



ST OLAVE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM INFORMATION
2021/22



Headteacher's Introduction

Welcome to the Sixth Form at St. Olave's Grammar School.

St. Olave's is a wonderful school where you will find staff who know their students well and serve their individual needs, and where there is a strong sense of pride and loyalty throughout the school. We welcome students of all faiths and backgrounds, championing dignity and respect for all. This brings diversity and richness, which is a real strength of the school. These qualities were amongst many noted by Ofsted when they gave the school an 'Outstanding' outcome in February 2019.

There is an emphasis on nurturing young people to have the wisdom, honesty and strength of character to make the right choices and have the very highest aspirations. With an outstanding record of academic excellence our A Level results show consistently around 95% A*/B grades, placing St. Olave's amongst the very top schools nationally. Around 100 students have gained Oxbridge places in a broad range of subjects over the last 3 years. This number is more than many schools in the country can replicate. This is testament to the talents of our staff and students alike.

There have been obvious challenges this year and potentially beyond. However, this will not prevent academic, sporting, cultural and moral excellence being celebrated and encouraged, within and beyond the classroom. Our co-curricular programme is outstanding; sport, music, drama, DoFE, clubs and societies are very strong. We want our students to participate fully in the life of the school so they become independent and creative young people who will make their mark in the world. Olavians will be encouraged not to be preoccupied by the fear of failure, but be prepared to give things a go even if there is a risk of not succeeding.

Due to the pandemic, many global activities have been hindered, but we hope to return to these as quickly as possible. Our rugby squad has toured South Africa; Biology students have spent three weeks in Malawi doing scientific research with Operation Wallacea; our Economists previously visited the European Bank in Frankfurt; our linguists regularly travel to Germany and France; others have visited the sites of Ancient Greece or trekked the jungles, mountains or volcanoes of Ecuador or Nepal on World Challenge. Our top Chess and Fives teams comprise a number of national champions whilst our budding playwrights have had scripts performed at the National Theatre.

I know you will know the school well, but if you are looking for further information, please explore our website. The atmosphere in our School is truly unique – it is a community which is welcoming, caring and inspiring. This is enriched further by the number of Old Olavians who return to school after they leave, offering their support and guidance to our current students.

We now regularly admit over 100 young women into Year 12; for them and our young men, Sixth Form should be one of the most exciting times of their lives; you will certainly not be disappointed if you join us at St. Olave's.

Andrew Rees, Headteacher

January 2021

The Sixth Form at St. Olave's

In the Sixth Form at St. Olave's, the very highest standards of academic aspirations are matched by the very highest standards of pastoral care. Intellectual excellence, determination and hard work are promoted in all subjects, but learning here is also relaxed, enjoyable and underpinned by careful support. Teachers will always look to promote knowledge and understanding that takes the students beyond the confines of the examination specification and which fosters independent intellectual enrichment which will serve them long after they have left the school. Our Sixth Form students are constantly challenged, encouraged to explore complex issues, and tackle difficult problems. They are also treated with dignity and valued as individuals, each with unique hopes to foster and concerns to address.

As a Church of England school, we welcome pupils of all faiths and none into an environment which actively promotes the virtues of compassion, humility and giving freely of your gifts for the greater good. This is expressed through the school's public values of duty to self, to school, to others and to the community.

There is a brisk pace of learning and students take on increasing responsibility for their work. They have to be ambitious, self-motivated, diligent and organised. When they leave, they will be prepared for the independent study required at university, which is often embraced at school through their participation in a diverse range of co-curricular pursuits, including the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), presentations or discussions at our enviably diverse range of academic societies and contributions to our award-winning society journals.

We have a large Sixth Form of about 450 students, including a substantial proportion of boys and girls who join us from other schools after GCSE (around 50%). All students experience a thorough induction programme at the start of Year 12 to assist their transition into the Sixth Form. Students enjoy excellent facilities within an independent Sixth Form Resource Centre, which contains a Sixth Form Common Room and Sixth Form Library. Our pastoral system ensures that students always have someone who they know well to turn to for both academic and personal support, as it is our aim to make sure our students are happy and successful throughout their time here and have every cause for hope and realistic, justifiable optimism about their future. Students receive a systematic programme of advice about Higher Education and the associated application procedure. This, together with the guidance given about careers, allows students to make an educated choice about their future before they leave St. Olave's.

We offer all our students the chance to assume responsibilities within the school via our prefect system, our house system, our Sixth Form Association and our wide range of academic clubs and societies. Further opportunities for leadership include running the committees for Cabaret, Festival and the Cultural Evening which are key events in the Sixth Form calendar, all of which, together with our Le Chavetois outreach programme, are the backbone of our dynamic and proactive approach to charitable fundraising and reinvestment in our local community.

All of this demonstrates our commitment to developing our students into independent learners and into mature, responsible adults who are prepared to play a full and active role in society - and to leave a strong legacy of high moral standards and academic excellence in their wake at the School to inspire and support younger students.

In the Sixth Form at St. Olave's you can have it all – specialised, individualised academic provision to support the highest possible aspirations in terms of competitive courses, universities and careers, as well as a pro-active, sensitive and compassionate approach to pastoral care.

We hope that you find joining our thriving, dynamic Sixth Form an exciting prospect and look forward to working with you over the next two years of your education.

Matthew Birtchnell
Director of Sixth Form
January 2021

The Curriculum

St. Olave's operates a ten-day timetable cycle which means that we divide each term into two-week blocks. In each fortnightly cycle, the normal timetable allocation in Year 12 will be ten fifty-minute lessons in each main curriculum subject. This will rise to eleven fifty-minute lessons per subject in Year 13.

All students entering the Sixth Form will opt for at least four subjects in Year 12, one of which will be studied only to AS Level and which will be examined in the summer of Year 12 (where an AS exam is available). Typically, students will then continue the remaining three of these subjects into Year 13 to study at A Level, which will be examined in the summer of Year 13.

Please note that some minority subjects may run only as a one year AS course in Year 12 and not follow through to A Level if insufficient numbers opt for these courses.

All A Levels are now linear in structure with all qualifying exams taken at the end of Year 13. The courses are "decoupled", i.e. the AS Level qualification does not contribute to the overall A Level qualification and students will have a synoptic terminal assessment in the summer of Year 13 which assesses all learning over the two-year course.

Subject to numbers, staff and timetable restrictions, we intend to offer the following main curriculum subjects:

Art	Geography
Biology	German
Chemistry	History
Classical Civilisations	Latin
Computing	Mathematics
Design & Technology	Further Mathematics
Economics	Music
English Literature	Physics
French	Religious Studies

In addition to studying four main curriculum subjects in Year 12, students are also required to take an option within the Year 12 Elective Programme (two fifty-minute lessons per fortnight), unless they have opted for Further Mathematics. This has included certificated and non-certificated options on courses such as Cooking, Health Related Fitness, Photography, Robotics, Russian, Drama and Ancient Greek. It also includes options for aspiring Medics to prepare for BMAT and/or UCAT, and for aspiring Mathematicians to prepare for highly specialised Mathematics university admissions tests (MAT and STEP), as well as a more general university admissions primer course: the "HEP" or Higher Education Preparatory Course, covering interview technique and critical thinking skills (which give students the opportunity to practise, develop and refine their skills of focused thinking; reasoned, articulate discussion; critically engaged wider reading; and analysis of arguments). These skills will complement their A Level subjects and are skills that increasingly universities are testing as part of their admissions process. The HEP option is particularly recommended for students considering Oxbridge (especially if their chosen course requires that they sit the Thinking Skills Assessment) and those considering a Law degree. Students will also take part in games activities or community service every Wednesday afternoon. A structured programme of PSHE runs fortnightly in the Form Period.

In Year 13, we run a series of lectures during which students hear guest speakers talk on a wide range of subjects which, in the past, have included cults, creationism, intellectual property, ethical finance and leadership skills. The aim of this programme is to expose students to a range of issues and views

as well as preparing them for a university environment. This runs alongside the Year 13 Elective Programme where students choose an independent study option, which includes the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). The EPQ, which is taken in Year 13, facilitates the maturing of our students into critical, reflective and independent learners through the development of skills of research, analysis and evaluation. The qualification also allows them to develop their planning and time management skills, their ability to synthesise a cogent and carefully structured piece of extended writing (similar in length and form to an undergraduate dissertation) and their presentation skills.

Therefore, the core curriculum for the Sixth Form is as follows, subject to timetabling, subject specification and funding constraints:

YEAR 12

- 4 main curriculum academic subjects, one of which will be taken at AS Level (N.B. Mathematics and Further Mathematics count as one option)
- Elective programme (unless studying Further Maths)
- Games or Community Service
- Form Period

YEAR 13

- 3 A Levels. These will be the 3 subjects chosen by students in the first term of 2021 (N.B. Mathematics and Further Mathematics count as two A Levels but only one option)
- Lecture programme
- Games or Community Service (optional)
- Form Period

Choosing A Level Courses

Choosing subjects for A Level study can be a very tricky process. Some subjects are significantly different at a higher level in both content and assessment pattern. Other subjects are completely new. The purpose of this booklet, in conjunction with our website and subject-specific advice from departments, is to provide information about the subjects and specifications to help you make an informed choice. Staff will, of course, be happy to talk in more detail about their subjects at AS and A Level.

We will certainly do our best to accommodate all programmes and to ensure most subject combinations are available. In some cases, provision of courses may be subject to numbers and other such factors affecting viability. In the event of any change, we will undertake to notify you at the earliest possible opportunity.

In choosing subjects, students should be aiming for a course that they will enjoy and which will give them the best chance of achieving excellent grades. There is also an opportunity for students to take a broad variety of subjects, for example taking a language or humanities course alongside three sciences. Students will also need to consider whether their choices meet the needs of any university or career aspirations they may have. Overall, students should pick:

- 1) Subjects they are good at (we expect students to have achieved at least a grade 7 at GCSE and most students have an 8 or 9 in the necessary qualifying subject) - please be aware that there is a significant gap between GCSE, AS and A Levels, so students should not be overly influenced by just one exam result e.g. a GCSE mock. Instead they should reflect on their performance over the last two years in order to get the best indication as to their likely success in a given subject.

- 2) Subjects they enjoy - this is crucial as enjoyment and examination success go hand in hand and intellectual talent cries out to be exercised regularly. Students will find self-motivation much more of an issue if they take a subject that they do not find interesting and exciting.
- 3) Subjects that are particular to a career or university choice (this can be checked on the UCAS website) - for most careers, any combination of A Levels is appropriate. If you have a particular vocational career ambition though it is always wise to consult with staff and to use the careers library before finalising your Sixth Form options.

Sixth Form Study

One of the key aims in the Sixth Form is to develop students as independent and lifelong learners, carefully managing the transition from the highly structured nature of Year 11 in preparation for higher education and beyond. In the Sixth Form students will have non-contact study periods alongside taught lessons. Students are expected to use study periods constructively and wisely to support their academic studies. Much of this work will be self-directed and will involve wider-reading and additional note-taking – skills that are essential at this level of study. The Sixth Form Library and Resource Centre, IT rooms, Common Room, Pavilion and Small Hall are all available for private study. Year 12 students will generally be allocated thirteen study periods over the fortnight (this will be fewer for those taking Further Mathematics). Year 12 students are timetabled to spend at least half of their study periods in the Small Hall where they must work independently and in silence.

At this level of study, students will be expected to devote around five hours per week of self-directed study to each of their four subjects outside of the classroom. This equates to students being expected to spend an hour on independent study for every hour of teaching they receive.

As a means of supporting students' self-directed study, the School offers a web-based Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This allows students to access a wide range of personalised learning resources which have been developed by the relevant academic departments in order to support classroom learning. Alongside this, Sixth Form students are encouraged to buy a wireless laptop, which allows them access to the School's network during their time in the Sixth Form. For those experiencing financial hardship, the 16-19 Bursary Award Scheme can help eligible pupils to access such resources.

All students go through a detailed and extensive induction programme as it is important that the transition from GCSE is carefully managed. An introduction day for all successful applicants is held in July and provides an opportunity to ensure students have a clear expectation of life in the Sixth Form and to inform them how best to prepare for A Level study. It is also an opportunity to meet the other students who will be attending the Sixth Form. At the beginning of the first term, Year 12 will spend a day undertaking team building and problem-solving activities and developing their independent learning skills. These activities are both held in school. There is also an evening for parents/carers to learn how best they can support their son or daughter throughout the next two years and this event offers an opportunity for parents/carers to meet form tutors and senior staff.

Facilities

The Sixth Form is fortunate to enjoy the use of the Sixth Form Centre. It comprises the Sixth Form Library and Resources Centre, where students have access to work areas, computers, careers and university resources as well as wireless internet and network access. It also contains the Sixth Form Common Room where students can relax and socialise. The Sixth Form Association assists the Director of Sixth Form in the management of the Sixth Form Centre. Students also have access to the second

floor of the School's Pavilion which has a work area and provides catering facilities similar to that of a university refectory.

Pastoral Care, Support and Guidance

Each member of the Sixth Form is allocated to a tutor group and it is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to monitor academic progress as well as the general welfare of the student and to provide pastoral support. Tutors will often teach members of their tutor group in one of their A Level subjects which allows tutors to get to know their tutees very quickly. Students will normally keep the same Form Tutor for both Year 12 and Year 13. It is the Form Tutor who provides the regular daily contact with the students at morning and afternoon registration and he or she is the first port of call for parents/carers. As part of their timetable all students have a one-to-one mentoring meeting with their Form Tutor every half-term to discuss and review their progress. Also Form Tutors will have a timetabled PSHE lesson with their tutor groups once a fortnight which will focus on the school's values of duty and will include discussions on a range of pastoral and social issues as well as preparation for higher education. It is usually the Form Tutor that will draft the reference for a university application.

In addition to the Form Tutor, there is a Head of Year 12, an Assistant Head of Year 12, a Head of Year 13 and an Assistant Head of Year 13. Normally students will keep the same Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year during their time in the Sixth Form and they provide another point of contact and support for students. The Heads and Assistant Heads of Year and their teams of Form Tutors ably support the Director of Sixth Form who has overall responsibility for the work of Tutors and the monitoring of students' progress. All are available to meet with students who are encountering difficulties and can also direct them to outside agencies where appropriate. As part of this, 'Bromley Y' provide an on-site counselling service for students which is available four days a week.

Reporting

Monitoring progress and regular feedback are clearly of vital importance in ensuring academic success. The School's Individual Pupil Monitoring (IPM) scheme measures students' progress against their own potential by setting aspirational challenge grades. The reporting schedule is shown below.

YEAR 12

November:	Interim Report
December:	Parents'/Carers' Evening
February:	Full Report
July:	End of Year Exam Report and UCAS Grade Predictions

YEAR 13

November:	Interim Report
November:	Parents'/Carers' Evening
March:	Full Report

Co-Curricular

At St. Olave's we value the importance of a broad curriculum and we pride ourselves on providing enrichment opportunities for students to build on existing talents whilst developing new skills and interests. The School has a long tradition of providing an impressive and varied co-curricular

programme and all members of the Sixth Form are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities.

The School has an excellent record in Sport, boasting a rich fixtures programme, and many students excel at school level and beyond. As well as the major team games of Rugby, Basketball, Netball, Hockey, Cricket and Athletics, many other sports are popular. These include Eton Fives, Swimming, Tennis, Football, Squash and Chess.

There are regular school concerts and drama productions as well as a wide range of orchestras, ensembles, bands and choirs. We also offer individual tuition in a wide range of instruments. The Music block provides first class facilities for such activities.

For many years, groups have been involved in World Challenge Expeditions which in recent years have travelled to Ecuador, Tanzania, Nicaragua, Botswana, Peru, Costa Rica and Morocco where they enjoyed a combination of mountain trekking and project work in local schools. Groups have also taken part in Operation Wallacea, which involves conservation work in the game reserves of South Africa and in the Amazonian rainforests of Peru. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is also very popular and offers Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

Students may opt for Community Service work on Wednesday afternoons through the School's 'Le Chavetois Society'. Popular options include visits to local primary schools and Day Care centres. These include our family of local schools which are involved in a number of joint activities with St. Olave's. This has included Sixth Form students helping with sports days and organising and running a Year 5 Maths and Science Day. This is part of our actively promoted duty to others and to the community.

There are numerous other activities including Young Enterprise, the very popular Debating Society, the Model United Nations (where, in partnership with other local schools, students take over the Bromley Civic Centre to debate issues in the style of the UN), as well as numerous language clubs ranging from Russian to Japanese.

A large number of clubs and societies are run by the Sixth Form. These include the Medics' Society, Law Society, History Society, Philosophy Society, Political Economy Society, Natural Sciences Society, Physics and Engineering Society, Literature Society and a whole host of others. If members of the Sixth Form cannot find a society they are interested in, then they are encouraged and supported to set one up. Senior students also lead a number of clubs for the younger members of the School (such as Chemistry Club and Current Affairs Society) which often take place at lunchtime. In this incredibly diverse and dynamic culture of student-led academic clubs and societies, many societies produce their own annual publications containing top-calibre scholarly work on a range of independently researched topics which go far beyond the requirements of the examined curriculum. These are some of the fruits of our actively promoted and carefully fostered duty to the school and to others.

At St. Olave's the Sixth Form is very much part of the School and not a separate body within it. As such the Sixth Form play a highly significant role in the day-to-day running of the School. Some students will act as Form Prefects who are attached to Lower and Middle School forms where they undertake administrative and pastoral support duties as well as acting as mentors to individual students. Academic Prefects are attached to Faculties and assist them in a number of ways which include running lunchtime clubs as well providing one-to-one support to Lower and Middle School students in a particular subject. Ambassador Prefects oversee the integration of the new Year 12 students, both internal and external, and ensure that students settle quickly into the Sixth Form. Outreach Prefects engage with the Old Olavian Community and network with University Clubs and Societies. Some students will act as Duty Prefects at break and lunch times with responsibility for supervising areas of

the School alongside members of the duty staff. House Captains and Vice Captains help to foster a healthy sense of collaboration within and competition between the four houses of the school across all seven year groups. Finally, there are also Sports Prefects who help with the organisation, coaching and running of individual School sports as well as giving regular sports reports in Full School assembly. These various prefect teams are led by the Captain and Vice Captains of School who are appointed by the Headteacher and Director of Sixth Form following a process of consultation with students and staff.

Sixth Form students run their own Association through a council of elected members. This is an important body and provides a powerful forum and voice for the Sixth Form as well as being responsible for looking after Sixth Form facilities and for organising events such as the Leavers' Ball. New members of the Sixth Form are asked to make a voluntary donation of £50 to the Association at the beginning of the year.

University and Careers Guidance

During their time in the Sixth Form students will be given comprehensive support and guidance with making decisions about Higher Education and future careers. Nearly all students leave St. Olave's to take up a place at the top Russell Group universities, either immediately after their A Levels or after a gap year. Others may go on to degree apprenticeships or other specialised courses and the same level of support is provided to these students too. Students will receive very detailed guidance on applying to university which includes the Higher Education Evening at which the process is explained by university admissions tutors. The PSHE programme also provides clear guidance to students about university application. The Sixth Form Library and the VLE have a wide range of resources related to university applications and careers as well as university prospectuses.

Candidates interested in applying for Oxford or Cambridge are invited to attend information sessions during the Spring, Summer and Autumn terms to help with their applications and choice of colleges. There is also an Oxbridge Information evening held at the School shortly after the Higher Education Evening in the Spring Term. There are sessions led by the Director of Sixth Form who oversees and supports students applying to Oxford and Cambridge. There is also a member of staff responsible for overseeing applications for Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry. The Medics' Society regularly invites outside speakers to talk about how best to maximise the prospects of successful university applications for such courses (and the Year 12 Medical Elective devotes weekly curriculum time to preparing for the admissions process). We also run admissions workshops in conjunction with prestigious Higher-Education providers to support aspiring medics in fulfilling their ambitions.

The application process begins in the Spring term of Year 12 and there is a strong emphasis on students making early applications; the vast majority of students will submit their UCAS forms by the end of October of Year 13. A small number of students apply after their A Levels and, provided they left the School in the previous academic year, they may do so through the School (the School charges a small administration fee for this service).

Careers evenings held in Year 12 allow students to attend talks on a wide range of careers and provide an opportunity to find out more information about them. The evenings cover areas such as working in the media, the city and in the public sector.

The Leavers' Farewell

It is vitally important to make sure students feel welcome and settle in quickly when beginning their Sixth Form careers; equally important is how we say farewell to students at the end of their A Level

courses. Once the examinations in Year 13 have finished we hold our Leavers' Reception for parents/carers, students and staff. Guests are able to hear speeches from key staff and students as well as enjoying a glass of wine and canapés. The Leavers' Ball for students and staff follows the Reception. The Ball always proves to be a very pleasant occasion where staff, students and their guests can relax and socialise in impressive surroundings.

Life Beyond the School

At St. Olave's we are very keen that our former students maintain close connections with the School and remain a part of our School Community. To this end, we have a number of opportunities and systems in place which help former students to keep in touch and to remain an active part of the life of the School. The first such opportunity comes in the September after a student has completed his or her course of study; this is Young Olavians' Day and involves a range of sporting fixtures between current Sixth Formers and "new" Old Olavians. Whether competing or spectating this is a great day and a great opportunity for a student to commence his or her longer-term relationship with the School.

Thereafter students are invited and encouraged to join the Old Olavians Society and via this organisation a range of social, academic and cultural opportunities will be presented to our former students to maintain links with the School. We strongly believe that such ongoing relationships are to the mutual benefit of all members of the Olavian family. Once an Olavian, always an Olavian.

Sixth Form Curriculum in Detail

Detailed outline of the A Level courses on offer at St. Olave's can be found on the website via "Current Olavians", Curriculum. You should also view the videos that are available for each subject.

Admissions Procedure

Internal Applicants

All Year 11 internal applicants will be invited to meet with a member of staff to discuss their application, as part of the School's careers programme.

All successful applicants (both internal and external) will be offered a place on condition of meeting the entry requirements set out in the School's Admissions Policy for 2021/2022 and will be expected to attend an Introduction Day during the Summer Term 2021.

Appeal Process

Should a parent wish to appeal against the Governors' decision not to admit their child, they should write to the Clerk to the Independent Appeals Panel, care of the School, requesting an appeal form.



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