

Psychology: Curriculum Intent

Vision

The Psychology subject area is committed to providing a vigorous and challenging GCSE 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., depression and addiction, 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 20th 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

Psychological explanations	Ways of investigating behaviour	Biological explanations	Cognitive explanations
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 two exams at the end of the course.

The subject area aims to assess and support the progression of its students through a combination of independent learning tasks, short knowledge assessments, written assessments and written homework. The students will also be given the opportunity to carry out a research project.

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.