



WESTHOLME
SIXTH FORM

WELCOME TO WESTHOLME

SIXTH FORM

The Sixth Form experience at Westholme is vibrant and diverse, providing post 16 students with a sense of independence and responsibility within a supportive community. We offer a varied curriculum as well as many stimulating and enjoyable activities beyond the classroom.

Students benefit enormously from their own Sixth Form Centre, giving our students access to exceptional facilities. The centre includes a comfortable social space, a modern café, study facilities, teaching rooms, a lecture theatre, fitness suite and dance studio. The building also features state-of-the-art IT systems, with touch screen computers available and WiFi provided in all areas.

Sixth Form students are supported to develop the self-starting attitude and independent learning skills that will prove invaluable in higher education and the workplace.

The Sixth Form also provides young people with the chance to develop their leadership skills and demonstrate initiative; many of them relish this opportunity.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to our Sixth Form where we pride ourselves on the performance of our students. We believe that we provide a positive, dynamic learning environment that gives students the opportunity to achieve their potential and fulfil their goals whether that is in terms of university entrance or employment.

Our goal is to work with students to help prepare them for life post 18, through our range of courses, our substantial enrichment programme and our desire to see our students take responsibility. Westholme students mature into young people who can enter higher education or the world of work equipped with confidence, authority and a determination to succeed.

THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM

WHY A LEVELS?

There are a number of reasons why we have A Levels at Westholme, but the most important amongst these is that they continue to be the best guide to potential. University admissions tutors find A Level students the best prepared for undergraduate courses; they like the fact that students have studied topics in-depth.

You will be asked to choose 3 subjects to study at A Level. A small number of students may opt to study 4 subjects and this will be discussed on an individual basis.

When you are choosing what to study in the Sixth Form, do bear the following points in mind:

- You should have a genuine interest in, and enthusiasm for, the subjects you choose.
- The subjects should be appropriate for your future career.
- There is keen competition for places in Higher Education and so a high degree of commitment is necessary at Advanced Level if you are to obtain the required grades.

You will also complete an Extended Project Qualification during the Lower Sixth and have a variety of additional courses to choose from during enrichment activities.

A LEVEL SUBJECTS ON OFFER

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| » Art | » Geography |
| » Biology | » German* |
| » Business | » History |
| » Economics | » Mandarin* |
| » Chemistry | » Mathematics |
| » Classical Civilisation | » Music |
| » Computer Science* | » Photography |
| » Design & Technology:
Textiles | » Physical Education |
| » Drama & Theatre
Studies | » Physics |
| » English Language | » Psychology |
| » English Literature | » Religious Studies |
| » French* | » Sociology |
| | » Spanish* |

* May be offered at AS only and/or A Level dependent on demand

ADVANCED LEVEL SUBJECT CHOICES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY COURSES

There are particular subjects which may be required or expected for entry to certain degree courses. These requirements may change as universities adjust their expectations, and only the university's website should be considered authoritative.

Most other degrees have no requirements other than that the subject should have been studied to A Level or equivalent standard if it is available. Competition for places at the top universities is high. For some courses, particularly Medicine, Veterinary Science, Law, Psychology, History and English, competition for places is high and only consistent effort and determination to achieve high grades will lead to success. In these cases you should not choose subjects simply because you think they will be enjoyable or useful; you must be confident of achieving a good grade. An increasing number of universities including the Russell Group (e.g. Imperial College, London, Cambridge, Bath and UCL) will require an A* grade in at least one subject at A Level.

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CURRENTLY THE FOLLOWING BROAD GUIDELINES APPLY

NATURAL SCIENCE

Mathematics plus at least two of the three sciences advised.

MEDICINE, DENTISTRY, VETERINARY SCIENCE

Both Chemistry and Biology strongly advised (most medical schools require both to AS Level). Mathematics is also advisable.

ECONOMICS AND PPE

Mathematics is strongly advised and required by some universities.

PHARMACY

Chemistry and Biology are strongly advised.

ENGINEERING

Mathematics and Physics required. Further Mathematics is very useful.

COMPUTING

Mathematics is required.

LAW

Any A Levels at the highest grade.

PSYCHOLOGY

Usually two sciences are advised, but entry via arts subjects is possible.

BUSINESS STUDIES, MANAGEMENT

Mathematics is helpful but not essential.

ARCHITECTURE

Mathematics and Physics are useful, sometimes required, and an art portfolio is essential.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Two languages (modern or classical) are desirable but not essential.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Westholme we are certain that there is more to education than academic qualifications. The Sixth Form enrichment programme is ever evolving to ensure we provide up to date life skills, new experiences and the best possible advice for our young adults and future leaders.

Sixth Form students will have an extensive choice of enrichment activities on Wednesday afternoons when all students have the opportunity to further develop their personal and life skills. They may also be able to complete qualifications such as English Speaking Board in addition to their A Level studies. This may be available in either Lower or Upper Sixth Form.

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EXTENDED PROJECT

The Extended Project is offered by AQA allowing students more control over their studies. Candidates can choose to explore a further aspect of a subject they are studying, or a topic in which they have a personal interest.

The finished Project can be a written report, a performance, a piece of art, a community project, a CD, a DVD or even computer software.

The Project is graded A* - E and is worth slightly more than an AS qualification.

Universities are strongly in favour of this new qualification as it offers students the opportunity to develop essential skills for Higher Education and the workplace. By choosing to complete this project students become critical, reflective and independent learners.

If you are applying for a competitive course at a prestigious university you may be asked about your Extended Project topic. An unusual and interesting topic may secure your place!

WESTHOLME ENTERPRISES

In September 2015 we set up the Westholme Enterprises scheme for Sixth Form students to develop their business skills and allow them to hone their entrepreneurial flair by creating their own Private Limited Company.

The shop was officially opened by Mr Andrew Hall, Managing Director of James Hall & Co. Ltd in March 2016.

Having a school shop benefits students, staff and visitors to the school but it is the input into the venture by students which really sets Westies apart. They were responsible for its design, location and layout. They worked closely with the school's Maintenance Team and also source stock by meeting with Mrs Ballan, our Catering Manager, and with staff from James Hall Distribution. The students have had to budget and produce a cash flow forecast in order to prove that they can pay back the loan that the school have been willing to grant them.

Westies trade as a Limited Company and the students have registered the company, opened its own business bank account and developed systems to account for all their money – they are well aware of the legal requirement for them to produce accurate financial published accounts. As a new group of students join the Sixth Form each year they too will have the opportunity to take over Westies and manage it with their own new ideas and business strategy.

Westholme Enterprises are particularly proud of the name and logo for Westies; it is certainly a unique and innovative design and we cannot wait to see how it will evolve over the coming years.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

All Sixth Form students are encouraged to achieve the very best they can and to excel in their chosen field. Each year we have a number of students who achieve excellence in many areas including: Grade 8 Music, LAMDA gold medal qualifications, National Science Olympiad Competitions, CSLA and playing sport at County Level and much more. Westholme also provides a comprehensive Oxbridge Programme.

Every year we have a number of candidates apply for Oxford or Cambridge University. In the Autumn Term of Upper Sixth candidates will also meet regularly with key academic staff to prepare for their interview and will be working with subject-specific mentors to hone their specialist skills and prepare for entrance tests where applicable. All students have a mock interview in September of Upper Sixth, and Oxbridge candidates will also have a further mock interview, often with a subject specialist, in November. Academic staff work with the Oxbridge candidates on their personal statements and write their references, ensuring that their applications are competitive.

MUSIC

Grade 8 is the highest music examination that can be taken before moving on to diplomas and degrees that gain letters

after one's name! A distinction at Grade 8 currently gains 75 UCAS points, more than an A grade at AS Level (60 points) and very close to a grade C at A Level (80 points). Students have to perform three pieces (or four songs) to a very high standard and also succeed in scales and technical exercises; performing music seen for the first time in the examination; and some listening tests.

LAMDA

Sixth Form students can complete Gold Medal Qualifications in Solo or Duo Acting, Solo or Duo Musical Theatre and Solo Verse and Prose. These are a Grade 8 qualifications.

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD COMPETITIONS

The Science Olympiads are very challenging, annual competitions, set by the Royal Society of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It consists of 90 multiple choice questions, answered online, many of which cover topics not on the A Level syllabus. Our top Year 13 students are entered and every year they are successful in gaining awards.

COMMUNITY SPORTS LEADERSHIP AWARD (CSLA)

During the course, students are taught various leadership skills through the medium of sport.

There are 8 units which must be completed:

- 1 Organising and delivering a sports activity session.
- 2 Establishing and maintaining a safe sporting activity.
- 3 Understanding the structure of a sport in the UK.
- 4 Understanding and leading fitness sessions.
- 5 Demonstrating principles and practice in running sporting events and competition.
- 6 Demonstrating principles and practice in adapting sporting activities.
- 7 Planning a series of appropriate sporting activities.
- 8 10 hours of voluntary leadership experience in the community.

It is important to note that candidates do not have to be expert sports performers. Students just need to have good communication skills, be organised and most importantly, be enthusiastic.

We work quite closely with our Junior School and CSLA candidates will be expected to organise and lead sessions with small groups of these younger students during the course (usually a highlight of the year for both our Junior School children and CSLA candidates!).

The course is ideal for students who want to improve their leadership skills, have an interest in sport and are looking into careers that would benefit from this sort of tuition, (e.g. teaching, management, sports development, event management), providing them with excellent skills for life.

There are many reasons to join our fantastic Sixth Form. These are three aims that summarise our ethos:

1.

YOU WILL ACHIEVE YOUR FULL POTENTIAL

Class sizes are small; teaching and specialist facilities are excellent. As a consequence, standards are extremely high and each year our external examination results and value added show that our students exceed their expectations. The vast majority of our students go on to further education and a large proportion obtain places at their first choice university, whether in the UK or abroad.

Our excellent, individual pastoral care is provided by a specialist team of Sixth Form tutors and the Head of Sixth Form. They also work closely with the Academic and Pastoral Deputy Heads to monitor individual academic progress. Individual target setting is used and this forms the basis for much individual one to one discussion between students and tutors.

2.

YOU WILL GAIN MANY LIFE SKILLS THAT WILL HELP YOU SUCCEED IN THE FUTURE

Future success is no longer just about obtaining excellent exam results. Every university and employer wants to see the real person behind the results: to find out about you! The myriad of opportunities and activities available to you will ensure you are able to develop as an individual and create a CV or Personal Statement that will truly impress. As a member of the senior section of Westholme you will have the opportunity to lead, mentor and be role models for younger students developing invaluable skills for your future workplace. There will be a wide programme of activities that allow you to develop team-working, leadership and life skills through an incredible array of co curricular activities and our extensive enrichment and PSHE curriculum.

3.

YOU WILL ENJOY AN EXCITING AND FULFILLING TWO YEARS; IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT HARD WORK!

Hard work, dedication and determination are, without doubt, important attributes for the Sixth Form. But it is also important to enjoy the time you spend at Westholme and we hope you will acquire lifelong memories. Our social facilities, activities, trips, visits, House competitions, visits, lectures and much more will ensure you make the most of every day; coming to Sixth Form will never be dull. Our Sixth Form students develop friendships that last a lifetime and whenever our strong Alumni network return to school they are always full of stories about the fun, excitement and support they received at Westholme.

OUR CORE PRINCIPLES

- » Dedicated teaching from experts in their field.
- » Individual care for every student and extensive knowledge of their potential.
- » Outstanding UCAS support including careful preparation of Personal Statements and References by our specialist Sixth Form Tutor Team.
- » First class links with top universities.
- » Wide connections with local and national businesses.
- » Continued support from a wide and flourishing Alumni network.

THE COMMITMENT TO STUDY

Each A Level subject will require substantial private study each week. Wider reading and research are an important part of your work at this level. There is an excellent Learning Resource Centre and numerous study room facilities with WiFi available for you to use. You are expected to take responsibility for organising your study periods and free time in preparation for when you move on to Higher Education. This can often be a difficult lesson but help is always at hand from the Head of Sixth Form as well as your Form Tutor.

GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES

Opportunities for further responsibility and leadership roles - especially in your House, in co curricular activities, sports, charities, becoming a prefect or a subject mentor - will arise as a matter of course in the Sixth Form. The Sixth Form plays a pivotal part in the life of Westholme.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY

After taking examinations at the end of Year 11 most Westholme students enter the Sixth Form for a two-year course in A Levels. Each year the School also welcomes a number of new students into the Sixth Form from other schools.

In order to enter the Sixth Form, students are ideally expected to achieve 6 GCSEs at Grade 5, including English and Maths* with a Grade 6 in those subjects they wish to study at A Level if they have been taken at GCSE. All students will also have an interview with the Principal and Head of Sixth Form when there will be an opportunity to discuss GCSE performance, A Level subject choices and future career aspirations.

*Applications from students who achieve a Grade 4 will be considered on an individual basis.



CAREERS

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sixth Form students undertake work experience and both resources and support are available to make this happen. Three days are allocated in the Spring Term although for those students aiming for competitive or vocational university courses it will be necessary to undertake further work placements in the school holidays. The Work Experience Information Pack provides advice on arranging work experience together with placement agreement and feedback forms for students and host organisations. Our Head of Careers is available in School four days each week and can advise on suitable placements and make initial contact with employers.

The Head of Careers also ensures that students are aware of other prestigious careers experience workshops including 'Futurewise Day Courses', 'The Medlink' programme organised by the University of Nottingham and the 'Headstart' engineering programme. These courses all help to give students an insight into related careers and university courses. Our Careers programme is delivered through our weekly PSHE course.

CAREERS AND UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

We encourage students to be proactive in their research into Higher Education and careers. Biennial Careers Conventions and Higher Education Fairs are held at Westholme and students are invited to attend with their parents. Students are given the opportunity to visit UCAS Higher Education conventions to further explore universities and courses of interest. Copies of university prospectuses are available and Higher Education guides can be borrowed from the careers room. All students and parents have access to the online version of 'Degree Course Offers' by Brian Heap (www.heaponline.co.uk) which lists courses in order of entry grades enabling students to make accurate choices based on progress in their Sixth Form subjects. Students can research prospective careers using the eCLIPS online resource (www.eclips-online.co.uk) which provides regularly updated information on over 1000 jobs and careers.

UCAS (UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS)

Each student has a Form Tutor for the whole Sixth Form who provides pastoral support throughout the two years. Form Tutors also support the UCAS application process and write each student's academic reference, drawing together the comments of teaching staff and including feedback from work experience and other co curricular activities. UCAS opens in September of Year 13 and all students are taken through the induction process in the Summer Term of Year 12 in order to be ready to apply in the Autumn Term. Those students who are considering alternatives to university e.g. a higher apprenticeship or employment at 18, are also supported in applying for these opportunities.

BRIDGEU

When searching for university options, making applications and applying, we know that the needs of students and universities are constantly evolving, as the world of Higher Education experiences extraordinary growth. Westholme's Sixth Form has access to BridgeU throughout the two year A Level programme which empowers us to provide intelligent, data-driven university and careers guidance on an individual basis. With BridgeU we are able to draw on big data and powerful management tools to streamline and evolve the traditional approach to university and careers advice. The platform allows students to research, select and manage their university applications with support from the tutor team along the way.