

### **Intent: A-level Psychology**

Psychology is an academic subject that enables our students to develop their knowledge of psychological issues, research studies, theories and models in a range of topic areas relating to human and animal behaviour.

Students develop the higher-level skill of evaluation by looking at strengths, limitations and other discussion points such as compare and contrast throughout the course. This allows them to understand the complexity of psychological issues and move away from simplistic answers towards more developed discussions. Students use their knowledge and evaluation skills to apply Psychology to real world examples of behaviour and need to be prepared to consider topics in the exams that are not on the specification, a wide range of examples are used in lessons to support them with this.

In Psychology, 25% of the course consists of optional units - as a Department we have chosen schizophrenia, relationships and forensics. We have a strong commitment to raising the profile of mental health care and mental health awareness, studying schizophrenia gives us an opportunity to dispel myths about this psychotic disorder. The relationships topic can be easily related to life in terms of how romantic relationships are started, maintained and ended all the way through life. The topic of forensics has been chosen as criminal behaviour impacts everyone either directly or indirectly. The causes of offending behaviour and ways of dealing with offending behaviour have many moral, social and political implications

A key aim of our course is to support students to develop skills that will help them in their future education, work life, family life and as a valuable member of society. We look at many ways in which Psychology can be used to help people, including ourselves. We encourage the development of independence and resilience, offering opportunities for one-to-one support in addition to class time support. This is in the context of expecting students to take responsibility for their own progress and outcomes in A-level Psychology.

Students work towards the AQA A A-level course in Psychology. It is therefore our intent that young people are fully prepared for the course and are aware of the key skills and knowledge needed to succeed in this course.

### **Goal for every student: A-level Psychology**

- Every student should be able to recognise the difference between A01, A02 and A03 skills in psychology.
- Every student should be familiar with their target grade, as well as grades they have achieved in mock exams and other key assessments.
- Every student should be able to recall the layout of the three exams, including which topics are examined in which exam.
- Every student should be aware of the core approaches and methods that are integrated throughout the whole course: cognitive, social, biological, developmental, individual differences and research methods.

### **Implemented pace: A-level Psychology**

- Each topic is delivered through 16 hours of teaching. Some topics may need more or less time depending on the confidence of the group.
- More time will be needed on research methods as this is central to the subject (25% of the A-level).

- Each topic will have a 16-mark question set (apart from research methods), as well as a full 24-mark assessment.
- Year 12 start with the research methods and approaches topic. This is because these two are the core elements of the course and are revisited in various other topics. After this, the group move onto studying the topics needed for paper one (memory, social influence, psychopathology and attachment). This makes sense in terms of sequencing as this is the first exam that the group will face in year thirteen. After paper two, the group move onto the final part of paper two – biopsychology. The group would have already studied the other two elements of paper two (approaches and research methods) at the start of year twelve.
- In year thirteen the group start with forensic psychology. This is merely due to the amount of young people who apply for criminology/law-based degrees in the past. It gives them the knowledge and capacity to add to their personal statement, as well as being signposted to wider reading that might well set them aside from other candidates.

#### **Impact: A-level Psychology**

Our study of Psychology shines a light on our own behaviour and the behaviour of others. It brings about empathy, tolerance and an appreciation of how interconnected and complex our lives as humans has become. Furthermore, we examine the subject material from a stance of sensitivity and understanding. Such traits are necessary should students follow a career into health disciplines.