

Humanities Department

The Humanities department is situated in B Block within the school. The department has traditionally been structured with Geography, History and Religious Education departments and all three subjects are offered at GCSE.

Staffing

The faculty has up to 14 full time and 2 part time members of staff who have been timetabled in their specialist subject areas from Key Stage 3 through to Key Stage 5. Additional staff teach Key Stage 3 topics following agreed schemes of work in the school's inclusion department with special curriculum classes. Other members of staff may also teach Key Stage 3 lessons where capacity dictates. A small number of lessons are also currently delivered by members of the school Senior Leadership Team

Curriculum

The full curriculum offer comprises Religious Education (plus short course RE), History, Geography and Sociology at GCSE with the faculty leading the way in early entry for some year 9 students. At Key Stage 5 the curriculum offer broadens to include Philosophy and Ethics, Humanities, History, Government & Politics, Economics, Geography, Sociology and World Development. Student numbers for most subjects at post 16 have been traditionally very strong although the sustainability of all subjects is a priority.

At Key Stage 5 students will receive 9 hours per fortnight of lessons (except World Development which is delivered as an enrichment lesson – 1 per week). Currently there are 125 Key Stage 5 students across Year 12 and 13.

GCSE uptake has been strong in History with low numbers in Geography being boosted by the newly introduced Sociology GCSE. Religious Studies is compulsory for all students to the end of Key Stage 4 and is delivered by the department alongside the school Citizenship programme. Students also have the opportunity to choose to study Religious Studies as part of their GCSE package at Key Stage 4.

At GCSE students will have 5 lessons per fortnight other than for Religious Education where two lessons per fortnight are taught. There are currently 190 students in year 10 studying humanities subjects at GCSE and 188 in Year 11.

At Key Stage 3 students have three / four lessons per fortnight depending on the subject. Year 9 students in some classes have been entered for GCSE qualifications.

Resources

The department has 12 dedicated teaching classrooms with interactive whiteboards in each together with a learning hub at the centre of the block with the potential for staff to teach collaboratively with groups of up to 60 students.

The faculty has led the way in which the school's VLE is used to share teaching resources and planning with staff. There is a challenge ahead to ensure students gain from this work and to incorporate home learning using the VLE.

Vision

The new Head of Humanities role offers an opportunity to bring together subject areas that have traditionally worked along separate curriculum lines. We anticipate the new Humanities Leadership will explore the opportunities for staff and students to work together in a multi discipline and cross curricular way with improved use of shared teaching spaces, collaboration in planning and delivery between subjects and also investigating the possibility of curriculum reform at Key Stage 3 in particular.

Darren Potts
Director of KS5
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