revious study at GCSE but may require A grade

KINGSTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

FOUNDED 1561

Curriculum Options 2019

"The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent."

"The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent."

The findings of our recent Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection report pronounced the School 'excellent' - the top rating inspectors can use - in both pupils' achievement and their personal development.

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External applicants should obtain a general prospectus and an Admissions booklet from the Admissions Office by calling 020 8546 5875 or emailing registrar@kgs.org.uk.

WELCOME

Life in the Sixth Form at Kingston Grammar School is an exhilarating experience and an opportunity for lifelong success. You will be able to study subjects of your own choosing, starting four A Levels in the Lower Sixth with the aim of completing at least three to the highest possible standard by the end of the Upper Sixth. Whilst you will benefit from experienced and dedicated teaching, you will also find an increased emphasis on individual study. This gives you greater capacity to develop your own ideas and experience a more significant level of personal achievement.

This is especially true of the additional enrichment opportunity that you will undertake alongside your A Level courses. Whether this is an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) or an Open University online learning module, it will be up to you to decide what and how you study. Therefore, whilst you will be mentored throughout the process, whatever you achieve will be truly yours. Along with your A Level grades, this is what the best universities, colleges and future employers want to see from you.

You will also have the opportunity to take on new responsibilities and leadership roles, and to participate in our extensive programme of co-curricular activities, visits and conferences. Applying to become a Prefect at KGS is open to all and is a great honour. Equally, being involved in sport, art, drama, music, charity and community work, as well as a whole host of other opportunities, is crucial to your personal development.

The gap between GCSE and A Level can be significant for some students, and you will always be expected to work hard and to use your time wisely. There is plenty of support at hand, should you need it. When choosing your subjects, be sure to play to your strengths and ensure that you make the right choices to support the university course or career you think you may like to follow. Remember that evidence of how well you work in your first year will furnish important information for your university application, your reference and your predicted grades, so make sure you start the way you mean to go on. We shall expect high standards from you in work ethics, behaviour and appearance at all times, not least because the rest of the School will look to you, as role models, to set the standards they will follow.

At KGS we place great emphasis on aspiration, integrity and regard and expect all members of our community to contribute positively to our ethos. In doing so, we all aim to embody and exemplify our School motto: 'Work Well & Be Happy'. This applies to everyone at KGS and helps to engender very positive relationships between all students and between students and staff.

The Kingston Grammar School Sixth Form is both challenging and rewarding and those who will benefit most are those who are prepared to work hard and get involved. Our aim is to give you the tools and the necessary confidence to go beyond our walls and be the very best that you can be in whichever field you choose. In doing so, it is our wish that you employ your well-earned success to make our world, and our future, better.

Bene agere ac laetari.

Stephen Lehec
Head Master

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

In order to cope with the demands of an academically rigorous Sixth Form programme, students must have a sound base across all their GCSE or IGCSE subjects, and excel in those they wish to study at A Level or Pre-U. Prospective Sixth Form students, both internal and external, would be required to fulfil two criteria:

i) As a minimum, students must achieve at least Grade 7 (equivalent to A grade) in four separate subjects.

ii) In addition, all students must achieve a minimum Grade 6 (equivalent to the top half of a B grade) in Mathematics and English GCSE or IGCSE. Please also note that a minimum of Grade 7 is required in those subjects, or closely related subjects, that students wish to study for A Level or Pre-U with the exception of Mathematics where students will require a minimum Grade 8 at GCSE.

The subjects below do not require previous study at GCSE but may require a Grade 7 in certain related GCSE subjects in order to study them at A Level (this is at the discretion of the relevant Head of Department):

Subject at A Level	Related subject requirement
Classical Civilisation, Philosophy & Theology (Pre-U), Government & Politics	Grade 7 in an essay-based subject, preferably English Literature or History
Drama & Theatre Studies	Grade 7 in English Literature
Economics (Pre-U)	Grade 7 in Mathematics
Physical Education	Grade 7 in Biology
History, Geography (if not taken at GCSE)	Grade 7 in an essay-based subject, preferably English Literature
Psychology	Grade 7 in English Literature and a science-based subject

SIXTH FORM PHILOSOPHY

At Kingston Grammar School we are very proud of our provision for Sixth Form students: the detailed academic rigour of A Level and Pre-U study, complemented by our Academic Enrichment Programme, co-curricular activities and community service. The pursuit of curriculum subjects, alongside an enrichment option, affords our students the in-depth study and intellectual versatility which will serve them well in the future. In addition to this academic profile and an impressive range and variety of co-curricular activities, all of our students engage in some form of regular sporting activity, and are encouraged to take part in community service; this ensures that they have the opportunity to give back to society and enables a deeper understanding of social and economic issues. We aim to instil in all of our students the core values of regard, integrity and aspiration.

A co-educational environment in the Sixth Form is undoubtedly the best preparation for later life, both at university and beyond. The boy to girl ratio in the Sixth Form at KGS is currently just over 50% boys and all the tutor groups are mixed. The Lower Sixth cohort is enhanced by the fact that up to twenty-five keen and motivated external entrants join the Sixth Form each year. Sixth Form students enjoy dedicated facilities at KGS: the Sixth Form Study, with dedicated laptops, which is for their exclusive use and is designed for quiet collaborative study; and the Sixth Form café, Hawkes, where students can socialise and buy drinks and snacks. All students can also choose to work in the Library if they prefer to work in a silent environment.

We encourage students to express their opinions and work collaboratively with us. The Sixth Form Committee is where they are able to give their views and have a say in developments and changes within the School, particularly those concerning Sixth Form life. Impressive examination results will give students the best chance of gaining a place at a reputable university, and a good degree will help to secure a fulfilling career. In addition, we aim to cultivate the 'soft skills' which students will need to succeed after attaining a university place or job. Sixth Form students leave Kingston Grammar School as confident young people armed with independence, self-motivation, excellent communication skills, high aspirations and resilience.

The Sixth Form is an exciting stage in a student's education, and we hope that they will take advantage of the wide range of opportunities available at Kingston Grammar School. With the excellent balance our Sixth Form programme offers, we are confident that students will leave the School with impressive qualifications and skills, ready to foster positive relationships and be the best they can be.

Miss BA McDonald
Director of Sixth Form

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

For the first time in their school careers, students are able to really focus in on the subjects they love, and discontinue those which interest them less. Nevertheless, while they will have the opportunity to study their chosen subjects in depth, they must be prepared for the fact that the move into the Sixth Form is a significant step. Twenty-three subjects are available at A Level or Pre-U, and Kingston Grammar School enjoys a great deal of success in public examinations – the three-year rolling average A*-B pass rate is 86%, and the School is successful at placing students on Oxbridge courses. On average, over the last five years, around 10% of the cohort won places at Oxbridge, while others have gained places on highly competitive Medicine or Veterinary Medicine courses. In 2018, 90% of students gained entry to their first choice of university, career or apprenticeship.

At the start of the Lower Sixth, students will embark on four A Level subjects as well as timetabled academic enrichment. They will have eleven timetabled lessons over the two-week block, usually split between two teachers. Class sizes are small, and fifteen is usually the maximum number in a set.

In lessons, teachers will expect students to take increasing responsibility for their studies. They will guide students through the fundamentals of the course, and will set work to consolidate the knowledge gained and develop their understanding of it. We will not indulge in spoon-feeding, so students will need to be proactive! We will, of course, offer support and guidance as necessary, but the onus is on the student to shape their own learning.

The ability to work independently in the Sixth Form is a vital skill in preparation for the type of study and work which will be undertaken at university and, later, in a career. It is not sufficient to sit passively in class, waiting for information to be disseminated. We therefore expect the necessary commitment from Sixth Form students to invest time and effort into their academic work, demonstrating a sustained approach and intellectual curiosity. Students are expected to spend a minimum of four hours per week study time, outside of the timetabled lessons, on each of their A Level subjects, increasing to six hours per week for each subject in the Upper Sixth.

In addition to A Level subjects, for two lessons each fortnight all Lower Sixth students will take a course chosen from our Academic Enrichment Programme, which includes options such as the Extended Project Qualification (resulting in an additional AS qualification), Critical Thinking, NVQ in Leadership & Management and online courses offered by the Open University and MOOC providers. It is worth noting that some universities may take a good EPQ into account when making course offers. Those students predicted an A*, A or B grade for their EPQ may receive a more favourable offer alongside the standard offer. This is to recognise that the qualification helps to develop a broad range of independent study skills, thereby serving as excellent preparation for university study. All enrichment options are intended to engage our students in topical discussion and debate, to sharpen their skills in argument and research and to stretch their academic interests beyond the syllabus. Whichever course a student undertakes, the experience will stand them in good stead for their university application and is particularly useful for those who may face interviews. While A Levels do a good job at developing a sound knowledge base and confidence in a range of skills, our Academic Enrichment Programme helps develop originality, creativity, clarity of argument and analysis.

In the Summer term of the Lower Sixth, students will be asked to decide which three subjects they intend to continue into the Upper Sixth (typically four subjects for those studying Further Maths). These arrangements are different to the previous examination system, as all students now follow two-year linear A Level courses with all examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth, as opposed to a one-year AS combined with the second year A2 course. Nevertheless, the fourth discontinued subject is still highlighted on their UCAS application form, even though they will not have a formal qualification. Subjects will be taught over 12 lessons per fortnight in the Upper Sixth.

Many leading universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, are becoming increasingly prescriptive concerning the subject combinations which they prefer applicants to pursue at A Level. Therefore, if considering an application for a popular course at a competitive university, students should research and seek advice from our Higher Education and Careers staff to ensure that they have an appropriate profile. This should obviously be considered carefully when making any decision about continuing a fourth A Level subject.

In the Sixth Form, additional classes which are designed to take students beyond the requirements of the A Level curriculum are offered by many departments, and targeted preparation classes for Oxbridge applicants begin in the February of the Lower Sixth year and continue until the December of the Upper Sixth year. These provide stimulating and challenging material for those applying to Oxbridge or Russell Group universities, in preparation for university interviews.

The entries in this booklet outline all the subjects available at A Level and Pre-U. They are intended to answer many of the questions which help students decide which subjects they may wish to pursue in the Sixth Form. Nevertheless, if you have any further questions then please contact either Miss McDonald (Director of Sixth Form) or Mr Cooper (Deputy Head - Academic).

PASTORAL CARE

Our strong and enviable pastoral system is central to the success of our students at Kingston Grammar School. Tutorial groups usually have up to fifteen students, who have at least one subject in common. Tutors will meet with their tutees every morning, and deal with the majority of the day-to-day administration and provide directed pastoral care and teaching. This daily contact with a Form Tutor and fellow students provides the solid foundation upon which the success of Sixth Form education rests. Tutors will remain with their tutor group throughout the two years of the Sixth Form, and will therefore develop a very close rapport with their tutees. This is crucial, since it is the tutor who will write the basis of the UCAS reference when students apply to university. Help is always on hand if needed from specialist staff, together with careers advice and guidance in the selection of university courses.

New entrants to the School are divided between all of the tutorial groups, ensuring that they are integrated quickly and with ease into the Sixth Form. All new entrants are allocated a Lower Sixth buddy and an Upper Sixth mentor and have a dedicated Assistant Head of Year to look after them.

Transition into the Sixth Form can be a challenging time, and there is plenty of advice and guidance available for students. The Sixth Form team comprises the Director of Sixth Form and the Heads of Upper Sixth and Lower Sixth as well as an Assistant Head of Year, all of whom are available to see students either by appointment or on a walk-in basis. The Sixth Form Secretary is in the Sixth Form office to help with day-to-day queries and to give advice about procedures.

The Sixth Form constitutes the beginning of the transition between school and later life, when students will have to be independent, confident, and sensitive to the expectations of others. Sixth Form students at KGS are role models for the rest of the School, and therefore are expected to be respectful in their demeanour and positive and diligent in their attitude. They will enjoy a relaxation of the uniform rules, yet we do expect them to be smartly presented in office attire and punctual at all times. The uniform guidelines can be found later in this booklet.

The House system is very strong at KGS. All students are divided between the five houses which are: Lovekyn, Queen's, Taverner, Walworth and Stanley. Students of all age groups compete together in a variety of activities, including sport, debating, dance and drama. Sixth Form students often enjoy leading and organising these events and are a credit to the School when they do so.

At Kingston Grammar School, we set great store by parental support and communication. To support the Sixth Form students fully, we ask parents to ensure attendance and punctuality; to contact us in case of illness, absence or any pastoral concerns; to ensure appropriate attire, according to the Sixth Form dress code; to take a keen interest in academic progress; to attend the parents' evenings; and to encourage wholehearted commitment to and participation in the wider life of the School.

Our strong programme of PSHE education continues into the Sixth Form, through form time for our Lower Sixth students and in a dedicated lesson once a fortnight for our Upper Sixth. We focus on three key areas in both years: Being an Independent, Respectful Citizen; Preparing for Life After School; and Keeping Socially and Academically Healthy. This programme is supplemented by a series of lectures designed to widen their horizons beyond the curriculum. We want to ensure that our students leave KGS not only with excellent academic results but also with an idea of how to cope in the world outside.

BEYOND THE CURRICULUM

Although public examination results are important for the future, students will leave Kingston Grammar School with far more than just good A Level and Pre-U qualifications.

KGS is deservedly proud of its strong reputation for sporting prowess, particularly in the fields of hockey and rowing, but there is a long list of diverse sports and activities, both team and individual, from which students can choose for their Games option on a Wednesday afternoon. Competitive options include hockey, rowing, football, netball, cricket, golf and tennis, whilst the more recreational options include conditioning, cross-country running, studio cycling, real tennis, squash, shooting, watersports and Zumba. For all our competitive sports, an extensive programme of training and fixtures, both friendly and cup, provides the highest level of opportunity for the most able athletes to fulfil their full potential.

KGS has an outstanding reputation for Drama, and is very fortunate to have the facilities of the Michael Frayn Theatre. Sixth Form students can audition for the annual Senior Production, with recent productions having included 'Nell Gwynn', 'Romeo and Juliet', and 'Earthquakes in London'. There is also a Sixth Form Drama Festival where students can showcase their writing, directing, performing and design work. Senior technicians have the opportunity to design and stage manage a range of events and productions throughout the year. We also run House Drama and House Dance competitions where Sixth Formers direct and choreograph younger students. For those that enjoy the theatre, KGS is a venue for National Theatre Live, and students can enjoy West End productions from the comfort of the Michael Frayn Theatre.

The Music Department at KGS is a vibrant and exciting place to be, and our Sixth Form students are involved in a huge variety of co-curricular groups. All senior groups, which include the Symphony Orchestra, School and Chamber Choirs, Girls' Close Harmony, Recording Club and several smaller ensembles, are open to Sixth Form students, and many participate in our regular tours abroad, which have included Rome, Salzburg, Venice and Rust in Germany in the past few years. Sixth Form students also take on a leading role in our annual House Music competition, where they frequently demonstrate excellent conducting and directing skills. There are also opportunities to lead ensembles throughout the year, and interested Sixth Form students are always welcome.

Community Service is an important part of Sixth Form life at KGS and a large number of students choose to volunteer in the local area. We have links with more than a dozen projects including Mencap, Inspire, King Athelstan and St Joseph's Primary Schools, Joel Community Project, Elmbridge Community Link, Kingston Museum, Wingham Court Care Home and Bedelsford School. The local organisations where our students volunteer support a wide range of people and causes, including working with disabled adults and young people, promoting cultural activities and sports, and engaging with elderly people and primary school students. Our students volunteer after school, at the weekend or during their free periods, and are inspired by the people with whom they work and are challenged by the situations they encounter. Many Sixth Formers also volunteer for school-based roles, such as mentoring students in the lower years, or helping to run other co-curricular activities. Although the School already offers a wide range of activities, staff are also willing to help students find other projects if we are unable to meet their needs. Similarly, students are informed about volunteering activities that they can take part in during the summer holidays if they feel unable to make a regular commitment during term time. Volunteering can change lives and make a real difference to individuals and communities whose experiences of life and work differ dramatically from our own. Making time for others through our Community Service Programme can be tremendously rewarding, giving students valuable life experiences and the opportunity to experience first hand the satisfaction that comes through giving up time to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

The Young Enterprise Company Programme offers Lower Sixth Form students the incredible opportunity to start their own company from scratch. Teams from schools around the country compete to create the most innovative and profitable start-up. In recent years KGS Young Enterprise companies have sought to tackle growing social issues by developing products which have aimed to reduce food waste and raise awareness of the benefits of mindfulness for young people. As part of the Young Enterprise competition, each team must raise capital, elect managers, decide on a product or service which they would like to market, and then advertise and sell their innovation to friends, family and members of the general public at top trading locations across London such as Spitalfields Market. This demanding process gives students the chance to develop skills in a number of areas through real-life situations: communication; team work; business-based problem solving; financial management; marketing; logistics; and organisation.

We are very fortunate to have a very successful Combined Cadet Force here at KGS and one that is steeped in history. It offers challenging and enjoyable activities for our students to better prepare them for their role in society. The CCF focuses on developing vital life skills such as the qualities of leadership, self-reliance, confidence and initiative by offering

structured military-based training in a variety of areas only open to a member of the cadet forces. The CCF meets on a Friday afternoon and is split into an Army and an RAF section.

Many Sixth Form students take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award Scheme - approximately a third of the current Lower Sixth have enrolled - and each year some Sixth Form students achieve their Gold Award before they leave school, which is no mean feat.

Every two years, there is a Sixth Form Expedition, encompassing challenge, culture and community service in an overseas destination. There is always keen competition for places and recent destinations have included Ecuador, Tanzania, Peru and Vietnam, with Ladakh in the Indian Himalayas the destination for July 2018.

Students will attend a fortnightly lecture on such diverse topics as animal research, restorative justice, mental health, online safety, student finance, body image, organ donation, drugs and sexual health. In the past our speakers have included: John Meredith from Understanding Animal Research who debated with students the human cost of banning animal research; an honorary lecturer in Neuroscience at the University of Nottingham discussing whether there is a criminal brain; Dr Jane Brake looking at modern-day slavery and human trafficking and a former KGS student who spoke about coping with mental health issues while at university.

Towards the end of the Lower Sixth, students will also be involved in our John Lewis sponsored 'Dragons' Den' event. The year group is split into ten teams of approximately 10-12 students each and the aim of the event is for each team to come up with a business case for a product or service that could be sold in John Lewis. Each team is allocated a business adviser to help them over the two days and on the second day each team presents their business case to a panel of four Dragons (comprising John Lewis senior executives and KGS Governors) and the rest of the year group, competing for the Best Product and Best Presentation prizes. In addition to being fun and competitive, the event helps students gain and develop key life skills such as innovation, initiative, teamwork, leadership, communication and organisation.

Our Director of Careers & Universities is very happy to help Sixth Form students find productive work experience and he has a huge number of contacts in a variety of fields and hosts a number of specialised careers events with many involving Old Kingstonians throughout the year. In 2018–19, in addition to our annual Careers Evening in January, we are planning to offer a themed Careers Dinner in November, a Careers in Engineering and IT Seminar in February and a KGS Friends Connect event in March, events that will offer students the opportunity to meet with alumni from a diverse range of career backgrounds.

There are many opportunities in the Sixth Form to gain valuable leadership experience. There are approximately thirty School Prefects elected each year, but others can take on the responsibility in a variety of areas, such as House events, in the CCF, or mentoring junior classes or tutor groups.

Responsibility is both its own reward and a challenge. The onus, therefore, is on the students to manage their time, both in and out of the classroom, in order to engage fully with the opportunities on offer over the two years in the Sixth Form.

EXTERNAL APPLICANTS

All prospective external entrants to the Sixth Form at KGS are required to sit an assessment in their chosen A Level subjects. Those who perform well will be invited back for specific subject interviews. We offer places to successful applicants dependent on the entry requirements mentioned on page 6.

Our entry timeline is as follows:

Stage	Date	Time
Open Evening	Monday 8th October 2018	7-9pm (Booking required)
First closing date for registration*	Friday 29th October 2018	Midday
First pre-assessment session*	Thursday 8th November 2018	Afternoon
First interview afternoon*	Thursday 15th November 2018	Afternoon
Second closing date for registration	Friday 15th February 2019	Midday
Second pre-assessment session	Friday 8th March 2019	Afternoon
Second interview afternoon	Wednesday 15th March 2019	Afternoon
Resits only: Third pre-assessment session	Friday 3rd May 2019	Afternoon
Resits only: Third interview afternoon	Wednesday 15th May 2019	Afternoon

*Compulsory for those who wish to apply for fee assistance or a scholarship. Scholarship Awards will normally be awaded in the Autumn term after the first assessment session. For further information on fee assistance and scholarships, please read our separate information booklet – Fee Assistance & Scholarships 2019

- If you are unsuccessful in one subject at the examination stage, you can choose an alternative subject to be examined in at the following pre-assessment session.
- If you are unsuccessful in two or more subjects at the examination stage, your application will not be taken further. On GCSE results day, however, if you meet the required pre-requisites to join our Sixth Form then please contact us and we can discuss your application further.

Scholarships available are: Academic, Art, Design & Technology, Drama, Music, and Sport. More information can be found on page 16.

SIXTH FORM DRESS CODE

The key to Sixth Form dress at Kingston Grammar School is a smart, tailored, business-like appearance

- Trousers or skirt with a jacket, or a smart dress that covers the shoulders with or without a jacket
- Dresses and skirts should not be stretchy or tight, and should be worn on or close to the knee
- Trousers must be of a standard tailored fit, from waist to ankle, and not, for example, low slung or tight fitting
- Jackets, skirts, trousers and dresses can be dark blue, black or grey in colour, worn as a suit or combination
- Shirts and blouses should be collared, smart and of a plain colour but may have a subtle pattern e.g. check or stripe. Shirts are worn with a School Sixth Form tie
- Polished shoes or ankle boots in black, dark blue, dark grey or dark brown with dark socks or tights as appropriate. Ankle socks, but not trainer or slipper socks, may be worn in warm weather instead of tights
- Students may wear a plain, fine knit, smart jumper or cardigan, or a waistcoat with no logos or patterns but only under a jacket. The exception is that a smart, fine knit cardigan may be worn over a dress without the need for a jacket
- Make-up should be discreet; jewellery limited to a watch, a simple necklace/bracelet and simple, subtle ear piercings e.g. no more than two in each ear and no hoops
- Hairstyles should be natural looking not extreme, long hair should be kept off the face, and tied back in practical lessons. Facial hair, if worn, should be kept short, neat and trimmed

For the avoidance of doubt, items such as, but not limited to, the following are not permitted:

- Canvas, camouflage or denim items of clothing
- See-through blouses/shirts
- Sweatshirts, hoodies, t-shirts or any form of sportswear (except for Games, PE & fixtures)
- Stretchy and/or short skirts/dresses
- Any form of casual shoe or trainer, and trainer/slipper socks
- Torn, ripped or dirty clothing
- Facial jewellery/piercings and visible tattoos

SIXTH FORM SCHOLARSHIPS

Fee assistance

Internal and external candidates are required to download a fee assistance pack from our website (www.kgs.org.uk/admissions/fee-assistance). For external candidates the deadline for submission to the Admissions Office is Monday 29th October 2018; for internal candidates it is Monday 3rd December 2018. Any external applicants wishing to apply for fee assistance must attend the first assessment session.

Academic Scholarships

Academic Scholarships are awarded for the duration of the two-year A Level course. The amount awarded ranges in value from 10% upwards. Retention of the award will depend upon a student maintaining the required level of academic progress and demonstrating a commitment to their studies. Both current KGS students and external applicants can be considered for an Academic Scholarship.

Internal candidates

At the start of the Fifth Year, students will be invited to apply for an Academic Scholarship. This initial selection process will be based on a student's academic performance to date, and will take account of internal examination results as well as other reporting data. Students will also be asked to submit details of their individual academic interests and achievements. Application forms are available online via Firefly.

Applications should be submitted to Mr Cooper via Miss Creasey (bcreasey@kgs.org.uk) by 12pm on Friday 12th October 2018. All applicants will be invited to attend an interview in the second part of the Autumn term and the awards will be confirmed by the end of the Autumn term 2018.

If current Academic Scholars wish to be considered for an increase in their scholarship, they will need to submit an application. It is not necessary for them to reapply if they wish their scholarship to stay the same in the Sixth Form.

All students are strongly advised to speak to their Head of Year before completing an application form.

External candidates

Candidates who perform well in their Sixth Form entry papers will be invited to attend subject-based interviews. Those candidates who excel in both the written paper and interviews, and who also have the highest quality predicted grades and references, will subsequently be invited to a scholarship interview.

Art, Design & Technology, Drama, Music and Sport Scholarships

Both current KGS students and external applicants can be considered for any of these scholarships.

Internal candidates

Any student wishing to apply for a scholarship must speak to the relevant Head of Department before submitting an application, and may be required to take part in a practical test or audition. Application forms are available online via Firefly.

Applications should be submitted by 12pm on Friday 12th October 2018. Assessments, auditions and interviews will take place in the second part of the Autumn term and the awards will be confirmed by the end of the Autumn term 2018.

External candidates

External candidates of exceptional sporting, musical or artistic ability may apply for one of our Art, Design & Technology, Drama, Music or Sport Scholarships. External candidates are required to download and complete a registration form from our website: www.kgs.org.uk/admissions/scholarships. The completed application form must be returned to the Admissions Office by midday on Monday 29th October 2018.

In all matters relating to the scholarship process, the Head Master's decision is final.

CHOOSING YOUR A LEVELS

When deciding upon your choice of A Levels you must try to balance five important factors:

- What you enjoy
- Your own abilities, aptitudes and skills
- Your academic interests
- The subjects available
- The breadth of higher education and career choices these will support

The key questions to ask yourself are "Am I good at these subjects?" and, perhaps more importantly, "Am I really interested in them?" You must look realistically at your strengths and weaknesses, and match these to your interests. A Level work is demanding and is unlikely to be sustained in a subject which you do not enjoy. Give serious consideration also to those subjects you have not studied before. Assessing your own abilities and interests is not an easy thing to do, and you are urged to seek advice on your suitability for A Level work from your subject teachers and tutors. An uncommitted student will gain little from two years in the Sixth Form.

It is particularly important to research further into your proposed subjects, and investigate career prospects and the implications of different combinations. In this way, you can more easily begin to identify and define just what it is you want and expect from your proposed studies. You should also include in your research the increasing number of Apprenticeship and Degree Apprenticeship routes that are becoming available as well as traditional higher education courses. Try to balance your academic abilities and interests with your plans for the future. Those of you who have little idea of likely future careers should aim to keep your options open by a wise choice of A Levels. Consult subject and careers staff. In choosing each of your subjects, bear in mind that you must satisfy the School that your performance so far in this and/or related subjects justifies your continuation to A Level work in that department.

In general, there is more flexibility on the Arts side because very few courses have a strong vocational element. It is important to note that many degree courses and careers accept students who have studied any combination of subjects at A Level, as long as they have shown reasonable success in doing so. Good qualifications in, for example, Classics or English or History or Modern Languages indicate an able, flexible, disciplined and thoughtful mind. Most employers are more concerned with the level of achievement and with personal qualities than with particular subjects. Degree courses now being studied by recent Sixth Formers include Archaeology, European Studies, Law, Oriental Languages, Philosophy and Social Studies. Courses in Theology, Art and Design, Politics and Business Studies are open to all.

A Level selection on the Science side must be the result of informed consideration. It is worth noting too that many of the non-scientific professions also accept students with Science A Levels. If you are considering entering a scientific or technical career, you should choose at least two, but preferably three, subjects from the Sciences and Mathematics. This will give you a much greater choice of Science careers and courses at the end of the two years.

For those with specific career plans, the choice will be more straightforward. The resources of the Careers & Universities Department can provide information about A Level requirements and indicate career areas open to students with particular combinations. Take full advantage of this, and research relevant course and institutions in advance.

In recent years, Law, Medicine and Engineering have been three of the most popular areas of study. Medicine is highly competitive: you need to achieve at least AAA at A Level. If you are unlikely to reach this standard, you must consider keeping other options open as far as possible. A combination including Chemistry and Biology will meet the requirements of all courses in Medicine. Courses in Law also continue to be very popular. There are few restrictions on A Level choices for Law but traditional academic subjects are preferred and it is advisable that at least one is a humanities-based subject. Applicants who also have Mathematics and Science are well regarded. For Engineering, Mathematics and Physics are essential; a wide range of third or fourth A Level subjects are acceptable, depending partly on which branch of Engineering is preferred. Mathematics and Physics with a Modern Language is a useful and increasingly popular combination, though Design and Technology is also a well-regarded complement to Mathematics and Physics.

If, towards the end of your A Level course, you come to realise that your subjects are not suited to your higher education plans, all is not lost. Some allowances are made for this. Courses may, in some cases, be lengthened by a year to admit candidates who have not taken appropriate A Levels. For example, many languages may be started from scratch, and some universities have a four-year course in Engineering which incorporates a preliminary year for those without A Level Mathematics or Physics.

In the end you should aim to match your interests, abilities and needs to the most suitable combination of A Levels. As far as possible, you must be aware of your motives as well as your academic prospects, and the balance of criteria for choosing your A Levels will vary from one person to another. Well-prepared students who have investigated the subjects they have chosen to study and their possible influence on their future are, however, likely to be happy and successful A Level candidates.

Exam Board : OCR

ANCIENT HISTORY & CIVILISATION

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Why choose Ancient History & Civilisation A Level?

Any student who enjoyed and was successful at English and History GCSE will like the variety and scope of Ancient History & Civilisation A Level. It concentrates on exploring the world of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, which has had such an influence on Western culture, and it's all in English!

Ancient History & Civilisation involves the study of some of the greatest works of art and literature. Students will read about Achilles, Agamemnon and the Trojan War; explore the politics of the Roman Republic featuring the likes of Caesar, Cato and Cicero; and consider how the Greeks presented their myths and history in some of the world's greatest vases and sculpture.

How is the course assessed?

The course is divided into three sections: The World of the Hero (40%), Culture and the Arts (30%), and Beliefs and Ideas (30%). Each has its own exam paper featuring a mixture of factual questions on literary or material sources, longer commentary questions and essay questions. The skills needed for commentary questions are the same as those for English texts at GCSE, but they must now be tailored to the A Level requirements.

1. World of the Hero

We study two of the most influential authors from the classical world in English: Homer's Iliad Books 1, 3-4, 6, 9-10, 16-19, 22-24, and Virgil's Aeneid Books 1-2, 4 and 6-12. The Iliad (think Troy but with meddling gods and goddesses) tells the story of the last year of the Trojan War, with the set books focussing on the great rivalry between the heroes Hector and Achilles. The Aeneid tells the story of the Trojan hero Aeneas who went on to found a new race in Rome. Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton and many more were inspired by this great epic. Students sit an exam of 2 hours 20 minutes in this module.

2. Culture and the Arts - Greek Art

Here students investigate what it is that makes Greek art so appealing and enduring. We study a selection of Greek sculpture exploring the development of the art form from the early, block-like kouroi through the consideration of human proportions to the apparent 'perfection' of figures from the 4th century BC, including the controversial first female nude. This part of the course also looks at Greek vase-painting, where the beauty of Art meets the practicality of History as painters experiment with different techniques and adapt their depictions of mythical adventures to scenes of everyday life

3. Ideas and Beliefs - Politics of the Roman Republic

This module explores the political scene during the Roman Republic. Students consider the implications of personal relationships between the likes of Caesar, Cicero and Pompey, and the scandals which rock the Roman world at a time of massive upheaval. Through a combination of Cicero's letters and political and legal speeches, students explore the politics of Republican Rome and how they sought to retain their values, traditions, and most importantly, power, in a period of utter turmoil whilst trying to avoid the ultimate disaster: Civil War.

Useful attributes

You do not have to have taken a classical subject at GCSE to do Ancient History & Civilisation at A Level. You will need the same skills of evaluation and analysis which you have developed in English and subjects such as History or Religion & Philosophy. An inquisitive and open mind and an enjoyment of reading are essential.

Personal development

Because of its great breadth, and with its overview of human thought and development, Ancient History & Civilisation constitutes the single best preparation in a general sense for almost any of life's available pursuits! Classicists develop the ability to think logically, to compile and evaluate evidence, and to express themselves clearly and succinctly. Practice in analysing sources, both literary and material, helps to develop critical thinking and problemsolving skills. Exposure to cultures which are similar, and at the same time, very different to our own encourages empathy and an appreciation of the wider world in which we live today.

Future directions

From pots to plays, Plato to Pausanias – the range of areas Classicists study is exhilarating, offering a great base from which to branch out, alongside a grounding in an inherently fascinating area with excellent travel opportunities. Classicists make their way into careers as diverse as computing, the Civil Service, politics, journalism, law, accountancy, teaching, public relations and advertising. Even the odd neuroscientist or Nobel Prize-winning Physicist started out with a Classics degree!

Exam Board : AQA

ART

Mr JA Dyson • Head of Art • jdyson@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Art A Level?

If you have a flair for Art and Design and a passion for drawing, painting and being creative, A Level Art could be for you. Be clear: there is a terrific amount of work involved and it can be extremely time consuming, but the ultimate rewards are most certainly worth the hard work.

How is the course assessed?

The A Level qualification is awarded on the basis of two components. The first of these is a Personal Investigation, which gives you the opportunity to explore themes that are of particular interest to you in practical ways and will include a written piece of about 3000 words. Component Two is also a practical unit that may include processes such as drawing, painting, ceramics and photography based on one of several themes offered by the exam board and which culminates in a 15-hour practical exam.

Exam Board : AQA

A successful A Level Art student will be hard-working, independently minded, and keen to work tenaciously on ideas to find the best visual solutions. It is an expectation that A Level Art students regularly visit art exhibitions (including taking advantage of the many KGS Art Society gallery visits organised by the School), make notes on shows they have seen and take time to read reviews of current exhibitions and about art history more generally. All these activities serve to equip the successful A Level Art student with the inspiration, knowledge and vocabulary to produce the in-depth project work needed to receive top grades.

Personal development

During the course you will have the opportunity to learn various techniques beyond simply drawing and painting, such as photography, etching, screen-printing or even film-making, if that is of interest to you. We also run a regular programme of gallery visits via the KGS Art Society and aim to organise at least one residential trip to a major cultural centre during the two-year course. An A Level course in Art and Design is likely to be an emotional roller-coaster. There will be times when your work is going well and there is no stopping you. Equally, you will have periods where your confidence seems to have evaporated and the constructive criticism offered by your teachers might be hard to take. Expressing ideas and feelings through Art can be a challenging and revealing process, but one which is, ultimately, highly rewarding.

Future directions

Following A Level Art, many students carry on to art schools to take Art & Design Foundation courses, which in turn lead on to undergraduate studies in anything from Graphic Design and Film & Photography to Fine Art Painting and History of Art. Some students move directly onto Architecture courses and find that the Art portfolio developed during the course is an essential part of the application process.

Exam Board : AQA

BIOLOGY

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Why choose Biology A Level?

Every single one of us is an example of the wonders of Biology. There is not one aspect of your life in which Biology does not play a part and to understand the subject is to understand oneself at the most basic level. There is always some part of Biology that has a direct influence on each of our lives.

A Level Biology helps to foster and develop transferable problem-solving, analytical and evaluative skills that are so highly regarded by university admissions tutors and employers alike. It provides you with an opportunity to stretch yourself and to open your mind to a greater understanding of how every living thing around us comes to exist and interact with its environment.

How is the course assessed?

A Level Biology investigates many of the topic areas covered at GCSE but in far greater depth. It also introduces you to areas of Biology that you will not have experienced before. Some of the topics covered include biochemistry, cell biology, immunology, human physiology, epidemiology, ecology, neurobiology and genetics. There is also a Lower Sixth Form Biology field trip to the Dorset coast in June each year.

All A Level exams will take place at the end of the Upper Sixth year and there is no longer any coursework or practical examination component. Instead, students will complete a number of required practical assessments (six in the Lower Sixth and six in the Upper Sixth) which will be assessed on a pass/fail basis by classroom teachers. This endorsement of practical skills will be separate to the A Level award.

Our teaching and learning seeks to expose students to as many elements of Biology as possible. Biology is a practical subject and, as such, students spend a considerable amount of lesson time learning through first-hand experience and experimentation. A Level Biology is a 'hands on' learning adventure that addresses many of the questions you've always wanted to know the answers to. Students are encouraged to synthesise plausible explanations for some of life's more puzzling questions such as:

- How exactly does the human heart keep beating for up to 3 billion times in a lifetime?
- Why do I always seem to catch a cold every winter?
- How on earth can humans share 98% of their genes with apes?
- How can whales stay under water for so long?
- Why do some people not like Brussels sprouts?

You will be expected to work hard, to work independently, to write essays, to calculate and interpret statistics, to formulate your own ideas, to challenge accepted thought and achieve to the best of your ability. Biology is a difficult A Level subject (ranked second only to Physics in a study published by Durham University in 2008) and should never be considered the easy science...just the exciting one!

Useful attributes

Hard-working, diligent students thrive at A Level Biology. An enquiring mind and the ability to link ideas together is necessary to achieve the highest grades as well as regularly reading additional materials such as the Biological Sciences Review, New Scientist, Nature and the BMJ. A sound knowledge and understanding of all the topics covered at GCSE is important to fully access the course content at A Level.

Personal development

Students must learn to be self-reliant and be willing to take the initiative when studying A Level Biology. Literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills will all develop through the study of Biology at this level and a significant emphasis on independent learning will prepare students effectively for the demands of university education. The Biology Department runs a biomedical extension class that seeks to broaden the experience of Biology beyond the syllabus and to consider some of the current ideas in the field. Anyone with ambitions of studying Biology or Biology-related subjects beyond school should attend regularly.

Future directions

Biology ties in well with many other subjects, the obvious ones being Chemistry, Physics, Psychology and Geography as well as Mathematics and Sports Studies - but Biology can also fit well with contrasting subjects such as Philosophy & Ethics. Our subject opens up many different avenues for future study and careers. Doctors, dentists, nurses, dieticians, sports coaches, research scientists, teachers, oceanographers, pharmacologists, geneticists and conservationists all have an educational background in Biology.

Exam Board : Edexcel

CHEMISTRY

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Why choose Chemistry A Level?

Chemistry is the science of substances – their behaviour, their properties and their transformations. It is the central scientific discipline, applying physical laws to explain the diverse properties of materials and unlocking the secrets of life in the molecular workings of the cell. Studying Chemistry will give you a deeper understanding of the natural world and open the door to further study of a range of traditional pure subjects as well as many newly emerging interdisciplinary fields.

How is the course assessed?

The assessment for Edexcel A Level Chemistry comprises three written papers taken at the end of the Upper Sixth year. Paper One is based around inorganic and physical chemistry, whilst Paper Two is based around organic and physical chemistry. Paper Three is fully synoptic and may include questions from all parts of the course, but it will additionally

contain questions that focus on conceptual and theoretical understanding of experimental methods. Papers One and Two are both 105 minutes (90 marks), each representing 30% of the overall qualification. Paper Three is 150 minutes (120 marks), worth 40% of the total qualification. Across the three papers 20% of the marks will depend upon the use of mathematics of GCSE or higher standard.

There is no coursework or practical examination but students will be required to complete 16 core practicals. These provide opportunities to demonstrate competency in 12 skill areas, which will be required to pass the practical competency component of the qualification. This will not form part of the grading process but will be reported independently as pass/fail alongside the grade. Completion of the core practicals is essential for the course and any students who are absent when these are carried out will need to attend in their own time to complete them. Universities are expected to make passing the practical component a requirement for admissions.

Useful attributes

Successful chemists typically show curiosity about the natural world and a desire to understand how substances behave and why they exhibit their properties. They often appreciate the intellectual challenge of puzzles and enjoy solving problems. Whilst A Level Mathematics is no longer a requirement for the successful study of Chemistry, strong mathematical proficiency is a significant advantage, and advanced mathematics is essential for a serious study of any scientific discipline at university level.

Personal development

A Level Chemistry develops students' understanding of the physical world and begins to explain physical phenomena, rather than merely describing them. Students also gain knowledge of the behaviour of a wider range of substances and become proficient in analysing problems, applying theoretical principles to new situations and encouraging independence of thought. Practical work enhances proficiency in the use of scientific apparatus, as well as the ability to observe and record data accurately and concisely.

Future directions

A Chemistry degree offers a wealth of opportunities in academia or industrial research, both in Chemistry and in allied disciplines, such as Biochemistry, Materials Science and Nanotechnology. Chemistry graduates are in high demand in the financial sector because of their numerical and analytical skills. The 2012/13 HECSU survey found that 86.3% of 2012 Chemistry graduates were in employment or undertaking further study six months after graduating (slightly higher than the other pure sciences).

Researchers holding a Master's or doctoral degree in the physical sciences typically earn in the region of £25-35k, with higher salaries in more senior positions. A recent survey for the Institution of Chemical Engineers put graduate starting salaries in the region of £29,500, and median salaries for chartered chemical engineers are around £70k. [Source: www.prospects.ac.uk]

Chemistry is also a fundamental requirement for the study of medical, biochemical, pharmaceutical and pharmacological degrees as well as being an excellent support for the further study of Biology, Physics and Geology.

Exam Board : Edexcel

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Mr D Farr • Head of Design and Technology • dfarr@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Design & Technology A Level?

Problem solvers wanted! A Level Design & Technology allows you to develop practical skills and demonstrate creative thinking. It seeks to widen your knowledge and understanding of the designed world that we all live in. You will have the opportunity to create new ideas and develop your design and technology capability.

How is the course assessed?

In the Lower Sixth, you will develop your knowledge and skills with two distinct practical projects. There are also theory topics that will be assessed in the Upper Sixth examination. There are two assessed units in the Upper Sixth.

Exam Board : Edexcel

Component One

This is an externally assessed examination which lasts two hours and 30 minutes and is worth 50% of the qualification. It includes topics such as: Materials and Properties, Manufacturing Processes and Techniques, Digital Technologies, Industrial Manufacturing, Environmental and Sustainable Issues in Design, Legislation and Laws, Information Handling and Modelling.

Component Two

This is a coursework project which is also worth 50% of the qualification. You will have the opportunity to design and make a substantial product of your choice. You should adopt a commercial design approach to your work and include the views of a client or user groups into the decision making at various stages of the design and build process.

Useful attributes

A keen interest and passion for design is essential, and you should study the works of iconic designers such as Dieter Rams, Jonathan Ives or James Dyson. An investigative nature of everyday objects will help you to develop your perceptive analysis skills. A visit to the New Designers exhibition each summer is a 'must do' as a date in the calendar.

Personal development

It is helpful, but not essential, for you to have studied GCSE Design and Technology before starting the course. Mathematics, Science and Art all support this subject and should be considered when selecting options.

Future directions

There are numerous degree courses and careers associated with Design and Technology such as Product Design, Engineering, Automotive Design, Interior Design, Graphic Design, Architecture, Furniture Design, Jewellery and Ceramics. A career in Design can be rewarding and extremely fulfilling.

"Design and Technology is a great subject. I chose it because it allows you to be creative, innovative and develop your practical skills. It helps prepare you for higher education and career choices in subjects such as Engineering and Design. You gain a wide range of new skills, experiences and develop your design into a practical solution."

Exam Board : Edexcel

DRAMA & THEATRE

Mr R Gee • Director of Drama • rgee@kgs.org.uk (Maternity cover 2018-2019)
Miss S Boulton • Director of Drama • sboulton@kgs.org.uk (Maternity leave 2018-2019)

Why choose Drama & Theatre A Level?

Combining coursework assessment and final examination, Drama & Theatre A Level aims to develop your knowledge and understanding of text, performance and practitioner. It offers a range of opportunities to develop performance skills through participation in devised and text-based performance work. In addition, you will become skilled at textual analysis, directing for the stage, and responding to live theatre. This course is active, creative and dynamic. Contemporary texts and current theatre practice form the basis of study.

How is the course assessed?

Exam Board : Edexcel

60% of the course is assessed via practical and written coursework, which takes place throughout the two-year course. The final 40% will be a final written exam at the end of the course.

Over the two years you will demonstrate a practical understanding of:

- Two full and substantial performance texts
- Three key extracts from contrasting texts
- Two influential theatre practitioners

You will also take part in two major performances:

- A devised performance
- A text-based performance

Useful attributes

This course suits students who enjoy active learning and independent exploration. Much of the learning is done through practical work, and the emphasis is placed on the individual to research, discuss and explore text and performance. An interest in Theatre and different styles of performance is required, as is an open and creative mind.

Personal development

By the end of the course, you will be a creative and knowledgeable Theatre maker, who has an extensive knowledge of text and the ability to critically respond to ideas. You will have gained a wide range of performance and presentation experience, applicable to all types of career paths. You will be able to structure debate, drawing on a wide range of examples from world of Theatre and the Arts.

Future directions

The majority of A Level Drama & Theatre students progress to studying courses at top universities including English and Drama at Cambridge, Law at Cambridge, and English at Oxford. Some students choose to audition for drama schools to train to be actors or designers. Schools such as RADA, LAMDA, Guildhall and the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama have been popular choices.

Exam Board : CIE

ECONOMICS (PRE-U)

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Why choose Economics Pre-U?

The next few years will be especially interesting for UK students of Economics, given our impending departure from the European Union. Should we fear the imposition of tariffs on our exports to Europe? Should we impose tariffs on our imports from Europe? Free from the Common Agricultural Policy, what approach should we take toward our farmers? Other questions would have arisen even had we voted to remain in the EU. Will the new National Living Wage cause job losses? The wider world will continue to throw up further questions. According to Christian Aid, "While rich countries get richer through trade, poor countries are getting poorer." Are they right?

These questions merit serious consideration not only as an intellectual challenge but also because they have an important bearing on people's welfare. If such questions interest you, you should consider studying Economics. Nationally, there has been an increase in the last few years in the number of Sixth Formers taking 'hard' subjects, including Economics. Universities and employers regard Economics as a 'numerate' discipline. It also requires an ability to express arguments in clear and accurate writing.

How is the course assessed?

The first year covers elementary economic theory and applied work. Students become familiar with a range of economic statistics including, for example, data presented in index number form. In microeconomics, the markets studied include commodity markets, agricultural markets and markets in health care, education and housing. The analysis of market failure includes aspects of environmental economics. In macroeconomics, students become acquainted with the main indicators such as growth, inflation and unemployment, and they learn to make sense of their inter-relationships by using an aggregate supply and demand framework.

The second year of the course builds on these foundations. Further theoretical work includes the analysis of utility maximising and profit maximising behaviour. Major new topics including international trade, international capital movements and exchange rates are added. Students also choose an Independent Study topic from a list including Behavioural Economics and China and the World Economy. At the end of the Upper Sixth, students sit the Cambridge Pre-U Economics exam.

From 2011 to 2015, a number of our students took the Pre-U Economics exam as well as the 'old' A2 Level exam. Our decision to adopt Pre-U across the board from September 2015 is based on this experience. We welcomed the increased opportunity for independent study and we were pleased by the consistency of the exam marking. The Pre-U grade D2 is counted as equivalent to the A Level A* for university entrance purposes; there is one higher Pre-U grade, D1, which is achieved by the very best candidates.

Paper One includes multiple-choice, short answer and data response questions (all compulsory and covering the whole syllabus) and Paper Two requires students to write three essays, at least one of which must be on micro and one on macroeconomics. In Paper Three, candidates write an extended essay on their chosen Independent Study topic.

Useful attributes

Simple applications of Mathematics are used throughout the course and you will be assessed on those in the exams. You can fruitfully apply more advanced maths, including calculus, to deepen your understanding of economic concepts. If you think you may want to study the subject at university, you should be aware that most Economics degree courses require Mathematics A Level and that Further Maths is increasingly becoming a de facto requirement.

Personal development

We encourage our students to enter essay competitions including those put on by the Royal Economic Society, Institute of Economic Affairs and Marshall Society (Cambridge University). These activities provide further opportunities for independent study.

Future directions

From 2014 to 2018, 86 students took the full two-year Economics course at KGS, of whom 34 went on to read Economics in single or joint honours at university.

Economics learned in the Sixth Form sheds light on a number of issues studied at degree level in subjects such as History, Politics and Geography. Students reading Medicine or Engineering at university are likely to encounter some Economics in their degree courses. Behavioural Economics has strong connections with Cognitive Science.

Exam Board : WJEC

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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Why choose English A Level?

Without doubt, English A Level is the only subject which furnishes students with the opportunity to understand, evaluate and analyse not only the beauty of the written word, but its importance as a reflection of wider society and its beliefs and systems, both contemporary and historical. This ability to read with curiosity, reflect, critique and communicate your conclusions is a prerequisite for university degrees in any subject, as is the ability to construct and defend an argument.

How is the course assessed?

All students complete the WJEC English Literature specification. This is a linear course. Teaching is spread over two years at the end of which candidates will sit three separate examinations and complete one piece of coursework.

The course is divided into four components which are as follows:
Component One is open book and constitutes 30% of the final award. Students are required to complete two essays, one on pre-1900 poetry and one on a comparison of two, paired, post-1900 poetry texts.

Component Two is also worth 30% of the A Level. It takes the form of a closed book examination where students are, again, asked to produce two essays, one on a Shakespeare play and another on a pair of plays of which one will be pre- and the other post-1900.

Component Three is worth 20% of the qualification and gives students the opportunity to synthesise and reflect upon the knowledge they have gained from the course as a whole and to apply their skills of literary analysis to the examination of unseen poetry and unseen prose texts. They are required to write two essays in this section.

The three examined components are each two hours in length.

Component Four (20% of the qualification) takes the form of coursework and requires students to complete one 2500-3500-word assignment based on the reading of two prose texts, one pre- and one post-2000. This component is internally assessed and externally moderated and aims to allow learners to show knowledge and understanding of ways in which texts relate to one another and to literary traditions, movements and genres.

How is the course taught?

In your Lower Sixth year, you will concentrate on your paired pre- and post-1900 drama texts, your paired pre- and post-1900 poetry texts and the study of a selection of previously unseen poetry and prose. You will also begin your coursework preparation. In your Upper Sixth year, you will study a Shakespeare text and the final pre-1900 poetry text. You will also complete your coursework and revisit components completed in your previous academic year.

Texts are taught through class discussions and seminar-style sessions where teachers and students work collaboratively. There will be regular assessment through frequent essays on the set texts. Two subject specialists will lead your study of English during both years of your A Level course and will offer their advice, expertise and assistance at all stages of your A Level experience. However, students will gain most from the course if they also engage with their studies independently, reading and researching texts outside lesson time.

Useful attributes

While it is not a prerequisite to have read comprehensively before beginning A Level English, a love of reading and a curiosity about texts and their contexts is important. You should enjoy researching a text's author and the period in which it was created. To prepare best over the summer, you should not only read a broad selection of challenging books, but also consider visiting current theatre productions, films and exhibitions.

Personal development

Studying A Level English develops you as an individual: intellectually, you gain confidence in thinking about texts in sophisticated and conceptual ways, as well as formulating well-researched, fluent and convincing arguments. More broadly, you will also develop your ability to discuss your ideas with others, often defending, and perhaps modifying, your point of view.

Future directions

The proof of the versatility of English as a subject, with its wide-ranging and informative basis, lies in the variety of degree courses that students opt to study. Apart from the more obvious 'English routes' of the Arts, where English is a perfect accompaniment to essay-based subjects such as History and Philosophy, the analytical nature of A Level English means it is also regarded as a sound basis for those students who wish to pursue a degree in Sociology, or related areas, Law and Medicine. For those who graduate in English, careers such as copy writing, publishing, journalism, marketing and the Civil Service are just a few possibilities.

Exam Board : AQA

GEOGRAPHY

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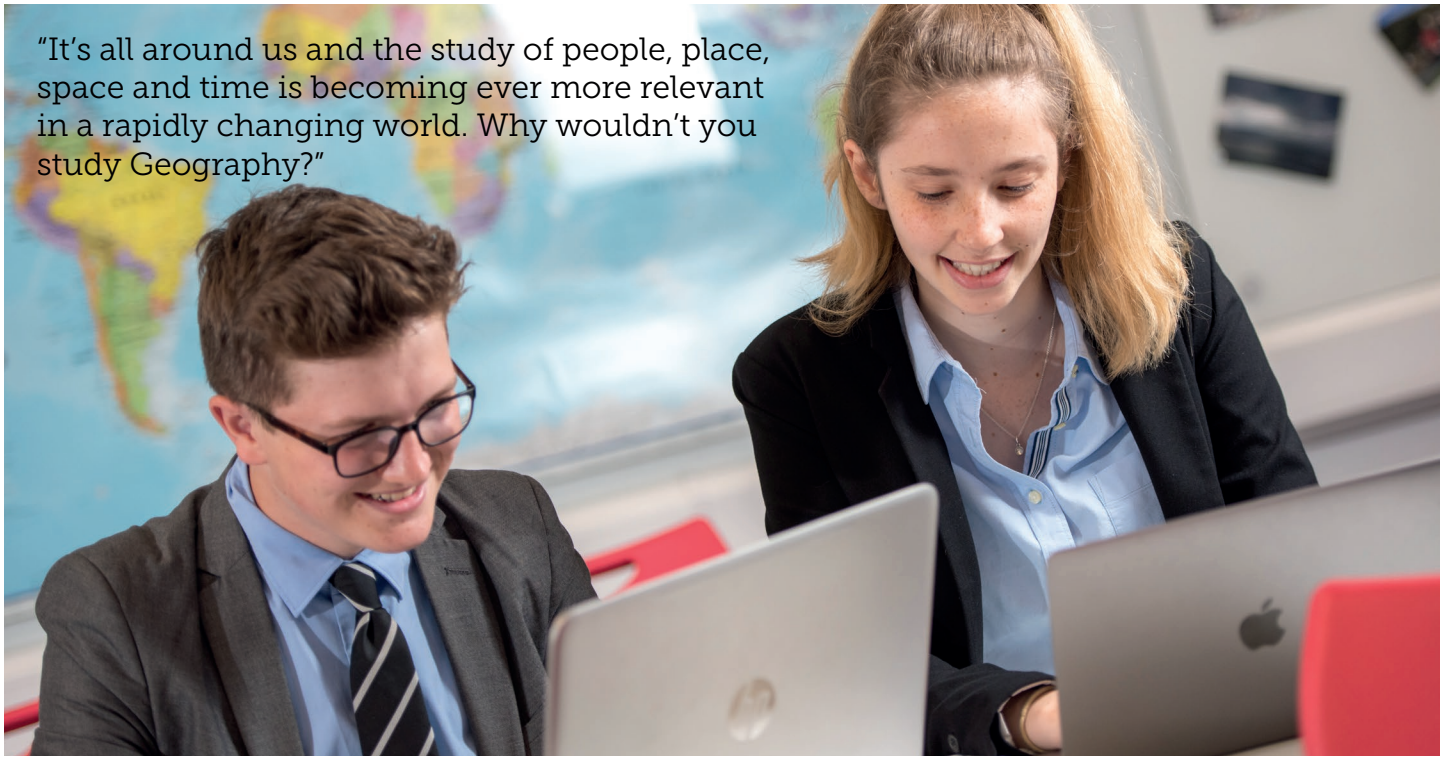


Why choose Geography A Level?

Understanding key human and physical processes, and having a diverse range of transferable skills, is a distinct advantage in an ever-changing and increasingly competitive world. Studying Geography A Level will give you this understanding, and develop enviable skills, complementing your other subjects, and helping you at university and in future employment.

Coping with natural disasters, reducing poverty, and managing conflict are some of the challenges facing the next generation of geographers and you will investigate issues such as these as part of the A Level course.

Key topics at A Level include the concept of 'place', environmental systems and cycles, global systems and governance, cold environments and natural hazards.

Away from the classroom, the new A Levels require students to complete both Human and Physical fieldwork and there is the chance to travel on an optional overseas 'awe and wonder' fieldtrip; Iceland has been our recent destination of choice. Students also attend regular lectures at the local Geographical Association. We have strong links with the Royal Geographical Society too, and a number of students join as 'Young Geographers' each year to make use of the additional student resources and world-renowned Monday night lecture series.

Exam Board : AQA

A Level Geography is considered a 'facilitating subject' by UCAS, which means that Oxbridge and Russell Group universities love the wide range of transferable skills that geographers bring with them onto almost any course. Students who go on to study Geography at university are statistically some of the most employable graduates, and earn some of the highest salaries upon graduation.

How is the course assessed?

Geography has gone linear – you will sit all of your exams at the end of the Upper Sixth. There will be two separate Human and Physical Geography papers, each marked out of 120, and each lasting two hours and 30 minutes. Both papers will be split into three sections, and the questions will be a combination of multiple choice, short structured, level marked and essay based. These papers are each worth 40% of the A Level.

You will also complete a Geography Investigation. This is based on fieldwork completed over the course of the A Level, with an individual title and hypotheses to be tested. The investigation will be written up as a project of around 4000 words which will be marked by your teachers (and externally moderated). This is worth 20% of the A Level and will involve a fieldtrip to the Isle of Arran at the end of the Lower Sixth.

Useful attributes

You should have a keen interest in the world around you, especially contemporary global issues. You will be encouraged to participate actively in lessons and to approach your studies with curiosity and a critical edge. You need to be open to having your opinions and perceptions of the world around you challenged.

Personal development

You will develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of geographical processes and patterns, and their inter-relationships which will help you understand and explain what you see happening in the world around you. Throughout the course you will develop your communication and teamwork skills, as well as those of research and critical analysis. These are all crucial transferable skills for continuing to university and the world of work.

Future directions

Unless you want to study subjects such as Veterinary Medicine or Dentistry at university, Geography can add a great deal to your portfolio of skills and life experiences for any other course as it bridges the gap between the Sciences and the Arts. At university you can study either Physical or Human Geography, combined Geography, or other related degree courses such as land economy or environmental science. Geographers are highly employable and enter a wide range of careers from banking and finance to TV production and marketing. In August 2014, over 85% of Geography graduates were fully employed or completing further study within six months of graduating, and Geography had one of the lowest graduate unemployment rates of any subject, well below the UK average. If you don't believe it, have a look at the 'Going Places with Geography' publication from the Royal Geographical Society, featuring inspiring young graduate geographers speaking about their careers and the range of skills and experiences Geography has enabled them to develop.

"Don't wave goodbye to Geography, don't just meander through life... Hungary for success? Then Czech out Geography. There's Norway it won't have you Russian to the pinnacle of life." Fiona Steinitz, known for her sense of humour, studied Geography, History, Philosophy and Psychology at A Level.

Exam Board : Edexcel

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Mr DAR Sorley • Head of Government & Politics • dsorley@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Government & Politics A Level?

Politics at KGS is in all senses of the word a 'dynamic' subject. The changing political landscape means that a critical, ongoing inquiry-based approach is essential. We organise a varied and full programme of events to complement the classroom teaching. Each year we invite high-profile speakers to debate with us. In the recent past we have hosted Justine Greening, Ed Davey, James Berry and Tom Brake. In May 2015, we held a School Election contested by seven major parties, and, in June 2016, we held a mock EU referendum and finally came the 'snap election' of June 8th. The two campaigns, led by students of the Lower Sixth, tried to persuade the school body to either leave or remain in the EU. Our students are encouraged to take the initiative in furthering their own political education by, for example, gaining holiday time work experience at Westminster or in an MP's constituency office, perhaps learning the rudiments of campaigns or helping in research, as examples. Therefore, apart from the academic side, you will have many opportunities to immerse yourselves fully in this 'living subject'. Politics has never been more relevant and important as it is today.

How the course is assessed?

In the Lower Sixth, students study UK politics which includes units focusing on the role and powers of the key branches of government including Parliament; the Prime Minister; and the Supreme Court. We also study representative processes and democracy, especially the importance and role of referenda, elections and pressure groups in enabling citizens to participate and influence decision-making at Westminster. A study of the European Union is made, primarily in relation to how decisions affect the UK's sovereignty, and its ability to legislate independently; an area assuming special significance in the post-referendum landscape. A key component of the new A Level specification is the requirement to learn about

political ideas which have shaped political thinking over the last 200 years, including the writings of Marx, Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, Betty Friedan, Edmund Burke, and Marcus Garvey as examples.

In the Upper Sixth, American government and politics is studied, with special emphasis on the office of the Presidency, foreign and domestic policy, the Supreme Court, Congress, political parties and race issues, to name a few key areas. Key questions which students would debate and discuss could be: To what extent are Prime Ministers presidential? Which is more powerful, Congress or the Presidency? Are American pressure groups detrimental to democracy? In addition, students will be expected to compare and contrast UK and US politics.

As one would expect from this A Level course, there is a significant 'step up' from GCSE. You will be required to write essays in the examination at the end of the Upper Sixth covering the political ideas of key thinkers and the politics of the UK, USA and the European Union. There is also a unit of comparative politics comprising the UK and USA.

In both the Lower and Upper Sixth you will learn progressively how to assemble and deploy evidence, form judgements, and construct lucid, cogent arguments on a range of content. You will be expected to submit one fully researched essay on a core examination topic (e.g. the importance of the Human Rights Act or power of the US Supreme Court) once every 7-10 days as the main 'homework' requirement. In addition, shorter assignments may be set. These may be presentations by students on part of a topic currently being studied and can often take the form of a PowerPoint or Prezi. There are regular, formal 'set-piece' debates on key topic areas for which students have research time in class and at home. We have regular team quizzes which follow original formats devised by the department. Of course, at the end of each topic there will be a formal test based on examination criteria, which remains the key form of assessment.

Useful attributes

Are you open-minded? Do you have a viewpoint which you would enjoy expressing? Do you have good writing skills? Do you like researching what is in the news? Do you want to understand what happens when you vote? Do you want to know how laws are passed which directly affect you? If any of these attributes apply to you, then you are on the right track to becoming a knowledgeable and well-informed student of politics.

Personal development

If you study Politics, you find something out about yourself that you perhaps didn't already know: your personal politics. You may not think you have a political view, but as everything boils down to politics in the end, everyone will eventually know where they stand on a range of issues such as: gay marriage, the death penalty, universal welfare benefits, the European Union, the NHS and foreign intervention. If you didn't think you had a view that will soon change studying Politics at KGS.

Future directions

An increasing number of our students read Politics, International Relations or a combination of History/Politics at university. We offer additional help and advice, including extension classes, to those who are considering reading PPE or Politics at Oxbridge. As befitting a high profile A Level, the Department has been awarded a national prize, winning the Best Girls' AS results in an English independent school. There is no doubt that this has consequently spurred our students on to read the subject at some of the best universities in the country. Career options are limitless and graduates enter Law, the City, advertising, journalism, broadcasting, teaching and the Civil Service to name a few destinations.

Exam Board : Edexcel

HISTORY

Mrs A Angell • Head of History • aangell@kgs.org.uk

Why choose History A Level?

If you enjoyed studying History at GCSE, you will love it at A Level. You will have to grapple with difficult yet fascinating questions. Was Adolf Hitler a uniquely evil individual? Were the communists just red Tsars? Who was a better Prime Minister, Churchill or Thatcher? Why did people feel the need to rebel under the Tudors?

It is in asking questions of the past that we begin to make sense of the present and plan for the future. Unless you know history, you will not be able to understand the world you live in, for most of the problems of the world were spawned in the past.

Exam Board : Edexcel

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed in a linear fashion so that all three examined units will be taken at the end of the Upper Sixth year – there will be no Lower Sixth AS examinations. You will be able to choose yourself what you wish to study in both years of the Sixth Form. In the Lower Sixth you have two choices:

1. The Wars of the Roses and Henry VII 1445-1509 and Democracy and Dictatorship in Germany 1919-1963.

2. Churchill and British Politics 1930-1997 and The American Revolution 1740-1796.

In the Upper Sixth you will again be offered a choice of study for the one unit out of three:

1. Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors 1485–1603.

2. Russia and its Rulers 1855–1964.

3. The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792–1945.

The final unit is a non-examined unit where you have to write a 3000-4000-word coursework essay on almost any historical topic that you wish to study. You may extend your knowledge of an area you have already studied or study an entirely different topic.

A combination of assessment techniques will be used. You will be required to undertake extended writing and essays in all units, in order to present historical explanations, the significance of events, individuals, beliefs and movements, and to reach substantiated judgements. You will evaluate sources in order to reach judgements by analysis and evaluation, and to address historical claims and debates.

Personal development

You will become skilled at asking questions, some of them awkward. You will learn not to take everything at face value. You will develop empathy and understanding of the actions and achievements of others and you will learn how to prepare a case and how to argue that case convincingly; you will learn how to use evidence, draw conclusions and make judgements. These attributes should enable you to think and work in an independent and co-operative manner.

Future directions

A Level History is highly regarded and excellent training for any career where you have to use evidence or make decisions, especially where those decisions affect other people. A qualification in History is regarded as desirable in careers such as law, medicine, business, finance, accountancy, tourism, town planning, politics, journalism, research and teaching.

Exam Board : OCR

LATIN & CLASSICAL GREEK

Dr L Snook • Head of Classics • lsnook@kgs.org.uk

Latin & Greek are taught as separate A Levels

Why choose Latin & Classical Greek A Level?

Any student who enjoyed and was successful at Latin and/or Greek GCSE will like the rigour and extension of Latin/ Classical Greek A Level. They offer the chance to become proficient in the language and to read more of the original texts, showing an appreciation of them within their literary, social and historical context.

How is the course assessed?

Latin and Classical Greek A Level are structured in the same way, with four papers for each A Level.

1. Prose Literature 25%

Students study texts in the original Latin by Cicero, one of history's best orators, and Tacitus, one of Rome's greatest historians. The Greek course looks at Xerxes' invasion of Greece according to Herodotus, father of history, father of lies. Additional literature is studied in translation to understand the context of the texts. The texts are examined by translation and literary criticism questions.

2. Verse Literature 25%

Latin students study a selection of Latin from Virgil's Aeneid, one of the cornerstones of Western literature, while Greek students will read selections from Euripides' Medea, a story of betrayal and revenge. As with the prose text, additional literature is studied in translation in order to understand the context of the set texts. The texts are examined by translation and literary criticism questions.

3. Unseen Translation 33%

Through unseen practice, you will become sensitive to the genre, themes and motifs which are popular with particular authors and you will build your knowledge of vocabulary and linguistic structures. The examination requires students to answer translation, comprehension and literary criticism questions on an unseen prose passage and an unseen verse passage. Students must also scan two lines of Latin verse which will be taken from the works of Ovid.

4. Prose Composition or Comprehension 17%

There is then a choice between a short passage to translate into Latin or a passage in Latin on which you will answer comprehension, translation and grammar questions.

Vocabulary revision is centred around that met in the other sections of the syllabus. We revise all main Latin constructions as well as looking at how to write stylish Latin. At A Level, there is some new grammar, but for the most part it is extending knowledge of grammar already learned in the GCSE course. We use the John Taylor Latin Beyond GCSE textbook. This paper is worth 17%.

Useful attributes

The skills for set texts are the same as those acquired for GCSE, but they must now be tailored to the A Level requirement. A meticulous approach to learning vocabulary and grammar are essential to success in the language element of the course. Typical Classicists tend to have a love of reading and, more importantly, of learning, about anything and everything. It goes without saying that an interest in the ancient world, with all its moral dilemmas, scandals and politics is a must.

Personal development

It is true that you will not come away from Latin/Classical Greek A Level with the practical ability to mix chemicals safely or design a house, but you will have the hugely transferable skill of being able to analyse complex information and relate it to the modern world. Studying Latin/Greek encourages students to reconcile the minutiae with the big picture. Exposure to some of the world's most influential literature teaches students to become skilful writers themselves. Classical subjects are not the study of one area, but many, including literature, history, drama, politics and philosophy, which can all be used to develop understanding of today's multicultural society.

Future directions

There is huge variation in the other subjects taken by Latin/Classical Greek students, since these A Levels combine very well with Humanities, Languages, Science or Mathematics A Levels. The many transferable skills required for this subject makes it invaluable to a huge range of careers in later life. Recently, Latin/Classical Greek students have gone on to study Computing, Philosophy, History, Physics, and Modern Languages, as well as Classics-related subjects like Ancient and Modern History, Oriental Studies and, of course, Classics. Recent years have also seen considerable Oxbridge success for Classics students.

Exam Board : Edexcel

MATHEMATICS

Mr JW Skeates • Head of Mathematics • jskeates@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Mathematics A Level?

Studying Mathematics develops excellent problem solving skills. Students learn how to think logically and analytically, enabling them to take complex problems, break them down into a series of smaller steps, solve each one in turn and then assemble these answers into a solution to the original problem. These skills, in addition to being highly satisfying their own right, are highly valued by employers as well as being key building blocks for the study of many other subjects.

Mathematics is the language of the universe and it has an amazing beauty and elegance in its own right. Study Mathematics because...

- You love the challenge of problem solving and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing when you have found the

correct answer

- You enjoy learning about abstract concepts such as algebra, and how these concepts can be applied to real life problems
- It provides the mathematical skills you need to further your study of other subjects
- It contrasts with other subjects and keeps a breadth to your Sixth Form studies. You want to explore Mathematics a little further before specialising

A brief outline of the course and how it is assessed

The Mathematics course covers topics in Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics.

Pure Mathematics extends ideas such as calculus and trigonometry, introduced at IGCSE, setting them in their proper context. We also look at ideas of infinity, co-ordinate geometry and sequences. You will start to see how all the different branches of Mathematics link together and are used to solve increasingly complex problems.

In Statistics we study methods of analysing and comparing data, probability and statistical testing. This knowledge will be particularly useful in Economics, Psychology, Biology, Chemistry and Geography.

In Mechanics we apply mathematical ideas to the study of forces, Newtonian Laws of Motion, and vectors. Mechanics is the ideal partner for Physics because many topics overlap but it also complements the other sciences.

Assessment will be in the form of examinations at the end of the course.

Requirements

Unless there are special circumstances, we expect a grade 8/9 at GCSE or IGCSE as this demonstrates that you will be able to make the transition to A Level Mathematics. Being competent at algebra is vital as these skills underpin the way we explain our solutions. We will be helping you with your algebra, and testing you on it, early in the course.

Exam Board : OCR MEI

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Mr JW Skeates • Head of Mathematics • jskeates@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Further Mathematics A Level or Further Mathematics AS Level?

For the most capable mathematicians, the Further Mathematics A Level offers a challenging syllabus which is excellent preparation for those planning on studying Mathematics, Computing Science, Physics, Engineering or Economics at university. You will typically already have a qualification beyond your IGCSE Mathematics, such as Additional Mathematics or GCSE Further Mathematics.

A brief outline of the course and how it is assessed

There will be two options to study beyond the A Level Mathematics syllabus.

Option One - A Level Mathematics with AS Further Mathematics

This will be a fast-paced course designed for those wanting a taste of Further Mathematics alongside three other A Level subjects. Students will cover content required for the A Level Mathematics and then continue onto an additional AS Further Mathematics course. This course will offer further study in Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics, introducing topics such as Complex Numbers, Matrices, Discrete Random Variables, and Work, Energy and Power.

Option Two - A Level Mathematics and A Level Further Mathematics

This is the course for those students who want to study Mathematics in depth as it counts as two A Level option choices. Designed for those who have a passion for the subject, Further Mathematics is a perfect choice for you if you would like a fuller experience of Pure and Applied Mathematics, or are considering studying Mathematics at university.

The syllabus will cover additional material in Pure Mathematics, Statistics and/or Mechanics, including Vectors, Differential Equations, Poisson Distributions and Circular Motion.

This group very much works as a team and at a fast pace with half of your timetable devoted to Mathematics in both the Lower and the Upper Sixth. 'STEP' paper, Oxford Admission Test material and other extension work provide enrichment as well as preparation for university entrance exams and interviews.

The assessment of both options will be by examination at the end of the course.

Requirements

You will require a Grade 9 at IGCSE and will preferably have studied beyond GCSE or IGCSE with a course such as Additional Mathematics or GCSE Further Mathematics and we expect a good grade to demonstrate that you will be able to start the course. The most successful students enjoy the challenge of applying their knowledge to unravel a problem. There is a degree of satisfaction and enjoyment from solving a mathematical problem. You will have the discipline and courage to persist in finding not only the answer, but in developing the most elegant solution.

Personal development

You will build on your knowledge so far by developing and understanding new techniques and skills used in a variety of contexts in other subjects as well. However, studying Mathematics also trains you to reason clearly, logically and accurately, all of which are vital skills in today's world. Former students acknowledge that Mathematics provided them with thinking skills they employ daily in a wide variety of careers.

You have the ability to express yourself clearly and concisely and you fully understand the theory behind techniques. Consistency is crucial and your success will show you to be organised, committed and determined.

We also attend lectures, review the latest journals or news stories and promote independent learning through the reading of books such as 'The Story of Maths' or 'Alex's Adventures in Numberland'. Students are encouraged to act as mentors to younger students through Community Service either coaching those who need extra support or stretching the more able with extension material. There are also opportunities to enter competitions such as the 'Senior Mathematics Challenge' and to develop a wider interest in the latest developments in Mathematics beyond the textbook!

Future directions

Each year several students go on to study various Mathematics courses at university including Oxbridge. Other students find their understanding of Mathematics is essential as they move on to Science, Engineering, Computing and Economics courses. Statistics is widely used in Medicine and Geography courses. Further Mathematics students tend to go on to study various Mathematics courses, Physics or Engineering at universities including Oxbridge, Imperial, Warwick and UCL.

Many former students comment on how surprised they are that Mathematics features so heavily in these courses and how their confidence in their skills helped them make the transition to higher education. Other students use the thinking skills Mathematics promotes as linguists, artists, lawyers or historians. The study of Mathematics installs a sense of logical process, discipline and perseverance, all of which are highly valued by employers.

Exam Board : Edexcel

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Mrs TM Russell • Head of Modern Foreign Languages • trussell@kgs.org.uk

FRANÇAIS – DEUTSCH – ITALIANO – ESPAÑOL

Why choose a Modern Foreign Language A Level?

Do you know what your pizza toppings are without looking at the English? Do you wish that you knew what "Vorsprung durch Technik" meant? Wouldn't it be great to communicate clearly on the Inca Trail? Wouldn't you like to sing along with the proud Marseillaise?

French, German and Spanish are taught at A Level following on from GCSE, whilst Italian is available for proven linguists ab initio to lead to an AS Level qualification over the two years of the Sixth Form.

Exam Board : Edexcel

How is the course assessed? PREPARACIÓN – PRÉPARATION – VORBEREITUNG – PREPARAZIONE

The themes for the MFL A Level courses are inspiring and engaging, and rooted in the target language countries. These range from social issues, trends and politics to intellectual and artistic culture. There are three exams which cover listening, reading and translation into English; essay writing on the literary text and film studied and translation into the target language; and, of course, speaking. For the latter, students set their own research 'question' based on one of the themes or their own subject of interest, related to the target language country.

Sound knowledge of the grammar covered at GCSE level is essential. In addition to your timetabled lessons, you will have one speaking lesson in a small group with the MFL assistant. Grammar skills are honed in order to tackle the demands of the prose translations. Over time these essentially become a very accessible way to test fundamental grammatical knowledge.

Studying languages at A Level gives you plenty of scope to develop your own interests and to analyse and challenge received opinions, enabling you to formulate your own ideas on current affairs, and more. Emphasis is placed on spoken communication as well as planning, structuring, and writing essays.

Students are strongly encouraged to go abroad during their time in the Sixth Form. Work experience for all languages can be arranged through a company recommended by the School. They also have the opportunity to compete in debating competitions in their target language, which is invaluable preparation for the oral exams.

Useful attributes ORIZZONTI – HORIZONTES – HORIZONS – HORIZONTE

Studying a language opens up new horizons, and gives students access to different countries and cultures; it provides stimulation in so many different ways. It is one of the most enjoyable subjects to study and the one thing most adults regret not having pursued when they were younger. With Britain being named 'the linguistic pauper of Europe' (Times, May 2010), it is becoming increasingly important in the world of work to be able to compete with our European neighbours in being able to speak foreign languages.

Personal development DESARROLLO – ENTWICKLUNG – DÉVELOPPEMENT – SVILUPPO

There has never been a better time to learn a modern language. Modern language skills are priceless in today's global professional market and we encourage the study of any language at university as a specialised subject and as combined honours with other subjects. Learning a language is an enriching and useful experience for students of any background and ability. Speaking a language, you are better prepared for the international stage.

Future directions ZUKUNFT – FUTURO – AVENIR – FUTURO

Languages lend themselves to being combined with another subject at university, such as Medicine, Law, Philosophy, Science, History, Engineering, Economics and Business Studies, Music or Journalism. Unemployment figures show that the percentage of MFL graduates without a job is considerably lower than the percentage of graduates with other degrees, an important factor to consider in today's economic climate.

Exam Board : AQA

MUSIC

Mr M Laflin • Director of Music • mlaflin@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Music A Level?

If you love music and enjoy performing and composing, A Level Music could be for you. Many students regularly prepare performances for grade exams, and playing the same or other pieces for an A Level recording completes about half of the coursework. If you have always wondered how music really works, why musicians find it rewarding and how sound can have a profound effect on people, you will gain a good grounding in the analysis skills which help to explain this. You will study some great music in considerable detail, and also choose areas of music to explore in more depth. You will also further develop and refine your composition skills.

How is the course assessed?

Component One of the course is Appraising Music, and it is worth 40% of the overall mark. It is assessed at the end of the course through a written paper comprising three sections: Listening, Analysis and Essay. Students study works from the

Western classical tradition and a choice of two further areas of study (from a list of seven), including pop music, music for media, music for theatre, jazz, contemporary traditional music, and art music since 1910.

Component Two is Performance, which can be a solo and/or an ensemble performance as a vocalist or instrumentalist, or it can be a music production using music technology. The performance needs to be at least 10 minutes long, and this component is worth 35% of the A Level marks. The performance is recorded in school between 1 March and 31 May of your final year and it is then assessed externally.

Component Three is Composition. Students need to produce two compositions, one based on a brief set by the exam board, and one free composition. The process of composing happens mainly during lesson time, and work must be completed by 31 May of your final year. This component is worth 25% of the overall marks.

Useful attributes

In preparation for starting A Level Music, we recommend you get as much experience of different types of music as possible. The BBC Proms during the summer are an excellent introduction to a broad variety of music, and standing ('promming') tickets are cheap, plentiful, and the best position in the house; other popular concert venues in London include the Southbank, the Barbican Centre, and the Wigmore Hall. BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM also provide useful introductions to all kinds of music: try to analyse the genre/period/composer whenever you listen to a piece you do not yet know.

Personal development

A Level Music will further develop you as a musician. You will gain a broader and more detailed knowledge of styles and periods and be able to apply this knowledge to your own performing and composition. By taking a more careful and detailed look at how music works, you will be able to increase the range and depth of your own music-making, whichever style you prefer. You will also consider the subject from a musicological perspective, relating music to its political and social context and gaining an insight into the nature of performance.

Future directions

Following A Level Music, many students move on to university to study Music, either as a discrete subject or for joint honours. Many other options are available, such as Conservatoires and other music colleges. Music Technology courses prefer students to have the all-round grounding of the Music A Level. Careers in music often centre around performing and teaching, but musicians are found in all walks of life, such as law, medicine, banking, journalism and arts administration; in terms of what it can lead to, a Music degree is equivalent to other arts or humanities degrees.

Exam Board : CIE

PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY (PRE-U)

Mrs CM Williams • Head of Religion and Philosophy • cwilliams@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Philosophy & Theology Pre-U?

Philosophy & Theology is a truly exciting, stimulating and interesting course. If you enjoy thinking and talking about the biggest questions in life then it is the choice for you. Equally, if you like a straight answer to every question then it is perhaps not the choice for you! The skills that you will develop when studying this course are invaluable: you will become more adept at critical analysis as it will genuinely make you a better thinker. This will have a positive impact on your other subject choices.

How is the course assessed?

We follow the Cambridge International Examinations Pre-U syllabus in Philosophy & Theology and this offers an exciting and varied study of topics, from Ancient Greek Philosophy to Life after Death, and ethical theories such as Utilitarianism.

Of particular interest are the primary philosophical and ethical texts that bring many of the current contemporary debates in Philosophy & Theology into sharp focus.

Assessment is through three, essay-based written examinations of two hours 15, two hours and two hours respectively. Although assessment will be entirely through essays, you should not let this put you off. You will have every opportunity to become an expert at structuring and writing essays by the end of the course. If you want to aim for the very highest grade, you have to do quite a bit of reading, but the beauty of the course is that you can have a certain amount of autonomy in those areas you would like to read about in more depth. This is because we supplement the specification requirements by looking at the contributions of other philosophers, such as the falsification theory of Anthony Flew and the Language Games of Wittgenstein.

Useful attributes

Lessons are focused on discussion which makes them lively affairs! Having an opinion is therefore important, as is having the confidence and ability to challenge ideas that you read and hear. We teach, and insist upon, reasoned analysis and careful thinking, so you should be prepared to be challenged (in a good way!). As the assessment is entirely through essay-writing, you need to be able to express yourself on paper.

Personal development

The key skills which you will develop by taking Pre-U Philosophy & Theology are the ability to think, to understand how arguments are formulated and to be able to challenge arguments through the use of logic and evidence. You will be able to contrast the ideas of different scholars and come to reasoned conclusions. You will be thinking about some of the most important questions about life and the world around us.

Future directions

Many of our students choose to continue studying Philosophy at undergraduate level, be it as a single or a joint honours degree. We have found that a great many university interviews involve a philosophical element, so the discussions we have in Philosophy & Theology lessons are great preparation for this. For example, the course is an excellent preparation for students wishing to go into areas such as Law and Medicine; and it also complements subject areas such as Mathematics, History, Classics, and English, as well as many others. Touchstone, our very popular weekly Philosophy debating society, also creates wonderful opportunities to develop the critical analysis skills which are so important in all areas of academic study.

Exam Board : AQA

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Miss H Naismith • Head of Physical Education • hnaismith@kgs.org.uk

Why choose Physical Education A Level?

This subject at A Level offers an exciting opportunity to learn about the human body in a sporting context. It includes an in-depth look at the physiological and psychological aspects of sports performance as well as the effects of history, culture and society on the world of sport today.

Specifically, this subject is designed to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of biomechanics, physiology and psychology which govern sports performance
- Illustrate the historical development of organised sport in the UK, globally, and the effects of socio-economic factors
- Examine the social context in which sports operate
- Extend and reward students' commitment to sport and its associated activities

How is the course assessed?

The new A Level Physical Education will be split into 70% examination and 30% non-examination assessment (practical assessment and written analysis and evaluation of performance) with students assessed in the role of a player/performer

or coach. Assessment of quantitative skills will represent a minimum of 15% of the overall A Level marks and students will be able to focus their skills as they will only be assessed in one activity/sport.

What are the areas of theoretical study?

1. Applied Anatomy and Physiology – cardiovascular system; respiratory system; neuromuscular system; musculo-skeletal system; analysis of movement in physical activities and energy systems.
2. Skill Acquisition – skill, skill continuums and transfer of skills; impact of skill classification on structure of practice for learning; principles and theories of learning and performance; use of guidance and feedback; general information processing model; efficiency of information processing.
3. Sport and Society – pre industrial, industrial and post-industrial; post-World War II; sociological theory applied to equal opportunities.
4. Exercise Physiology – diet and nutrition and their effect on physical activity and performance; preparation and training methods in relation to maintaining physical activity and performance; injury prevention and the rehabilitation of injury.
5. Biomechanical Movement – biomechanical principles; levers; linear motion; angular motion; projectile motion and fluid mechanics.
6. Sport Psychology – aspects of personality; attitudes; arousal; anxiety; aggression; motivation, achievement motivation theory; social facilitation; group dynamics; importance of goal setting; attribution theory; self-efficacy and confidence; leadership; stress management.
7. Sport and Society and the Roles of Technology in Physical Activity and Sport – concepts of physical activity and sport; development of elite performers in sport; ethics in sport; violence in sport; drugs in sport; sport and the law; impact of commercialisation on physical activity and sport; the relationship between sport and the media; the role of technology in physical activity and sport.

Useful attributes

To undertake this course at A Level, candidates should have at least an A in Biology at GCSE, due to the overlap with this subject. A science is also required for some Sports Science courses at university. An interest and ability to perform in whatever roles of the sport(s) chosen is also fundamental.

Personal development

It really is an excellent and exciting A Level to take and a great choice if you are playing sport at a high level, as you can easily relate your experiences to your studies. It will also help your performance by raising awareness of how you learn and perform under pressure of competition. With the new elements of officiating and coaching, you can also explore a different avenue of sports participation and performance.

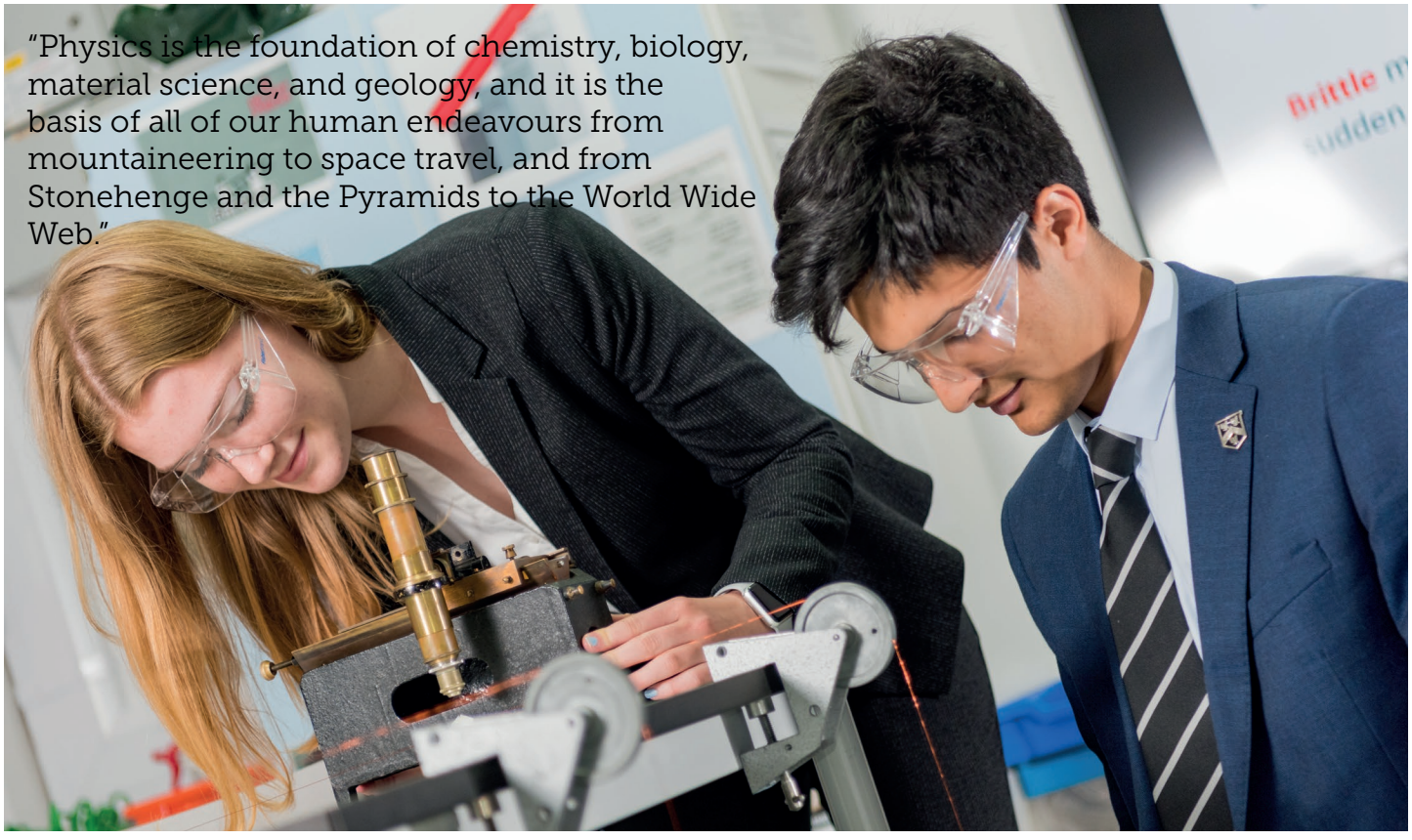
Future directions

At the major universities, there is scope to combine Sports Science with additional subjects. The most popular universities for sports-related undergraduate courses are Birmingham, Loughborough, Bath, Durham and Exeter. According to a study by Sport England in 2010, sport's contribution to the English economy reached £20.3 billion. This placed sport up in the top 15 industry sectors in England above motor vehicles, telecoms services, legal services, accounting, publishing, advertising and the utilities. The number of people with sport-related jobs was estimated at over 400,000 – that's 2.3% of all employment in England.

Exam Board : AQA

PHYSICS

Mr I Deepchand • Head of Physics • ideepchand@kgs.org.uk



Why choose Physics A Level?

Physics is at the heart of everything, from the building blocks of the atom, to the great expanse of the universe. How did the universe begin, and how will it end? Physics opens the door to a wide variety of career paths. The skills you will develop by studying Physics are those that employers will be looking for in new recruits. The range of potential career paths is huge – astrophysics, geologists, pilots and surgeons all find A Level Physics essential. Physics is intellectually stimulating; it was ranked the most challenging A Level in a study published by Durham University.

How it the course assessed?

Physics may be theoretical but the fun is real! We endeavour to teach Physics in a fun, relevant way at all levels. This is reflected in the popularity of Physics at A Level. In many ways, Physics in the Sixth Form is similar to GCSE: we will cover many familiar topics, such as forces and motion, electricity and waves. The advantage at A Level is that, as we develop a greater level of complexity in both our explanations and understanding of these basic phenomena, we can apply

them to many real-life situations. Some topics are new, such as quantum physics, particle accelerators, and cosmology. Studying these areas is challenging yet immensely rewarding. It also gives us an excuse to visit world-leading facilities, such as CERN in Geneva, an experimental fusion reactor near Oxford, and also to observe the Northern Lights, possibly the greatest natural light show on the planet.

Practical skills form an essential part of any scientific endeavour. At KGS planning, implementing, analysis and evaluative skills are developed during both years and assessed in the classroom as well as in exam papers.

For the AQA qualification students will sit three papers, each worth approximately a third of the final mark. Topics assessed include Electricity, Particles and Radiation, Waves, and Mechanics – the last of which has much in common with Mathematics. Students are encouraged to take Mathematics A Level with Physics though it is not essential. However, anyone planning to study Science and Engineering beyond A Level will usually find A Level Mathematics a prerequisite.

The full A Level will contain the above material plus Nuclear Physics, Further Mechanics, Thermal and Astrophysics. The assessment model will comprise two papers, each worth 34% and two hours long covering specific topics. The final 32% is assessed in a two-hour synoptic paper; all the skills and techniques developed throughout the A Level Physics course are brought to bear as we delve deeper into practical skills and data analysis. Astrophysics is the option offered at KGS and this will be assessed by means of short and long answer questions within the synoptic paper.

Useful attributes

Physics at A Level will involve lots of problem solving and you will need to develop a logical and numerate approach in order to achieve the greatest success. Communication skills form an essential part of being an effective scientist. You will need to convey your findings both in written and oral form. You will be able to develop your skills of presentation and persuasion as you argue various points in your work.

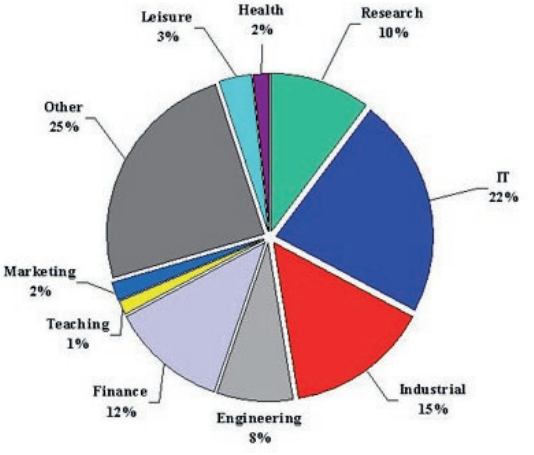
Personal development

A Level Physics requires someone prepared to ditch 'everyday' descriptions of phenomena and replace them with scientifically rigorous explanations. You will require an open mind to do this and at the same time you will develop computing and practical skills, teamwork and flexibility. The Department regularly produces successful Oxbridge candidates. All this requires hard work, commitment and attention to detail.

Future directions

The skills outlined above are ones that any employer will value regardless of your final career. Physics keeps your options open at university and in the workplace. Dentistry, Aviation Engineering with Pilot Studies, and Economics are three university destinations for recent A Level Physics students.

As you can see from this chart, studying Physics doesn't really pigeon-hole you into a science-based career, yet it does form a solid foundation should you wish to continue in science-related careers.



Exam Board : AQA

PSYCHOLOGY

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Why choose Psychology A Level?

Psychology is the scientific study of mind and behaviour, covering a wide range of topics including: the workings of the brain, memory, group behaviour, child development and psychological disorders. It can also be applied in wider settings such as: mental health, sport education and forensics. Psychology is really a very new science, with most advances happening over the past 150 years or so. However, its origins can be traced back to Ancient Greece, 400-500 years BC. Psychology is perfect for those fascinated by human behaviour and is much more broad-ranging than many imagine. There is something in it for almost all interests, ranging from the 'hard science' of neuropsychology to the complex interpersonal skills of the counselling psychologist.

How is the course assessed?

The psychology specification introduces students to the broad range of Psychology topics. This course of study comprises three written units at A Level, with no course work. The course is linear and therefore the three exams will be taken at the end of the Upper Sixth. Students will sit three papers: Paper One - Introductory topics in psychology; Paper Two - Psychology in context; and Paper Three - Issues and options in psychology. These three papers are equally weighted.

The emphasis is on applying knowledge and understanding, thereby developing students' transferable skills of analysis, evaluation and critical thinking.

The specification offers a broad range of topics, with research methods in context. The compulsory content consists of social influence, memory, attachment, psychopathology, approaches in psychology, biopsychology, research methods and issues and debates in psychology. The second year of the course builds on these foundations; students can study various subject options such as relationships, gender, cognition and development, schizophrenia, eating behaviour, stress, aggression, forensic psychology and addiction. The exam papers include multiple choice, short answers and extended writing.

Useful attributes

At A Level: To undertake this course at A Level, candidates should have at least an A in a Science at GCSE and an A in English Literature or Language.

At degree level: Psychology is studied as a Bachelor of Science course at most universities and therefore A Level Biology is very helpful; most universities require at least one science subject to read Psychology.

Psychology at A Level and beyond relies on writing balanced and well evaluated essays. A solid writing style is paramount and so English or History can complement Psychology A Level well. Reading around the subject is incredibly useful before you start the course: 'The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil', Philip G Zimbardo; 'The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat & Other Clinical Tales', Oliver Sacks; 'How the Mind Works', Steven Pinker; and 'Forever Today', Deborah Wearing. Another great resource is TED talks (www.ted.com) where short, recent lectures which are usually around 15 minutes long are published.

Personal development

The Psychology course is not 'an easy option'; there will be lots of content, studies and theories to learn. You will find that you have to learn much more than you have ever had to at GCSE which will test your methods of revision. At the same time you will hopefully enjoy learning about how and why we behave in the way we do. An important skill that you will develop whilst studying A Level Psychology is the ability to analyse critically and evaluate studies and theories.

Future directions

Psychology at university is incredibly popular and can lead to careers in most areas, but education, marketing, advertising, medicine, the law and human resources are common choices. For students who are thinking about becoming a professional psychologist, they need to ensure that their degree is recognised by the British Psychological Society and is suitable for Graduate Membership.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Mr DAR Sorley

History
Mrs A Angell

Latin & Greek
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Mathematics
Mr JW Skeates

Modern Languages
Mrs TM Russell

Music
Mr M Laflin

Philosophy & Theology
Mrs CM Williams

Physical Education
Miss H Naismith

Physics
Mr I Deepchand

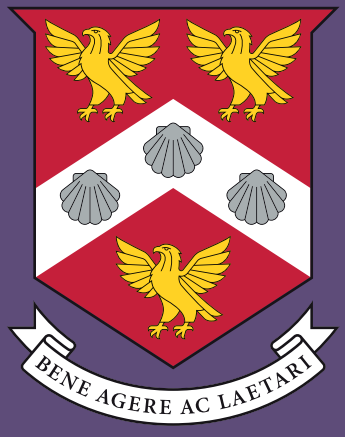
Psychology
Mrs AL Edwards

"Pupils show great enthusiasm in their work and display excellent attitudes to their learning. These attitudes are prodigious because they form highly supportive relationships with their teachers who inspire them to enjoy learning and do their best."

"Key contributory factors to pupils' personal development are the strong ethos and commitment to pupils' well-being and clear sense of purpose promoted by the school leaders and governors, the coherent and well-planned pastoral care provision, and the strong supportive community which values equally success and personal growth."

"The high levels of achievement derive significantly from the impact of a culture of all-round accomplishment for all pupils that is so effectively promoted by senior leadership and governors. Pupils are determined to live up to the school motto 'Work well and be happy', and in this they are conspicuously successful."

ISI Report, May 2017 (full report available on our website)



#workwellandbehappy

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