilience whilst competing and training, and in other aspects of life.

Selection of Scholars
Internal candidates will be selected to attend the Sports Scholarships Assessment Day in addition to all external applicants.

During the day, candidates will be assessed against the evidence of their current performance and future potential. Their physical competency and sport specific technical capabilities, attitude and life skills are assessed through a combination of observation of performance, fitness test, interview (and references for external candidates).

Sports Scholarships are reviewed annually. 11+ Sports Scholars will be considered for a two-year Benenden Diploma Sports Scholarship and may apply again for the 13+ award two years later.

Expectations of a Sports Scholar
In line with the selection criteria, Sports Scholars are expected to meet specific sporting, commitment and behavioural characteristics. These include:

- Performing consistently at the highest level possible
- Demonstrating a commitment to improve tactical and technical knowledge by seeking regular feedback
- Maintaining and improving fitness levels outside of formal sessions and working to minimise any injury risk

Furthermore, Sports Scholars are expected to represent Benenden at all Sports Scholar events and to meet regularly with their assigned mentor. Ambition and role modelling positive behavioural characteristics are also key values. Sports Scholars can expect to receive specialist help to develop them holistically as athletes and individuals.

All-Rounder Award – A Complete Education Scholarship 13+ Entry

13+ All-Rounder Scholarship *(External applicants only)*

Assessments for the 13+ All-Rounder Scholarship will take place alongside the assessments for the individual scholarships in January 2027.

At Benenden, we celebrate all girls accessing A Complete Education and our All-Rounder Award will consider performance in two areas of co-curricular skill (Art, Drama, CT, Music and Sport) as well as considering academic potential.

Where it is appropriate, an All-Rounder Award may cover the cost of individual tuition or training for one or more individual lessons per week. Any Scholarship candidate entering for **two Co-Curricular awards and the Academic award** will automatically be considered for the All-Rounder Award as well as the individual scholarships. All-Rounder candidates will undertake the same assessment as the candidates for the individual scholarships and will therefore need to attend on more than one day. We recognise that an 'all-rounder' may not have reached the same level of performance, but recent experience has shown that there are some very talented candidates who have difficulty in selecting a specialty at 13+.

Candidates will also sit the 13+ Academic assessments. There will be four papers – English, Maths, Science and a Humanities and Languages paper. In the case of the latter, candidates can choose two questions to answer from History, Geography, Latin, Philosophy and Religion, French and Spanish. It is important that evidence of academic ability is sufficiently high so that the All-Rounder Scholar will thrive within a busy academic and co-curricular programme.

Interviews
All-Rounder candidates will be interviewed on the day of the assessments for individual scholarships.

Terms and Conditions for all Scholarships

Unless otherwise agreed, all examinations, practical tests and interviews take place at Benenden School. All Scholarship awards will be honorary – no fee remission is included. Parents seeking financial assistance should contact the Registry to request details of our bursary awards. Music Scholars also receive two free 30-minute instrumental lessons each week for the principal instrument (60 minutes per week in total). Sports Scholars may receive free tuition in tennis (60 minutes per week), if they have excelled in the tennis part of the assessment.

It is a condition of accepting a Scholarship that a Scholar will, throughout her School career, pursue courses of study approved by the Headmistress, and will make a commitment to remain at Benenden until she has taken her Advanced Level examinations. Each Scholarship will be tenable throughout the holder's time at Benenden, subject only to an annual review of her industry and good conduct. A Scholarship award may be surrendered or withdrawn at any time if a Scholar ceases to be keen to invest time or energy in the area concerned. All Scholarships are subject to annual review and general good conduct.

Closing date for Lower School Scholarship applications for September 2027 is 1 December 2026
Candidates wishing to be considered for a place, even if a Scholarship is not awarded, must be registered for the School in the usual way.

Benenden Scholarships are honorary in all cases. **Candidates seeking means-tested bursary support** should apply via the Registry on registration.

For any enquiries please contact:
Registry
Benenden School, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 4AA
Telephone: 01580 240592
E-mail: registry@benenden.school

Application Form – click here for the online application form

Benenden Scholarships are named in honour of the following supporters of Benenden School

The Bird Scholarship
Named in honour of Miss K E Bird, one of Benenden's Founders and the first Housemistress of Hemsted from 1924 to 1954.

The Michael Coates Scholarship
Michael Coates joined the governing Council of Benenden in 1981 when his daughter Annabel was at the School and continued as a Governor until 2007. He acted as Vice-Chairman of Council and as a member of and Chairman of the Building Committee.

The Sir Hugh Collum Scholarship
Sir Hugh Collum was born in 1941 and after Eton, where he was Head of House and a cricketer, he trained as a Chartered Accountant. He then went into business as Financial Director of Courage, and then Cadbury Schweppes. Sir Hugh was a member of Benenden's Governing Council.

The Candy Chanyavongse Creative Technology Scholarship
In memory of Miss Candy Chanyavongse who was a talented Design and Technology student at Benenden. She joined Marshall House in 1994, leaving the Sixth Form in 2001.

The Clarke Scholarship
Miss E B Clarke was Headmistress of Benenden from 1954 to 1975, Housemistress of Guldeford (1954 to 1956) and Housemistress of Norris (1956 to 1961).

The Rachel Close-Smith Sports Scholarship
Rachel Close-Smith (nee Earp, E65) grew up in Eastbourne and followed her two sisters to Benenden, where she was very happy. Sport played an integral part of her childhood, with a highlight being an appearance at Junior Wimbledon, and she was never one to just sit by and watch.

The Robin Dalton Holmes Scholarship
Robin Dalton Holmes was Bursar of Benenden School between 1983 and 2003 - and helped in all normal fields with particular emphasis on building, (four boarding houses, sports complex, study centre and library, science and medical centre, staff housing and numerous conversions). Robin worked under four Headmistresses and four Chairmen.

The Gillian duCharme Scholarship
Gillian duCharme is a Cambridge modern languages graduate who spent 19 years on the East Coast of the United States, working in the independent school sector. After five years as Head of the Town School in Manhattan, she returned to England in 1985 as Headmistress of Benenden, leaving in 2000.

The Barbara Findlay Trust Scholarship
Barbara Findlay joined Hemsted House as an Upper Fifth in 1923 and was one of the School's first students.

The Cynthia Gee Scholarship
Named in honour of Miss C F H Gee, LVO, who was Housemistress of Guldeford from 1960 to 1988.

The David Harmsworth Scholarship
David Harmsworth was a member of staff at Benenden for just over 30 years, from January 1975 until the summer of 2005. A classicist, educated at Christ's Hospital and University College, Oxford, he came as Head of Classics and taught throughout the department, though increasingly involved in wider academic administration under various titles, starting as Head of Staff and ending as Deputy Head, Director of Studies.

The Hindle Scholarship
Miss A D Hindle MBE was one of Benenden's Founders and was the School's first Bursar (1923 to 1954) and was also the first Housemistress of Echyngham (1924 to 1940).

The Rosemary Langton Scholarship
Named in honour of Miss I R Langton, Housemistress of Echyngham from 1940 to 1976.

The Lawrence Scholarship
The Lawrence Scholarship is named in honour of Mr Murray Lawrence, a former Benenden Parent and Chairman of Benenden's Governing Council from 1991 to 1998. He is also a Trustee of the Benenden School Trust.

The Hilary Marshall Scholarship
Hilary Marshall was the youngest daughter of John Maitland Marshall and Head Girl of Benenden School. John helped the Founders financially in their plan to found a new girls' school and went on to finance this Scholarship, the Jessamy James English Prize and the Swimming Cup.

The Nash Scholarship
Miss M R Nash was Housemistress of Medway from 1972 to 1977.

The Catherine Nunneley Scholarship
Catherine Nunneley was a governor of Benenden School for twenty years and Chairman of Council for the last eight of these. She has been married for almost fifty years, has four children and eleven grandchildren and lives in Wiltshire.

The Debra Price Scholarship
Debra Price joined Benenden in 1990 to co-ordinate Admissions, Marketing and PR. She was the first Development Director in a UK school and devised the fundraising campaigns that led to the construction of the Clarke Study Centre, Theatre, Science Centre and much more. Latterly a teacher of History and Head of Critical Thinking, Debra left Benenden in 2015 after four years as Deputy Head and 26 years of service.

The Sir Alan Pullinger Scholarship
Sir Alan Pullinger was born at Trowbridge, Wiltshire in 1913. He was educated at nearby Marlborough College and then Balliol College, Oxford, where he read Engineering. Sir Alan joined the Council of Benenden (where his first wife had been Head Girl) in 1976 and later became its Vice-Chairman.

The Harry Salmon Scholarship
Harry Salmon joined the governing Council of Benenden in 1979 and has been a parent and grandparent of girls at Benenden. A retired businessman he has served the School as a member of the Executive Committee, the Scrutiny Committee and as Chair of the Health, Safety and Security Committee.

The Sanger Scholarship
Jim Sanger was the lead financial governor of Benenden for thirty years from 1975 until 2005. He was invited to join the Council by a colleague "because you will bring the average age down"! Hopefully he did a little more than that and the School grew from 334 girls to nearly 500 over this time.

The Sheldon Scholarship
Miss C M Sheldon was one of Benenden's Founders and was the first Headmistress of the School from 1923 to 1954. Miss Sheldon was also Housemistress of Guldeford.

The Ellen Winser Scholarship
Ellen Winser is a Benenden Senior and a long serving member of Benenden's Governing Council. She read Archaeology and Anthropology at Girton College, Cambridge and then went to work as a research assistant with a firm of stockbrokers in London. In 1973 women were able to become members of the Stock Exchange and Ellen was in that first cohort.