

## Psychology: Curriculum Intent

### ***Vision***

The Psychology subject area is committed to providing a vigorous and challenging A-level curriculum. The subject area will deliver the course via a variety of methods, drawing on the most current pedagogical theory and learning and teaching techniques that have been rigorously tested through research-based enquiry.

The students will be expected to demonstrate their prowess as independent learners, and they will be able to express these skills through challenging homework tasks and project work in class. However, the students can also expect high levels of support and scaffolding from their contact time in lessons.

### ***Intent***

Learning Psychology encourages students to become curious about a range of factors that influence our behaviours, e.g., the structure of the brain, parenting or past traumatic experiences. Students will understand how a range of mental disorders are created, e.g., phobias and Schizophrenia, the effect these have on the individual, and appropriate treatments for them. They will explore the reasons why individuals became complicit in horrific incidents in the 20<sup>th</sup> century such as the Holocaust, how such evil can be committed and to reflect on whether these causes are biological or whether social pressures compel people to do such things. Ultimately, it is hoped that students will be able to evaluate a range of social–biological–cognitive explanations for all types of behaviour and to draw conclusions about behaviours based on a forensic evaluation of research in order to conclude which approaches they view as being the most useful. Students will therefore be able to analyse the world and individuals around them in new ways, incorporating a myriad of approaches and asking questions about the nature of human agency.

### **Themes that underpin the teaching of Psychology**

| <b>Psychological explanations</b>           | <b>Ways of investigating behaviour</b> | <b>Biological explanations</b> | <b>Cognitive explanations</b> |
|---|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| The role of conditioning                    | Qualitative and quantitative data      | The role of genetics           | Cognitive neuroscience        |
| Influence of peers                          | Methods used by Psychologists          | Neural structures              | Schema                        |
| How behaviour is learnt and imitated        | Influence of studies on the economy    | Hormones                       | Disorders                     |
| The role of the family in shaping behaviour | Influence on science                   | Trauma                         | Therapies                     |

### ***Implementation***

We believe that learning should be placed within a dynamic framework of discussion and debate and should involve a high level of independent learning from the students. In addition, we believe that by sharing our enthusiasm for the subject and modelling the importance of reading and lifelong learning we will inspire students to undertake their own research. This will, in turn, foster an environment for students to develop self-mastery and engagement in self-regulated learning. Students will be supported by the provision of high-quality learning booklets, which balance the study of Psychology with the demands of high achievement in examinations. The course will be delivered in a linear fashion and students will be required to take three two-hour exams at the end of the second year of the course.

The subject area aims to assess and support the progression of its students through a combination of independent learning tasks, short weekly knowledge assessments, weekly written assessments and weekly written homework. The students will also be given the opportunity to carry out a number of research projects throughout the course, which will be written-up to professional research standards.

***Impact***

Through the study of Psychology, the students are offered a scientific and rigorous education in how we develop, learn and behave. In addition, an appreciation of 'how science works' in conjunction with the application of the empirical method will be central to all lessons. Students will become critical thinkers, engaging with academic literature, which develops their cultural and academic capital in order to participate fully in society. Promoting academic success is crucial to the study of Psychology, broadening student horizons and opportunities in their future careers.