International Communications Faculty

Business Subjects

In class

Business and Economics are taught in mixed ability classes at both KS4 and KS5. The choice of courses, including BTEC in 6th form, is designed to allow students to follow a route of subject content and assessment type that maximizes their potential.

A combination of learning resources and methods are used to offer the opportunity for students to extend their knowledge and explore new ideas. Real-world case studies are regularly studied in class, allowing students to apply theory and evaluate business and government decisions.

Homework tasks are designed so that the most able can stretch and challenge themselves, and extension work is always available in class and on the school network's student area.

Extra-curricular

Students are encouraged to use their understanding in the real world, through enterprise projects of their own, or undertaking work experience with local or London-based firms.

In year 9 an enterprise day is held in school, where students can explore the elements of starting and running their own business, and in year 12 we host an "Insight into Management" course, where groups undertake several business and management related tasks, guided by members of the local business community.

In recent years the department has run trips to Harry Potter World and subject conferences, and hosted speakers from local industry and the financial sector.

Relevant serial publications are made available in the 6th form library, along with a school subscription to FT.com, and a specialist lending library is available which is regularly updated with recent Economic, Business and Political books, allowing students to keep up-to-date with subject developments.

IT and Digital Literacy

In class

Digital Literacy is taught in mixed ability classes through Year 7 and Year 9 at present, with Information Technologies also taught in mixed ability classes in KS4 and KS5. The course that have been select at KS4 and KS5 offer a robust and challenging experience, with both internal and external assessments offered in each qualification.

Extension and enrichment activities are implemented into the schemes of work alongside having differentiated outcomes that support low level learners but will stretch and challenge more able. Teachers within the subject will use a variety of strategies to allow independent learning to occur that really challenges the more able, this is done by using challenging open ended questions, mini projects, scenario based problems, and allowing for research aspects to be completed on various topics. In particular at KS5 students are encouraged more so to become independent learners, which supports the assignment based assessments they have to complete. Students will consistently be

challenged about their approaches to a task and be expected to justify the decisions they make, related to the scenario/task they have been given.

Homework tasks are designed so that the most able can stretch and challenge themselves, and this is used at appropriate times within the course to enable this.

Extra-curricular

Students can get the most the department by accessing the clubs that run every lunch time giving access to the resources in the department. Weekly session are run for students at KS4 to push them in the courses they are completing, with these sessions focusing on topics from that week, and delivering in alternative ways to the classroom lessons.

In year 9 we encourage students to complete the Bronze Duke of York Award, testing them on a range of digital skills, and should they achieve it this is certificated from Buckingham Palace and HRH Prince Andrew. This is then developed further in year 10 where the Silver award has begun this year and students are encouraged to complete this.

In recent times we have run trips to Thorpe Park looking at how IT is implemented into the workings of a theme park, this giving them real world experience. We have also had links in place with Apple and run a number of trips for students to the Apple Store at Thurrock, developing understanding of the Apple technology and allowing for learning outside of the classroom. In place for this academic year we have Social media based trip to local businesses which supports the KS5 course.

Recommended resources to students: -

www.idea.org.uk providing the platform to complete their Duke Of York Award.

www.code.org a platform for various coding games that develop thinking skills and to solve problems.

www.codeacademy.com an online resource that provides various tasks within a range of computer languages

Languages

In class

We provide differentiated work for all students across the school. At KS3 we often have former students or sixth formers working in small groups with higher ability students.

Most Able students will be given extension tasks and resources which will encourage them to apply grammar and develop their language independently in a creative and imaginative way. We also enable native or near native speakers to develop their skills at KS3 with the potential of sitting a GCSE in their language once they are ready (this may be before their peers.)

We also provide regular language film viewings where students can hone their listening skills and increase their cultural knowledge.

Extra-curricular

We invite students in Key Stage 3 to subscribe to foreign language magazines to improve their language skills and their cultural knowledge.

There are residential trip to France and Germany, which provide excellent opportunities to experience life in another country.

In Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 students are given opportunities to enhance their knowledge in after school speaking clubs and one-to-one speaking sessions with a dedicated teacher.

Students receive much information in study guides and on an ongoing basis from their teachers as to how to extend and improve their language knowledge and acquisition beyond what they study in class.

Computer Science

In class

Computer science is taught in mixed ability classes at both KS4 and KS5. The courses, AQA GCSE Computing and AQA A-level computing, are designed to allow students to follow a route of subject content and assessment type that maximizes their potential and provides access to the best universities and technical apprenticeships.

A combination of learning resources and methods are used to offer the opportunity for students to extend their knowledge and explore new ideas. Complex computational thinking tasks are regularly given to students alongside challenging programming tasks.

Homework tasks are designed so that the most able can stretch and challenge themselves, and extension work is always available in class and on the school network's student area.

Extra-curricular

Students are encouraged to use their understanding in the solving of bigger and more complex programming problems. An after-school programming club has been organised for students to have access to deeper programming tasks and look at Robotics.

In recent years the department has run trips to Google DeepMind, QinetiQ, Royal Society, Ford Research and Queen Mary University. The department has also hosted speakers the Royal Institution and Ocado.

Faculty contact:

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