

Aspirations Project 2017

The Aspirations Project

The aspirations project aims to complement the education of selected pupils at the schools in the Wimbledon partnership by encouraging them to think positively about themselves and their academic careers and by giving them extra-curricular experiences of lasting value. The project has been designed by King's College School with the support of Coombe Boys' and Girls' Schools, Ricards Lodge, The Ursuline, Grey Court and Raynes Park High Schools and St Mark's Academy.

How the project works

Every year each school selects a group of about ten students who they think would benefit. A teacher at the school liaises with them and their parents to give them information and the dates and times of the sessions, which usually take place twice a term. Before each session the teacher meets the students to discuss a special workbook which prepares them by encouraging them to think about each session in advance.



In Years 9 and 10 students attend once or twice-termly sessions designed to broaden their intellectual horizons and encourage them to aim high at school and beyond. The sessions include workshops in science and arts subjects, a debate and a visit to the National Theatre. Students also attend a scientific lecture, a creative writing workshop and the Palace of Westminster. In Year 11, students visit the University of Sussex, where they are invited to sign up for the university's



Special Access Scheme. In the spring term they are expected to attend weekly GCSE revision classes at King's after school. After their exams some may get the opportunity to gain work experience by acting as student leaders in an arts and sports scheme run on the King's site for three primary schools. In Year 12 they are invited to attend academic society meetings and extension classes at King's. The final session of the project is a preparing for university day designed to give them information and help with applying to university. Students in the project are welcome to attend the Y12 sessions even if they are no longer attending one of the schools in the Wimbledon Partnership.

Parents are asked to make sure that their sons and daughters attend every session so that they can get the most they can out of the project. Throughout the project, students are encouraged to mix with the students from other schools. They are expected to be responsive, curious, open-minded and willing to learn.





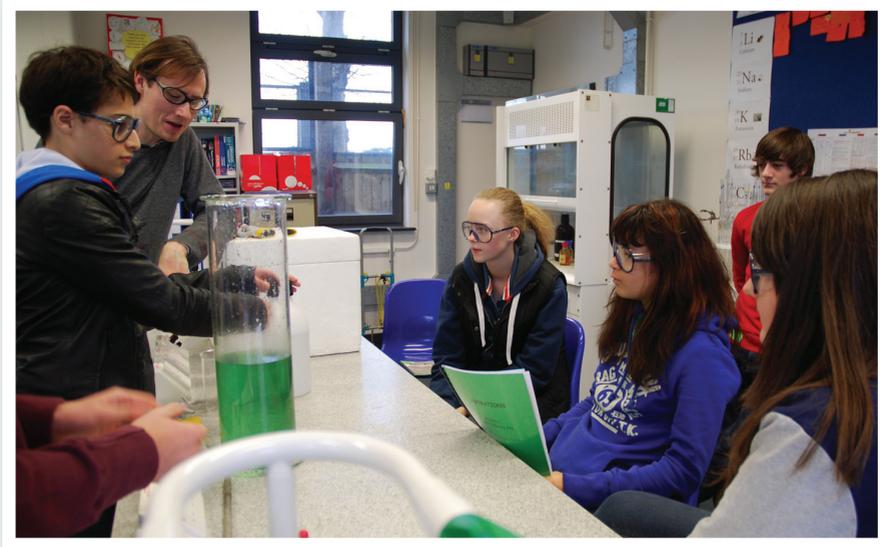
Outreach

The aspirations project is not the only way in which King's College School works in partnership with the local community. Its work with the Coombe Schools includes shared management courses and joint teacher-training arrangements. Two members of staff are governors at schools in the Wimbledon partnership and large numbers of Y11 students from the partner schools attend once-weekly GCSE extension classes in the spring term every year. In 2016-17 Gifted and talented students in Y8 are attending an inspirational science course taught by members of our sixth form. The school's programme of Friday afternoon activities includes the teaching of Latin, Maths, Science, Chinese and English as an Additional Language to students at schools in the partnership, and a wide range of joint creative projects involving drama and music. King's hosts an annual showcase for creative projects with secondary and primary schools in its school theatre at the end of the spring term, and invites children from St Mark's, Southmead and Ronald Ross Primary Schools on to its site for an arts and sports scheme known as the Open Doors project every summer. Altogether over 360 King's students do some form of community project every Friday afternoon in term time, including work in secondary, special needs and primary schools, libraries, a local park, and hosting a tea for the elderly in the school canteen, while the school also runs a junior aspirations project for pupils in Years 5 & 6 at five primary schools.



What people have said about the project:

'The feedback was enormously positive. The pupils are happy to be part of the project. They enjoyed the first day, especially the Chinese and Calligraphy. Furthermore they feel positive about the wider group - the pupils from other schools. They are looking forward to the next event.'



'Thank you so much for organising Friday's science event for the students. Our girls really enjoyed themselves and were so complimentary about the workshops and content on the way home. It was just the right balance of challenge and activity, and the sixth-form helpers added a really personable touch to the event. The speaker from Imperial College had a great approach and her lecture was really accessible for the students. They seem more and more at ease which is great to see and I am sure it is all helping to boost their confidence and ambitions.'





'I am very thankful to you and King's College School for giving me the opportunity of being part of the aspirations project, as I have felt that I have benefited from the experience a great deal. Yourself and the King's staff have made me feel welcome and this project has really encouraged me to continue with my academic studies. I am

thoroughly grateful for this and would be more than happy to keep in contact with you and the school itself. Having the opportunity to visit the University of Sussex, in particular was a highlight for me as I gained real insight to university/student life, seeing how independent the students became whilst being able to ask them a variety of questions myself.

Additionally, the GCSE reinforcement classes were a huge help, making a significant difference to my approach to the GCSE examinations... They were fantastic, so a special thank you from me to your Maths and English departments, for providing some very useful revision material.

I would like to also take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to be part of the Open Doors project held at your grounds. Being the only Ricards Lodge student in the 'sports' side of the project was admittedly a little daunting, however I was once again made to feel welcome and a real member of the team. The experience for me is surely an unforgettable one and I am so appreciative to have had the opportunity to work with such lovely, talented primary school children. I enjoyed the responsibility of having to help monitor such large groups of children and being not only a leader, but almost a friend to them, encouraging them to participate with all the activities even if they weren't so fond of the sport itself. Many thanks.'



'I was part of the aspirations project from Year 9 and throughout this time I grew in both confidence and self-belief, largely due to the encouragement and opportunities the project has given me. The GCSE revision sessions in science made a significant difference to my confidence going into the exam and helped me get a better grasp of the more challenging concepts. The interactive and friendly teaching approach also inspired me to continue with both Chemistry and Biology into the sixth form. A particular highlight was the trip to the University of Sussex. It gave me a real insight into university life as well as the many courses



offered. Getting an early start in thinking about the future has ensured that I am more informed about the many choices open to me. I cannot thank King's enough for all of the fantastic opportunities, encouragement and support for the past three years, it has been invaluable!'

"I am a late joiner to this programme and I had my concerns about the negative impact of taking our students to such a lovely site which was so different from our school environment. However, my concerns melted away when I was greeted by the very friendly and welcoming staff and students. My students were initially in awe of the proceedings, the content and the surroundings but quickly adapted and enjoyed all that had been laid on for them. Thank you for providing us with such a valuable resource to help increase our students' aspirations and enrich their world view."



For more information, please speak to the following:

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