

**Herschel Grammar School - PE Department**

## Information for Applicants

This busy department is currently staffed by five specialist teachers, Jane Lilley (Head of PE & Creative Arts Faculty), Lucy Cobb (Head of Learning Year 10), Christopher O’Donnell (Head of Learning year 8), Chloe Barton (Assistant Headteacher - Pastoral) and Anthony McCormack (PGCert PE mentor).

For the vast majority of pupils, PE is one of their favourite subjects, resulting in virtually full engagement and exceptionally high levels of cooperation between them and PE staff. Although we always strive for excellence, the department concerns itself with engaging as many pupils as possible, with a ‘sport for all’ ethos, aiming to have every pupil love PE so much that they maintain their active lifestyle beyond school and into the wider world.

A new Key Stage 3 assessment scheme was introduced three years ago and has been under review since. The new Head of PE would be expected to contribute to developing this and the Core PE curriculum to meet the demands of an ever-changing society.

At Key Stage 3, pupils follow a set programme with a combination of games and individual activities across the year. The focus is on developing physical literacy and transferable skills like teamwork, leadership and cooperation. We encourage competition in order to develop resilience and the vast majority of pupils love games, regardless of the sport in question.

In Key Stage 4, we offer more flexibility and some degree of choice for pupils in Core PE to pursue their own favourite activities, including recreational PE in Year 11, where the pressure of GCSEs can take a toll on our hard-working and conscientious young people. Here we help to prepare our young people for their transition to higher education and work through the development of inter-personal skills.

In addition to the National Curriculum, the department offers GCSE and Advanced Level Physical Education (AQA board) as options from Year 10 onwards. Approximately 15-20% of pupils choose GCSE each year and although numbers at A level can be small, the school has been very supportive in maintaining it as an option where most would not, including co-teaching where appropriate.

All pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum which includes games, athletics, gymnastics, dance and provision for outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils in year 9 and above are all involved in the development of leadership in sport as organisers, coaches or officials, which extends beyond school experience to supporting the local School Sport Network in managing events for Slough district. We have an excellent reputation as a school for producing leaders of all kinds to support sports organisers in a variety of events. The Head of PE role is supported through half-termly HoPE meetings with Slough School Sport Network, which offers a range of competitive and leadership opportunities for pupils and a programme of INSET and managerial support for PE staff, most of which is free or heavily subsidised.

There is an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities run by PE staff and a number of specialist coaches and instructors. The most popular games activities by far are Netball, Football, Cricket and Badminton, where we compete in local leagues and tournaments, many of which we host ourselves. Additionally, the pupils are keen on Dance, Gymnastics and Athletics. Many of our clubs are supported by students in sixth form who are placed in the department as part of a community service programme. We also have very popular performance activities culminating in our annual Gymnastics and Dance Show at the end of the Spring Term and Sports Day, a traditional athletics programme run for years 7 to 10 in the summer term.

The department benefits from excellent resources; a sports centre with sports hall and dance studio with ICT facilities, an astro turf pitch (recently replaced in 2022) for football and hockey, netball/tennis courts and an outdoor playing field for major games with enough room for a 400m track and astro turf cricket wicket. The multi-purpose sports hall has 6 badminton courts which can be divided by an electronic folding wall, plus facilities for indoor football, netball, basketball, handball, volleyball, cricket, table tennis and gymnastics.

A large number of pupils also participate in a variety of inter-house competitions throughout the year. Links with local clubs, utilising coaching expertise from outside school, expanding the extra curricular programme for students and ensuring that maximum use is made of the school’s facilities are all areas under constant development. We work closely with our local Slough School Sports Network and the wider Berkshire Sports Partnership to extend the experience of our pupils and the range of sports on offer. The department is experienced in mentoring PGCert student teachers from Brunel University and in the successful induction of NQTs.

The department runs a number of school trips, the largest being the annual ski and snowboard trip in February half term and PE staff regularly contribute to wider school activities such as Duke of Edinburgh’s Award expeditions, Bushcraft and Creative Arts Faculty events, such as drama productions and music concerts.

Wellbeing is a cornerstone of the school’s work and a programme is coordinated by the sixth form team which includes large numbers of students opting for sport during their weekly session. The PE department supports this programme extensively.

Herschel Sports Centre is used by the wider community through a management company, Active in The Community. The Head of Department and school site team work alongside to ensure day to day management of the centre is in keeping with the protocols.

The department is well resourced both in terms of facilities and equipment, benefiting from substantial investment by the school to maintain and run the centre.

PE staff are expected to contribute to both extra-curricular and whole school events including off-site activities and fixtures. The department has use of two minibuses and PE staff without a D1 driving licence will be supported to take the requisite test in order to take pupils to competitions.

Prospective candidates are encouraged to visit the school ahead of applying if they wish.