The Corsham School Vision

The Corsham School seeks to

1. promote the highest standards of teaching and learning – and see them reflected in academic achievement
2. use the evaluation and sharing of good practice to impact on teaching and learning
3. commit to a balanced, enriched curriculum
4. invest in, use and apply the best technologies
5. provide a safe and calm environment in which all young people can learn and grow, developing values which strengthen a positive community
6. encourage our students to be considerate, courteous and to show pride in their school
7. stimulate the involvement and commitment of all parents and carers
8. commit to the support and Continuing Professional Development of every member of staff
9. provide high-quality facilities within a clean and well-managed environment.
Welcome

I am very pleased that you are considering sending your child to The Corsham School. The top priority of the school is effective learning through excellent teaching. Our dedicated, well-qualified teachers and experienced support staff seek to develop each student’s individual talents to the full. We provide every opportunity to achieve, not only in a full range of examination subjects but also through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school has been awarded High Performance Status for value added measures and took on a second specialism in Maths and ICT in 2008, to add to our existing specialist status as a visual arts college.

In 2006 the school received the National Award from the Specialist Trust for the achievement of excellence promoted through creativity and enterprise. In 2009 the school received an outstanding categorisation from OFSTED.

Our curriculum prepares students to meet the needs and challenges of the new century. We are committed to providing innovative courses so that all of our students can look forward to fulfilment in their lives.

We have excellent, well cared for accommodation on an attractive site, close to the town centre, and adjacent to the Springfield Campus. The school has extensive specialist facilities and visitors are always welcome to arrange to see the purposeful work and lively activities during a normal working day.

The Corsham School is a community. Within this community, the provision of excellent care and guidance for each child is at the centre of our organisation. We promote the highest standards of behaviour and of school uniform. In the school’s recent OFSTED inspection the students’ behaviour was described as exemplary. We believe that education is a three-way partnership between students, parents and the school and seek to work with you to help your children discover and achieve their full potential. OFSTED reported that parents were overwhelmingly positive about their children’s school.

More specific details of the day-to-day running of the school will be provided in the booklet for new entrants to the school, distributed during the Summer Term. In the meantime the school’s website can be viewed at www.corsham.wilts.sch.uk.

I hope that you will find the enclosed documentation helpful although even the glossiest brochure is no substitute for first hand experience; so please do not hesitate to contact the school if you would like more information, or wish to arrange a visit.

Martin Williams
Headteacher
Philosophy

Creativity and Learning through Making

The culture of the school is uniquely focused on creativity and it has institutionalised ‘learning through making’ and visual literacy, across all areas of the curriculum. The school takes the view that the whole of its site is a learning environment and the visual impact of this environment has been transformed with the installation of outdoor sculptures, artwork, ‘The Artists’ Trail’, and displays of students’ work and other prompts to learning relating to each of the subject areas of the school.

Mindfulness

“Mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally, to things as they are.”

Mindfulness is gaining growing recognition in education circles as an effective tool to help adolescents manage a range of life stresses - not just examination pressures. Mindfulness based cognitive therapy (MBCT) is recognised by the UK’s National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence and the school believes that the practice of mindfulness is useful for developing a sense of well-being.

All our Y9 students are introduced to the concept of Mindfulness as part of their curriculum in PSHRE, during terms 5 and 6 each year. The “.b” Mindfulness course - a programme of 9 one hour sessions designed by the Mindfulness in School Projects, especially for teenagers - is facilitated by specially trained members of staff.

Through this programme all Y9 students learn about Mindfulness and are given the opportunity to practice and experience Mindfulness through a series of short exercises.
Every child deserves the best opportunities. At The Corsham School we aim to make every subject area a centre of excellence so that whatever a student’s special interest it will be well catered for. Our curriculum, homework and study programme, clubs, visits and enrichment activities support our students towards their best academic, sporting and creative achievements. Our success is reflected in excellent examination results and the involvement of our students in county and national sporting events, national poetry, science and technology competitions, superb drama and dance performances, and stunning displays of artwork and photography.

Every child is special. Every student has talent and it is our job and pleasure to ensure that every individual achieves his or her potential. In the process we expect our students to develop as courteous, enterprising, creative, adaptable, thinking individuals. Our school community values hard work, good manners, punctuality, good behaviour, self-discipline and self-control. To promote these characteristics we have developed a school ethos, which seeks to identify and reward endeavour, achievement and good behaviour in all areas of school life. The school provides opportunities for students to participate in a wide variety of activities and to develop both enterprise and leadership skills.

The school embodies the positive values of

- Citizenship, Teamship & Audienceship
- Integrity
- Reason, imagination & creativity
- Respect for self, family, and others
- Responsibility towards the environment
- Hard work and perseverance

“Exemplary relationships at all levels are a hallmark of the school’s ethos.”
Ofsted
Primary to Secondary Transfer

Together with our partner primary schools we do everything to ensure that students arrive at The Corsham School feeling happy and looking forward to being members of our community.

The process for the students begins in the spring when each of our partner primary schools brings its Year 6 class to us for a day. During their visit here they experience different areas of the school’s curriculum and are able to familiarise themselves with the layout of the school and begin to adjust to the differences between primary and secondary education.

In the late spring and early summer the Year Learning Manager for Year 7 visits each primary school to liaise with both students and teachers. Discussions and assessment records are used to construct Year 7 tutor groups to achieve a balanced social profile and to enable best academic success.

Early in July the Year 7 intake spend an Induction Day at school, meeting their form tutor and being involved in a variety of activities. New parents are invited into school on the same evening in order to meet their child’s tutor and have answered any remaining questions they may have.

Our aim is to ensure a smooth and happy transfer to The Corsham School.

A copy of the school’s Admission Policy is available on request.
Curriculum

The curriculum is much more than just lessons. It includes the atmosphere, attitudes and relationships, which create the high quality of life in the school as a whole. Our aim is to provide a broad, balanced curriculum that meets the needs and aspirations of all our students and leaves them well prepared for life after school. Our aims for the curriculum are:

- To ensure that content and delivery of the curriculum promotes equality of opportunity regardless of gender, race and culture.
- To provide additional support to students in accordance with the Learning Support Policy of the school.
- To ensure that all areas of the curriculum are valued and promoted equally, and that the provisions and arrangements of the school enable all students to fully develop their interests and aptitudes, with opportunities to excel.
- To develop appropriate skills in the prime areas of experience in literacy, numeracy and communication, in the physical, linguistic, aesthetic, historical, geographical, scientific, technological, moral, social, cultural and spiritual aspects of human life.
- To encourage students to develop initiative, lively inquiring minds, an enjoyment of learning and the skills which enable them to take advantage of opportunities for lifelong learning.
- To promote the concept of ‘teamship’ and co-operation in order to help to understand how groups and individuals relate to each other, and develop links with the community which will assist students in taking their place in society, as parents, citizens and consumers.
- To prepare students for the world of work and to promote an understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle including physical fitness.
- To develop awareness and respect of the environment and understanding of Sustainable Development.
- To provide opportunities both in the curriculum and extra curricular activities, which will enable students to take responsibility for themselves and develop their self-respect confidence and skills as leaders.

“Students’ extremely positive attitude to learning, good and increasingly outstanding teaching and the highly effective curriculum are key factors in the school’s success.”
Ofsted

“The curriculum is outstanding and includes excellent enrichment activities.”
Ofsted
Key Stage 3 Curriculum

In Years 7, 8 and 9 students study the National Curriculum in:

- English
- Maths
- Science
- Geography
- History
- Design Technology
- Music
- RE
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Computing
- People and Community Studies
- Art
- Drama
- Physical Education

“The curriculum is broad, balanced and well matched to the capabilities and aspirations of all groups of students.”

Ofsted
Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The curriculum for students in Years 10 and 11 is a mixture of ‘Core’ subjects and ‘Optional’ subjects. The programme is structured to allow for maximum flexibility of choice. Most students will follow courses leading to 10 GCSEs. A booklet giving details of all courses is produced and an Options Evening is held in January of Year 9 to explain the Guided Choice process.

- At The Corsham School all Key Stage 4 students study the core National Curriculum subjects of Maths, Science (single award, double award or individual GCSEs in Biology, Physics and chemistry) English and English Literature
- Study RE to GCSE level
- Take part in Physical Education lessons
- Take part in a personal, social & health programme through People & Community Studies
- Have an element of guided choice at 14+ choosing 3 out of the following Optional GCSE Courses:
  - Art
  - Photography
  - Dance
  - Music
  - Drama
  - Business Studies
  - Geography
  - History
  - PE
  - Food Technology
  - Graphic Products
  - Spanish
  - Textiles
  - Resistant Materials
  - Media Studies
  - French
  - German
  - Computing

Year 7/9

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Corsham School Curriculum Model Key Stage 4  Core 70%, Options 30%

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Curriculum Enrichment

At The Corsham School we have many ways of enriching our students’ learning experience beyond the classroom. We have a rich tradition of such after school activities and educational trips, visits and events. The school is proud to maintain its commitment to these activities in the belief that they provide an important contribution to the overall character of a lively, healthy school.

“There is a consistent pattern of higher than average percentages of students attaining the highest GCSE examination grades of A* and A across a range of subjects”

Ofsted
Homework

One of the most significant ways that parents can support young people with their studies is by encouraging them with their homework. Research in this country and abroad indicates that homework can make an important contribution to the progress of students at school. Homework is expected of all students. It is recorded in their personal organisers. At KS3 homework is set in the form of ‘Home Learning Projects’. Detailed information is published on the website covering all that is required. At KS4 students have a homework timetable that supports their GCSE and other course requirements. It is expected that students in Year 7 will spend about 40 minutes each evening on homework. The amount given increases each year gradually preparing students for the demands of examination courses at GCSE and beyond, when 2.5 to 3 hours per evening is the norm.

What homework is for

- to help young people become independent learners
- to encourage self discipline
- to consolidate and reinforce learning
- to complete coursework assignments
- to practice, often by doing
- to do work that might not be suited to the usual classroom situation
- to develop research skills
- to promote home/school partnership

Feedback to Students

Education research and classroom experience tells us that students make the greatest gains in their learning when they not only receive feedback from the teacher that tells them how to improve their work but when it is accompanied by an expectation that they act on this feedback.

We expect our students to reflect upon and engage with the feedback that they have been given. We might ask students to respond to our questions, re-draft work or attempt a more challenging task. We will always encourage students to pay careful attention to their spelling, punctuation and grammar and will encourage them to make corrections when appropriate.

By doing this, we show the students that we care for and value their work. It helps our students understand what they are doing well and what we need to do to improve. By encouraging them to act on their feedback, we ensure they get the maximum benefit.

“Students make excellent progress. They develop as considerate and articulate young people who relish responsibility.”

Ofsted
Religious Education

The Corsham School is non-denominational and welcomes students of all races and religions. Our religious education courses comply with the Education Acts.

Special Education Needs

We are a school which prides itself on providing for children of all academic abilities. The needs of students vary, some needing full-time support programmes whilst others may need intervention for shorter periods of time. These needs could be academic (both more and less able) physical, medical, sensory, behavioural and emotional.

The Learning Support Centre provides a high-quality service to students to support their social, emotional and behavioural needs, by offering a range of interventions and programmes, which will enable them to succeed.

The school also operates an in-class support system, which fully utilises our team of Teaching Assistants. If your child has special educational needs, please contact

Ms S Keeler, SENCO

A copy of the school’s Special Educational Needs Policy is available on request.

“Students develop exceedingly well spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.”

Ofsted
The Sixth Form

The Corsham School is particularly proud of its Sixth Form and its outstanding academic record. Ofsted Inspectors wrote, “In the 6th Form academic achievement is consistently high, and exceptionally high in some subjects as indicated by the above national percentage of students attaining A Level grades A*-B. Students receive outstanding support, advice and guidance. The 6th Form curriculum provides extremely well for differing aspirations and interests.”

In addition to the wide range of academic courses on offer our Sixth Form also provides experiences beyond the classroom such as community and charity work, democracy activities, balls and social events, paid employment in school, visiting speakers, mentoring and paired reading to support younger students, work experience, Business Enterprise, clubs, visits abroad, expeditions and many sports and leisure activities. Over 100 students join us each year; mainly from Corsham but an increasing number join us from secondary schools in the surrounding area. All students follow an induction programme which involves interviews, team-building and subject-based activities. The school has an excellent record for placing students in the top Russell group universities including Oxford and Cambridge. A fully detailed Sixth Form Prospectus is published in November.

“Opportunities and facilities in the Sixth Form are excellent.”
Parent
AQA Baccalaureate

A Baccalaureate qualification can be achieved through a combination of A levels, General Studies or Citizenship, an extended project and 100 hours of enrichment activities involving work related learning, community participation and personal development activities.

“The strength of the Sixth Form is in many respects due to the outstanding way it is led and managed.”

Ofsted
Care, Guidance & Support for Learning

In a large school such as ours there is great breadth of opportunity. We believe that young people achieve their best and make the most of these opportunities when they know their own talents and needs are recognised and they are cared for as individuals. Year Teams have a role to play in supporting students pastorally but they also play a significant role in supporting and promoting learning.

Year Teams and Tutor Groups

On entry to the school each student becomes a member of a tutor group. Attention is paid to ensure that each tutor group is similar in character and range of ability.

Tutor groups normally contain about 30 students. Generally the tutor group remain together for five years as they progress through the school. The tutor stays with them during this time and will usually teach their tutor group in their own subject in Year 7. The tutor will get to know the students as individuals, will monitor their academic and social progress, and will teach the tutorial programme. This may include such activities as silent reading, ‘Circle Time’, ‘Show and Tell’ and a programme to assist young people in developing their emotional intelligence.

The tutor is normally the first point of contact between home and school. This is the person to whom notes explaining absence should be sent and also who will organise homework during any period of prolonged absence. All students are provided with a personal organiser to record their timetable and homework. Parents are asked to sign the organiser each week. Form tutors also check and sign their group’s organisers.

The tutor groups in Year 7-11 work under the leadership and guidance of Year Learning Managers and Assistant Learning Managers. The tutor groups in Years 12 and 13 have individual tutors co-ordinated by the Director of Sixth Form Studies and his Deputy.
People and Community Studies

Students’ personal, social, health and careers education is delivered through the important area of People and Community Studies. Ofsted Inspectors concluded that our programme is, “well designed and appropriate for pupils’ individual needs and links effectively with the contributions made by other subjects.”

Sex Education

The Government legislation on sex education in schools indicates that all sex education should be in the context of family life and/or scientific education. The Governors fully support this and recommend it as part of the curriculum for all children.

Our programme is taught as part of the PSHE and science curriculum, which should help develop personal moral values and mutual respect, thereby preparing children for family life in the community.

“Students’ personal development and well-being are outstanding.”
Ofsted
Behaviour and Rewards

**Discipline**

The Corsham School takes pride in its effective discipline policies. The school relies upon each individual student following a responsible code of behaviour as well as specific school rules.

Similarly, parents are advised that verbal abuse and intimidation of anyone will not be tolerated. By far, the best method of encouraging good behaviour and high standards of effort and attainment is through recognition and praise; the school has developed a system of rewards to this end.

Students are rewarded for work of merit or exceptional quality or for any service that contributes to the successful running of the school.

Details of the school’s Discipline and Rewards systems can be found in the student organisers and copies of relevant policies are available on the school website.

"Students very much enjoy school and are extremely well behaved.”

Ofsted
Assessment and Target Setting

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process: learners need to know where they are and the steps they must take in order to make progress. Teachers assess the ‘gap’ between what they think they are teaching and what assessments shows students are learning. Parents can then be given accurate and meaningful information about the progress their child is making in school.

When students come to us in Year 7 it is important for us to have reliable information about their potential. We carry out our own baseline testing by using Cognitive Abilities Tests and NFER Literacy tests for reading and spelling. Together with Key Stage 2 scores and other information from our partner schools we are able to build a clear picture of each individual’s strengths, and areas for development. This information is shared with all teachers who are then able to set achievable targets for students in all subjects. Progress towards these targets is monitored by the tutor and Year Learning Manager as well as by the subject teacher, Curriculum Team Leader and the school’s Leadership Group.

Parents are regularly given information about their son’s or daughter’s progress. A full written report is issued annually and provides information on all the subjects studied. In addition to the annual report there are also brief interim reports produced at various times during the year.

“Students’ progress is regularly reviewed and they are set personalised, challenging targets.”

Ofsted
Home School Partnership

At The Corsham School we firmly believe in working in partnership with parents and welcome your involvement in the life of the school. Visitors are welcome to the school at any time. We are always pleased to talk to parents about any aspect of the school and all matters concerning your child. Appointments can be made by contacting the school 01249 713284.

Complaints

Please approach us at an early state if you have cause for dissatisfaction. There are a number of people to contact. If the matter concerns an aspect of the curriculum parents may wish to contact Mr M Chapman, Assistant Headteacher, and for Care and Guidance issues, Mr R Staten, Assistant Headteacher.

Complaints to the Governing Body should be directed via the Clerk to the Governors at the school.

A copy of the School’s full complaints procedure is available on request, and can be accessed via the school website.

“The use of performance data and other information on students’ achievement, to track the progress of students, to identify those who are underachieving and to prompt intervention to improve their performance, is exemplary.”

Ofsted
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Teamship  ◆  Citizenship  ◆  Audienceship