

Cowley International College – 11 to 16 site

Cowley International College is committed to providing a curriculum that is broad, balanced and challenging, fostering a love of learning to prepare our students for a life in an international world. We endeavour to ensure that our curriculum offer is the same for all students, regardless of their set, pathway, special educational needs or disabilities, social disadvantage or academic ability. We make every effort to cater for the students' individual abilities, interests and aspirations, giving every child the opportunity to strive for personal excellence. We are an academic school that aims to open doors for every student, whilst understanding the positive effect and contribution that creative, practical and vocational learning brings to a student's development.

We also recognise the importance of building the cultural capital of all of our students and have designed the curriculum in order to do so. Our hope is that every child who leaves Cowley International College has the qualifications, skills, knowledge and character to access aspirational Post-16 opportunities and to lead a life that includes positive relationships, resilience and financial independence. One way in which the college attempts to increase the cultural capital of all students is through our Cowleian Values Programme. Our mission is to create well-educated, independent, considerate, healthy and aspirational people that communicate well. Through teaching and providing an environment that is stimulating, safe and caring, we encourage all students to develop themselves and to support each other to achieve their full potential.

At Cowley we are conscious of the importance of stretching our most able students. More able learners are those who will typically excel in relation to expectations for their age group. At Cowley we identify the more able students both pastorally and in departmental areas. The cohort is reviewed and updated regularly especially at key transition and assessment points. We have initiated a new programme for these students known in the college as the "climb to 9" programme. It is specifically designed to enrich, extend and support the educational experience and outcomes of our most able learners, ensuring they make outstanding progress.

Sitting alongside our curriculum intent is the college's extracurricular programme. Staff offer an outstanding extracurricular activity programme for the benefit of all students.

Curriculum overview

What will my child study?

In line with the National Curriculum, the college requires students to engage with a broad range of subjects in Key Stage 3 (KS3), followed by a Key Stage 4 (KS4) curriculum which includes a core programme and an extensive options programme. The 3-year KS3 guarantees both breadth and depth in the early years of the students' time at Cowley: all National Curriculum subjects are studied in Years 7, 8 and 9. Students continue to follow the National Curriculum in Key Stage 4 (KS4), taking core subjects such as English and Mathematics whilst starting to specialise as they take their GCSE/Btec options.

Key Stage 3

The KS3 curriculum at Cowley International College follows the National Curriculum. In Years 7, 8 and 9 students follow programmes of study in English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, MFL, RE, PSE, Computing, Technology, Art, Music, PE and Games. Our

curriculum ensures that Cowley meets the statutory requirements for all students and does so with sufficient depth and breadth.

In KS3, each subject area maps their curriculum against the National Curriculum. We fundamentally believe that it is important to teach students a broad range of topics and ideas. These topics help to broaden the minds and experiences of students and increases the cultural capital of our students. To ensure that this is for all our students, and not just some of them, we believe that the delivery of cultural capital must come from within the curriculum and not as an add-on to it. In this way, a well thought out curriculum really can improve the future job prospects and life chances all of our students.

At Cowley International College, we view Key Stage 2 to 3 transition as an ongoing process, rather than something which happens at the end of Year 6. Every academic year, staff from Cowley meet with staff from our feeder primary schools to ensure that strong and sustained progress begins in all subject areas from our students' very first day at Cowley.

Students spend a three day induction period with us during the summer term in Year 6, involving many Cowley staff, including SEND specialists. Students visit their Year 6 teachers for in depth discussions which encompass both academic and pastoral issues. Students are given assignments to complete over the summer holidays, including reading challenges and book reviews, which provide further baseline data for secondary staff. As the students progress through their time at Cowley, each year's programme of study is designed to build on students' previous knowledge and experience to ensure continued and sustained progress is made by all students and at all stages of their time at Cowley.

All subject areas have sequenced topics at KS3, maximising the success of all of our students, interleaving topics to maximise progress at KS3. All students study an MFL subject throughout KS3 (typically French or German). In order to further enrich the languages offer, the college has introduced Mandarin in Years 7 and 8 for around 30 of our most able students. The college acts as a local hub for other Mandarin schools and is part of the prestigious Mandarin Excellence Programme.

Key Stage 4

The KS4 options process meets the statutory National Curriculum requirements and aims to provide a bespoke curriculum for the students at Cowley. For us, this means giving our students as much choice and flexibility as possible, whilst ensuring they follow examination courses that lead to positive outcomes and give them access to Post-16 opportunities at the correct level. Students are all expected to follow a KS4 core curriculum that includes Mathematics, English, Science, History or Geography, RE, PSE, IT and PE.

In Year 11, students benefit from the addition of an extracurricular student support session programme. This provides a vital opportunity for intervention in the subjects where they require more support. The Gatsby Benchmarks are used to guide continuing work-related learning opportunities throughout Years 9 to 11, with a UCAS careers fair, an employers' fair, enterprise events and regular contact with employers guaranteed for every student.

Our excellent extracurricular programme continues into Years 10 and 11, offering our students a range of sporting, theatrical, musical and cultural opportunities to ensure real breadth in the students' curriculum. The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award begins in Year 10 is successfully awarded to many of our students.

Cowley Sixth Form College - Years 12 and 13

Cowley Sixth Form College is an inclusive 16 -18, predominately level 3, provider. The college provides students with an ambitious, creative and wide ranging curriculum offer which enables students from our 11 – 16 site and external students, from the St. Helens area and beyond, to join at 16 and successfully prepare for the next step in their academic learning journey with progression to university, higher level apprenticeships or paid employment.

The curriculum has been designed with the intention to satisfy a wide range of ability levels. This ranges from students who wish to progress onto the prestigious universities e.g. Oxbridge/Russell group through to students who require a three year level 3 course by completing our unique foundation year programme which encompasses Functional skills and GCSE resits in Mathematics and English Language, alongside a L2 Cambridge National Qualification in Business.

In order to meet local need we also offer our popular Nursing Cadetship (Level 3) and Construction (Level 2) pathways which aim to deliver an integrated academic and work related learning programme to develop our students' academic and employability skills ready to enter the world of work.

As a sixth form college we recognise the importance of supporting our students to become independent, life-long learners. To this end we pride ourselves on the individualised support on offer for all students through small class sizes, a dedicated Student Performance and Development Tutor (SPDT) and access to our supervised study area with full time learning mentor.

As an inclusive sixth form college we work closely with our 11-16 site and High Schools to ensure the smooth transition of all students and in addition arrange additional 1 -1 meetings with any DA or SEND students who need a more structured transition to post 16 study.

The curriculum offer

The design of our sixth form provision is in keeping with our stated desire to maximise our students' ability to progress to further study at a respected university or to secure a well-paid position in the world of work. As such, our Level 3 option blocks in Year 12 and 13 allow students to choose from a range of A Level or BTEC Level 3 qualifications, or a mixture of the two, to form a blended programme. Students are given appropriate Careers Information and Guidance (CIAG) during both the application and enrolment process to ensure subject choices match their aspirational progression pathways.

In addition, to meet local need, we have bespoke courses that require students spending 3 days per week in college and 2 days per week on a work placement. This includes both our Level 3 Nurse Cadet programme (in partnership with St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals Trust) and our one-year Level 2 construction course (with the support of many local building companies).

Our inclusive nature ensures that we have also have appropriate programmes in place to ensure students are able to continue in their studies despite underperformance at GCSE. To this end we have our 3 year Foundation pathway that provides students, who have been unsuccessful in securing Mathematics and English Language, at least at grade 4, the

opportunity to pursue a one year bridging course to support their transition from Level 2 to Level 3 studies.

Some students at Level 3 are also required to retake English or Mathematics GCSEs as part of their studies. Specialist subject teachers always teach these important GCSE courses.

Every student joining Cowley Sixth Form College is allocated a Student Performance and Development Tutor (SPDT). The pastoral support ensures that every individual is able to seek the help they need through a programme of regular one-to-one meetings in addition to larger group sessions addressing key aspects of personal development e.g. mental health awareness and with a strong focus on progression planning for life after leaving the sixth form.

Unique to our sixth form we have our Cowley Honours Programme and Cowley Scholars Programme. Both provide additional support to our high achievers and provide students with personalised coaches, academic reading lists and a programme of workshops and visits.

The college also encourages all sixth form students to supplement their studies with enrichment activities. Students have taken part in activities such as college rugby, football, cricket, first aid, a range of high quality concerts and theatre productions, volunteering and Mandarin Chinese. In Y13, students have the opportunity to apply for a number of specific positions of responsibility to develop their leadership skills including, Head Boy and Head Girl, Y7 Team Tutor Ambassadors and Subject Ambassadors.

In order to develop our student's awareness and responsibility to the community, further enrichment opportunities are on offer as we arrange a number of fundraising and charitable events across the academic year. We also offer all students the opportunity to complete the Extended Project Qualification to enrich their academic studies further.

Work-related learning continues in the sixth form, most notably as part of our progression week at the end of Year 12. This includes amongst other activities a UCAS fair, an Apprenticeships and Employability fair, a one-one interview for every Year 12 student (with external professionals from a range of backgrounds) and a work experience placement.