

Applying to Arden

**Application Deadline:
3.30pm Friday 12 January 2018**

The Sixth Form Application Process

If you wish to apply for a place at Arden Sixth Form, you need to complete and submit the online application form before:

3.30pm on Friday 12 January 2018.

Any applications received after this time, will be treated as 'Late' and are significantly less likely to be successful - further details are available on the Arden website: www.arden.solihull.sch.uk

The majority of our post-application communication will be via email.

Successful applicants will receive a Conditional Offer by the end of February and will be expected to attend our Induction Day on Monday 2nd July.

Applicants who then meet the conditions of the offer, will need to enrol formally on Thursday 23 August at Arden Sixth Form in readiness for the start of the new school year in September 2018.



Arden Sixth Form

Arden Sixth Form

Station Road Knowle Solihull B93 0PT. 01564 773 348 www.arden.solihull.sch.uk

Executive Principal Mr M Murphy Ba Hons. Head of Sixth Form Mr P Simpson ©2017 Arden. Design and produced by CarneWhitney.com 01228 596 895





Presidents' Introduction

On behalf of the students of Arden, we want to thank you for considering our Sixth Form. As Presidents, we would like to highlight that by choosing Arden, you are making the best choice. The Sixth Form strives to encourage every student to make the most of these crucial two years, and to form friendships within a caring support network, that will remain with you for the rest of your life.

As this year's Sixth Form Presidents, we, along with the prefect team, work together to develop the Sixth Form further. We work to improve what is already an exceptional place to be.

What is perhaps most inspirational about Arden Sixth Form, is the remarkable teachers we encounter on a daily basis. All three of us have found our teachers to be supportive and enthusiastic from day one. They have our best interests at heart, helping us create the stepping stones to our ultimate dreams and ambitions.

At Arden, each student is sure to find a teaching and studying style suited to them. We have various silent study spaces; peer mentors and uniquely tailored lesson styles. As a result of this, all students at Arden have the facilities to achieve the best grades they can, being pushed and supported every step of the way.

We truly believe that the community here at Arden is one of the strongest in any school. The friendships created here, at this stage of a young adult's life, are some of the most crucial friendships in life, providing support and optimism when it is needed most.

Here at Arden, we all have a strong drive to succeed.

Leila Audhali, Isabelle Miners and Olivia Saunders, Sixth Form Presidents (pictured opposite)

We are extremely proud of our Sixth Form at Arden. The combination of students who have been at Arden for their GCSEs and those who join us from other schools creates a creative environment in which all students can learn and thrive. The Governors and leadership of the Sixth Form are committed to providing the best possible education for all post 16 students.

Our Sixth Form provides not only excellent teaching but also a range of character developing possibilities. We hope that this prospectus will enthuse you about the excellent opportunities available at Arden.

Geoff Harley-Mason, Chair of Arden Governors

The school achieves the right balance between independent learning and more structured support. It has not been heavy handed in its demands of my son but neither has it assumed that, as he is post-16, he has the skills to make his own decisions regarding his learning.

We have appreciated this approach.

Comment from the Arden Parental Survey, 2017

Introduction

Thank you for considering our Sixth Form as your next step towards a bright educational future. This prospectus provides a brief insight into what studying A Levels at Arden will be like.

We have been successfully delivering A Levels at Arden for over ten years and can boast fantastic results across all of the subjects we offer. We hope that this booklet, along with the information available on our Open Evening, will help you make a fully informed decision about your post-16 choice and the subjects you would like to study.

Joining Arden Sixth Form would place you at the top performing state sixth form in the borough. We consistently perform well above national average. Our students achieve some outstanding results and we are proud of what we have developed here at Arden: a caring and supportive environment that gets the best out of the students who study here.

The whole A Level system has undergone a period of reform and there has been a move back to 'Linear Examinations'. What this means is that there will be no external assessment of progress / attainment until the end of the course.

The entire grade will be decided upon by the end of Year 13 examinations. There may be a few subjects that will still have an element of coursework, so please read the subject information carefully to ensure you know exactly what is ahead of you.

From September 2018, students will choose three subjects to study as part of a two year linear A Level course. This means that you need to think very carefully about which subjects you study.

Pastoral support has been exceptional. My daughter has had every opportunity at Arden Sixth Form, both academically and in her personal welfare. The impact of Sixth Form on my daughter's life is significant - she would not be where she is now without them. In my opinion the Sixth Form team at Arden are outstanding.

Comment from the Arden Parental Survey, 2017

There will be a space on the application form for you to tell us if you would like to study four A Levels and the reasons why. We aim for our curriculum to be able to support those who wish to study four subjects, but this must be supported by an excellent GCSE profile.

Under a fully linear examination system, increased significance will be placed on internal assessments and ongoing progress checks.

We hope you find the information provided helpful. Please do get in touch if you require any additional details.

Mr P Simpson, Head of Sixth Form

Pictured Below: The Sixth Form Prefect Team.



Constant support with absolutely anything.

Amy Mullis-Watkins - Leavers' Survey, 2017



Principal's Welcome

Welcome to Arden Sixth Form. Whether you have spent your secondary school years at Arden or you are considering joining the Academy from another school, we are sure you'll find this prospectus interesting and useful. Arden's Sixth Form is a key academic pathway towards future success. When a student moves into elective education at Key Stage Five, they are doing much more than simply 'moving up a year'; our Sixth Formers are becoming young adults.

Arden is justifiably proud of its impressive reputation for being one of the best performing comprehensive schools in the country. The Sixth Form provides tremendous opportunities for students who recognise the value of learning and who have the drive and ambition to reach their full personal and professional potential. Those who choose to study at Arden are assured of tuition from inspiring, highly dedicated specialist tutors, many of whom are actually examiners for the major awarding bodies themselves.

It is an exciting time in many ways, but you are also assured that a fully structured pastoral support network is in place to guide your decision-making and ensure success.

There are also excellent opportunities to develop personal interests and skills and, as a respected senior member of the student body, you will have a chance to help mould the policies and decisions that affect your school career.

The choices you make at this stage can have a profound effect on your future; you have already made the right move in choosing to take your education to a higher level, now it is time to make some careful decisions. A key step is choosing where to study. The superb academic performance of our Sixth Form students, with an A Level pass rate of 99.2% last year, attests to the positive choice that Arden would be for you. Arden welcomes students who are diligent, hardworking, ambitious and independently minded - young adults who deserve the finest education we can deliver.

If you work with us we believe Arden Sixth Form will provide you with the academic success and personal development you are searching for. We will work tirelessly to help you develop into a happy, successful adult with a bright future laid out before you.

Mr M Murphy, Arden Executive Principal



Guidance on Application

Guidance on Subject Choice

The combination of subjects that you choose for Year 12 will influence your future pathways, so carefully consider both your subject choices and possible career plans.

We publish option blocks at the time of application. We have tried to maximise the number of possible permutations. We appreciate there will be some preferred subject combinations that are prohibited by these blocks but ask that you spend time considering alternatives, if necessary. We are happy to provide guidance, if required.

Experience tells us that those who choose A Levels based on a specific university course sometimes find that their enjoyment is not quite the same as those who choose subjects based on enjoyment and passion. Career choices may shift during your time here but passions don't: please choose carefully.

The Arden Curriculum

Arden provides a range of courses that offer a solid foundation for a successful future with twenty six subjects currently on offer. Due to being an academic curriculum, there is a common academic purpose which is taught by specialist staff with wide experience of teaching to Russell Group and Oxbridge entry level standard.

Detailed information for each subject will be available on Open Evening. There will also be an electronic copy on our website.

The success or failure of A Levels can depend totally on what subjects are chosen, so put as much thought into this as possible. We advise you to speak to your current teachers and Sixth Form students who are studying the subjects you are interested in to ensure you are making a fully informed choice.

Subjects to study at Arden Sixth Form:

Art & Design	French	Music
Biology	Further Mathematics	Photography
Business	Geography	Physical Education
Chemistry	German	Physics
Computer Science	Government & Politics	Product Design
Drama & Theatre Studies	History	Psychology
Economics	ICT (Technical Award)	Religious Studies
English Language & Literature	Law	Spanish
English Literature	Mathematics	



The subject teachers are willing to help you out as much as they possibly can (beyond just in lesson time) and genuinely seem to care how well you do.

Katie Mladenovic - Leavers' Survey, 2017

The Sixth Form Environment

Arden's Sixth Form is housed in its own modern, purpose-built block. This attractive modern building comprises classrooms, study rooms, computing suites and substantial, comfortable social areas.

The Learning Environment

Arden's Sixth Form is housed in its own modern, purpose-built block comprising classrooms, study rooms, computing suites and large, comfortable social areas. We are currently extending our computer facilities.

The study facilities are constantly being expanded to ensure there is ample space for those vital private study periods. There are areas of school that are reserved for 'silent study' to help you make best use of this time.

The Common Room provides a friendly social space that helps reinforce the warm camaraderie and academic buzz of Arden's Sixth Form. The space also boasts its own bistro café with a branded Costa machine.

We are very proud to be a school based sixth form. Our attendance policy reflects the fact that we believe the best time to study is during the day and we are keen to develop a conscientious approach to the use of non-contact time.

Care and Support

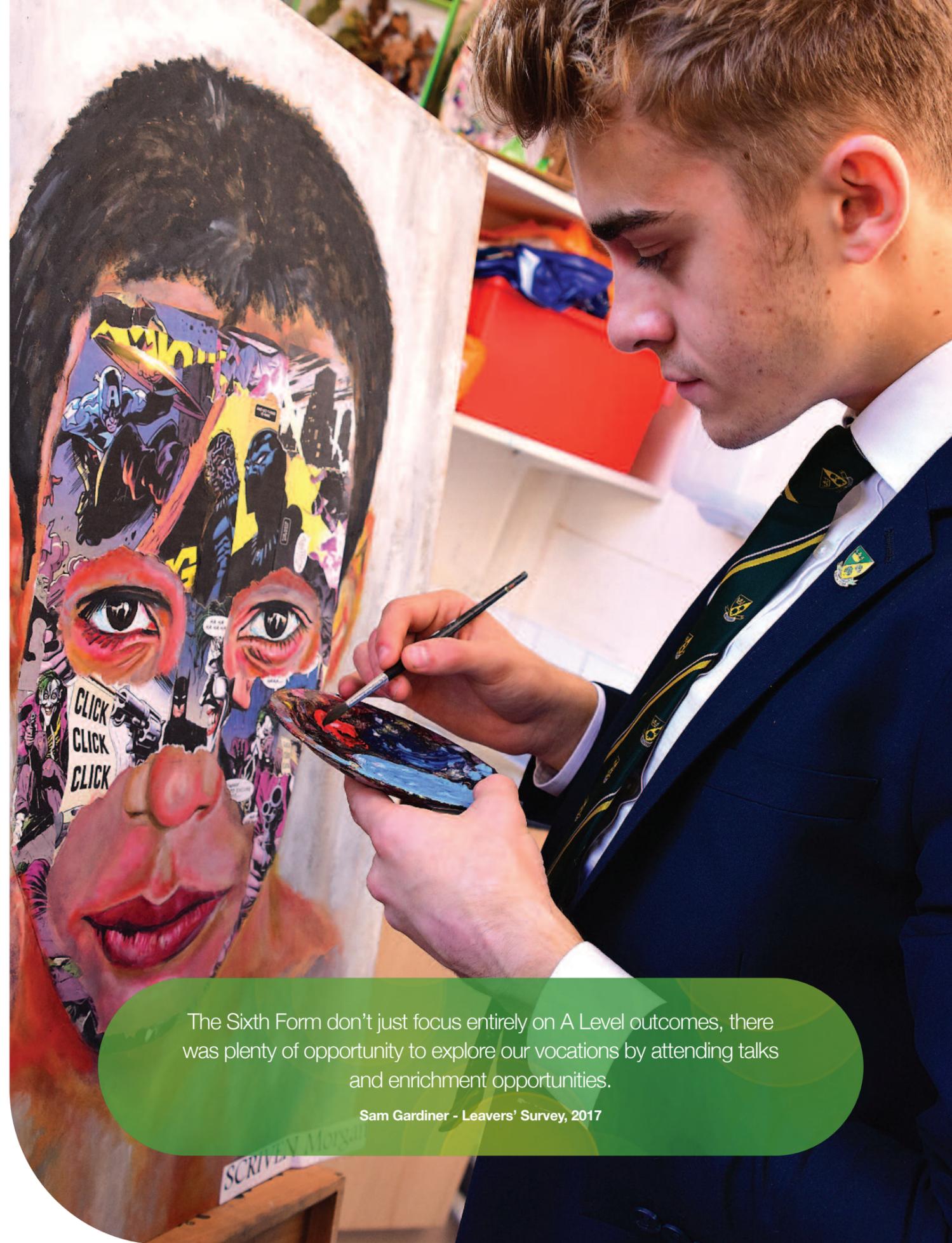
Arden prides itself on a pastoral support system where everyone is valued and cared for. A personal tutor is assigned to you on joining the Sixth Form who will guide you through the complexities of A Levels. These two years can often be a time of high pressure; we are here to support, as required.

Arden's pastoral care is both detailed and personal. This closely focused support structure is built around personal tutors, with whom every student meets daily at registration, as well as opportunities for private progress meetings. Our tutorial programme covers a range of important topics from Self-Esteem to Growth Mindset, and issues relating to online and personal safety.

An extended pastoral team provides more specialised emotional and personal assistance where required. We have a full time Pastoral Support Assistant who is available to talk to students on a one-to-one basis if the need arises.

The Sixth Form Leadership team is made up of staff with many years of teaching and pastoral experience. We support every individual student through the A Level journey, in whichever way is necessary.

It is of course also extremely important to engage parents in students' academic success. The two Year 12 Parents' Consultations each year are augmented by regular progress reports and intervention meetings, as required. These important academic snapshots record personal development towards established targets, helping both the student and their parents/guardians gauge progress and help iron out any personal or academic issues in good time.



The Sixth Form don't just focus entirely on A Level outcomes, there was plenty of opportunity to explore our vocations by attending talks and enrichment opportunities.

Sam Gardiner - Leavers' Survey, 2017





The professionalism of the environment has furthered my independent learning abilities and created a more mature and analytical mindset.

Matt Blackadder - Leavers' Survey, 2017

A Brighter Future

Transition

We appreciate that adapting to life in the Sixth Form can take time. Whether you've been at Arden for five years already or are joining us for the first time, it can take time to settle.

We hold an Induction Day once the GCSEs are finished where we will offer taster lessons to give you a flavour of what is to come and help you to get a feel for life in the Sixth Form.

Our enrolment process involves a one-to-one conversation with a senior member of staff who will talk through your application, GCSE results and subject choices. We run an Induction Weekend to Symonds Yat early in the new term. It is an action packed outward bound weekend. It is great fun and gives a perfect opportunity to get to know each other in a relaxed environment. The step-up from GCSE to A Level studies needs to be actively dealt with. As a result, we run a study skills session at the start of Year 12 and regularly revisit the concepts throughout the two year course.

New to the 2017 intake are 'Academic Mentoring Sessions'. These were created in response to the need for more structure during the transition between Year 11 and 12. After a study skills session with an external provider, Elevate, study skills are periodically introduced, revised and developed to ensure the most efficient use of study time.

These sessions also allow a greater degree of personal mentoring allowing students to discuss their achievements and difficulties with a member of staff. Lastly, they are used as a forum for exploring the wider world and the realms of general knowledge that some universities feel are lacking in today's students.

Futures

The assistance you will be given in terms of careers advice and post-18 options is of the highest order.

All students took part in a 'Futures' event in June of last year. Alongside attending the UCAS organised Higher Education event at the NEC and being given personalised support with the UCAS application process, students attended three days of talks delivered by a host of providers of post-18 choices.

Students selected to attend information talks by over sixty guest speakers from apprenticeship providers, degree apprenticeships, sponsored apprenticeships, universities and past Arden students as well as using unifrog for research and accessing specialist subject advice on the various application processes.

Every student is also given a mock interview. This involves facing an external visitor to school in a one-to-one setting and having to answer a range of questions. Last year, many admitted it was a daunting prospect, however the feedback was 100% positive.

The post-18 application process is a well-established practice, with a huge amount of experience amongst the staff involved. From guidance and support with choices, through to personal statement and CV writing help, we are with the students every step of the way.

Destinations After Arden

We are immensely proud of the destinations reached by Arden Sixth Form students.

We have a consistent record of students receiving and taking up offers at a diverse range of opportunities. Last year, over 70% of the cohort went straight into a University place, with over a quarter of them studying at a Russell Group University.

Arden graduates are currently studying at both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. We have successfully supported many students through the rigorous application process. We also have many students studying Medicine and Dentistry.

There is an ever increasing diversity of destination, with a sharp increase in students pursuing the apprenticeship route. Students in our most recent cohort have taken up places on higher apprenticeships including National Grid, IT, Chartered Surveying and Accountancy.

Beyond the Classroom

Arden provided the support necessary to excel at A Levels and when applying to university.

Comment from the Leavers' Survey, 2017

The relationships you will build with your teachers will be different to your previous experience: you will be treated as an adult and be expected to work together with your tutor to meet and exceed challenging goals.

Arden promotes a culture of self-development, providing numerous opportunities to build the extra qualities universities and employers want. We encourage you to be intellectually curious and extend your interests in subjects and careers in which you feel an aptitude and affinity.

We have many students who are interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge and have experience in supporting them. We have recently further expanded our provision by joining the Solihull Oxbridge Network. This is a group of schools from the area, including grammar schools and Solihull School, who are pooling resources to ensure the most effective preparation for all students. This means that they have regular access to conferences where information, expertise and hints are shared from our link colleges; the opportunity for mock interviews with teachers they are unfamiliar with and academic enrichment sessions to stretch them beyond the bounds of the A Level curriculum.

In the past few years, ex-students, currently studying at Oxford and Cambridge have enjoyed supporting us with this. We firmly believe that the 'road to Oxbridge' should be a journey that is enjoyable and enriching whether or not the final destination is achieved.

Real life work experience is becoming a vital part of a student's development. Some careers demand it; all recommend it. Every year we have a Work Experience Week, where students are encouraged to find a suitable placement, which will help them develop skills beyond the classroom. Each individual student researches and sources their own work experience suited to their own needs.

The time spent on work experience can prove invaluable, often serving to reinforce a possible career path, or to provide you with the knowledge to enable you to decide it's not for you. The opportunity to experience the 'real world' is an important element of many of Arden's courses.

Students are regularly offered enrichment opportunities outside school including higher level engineering workshops; Aston University masterclasses; the Finance Festival at the NEC; workshops relevant to Medicine applications and many more.

Many subjects also offer educational visits to enrich the curriculum. There is a CERN visit this year and Biology and Geography field trips, amongst others.

These opportunities are very enjoyable for Arden students and put their learning in a wider 'professional' context. It is also well known that both employers and higher education institutions value the depth of experience that is gained from learning outside the school environment.

There is plenty of opportunity to 'give back' by joining in with regular fundraising activities along with community outreach work, such as supporting the local Rotary Club. We are constantly expanding the opportunities for charitable giving.

Arden's reputation for Music and Drama is well deserved; both areas provide the chance to perform to a high standard or build experience behind the scenes in production, set design and lighting. For those with a sporting interest, we enter teams into national cups for both football and rugby. We are always looking to expand our sporting commitment, so will love to hear about what you would like to get involved in.



I believe taking young people away for the outdoors activity weekend before they started Year 12 was a successful way to support integration between previous Arden students and newcomers to sixth form.

Alicia Roper-Jones - Leavers' Survey, 2017

Opportunities

Enrichment

You do not come to Arden Sixth Form just to get a set of qualifications. We are passionate about providing opportunities to expand beyond the curriculum and students have regularly commented that they are surprised at the breadth of what they are offered outside the classroom.

Students are encouraged to take part in at least two hours of enrichment activities a week. The activities currently on offer range from volunteering in the local community to supporting lessons across the school. There are sporting opportunities and the offer of taking part in a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).

Essentially, whatever a student's interests, Arden is there to support and encourage participation. This broad spectrum of activities plays an invaluable role in enhancing and enriching the learning experience for a Sixth Former at Arden.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is offered through our Academic Mentoring programme. This is a fantastic opportunity to develop interests and knowledge beyond the classroom. It is becoming increasingly valued as part of a Post-18 application.

The breadth of EPQ projects is a testament to the way in which Arden nurtures individual ideas and passions. From designing and creating artefacts such as go-karts, quad-copters and remote control hovercrafts, to essay based projects such as 'Quantum Mechanics', 'Was Shakespeare a feminist?' and 'What makes a psychopath?'.

Financial Support

Though the current financial climate in education has impacted on student funding, some monies remain available for students in need of financial support during their time studying A Levels. The monies are drawn from a bursary and distributed at the school's discretion (details available upon request).

Leadership Opportunities

Arden has a very powerful student voice. Students' perspective, ideas and concerns are sought out at every level from the form room to the classroom and beyond. Students working together with teachers, the senior management team and governors have ensured that every student's voice is heard and respected. Their contribution has led to a real improvement in the daily life of students at Arden. It has also helped them to develop into caring, responsible and confident young people.

Last year, Year 12 re-introduced the Sixth Form magazine 'Ad Alt' providing a forum for students to discuss and present their personal viewpoints on a wide range of subjects. A student led venture which has been a huge success.

Our Sixth Form Council has a different focus each year. Some will look at Sixth Form development whilst others look at how to give back to the wider school and local community. Other roles include helping Heads of Year and being part of the Charity Committee.

Becoming a Prefect

Attaining 'Prefect' status is an achievement and a privilege. Those selected for the role have to bring ideas to the table and be willing to work hard. As the most senior students in the school, Arden Prefects act as role models for the entire academy.

Though being a Prefect involves giving up free time, it is extremely rewarding, providing opportunities to talk to younger pupils in assemblies and assisting with the running of the Sixth Form. Their visible presence plays a valuable role in reinforcing the strong links between the main school and the Sixth Form.





Arden Admission Criteria

To be accepted into Arden Sixth Form, the minimum requirements you must have achieved are a Grade 5 or above in English and Maths plus at least three other GCSE subjects at Grade 5 / C or above.

In addition to these basic requirements, each subject has specific entrance requirements (usually a 6/B or above in that or a related subject) which need to be met to be enrolled onto the course. These subject requirements can be found on our website.

The admission criteria are exactly the same for both Year 11 students from Arden and external students.

Very happy environment, enough freedom, support for individual growth to become an adult well prepared for university life.

Comment from the Arden Parental Survey, 2017