



Psychology Curriculum Overview

Our dynamic psychology department aims to create critical thinkers who are equipped with increased self-awareness and a range of highly transferable skills when leaving the course. We try to create a caring, stimulating and secure environment for all pupils, where they can explore a range of sometimes personal and sensitive topics and develop as individuals. We hope that by learning psychology students will acquire not only a mastery of the subject, but also a love for learning and researching human behaviour. Teaching is always high quality, creative and challenging for students where they are encouraged through a range of strategies to pursue further research into areas that they find particularly interesting. Given that Psychology is a new subject to most students the reasons for studying the subject, as well as the range of career options that Psychology can lead to is made explicit in their very first lessons and through introductory talks, with emphasis given to the dual sides of the subject (research data/essay and critical thinking elements).

The psychology A-level AQA builds on skills developed from GCSE Maths, Science, History and English. Teachers have had experience of a range of exam boards and feel that AQA offers the most holistic and coherent program of study. At the end of the course students will have:

- Sound knowledge of a range of psychological approaches and methods relating to the core areas of psychology
- Be able to understand complex issues and debates within Psychology and the implications of research
- Been given a choice to choose 3 topic areas for specialism in Year 13

Our curriculum allows students to build their knowledge in stages, encourages them to make links between approaches and other subject areas (most specifically Science, History, English, Maths) and offers opportunities to specialise via independent learning and extended projects. It therefore offers a coherent pathway towards a sophisticated understanding of the subject. Students will first learn about the approaches taken to studying psychology, developing an appreciation of the context for the development of theories and understand how conflicting perspectives arose. We also teach the Social Influence unit early on to engage students in big debates regarding human behaviour. The year two content builds on y12 research methods skills with the introduction of statistical tests. The students also engage with issues and debates at a deeper level to allow for a much richer discourse. Students have an opportunity to further their interests through participating in the psychology society, extended project work and opportunities to attend external conferences. Annually we enter the National Psychology competition and invite experts in their field to lecture (e.g. Psychology Brain Day). The main aim of the curriculum is not only to develop outstanding Psychology students with excellent research skills, which is reflected in their exam results, but also to inspire the students to investigate ideas further and explore their own behaviour. A good number of students take Psychology and related subjects onto higher education at leading universities.

KS5 Psychology Curriculum

	Year 12	Year 13
Autumn Term 1	Approaches, Social Influence	Recap year 1, Forensic Psychology
Autumn Term 2	Approaches, Biopsychology, Research Methods	Research Methods, Forensic Psychology
Spring Term 1	Attachment, Biopsychology, Research Methods	Schizophrenia, Relationships
Spring Term 2	Clinical Psychology and Mental Health, Memory	Issues and debates
Summer Term 1	Clinical Psychology and Mental Health, Memory, Research Methods Consolidation.	Revision and exams
Summer Term 2	Exam feedback and review. Teacher directed and supported project work and/or progressing to learn new material.	