The Dixie Grammar Sixth Form

2023

Welcome

Whether you are looking at the Dixie for the first time or have been a member of the school since nursery, I am delighted to introduce you to our Sixth Form.

The Dixie Sixth Form offers a warm and welcoming environment - we are small enough to know each student individually, but large enough to offer a wide range of academic and extra-curricular opportunities. This is not just a continuation of your school career; it is an exciting new phase. The Sixth Form is a bridge between school and university - our small teaching groups will give you the best possible chance of academic success, whilst our experienced staff work hard to ensure that you have every opportunity to develop your academic and personal skills. We have an excellent record in helping students achieve their ambitions and, whether you want to be a doctor or an artist, to go to university or enter employment, we have the expertise to help you get there.

Our aim is simple - to help every student to achieve their full potential. Our philosophy is tried and tested and, by the end of your time in the Dixie Sixth Form, I am confident that you will be equipped and ready for the next stage in your life.

I hope that you find the information in this prospectus useful – please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of our provision.

Jon Dixon
Head of Sixth Form

Entry Requirements

We are looking for students to join us who have not only ability in their chosen subjects, but who can also make a positive contribution to the ethos of the Sixth Form through their enthusiasm and commitment. It would not, however, be sensible or advisable to attempt an A Level course without having first achieved a reasonable standard at GCSE. You will normally be expected to have at least a Grade 6 in the subjects you wish to study at A Level, but this is open to discussion with the relevant Head of Department if you do not do as well as you expected. It is always worth talking to your teachers or to Mr Dixon, Head of Sixth Form, as we consider every student as an individual.

In order to make decisions about subject choices, it is important you find out as much as possible about the courses available that you might wish to take in the Sixth Form. During Year Eleven you are encouraged to talk to subject teachers, as well as to Sixth Form students who can give you valuable insight into each subject. This prospectus, one to one review meetings after mock examinations, and Sixth Form induction are also vital elements of this "choice" process.

Applying to the Sixth Form

If you are at another school and wish to apply to the Dixie Sixth Form, you will need to obtain an application form from the school (or the school website) and return it to us as soon as possible. Offers of places will be based on a reference from your present school, subject to you achieving suitable grades at GCSE.

All applicants
You can apply to join the Sixth Form at any time, but the earlier that you do so, the more likely it is that we will be able to ensure that your subject choices fit the timetable**.**

At the end of the Summer Term, all those students who are considering joining the Sixth Form in September are invited to the Sixth Form Induction Week, which will enable you to take lessons in your chosen subjects and experience life in the Sixth Form before September.

Sixth Form Scholarships

Academic Scholarships
Sixth Form academic scholarships are awarded on the basis of the mock (I)GCSE results and teacher recommendations.

Art Scholarships
Art Scholarships are awarded to students of outstanding ability who have shown a constant commitment to the subject throughout their school career but especially in their GCSE studies.

Music Scholarships
Music Scholarships may be offered to Sixth Form students who demonstrate the highest level of musical performance in one or more instruments or voice. Please note that recipients of awards will be expected to play a full part in all school musical activities.

Sports Scholarships
Sports Scholarships are offered to candidates of exceptional sporting standard (they will normally have county representative honours) and of high academic standard who wish to study Sport and Physical Education at A Level.

Further details are available from the Senior School Office and on the School website www.dixie.org.uk

General Information

A typical week in the Lower Sixth will consist of nine 35-minute lessons in each of your three chosen subjects. In addition, there will be two periods dedicated to the Sixth Form Enrichment programme and three periods each week are set aside for Senior Games. The remaining time is used for private study.

Work in the Sixth Form is certainly testing, but also very enjoyable and rewarding. You will need to be far more independent, learning to organise your own time and study, rather than relying on others to tell you what to do and when to do it. Thinking for yourself and developing your ideas are important skills that you will soon find essential if you are to succeed.

You are not on your own, so don't worry. Specialised and experienced Sixth Form tutors, in addition to your subject teachers, will help you to adjust and develop the skills needed for success. Your tutor will keep a close eye on your progress and ensure that everything remains on track.

Tutor groups contain students from both Upper and Lower Sixth. Generally, you remain with the same tutor for the full two years; he or she registers you, deals with everyday administrative matters, offers help and advice in group and personal tutorials and, of course, writes your references! The tutorial system is designed to help you achieve your full potential in every area, while also encouraging you to become independent.

What courses are offered?
Details of our courses are available in the subject information pages provided with this prospectus. We believe that the subjects we offer are those best suited to the Sixth Form students that we attract, as well as being those which universities see as a good basis for high-quality courses. Teaching groups in the Sixth Form are always small, which ensures that it is easy to obtain help from teaching staff and that any problems are spotted and dealt with promptly.

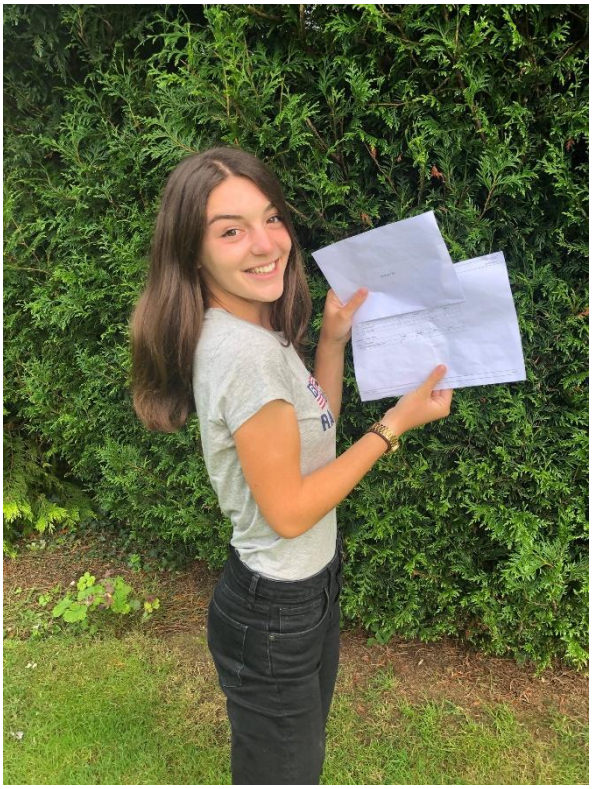
GCE A Level qualifications are linear: this means that all assessment is at the end of the course, i.e. at the end of the Upper Sixth for A Level.

How many subjects can I study?
The curriculum is designed to encourage breadth and flexibility in Sixth Form study. At The Dixie we expect Sixth Formers to follow a programme of three A Level subjects - the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is also offered to all students.

Careers & University Applications

In preparation for moving on after A Levels, it is vital for students to carefully consider their options for University; degrees, diplomas and apprenticeships. Advice is given on an ongoing basis about university applications and careers and there are opportunities to attend careers courses, day and overnight, at numerous venues both locally and nationwide.

The vast majority of our students do apply to university and the Sixth Form team are highly experienced in helping you make the strongest possible university (UCAS) application. Every year, almost all of our students gain places at their first-choice university and we are experienced at steering students through the Oxbridge application and interview process and supporting prospective medics, lawyers and engineers. Whatever your ambition, we will help you to present yourself in the best possible light in interviews and on application forms. For our part, we write positive and individual references for you to encourage successful applications. After your A Level results come out, we will be here to advise you if you need help at that stage.



Extracurricular & Leadership

Charities

Sixth Form students help to organise events in school which support both local and national charities. For example, non-uniform days, cake sales and other fundraising initiatives.

The Dixie Leaders Award

All Lower Sixth students are required to undertake the Dixie Leaders Award in one of their A Level subjects. This involves committing the equivalent of one period a week to one subject, helping younger students in liaison with the class teacher, delivering teaching activities and assisting in lessons. Again, this is invaluable for university applications - demonstrating commitment, dedication and leadership.

Enrichment

The Sixth Form Enrichment programme offers students the opportunity to gain fresh experiences, challenge themselves and develop new skills. In addition to House Debates and visiting speakers, students select from a wide range of activities that build skills and prepare them for life beyond Dixie.

Sport, Recreation and Wednesday Afternoon Activities

Senior Games takes place on a Wednesday afternoon for both Lower and Upper Sixth students. A number of our Sixth Form students continue to play competitive sport, representing the school in a variety of areas both as individuals and/or members of a team.

Prefects

Prefects are held in high regard by both staff and students and take a leading role in representing the school at key events. Prefects are expected to set the highest example to younger students and to demonstrate both leadership and initiative. Applications for the positions of Head Boy and Girl, and for the Prefect team, take place in the spring term each year.

Senior Prefect Team 2022-23

Head Boy	Elliot Breadon
Head Girl	Eleanor Bee
Deputy Head Boy	Guy Kibble
Deputy Head Girl	Emily Cutler

Art and Design

Head of Department: Mrs K McGranaghan

Head of Department Video

What do I need to study Art at A Level?

Usually the Art Department is looking for students who have embraced the GCSE course and risen to the challenges they have encountered there; worked hard throughout the two years of that course and achieved either a 7-9 grade in that qualification. The Department is looking for students who have an obvious interest in the subject but are not necessarily thinking of taking their studies to degree level.

Why choose to study Art at A Level?

There are real benefits to considering studying Art at A Level. The obvious benefit is that it is a natural progression from Art A Level to gaining a place on a Foundation course and a Degree place on an Arts course of your choice. The Art Department has been very successful over the years in preparing students for the Foundation course and has an impressive success rate for students accepted onto both Loughborough and De Montfort University Foundations.

If, however, you are not considering Art College there are still good reasons for choosing to study Art at A Level. Art is a natural foil to the more academic disciplines of other A Level subjects and can offer a creative outlet that might not otherwise be realised by activities within school. Also, the student who is willing to work hard in this subject, under the guidance of department staff, will usually achieve a creditable grade that can generate much needed points in the UCAS system.

What does A Level Art involve?

Firstly, lots of hard work on your part! But also lots of engaging, challenging work and new experiences channelled into two years of study. You will also encounter a programme of study that encourages interaction with galleries, museums and practising artists and craftspeople.

You will be expected to carry out in-depth investigations into various working methods and media. You will experience methods and materials you perhaps have not previously encountered at GCSE and have the opportunity to speak to practitioners about their approaches to creating Art and craft objects.

What does the course entail?

The course consists of two components.

1. Personal Investigation.
Students will submit one major project which will have a theme of personal significance. The investigation includes a related personal study that must be between 1,000 – 3,000 words.

2. Controlled Assignment.
Students select one starting point from an early release question paper and are given a minimum of three weeks in which to plan and prepare their assignment. This is followed by a maximum of fifteen hours of controlled time in which to complete a final outcome.

The coursework and controlled assignments are internally marked and externally moderated.

Biology

Head of Department: Mr G Bailey

Head of Department Video

Context:

Do you strive for a career involving medicine, sport performance development, climate change, food shortage crisis, dietetics, physiotherapy and injury prevention, forensics, animal welfare or future pathogenic pandemics' impact? Then A Level Biology is for you!

How often do you hear of these areas of Science mentioned in everyday life? How many of these affect us on a daily basis? In Biology you will explore the mechanisms involved in underlying principles that allow life to exist and develop skills to answer questions that we have not yet thought of. Gaining an understanding of how the study of life affects the ever-evolving world we live in can provide solutions to a plethora of problems, reduce suffering, save lives and allow organisms to prosper.

Practicals:

We offer a wide range of practical activities (both assessed and informal) to engage and supplement understanding through student discovery and application of the theory we have learnt.

You will model DNA using sweets, plasma membranes using plasticine and trays of water, explore local parks to conduct fieldwork, dissect a range of plant and animal organs and tissues, conduct tests to identify molecules in food, extract DNA, grow microbes, separate blood, use live animals, observe your body's responses plus many more.

Students are also assessed whilst conducting 12 compulsory practicals, which awards a separate certification in investigative skills.

What do our students say?

"Biology has given me an invaluable and inspiring idea of why we do what we do and specifically in the body."
Head girl

"If you like Biology at GCSE you'll like it at A Level as you go into more detail and you understand the big picture."
Year 13 student

Exam board:

OCR

Course Structure:

Lower sixth:

- Module 1: Development of practical skills in Biology – investigating how processes work
- Module 2: Foundations in Biology – cells, cellular processes and biological molecules
- Module 3: Exchange and transport – how species use and remove various substances
- Module 4: Biodiversity, evolution and disease – how life and the natural world interact.

This will potentially involve an ecological fieldwork residential expedition to Cumbria's AONB to gain some hands-on experience of how our environment is changing.

Upper sixth:

- Module 1: Development of practical skills in biology – investigating how processes work
- Module 5: Communication, homeostasis and energy - organisms responding to changes in their internal and external environments
- Module 6: Genetics, evolution and ecosystems – understanding our genetic make up; history and future.

Course delivery:

You will be taught by both of Dixie's Biology teachers, Mr Bailey and Miss Galpin. Module delivery is designed so each teachers' lessons complement each other in a spiral curriculum format that revisits and retrieves understanding to build and supplement your progress.

You will receive nine lessons of Biology per week in specialist laboratories. You will be provided with your own personal text book, lab book, lab coat and digital resources.

Assessment:

3 external exams at the end of the second year, each covering a range of the 6 aforementioned modules. Practical skills are developed throughout the course. These are assessed in the written exams and in the practical endorsement of teacher assessed investigations.

How Biology impacts the world around us right now…

As we grow older, the human body accumulates senescent cells. These are cells that no longer divide, put us at risk of diseases such as cancer and make us frail. They effectively make us old.

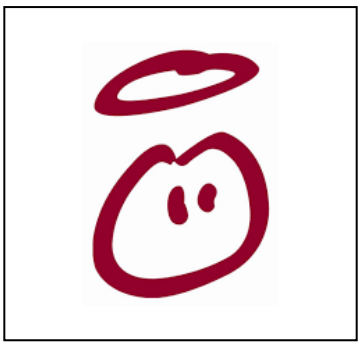
Up to the minute, modern scientific research is developing drugs called senolytics (seno-old; lytic-split/stop) that could slow or stop the ageing process of cells and tissues! Senolytics target the senescent cells and prevent "ageing genes" from being expressed/switched on and therefore reducing disease risk and strength loss, potentially saving trillions in expense. Clinical trials have shown mice becoming older yet stronger, more adventurous and more athletic!

Business Studies

Head of Department: Mrs S Hudson

Head of Department Video

Why might Business be of interest to me?



The Business A Level content is designed to engage students through topics and issues that are relevant in today's society, such as digital technology, business ethics and globalisation. Students will develop the knowledge and skills needed to analyse data, think critically about issues and make informed decisions; all skills that are needed for further study and employment.

What will I learn?

The following are the ten key areas of study in the Business A Level. Points 7 to 10 are studied in the second year.

1. What is business?
2. Managers, leadership and decision making
3. Decision making to improve marketing performance
4. Decision making to improve operational performance
5. Decision making to improve financial performance
6. Decision making to improve human resource performance
7. Analysing the strategic position of a business (A-level only)
8. Choosing strategic direction (A-level only)
9. Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies (A-level only)
10. Managing strategic change (A-level only)

The topics lend themselves to studying and engaging with the business world. The specification and assessment should encourage students to follow business developments and think critically about contemporary business issues. Most of the assessment material is based on real business situations. By examining and thinking critically about these situations, students will gain an insight into different contexts, helping them to understand the key issues whilst comparing and contrasting with other scenarios and contexts.

What else will I learn?

Over the course of study, students acquire generic skills in many areas including data analysis, formal written and presentation skills and construction of cash flow. Students also develop a clear and concise style of writing, the type used in business, enabling effective communication about business-related issues. Students are required to generate well written and balanced arguments and then come to a reasoned conclusion based on the weight of evidence.

Outside of the classroom

In addition, we have had a number of highly successful business ventures over the last few years. Sweet Treats sold home produced chocolate truffles and fudge and made a £400 profit which they donated to Hope against Cancer. Business Bakers made a £320 profit from selling cake pops and the Gingerbread Company sold gingerbread teachers making a profit of over £300. All profits are donated to a charity of the students choosing.

In October 2017, we launched the Young Enterprise Company Programme. To date, the Dixie teams have generated and managed 4 profitable social enterprises. This is a student led programme where they set up, open a bank account, manage their own money, market, sell and compete with teams from other schools over a 9 month period. Teams Athena's Books and Basic picked up Young Enterprise awards including Most Innovative Product and Best Marketing as well as qualifying for the County finals.

To help students to understand the complexity of manufacturing and topics such as lean manufacturing and kaizen, the Business students have visited local firms JJ Precision Engineering and Suncream Dairies to see first-hand how daily operations are carried out and enhancing knowledge gained in the classroom.

Young Enterprise team: Basic

Is this the right subject for me?

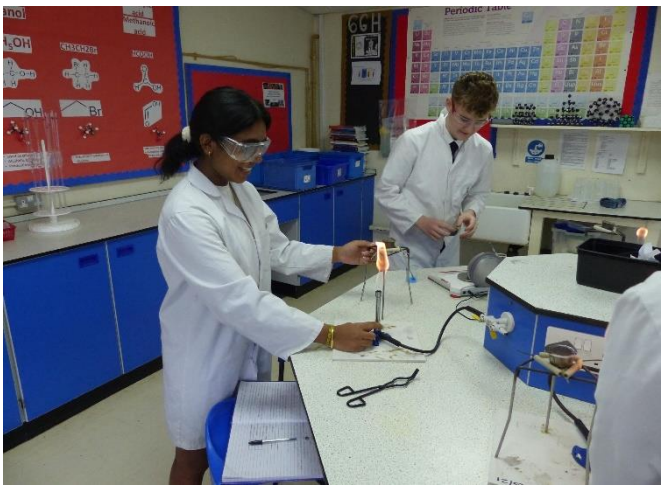
This course is suitable for you if you:

- prefer examinations to coursework
- are prepared to take an interest in current national news and international business news
- want to learn how to analyse information effectively and suggest solutions to real business problems
- enjoy putting 'theory concepts' into practice
- are able to meet deadlines
- have a good mathematical understanding
- have a genuine interest in the business world

Chemistry

Head of Department: Dr S Rimmington

Head of Department Video



Everything that physically exists is a chemical and industrial chemistry in one form or another underpins most of the world's economic activity.

Are you looking for an A Level that will stretch and challenge you?

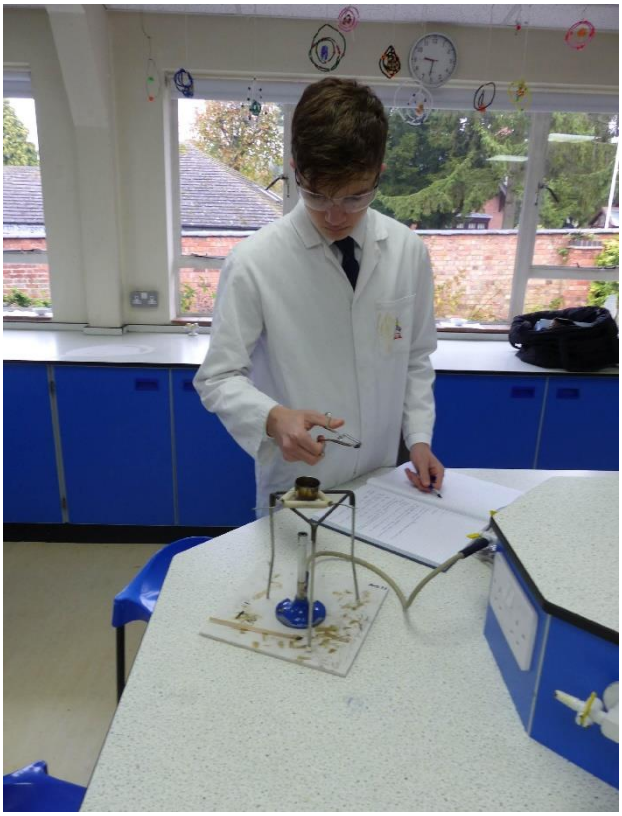
Are you after an A Level that is so well respected it is a requirement for some of the most competitive courses?

If so, A Level Chemistry is for you!

Chemistry is an exciting subject where theory is brought alive with a variety of practical work. It allows us to understand the world from the molecular level while developing many of the transferable skills that universities and employers are looking for.

What do Chemists contribute to the world?

Chemistry is responsible for feeding you. It can clothe you and produce the building materials for the houses you live in. It is responsible for the technology that powers your vehicles, keeping you clean, making you feel better when you are unwell, making you smell better and be more attractive.



Chemistry is central to any science-based course at university. It is important for most scientific disciplines ranging from molecular biology to astrophysics, and essential for medicine and veterinary science.

"I like the balance between theory and practical work. The teachers are always willing to give extra help or to answer questions, whether it is at lunchtime or during free periods."

Emily Cutler

The Future

Studying Chemistry helps students to develop their analytical and problem solving skills. These can then be applied to the further study of Science or to a wide variety of other careers. Here are just a few examples of courses that former Chemistry students at Dixie have studied at university:

- Chemistry
- Medicine
- Veterinary Science
- Dentistry
- Forensic Science
- Pharmacy
- Business and Management
- Law
- Engineering
- Art

"Chemistry is good clean fun. I have enjoyed my time studying A Level Chemistry."

Harriat Whitehead

"AS Chemistry seems like a big step from GCSE it is challenging but rewarding."

Tom Brining

The Chemistry Department has a long-standing tradition of helping students achieve excellent results. We offer an outstanding level of support to help you do your best.

Outside the Classroom

Students often get to use some of the latest analytical equipment at the University of Leicester.

They also attended study days and practical workshops in a university laboratory setting.

At Dixie we teach the AQA specification A Level Chemistry. We are able to co-teach the AS and A Level course.
Practical skills will be assessed as part of everyday laboratory work and a lab book will be used to show development over the two years of the A Level course. This will result in an endorsement on the A Level certificate when certain standards are met.

Computer Science

Head of Department: Mr K Gold

Head of Department Video

"Graduates who can code, solve complex problems and work smoothly in teams with non-technical colleagues are desperately needed."
Dr Louis Nanatson, Abertay University

When Charles Babbage invented the Analytical Engine, I am sure he could not have imagined how significant computers would become. You probably use several computers before you get to school every morning. Alarm clock, television, radio, traffic light systems, pelican crossings, cash machines, mobile phones, to name but a few.

They are threaded through our everyday life. Computer Science A Level helps you to understand their role, how they work and how you can control them. The course gives students a broad experience of the world of computing including finite state machines, logic gates, binary logic, database design, binary number systems, high level programming and the fundamentals of computer systems. More important than all of this is the problem solving approach it instils in the students who do this course. It teaches them to examine a problem and break it down into manageable stages and organise a plan to solve it. These are skills students can apply across all of their learning.

Computer Science is a growth area at University and the United Kingdom is a world leader so employment prospects are also good. Currently, there is a world shortage of suitably qualified computer scientists.

We will be delivering the AQA A Level Computer Science course 7517 and AS Level Computer Science 7516. These courses are designed to:

- Allow students to demonstrate knowledge of the fundamental principles of the subject
- Develop problem-solving abilities in a computing context using an algorithmic approach;
- Demonstrate knowledge of programming through a problem solving scenario;
- Develop an understanding of the hardware and software aspects of computing.

The specification has been designed so that the AS and A level can be taught alongside each other in the same class room. We cover the AS syllabus in the first year and build on this with the more demanding A2 material at the end of the first year and during the second.

Computer Science is assessed in three parts:

Paper 1: Practical Problem Solving and Programming
This is examined by a 2 hour 30 minutes, on-screen exam of short answer questions and programming problems. All questions are compulsory. There is pre-release material including a skeleton program and the questions in the exam will relate to this material. The pre-release material gives students plenty of time to prepare for the exam. This contributes 40% on the marks of the A level.

Paper 2: Theoretical Aspects
This is examined by a 2 hour 30 minutes written paper. It covers more theoretical aspects such as *Fundamentals of Computer Systems* and *Consequences of the Use of Computing*. This contributes 40 % of the marks of the A level.

Non Examined Assessment: Problem Solving, Programming, Operating Systems, Databases and Networking

Students complete a practical project in computing using the knowledge and skills they gain on the course. The project is chosen by the student and not set by AQA. This could involve producing a system to meet an end user need, or alternatively investigating some aspect of computer science. This contributes 20 % of the marks of the A Level. There is no non-examined assessment at AS.

Design and Technology: Product Design
Head of Department: Mrs N. Pike

Head of Department Video

Course Title: AQA Design and Technology Product Design (7552)

What is on Offer?

Product Design is a creative and thought-provoking qualification. At the Dixie Grammar School we give students the chance to investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning in to practice by producing products of their choice, often for real world clients. They will develop various practical skills, for example sketching and CAD, whilst also improving transferable skills such as the ability to research, analyse and problem solve.

The new Design and Technology course requires students to be able to apply maths and science to solve design based problems, and would therefore fit nicely alongside either of these A Levels.

What will be studied?

You will spend approximately half of your time on planning, designing and creating a product to meet your individual brief. For the other half of the course you will study how technology has advanced in the last century and take an in-depth look at iconic designs around us. You will learn how products are made in industry and look at manufacturing processes and the properties of materials.

Where could Design and Technology: Product Design lead?

Aerospace Engineering, Animation, Architecture, Art Therapy, Costume Design, Engineering, Fashion Design (Shoe Design), Fine Art, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Model Making/Special Effects, Printmaking, Product Design, Set and Theatre Design, Textile Design, Prosthetics.

Which subjects does Design and Technology go well with?

Design and Technology goes well with other STEM subjects such as:

- Science (especially Chemistry and Physics)
- Maths (this course is most suited to grade 7-9 GCSE candidates)

It also goes nicely with:

- Art and Design
- Business Studies

How is the course assessed?

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams and submit all their non-exam assessment at the end of the course.

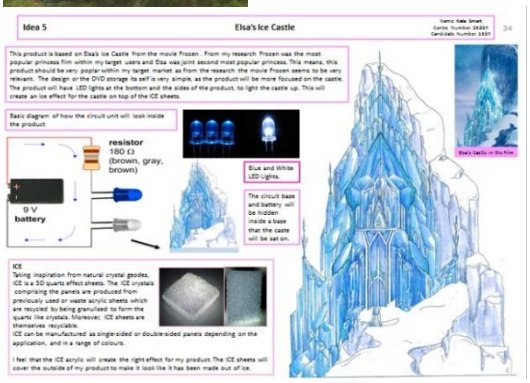
The course will be assessed in the following way:

1. NEA or Non Exam Assessment (formerly referred to as a coursework portfolio) – this counts for 50% of the marks. Students select their own brief and complete a substantial design and make project based on it.
2. Technical Principles exam – 2.5 hour written exam, worth 30%. The exam looks at the student's ability to apply mathematic principles to design situations.
3. Designing and Making Principles written exam – 1.5 hour exam that makes up the remaining 20% of the A Level. This exam consists of questions relating to product analysis and commercial manufacture.

Here are some examples of NEA work:








Please note that this subject is not suitable for those wishing to study for an AS Level. It is taught as a two year A Level course.

English Language

Teacher in Charge: Mr P Macmillan

Head of Department Video

Why do children say 'I goed to school' when they've never heard this word before?
Why is our spelling system so irregular?
Why do we have swear words?
Why can the words 'miss' and 'mrs' be viewed as sexist?
Why do parents say 'can you tidy your room?' when you have no choice in the matter?
Why has text language developed the way it has?

If these questions interest you then you should consider studying English Language. You need to have an interest in language and enjoy both looking closely at and also creating language.

What it isn't!

- A Level English Language is not English Literature. They are very different.
- A Level English Language is not GCSE English. It will be a new subject and you will have very little prior knowledge.
- A Level English Language is not for people who 'like English but don't like reading or writing'. You will have to read around the topics, the exams are written and the coursework requires extended writing and reading.

The best way of understanding English Language is to look at the course:

Paper 1

Section A - Analysis of a short text focussing on vocabulary and grammar
Section B - Creating a media text on a topical language issue
Section C - Comparing two texts, one of which will be spoken

Paper 2

Section A - Child Language Acquisition
Section B - Language and the Media
Section C - Historical Language Change

Coursework

Investigation into a language area of the student's choosing and the creation of an academic poster to display the findings.

Where can English Language take me?

You will acquire analytical skills, reading skills and a deep understanding of language. This will help in any walk of life, from a newspaper reporter to a salesperson. Any profession that requires the reading of complex writing, such as medicine or law, will benefit. Also any job that involves writing, such as journalism, academia or public relations, will suit English Language.

Basically, English Language helps any subject and the skills learnt will be useful for life!

You need to think carefully about studying English Language and do your research because it is a new subject. In particular, if you are deciding between English Literature or Language, you should speak to the relevant teachers because each subject is very different!

English Literature

Head of Department: Mr P Macmillan

Why study English Literature?

For starters, it is a highly respected subject - both employers and universities will know what it involves and no-one is going to question its academic merit. The rigour of the English Literature course means that, whilst it is not a soft option, it is very rewarding if you are willing to put in the work. You will develop essay writing skills, begin to interpret and evaluate material, discuss and criticise points of view - all skills that are transferable into many other areas of life.

On a less narrowly academic level, English Literature taps into the broader cultural heritage of the country - a familiarity with Literature broadens your understanding of the society that you live in, its history and people. As such, English Literature can enhance your understanding of subjects as diverse as History, Philosophy, Psychology, Law and even the social application of the Sciences.

Literature is also enjoyable! If you have any interest in story or narrative, in drama or theatre or poetry, this course allows you to explore those interests more deeply. We can't promise you will enjoy every text you study - but you will certainly have many opportunities to develop your interest in those that you do.

What does the course involve?

Almost all lessons are discussion based - we want you to become confident in sharing your ideas and in constructively responding to the ideas of others. Some lessons will be teacher-led - at other times students might be asked to lead the discussion.

When it comes to coursework (where you can choose your own texts for study) a lot of teaching takes place via one to one discussion. We follow the Edexcel A Level specification and whilst text choices for study may vary from year to year, current and recent selections are shown below.

Year One

- *A Streetcar Named Desire*
- Post-2000 Poetry
- *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*
- *Wuthering Heights*

Year Two

- *Othello, Hamlet* or *Twelfth Night*
- Metaphysical Poetry or Philip Larkin
- Coursework (NEA) (20% of total marks)

What can I study afterwards?

Almost anything you like!

You may decide that English Literature is the degree for you - and we have had many students over the years who have found that the A Level course gave them both the desire to study the subject at a higher level and the skills to enable them to do so.

However, English Literature is an excellent springboard to a wide variety of courses. An A Level in the subject will demonstrate that you can construct essays, develop a line of thought, argue, synthesise and criticise. Indeed, universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, list English Literature as one of the most useful A Levels. Even if your ultimate aim is, for example, Medicine, English Literature will show that you have a wide range of academic interests beyond those essential for your subject.

Past English Literature students from The Dixie have gone on to study Medicine, Law, History, Accounting – and, of course, English Literature.

Visits/Speakers

English Literature provides a number of opportunities for trips and visits – particularly theatre performances. Students can usually expect to see a performance of at least one play during the course.

Please note that an enjoyment of reading is fairly necessary
in order to succeed at this course!

Geography

Head of Department: Miss V Entwisle

Head of Department Video

Why study Geography?

Geography is, of course, a very important component of everybody's life, being as it is the study of human interaction with our environment. It is also an important link between the arts and the sciences, providing a great breadth of experience, skills and knowledge.

In the Geography Department at The Dixie Grammar School we believe an interest in and understanding of Geography is crucial to a well-informed, balanced individual. It is important to realise that Geography is much more than the basic knowledge of where places are; it is a much more complex and interesting subject vital to a lively person with an enquiring mind. It is true to say that geographers are not generally people who might sit idly on a beach. We want to know what is on the other side of the headland and why? Geographers have 'get up and go' and as a result are in demand by employers who want people who 'have something about them'.

At the Dixie Grammar School you will be encouraged to develop your knowledge and interests through independent learning. We are proud of our results which have, over the last 20 years, consistently led to students reaching their maximum potential.

What will be studied?

In Geography we will cover both human and physical topics at both AS and A Level study. Students will be given opportunities to experience fieldwork allowing them to make links between theories learnt in class and the real world. The AS/A Level courses not only allow pupils to further develop their knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts but also teach essential research skills which can be applied to a wide variety of occupations or further academic study.

Outlined below are current OCR specifications for the AS and A Level courses.
Further details can be found on the OCR exam board website www.ocr.org.uk

AS (H081)	A Level (H481)
Exam 1 Landscape systems Changing Spaces; Making Places **Exam 2** Geographical debates Fieldwork Skills are examined through the two exams outlined above	**Exam 1** Physical systems **Exam 2** Human interactions **Exam 3** Geographical debates Independent investigation

Where will it lead?

A Level Geography proves to prospective employers, colleges and universities that you are capable of working at a high academic standard. Geography provides a sound basis for degree level studies in almost any subject. More specifically it is vital in courses such as Earth Sciences, Business Studies, Sociology, Urban Planning, Cartography, Meteorology and Resource Management as well as Geography itself (in which the emphasis can be either on the physical or the human).

Extra-Curricular Activities

As Geography is the study of the Earth we like to try to get out and about as much as possible. Our main field trip is to North Wales. If there is sufficient interest there is also a possibility of a Geography visit to Iceland combined with IGCSE students.

History

Head of Department: Mrs J Prasher-Maldé

Head of Department Video

"The time for extracting a lesson from history is ever at hand for those who are wise." Demosthenes

Why study History?

What use is learning about the past to our future development and our values?
What role does studying History play in an individual's intellectual journey?
And what skills does History equip the student with?

If we know about the past, we can understand the present - and prepare for the future. History spans all subject areas from Science and Technology to Philosophy and Economics. Indeed, the study of History provides the foundation of where we are and how we got here. As we begin to understand the past of a variety of cultures and debate the moral issues, we begin to form more considered opinions and judgments. As a result we broaden our perspectives.

The study of History involves discussion and critical thinking. Gradually the student becomes accustomed to thinking logically and laterally. This leads to developing an analytical and evaluative approach when examining issues, which the student can then employ across all the subject areas.

With History, the student will acquire many skills including reading for meaning; writing purposefully; interpreting and evaluating documents; discussion skills and synthesizing arguments.

However, why should **YOU** do History? There is only one answer in the end - because you enjoy it.

What does the History course involve?

The study of History at Dixie is challenging, but rewarding - yet takes place in a relaxed and jovial atmosphere.

Lessons in A Level History are similar to lower school and GCSE in that a variety of teaching and learning strategies are used. The aim is to enable each student to gain their maximum potential through interesting and challenging lessons, as well as empowering them to think independently and to be able to exercise their judgement in a variety of situations.

In order to widen your historical and cultural knowledge, we also offer a range of extra-curricular activities such as:

- Opportunities to participate in Sixth Form Conferences led by eminent Historians
- Visits to places of historical significance relevant to our studies in the Sixth Form, such as:
  - Amsterdam, Poland and Berlin
  - Bosworth Battlefield
- Leadership of our highly motivational and popular History Society

A Level

Each year an initial survey is carried out with prospective A Level History students about what they would like to study. Based on this information a shortlist of topic areas are created by the department and this choice is offered to students, for example:

- The Age of the Crusades
- The Wars of the Roses
- The Tudors
- Tsarist and Communist Russia
- France in Revolution
- The British Empire
- The Making of a Superpower USA
- International Relations and Global Conflict
- Transformation of China
- Modern Britain

Students then get together and make a democratic decision as to which topics they study.

Students also conduct an independent historical investigation into an area of History that they are interested in and write an academic essay of 3000-3500 words. Over the years we have found that all students relish this aspect of their studies and the sense of accomplishment is extremely high. Just a few of the topics studied in the past few years have been: the Rwandan genocide; the Middle East; Changing Nature of Warfare; Apartheid; Scottish Medieval History; Irish nationalism; Tudor rebellions; Universal suffrage; African-American Civil rights; and the Opium wars.

What can you do with your History A Level?

Despite popular opinion there are other alternatives to using your History education rather than just for becoming a librarian or a museum curator and the ubiquitous History teacher with the tweed jacket with leather patches and brown sandals! In fact, a History education is useful and desirable in many fields.

What do the following people have in common?

Prince Charles, Gordon Brown, the documentary maker Louis Theroux, the BBC correspondent Jeremy Bowen, the barrister Michael Mansfield, the art critic Sir Roy Strong, the novelist Salmon Rushdie, the comedian Sacha Baron Cohen (Ali G), the ex-England footballer Steve Coppell, the BBC motor racing correspondent Jonathan Legend and the DJ Simon Mayo.

They all studied History!

Studying History is a passport to success in the world of work. Indeed, a History education will stand you in good stead in any position, which requires you to have the ability to develop cogent arguments and formulate considered judgements.

Mathematics

Head of Department: Mrs L. Deacon

Head of Department Video

Why should you choose Mathematics?

Mathematics is desirable to both universities and employers. Whatever your degree or career choice it is a valuable and impressive addition as it develops your problem solving skills, which are applicable to so many different fields. Depending on your degree choice, some universities may specify A Level Mathematics as an entry requirement, so it is worthwhile doing your research early.

What skills/qualities will I need?

First and foremost is that you enjoy the subject. The course involves spending a significant amount of time practising the concepts you are taught and so it is important that you have a love of the subject. Your IGCSE or GCSE will have developed the foundations of the mathematical skills that you will require. If you have a logical mind and find solving a problem satisfying then Mathematics could be the subject for you.

Course content and assessment

The A Level in Mathematics includes both Pure and Applied Mathematics (Mechanics and Statistics). These are examined by three examinations at the end of the course (two Pure papers and one Applied). At The Dixie Grammar School we follow the Pearson Edexcel A level syllabus for both Mathematics and Further Mathematics.

Can I take Further Mathematics?

Further Mathematics is offered (subject to demand). If you are interested in taking Further Mathematics or for further details, please speak to Mrs Deacon.

NB: To take Further Mathematics, you must also be taking Mathematics.

Other opportunities

All our Sixth Form Mathematicians are given the opportunity to achieve their Dixie Subject Leaders Award in Mathematics.
Pupils are required to plan and run motivational mathematical activities for our younger students, provide curriculum support and be a Maths Buddy. They will also help run our annual Year 5 Maths activity session and plan Junior School activities
The award aims to develop leadership, communication and organisational skills and is an excellent addition to their University application.

Modern Languages
(French, German, Mandarin)

Head of Department Video (French/ German)
Head of Department Video (Mandarin)

The study of a foreign language to A Level standard and beyond is rightly held in the highest esteem and Dixie languages students have gone on to careers in all of the above areas and more.

With languages, you are at home anywhere.
Edward de Vaal

Like all Arts, Social Science and Humanities subjects, students of languages develop enhanced skills in communication, the ability to analyse and infer conclusions and awareness of nuance and attention to fine detail. Literature and film are dissected and interpreted and students learn how to construct logical and persuasive argument. Alongside this, detailed knowledge and understanding of key aspects of culture and society are gained.

In addition, however, our students gain an extra skill for life: the ability to speak and understand a second language. This can bring huge advantages: a wider cultural perspective, improved awareness of English and all languages and of course international career options in the future.

The limits of my language are the limits of my world.
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head.
Talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.
Nelson Mandela

An A Level in a foreign language will complement almost any degree path and as such languages are a recognised 'facilitating subject' for university application.

She who knows no foreign languages knows nothing of her own.
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Content :

- A film and a book or a play
- Four cultural themes
- Write it, speak it, read it, hear it!

Full details at:
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/french-2016.html
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/german-2016.html
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/chinese-2017.html

Bring a curious mind, a penchant for discussion and an embryonic passion for words and ideas for us to nurture!

Physical Education

Head of Department: Mr L Burns

Head of Department Video

Why should you study A Level Physical Education?

Do you

- have an interest in sport and physical education?
- want to learn about and improve your own health and fitness?
- want to understand and improve your own sporting performance?
- have a desire to work in the sport, health and fitness industry?
- have an interest in how your mind and body work?

If the answer is yes to one or more of the above, then A Level Physical Education would be an excellent subject choice for you.

A Level Physical Education provides an ideal starting point for those that are enthusiastic about sport and physical education and wish to make a healthy living from their passion. From professional sport to amateur teams and individuals who just want to get into shape, the sport, health and fitness industry is large and fast growing with many opportunities in a variety of different roles such as sports science and nutrition; physiotherapy; teaching, coaching and personal training and sports development. Or for those who perhaps have other career aspirations but have a desire to improve their own level of performance this is an ideal course to learn about how to optimise the most important factor of any sporting performance…you!

What will be studied?

There are six main content areas that make up the A Level Physical Education qualification:

1. **Applied Anatomy and Physiology** - Changes within the musculo-skeletal, cardio-respiratory and neuro-muscular systems and the use of energy systems during different types of physical activity and sport.

2. **Skill Acquisition -** How skill is acquired and the impact of psychological factors on performance.

3. **Exercise Physiology -** Adaptations to the body systems through training or lifestyle, and how these changes affect the efficiency of those systems.

4. **Biomechanical Movement** - Motion and forces, and their relevance to performance in physical activity and sport.

5. **Sport Psychology -** The role of sport psychology in optimising performance in physical activity and sport.

6. **Sport, Society and the Role of Technology -** Interaction between, and the evolution of, sport and society and the technological developments in physical activity and sport.

How will it be assessed?

Written exams:
Paper 1 – 2 hours on the content above (105 marks) worth 35% of the qualification.
Paper 2 – 2 hours on the content above (105 marks) worth 35% of the qualification.

Non-examined Assessment:
As a performer or a coach in **one** sport plus a written/verbal analysis of performance (90 marks) worth 30% of the qualification.

Where could this subject lead me?

The areas of study you learn about will be invaluable on a personal level and will help you to be an improved sportsperson no matter what your standard.

The qualification also opens several career opportunities within sport, health and fitness such as: sports science and nutrition, physiotherapy, teaching and coaching, personal training, sports development or working for a national governing body to name but a few.

Is A Level Physical Education a suitable subject for me?

Are you passionate about sport? Do you take part in sport regularly for your school/club? Would you enjoy learning about the Physiological/Psychological and Socio-cultural aspects of sport? Do you want a career in the sport, health and fitness industry? Do you want to learn about and improve your own sporting performance? Then A Level Physical Education would be a good option for you!

Physics

Head of Department: Dr S Ketchion

Head of Department Video

Why study Physics? Physics is for all those who are interested in understanding how things work from the smallest sub-atomic particle to the largest conceivable distances in the universe. Physics is the basis for much of the present and future technology and hence qualifications in this subject are well sought after in the world of work. Physics has the reputation of not being an easy subject to study but you will develop valuable skills in thinking logically, solving problems, handling very large and very small numbers and finding things out during experimental work. Due to the broad range of topics we study at A Level, our students have gone on to a wide range of careers.

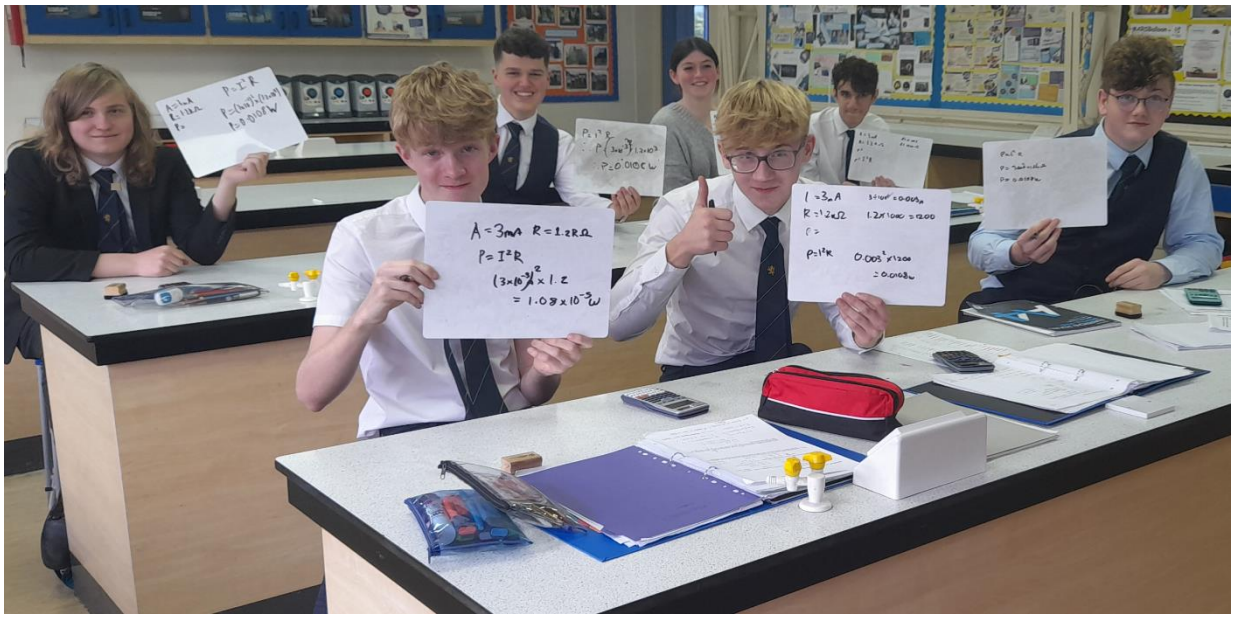


Fig.1 Problem solving activities

Fig.2 Practical work in the lab.

In the first year, students will study the relatively new topics of particle physics (that includes hadrons, leptons, quarks and other strange particles) and quantum theory. We also study topics such as electricity, waves, mechanics and materials that students should be aware of from IGCSE level but we obviously investigate in greater depth. Students will have two physics teachers who concentrate on different aspects of the course. Class sizes are generally quite small which allows us to look at problems in detail and discuss the solutions that each student has produced. This helps develop the necessary thinking and calculation skills that are needed.

One double session every week is normally reserved for experimental work where students learn the skills of making observations, taking measurements and analysing results. The skills developed during demonstrations and practical sessions will be assessed in a written paper.

In the second year of the A Level course, we cover the major topic of fields (gravitational, magnetic and electric) that involve anything from the motion of the planets to the physics of amusement rides. We also cover nuclear physics, thermal physics and an option topic that is normally engineering physics.

The department organises a number of visits to enrich the curriculum. Previous visits have included the aeronautical and space museums in Washington D.C., NASA's Kennedy Space Centre and the physics of amusement rides at Universal Studios in Florida. Closer to home we have visited to the Diamond Light Source Synchrotron near Oxford and the Physics department at the University of Birmingham to do a masterclass in particle physics. Next year we are hopefully taking a group to Switzerland to visit CERN, the largest scientific facility in the world and travel to Bern to visit where Albert Einstein did much of his famous work.

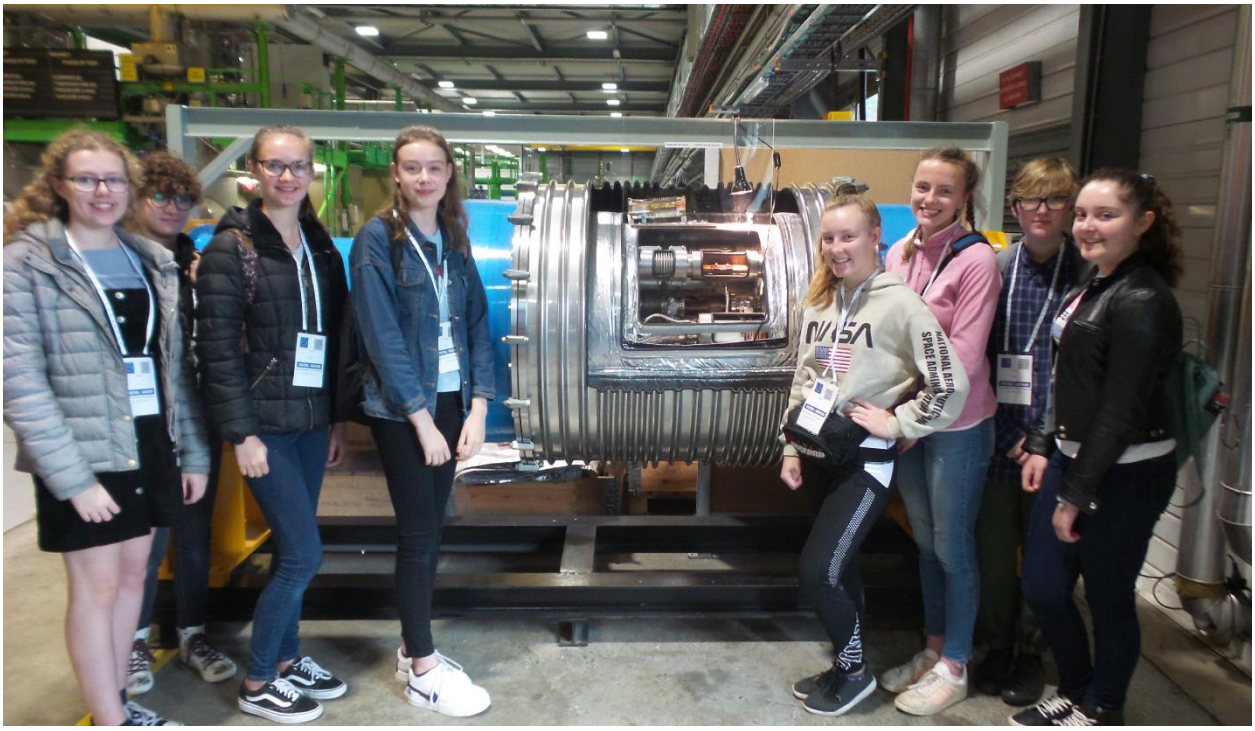


Fig.3. Dixie students visit the magnet assembly plant for the Large Hadron Collider

Students are encouraged to broaden their experience and attend Institute of Physics evening lectures and take part in the British Physics Olympiad challenges.

Psychology

Head of Department: Mrs H Johnson

Head of Department Video

Psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour, in particular how and why people behave in certain ways. It can provide theories and suggestions, as well as practical ways of explaining, understanding, and solutions for behaviour. If you are interested in human behaviour and why we are all different but also share similarities, then A Level Psychology is for you.

Psychology is a scientific subject and is often studied by students who want to pursue medical or science based careers. In addition to this, math and English skills are acquired throughout the course and therefore the variety of skills you will gain makes this a very attractive subject for university applications.

The AQA specification gives pupils the opportunity to learn about a broad range of the areas of Psychology. Over the course of the two years you will study the following topic areas:

- Approaches in Psychology (different ways of explaining behaviour)
- Psychological disorders such as depression, OCD, phobias, and schizophrenia
- Memory
- Attachment (how babies form relationships with their carers)
- Social influence (for example why people obey or how social change occurs)
- Research methods including statistics
- Gender development (what is gender and how it is influenced
- Forensic Psychology (criminal and offender behaviour)
- Biopsychology (looking at how biological factors can explain behaviour such as brain structure)
- Issues and debates in Psychology (for example, the nature/nurture debate)

Assessment

- Three exams which are 2 hours long each. These are all equally weighted and consist of multiple choice, short answers and extended writing.
- At least 10% of the marks will require the use of mathematical skills, so pupils should have a good understanding of GCSE Mathematics**.**

Skills

From valuable research skills to conceptual reasoning, psychology is a practice that benefits its practitioners as well its subjects. A level Psychology will improve your communication skills, teaching you how to communicate effectively or resolve conflict. It's one of the few subjects that will build your knowledge in scientific theories, behavioural analysis, child development and medical diagnoses, while introducing you to a range of strategies you can use for personal growth and success.

What careers can psychology lead to?

Studying Psychology will appeal to a wide range of students with varied interests and future plans, including both further education and going straight into employment, and students

will build on skills necessary in both. Students with a Psychology A level go on to study a range of subjects at a higher level, and psychologists can specialise in business, forensics, sports, advertising, education and counselling. Psychology provide a number of skills that apply to many different careers including medicine, law, and journalism, HR advertising and sport.

Religious Studies

Head of Department: Mrs A Hillier

Head of Department Video

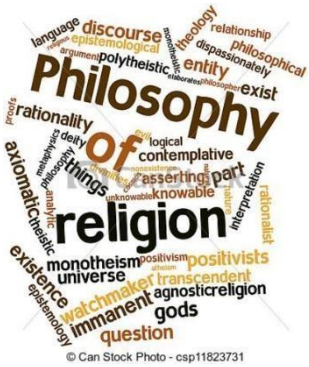
"The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing." Socrates

What is Religious Studies A Level?

- Dynamic
- Challenging
- Rigorous

What skills will I develop?

- Critical Thinking
- Debating
- Questioning
- Logical arguing
- Evaluating
- Researching
- Arguing
- Analysing
- Self confidence
- Literacy and essay writing.



How is Religious Studies A Level seen by Universities?

- The **Russell Group** of top universities has made it clear that RS A Level provides 'suitable preparation for university generally'.
- Both **Oxford and Cambridge** Universities include Religious Studies in the top-level list of 'generally suitable Arts A Levels'.
- Applicants with Religious Studies A Level were more likely to gain admission to study History at Oxford University in 2012 than those with A Levels in many 'facilitating' subjects
- 20% of students admitted to Oxford University to study Mathematics in 2011 had an RS A Level.

(RE Today services 2014 http://www.retoday.org.uk/news/a-level-rs-university)

What Careers does an A Level in Religious Studies lead to?

"RS A Level provides an excellent foundation for a range of careers – from **medicine** to **public service** to **business**. Imagine how better prepared a doctor or business professional is if they understand the **culture and customs of the individuals they are treating** or dealing with. As…we interact with more diverse groups day to day, **RE is becoming ever more relevant**."

John Keast, Chair, Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC)

"And career-wise, at least, theology has stood us in great stead … Between us, there is a television researcher, a theatrical agent, a Walt Disney producer, an artist, a court reporter, a primary school teacher, a financial journalist, a literary agent, a night club singer and a spy."

Clare Garner, journalist with The Independent on her University theology classmates.

Career prospects for those that take Religious Studies/Theology/Philosophy at degree level are also very bright, with 25% of 2015 graduates going on to work in the fields of **legal, social and welfare**, **11% choosing to become educational professionals** and almost **5% managers**.

Religious Education council, August 2017

What kind of questions does Religious Studies consider?

- Can it ever be right to kill somebody?
- Is there a distinct human nature which is good, or are we inherently evil?
- Is any act between two consenting adults okay?
- Can a disembodied soul survive death?
- Will the secularisation of our society eventually destroy religious belief?
- If God is all-loving, why does He allow evil and suffering in the world?
- If there's no God, is there no right or wrong?

The OCR A Level Religious Studies specification consists of THREE components/papers:

1. Philosophy of Religion
2. Religion and Ethics
3. Developments in Christian Thought

What will my lessons and private study be like?

Lesson will take the form of a seminar, with lots of discussion and argument. Occasionally you will present and lead a lesson yourself. Outside of the classroom you will undertake personal research. This includes reading, listening to podcasts, watching videos and commenting on contemporary newspaper articles. Essay writing is a key element of assessment.

What does the assessment look like?

- The A Level consists of three 2 hour exams.

And finally - you don't have to have studied RS GCSE to study RS A Level!