WELLNESS
AMBITION
TOGETHERNESS
CONFIDENCE
HONESTY

CHOSEN HILL SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

Curriculum Rationale

PSYCHOLOGY

Intent – What do we learn and why?

Psychology, as a discipline, delves into the scientific exploration of human cognition and behaviour. This field scrutinizes the underpinnings of behaviour, methodological approaches to its investigation, and the practical implications arising from research findings. The primary objective is to transcend superficial perceptions of psychology and embark on a more scholarly path, one that acquaints students with diverse theoretical perspectives and research methodologies at their disposal. The topics covered in this course offer students a contextual understanding of the significance of psychology and its profound relevance in their lives. For instance, historical analysis can provide insights into questions like 'why do individuals conform?' through the study of those who unreservedly obeyed the Nazis during World War II. More contemporarily, psychology's significance emerged prominently during the COVID-19 pandemic, with its role in researching and addressing the mental health effects of lockdowns.

This course provides an engaging introduction to psychology, cultivating essential skills valued by higher education and employers such as critical analysis and independent thinking, and ensuring the curriculum aligns with the evolving nature of the discipline. Furthermore, the course strives to challenge and inspire students to critically assess evidence from academic literature and media sources, fostering a comprehensive grasp of the subject's various domains and their interconnectedness.

Ultimately, the course aims to instil a deep appreciation for scientific methods, nurture competence in practical, mathematical, and problem-solving skills, and kindle enthusiasm for psychology, spurring interest in further studies and careers associated with the field. Additionally, students will gain insight into how society makes decisions concerning scientific matters and recognize the sciences' role in contributing to economic and societal prosperity.

Implementation – How is the curriculum planned?

We do not currently offer Psychology at GCSE, and as very few schools in Gloucestershire do either, students tend to join the course with very little prior knowledge of the subjects. To that end, the beginnings of the course lay the foundation for understanding across the coming two years, focussing mainly on the Approaches to Psychology Topic.

We follow the AQA Psychology Syllabus. This exam board was selected due to the variety of topics taught and the focus on application of knowledge. It is delivered in a way that maximises the synoptic learning of material across the three exam papers, rather than in exam paper order. For instance, understanding the Biological Approach to explaining behaviour is vital to understand the Biological Approach to explaining OCD within the Psychopathology unit.

Assessment – How do we assess student understanding?

End of topic tests occur approximately every 8 weeks, consisting of past exam questions. Students are regularly set extended answer questions to consolidate their learning. Shorter answer questions are often delivered through a low stakes quiz within the lessons themselves. Along with the mock exams, students are provided with ample opportunity to familiarise themselves with exam technique and to receive feedback also.

Home Learning

At Post 16 the out of lesson learning will include the Directed Study time as well as homework and the expectation is that students develop an independent work ethos where they are seeking out learning opportunities throughout the week. For Post 16 the work set to complete will focus on exam practice and will be equivalent to around 2-3 hours per week. Additional tasks will be set to facilitate knowledge consolidation and will vary from completing assessment mats, to filling in knowledge organisers to writing a summary of a relevant documentary. Students are actively encouraged to consolidate their knowledge and create revision material after each lesson.