OLD SWINFORD HOSPITAL

SIXTH FORM BROCHURE

1979

THE 6TH FORMER AT OLD SWINFORD HOSPITAL

A boy's two years in the Sixth Form ought, for the majority, to be the most enjoyable and positive of his whole school career. He will have surmounted the hurdle of 'O' levels, and is now able to concentrate on those subjects which suit his talents and which he enjoys most. The better facilities, the responsibility and privileges offered, should enhance his stature in the school as he approaches manhood; indeed the opportunities for accepting responsibility and exercising leadership are attractive to most young men; a real contribution can be made to the running of the school. There are important and difficult decisions to be made, too, about a future career. The Sixth Form provides a stable environment in which to make the transition from boy to man.

Working Conditions

The Sixth Former has fewer teaching periods than previously. Each main A level subject involves 8 teaching periods a week; General Studies, Games etc. may take about 10 more. So, in a 42 period week, each boy will be working on his own for about 8 lessons. Where does he go? At Old Swinford Hospital the conditions vary from day boy to boarder and Lower Sixth to Upper Sixth. Any 'study' period can be spent in the Library, but each boy also has a 'work base' of his own. In the Lower Sixth a day boy has his own personal 'carrel' unit which provides a working surface and shelves for his books. The carrels are in a room adjoining the Library so it is easy to move from one area to another. Boarders, too, may have carrel units in these rooms, but most of them will have more elaborate study units in their boarding houses made up of moveable pieces of furniture containing cupboards, working areas, shelves etc. For September 1980, it is planned to build 16 individual study bedrooms for Sixth Formers. At present there are two study bedrooms, each shared by two boys, in Prospect House.

In the Upper Sixth, day boys are allocated to a study which they may share with two, three or four others, whilst the Upper Sixth Boarders will have either a bedsitter, a shared study, or study unit in their boarding house.

Overall, the important thing is that each Sixth Former has his own place of peace and quiet where he can retire to work at any time of the day. After all, the amount of private study he has to undertake for his main 'A' levels can be considerable and five hours a week per main subject should be regarded as a minimum. For the boarders, two hours an evening is set aside for prep (from 7 to 9 p.m.) but most boys will also have to give up some of their free time to work.

The working week is from Monday until Saturday lunchtime, and the school teaching day is from 9 a.m. until 4.15 p.m. Because the school works a $5\frac{1}{2}$ day working week, the holidays are correspondingly longer, with about a month at Christmas and Easter and two months in the summer.

Out-of-school Time

Sixth Formers, both day boys and boarders, need plenty of facilities for "out-of-school" time. The provision at Old Swinford Hospital is particularly extensive: there exists a fine building, called the Commemoration Room, which was paid for by the Feoffees and Old Foleyans to mark the Tercentenary of the school. This is a Sixth Form Leisure Centre and the hub of "social" activity at break, and other free times during the day and evening. There is a coffee bar, easy chairs and tables and the decor makes it suitable for Sixth Form Society Meetings, e.g. the Foley Society. This Society meets four or five times on Sunday evenings during the two winter terms. Visiting speakers are invited, and boys are welcome to invite girl friends, parents, etc.

About twice a term a "Disco" is held in the Commemoration Room, and these are organised by boys with the guidance of members of staff.

All the games facilities are available to the Sixth Former such as table tennis, squash, badminton, tennis, golf etc. as well as the team games, rugby, soccer and cricket.

University Entrance, Careers etc.

Most Sixth Formers from O.S.H. go on to Higher Education after taking 'A' levels. But there are several possibilities open and the school gives help and advice to intending candidates.

Oxford and Cambridge Boys with a good level of academic success have the opportunity of trying for a place or Scholarship at Oxford or Cambridge. Some may take the entrance exam in the November before their 'A' levels, but the more usual procedure is for a boy to return for an extra term after A levels to prepare for the entrance exam. The school has links with one or two colleges.

Other Universities Application to other Universities is made by a single form through the Universities Central Council for Admission. Most boys submit their form during the Autumn term before taking their A levels (i.e. the fourth term of their course). Conditional offers may be made by Universities, who will specify what grades a candidate has to obtain in his 'A' levels. Application may also be made in the Autumn after the A levels are known: in this case boys will have a year 'off' between school and University during which they will have a chance to travel, gain work experience, or re-sit some 'A' levels.

Polytechnics Colleges of Education, Agricultural Colleges, The Services

Applications are made as early as possible in the Upper Sixth year. Once again, offers of a place are usually conditional on 'A' level grades or passes.

Careers advice

Advice about future careers is available both from Mr. Prince, the Careers master, who sets aside Monday evenings to see boys, or the Careers Officer, who visits Stourbridge twice a week. In alternate years a Careers Convention is organised at the school.

Boys are encouraged to go on Career-orientated Courses, for which financial assistance is usually provided by the Feoffees.

CHOICE FOR SIXTH FORM COURSES

All courses in the sixth forms last for two years and lead to the advanced level examinations of the General Certificate of Education. Boys entering these forms are normally expected to remain for the full two years.

The subjects available for 'A' level courses are grouped below:

A	B	C	D	E
Chemistry	Physics	Mathematics	Biology	Engineering Drawing
History	Geography	English Lit.	Economics	Archaeology
			French	Art
				Metalwork
				Woodwork
				Religious Studies

Boys are required to choose three subjects, not more than one from each of the groups, A, B, C, D, but any number from group E.

In addition to the three subjects chosen from the list above, all boys throughout the two years follow a course of General Studies. This leads to an examination of at least AO standard. Arrangements are made at the end of the first year for those who wish to transfer to the A level course in this subject. To help those who wish to follow A level courses in Physics or Geography, but who do not include A level Mathematics as a choice, there is a course in Applicable Mathematics. The admission standard for the sixth form is not rigid, but a boy with fewer than three O level grades of C or better would not normally be considered suitable to proceed to A level work. If necessary, it is possible to retake English Language and Elementary Mathematics at O level.

In deciding which subjects you want to take, you should have in mind -

(i) Your own interest and ability in the subject.

(ii) the combinations of subjects which might be needed for entry to Further Education Courses or for professional or apprenticeship course when you leave school.

Advice is always available and will be gladly given by the Careers Master and the Subject Masters.

PHYSICS

The syllabus is designed to enable students to derive interest, enjoyment, and some sense of achievement from their study of Physics: opportunities are created to discuss physics related problems of our time, and an effort is made to inculcate an appreciation not only of the limitations of physics but also of its achievements in describing the physical world.

The syllabus consists of:

(i) Basic work which is covered by all students -

(a) General Physics and Mechanics,
(b) Mechanical and Thermal Properties of Matter,
(c) Waves, Oscillation and Optics,
(d) Electricity and Megnetism,
(e) Radiation, Atomic Physics and Electronics.

(ii) More detailed optional work from the above, of which students study about three quarters.

One third of the time is spent on practical work which includes fundamental determinations as well as experiments needing investigation and evaluation. At the end of the course students should be acquainted with some of the refinements necessary for accurate work and should have developed some critical powers in the choice of apparatus and method.

The examination at the end of the course consists of one multiple choice objective type paper, one paper of the more traditional type questions and one practical paper. Students may also take an 'S' paper which needs more advanced treatment. Students should be able to answer questions which may recall some important principle or concept and also to be able to express an opinion about some model or theory as it applies to some part of the syllabus.

Apart from work on the syllabus, students are encouraged in project work and in the past, finished projects have been exhibited at the Science Fair in Birmingham.

CHEMISTRY

The chemistry department offers courses to Advanced, Scholarship and Oxbridge entrance examination levels. The basic course is two years with a single term in the third year for those wishing to enter Oxbridge on a seven term entry.

The aims of the department are to present a course in modern chemistry which will be intellecturally satisfying both to the future specialist and to the candidate who is likely to continue studies in the subject. Stress is laid on fundamental principles whilst limiting the amount of memorising, so leading to a greater understanding of the subject. Logical deduction and a thoughtful approach to the subject are strongly encouraged.

It is expected that students will work in their own time, for a minimum of 3 hours per week on this subject.

To be capable of success students are expected to have gained A, B or C grades at 'O' level, although there is provision for those with D and E grades to re-sit the 'O' level examination in the November of the lower sixth.

MATHEMATICS

1. G.C.E. ADVANCED LEVEL COURSE
(Single Subject Course)

The Mathematics Department offer 'A' Level SMP Course in Pure and Applied Mathematics together with Statistics and Computing. This TWO-YEAR course leads to an 'A' level examination of the OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE SCHOOLS EXAMINATION BOARD.

PURE MATHEMATICS is the study, to a greater depth, of the type of Mathematics done at 'O' level; the complete course includes a study of Trigonometry, Algebra, Vector Algebra, Complex Numbers, Calculus and Numerical Analysis.

APPLIED MATHEMATICS deals with the application of mathematical principles to problems in Mechanics, Kinematics and Electricity.

STATISTICS uses the mathematical principles learned in Pure Mathematics to analyse numerical facts, and aid decision making. Topics include probability, the normal curve and other distributions; tests of significance and hypothesis testing.

COMPUTING includes construction of simple flow charts with conditional jumps; iterative processes.

2. GCE ALTERNATIVE/ORDINARY LEVEL COURSE
(Applicable Mathematics)

This TWO-YEAR course leads to an AO Level examination of the University of London Schools Examination Board.

The Course will cover the essential Mathematics need for Advanced Level Courses in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography and Economics. It is recommended for students reading these subjects but not taking Mathematics at 'A' level. In addition it should also be very suitable for students reading two Arts subjects who wish to offer a third subject at AO level chosen from the Sciences.

BIOLOGY

The sixth-form Biology syllabus is a two-year course designed to prepare pupils for the Advanced level Biology examination of the Oxford Local Examinations Delegacy. Both the course content and subsequent examinations are quite demanding and pupils intending to follow the course should have an Ordinary level Biology pass, at least at grade C.

The main body of the syllabus covers topics such as Classification, Anatomy and Morphology, Physiology and Biochemistry, Cell Biology, Genetics and Evolution, Ecology, etc., with a strong emphasis on practical work. The latter includes microscopy, dissection, and experiments in physiology and genetics and requires a considerable degree of manipulative skill. There is also a certain amount of field work as part of the Ecology course.

In addition to the main parts of the syllabus each pupil is required to make an individual special study of a chosen topic such as the History of Biology Thought, Public Health and Hygiene, Man and the Environment etc. This list of topics is modified from time to time by the examination board.

The examinations test a wide range of knowledge and skills, there being four quite different papers:

Paper IA ($1\frac{1}{2}$ hours) A short answer paper on the whole range of the syllabus.

Paper IB ($1\frac{1}{4}$ hours) The Special Topic paper. Each candidate has to write one essay from a limited choice on his chosen study area.

Paper II (3 bours) A traditional essay paper, five questions from a choice of about eleven.

Paper P (3 hours) The practical examination. This is often the most demanding paper, testing the practical skills and techniques outlined earlier as well as theoretical knowledge.

Finally it should be stressed that the Advanced level Biology course is interesting, but considerably more demanding than at Ordinary level. Success will depend largely upon willingness to work privately on background reading, research and revision.

HISTORY

Qualifications needed to undertake the course:

Boys wishing to study 'A' level History will find it helpful if they are good at such subjects as English, Geography, English Literature as well as History. Some boys who are also good at science and Mathematics take this subject at A level along with Mathematics etc. Since the 'A' level course differs markedly from 'O' level it is possible to take this subject from scratch in the 6th. However, boys doing this need to have pretty good all round ability.

The Course:

British and Foreign History between 1815 and 1951.

Included in the above are such topics as 19th Century Russia, the development of Communism in Russia and Russian problems and policies down to 1951. German and Italian unification and the growth of the Nazi and Fascist movements. The causes and results of the two world wars. The growing importance of the U.S.A. in international affairs and the causes of the cold war. The revolutionary tradition in France and why there was no revolutionary tradition in Britain. The growth of the major British political parties and the careers of some major British statesmen, the problems which have been caused by changes in British society in the last 150 years and how these have been tackled.

Boys taking this course will be expected to contribute to class discussions to the extent of having on occasion to introduce topics for discussion by the rest of the class. They will be expected to read widely and to form their own opinions on aspects of the course. Essay writing is important: in the examination candidates will be required to write four essays in each of two three hour papers.

GEOGRAPHY

The course leads to the 'A' Level examination set by the Oxford Board. It is expected that Geography will be included among the 'O' Level subjects that boys have already passed. Although some knowledge of Mathematics is required by the syllabus, this aspect of the work is kept to a minimum so that non-mathematicians can complete the course successfully. It is

usually possible for those with a special interest in statistics to attend relevant classes in the Mathematics Department.

Three papers must be taken as follows:-

Paper I Physical Geography

Paper II Human Geography

Paper III Regional Geography

In paper III the regions selected must include a developed country and a developing country. The choice at Old Swinford Hospital is The United States of America and Brazil.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

An interest in books is essential. A minimum qualification is a C grade in Ordinary Level English Language or equivalent, a C Grade in Literature being desirable.

The Advanced Level Syllabus of the University of Oxford Board is followed. This comprises 2 papers:

Paper 1 requires detailed study of 4 specified books : a Shakespeare play, a Canterbury Tale, a book of "Paradise Lost" and a major novel.

Paper 2 is wider in scope involving the study of at least 3 texts:- one play, one novel and one book of poetry. The emphasis is on contemporary writers - Harold Pinter, Philip Larkin, Stella Gibbons, for example - although the occasional 18th or 19th century writer may be included.

In addition to answering questions on the set texts the student will be required in the examination to criticize an unseen passage of poetry or prose. Literary appreciation is an integral part of the course; this makes reading of any kind relevant as an aid to the development of the critical faculty.

Every effort is made to elicit a personal response from the student and to relate literature to life. All texts are read and discussed against the background of their respective periods.

Students whose interest lies in Language as well as Literature are catered for by the instruction given in practical criticism. All students are encouraged to produce their own creative work.

ECONOMICS

This subject is not taught at 'O' level in the school. If you are good at English, Mathematics, History and Geography the chances are you will be able to cope well with this subject.

The course covers some aspects of both Economic Theory and practice. The theory attempts to give some basic ideas as to how an economy functions. Topics covered include the role of the consumer, how scarce resources are allocated, the factors of production and their roles and different forms of competition.

Much of the course aims to help the student understand the British economy. This probably is the most valuable aspect of the subject. Topics studied include Money and Banking, the functions of the Bank of England, Factors which determine the U.K. National income, Balance of Payments problems and how they can be tackled, Inflation and the nature of the unemployment problem in the U.K.

Government policies towards the whole range of economic problems are examined in some detail. The role of the state in both free market and planned economies is discussed at length.

In order to do well in this subject you need to have some interest in current affairs and ability to follow a reasoned argument. If you lack these two qualifications you are likely to find the subject difficult and boring.

FRENCH

It's a pity that so many students of French to 'O' level are put off by what they regard as the unending grammatical grind of this oft - maligned sunject. In many cases the damage has already been done when students are faced with the crucial task of deciding which subjects to study at 'A' level; hence many potentially gifted linguists will not even consider taking French at the higher level.

Of course, no 'A' level subject is easy and acceptance on this course must presuppose a high standard of ability, so you should have obtained at least a grade B at 'O' level before you can realistically hope to do well at 'A' level. This statement may be subject to some flexibility.

Let's suppose that this initial obstacle has been overcome. What next?
We are a small school and can therefore offer small sixth form groups which are well suited to the study of French at 'A' level. Theoretically, the grind of grammar exercises, verb tenses, pronouns etc. is more or less a thing of the past. For the first time, the student has the opportunity to appreciate the language. Of course there must be some grammar involved, but now the emphasis moves to the refinement of expression, to the acquisition of style in translation and to a level of oral fluency, best described as "a good working knowledge" of French. You now get the chance to actually see the language at work - and where better to do this than the study of literature.

This is the big difference with any language at 'A' level. Four or five set books will be chosen (in consultation with the students) from a list supplied by the examination board. This list would normally include novels, plays, poetry or books of short stories ranging from the seventeenth century tragedies of Racine and Corneille to the brilliant 20th Century novels of Camus or the absurd comedies of Ionescou - a whole new field of untapped knowledge and interest.

Discussion is the order of the day, not dictation or monologue from the masters involved. French is one of the few subjects at 'A' level to encourage a new cutural awareness among its students. Many enjoy it; why not give it some thought?

ARCHAEOLOGY

Over the last decade Archaeology has been the fastest growing subject in British Universities, and with new syllabuses and examinations it is now being taught in some form or other in an increasing number of Secondary Schools. Many people have an innate interest in the past, and this can take many forms. Some are interested in old buildings, particularly the remains of our industrial past, some in the great earthworks which are scattered on downland and hill-tops, others in the development of their own local community. Archaeology encompasses all these studies. The only qualification needed to begin the subject is a willingness to be interested; in fact it is better to be totally ignorant than to have absorbed some the lunatic notions about our ancestors currently available in cheap paperbacks.

Those who take the course should gain an Alternative Ordinary level pass (London Board) after one year, and an Advanced Level pass (Cambridge Board) after two years. What does the course involve? As much time as possible

is spent on expeditions to look at sites in the countryside, though no excavation is done. (Arrangements can be made for boys to go on 'digs' in the holidays). Original objects are studied in the Classroom, and simple scientific experiments carried out to show how archaeologists gain information about sites.

The main basis of work in the classroom is the Archaeology of Britain; the results of the latest excavations are used to show the state of our knowledge about our ancestors from the earliest times. According to the inclinations of the Set we study Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or Medieval archaeology.

The course also includes a study of the main developments in prehistory over the world: the earliest fossil men from Africa; cave paintings; the beginning of farming; the discovery and exploitation of metal.

For Advanced level, each candidate has to complete a project which combines investigation in the countryside, study of excavated objects and published material. A Roman Villa or Town might be studied, but a study of an Iron Age Hill Fort or the archaeology of one's home town or village is equally acceptable.

By the end of the course, it is hoped that the student will have a greater appreciation of the development of his own environment, the importance of preserving something of the past, and the ways in which the archaeologist sets about recovering evidence to build up a picture of the past.

ART

Work in this course is designed to develop the creative/interpretive development of the individual pupil in an expressive, visual way through drawing and painting.

The A levelcandidate is required to sit 3 papers in the Oxford Local 'A' level Art Examination. They are:-

(a) Art:- Imaginative Work in Two Dimensional Media in which the pupil is required to execute a picture in some two dimensional medium such as paint, pastel drawing and/or painting to his powers of creative visual thinking and interpretation of some chosen topic set by the examiner. Set topics in this paper can vary from such subjects as pictures on ordinary day to day life to subjects requiring abstract interpretation by the use of form, colour and texture, therefore, wide scope of interpretation is allowed. In teaching this requirement we try to develop a boy's ability in drawing, painting and interpreting imaginatively.

(b) Art:- Drawing from Observation.

In this paper the A Level Pupil is required to execute a drawing in some chosen medium which allows the examiner to judge the pupil's ability to draw an object or objects placed in the pupil's angle of sight. The objects usually set for the pupil to choose from are:

(i) The posed human figure clothed in gym-kit.

(ii) A group of natural or man-made objects.

(iii) A spray or group of plants arranged in a certain order.

Observation drawing requires considerable practice both in looking at and analysing forms and in the skill and knowledge of their interpretation in two-dimensional drawing. We try to allow the pupil every available type of object to draw from to gain experience in expressive drawing.

(c) Art - History of Art

In this examination the pupil is required to show some written and some sketching knowledge either of the History of Architecture or of the History of Painting and is expected to answer 4 questions which can all be on the History of Architecture or History of Painting or from both.

This examination paper balances the creative practical papers in drawing and painting and allows the pupil to show that his own creative/interpretive skills are balanced by a reasonable academic standard in the Art subject.

This course attempts to give the suitable pupil the opportunity to develop his personal creative ability in an individual way through a variety of media and means so that should a pupil wish to continue their Art Studies on into Further Education they have a sound foundation in especially drawing which is the essence of all art.

ENGINEERING DRAWING

The aim of this course is not to produce draughtsmen but to provide the student with a comprehensive understanding of engineering drawing principles which will enable him to approach further education in engineering with confidence.

There are still some Universities who do not accept Engineering drawing as an entrance qualification but these are fast falling by the wayside. Even so the student is usually exempt from the majority of engineering drawing during the first year of the degree course.

The A level exam itself consists of three papers each of three hours duration.

Paper I Practical Plane and Solid Geometry

Paper II Engineering Drawing

Paper III Design

METALWORK

On successful completion of the 'O' level design course it is an easy transition into the 'A' level metalwork course. The subject offers an insight into engineering practice and in turn forms good ground work for subject such as mechanical or structural engineering taken in further education establishments. Basic metallurgy is also covered in the course.

Thoery and practical work are equally timetabled and whenever possible the physical properties of metals are investigated in a practical sense. A high standard of workmanship is required for the practical examination and the theory examination requires a reasonable proficiency in technical drawing. Although there are no requirements with regard to other subjects being taken with this course, it is a great help if technical drawing is considered.

Students whose interests are in specific areas of metalwork, such as model engineering and jewellery are encouraged to concentrate on these subjects during practical sessions.

WOODWORK

This department could offer a 2 year 'A' level course in woodwork culminating in an examination by the Oxford Examination Board.

The course and examination consist of 3 parts:-

1. Theory

An in depth study of Timber, tools, construction and History and Design.

2. Drawing and Design

Methods of preparing working drawings of small articles of furniture.

3. Practical Work

Progression through the various tool techniques, joints and shaping etc., resulting in an article of furniture produced from a working drawing.

General D.I.Y. Techniques including tiling, painting, glazing and fittings are incorporated in the course as general interest topics.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Subject to sufficient demand, Religious Studies may be taken at A level. The course is much more demanding than the 'O' level course, and covers topics much more wide-ranging, Students will need to be able to enter imaginatively and sympathetically into ways of life and modes of thinking very different from our own.

There are two, three hour papers. The course covers the main outlines of most of the Old Testament (including Apocrypha) and New Testament with respect to their history, religion and literature; together in each ase, with a prescribed text for more detailed study.

GENERAL STUDIES

All boys entering the sixth forms persue a two-year course in General Studies, provided they have first gained a certificate in 'O' level English Language of grade C or above - or equivalent.

The course leads to the General Studies examination of the Joint Matriculation Board at either Advanced or Alternate Ordinary level (a standard reaching beyond Ordinary but not up to Advanced level). The course in the first year sixth is common to both; and the choice of examination, A or A/O, is made at the beginning of the final year after discussion between the student and Head of Department.

For those following the preferred pattern of three major A level subjects, five (in 6 Upper) or six (in 6 Lower) periods a week are given to General Studies over a period of five-and-a-half terms. Students are time tabled not only in year-groups but also in smaller groups to allow greater opportunities for Discussion. Ten or eleven teachers contribute to varying aspects of the course.

Both A level (two, three-hour papers) and A/O level (one, three-hour paper) examinations include multiple-choice questions on general knowledge and both require essays broad, general topics. The range of topics is very wide, but broadly falls into three main categories:

a. Social Sciences

b. Natural Sciences and Mathematics

c. The Arts

d. Religious, philosphical and ethical implications of the above.

In addition, candidates at A level are set multiple-choice questions on English comprehension, a foreign language and spa al/mechanical relations. As an option, A level candidates may also choose to offer themselves for assessment in Spoken English.

If my son.....of form .....
reaches a satisfactory standard in the General Certificate of Education in July 19..., I wish him to take a two year course to Advanced Level in the following subjects:-

1.

2.

3.

I understand that final choice of subject options must rest with the School, and is to some extent dependent on circumstances when requirements of all boys are known.

Parent's signature.....

Date.....