

BARTON COURT GRAMMAR SCHOOL - PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is a popular and thriving subject; at the moment there are about 130 pupils studying GCSE in years 9, 10 and 11 and 63 students studying psychology for the A level course in the sixth form. Students are interested and motivated from GCSE onwards, and a good number of students continue with psychology in the sixth form and then at university. Both courses following the AQA Psychology Examining Board. The Department runs a students as researchers programme with the University of Kent, and students attending this are trained in research methods design and implementation.

The aims of the department are:

- To broaden students' knowledge of areas of psychology and their understanding of how to apply them to everyday life
- To develop their capacity for critical thinking
- To develop skills in presenting an argument and/or data, both orally and in writing
- To develop knowledge and understanding about conducting experiments and surveys, and how to interpret their own and other people's data

Teaching takes place in two psychology teaching rooms, both of which are equipped with a Smartboard. Teachers make full use of the Smartboard software to make lessons interactive and dynamic. ICT rooms are bookable for independent study in lessons.

A variety of activities are included in the 60 minute lessons e.g. thinking tools, investigations, question and answer sessions, discussion and practice. Homework is set for one hour after each lesson and marked regularly and all students have information on how assessments are made as per the psychology marking policy. Regular monitoring of student progress is made using unit tests and examinations as well as class work and homework. Students are encouraged to take an active part in reviewing their own progress and target setting. High quality work and effort are rewarded with BCGS points.

Key Stage 4

KS4 (Years 9 – 11) follow the AQA GCSE specification. There are two written papers at the end of the course and neither have coursework. Common topics are Research Methods, Social Influence and Memory and both courses offer a broad introduction to the study of psychology.

Lessons are delivered through 4x 60 minute lessons per fortnight. Learning is supported by a wide range of practical activities, ICT and printed resources, ensuring that a variety of activities is offered to suit every type of learner. The syllabus is delivered in units of 15-20 lesson. There are two assessments per term of 25 marks each assessment and grades are reported to parents.

Key Stage 5

Students study the AQA A level examined in three written papers at the end of the course in Year 13. Compulsory topics including psychopathology, attachment, approaches and research methods for papers 1 and 2 are studied in Year 12 with the synoptic element and options for paper 3 in Year 13.

Lessons are delivered through 9x 60 minute lessons per fortnight. Many students studying A level have taken psychology at GCSE but this is not a requirement as the course assumes no prior knowledge. A variety of teaching and learning activities are employed to provide a thorough, challenging and, above all, stimulating grounding in the subject and its methods.