

Bournemouth School

SCHOOL TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



A Handbook for Tour Guides

Last Updated: January 2026

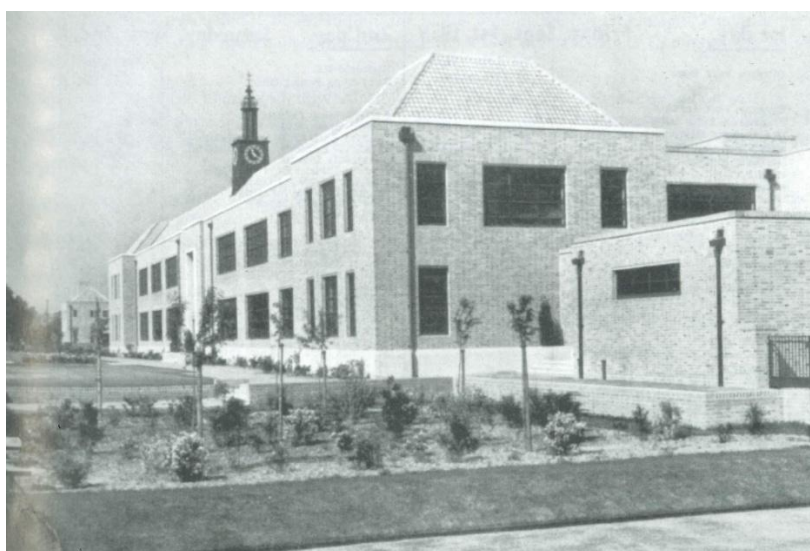


School Tour Highlights

We are always trying to improve our accommodation. Recent projects have included replacing exterior doors, windows and roofs, securing the site perimeter, refurbishing toilets and upgrading the heating system. We are currently in the middle of a project to replace all of the fire doors across the site. This project is being mostly funded by the Department for Education. So far, new doors have been installed in the corridors. The replacement of classroom and office doors will be very disruptive and is scheduled to happen over the summer holidays. In the meantime, we are replacing all of our light fittings with energy efficient LED units. As you walk through our school, you may see some areas that are in need of redecoration; you will appreciate that there is little point in addressing this before the fire door and lighting projects are completed.

1. The 1930s exterior façade

In the Spring Term of 1935, the school's governors resolved to proceed with the building of a new school. The proposed site was in East Way, overlooking the new playing fields and the Stour valley. Mr Parry, the school's second headteacher, hoped that it would *"rank with the greatest and finest education institutions in our land, and thereby enhance the glory of our borough."*



The new Bournemouth School in 1939, as war broke out

Bournemouth School on its current site opened its gates exactly at the time of the outbreak of the Second World War. The first pupils who walked into the new buildings were not, as expected, Bournemouth School boys but those of Taunton's School, who had been evacuated from Southampton. During the war years the school's buildings

served students from both schools, resulting in a relationship between both sets of past students which prevailed for more than 70 years.

The design of the façade is typical of late 1930s buildings, with some aspects, such as the inclusion of the clock tower, endeavouring to emulate the design of independent schools. Although not listed, the building is of local historic interest.

2. The foyer

Opposite the school's reception there is a plaque commemorating the co-operation between Bournemouth School and Taunton's School during the war years. Next to the plaque there is a trowel used to lay the foundation stone of the East Way building in May 1937.

When the old Portchester Road school was demolished in the 1980s, the foundation stone was rescued and subsequently laid under the trophy cabinet. It was unveiled in its new home on 24th May 2000, exactly 100 years after it had been laid at the original site.

The foyer is dominated by the trophy cabinet, boards listing the School Captains, and photographs of the current leadership (trustees, senior staff, and senior prefects).

3. The main hall

One dramatic summer night in May 1973 the school hall, which had been built in 1939, was completely destroyed by fire. Fortunately, the fire was contained: it destroyed the hall and the stage, but nothing more. The present hall was ready for use by September 1975.



The ruins of the School Hall after the fire in 1973

The hall is used today for assemblies, formal events (such as the annual prize-giving) and examinations. The hall can accommodate around 450 students (including on the balcony). We now have 1,320 students on roll, so whole school assemblies are a thing of the past!



Look above the stage!

The “official” school badge is the same as for the town of Bournemouth. The coat of arms of Bournemouth, granted in 1891, features a pine tree above four roses on a crown, symbolizing local parks and the town's history within Hampshire and England. It includes six legless birds (martlets) and salmon, referencing the River Stour and King Edward the Confessor. The motto is *Pulchritudo et Salubritas* ("beauty and health").

4. Teaching rooms on front corridor (any of rooms 1-7)

The teaching rooms at the front of the school are typical of those in the main block. They vary in size, but few are able to comfortably accommodate a class of 32. All teaching rooms are equipped with projectors, enabling teachers to use PowerPoint presentations to help structure their lessons. All teaching staff are issued with a laptop.

5. House displays

The house system remains important to Bournemouth School life, both in terms of promoting healthy competition and raising money for charity. The displays in this corridor are a “Who’s Who” for each house, celebrating past achievements and giving the current standing in the House Championship.

As the school expanded, the number of houses increased, with the names also changing over time. The first house names were the surnames of the school’s teaching staff. The most recent house name, Moore, was chosen by students.

1908 Barraclough, Ord, Sewell and Taylor

1910 Corinthians, Romans, Spartans and Trojans

1948 Avon, Bourne, Forest, Hambledon, Portchester, Romsey, Solent and Twynham

1958 Avon, Forest, Hambledon, Portchester, Romsey and Twynham

1992 Darwin, Elgar, Newton, Scott and Turner

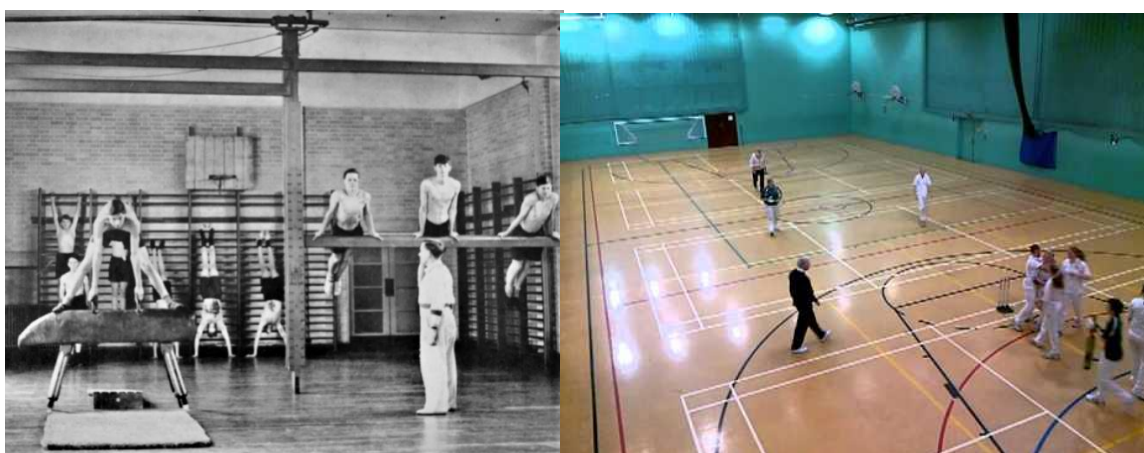
2018 Darwin, Elgar, Moore, Newton, Scott and Turner

6. The Old Gym

The picture below shows a “P.T.” (physical training) lesson in 1951. The facilities offered to students remained little changed until the opening of The Sir David English Sports Centre in 1999.

The centre is named after Sir David English, an Old Bournemouthian, who in the latter years of his life became a great supporter of the school. Sir David served as a governor and despite his punishing schedule of work as the editor of the *Daily Mail*, and a myriad of other commitments, worked alongside Allan Petrie, the school's sixth headteacher, to negotiate the financial and legal barriers to secure the facilities from which we still benefit. Our students enjoy the use of an 8-badminton court sports hall, 3 all-weather surfaces, and netball/tennis courts, in addition to the fields between the school and Bournemouth School for Girls.

The centre is owned by Bournemouth School Charitable Trust and run on their behalf by BHLive. The public has access to a first-floor gym at all times, and the other facilities outside of school hours.



7. Le Bistro

The 2022-23 academic year saw the opening of a long-awaited new building (built where there was once a subterranean cycle shed). Six new classrooms, additional toilets and a new dining room and kitchen were complemented by a sixth form study centre, with the latter funded from careful budgeting over the preceding ten years. The total cost of the project was £4.5 million (with £3.9 million from the Selective Schools Expansion Fund).

The new facility was opened in January 2023 by Old Bournemouthian, Alex James (of “Blur”). Le Bistro (together with outdoor seating under a canopy, and further seating in the Old Gym) caters for more than 1,300 students. There is a morning break and a 45-minute lunch time, as well as a breakfast offer before school. Sixth form students may use the facility during times when they are not timetabled for lessons. The vending facilities are available at all times.

8. Sixth Form study centre

The basement of the new building serves as a sixth form study centre. The study facilities enable students to make best use of their time in school when not in timetabled lessons. The access to computers and the study booths has proved popular.

9. Languages classrooms (60-66)

The classrooms in the new block are bright and inviting. They are larger than most classrooms across the older parts of the school, and are able to comfortably accommodate 32 students. Students joining the school in Year 7 may choose to study French or Spanish; able linguists may then also begin studying German in Year 9. Virtually all students follow a GCSE languages course. The intention is for Room 60 to become a video-conferencing suite to enable our students to work with their peers in other schools, in this country and beyond. Recent funding from the parents' lottery will be enable us to complete this project in the very near future.

10. Student toilets opposite staffroom

These toilets were refurbished in 2025 as part of an on-going project. The floor-to-ceiling cubicle doors and the open design help reduce the likelihood of vandalism and bullying. We have recently made a bid to the Department for Education for the funding to complete the programme of toilet refurbishment.

11. Outside the art and technology block

New science labs (on stilts) were constructed along with a new art and technology block behind the school, with six teaching spaces coming into use in 1996.

12. Room 80

This is an example of one of our product design rooms. The workshop is used mainly by students in Years 7-9. They gain experience in using a variety of materials.

13. Room 81

All students in Years 7 and 8 also gain experience of graphic design before choosing their GCSE options. We have a number of 3D printers, enabling students to print their designs, before evaluating and further refining them.

14. Room 82 (Food)

There were originally three art rooms in this block. In 2010, one room was converted to a food technology room using funding from the Department for Education. We deliberately based its design more on a commercial kitchen than a domestic one. All students in Years 7 and 8 learn some basic skills, and the subject is a popular GCSE option. Although we do not teach the subject at A-level, we do offer "survival cookery" courses for those preparing to leave home and go to university.

15. Art rooms (83 & 84)

The school benefits from having some fantastic artists, with their work adorning many of our corridor walls. The two art rooms are served by an IT room/library that enables students to undertake research and use applications such as Photoshop to manipulate images.

16. Scout hut

Many believe that the oldest part of the school is the Scout Hut behind the Technology Block. This ancient piece of wooden architecture was originally at the Portchester Road site, before being relocated in 1939. Over time, of course, virtually all parts of the building have been replaced. The Scout Troop continues to thrive using facilities at the school in the winter and, in the warmer weather, a boating base at Perch Pool. From this base, scouts access the River Stour on a variety of canoes, dinghies and other vessels.

17. Maths block (outside only)

The mathematics block was opened in 2006. The building comprises eight main teaching rooms and one seminar room. As with other classrooms across the school, teachers are able to use IT to enhance lesson delivery.

18. Room 39 (Stokoe Laboratory)

Geoff Stokoe taught physics at our school between 1950 and 1989. When he passed away, he bequeathed a sum of money to the school. We felt it only fitting that this was used to contribute to the refurbishment of the laboratory in which he taught, and which now bears his name.

19. Drama studio (outside only)

The building currently used as a drama studio has had a number of uses over the years. Although it was only intended to be a temporary building, re-modelling the inside and replacing the doors, windows and roof have extended its life span. We no longer offer GCSE or A-level Drama, but the subject is delivered as a part of the English curriculum. If money were no object, we would replace this structure with an open-air amphitheatre, making use of the slope between the upper and lower terraces.

20. The learning resources block

In 1966, work began on the biggest transformation to Bournemouth School since it moved to East Way – the construction of the sixth form block, which was opened in 1968. The new facility comprised a magnificent library, a state-of-the-art language laboratory, a suite of sixth form rooms and, ingeniously using the sloping site leading down to the copse, a large lecture theatre capable of holding a full year-group at a time – year groups at that time comprised 120 students, rather than the 180 of today.

21. Lecture theatre

The refurbishment of the lecture theatre began in the last academic year. The area has been redecorated and re-carpeted, the seating has been replaced, and three projectors have been installed. In the coming months, new curtains will be added and AV equipment to record presentations will be installed. The cost of the latter is being met thanks to a donation from the parents' lottery. It is hoped that we will be able to "live

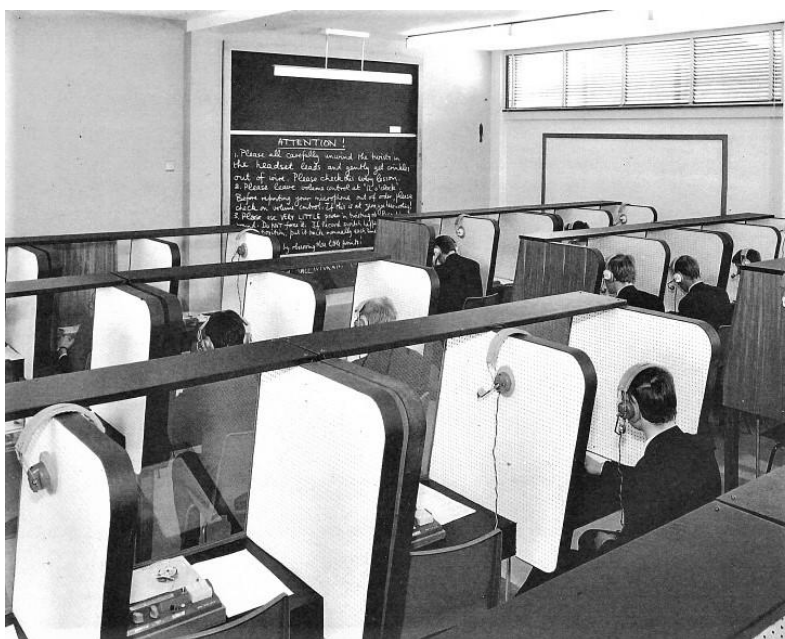
stream” and record lectures. The current capacity is just over 130 – unfortunately too small to accommodate a year group or house, but just big enough to seat all Year 12 students studying A-level maths.

22. Rooms 51 & 52 (and toilets opposite)

For many years this block was known as “the Sixth Form Block”. The classrooms were designed to be smaller than others across the site, as sixth form class sizes were then quite small – no longer the case today! In 2024, the decision was taken to relocate the IT department to the block and knock four classrooms into two air-conditioned IT suites (Rooms 51 and 52)

The toilets were refurbished alongside the other improvements. The floor-to-ceiling cubicle doors and the open design help reduce the likelihood of vandalism and bullying. We have recently made a bid to the Department for Education for the funding to complete the programme of toilet refurbishment.

23. Room 53



What we now refer to as Room 53 was initially a languages' laboratory (see above). In more recent times, it had simply been used as a large classroom (after removal of the study booths). As part of the block refurbishment a study area for sixth form students has been created, with students able to reserve a computer for their use during study periods and after school.

24. The library



When the block opened in 1968, the library was for the sixth form only (as shown above) – lower school students continued to use a library in Room 24 (as we know it today). All year groups use the facilities currently, with a great emphasis placed upon students in years 7 and 8 developing a love of reading a wide range of genres. There are a wide range of publications targeted to the sixth form, and the library also houses the school's archive.

25. The former caretaker's house (outside only)

The former caretaker's house has had a number of uses and occupants over time. The interior was refurbished in 2025, with the rooms being used as offices, for meetings and to accommodate small groups for examinations.

26. Music suite (Practice rooms and Room 11)

The current music suite was remodelled in the summer of 2013. Before that time, the department was spread over two floors, with the only practice rooms in the former caretaker's house ("the Music Mansion"). The department now enjoys having all of its facilities in one suite – classrooms, practice rooms, a recording studio, an instrument store and an office.

27. Room 24

Although now used as an English classroom, for many years the space accommodated the school library.

28. Chemistry rooms (44 and 45)

Comparing these two rooms gives a good picture of the “before” and “after” our programme of refurbishment. We hope to be able to refurbish room 44 in the summer of 2026.

29. Main staircase

The main staircase is dominated by the two war memorials. The one commemorating the fallen from the First World War dates from 1926, and was relocated from the Portchester Road site. The 1939-45 War Memorial was unveiled in 1951. The annual Remembrance services continue to be well-observed, with the last post sounded, the whole school falling silent and wreaths laid.

Until recent times, only staff and sixth formers were allowed to use the main staircase. With the growth in student numbers this is no longer a luxury that we can enjoy, unless we wish our corridors to be even busier. In a similar vein, the days of students not being allowed to use the main entrance are also long gone. During the school day, this is the only way in which students (and visitors) may leave or enter the main site.



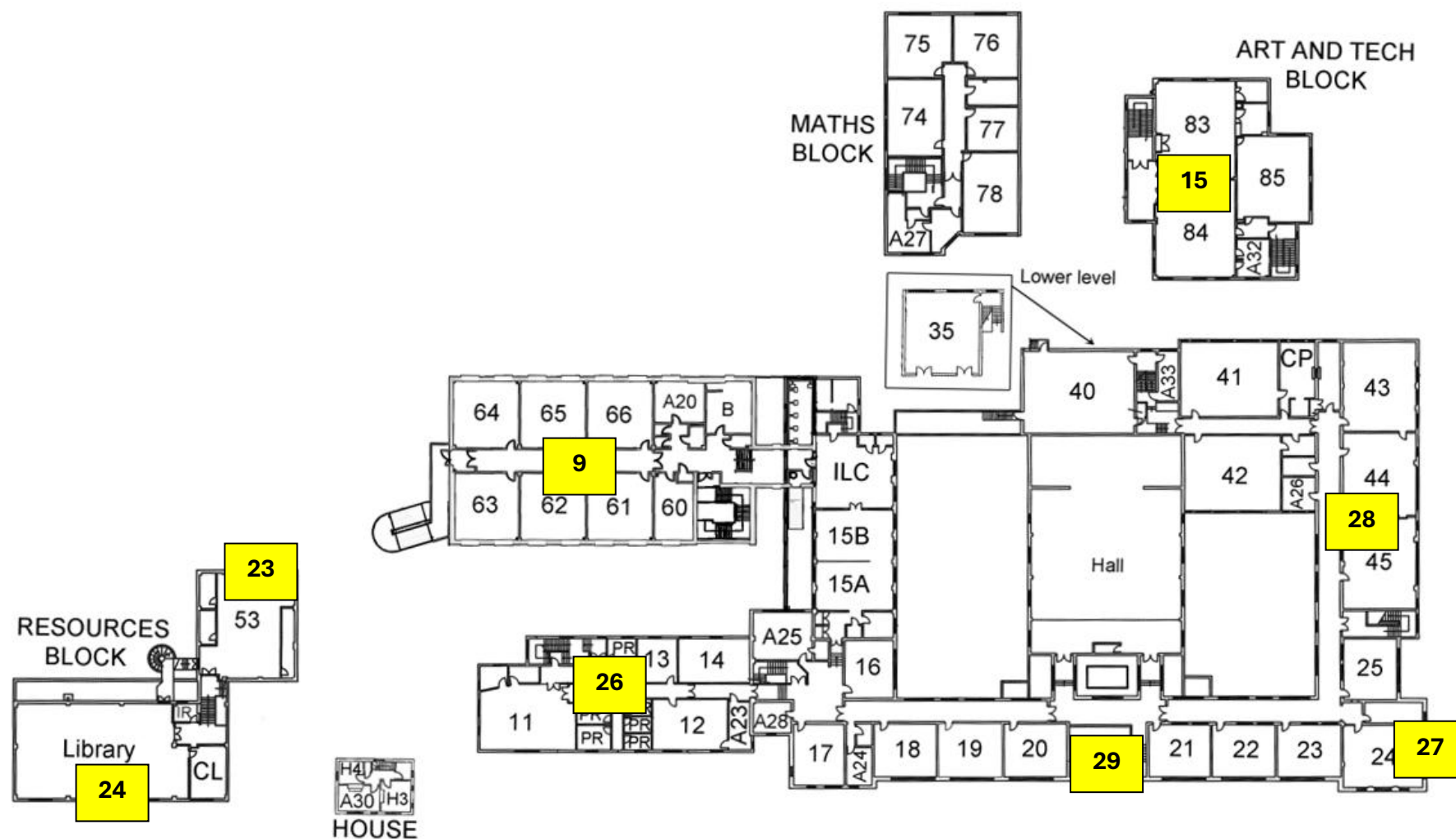
The main school site from above (2025)

What's in a name?

When the school opened in 1901, it was called “*Bournemouth Secondary and Technical School*”. The first headmaster, Dr Fenwick, first used the term “grammar” in relation to the school in 1902. Since 1902, the school has been simply “Bournemouth School”. The addition of “for Boys” (and the local use of “BSB”) only came about after the establishment of Bournemouth School for Girls (BSG) in 1918.

Officially, we have never been BSB!

Ground Floor



First Floor