



Spalding Grammar School

SIXTH FORM



2017 Prospectus



Welcome

The transition from GCSE to A Level is considerable and can be a daunting prospect for many students; it requires patience, perseverance and plentiful practice. The nature of studying also changes significantly in the Sixth Form and, as taught lessons are fewer than at GCSE, so the need to develop effective time-management and independent organisation skills becomes greater. Whilst we cannot promise you that your transition into Sixth Form will be without difficulty, we can promise that you will be supported every step of the way.

Spalding Grammar School Sixth Form is a large, successful, mixed Sixth Form of approximately 270 students, where there is an emphasis on academic excellence, delivered through a rich, relevant and stimulating curriculum with a strong academic core.

Students who join our Sixth Form benefit from a broad range of A Level subjects, complemented by an extensive enrichment programme that enables them to stand out from the crowd. Such choice and diversity means that we can offer all students a programme of study well suited to individual needs, which in turn promotes very positive attitudes to learning and ensures that students make good progress across all aspects of their study programmes.

Just as in the main school, a cornerstone of our approach in the Sixth Form is the strength of relationships between staff and students, and we are committed to supporting the success of every student whether they are 'home-grown', or join us from another school in the region or beyond. The care and guidance that students receive is outstanding, and the vertical tutor system groupings, together with the strong support provided by pastoral staff, not only contribute significantly to students' enjoyment of school but also enable students to develop clear and ambitious plans for their future. There is a real sense of community at Spalding Grammar School and the Sixth Form takes the lead in developing this community spirit through House activities, charity events and mentoring younger students.

If you are stimulated by academic challenges, want the opportunity to develop a wide range of talents, enjoy taking a leadership role and are looking to be part of a caring, friendly school, then I invite you to consider our Sixth Form.

BA Love

Director of Sixth Form Studies



Curriculum and Learning

Naturally, academic success will be a major priority for you, and you can be confident that at Spalding Grammar School we support, encourage and facilitate academic excellence.

As a student in our Sixth Form you can choose from 28 different A Level subjects and languages. Additionally, all students are given the opportunity to choose from a diverse range of enrichment subjects to complement their core curriculum.

Sixth Form students value our positive ethos, where academic aspiration is fully encouraged and supported. Our teachers have a very high level of expertise in preparing students for A Level and beyond, and students thrive in a learning environment where everyone is keen to succeed.

Examination results are one of the key measures of our Sixth Form students' achievements. In 2016, the school achieved a 98% pass rate with 48% of the grades awarded being A*-B.

If you join our Sixth Form, we shall expect enthusiasm, commitment and, of course, a dedication to your chosen course of study, which will lead to the highest results at A Level.

Art and Design	Economics	Geography	Latin	Physics
Biology	Engineering	German	Law	Psychology
Business Studies	English Language	Government and Politics	Maths	Sociology
Chemistry	English Literature	Early Modern History	Maths (Further)	Spanish
Computer Science	Ethics and Philosophy	Modern History	Music	
Design Technology	French	ICT	Physical Education	

'Teachers have good subject knowledge, use high-quality questioning to check pupils' understanding and plan activities which are sharply focused on developing examination skills.' Ofsted



Pathways

From 2015 to 2017 the Government is introducing some fundamental changes to the A Level system and our aim is to offer students the opportunities that will arise from this new system, by bringing in a greater degree of personalisation into our Sixth Form offer. Universities – up to, and including, the Russell Group and Oxbridge universities – are making their offers based on subjects at A Level, and the competition for places is harder than ever, increasing the need to achieve top grades. For the majority, achieving these grades is the goal and we want to support them in maximising their chances of obtaining a university place.

To this end, all students applying to join our Sixth Form are required to choose three A Level subjects which will form their core curriculum, and they will commit to these for the full two years. The only exceptions to this will be students wishing to study Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and Mathematics, or Engineering and Mathematics, who will be permitted to choose four A Level subjects. Again, these students must commit to these subjects for the full two years. Students can choose any combination of subjects with the following restrictions: only one History may be studied; and Physics must be studied in partnership with Maths.

Following the changes to the A Level system, there will no longer be an option for students to discontinue an A Level subject at the end of Year 12, and all students entering Year 13 must study three A Levels. Additionally, given that AS Levels are now only worth 40% of an A Level and that AS results no longer count towards an A Level, students will not sit AS exams in reformed subjects at the end of Year 12. We, like many schools, have taken the view that to lock students into a Year 12 diet of AS can only dilute performance in the reformed A Level examinations.

A strength of our curriculum comes from giving students a free choice in the subject combination they want to study. We then build the teaching blocks around the students' choices when many schools and colleges predetermine the teaching blocks and limit the combination of subjects that an individual can choose.

On occasion, particular subject combinations have not been possible to timetable, and subjects that have attracted too few students have been deemed to be not economically viable. Should such a circumstance arise, we will contact individuals affected as soon as possible after the application deadline.



Enrichment

In a competitive world, it is no longer enough simply to do well in examinations in order to secure a place at university, or a good job. Each student needs to stand out as a well-rounded individual with a range of experiences, striking personal attributes, achievements and interests that complement those professional qualities that have enabled them to succeed in their studies.

On top of their core curriculum, students are also required to choose an enrichment subject. The only exception to this will be students studying four A Levels, who, given the increased demands of their chosen curriculum, may opt out of enrichment and use the time for private study instead.

To this end, Sixth Form students benefit from an extensive enrichment programme, through which they are encouraged to acquire new interests or develop existing ones, fill gaps in their UCAS personal statement or CV, or add an extra dimension to their curriculum or perhaps the wider community.

Within this enrichment programme students may choose from a diverse range of subjects:

AS Classical Civilisation	Formula Gravity Racing Team Project
Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives	Sports Leaders (Level 2)
Core Maths	Work Experience
European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)	Young Enterprise
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	

'Application rates for UK 18 year olds are at record levels, rising for England, Scotland and Wales, so it is becoming increasingly important for students to set themselves apart from their competitors. Our thriving enrichment programme allows them to do this.' B A Love, Director of Sixth Form Studies



Extra-Curricular

Sixth Form life offers numerous opportunities for students to develop their wide-ranging talents and use them to contribute to the School and the wider community.

Our school excels in sport, being successful in local and national competitions, and recognised as the best state school in the county for sport in 2014. With this in mind, all students are encouraged to continue their involvement in sport during the Sixth Form, and most receive two hours of games tuition per week.

School representative matches are centred around rugby, football, hockey and cricket, and are played during the games sessions on Wednesday afternoons or outside curriculum time.

Alongside this designated time, the PE Department runs a thriving enrichment programme and a variety of clubs take place at lunchtime and after school.

The School Houses also compete in inter-House sports throughout the year, which culminates in Sports Day during the summer.

Drama and music are also a prominent feature of extra-curricular opportunities at SGS, in which the School has achieved high standards and gained an enviable reputation. Productions have ranged from a musical version of Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' to the Broadway musical 'Honk!' and not forgetting the 2014 production of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat!'

Every show offers a wealth of on-stage and backstage opportunities, whether it be controlling the lighting rigs, managing the props or taking centre stage in one of the leading roles!

There are also many events in the School calendar that enable students to perform in various groups including Christmas concerts, awards ceremonies and charity events. The groups include the school choir, a concert band, soul band and ukulele band. Musical theory is also taught to supplement instrumental/vocal studies.



Purpose-built Sixth Form Facilities

The nature of studying changes significantly in the Sixth Form and, as such, each student is allocated a fixed number of timetabled private study periods, designed to help them cope with the increased demands of A Level.

Private study is essential to students' development, giving them the opportunity to consolidate what they have been taught in lessons, and our purpose built Sixth Form Study Centre provides a base for silent and supervised private study. Research and in-depth study, reading around a topic, note making, organising notes and writing essays are all tasks best carried out at school, where there are resources and staff available.

The Sixth Form Study Centre is a flexible space, consisting of an open-plan study area, private study rooms for group work, and study booths for individual work, giving students the opportunity to personalise their learning environment.

As well as having access to networked PCs, enhanced Wi-Fi provision in these areas allows students to take advantage of new technologies to assist them with their studies well. Students are able to bring their own laptops, netbooks and tablets to school; access their own dedicated file areas on the school network and take full advantage of a wide range of 'on-line' resources.

In recognition of their growing maturity and independence, Sixth Form students are also given a fixed number of 'free' periods, and our Sixth Form Coffee Lounge provides them with a modern area in which to socialise and recharge their batteries between lessons. The number of free periods given to Year 13 students increases after Year 12.

'The facilities available to the Sixth Form, namely the Sixth Form Study Centre and Coffee Lounge, provide areas for us as a cohort to work but also relax in, in order to get the best results possible' Sam, Year 13



Support at Spalding Grammar School

The Director of Sixth Form Studies, Mr Love, ably supported by the Heads of House, will guide you through our application process, help you work out which subjects you can study and induct you into how academic life in our Sixth Form works.

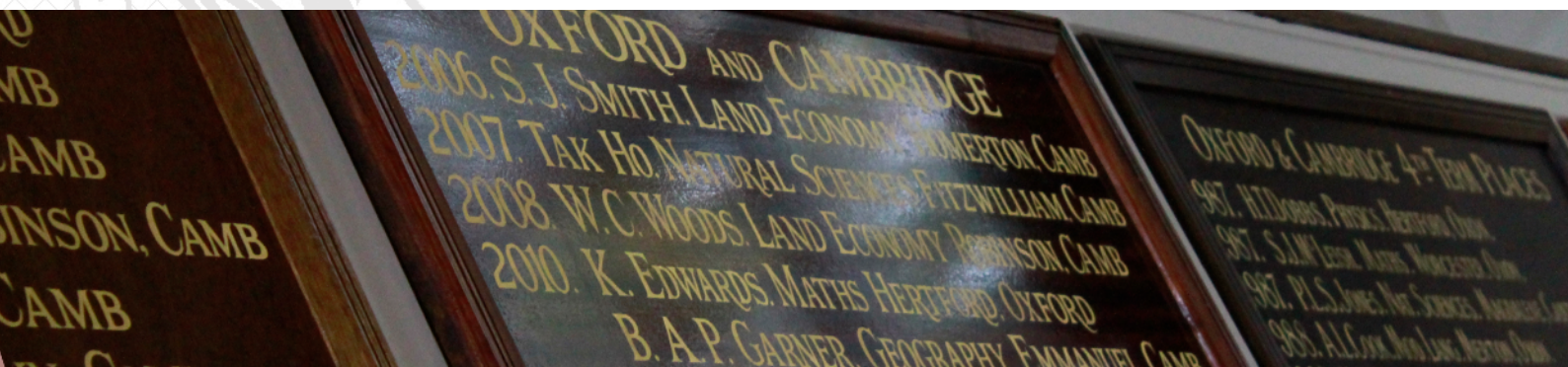
Each Sixth Form student is placed in a vertical form of approximately 20 students from different Year groups, led by an experienced form tutor who has special responsibility for the academic and personal well-being of each member of the form. In addition, there are six Heads of House who support the tutors in helping Sixth Formers to make the best decisions, not merely in career matters but in general pastoral support. They do this largely through one-to-one academic tutorials with the student and their parents/carers.

As well as pastoral support, our well established House system forms the focus for a wide range of events, clubs and activities in which Sixth Formers play a leading role in organising and running.

They are also encouraged to act as mentors to the younger students within their form in a number of ways, including assisting the tutor with regular school planner checks, running the intra-house quiz during form period on a Friday, or perhaps helping them with their homework during private study.

All in all, the Sixth Form is a place where staff are always willing to 'go the extra mile' for students, and the standard and quality of guidance is such that you would have to look hard to find better elsewhere. Indeed, around 60 students from other schools integrate very successfully into our Sixth Form each year. Moreover, through the Senior Student Team (a team of 16 representatives that have been elected from within Year 13 by their peers and staff), Sixth Form students have an opportunity to play a fundamental role in ensuring that the experience of every student within the School is as positive and rewarding as possible.

'The academy's system of vertical tutoring [...] provides pupils with opportunities to act as role models and to take on positions of responsibility within the academy's pupil community. 'Ofsted



Post-18 Preparation

The majority of our students decide to go on to Higher Education, and preparation for this starts early in Year 12. Students are given advice and guidance on how to research Higher Education courses and how to manage the electronic UCAS application process. Parents are also welcomed into School during Year 12 to attend an information evening concerning the UCAS journey and student finance. In addition, students are given advice and guidance on the writing of the Personal Statement, which is carried out and supervised in tutor groups and completed in the first term of Year 13.

Mock interviews are provided when necessary and past students are occasionally invited back to give advice to current Sixth Formers. Courses and 'taster sessions' are also advertised by e-mail throughout the year to provide students with an insight into careers, professions and undergraduate courses. Students applying to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge benefit

from dedicated specialist advice and support to help maximise their chances of success.

In 2016, 90% of Year 13 students that applied to study at university were accepted on to undergraduate courses and, of those, 25% secured places at Russell Group universities.

Needless to say, students considering other pathways are equally well supported and help and advice is offered throughout the Sixth Form concerning apprenticeships, school leaver programmes and gap year opportunities. We continue to build strong relationships with local apprenticeship providers and local businesses, and each year the School hosts a careers fair in a bid to raise students' awareness of a wide range of career and educational opportunities.

'Pupils receive effective advice and guidance in preparation for their next steps after sixth form. Pupils receive information about the different pathways available to them. They receive valuable support in making applications to university, and are provided with information about finance.' Ofsted



Student Profiles

Tom, Year 13

“ The transition from Year 11 to Year 12 was one which I faced with excitement. The prospect of specialising in my favourite subjects and the freedom of study periods was certainly appealing. I found that after I adjusted to the new workload through the support of my teachers, Sixth Form life became very enjoyable and after a year of studying A-Levels, I still find this to be the case. Becoming Head Boy was a target that I set myself early on in Year 12 and I am glad I did so. The demands of this position have helped me to mature and the selection process was an experience that is not offered in other parts of school life. I feel proud that I have been gifted with this role and responsibility and I hope to be able, in this way, to also support my fellow students. ”

Hannah, Year 13

“ Moving from secondary school to a completely different Sixth Form can be very intimidating. I came from University Academy Holbeach and barely knew anybody; however, the staff and my teachers were very welcoming and it did not take long for me to settle in. At SGS, expert support is offered with UCAS and personal statements, allowing you to create an application which truly 'stands out from the crowd' and I feel confident in now moving forward with finding my place in Higher Education. ”

Jordan, Year 13

“ In choosing to move from Spalding High School to take up a place in the Sixth Form at SGS, I found a school which made me feel both welcomed and valued. From my very first day, I felt very much listened to, considered and encouraged. Every teacher greeted me with a smile and every student seemed to appreciate the efforts the School has gone to in establishing the sense that 'individuals matter'.

The warmth and positivity of the School made me feel at home and confident in my studies even though I was still being challenged to achieve. I also felt reassured that - should I need it - staff are approachable and always willing to offer their support. ”

Oliver, Year 13

“ As with any change in life, I was a little nervous about switching schools, but at the same time excited at the opportunities the School would offer me as well as the chance to make new friends. I needn't have been anxious as the staff were extremely welcoming and soon put me at my ease. I had wondered how I would fit in as the Sixth Form is made up of internal and external students, but I quickly found that everyone is treated equally and all are encouraged to succeed, no matter which school they originate from. Within a week I had settled in to my new curriculum and made a number of new friends. I can honestly say that choosing Spalding Grammar for my A Level studies was definitely the right decision for me and I'm looking forward to making my own contribution to the success of the sixth form. ”

Admissions

Entry Requirements

From 2017, GCSE English Language, English Literature and Mathematics will be graded on a scale of 9-1, rather than A*-G, with grade 5 considered a good pass and 9 being the highest and set above the current A*. For the purposes of the entry requirements below, the following equivalencies will apply:

Current GCSE Grading Structure	New GCSE Grading Structure
Grade C	5
Grade B	6
Grade A	7
Grade A*	8

Admission to Sixth Form courses is dependent upon students meeting all the following requirements:

1. Six grades A* to C at GCSE, including a minimum of grade 5 in GCSE English Language and Mathematics.
2. Subjects being continued to A Level should be at least grade B or grade 6. That said, some subjects have higher expectations. Please see the individual subject information for details.
3. Students wishing to undertake subjects not previously studied should have at least a B grade or grade 6 in a related subject. Again, please see the individual subject information for details.
4. Additionally, students should have an enthusiasm for academic study.

Admissions

All students, both internal and external, must apply for a place in our Sixth Form. For September 2017 admission, external applications must be received by Friday 16 December 2016 and internal applications by Friday 10 February 2017. Application forms are available both through the 'Sixth Form' section of our website and the School Office.

For external applicants we will contact their current school to find out their predicted grades. In light of that information, prospective students may be invited to discuss their most suitable course of study.

Open Day

Before deciding upon their final subject combination and submitting their application, students are advised to attend our Open Day on Tuesday 29 November 2016. The Open Day allows students to experience Sixth Form life and Sixth Form lessons and will help to inform their final subject choices. Students may attend lessons for five different A Level subjects on this day, as well as experiencing our Sixth Form Coffee Lounge and Study Centre. Application forms are available both through the 'Sixth Form' section of our website and the School Office. The deadline for Open Day applications is Wednesday 23 November 2016.

It is still possible to apply for a place after the application deadlines, though initially you may have to be put on a reserve list for particular subjects or the Sixth Form itself, if places are already full. It is also possible for you to change your mind about your choice of courses. We will accommodate changes provided these are available within the final timetable. This can happen right up until the start of the September term, as some students will need to change courses when they know their GCSE results.



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