

**Sixth Form  
Handbook  
2010 - 2011**



**Priory School**

***Principal: Mr E J Matyjaszek BA (Oxon)***

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## **The Sixth Form at Priory School - An Introduction**

When I became Proprietor and Principal of Priory School in March 2009, which had until then promised an education up to the age of 16, or GCSE level, I became immediately aware of two aspects that suggested the idea of opening a Sixth Form.

The first was the very high calibre of the staff I had inherited and that I was able to appoint. Priory School was top of the island academic League Tables in 2006, though I am unsure how reliable such statistical guides are. For a genuine school, it is not a matter of figures and tables, but whether the children in one's care are all given the chance they deserve.

Some triumphs never appear in league tables – the child who just needs five GCSEs whatever the grades to go on to the career of their choice but who struggles in every one; or the child for whom to stand up in front of a public gathering and read out a text without loss of confidence or fluency is a major and unforgettable achievement. These in human terms rank with the A\* grades, the Oxbridge Scholarships, the high-flying career paths. But both are the proper pursuit and legitimate interest of a good school.

It was clear to me from the staff I met that Priory School had the capacity to be such a good school; and I set about bringing back those staff who had earlier brought the school such academic achievements, and supporting those who were already here. We have also been able to make further appointments since - and are still doing so - to search out and keep teachers whose professional ability and vocational commitment mean we can sustain this ethos.

I feel we have seen this confirmed in the most dramatic way this year by the national award by the Good Schools Guide for being the best School in the country for teaching Biology to boys at GCSE. The Good Schools Guide awards in this very eclectic way, but quite simply it means our teaching is of the highest standard. This has been corroborated by last November's GCSE papers: out of 84 papers taken by 22 pupils, many in Years 9 and 10 (our S3 and S4 years), the A\* or A pass rate was 55%.

In recent years also we have seen students from Priory School win scholarships to Christ's Hospital, for instance, and also go on to Cambridge. Based on all this, I felt the capacity to provide a Sixth Form education of the highest standard was there.

But the second aspect was the unusually talented - and lively! - set of pupils who would prepare for GCSEs this year. I thought many of them were potential Sixth Form entrants, who could benefit from a rigorous academic education to prepare them for their future. I am pleased to say that members of our current Fifth Form will be staying on to be Founder members of the Sixth Form in September and that is of course a matter of considerable pride.

We aim to do our absolute best for them and all who enter our Sixth Form, to provide a full education all the way to University entrance, professional training, the Services, or whichever career path is chosen. This would we hope complete the education we offer at Priory School, and give island families a real choice for their children.

***A brief checklist:***

- A Level students will have 32 periods per week maximum (4 subjects x 8 periods). The full timetable is 36 periods,.
- Although fully part of the school, Sixth-Formers will be treated separately with a separate uniform/dress code.
- Study periods are to be taken in school during the day; attendance is required at the start of the school day; will be optional at end of day if studies dictate; games periods will be optional.
- The Prefect body will be drawn from the Fifth and Sixth Forms.
- Sixth-Formers will be expected to present school at public occasions such as open days, end-of-term services, major assemblies etc.
- A Sixth-Form Common Room will be provided. It will serve as a study room.
- Sixth-Formers must purchase their own textbooks. They can do this either independently or through school.
- It is expected that students will have their own laptops.
- Sixth-Form students may, with the explicit approval of the school and of parents or guardians, use their own motor vehicle for the express purpose of travelling to and from school. No parking spaces are available within the school grounds. Use of the vehicle for social or private purposes during school hours is strictly prohibited.

## **Subjects offered for Sixth Form study**

### **Currently applied for:**

*English Literature*

*Mathematics*

*Biology*

*Chemistry*

*Physics*

*ICT*

*History*

### **Also available:**

*Religious Studies*

*French*

*Art & Design*

We also have the capacity to provide Sixth Form tutoring for further subjects already requested by our Foundation Sixth-Formers:

*Law*

*Sociology*

We are exploring these further subjects which we teach at GCSE and which we are confident we will be able to offer if there is the demand:

*Geography*

Drama/Performing Arts

## The Sixth Form – A Tutor’s View

The Sixth Form is quite unlike any previous time you have spent in school. It provides a totally different work environment from that of the lower school. You are likely to be taking three or four subjects at a significantly advanced level of study, compared to GCSE. There will be times in the day when you do not have a taught lesson, and these times are **very much your own responsibility: you must use them for your own private study**. You will be set assignments which require you to read and research on your own, and you are trusted to do this.

Bear in mind that the effort and commitment you put in to your studies is very important. What you do in these two years - and they are very short ones – determines what choices are open to you when you have finished: be it university, college, professional career path. Always remember that the better qualified you are, the more choice you have about the kinds of career open to you, and the further up the promotion ladder you can go.

So, to keep your options as wide as possible you need to be committed as soon as you begin your AS courses in September: that is when opinions are formed about you, and when you form opinions about yourself and your own potential.

Above all, Sixth Form studies will help you to become an independent learner. The skills and habits you develop now will stand you in good stead for the rest of your working life.

As with any institution, there are rules to be observed and expectations on you:

- Attendance at all subject lessons is compulsory; you must be punctual.
- Attendance at 8.45am, the beginning of the school day, is compulsory.
- The Sixth Form uniform is to be worn and is a condition of Sixth Form membership.
- Study periods during the day are to be taken in school. If you have a study period at the end of the day you may sign out and go home.
- Unless you are required for a specific purpose, permission to leave the premises at lunchtimes is usually granted provided you have signed your name in the leave book kept in the office.
- Full uniform is to be worn for examinations.
- Students may, with the explicit approval of the school and of parents or guardians, use their own motor vehicle for the express purpose of travelling to and from school. No parking spaces are available within the school grounds. Use of the vehicle for social or private purposes during school hours is strictly prohibited.

## The AS and A2 Levels

At Priory School you need appropriate results at GCSE to study for A Levels in the Sixth Form. Ideally, if you have gained a B grade or above in your chosen subjects, you should be well placed, but a C grade plus a positive interest in the subject is also perfectly acceptable as a basis.

### *Which subjects to choose?*

The normal course of study means taking four subjects in the Lower Sixth, at the end of which – if successful – you finish with four passes at **AS Level**. The normal course of study then involves selecting three of those and spending your Upper Sixth year studying these through to gain the full **A2 Level** qualification. You don't need to decide whether you wish to continue with each chosen AS subject to a full A2 Level until you have received your AS Level results in the August following completion of the course and exams.

Think carefully about your choice of subjects: you may find that your choice of four to start with is an easy one to make: perhaps you have a clear idea of three which fit together - say, Maths, Physics and Chemistry - but would like to choose something completely different and refreshing for your fourth subject: say, English or Art. Whatever your thoughts, do discuss with your tutors and listen to advice from subject tutors, the Senior School Head, the Sixth Form Head or the Principal. Our main aim is to make sure that you are comfortable with the courses you have chosen. It is an important choice for you to make, after all.

Naturally, you should select subjects which you think you will do well in when it comes to final grades: you need to bear in mind the university, college and career options you may wish to pursue beyond school, so check your proposed courses against these plans. On the other hand, you may not necessarily have a clear further study or career option in mind and you may wish to select your subjects simply on the basis of you liking for them. That's fine.

### *How assessed?*

Your A Level courses will be assessed on what is called a modular basis. Don't worry too much about this technical term: essentially, a modular course is one which is assessed not only by examinations at the end of the course but one which is **assessed by examinations, or through the submission of coursework, at various points during the course.** Most AS modules will be assessed in June of the Lower Sixth year, although some may be assessed in January; a similar pattern operates at A2 Level. Again, you need not worry too much about the details at this stage – what matters is that you develop good working habits from the start.

# **GCE Advanced Level English at Priory School**

## ***Our general approach***

In general, we encourage a way with, and an awareness of, good use of English. At all year levels we aim to emphasise engagement with language through the study of works of literature, promoting aesthetic perception, creativity and clarity of thought and expression.

We encourage pupils to develop speaking skills through both formal and informal situations, and to develop as writers by aiming for control over such matters as grammar, spelling and punctuation, structure and organisation of material and an awareness of moods, styles and forms.

## ***What about A Level?***

At Advanced Level, in particular, we want you to build on these skills, developing as far as possible a love of literature. This means that you will study a range of literature in all three main genres, whether you are taking the subject to AS Level only, or on to A2 Level.

Alongside this, you will have the opportunity to write creatively and imaginatively. You will be encouraged to see the craft of writing as an ongoing process, with redrafting of written work a crucial element in the quest for success.

## ***The exam board***

We will use the OCR Board's specifications for GCE English Literature. On the following pages is OCR's own candidate guide to the course, highlighting:

- what it will help you to develop
- what value an A Level in English will have for a range of future careers
- how the course fits in with other subjects and the sort of GCSE basis you ideally need to have

some details of the 2 AS units studied in your first year and the 2 A2

***Studying for these qualifications will enable you to develop:***

- your interests in and enjoyment of reading and discussing literary texts;
- your knowledge and understanding of a wide range of English literature texts;
- your skills of literary analysis.

This qualification gives you the opportunity to study literature across the genres of prose, poetry and drama, and to read around concepts of literature and literary analysis.

To get the AS qualification, you'll need to cover six texts and then another six texts to get the A level qualification, and it is possible to choose texts that link together or contrast with each other.

***Before you start this qualification:***

It is usual to have a GCSE in English or English Literature, at least at Grade C, but you could have an equivalent qualification. The emphasis is on progression from GCSE to the AS qualification and progression from the full A level towards study in Higher Education.

English Literature combines well with many other subjects. History, Classics and Modern Foreign Languages are particularly suitable, but it can also be a valuable contrast to scientific, technological and economics-based subjects.

If you are considering going on to Higher Education, the English Literature qualification provides a wide range of opportunities for degree courses in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The English Literature qualification is also welcomed for many different careers because it emphasises creativity, disciplined thought and communication, plus an ability to synthesise and contextualise ideas.

### ***Requirements of the qualifications:***

To get a certificate for Advanced Subsidiary GCE, you will need to have studied for and been assessed on the two mandatory AS units. (F661 and F662).

For these units, you need to study a minimum of six texts, which may in some cases be extracts from texts, and must include:

- post-1900 literature, including at least one text published or performed after 1990;
- poetry 1800-1945;
- prose 1800-1945;
- a literary-critical text.

The literary-critical text is used as a reference to support understanding of the 1800-1945 prose texts and it is expected that selected sections or chapters will be read, not the whole text.

To get a certificate for Advanced GCE A level, you will need to have studied for and been assessed on the two mandatory A2 units (F663 and F664), in addition to the two AS units.

You will need to study another six texts. For the examined unit (F663), these must include:

- a Shakespeare play
- one drama and one poetry text from pre-1800

For the coursework unit (F664), this must include three texts which can be from any period, or across periods, and must include one prose and one poetry text.

## **Mathematics at A Level**

Teaching A/S and A level Mathematics involves a less formal approach than GCSE inasmuch as the lessons would be less rigidly structured, giving the students the opportunity to take on more responsibility regarding their understanding of individual topics. This would allow a mixture of formal work as well as their studying out of lessons without formally set homework, although forms of assessment would be necessary to monitor each individual's progress. Success in A Level Mathematics requires that each pupil be motivated towards the subject, and not see it as just another qualification, otherwise the subject will not yield its full benefits or be attended by success.

This specification is derived from the School Mathematics Project and the AQA GCE Mathematics and Statistics Specification B.

It includes optional assessed coursework in a number of Statistics and Mechanics units, but coursework is not a compulsory feature.

This specification is designed to encourage candidates to study mathematics post-16. It enables a variety of teaching and learning styles, and provides opportunities for students to develop and be assessed in five of the six Key Skills.

The qualifications based on this specification are a recognised part of the National Qualifications Framework. As such, AS and A Level provide progression from Key Stage 4, through post-16 studies and form the basis of entry to higher education or employment.

Mathematics is, inherently, a sequential subject. There is a progression of material through all levels at which the subject is studied. The Subject Criteria for Mathematics and therefore this specification build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE Mathematics.

There is no specific prior requirement, for example, in terms of tier of

## **Welcome to AS Biology!**

### ***What syllabus do we follow?***

We follow the AQA syllabus and you will be using AS Biology by Glenn and Susan Toole from your first lesson in September. There are other AS textbooks on the market which meet the requirements for your syllabus including ‘AS Biology for AQA’ by Keith Hirst (published by Collins) and ‘AS Biology for AQA’ by Michael Kent (published by Oxford). You may find it useful to acquire a copy of one of these to help your studies.

### ***What are the requirements for taking AS Biology?***

It is strongly recommended that you have at least grade B in GCSE Biology and in GCSE Chemistry. If you are taking Additional Science GCSE then grade A or A\* is required.

### ***How is AS Biology different from GCSE?***

Studying AS Biology is very different from studying GCSE level Biology. It isn't just that there is more detail to learn or that the exam questions demand more writing but also that you will need to study outside lesson or prep times to do well – adding to your notes from other sources (other textbooks, reliable websites, journals etc.) keeping up to date with Biology in the news and reading other areas of Biology that interest you.

### ***What will I study?***

There are three main topics:

- Biology and disease
- The variety of living organisms
- Practical assignment

### ***How can I prepare for AS Biology?***

You will be given summer holiday work to prepare you for the course. This includes preparatory work on the heart, lungs, enzymes, the immune system and plant structure. There is a test on this material in the first week of the course.

Read a broadsheet newspaper, its online equivalent or BBC online news as often as possible and build up a portfolio of articles about issues related to Biology such as swine flu, cloning, heart disease and vaccines. You will be expected to maintain this portfolio throughout the course.

Follow up interesting articles by doing a wider search on the internet – use reliable websites and think about who is funding it/the work behind it. If you use Wikipedia, use it as a springboard to other sites rather than as a source of reliable information.

Buy or borrow books on topics such as smallpox, TB, cholera, immunology, genetic testing and evolution – and read them!

Visit places such as the Natural History Museum, Bodyworlds or the Eden Project.

## **Summary of A Level ICT**

This specification brings the study of ICT up to date for the 21st century. Candidates can develop an understanding of how ICT can be used in society and organisations and the implications of its use.

Among the many benefits, this new specification is designed to encourage candidates to:

- work co-operatively and manage projects
- develop personal learning and thinking skills
- provide quality ICT-based solutions to a range of problems
- develop an awareness of developments in technology.

### ***AS outline***

At AS, there are 2 complementary units concerned with applying ICT to solve problems and the study of the opportunities for and effects of using ICT in the world today.

Candidates have the opportunity to put into practice a wide range of software and hardware to create solutions to solve problems:

- INFO1: Practical Problem Solving in the Digital World
- INFO2: Living in the Digital World.

### ***A2 outline***

At A2, students study the concepts associated with the use of ICT in the 21st century. They also have opportunities for acquiring skills needed in the IT profession.

These practical skills can be developed in areas of ICT that are of interest to them. Students can also use these newly acquired skills as a springboard into other qualifications and working environments:

- INFO3: The Use of ICT in the Digital World
- INFO4: Coursework: Practical Issues Involved in the Use of ICT in

## **Why study History at Advanced Level?**

History deals with how our present society and world came about.

- It fits well with a number of A Levels and prepares students for degree courses in these and in Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy, Law.
- For those students studying Science subjects at A Level and anticipating a degree in this area, it is a very good Humanities subject balance for AS (at A2 the research topic can be on the History of Science - the importance of a movement or an individual for instance).
- History helps students to develop critical and evaluative skills. It gives students the opportunity to examine different interpretations, analyse them, evaluate them, argue with them and develop the ability to present their own position clearly.

### ***So why History? Is it for you?***

Yes, if you eventually want a career working with people.

Yes, if you want to go on to applied Humanities at university like law and sociology.

Yes, if you are interested in “people and the past” for the present is built on the past and is the foundation of the future.

### ***The specification offers maximum flexibility***

- A wide choice of options
- The chance to select options from the same period
- The specification also promotes a coherent study of History.
- It contains a substantial British history requirement.

## **Some pointers for the French AS/A2 course**

Pupils moving from GCSE French to become "A" Level students in our Sixth Form will realise that a considerable change of intellectual gear will be required.

They will find that the grammar and vocabulary which achieved their good grade at GCSE will suddenly seem rather inadequate for the challenges they will be meeting.

Therefore, a good deal of tutor-time will be devoted to developing a more academic understanding of French grammar and to a speedy broadening of vocabulary.

Sixth Form students will be expected to develop their knowledge of French culture, history and contemporary life through their own research, and it will be beneficial for them to be able to spend some time in France, something with which *Priory School* is likely to be able to assist.

While it is possible to reach "A" Level standard without the study of French Literature, this is such a rich field, as well as an area in which the H.O.D has specialised, that it will certainly feature in the course.

## **Why choose Religious Studies for A Level?**

- No personal religious persuasion is required - it is open to the agnostic and the atheist, as well as those who have a religious faith.
- It is an academic discipline developing the knowledge, understanding and skills of the subject.
- No prior knowledge of Religious Studies is required, though for those who have done it at GCSE there is the opportunity to build on knowledge, understanding and skills gained.
- Religious Studies can be a very important subject in an A Level portfolio with History and English instance.
- It helps students to develop evaluative and critical skills, to examine evidence and argument, and develop their own skills at argument.
- Religious Studies gives students the time, space and skills to reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their learning.
- If you are interested in people and what makes them tick, if you have an open mind, if you enjoy discussions and debate, this could be the subject you are looking for at A Level.

## **Introduction to the A level Art & Design Course.**

As visual communication becomes increasingly important, this course seeks to encourage students to express themselves effectively, whilst gaining an understanding of how ideas and information are communicated. Students may decide to further their studies in higher education and A level Art & Design will provide a firm foundation.

### ***What must be produced for an Art & Design A level?***

There are 2 coursework units:

- a Portfolio at AS and a Personal Investigation at A2.

### **There are also 2 units set by the AQA;**

- an Externally Set Assignment at AS and a second Externally Set Assignment at A2.

### ***What should the portfolio contain?***

The Portfolio is effectively a collection of 2 and/or 3 dimensional work. There will be opportunities to experiment with media, develop skills, learn new techniques and explore a range of critical/ historical & contextual materials.

### ***What is required for a Personal Investigation at A2?***

This unit requires the student to link both written & visual materials.

- Written materials must be 1000- 3000 words in length and should be in the form of extended writing rather than annotations.
- The written component must be taken as seriously as the visual work.

### ***Which areas of Study are available in Art & Design?***

- Unendorsed Study
- Fine Art
- Textiles

## Priory School Sixth Form

*If you would like further, detailed information, please fill in this slip and send it to the school office. We can then contact you to discuss matters further.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible A Level Subjects: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



