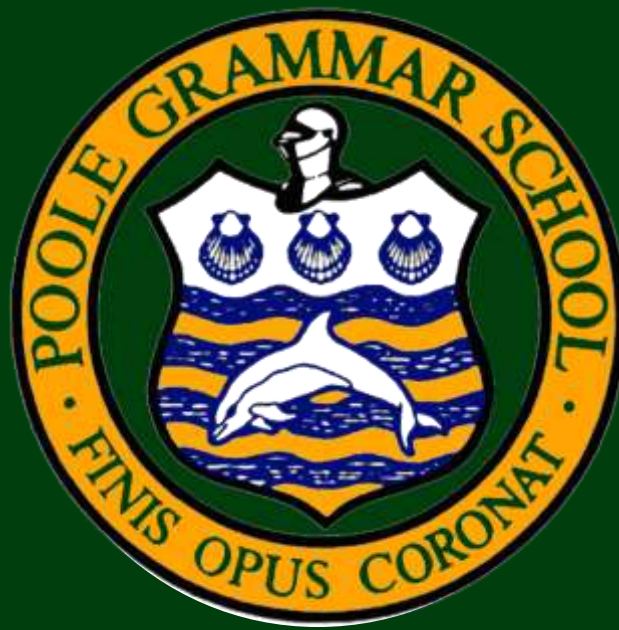


Poole Grammar School



Joining the Sixth Form

Guidance for Year 11 students
and their parents/carers for
Sixth Form entry in
September 2020

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Headteacher's welcome message



Mr A. J. Baker
Headteacher

I am very pleased that you are considering joining Poole Grammar School Sixth Form.

When OFSTED inspected the school in 2018 they found that students' performance was above average in the Sixth Form.

Indeed, Poole Grammar School Sixth Form is in the top 25% of schools and colleges in England for A-level value added.

In 2019 99.3% of our Year 13 students passed all their A-levels and 72% of grades were at A*, A or B, enabling many of our students to secure places at prestigious Russell Group universities. Over the last 5 years, 16 students have gained entry to either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge and a significant number have gone on to read medicine, veterinary medicine or dentistry at university.

Every year we also have a number of students gaining places on extremely competitive higher level apprenticeships with local employers such as Cobham, J P Morgan and Dyson. All students progress into higher education, apprenticeships or employment after Year 13.

The reason for the school's outstanding progression rates is that the Sixth Form provides academic excellence whilst also developing students' leadership, teamwork, problem solving and communication skills through the varied enrichment, sport and games programme.

I hope that you choose to continue your education at Poole Grammar Sixth Form and the Sixth Form team looks forward to meeting you at one of our events over the next few months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. J. Baker', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mr A. J. Baker
Headteacher

Life in the Sixth Form

Curriculum: Students pick A-level subjects from a choice of 28: the average Sixth Form student studies 3 A-levels and many also take up an additional qualification such as the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Some subjects are taught



exclusively at Parkstone Grammar (media studies, sociology), some subjects are co-taught (drama and modern foreign languages) and some subjects taught at Poole Grammar have Parkstone girls in the class (ancient history, DT Art & Design (3D design) and geology).

All A-level subjects have been relatively recently reformed by the Government. These new A-levels are all 2 year linear courses i.e. there are no external examinations for A-level until the summer of Year 13. The school will provide students with the opportunity to take a rigorous mock examination at the end of

Year 12. Progression into the second year of each A-level course is dependent on a student passing the Year 12 mock examination in that course.

Enrichment: All students must participate in a games/sport and an enrichment activity each week. This is a central part of the Sixth Form curriculum as engaging in sports and enrichment helps students improve on skills such as teamwork, communication, leadership and problem solving. Examples of sports options include: football, rugby, cricket, athletics, badminton, tennis, swimming, windsurfing, sailing, rock climbing. Enrichment options involve giving something back to either the school community or the local community. For example, school enrichment activities include, students mentoring boys in Year 7 or running a student society; community enrichment activities include helping out local charities or volunteering at organisations like Montacute Special School.



Pastoral care: Students are placed in a mixed Year 12 / Year 13 tutor group. They spend at least one and a half hours per week with their tutor. The tutor provides front line help, advice and guidance and will ensure that students have a high level of support when considering their post-Year 13 options. Tutors meet regularly with each of their tutees on a one to one basis. If students are not making high rates of progress, or experience personal or medical problems that affect their learning, then interventions may be put in place by a member of the student support team and/or the Head of Year 12 to help the student get back on track quickly.

Independence: Students benefit from a greater degree of independence (for example, there is a dress-code rather than a prescribed uniform, lunchtime exits are granted, and there is a Sixth Form Centre for student use), whilst being able to take advantage of being part of a school, with its supportive structures and personal knowledge of individuals. As its most senior students, Sixth Formers are able to contribute tremendously to the life and ethos of the school community. Towards the end of Year 12 thirty-five students are chosen as school prefects. Students can also become Subject Ambassadors, which involves supporting younger students and helping encourage a love of the subject. Such contributions can be reflected in school references when students move on to careers or Higher Education, as well as being rewarding and valuable in fostering personal development. With independence, however, comes the need for responsibility and self-discipline: for the first time students will have 'private study lessons'. There is a Sixth Form silent study room with computers and a printer and the school library is available for private study, as are some classrooms (including computer rooms).

Student progress: This is monitored by regular assessments. Students' performance is matched against their expected levels of attainment using projections provided by the A Level Performance System (ALPS). ALPS uses students' GCSE performance as a baseline for setting A-level targets.

There is a progress check, which is for school use only and so is not sent home, at the end of the first half term of Year 12 to ensure students have settled in to the A-level pattern of work and study. If any problems emerge at this stage the Head of Year will intervene. A fuller progress report, which is sent home, follows this at the end of the autumn term and another at the end of the spring term. The Year 12 consultation evening takes place in March. All students complete rigorous mock examinations in May of Year 12. These results provide an important mid-course assessment of progress and students may only continue with the subjects where they have passed the mock examination. The end of Year 12 mock examination results will be used by teachers to generate A-level grade predictions that are included on university, apprenticeship and job applications.

Where students find themselves in difficulty in adapting to the demands of work, the school has a number of support systems. Pastoral support is offered to students through the Sixth Form Office. Students who find they are struggling with the academic demands of one or more of their A-levels can receive additional monitoring and guidance, where the overseeing of their progress becomes the particular responsibility of a designated member of subject staff. However, it must be stressed that Sixth Formers are expected to take responsibility for their own learning. The Sixth Form academic intervention system is applied where students are failing to commit themselves fully to their studies, are missing deadlines, have poor attendance, and/or are exhibiting inadequate effort. Students on an academic intervention are required to meet specific targets within fairly tight time scales, and failure to meet these targets can in exceptional circumstances lead to withdrawal from the subject concerned.

Joining the Sixth Form

Programmes of study

The majority of students in Year 12 study **3 core subjects* for 2 years, ending up with 3 A-level qualifications**. Additionally students can take further mathematics AS/A-level. It is possible to take mathematics (core), which is a 2 year course, or the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) alongside 3 core subjects. Both qualifications are worth half an A-level each.

It is possible to take more than 3 core subjects in Year 12, but this is **not recommended** as even the most competitive universities and higher apprenticeships only require 3 A-levels or their equivalent. Students who choose to do 4 or even 5 core subjects often find that they are stretched too thinly and their performance across the board suffers. It is far better to study 3 core subjects across Year 12 and Year 13 and invest the time that would have been spent on a 4th subject in gaining work experience or carrying out volunteering/community work, both of which are highly valued by universities and employers.

Due to Government funding restrictions it is not possible to take fewer than 3 core subjects in Year 12 or in Year 13. It is not possible to re-take Year 12 or Year 13, unless the school has been supplied with evidence of exceptional circumstances (such as a letter from a medical professional stating that the student is not capable of being in full-time education or continuing with full-time education for a prolonged period).

*A core subject is any AS/A-level subject excluding EPQ, further mathematics & mathematics (core).

Reformed A-levels

All the A-levels that are offered at Poole Grammar School have now been reformed. This means that AS-level examinations do not count towards the A-level qualification as they did previously. **Students will not be entered for AS-level examinations in any subject as all A-levels are now 2 year linear courses with all of the examinations held in the summer of Year 13.** Some subjects do offer an AS-level course in addition to the A-level course and, if available, students can choose this as an option alongside 3 core A-level subjects and could therefore end up with 3 A-levels and 1 AS-level at the end of Year 13. However, when considering this option the school's advice (set out in the previous section) concerning students over-stretching themselves should be noted.

Progression of subjects into Year 13

To progress into Year 13 in a particular subject students must pass the mock examination in that subject at the end of Year 12. A pass means a grade 'E' or above. Students should therefore take the end of Year 12 mock examinations very seriously. One re-take opportunity will be supplied to students who do not gain a grade 'E' or above in a mock examination.

Choosing courses

All subjects are offered on a provisional basis: courses that do not attract a viable number of students may be withdrawn and courses that are over-subscribed may become subject to a waiting list.

Applicants who are in Year 11 at Poole Grammar School will be asked for their provisional subject choices at the end of the autumn term after they have had their **one to one careers/higher education interview** and a chance to attend the **Post-16 Information and Sixth Form Subject Evening on Monday 18th November 2019**. Students will be asked to firm up their Sixth Form subject choices by the end of February 2020. However, subject choices can be changed once again in the light of GCSE results. Even when a student has started Year 12 it is possible to change subjects during the first few weeks of the autumn term, although the earlier that this is done the better.

Applicants who wish to join Poole Grammar School from another school do not need to submit their subject choices until the end of February 2020. Application forms for the Sixth Form will not be available on the school website until after the **Post 16 Information and Sixth Form Subject Evening on Monday 18th November 2019** and the **Taster Day on Monday 2nd December 2019** have taken place. External applicants will be interviewed from February 2020 onwards.

How to choose your courses

You are advised to think about your higher education and/or career ambitions when choosing courses.

Higher Education - all courses will have minimum entry requirements, which can vary greatly from one course to another, and in practice most will select applicants with qualifications above that minimum. If you have a particular target in mind you should seek advice from school careers advisors before making any decisions, as there are many considerations to be taken into account.

By way of illustration, some of the factors which may influence your choice are:

- some professions are degree entry only, and some degree courses require specific A-level subject passes (maths and physics for engineering; chemistry and two from maths/physics/biology for medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, etc.);
- some areas of employment require degree-level knowledge - you cannot expect to work as a physicist or a linguist, for example, with no more than A-levels in these subjects;
- some subjects at university require you to have studied that subject at A-level (e.g. English literature), some (e.g. economics, geology, law, psychology, politics) do not.

Employment - many employers and apprenticeship providers now recruit mainly or solely from applicants with A-level passes, even though the subjects studied may not be directly relevant to the job. In such cases the employer is more

concerned with the academic/intellectual potential of the applicant than with the specific knowledge s/he possesses. For example, the Civil Service, and the insurance and banking sectors, are just as likely to be impressed by passes in the sciences or languages as by passes in more commercially orientated subjects such as business or computing. If, therefore, you are taking A-levels primarily to enhance your employment prospects at age 18 you would be wise to choose those subjects which you have enjoyed or for which you have a genuine enthusiasm, in which you might reasonably expect to do best. For example it is better to get a B in history rather than a D in business - even if your target is some aspect of business or management.

Other considerations - some subjects complement each other (geology and geography; maths and physics). On the other hand, students should consider maintaining breadth in the curriculum they follow. A range of contrasting subjects offers a broad portfolio of skills and knowledge. Some subjects involve certain study aspects or methods - those who do not enjoy reading should therefore avoid English or history; those who are not good at organising themselves should think carefully about coursework requirements.

If students are not sure about which subjects to pick, it is possible to start on 4 subjects and drop down to 3 at some point during the autumn term of Year 12.

Students should pick 3 core subjects from the list below. Please note that subject availability is provisional as some courses may have limited spaces on them* and whilst Poole Grammar School seeks to resolve any timetable clashes sometimes certain subject combinations are not possible.

Subjects provisionally offered for September 2020⁺

Ancient History	Geography
Art (Fine Art)	Geology
Biology	German [^]
Business	Government and Politics
Chemistry	History
Computer Science	Mathematics
DT – Art & Design (3D Design)	Mathematics (Core)*
DT – Electronics	Mathematics (Further)
DT – Product Design	Media Studies ^{\$}
Drama and Theatre Studies [^]	Music
Economics	Physics
English Language	Psychology
English Literature	Religious Studies (Philosophy)
Extended Project (EPQ)*	Sociology ^{\$}
French [^]	Spanish [^]

* = Subjects that do not count as core subjects – these subjects are taken in addition to 3 core subjects

\$ = Subject taught solely at Parkstone Grammar School

[^]= Subject taught jointly with Parkstone Grammar School

⁺= If a subject is oversubscribed then places will be allocated by random selection from the students who picked the subject as one of their firm choices in February 20120.

Entry requirements

General entry requirements

Entry requirements are based on an applicant's **best 8 GCSE or IGCSE results**. Only GCSE or IGCSE qualifications are included in the calculation.

A minimum of a **mean grade of 5.5** is required from an applicant's best 8 (I)GCSE results where: A⁺ = 9; A* = 8; A = 7; B = 6; C = 5; D = 4; E = 3; F = 2; G = 1.

Applicants must also have achieved at least a **5 in English language GCSE** and a **5 in mathematics GCSE**.

In exceptional circumstances when a student is admitted without a 5 in English and/or a 5 in mathematics a requirement of a place in the Sixth Form is that the student re-takes English GCSE and/or mathematics GCSE in Year 12.

Subject specific entry requirements

In addition to the general entry requirements students must also meet the subject specific entry requirement for the A-level that they wish to study.

For old-style GCSEs the letter grades can be converted to number grades using the key set out above.

Subject	Entry requirement
Ancient History	English literature 6 or History 6
Art (Fine Art)	Art 6
Biology	Biology 6 or Science (double) 6,6
Business	Mathematics 6
Chemistry	Chemistry 7 or Science (double) 7,7 and mathematics 6
Computer Science	Computer Science 6
DT (3D Design)	Design Technology 6 or Art 6
DT (Electronics)	Electronics 6
DT (Product Design)	Design Technology 6 or Mathematics 6 if DT not taken
Drama & Theatre Studies	Drama 6 and English Lang. 6 or English Lit. 6
Economics	English Lang. 6 & Mathematics 6
English Language	English Lang. 6

English Literature	English Lit. 6
French	French 6
Geography	Geography 6
Geology	Mathematics 6 & Science GCSEs: two 6 grades
German	German 6
Government & Politics	English Language 6 or History 6 or Religious Studies 6
History	History 6
Mathematics	Mathematics 7
Mathematics (core) ⁺	Mathematics 5
Mathematics (further) [*]	Mathematics 8 & Mathematics (Further) 7
Media Studies	English Lang. 6 or English Lit. 6
Music	Music 6
Philosophy	Religious Studies 6
Physics	Physics 7 or Science (double) 7,7 & Mathematics 7
Psychology	English Language 6, Biology 6 or Double Science 6,6
Sociology	English 5 (Language or Literature) or a Humanities subject
Spanish	Spanish 6

⁺Core Mathematics is not a core A-level subject, cannot be taken in conjunction with Mathematics and/or Further Mathematics and has to be taken with 3 other subject choices.

^{*}Further Mathematics is not a core A-level subject and has to be taken in conjunction with A-level Mathematics. Consequently Mathematics and Further Mathematics counts as 1 subject choice not 2.

Application timeline

Students currently in Year 11 at Poole Grammar School

Year 11 one to one careers/higher education interview (Oct to Dec)

Post 16 information & Sixth Form subject evening
6:00pm Monday 18th November 2019

Sixth Form taster day
Monday 2nd December 2019

Initial course choices submitted by
Friday 20th December 2019

Firm course choices submitted by
Wednesday 12th February 2020

GCSE results day Thursday 20th August 2020

Post GCSE advice and guidance interviews, if required (Thursday 20th & Friday 21st August)

Students currently in Year 11 at another school

Post 16 information & Sixth Form subject evening
6:00pm Monday 18th November 2019

Sixth Form taster day
Monday 2nd December 2019

Application form available from school website December 2019

Interview with Headteacher (February through to July)

GCSE results day Thursday 20th August 2020

Post GCSE advice and guidance interviews, if required (Thursday 20th & Friday 21st August)

Autumn term 2019
1st half

Autumn term 2019
2nd half

Spring term 2020
1st half

Spring term 2020
2nd half

Summer term 2020
1st half

Summer term 2020
2nd half

Autumn term 2020
1st half

Induction day for new Year 12 students,
Tuesday 8th September 2020