

Psychology KS5 – Statement of Intent

“Human nature is not an object for curiosity merely. It is the source of all our enjoyments, the sum of all our powers. It is the great artist to which poetry, eloquence, history, philosophy, and all the arts and sciences, owe their existence. It is the grand instrument of feeling to which life owes all its interest. It is, in a word, that which makes us to be what we are. It is our very selves. The study of it, therefore, cannot but be deeply interesting.” John Gibson Macvicar

At All Saints Academy we strive for our Psychology curriculum to give students all of the skills and knowledge needed for their next steps in life, whilst also aligning it to our Academy vision of *‘Living Well Together with Dignity, Faith and Hope.’* Within psychology, we ensure students are able to communicate and debate their opinions effectively, without thoughtless comments from others, allowing them to feel they can express themselves with dignity and pride, as well as *‘Live Well Together’*. Students in psychology look at how the field of study has developed over time from a science based in philosophy and faith, to a widely recognised individual science in, and of, itself. We also build the skills of our students to ensure they have the faith in themselves to describe, apply and evaluate key content as well as conduct research, critically analyse and discuss this content. It is our hope that all students leave us in Year 13 with a minimum of an A-Level grade D, but with many more surpassing this, especially those interested in studying psychology further at university.

We make sure any boundaries to learning are removed by using our pupil premium funding to equip all students with a textbook. This textbook allows students to have access to all content, studying extra questions to attempt in their own time, and also guidance on revision and essay writing in preparation for exams.

We are now offering Psychology at KS4 and, although with different exam boards, we have ensured fluency of skill development. Additionally, we have at both KS4 and KS5, chosen exam boards that allow cohorts to choose their final modules, meaning they can become fully invested in studying elements of psychology that are truly of interest.

Substantive Knowledge

Although students can study Psychology at KS4, it is not guaranteed that all students at KS5 will have taken this course. For this reason, the first two weeks of the course are spent identifying and developing the skills needed to learn and analyse psychology content and concepts. Following this, students move onto Social Influence and Attachment. Social influence focusses on research and ideas around conformity, obedience and influence. Students learn about Asch, Milgram and Zimbardo as widely-known research contributors to this field of study, as well as starting to develop ideas around ethics in research, particularly for Milgram and Zimbardo.

In attachment, students look at the different theories around early childhood attachment and the impact this can have on behaviour as an adult. Students learn about the Learning Theory of attachment, as well as key research in attachment theory such as Bowlby.

Once Year 12 have developed their first understanding of different ideas in Psychology, they move onto Approaches and Memory. Approaches is the first component of Paper 2 and moves students through the process and development of psychology across the timeline, starting with Wundt and the first psychology lab, through to Humanistic Psychology as the most recently developed field of study. Students learn the underlying assumptions of each field in psychology, but also how research and ideas can vary within these fields and still hold these assumptions. In memory, students look at how memory works, the different models of memory and processing memory, and also how

memory deteriorates or can be manipulated. Students learn about the multi-store model of memory versus the working memory model and how factors such as anxiety and misleading information can affect the accuracy of eyewitness testimony, thinking about the wider implications of this research. As students have now understood all the different areas of research and study in psychology, they then move onto Research Methods and Psychopathology, with psychopathology finishing their Paper 1 study, and Research Methods supporting the content learned so far, as well as meaning further critical analysis can happen moving forward. Research Methods in Year 12 focusses on the types of research that can take place, and the advantages and disadvantages of each, as well as the deeper understanding of the importance of ethics in research. Psychopathology studies the types of disorders that psychology may be used to treat such as phobias, depression and OCD. Students learn about the different approaches to treatment of these disorders, with the aim to be able to compare and contrast methods based on their previous understanding of approaches.

Finally, Year 12 look at Biospsychology and the concepts of how the brain, hormones and neurons all impact our behaviour. They also then use this time towards the end of the year to experience taster sessions of each of the optional modules in Year 13 so that they can make a fully informed choice, as a cohort, about which three option modules to study.

In Year 13, students start off with their option modules immediately. This is to capture their attention and get them re-engaged after the summer. The options are: relationships, gender, cognition and development, schizophrenia, eating behaviour, stress, aggression, forensic psychology and addiction.

Each year these option choices change depending on the interests of the cohort. Additionally, Year 13 study Issues and Debates and further Research Methods. Issues and Debates is focussed on the development of wider ideas in psychology and the big debates such as nature versus nurture. This module also ensures students understand the differences between free will and determinism, as well as holism and reductionism, gaining students a deeper understanding of previous evaluative points. Research Methods in Year 13 looks at developing their knowledge of types of research and moving this into specific statistical analysis, which statistical test to take and how to measure significance of results as well as central tendency and distribution.

Disciplinary knowledge

The most important skills for students to develop throughout Year 12 and Year 13 are describe, apply and evaluate. In every lesson, students will be given opportunities to develop these skills. Students learn to describe research and concepts and also the differences when describing each of these. It is important for students to understand that concepts are supported by research, but that you can describe each independently as well. In terms of application, this develops in significance through Year 12 and Year 13. In Year 12, students must be able to apply research and concepts, but this is mostly in reference to specific examples and explaining behaviour. In Year 13, this further develops to be able to not only apply to examples of behaviour, but also to be able to apply research into wider society. It is imperative, for this reason, that students are reading widely around the subject. To support this, reading link tasks are often larger than they need to be to guide students to further reading outside of class. Their studies in 'Issues and Debates' also further inform this application of the content. Evaluation also develops through Year 12 and Year 13. In Year 12, students understand how to explain strengths and limitations of research and, in some cases, concepts. In Year 13, students continue to develop their PEEL paragraphs looking at strengths and limitations, but their deeper understanding of research methods means they can conceive their own ideas of strengths and limitations based on methodology, and not just problems, with the underlying concepts.

In addition to the above, throughout the course we feel it imperative that Year 12 and Year 13 students learn to create, carry out, analyse and evaluate their own research. At the end of each module of study, time is set aside to complete a practical research project including time to learn the

mathematics involved (which makes up 10% of their overall grade) as well as time to analyse their own data and evaluate their own research. For students who may progress into any form of research qualification or employment post-18 this then prepares them for the world of work. For students who may not go study specific research-based qualifications, they are still prepared for running projects and to deadlines as this skill is transferable.