

STEM event, for example, saw the return of old girl and Young Engineer of the Year Roma Agrawal – one of the structural engineers who worked on the Shard. What a role model.

## PUTNEY HIGH SCHOOL

35 PUTNEY HILL, SW15 6BH

Website [putneyhigh.gdst.net](http://putneyhigh.gdst.net)

Head Suzie Longstaff, BA, since 2014;

previously deputy head Pupils 656

day girls Faith Non-denom Ages 11–18

Term fees £5,803 Oxbridge 10%

Registration By November of year

before entry; £100 fee Admission

School's own exam and interview

Alumnae Sophie Raworth, Sophie

Kinsella, Jenny Beavan

**Prep:** Head Jo Wallace Pupils 320 day

girls Ages 4–11 Term fees £4,801

The fast pace at Putney High never

seems to flag. They raised the

opening-night curtain on their

spectacular performing-arts centre

(complete with swanky green room)

last year, and the new boathouse on

the Thames is getting lashings of use

(they're the only girls' school with

one on the Tideway). Head Suzie

Longstaff has climbed through the

ranks to take the top spot and has

ambitious plans for her young

women. Digital learning is at the

forefront: all girls from Years 4 to 13

have been given their own iPads,

coding has been introduced and

computing is now an option at

GCSE and A-level. Our researcher

was warmed by Putney's atmosphere – friendly and family-orientated (although no priority to siblings), with a new mindfulness programme keeping wellbeing up to snuff.

Results are punchy – 92 per cent A\*–B at A-level with the standout being English Lit, in which 82 per cent of girls got an A\*. And their writer-in-residence is clearly doing his job: two girls in the junior school have already published stories. The music is tremendous, and one sixth-former composed a fanfare for the Royal Opera House, which is now one of the school-bell rings (there are 16 different ring variations). When not bossing the academics or winning regattas, girls jet across the globe – skiing in Canada, Spanish trips to Costa Rica and, next up, a physics trip to NASA. They just don't stop.

## QUEEN'S COLLEGE

43–49 HARLEY STREET, W1G 8BT

Website [qcl.org.uk](http://qcl.org.uk) Head Dr Frances

Ramsey, DPhil, since 2009; previously

director of studies at Westminster

School Pupils 380 day girls Faith C of E

Ages 11–18 Term fees £5,900 Oxbridge

Occasional Registration By November

of year before entry; £100 fee

Admission North London Girls' School's

Consortium exam and interview

Alumnae Emma Freud, explorer

Gertrude Bell, Dame Hermione Lee

**Prep:** Head Annie Dempsey Pupils 217

day girls Ages 4–11 Term fees £5,500



Last year, Queen's College celebrated its best academic results ever, bagging a pleasing 83 per cent A\*–B at A-level. What a credit to head Dr Frances Ramsey, who's been quietly upping the academic ante while keeping the vibe relaxed and the school's famed creative ethos intact. It is set in a stretch of Harley Street townhouses, where you'll find the walls lined with student artwork (the department is absurdly good) and the former wine cellars packed with musical instruments. A recent production of Sondheim's *Into the Woods* was a stonking success and there are plenty of cultural jaunts to all those world-class museums, theatres and galleries jostling on their doorstep. When it comes to exercise, these girls don't let a lack of outside space stand in their way, nipping up to Regent's Park for a spot of netball and cross-country, and there's a sports tour to Sri Lanka planned for next year. Sixth-formers benefit from urban perks like pilates at the University of Westminster and lunchtime excursions to Topshop, and will have a plush new rooftop

common room next term. Lots of girls are the sisters of Westminster boys, so there's much fraternising betwixt the two, and QC's small class sizes make for chummy relationships with teachers. Our mole was struck by the quiet energy of the place – though the feminist society was, she noted, enthusiastically vocal.

## QUEEN'S GATE

133 QUEEN'S GATE, SW7 5LE

Website [queensgate.org.uk](http://queensgate.org.uk) Head

Rosalynd Kamaryc, MSc, since 2006;

previously headmistress of

Wykeham House School, Hampshire

Pupils 373 day girls Faith Non-denom

Ages 11–18 Term fees £6,300 Oxbridge 5%

Registration By November of year

before entry; £100 fee Admission

North London Girls' Schools'

Consortium exam, interview and

previous school's report Alumnae The

Duchess of Cornwall, Vanessa

Redgrave, Jennifer Saunders

**Prep:** Head Rosalynd Kamaryc Pupils

159 day girls Ages 4–11 Term fees £5,550

There's a boarding-school spirit at

this small but perfectly formed

Kensington school, where the doors

are kept open during the holidays for

girls to swot up in the library. Last

year, they notched up 80 per cent

A\*–B at A-level, and securing a place

here has become nail-biting – do

note that coming from the junior

school doesn't give you leverage.

There's no ducking the teacher's

eye at the back of the class when

numbers are kept this low,

particularly come the sixth form,

where lessons are more akin to

private tutoring. Mandarin is this

year's timetable newbie. Sport is

blossoming: the U16 netball team

have just enjoyed an unbeaten season

and there's a QG tennis academy at

nearby Queen's Club. Speaking of

royalty, the Duchess of Cornwall

returned to her old school in

February to cut the ribbon on the



Queen's College