Hayesfield GIRLS' SCHOOL | MIXED SIXTH

Sociology
Curriculum Booklet
2025-2026

Head of Subject: Laura Blower

Subject Curriculum Intent:

'The difficulty, in sociology, is to manage to think in a completely astonished and disconcerted way about things you thought you had always understood.'

Pierre Bourdieu

In A Level Sociology students will gain an understanding of the social world that goes beyond the 'common-sense', 'informed opinion' type of understanding. They will come to understand what makes our society the way it is and develop a life-long curiosity about the world. Students will be able to locate their own social experiences within the theoretical frameworks offered by the various sociologists they come across during the course: they will look at issues that are highly relevant to them as mixed sixth form students in Bath - from changing family patterns to feminist theory, from the status of scientific knowledge to the nature and causes of inequalities in society.

As a school and mixed sixth form that is predominantly white British, Sociology ensures that our students have a knowledge of societies different to their own, by allowing students to go beyond their own personal experiences of the social world in looking at groups; institutions; agreements; conflicts; identities; cultures and power relations. In doing so sociology students will develop a critical ability to analyse all aspects of society and thus become Social Scientists, being able to spot the causal correlations between various social facts.

Studying sociology will allow students to become critical thinkers and thus agents of change with expertise, insight and awareness about their society and will be able to add their voice to those that play a central role in shaping the way things are from the local to the global.

Our curriculum intents for Sociology:

- To inform students on how individuals organise their societies, the patterns they create and their group behaviour.
- To develop students' natural curiosity and allow them to question the world in which they live.
- To produce open minded, independent thinkers prepared to take on the challenges of a constantly changing modern world.
- To encourage a deep understanding of the research process and to get students to approach academic questions with the rigor and integrity that both Higher Education providers and employers' value.
- To make students informed about the cornerstones of sociology; the sociological perspectives to explaining society, so that they are prepared to apply their knowledge to families and households, education, beliefs in society and crime and deviance.
- To inspire an understanding of the changing position of the woman within society.
- To facilitate a love of the Social Sciences which moves towards further study or careers working with people.

The Sociology A Level course enables students to gain a flavour for this topic at degree level. The course places a special emphasis on research processes and how sociologists conduct research. This component prepares students for studying social sciences at university. Many students choose to study sociology and other social sciences at degree level after studying the sociology A Level.

Subject Curriculum Implementation:

The course begins with students learning about key Sociological theories, this brief introduction provides a foundation of knowledge that they will build upon during each unit of work that is studied. The first main unit of work focuses on the education system, looking at its purpose, how it has developed into the system we know today and how it may advantage or disadvantage certain groups of people within society. We begin the course with a study of families - how they have evolved, how they are structured and their significance in contemporary society. This is followed by a study of sociological research methods, to develop and embed an understanding of how sociologists carry out their work. Students will then study the education system, unpacking the issues within our current system and examining differing patterns of educational achievement among different social groups (e.g. gender, ethnicity).

Upon completion of education, students then begin to study what research methods are used by Sociologists. Now they know some of the basics of Sociology they are now able to look into how research is conducted and try some of the techniques out for themselves.

Moving into Year 13, students begin the final year of the course by studying the unit of crime and deviance. Here they examine the police and criminal justice system as another institution within society and assess its function and role within society, as well as continuing with the running theme of who benefits and who loses out from the existence of these institutions. Students then study The Media topic, in which they study topics which are highly relevant to their lives; examining the impact of new media technologies such as social media, analysing the impact that media have on audiences and evaluating stereotypical representations of different social groups in popular culture.

This combination of units provides students with a range of cross-curricular links, including Geography, Psychology, Philosophy & Beliefs, and History. It often builds on prior learning from many of these subjects but also seeks to fill in gaps where students have not studied certain subjects as GCSE options. During the two-year course students will develop critical thinking skills and with that will be able to evaluate explicitly in their written work to be able to achieve top mark band responses. Students learn about cultural capital as part of their first unit of study and they are encouraged to seek out knowledge and experience that enhances and adds to their learning. Students are consistently encouraged to use the media to add to their knowledge of Sociology and find current, real-life examples of Sociology in the real world that could be used as examples and evidence in their written work.

The overall aim of Sociology is to encourage students to look at the world in a more critical way and question why society functions in the way that it does. These students are the future workforce of our country, and maybe even further afield, therefore it is essential they have an understanding of how their world has been made into what we see today and how even as individuals they can influence positive change in the future.

Allocated Curriculum Time:

	Year 12	Year 13
Fortnightly lesson allocation	8	8

Year 12

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 7192

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	
1	**Introduction to sociology** ● Key theoretical perspectives **Education** ● Functionalist, Marxist, New Right, Feminist and Postmodern view of the role/functions of education ● Differential educational achievement ● Class, gender and ethnicity factors affecting educational achievement	**Assessment details** Assessment 1: Functions of education + social class (40 marks)
2	**Education** ● Educational policies ● Globalisation and privatisation ● **Research methods** ● Practical/ethical/theoretical considerations ● Types of data/data sources	**Assessment details** Assessment 2: Theories of education + ethnicity(40 marks) Assessment 3: Education policy + gender
3	**Research methods** ● Primary methods ● Secondary methods	**Assessment details** Research Methods (40 marks)
4	**Families and Households** ● Functionalist, Marxist, New Right, Feminist and Postmodern view of the role/functions of families ● Demographic patterns of families and households ● Roles in relationships ● Marriage, divorce, cohabitation and childbearing ● Family diversity ● Childhood ● Social policy	**Assessment details** Education: Functions of education (40 marks)
5	**Assessment preparation** ● Sociology mock: Paper 1/2	**Assessment details** Assessment 5: Functions of families + demography (40 marks)
6	**Preparing for Year 13** ● The Media / Crime and Deviance	**Assessment details** End of Year exam Paper 1: Education + Paper 2 Families (80 marks)

Year 13

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	
1	**The Media** ● Ownership and control of the media ● Citizen journalism ● Social construction of the news ● News presentation and moral panics ● Pluralist view of the media ● Globalisation and popular culture	**Assessment details** The Media: Ownership, control and citizen journalism (40 marks)
2	**The Media** ● Violence and the media ● The significance of new media ● Media representations of gender, sexuality and disability ● Media representations of age, class and ethnicity ● Media presentation and audience effects	**Assessment details** Mock exam: Paper 1 Education; Paper 2 Families + Media (80 marks per paper)
3	**Crime and deviance** ● Perspectives in understanding crime and deviance ● Left and Right realist approaches to crime and punishment ● Gender, ethnicity, class and patterns of crime ● Globalisation and crime ● Crime in the media	**Assessment details** Crime and Deviance: Subcultures and crime prevention (40 marks)
4	**Crime and deviance** ● Punishment and surveillance ● Victimology ● State crime **Theory and methods** ● Ideology and science ● Value freedom and value objectivity ● Sociological perspectives ● Social policy and sociology	**Assessment details** Paper 3 Crime and Deviance - Mock exam 2 (80 marks)
5	**Revision and Exams**	**External exams**

Revision and Support:

Sociology is focused on understanding contemporary society and applying different theories to it. The best way to support your child is to provide them with an environment of discussion and debates. You can do this by the following:

- Discuss current news events and political ideas such as protest - see whether you agree!
- Help your child to access quality news sources e.g. BBC

Many revision resources are available, including:

- Free websites such as:
  - https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology
  - https://www.thesociologyteacher.com/a-level-sociology
  - https://www.hectic-teacher.co.uk/sociology-support
- Textbooks such as:

  AQA A Level Sociology Book One Including AS Level: Book one ISBN: 0954007913

  AQA A Level Sociology: Book 2 ISBN: 0954007921

Final Assessment Structure:

Component	Weighting	Content	Proposed Date of Examination
Paper 1: Education with theory and methods	33.3%	• Education • Methods in context • Theory and methods 80 marks total 2 hours	May Year 13
Paper 2: Topics in Sociology	33.3%	• Families and Households • The Media 80 marks total 2 hours	June Year 13
Paper 3: Crime and deviance with theory and methods	33.3%	• Crime and deviance • Theory and methods 80 marks total 2 hours	June Year 13

Please see exam board websites for up to date information:
https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/a-level/sociology-7192/specification