

D'OVERBROECK'S COLLEGE

CURRICULUM POLICY

Background

d'Overbroeck's College consists of three parts:

- Leckford Place (11 – 16, day only)
- The Sixth Form (16+, day and boarding)
- The International Study Centre (15+, boarding)

The same overall ethos and aims inform our approach and practice throughout the College. At the same time, the fact that the different parts of the school occupy separate buildings means that we are able to create in each an environment and a *modus operandi* that are appropriate to the age group and 'constituency' of that part of the school.

The curriculum

As a general principle, our curriculum subsumes and extends beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum. At KS 4, our students prepare for GCSE examinations though we have in the past couple of years introduced the IGCSE as the standard curriculum in certain subjects at our International Study Centre. Our Sixth Formers prepare for A levels.

This policy is in two sections: the first sets out the overall aims and principles that inform our approach and practice throughout the age range and the different parts of the school. This is then followed by a detailed curriculum policy for each part of the school.

Overall aims and principles

- to offer a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum with a strong academic core throughout our 11 – 18 age range
- to offer a wide range of subjects and, where appropriate, to offer students a wide range of options and as much flexibility as we can in subject choice
- To meet the individual needs and develop the particular talents of all of our students as far as we possibly can
- To ensure that every student is able to achieve to the maximum of his or her potential whatever that may be
- As far as possible, to make learning an enjoyable experience, and to stimulate curiosity and an enthusiasm for active and independent learning
- To maintain the highest standards of teaching
- To maintain a vibrant and effective learning environment in which students are engaged and stimulated both by the curriculum and by the teaching
- To ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all students including those with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) and students whose first language is not English
- To ensure that students with LDD and those whose first language is not English are appropriately supported
- To help our international students to adjust to the practical, cultural and academic consequences of living and studying in a different country

- To ensure that students are well informed and well prepared for the next stage in their education and for adult life
- To provide personal, social and health education that is appropriate, both in its content and the way in which it is delivered, to the age, experience and needs of the students
- To supplement the taught curriculum by a diverse range of curricular and extra-curricular activities that will provide stimulus, richness and breadth to the students' educational experience.

Please refer to the relevant appendix for more detailed policies specific to each part of the College.

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APPENDIX A

LECKFORD PLACE

We aim to nurture our students, developing knowledge, skills and talents in a supportive environment which stretches rather than pressurises and which understands the primacy of the individual. The aim is for students to become confident, independent personalities well able to make full use of their potential wherever it may lie.

To achieve this, we offer a full and broad curriculum with a strong academic core. It covers the full range of subjects in the sciences, humanities, arts, and modern foreign languages. There is also a pronounced emphasis on art, music, drama, sport and Personal Development, both as curriculum subjects and as after school activities.

In order to ensure that students make maximum progress and are prepared for higher education and lifelong learning all students experience a balance and range of curricular subjects and extra curricular opportunities.

Aims

The Leckford Place ethos is to:

- provide a curriculum which answers the needs of the individual and facilitates the maximising of individual potential through balance, support and encouragement.
- provide a holistic education in which the different elements of curricular provision - facilities, resources, teaching, and learning content - are purposefully linked to provide an education responsive to the uniqueness and special potential of each child;
- provide a broad, balanced and developed curriculum encompassing the taught curriculum, the enrichment offered in the extended curricular programme, and the informal curriculum;
- help students to become knowledgeable, confident and active learners with a desire to explore and solve problems in innovative ways;
- ensure that the aims of the school are embodied within the wider curriculum

- ensure a curriculum which offers continuity and progression of learning within and across Key Stages
- provide a relevant and appropriate curriculum that both fully engages and motivates students throughout their time with us. Lessons can be fun!

The Taught Curriculum

The curriculum will ensure coherence in students' learning, which will help them achieve well. Continuity and progression through succeeding phases of education will be assured through the quality of whole-school curriculum planning and its response to the outcomes of student assessment.

Due cognisance is taken of the National Curriculum and many of the units of study will draw heavily on the national model though individual departments retain a good deal of independence in developing their own teaching strategies within the overall school curriculum policy. Staff are encouraged to consider the needs of students and to gear curriculum planning accordingly.

The curriculum will consequently be effectively differentiated to account of varying abilities, paces and styles of learning. All students will be taught the same key skills and content for each component of the curriculum but schemes of work will be designed to enable students who may not have mastered those skills to receive extra support, whilst others will further develop their learning through extended topics, in readiness for moving on to the next component. Learning Support is organised for those who require specific extra help alongside mainstream teaching.

Years 7-9

In year 7, students are taught in mixed ability groups but from Year 8, when we have a clear idea of their needs and potentialities, they are grouped according to ability. Although all students access the same broad curriculum, some groups may move at a faster pace whilst other may have more topic reinforcement. We take great care when selecting groupings, although it is important to remember that they are not 'set in stone' and groups may well change through a student's career depending on changing individual needs. Maths and English are 'setted' and so these departments make their own decisions about groupings.

From Years 7-9 All students follow a broad curriculum, embracing Mathematics, English (including Literature), Geography, History, Classics, Information Technology, Design Technology, Art, Music, Drama, Games and PE, Personal Development and Religious Education. A General Science course taught by specialists in Years 7 and 8 leads to the separate sciences in Year 9.

A commitment to fluency in foreign languages is reflected in the provision of French for all our younger students with Spanish being introduced for more able linguists from year 8 onwards. German, Italian, Mandarin Chinese and other languages may also be studied after school for an extra charge.

In short, we aim to provide a curriculum which equips all of our students with the kind of knowledge, skills and confidence which will enable them to make the most of their talents at GCSE and beyond.

GCSE Years 10 -11

The majority of our students study 10 GCSE's but the number and the subjects pursued depend very much on the individual's capabilities and inclinations. We aim to tailor our programme towards these variables and GCSE option groups are created on the basis of student and parental discussion. This enables the majority of students to follow the programme of their choice, remembering that Maths, English Language and Literature, 2 Sciences, a modern foreign language and a Humanity must be included.

Any Extra GCSEs over the 10 subject norm will need, however, to be studied off-timetable and will incur an extra charge.

During their GCSE years, students will also receive guidance on preparation for public examinations, careers and their options for Sixth Form and further education. Year 10's also undertake a week's work experience in May, organised through the county.

Religious Education

d'Overbroeck's is a non denominational school but we believe that it is vital for young people to gain an understanding of a range of religious traditions as well as investigating social and moral issues. RE is therefore a part of the core curriculum up to and including Year 9 and is available as a GCSE option thereafter.

Sex and Relationships Education

We provide sex education as part of the Personal Development curriculum for all students, in which students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. Sex and Relationships Education covers more than biological facts and information and tries to help young people develop self-esteem, self-responsibility as well as the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare students to develop caring stable relationships. Appreciation of the value of self-respect, dignity, commitment and parental duty should be encouraged in all students, together with sensitivity to the needs of others, loyalty and acceptance of responsibility.

PE and Games

All students are expected to take part in the Physical Education and Games programme. We see this as a crucial part of a child's physical, intellectual and social development. The aim is to encourage participation and skills development through enjoyment and good sportsmanship.

Years 7 and 8 will enjoy a double period being taught separately as a year group on one day per week alongside a whole afternoon of sport once a week with the two year groups being taught together. Years 9-11 will retain the current setup of two doubles per week. The sports taught are the traditional seasonal sports of Rugby, Hockey, Football, Netball, Swimming, Tennis, Cricket & Rounders and Athletics. We use a range of excellent local facilities in addition to our own hall and playing areas.

For those students wishing to follow the academic route for Physical Education, the GCSE course is offered. Students choosing this option will follow separate additional theory and practical lessons with a view to examination after two years.

In addition to curriculum-based sport, we offer a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme including fencing, sailing, netball club, riding, football and basketball. Our fixture list is growing steadily and we play a variety of local schools, believing that a degree of healthy competition is useful for developing individual skills and team spirit. We regard it as vital, however, that everyone has the chance to play in a team and that they enjoy the experience.

Students can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, (for which a note from a parent will suffice), or for other reasons agreed with the school.

The Extended Curriculum

The extended curriculum will provide enriching opportunities for learning beyond the taught curriculum.

One way of achieving this is through the provision of **extra-curricular activities**. A range of clubs and activities is on offer at Leckford Place, both during the school day and afterwards, designed to broaden students' experience and improve their skills and knowledge. The aim is also to generate personal interest and have fun! Students will have opportunities to participate in activities that may be closely related to the subjects they study during the day, for example in ICT club, Drama society or Maths Club or may open up a totally new experience as in a chess club or the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

One afternoon a week is devoted to extra-curricular activities with students being required to opt for a different activity each half term. These may include football, street cricket, basketball, netball, badminton, fencing, babysitting, sailing, golf, archery, Warhammer & chess, art & crafts, photography, green club, drama, choir, and orchestra. In addition, a number of other activities take place after school from sports fixtures to jazz and riding clubs.

A wide range of lunchtime clubs and activities supplements existing provision with students having the opportunity to extend or support their academic skills in a suite of subject-based clubs and 'clinics' as well as develop other skills in clubs such as vocal group, orchestra, keyboard club, composing club, reading club, debating society, chess club and so on.

Homework, of course, also forms an important part of the extended curriculum. It will be concerned with research, problem solving, the reinforcement of learning, and encouraging students to use their initiative. It will follow an agreed appropriate timetable, known to parents, students and teachers.

Cross-curricular activities will also be developed in which students investigate particular themes that transcend conventional subject and timetable boundaries.

Work experience in Year 10 is also an integral - and successful – part of the extended curriculum.

The overall aim of work experience is to contribute to students' education by giving them a foretaste of working life, and to help prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adulthood.

Work experience is arranged by Ruth Robinson under the aegis of the Oxfordshire work experience partnership that organises placements and insurance and deals with Health and Safety issues.

Students in Year 10 are given the opportunity to go out on a one week placement usually in May. Staff are encouraged to visit students on placements. Employers feed back information on students' performance which can prove very enlightening!

The experience is always immensely rewarding for the students and we always receive very positive feedback from employers who frequently offer students part time jobs!

Please note that entry to all these programmes of study and activities is based on student suitability and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. In accordance with the statutory requirements we aim to make the curriculum accessible to all students as far as is reasonably practicable. The d'Overbroeck's Disability Inclusion policy and current Accessibility Plan are available to parents on request.

The Informal Curriculum

Schools sometimes forget that daily life outside the organised curriculum is central to the development of student attitudes and behavioural patterns. Teachers are consequently crucial role models and their daily interaction with students can have considerable influence, as can daily involvement in the ethos of the school. A strong commitment of staff and students to the school's vision and the positive relationships that ensue contribute significantly to a strong and supportive ethos. The care, understanding and support shared within the school community are the observable outcomes.

The development of mutual respect, manners, care and consideration in daily activities is of the essence. Mealtimes are a particularly important part of the school day where staff and students are able to interact and students are supported in selecting healthy food and in developing their social skills.

Stretching the academically able

We are dedicated to realising and maximising the talents of all its students, whatever their ability. One of our most important stated aims is that we tailor what we do to the needs of the child – so inevitably this will also mean that some students, identified as gifted or talented, require particular strategies and investment in terms of time and resources to ensure that their potential is fulfilled.

At the heart of the provision for Gifted and Talented students will be what happens in the classroom. The challenge for teachers will be meeting the needs of each individual to ensure that their potential is fulfilled.

Several means can be employed to achieve this:

Enrichment consists of providing extra materials at a deeper or more complex level, or providing challenging questions, which help further students understanding of a topic.

Extension consists of enabling students to move through the curriculum at a faster rate than normal.

Acceleration in this sense means taking students ahead of their year group to be taught with older students.

Most children in this category will receive a combination of the first two strategies; some may need the more radical approach suggested by the third possibility. There needs to be a very good reason for a child to be out of chronological year but we are prepared to countenance this if it can be shown in the best interests of the child.

The progress of gifted and talented students needs to be monitored carefully and adapted as appropriate to ensure their changing needs are being met effectively. We aim to provide an education for our gifted and talented students that is integral to on-going teaching and learning.

Learning Support

We are happy to offer places to those children who will require learning support if they fulfil our wider academic criteria and if we are satisfied that we can offer them a complete package of such support. Clearly, we will only accept students for whom it can make appropriate provision.

Our aim is to remove barriers to learning and to enable those students who require support to enjoy equal access to the curriculum and to achieve results commensurate with their abilities, so far as this is practically possible. We also want to build confidence and self esteem and equip students with the necessary practical skills for future success

Teaching staff are committed to, and experienced in, providing a classroom environment which enhances the learning opportunities of all students. This means that although some children may benefit from one-to-one sessions, many will find that their needs can be met through the medium of small mainstream classes with differentiated activities.

All children receiving learning support are provided with an Individual Education Plan, which is reviewed termly, and we monitor need and progress very carefully. No additional charge is made for learning support lessons.

Identification of Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD): on application to the school, parents are expected to disclose any history of recognised learning difficulties, or any formal assessment of such difficulties

All students in Year 7 (and new students enrolled in Years 8 and 9) are given standardised reading and spelling tests. The differences between students' spelling and reading ages, and their chronological age are noted. The Head of Learning Support, who marks this test, identifies those students who require additional support.

The Head of Learning Support can give individual help to students with difficulties, although the expectation is that students will spend the majority of their time in a whole class environment. Any further testing is the parents' responsibility, but in the case of students with SLD, the Head of Learning Support will recommend suitable professional consultants.

The creation and restoration of academic self-esteem

We do not believe that past performance should define a student's career with us at Leckford Place. We therefore aim to lay fresh foundations, encourage self-esteem and assist students in reaching levels of achievement that may stretch their previous boundaries or aspirations. Although we recognise that this may involve patience and perseverance, along with the inevitable missing of targets from time to time we do, nevertheless, however, expect a pattern of improvement over time.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by Deputy Head, who will report to the Head on its implementation on a regular basis. All staff will be involved both in self-evaluation and in contributing to the development of the wider curriculum.

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APPENDIX B

THE SIXTH FORM

At the heart of all we do in the Sixth Form is a determination to support our students and to respond to their individual needs to help them achieve academic success and personal fulfilment. We want our students to be happy here, to grow in self-confidence and to become more aware of the world around them.

To achieve this we provide students with the opportunity to choose an appropriate programme of A level subjects based on their intellectual abilities, ambitions and interests. We offer an unusually wide range of A level subjects, including the mathematical, scientific, creative, linguistic, and human and social. It is a distinctive and prized feature of the Sixth Form that we offer such a range of subjects and that students are actively helped to choose the combination of subjects that best fits their individual requirements.

We aim to encourage our students to develop their powers of expression, independent study skills and personal confidence so they are fully prepared for the opportunities and responsibilities that lie ahead. These talents are nurtured not just in the classroom but in all aspects of Sixth Form life, including an eclectic and inclusive range of extra-curricular activities, in which we encourage all students to play an active part.

Aims

We believe we have several responsibilities to our students:

- to provide a curriculum that offers each student the opportunity to pursue a course of study that best suits their individual needs and interests
- to encourage students to think beyond the confines of the A level syllabus and to foster an academic and social environment that rewards hard work, individual responsibility and intellectual curiosity
- to emphasise the importance of mutual respect between teachers and students

- to provide students with effective role models in terms of the intellectual enthusiasm, personal responsibility and social concern displayed by their Sixth Form teachers
- to understand the academic profile of each student and to work with them to maximise their potential
- to offer the highest possible standards of teaching across all our subjects
- to provide a programme of extra-curricular activities that stimulate and enrich the lives of our students
- to ensure that students who have special educational requirements are given appropriate support to help them achieve success
- in the case of students whose first language is not English, to provide the necessary language support
- to give students the study skills and university and careers advice required to allow them to prosper academically and socially beyond A levels.

The Taught Curriculum

AS/A Level subjects

- In the lower sixth students will normally study four subjects. In exceptional circumstances students, in light of their academic abilities and ambitions, may pursue, after due consultation with parents and the Academic Head of Sixth Form, a different programme, involving either five or three AS subjects.
- In most cases students who are studying four subjects at AS will continue three through to upper sixth. Academically able students who have shown the requisite levels of personal organisation may continue with all four subjects through to the final exams, if it is in their best interests. Those with five AS subjects will normally continue with four at A2.
- Exceptionally gifted and organised students who would like to study more subjects than usual are encouraged and supported provided they are capable of managing their time and workload effectively.

Choice of subjects

- We offer an unusually wide range of subjects at AS and A2. While the timetable operates on an option block basis, small group sizes and multiple groups for most subjects mean that students have a great deal of flexibility in mixing the subjects of their choice. In general, we encourage an element of complementarity in subjects (e.g. selecting a humanity alongside a science-dominated programme).
- Students are not required at the start of their sixth form career to select the subject that they will drop after AS. This decision will be required provisionally in the summer term of the lower sixth, but is reviewed in the light of AS results and timetable restraints.

APPENDIX C

THE ISC

Rationale

At the ISC we aim to provide an academically serious and supportive environment for international students to work and socialise in as they adapt to living and studying in Britain. We measure our success in two ways: how happy and settled our students are here and how well they progress academically. The International Study Centre strives to offer a curriculum which, while having a strong emphasis placed upon improvement in English language skills, more generally provides opportunities for personal development, stretches our students creatively and imaginatively, encouraging intellectual curiosity and academic excellence. We believe that all students are entitled to equality of regard and equality of opportunity irrespective of age, appearance, gender, social background, race, ability or disability. Within the ISC our core activity is the GCSE Programme. The GCSE Programme is designed for international students aged 15-18, with English of low intermediate or above, as a bridge between education in their home country and that of the United Kingdom.

Aims

The decision to undertake study in a foreign country is one that presents many challenges to any young adult. We recognise that our students' needs are, therefore, threefold:

1. A core academic curriculum which will allow our students to improve their English, develop a range of key skills (literacy, numeracy, communicative skills, use of ICT and independent study strategies) and gain nationally recognised qualifications, so that they may progress onto the next step in their UK education – whether A level or a Baccalaureate Programme.
2. A strong framework for personal development, underpinned by caring pastoral support and a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme, which encourages the students to extend their learning beyond the classroom and to develop life skills such as personal responsibility, team-working and creativity. This strand of the curriculum comprises a crossover between the taught curriculum of sport, PSHE and Study Skills and an Extended Curriculum of optional extra-curricular activities and excursions.
3. A mutually supportive and respectful learning environment, which welcomes diversity as a strength and recognises the contributions of every individual. This involves providing culturally inclusive teaching and learning opportunities, so that the difficult transition from one educational system to another may be assisted.

The Taught Curriculum

As a transitional one-year programme with the aim of giving international students the opportunity to focus on their language learning and the acquisition of key vocabulary across a range of academic subjects, the GCSE programme contains a compulsory core:

- English IGCSE
- Maths IGCSE

- Sciences: IGCSE Single Sciences: Chemistry, Physics, Biology as well as offering Dual Award
- Mother-tongue GCSE where available
- GCSE Citizenshipship.

In this compulsory core, IGCSE's have predominantly been chosen specifically because they have a distinct international element and are particularly suited to our students. IGCSE's allow teaching to be placed in an international context and are suitable for adaptation to different regions and cultures – and thus more relevant to our diverse student body. Furthermore, they are intended to be suitable for students whose first language may not be English and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

We have added a modern-foreign language in the options and art, for those students whose future study interest are not science orientated. We have increasingly found that as our nationality range has widened there are students who wish to go on and study Geography, Politics, Law, Art, Sociology and Communication Studies, for example, and that our existing curriculum did not adequately prepare these students. We were also aware that previously our curriculum had been very 'science heavy' for those students who did not have a great aptitude for these subjects.

In English classes, students are taught in groups according to language level. These groups also dictate the options they have available to them from the additional GCSE's we offer. The timetable structure means that we can also ensure that those students with the strongest aptitude for science can also be grouped. This means that classes can be paced accordingly. Project Work is also on offer instead of a GCSE for those with the weakest level of language, as offers opportunities for extending language learning without necessarily requiring these students to take the exam at the end of the academic year.

Students will be advised, according to their language ability, on their choices from the following options:

- Business Studies or History GCSE
- Art or French
- Project Group
- Geography or ICT may also be chosen to replace one science subject

In these subjects, weaker students are generally directed towards subjects requiring more practical skills (Art) or Project Group, where we decide whether to focus on them achieving GCSE or whether to use their interest to develop both their skills in this field and provide extended language practice. We also use learning an additional language – French as a means of encouraging the language knowledge and understanding of these weaker students, as adding a language can increase the speed of acquisition of English, particularly for Asian students.

The subjects offered as options have been selected on the basis that they:

- a. Present a higher level of language challenge than the subjects offered in the Sciences strand of the core curriculum, thus ensuring all students are being stretched linguistically and academically.
- b. Give the students access to a wider range of subjects at A level. For example Business Studies may provide background vocabulary and knowledge useful for Economics, while History is a good stepping-stone into A level History or Politics or any of the humanities where essay writing skills are essential. Art prepares students for Art, Photography or can be used to stimulate interest in History of Art
- c. Each of the subjects is achievable within a one-year period.

Life in the UK/PSHE

As well as sending out a pre-arrival Welcome Pack to prepare the students for what to expect when they make the move to living in the UK, The ISC provides a one week induction course on arrival. This is aimed at giving our students as much practical support as possible as they get to grips with their new environment and in particular in their dealings with day to day matters of health and safety. This continues in Thursday afternoon activities slots over the remainder of the first half term. Throughout the year the students have an on-going PSHE strand which is covered in Registration sessions in the morning and afternoons. The course covers matters such as coping with culture shock, travelling around the city, personal safety, care of possessions and valuables, healthcare in the UK, sexual health and relationships, drugs and alcohol and British law. The course is run in a relaxed fashion with students working together with their Form group and Form Teacher. The content is presented through discussions and activities and role play so that potentially culturally difficult topics may be addressed in a sensitive fashion. Additional on-going practical support is available to students in the form of fortnightly individual tutorials with their Form Teacher. This allows us to deal with any personal worries that our students may be having.

Study Skills & Examination Preparation

Throughout the year, the Form Teachers cover study skills in Registration, PSHE and one-to-one tutorials with their form group members. In these they discuss styles of learning, study strategies and organisation. The Form Teachers regularly check students' Planners to ensure they are completing their homework and are maintaining their organisation. One-to-one time allows the Form Teachers to cover areas of specific weakness with a student and set goals in their Planners to help them address these, enabling our students to make the most of their academic talents at GCSE and, later, A level. In addition to this, in the exam term, we provide a 4 week examination preparation course which covers skills such as revision timetable planning, memorisation techniques and managing stress.

Sport and Activities

All students at the ISC are expected to take part in the Sport and Activities programme available on Tuesday afternoons. We see this as a crucial part of their physical, intellectual and social development. The aim is to encourage participation and skills development through enjoyment and team-working. On Tuesdays, students may choose from a wide variety of sports and activities that are run in conjunction with Sixth Form, offering opportunities for socialisation with both British and other international students. We are hoping to introduce taught sport's lessons within this

afternoon activities programme in 2010-2011. We run annual sporting events in conjunction with 1 or 2 of our partner ISC members of BAISC, and this is an area we aim to develop in future.

The Extended Curriculum

The aim of the extended curriculum is to encourage our students to extend their learning beyond the classroom, to explore personal interests and discover new talents. On Thursday afternoons, students take part in a variety of ISC-only activities, ranging from special interest activities such as Debating Society or Cookery Club, through to whole-ISC activities such as the Christmas pantomime, Newsday or the annual International Arts Festival. We also offer regular evening and weekend activities aimed at opening up new experiences to our students. These include school-based workshops (drama, music, and dance, for example) and visits to places of interest in Oxford and beyond, challenging physical activities such as orienteering and 'outward-bound' sports, and purely social events such as cinema trips. These activities all offer opportunities for our students to reinforce their language learning and communicative skills whilst having fun, and as such are a vital part of the overall curriculum.

This policy will be monitored by the ISC Director in conjunction with the GCSE Programme Co-ordinator, who will report to the ISC Director on its implementation and effectiveness. All staff will be involved in both self-evaluation and in contributing to the development of the wider curriculum.

AQA Baccalaureate

Details of what is involved in it are given elsewhere in this Handbook.

Transition from AS to A2

- Transition from AS to A2 at the end of the lower sixth is not automatic. There is an expectation that under normal circumstances a student must achieve a minimum set of results at AS. At present this stands at CCDD. If students do not achieve this minimum level or if, for other reasons, we do not believe they are capable of succeeding at A2, they may be required either to retake the lower sixth, or to leave the College.

Provision for students whose first language is not English

- The students are assessed before the start of the lower sixth. Only students whose English language is sufficiently strong to enable them to embark successfully on an AS programme will be accepted.
- Unless a student's English is outstanding, then they must join an EAL class in Lower Sixth. EAL support may continue into the Upper Sixth for those students who are deemed to need it.
- As far as possible, Lower Sixth EAL classes are timetabled in parallel to enable the students to be 'setted' according to needs and abilities.
- The broad objective of EAL teaching is to develop our international students' understanding of UK culture and society as well as their command of the English language. More specifically, our EAL department aims: (i) to support and assist students in their AS/A Level studies and (ii) to prepare them to attain the IELTS standards necessary for their proposed further education plans.

Classroom Teaching

We believe strongly that small and interactive classes are very important. Such classes give all students the opportunity to debate ideas and to form and share their own opinions. These classes, never more than 10 in number, help generate an academic atmosphere of collective support and engagement whilst also allowing the time and opportunity to address the individual needs of each student.

The Extended Curriculum

A busy and wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities is an important feature of life in the Sixth Form. We believe that involvement in these activities promotes a sense of teamwork, individual confidence and collective goodwill. A number of clubs and activities takes place each week including a range of individual and team sports, drama, music, art, yoga, Tai Chi, debating, environmental awareness, Duke of Edinburgh, Young Enterprise – and many more besides. There are also several weekend trips, activities and visits during the year. In addition, all students in the Lower Sixth take part in an Enrichment Programme, which takes place on Monday afternoons and involves a range of talks, seminars etc on a wide range of issues of general educational interest and personal development.

Lower Sixth students are expected to take part in at least one activity of their choice each week. When they reach the Upper Sixth, students are free to decide whether or not to take part in the Activities programme – though participation continues to be valued and encouraged, and we hope that most students will carry on with their chosen Activities throughout the Sixth Form

Higher Education and Careers Advice

The great majority of our students go on to university. We believe that the choice of university and degree course is one of the most important a young person will make and therefore we have a responsibility to ensure they are fully supported to make the best possible decision. To help them make the right choices about what and where to study we guide students through the whole application process on an individual basis. This includes personal advice on how to complete the application form and, where relevant, interview practice. We also provide a number of higher education events and visits to universities.

For those applying for medical courses or to the universities of Oxford or Cambridge, we provide special preparation programmes starting in the second term of the Lower Sixth.

Students not intending to go on into higher education have access to careers advice from the College's Careers Adviser.

Policy last reviewed August 2010
