



SHIRLEY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE

Our Vision:

To develop aspirational learners who strive for excellence academically, creatively and culturally, benefitting from a wide range of opportunities led by inspirational educators.

SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Intent of the curriculum:

We aim to inspire students with a challenging high-quality sociology curriculum, cultivating a questioning of the structures and systems that are the foundations of society. We want students to be able to relentlessly challenge assumptions and understand how each of us is impacted by both external and internal factors, e.g.; the class structure versus primary socialisation. Our curriculum equips students with an insight into various facets of society including, the stratification system, institutions such as Education and the Family unit as well as well as Criminology and the Media.

We want students to have awareness of their role in society by understanding the way society is socially constructed and examining the social phenomena that affect people's lives in profound ways. The course is designed and delivered to nurture thoughtful and motivated young people, who can act responsibly as active citizens, and who believe in their ability to change their community for the better. Students will understand the inequalities and prevailing attitudes that exist in society that can mean there are conflicts of power between groups in relation to gender, ethnicity, locality, age and class, such as the disparities in educational outcomes. Students will learn about the importance of scholarly evidence and research in relation to society so that they have empirical grounds on which to base their claims rather than relying on anecdotal evidence or common-sense knowledge. Students will understand the classic nature of the theoretical perspectives that have been debated or helped to inform policy, for example, Marxism, Postmodernism and Feminism. Above all, we want to instil a passion for 'doing sociology', so they are equipped with the skills to research society themselves. This means they will excel at constructing surveys, analysing data and understand the strengths and limitations of various opposing quantitative and qualitative methods through practical, theoretical and ethical considerations within a specific context, e.g. they use Observation in classroom interactions between boys and girls or in a scientific way though the analysis of Official statistics.

Implementation:

We implement a curriculum that develops key knowledge and skills for all by engagement and development of cultural capital through extended and wider reading and links to media, news and current affairs. Sociology is topic based and within each area runs thematic strands. We begin with a foundation of the basic theories of society and the basic skill of methodology. This enables students to build a sociological vocabulary, via an introduction to how sociologists study society and sociological theory, Students very quickly understand that this is a critical subject. Skills of analysis and evaluation are essential in their approach to the areas of knowledge, so they are taught how to develop their critical analysis through frequent extended writing and evaluation of researcher's case studies.

Students first demonstrate their understanding of the foundations of stratification, socialisation and ideologies seeing connections between current events and inequalities in society and the theory put forward by research scholars, e.g.: the London Riots and the BLM agenda.

By Year 13 students can debate and openly challenge government policies as well as understand how inequalities re-emerge and are exacerbated in society. They will gain a holistic and critical appreciation of Sociology through use of a range of teaching strategies that promote independent, student-led learning and active learning, such as well-structured debates, presentations, discussions to deepen their understanding and enjoyment, whilst building core skills.



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Impact:

Students are equipped with research skills and knowledge for many areas of their future lives.. They will grow in the empathetic understanding of issues, such as ‘Why do people commit knife crime?’ or ‘Why has the divorce rate increased?’. We want students to have thoroughly enjoyed learning sociology, developing understanding, as well as strategic skills, hence the ability to interpret different sources of data, weigh up the value of evidence, question what they read, see and hear before taking it at face value by examining media representations We hope students leave with deep sociological knowledge instilled in them by regular knowledge retrieval, half termly assessments, feedback and internal tracking leading to solid A level outcomes, which are necessary for success in a broad range of careers and in higher education. Sociology students leave with an increased awareness and understanding of the structures and processes that guide their lives and a confidence to share their views and challenge misconceptions in society.

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We want all at SHS to believe in and maintain the values of our school:

