



Arden Sixth Form

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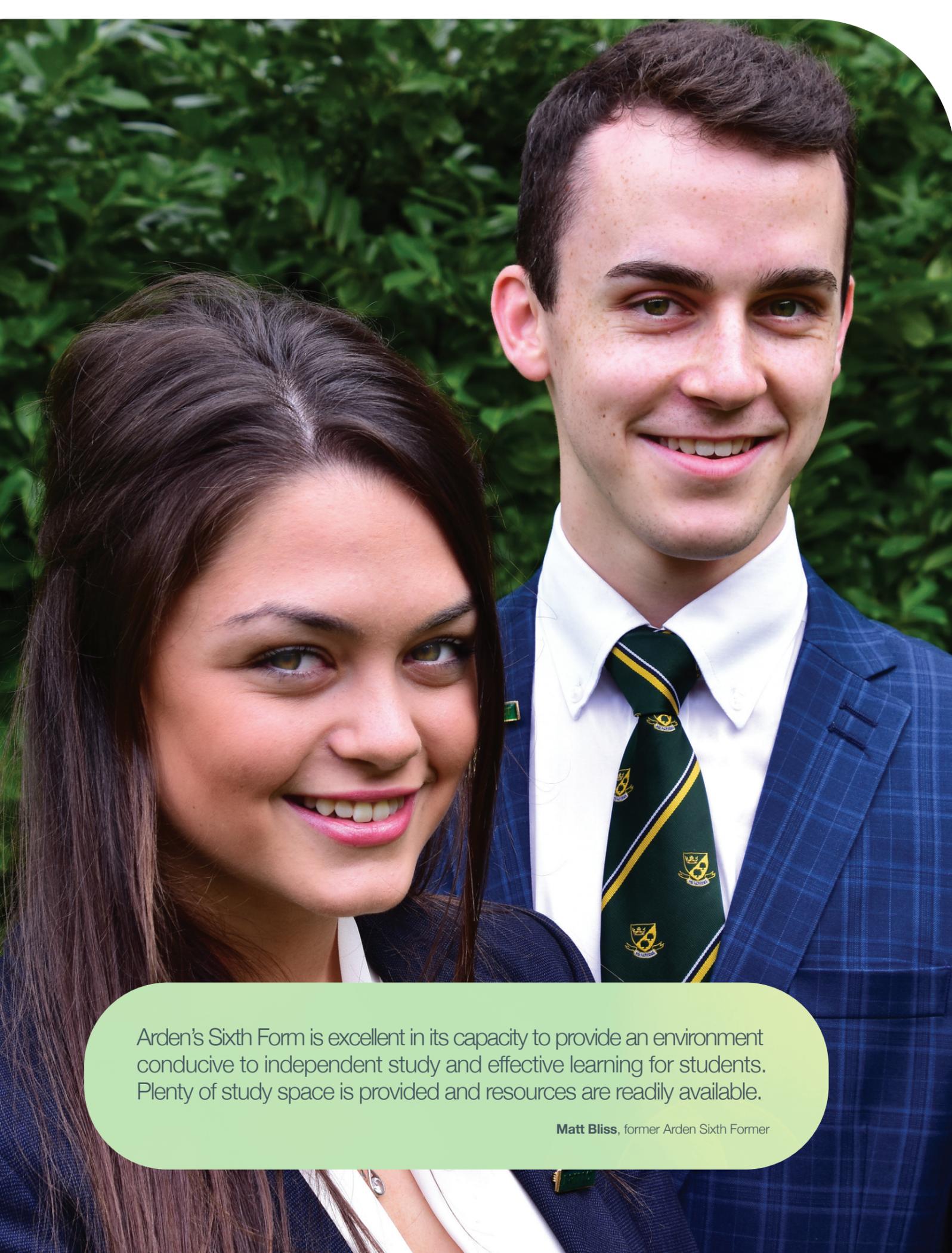
Excellence in Education in 2017

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

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Presidents' Introduction

On behalf of the students of Arden, we'd like to thank you for considering our Sixth Form. As students, we would like to assure you that in choosing Arden, you are making the best choice.

Not only does the Sixth Form offer us exceptional teaching to help us reach our full potential but the students here are all very welcoming and the friendships we make truly are for life.

We are this year's Sixth Form Presidents and together we lead the Sixth Form Prefect team in evolving the Sixth Form and its connections to the wider community. If we were given the chance to start our Sixth Form journey again, we would, without a doubt, choose to come back to Arden.

The quality of teaching we have received is nothing short of outstanding. We have both found that all of our teachers have made great efforts to get to know us, our capabilities and our aspirations and ambitions. They are always here to help us through any difficulties, and to praise us for our successes.

In addition to this support, we have a multitude of different approaches to study available to us, including silent study rooms and uniquely tailored lesson styles. This ensures that, regardless of how each of us learns best, we are all granted the ability to achieve above and beyond our potential.

The aspect of Arden life that has been the most valuable to us is the friendly and supportive community. It is important to surround yourselves with people who encourage you to be positive, optimistic and ambitious. All our peers have a drive to succeed and we all strive to be the best we can be.

Sam: Next year I hope to be studying medicine at St George's University, London. I'm currently taking A Levels in Chemistry, Biology and Maths.

As a student joining from Lode Heath, I had no idea what to expect. Having been in the Sixth Form for nearly two years now, I can say that it has been a fantastic experience all round and has enabled me to meet many people I would not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet.

Callum: I have been at Arden for almost seven years now; I can honestly say that deciding to continue on to Arden Sixth Form has been the best choice for me. The holistic experience it provides cannot be faulted and the friendships, knowledge and skills I have gained over the years are invaluable.

I thoroughly enjoy studying Maths, Further Maths, and Psychology, having also taken Physics at AS Level. I hope to study Accounting & Finance at a top Russell Group University next year.

If you choose to come to Arden Sixth Form, we hope you have as brilliant a time as we have had.

Samantha Padget and Callum Beddoes
Sixth Form Presidents

Arden's Sixth Form is excellent in its capacity to provide an environment conducive to independent study and effective learning for students. Plenty of study space is provided and resources are readily available.

Matt Bliss, former Arden Sixth Former

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 choice of Sixth Form 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 recently 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 2017, you will have the option of starting with three or four subjects. All of the courses will be two year linear A Levels, so you will need to choose very carefully.

My son is set challenging targets but enjoys his chosen subjects. Standards and expectations are high and this suits us. Student behaviour is good. External students seem to have integrated well and he has new friends amongst this group.

Parental Survey 2016

We believe that there are definite advantages in starting with four subjects, which include having a breadth of study and some flexibility in future options. However, we also appreciate the demands of A Levels and some will want to focus on three subjects from the start.

There will be space on the application form to tell us if you would like to start to study three or four A Levels and the reasons why. Our curriculum will be able to support those who wish to take four subjects all the way through to the end of year 13.

Under a fully linear examination system, increased significance will be placed on internal assessments and there will be a need to have a successful grade profile at the end of the first year for enrolment into the second year of courses.

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

Mr P Simpson, Head of Sixth Form

Pictured Below: Arden The Sixth Form Prefect Team.



Preparation for exams has been good, the teachers fill the students with confidence and make them believe they can achieve high standards. Great attitude from the teachers.

Parental Survey 2016

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 99.6% last year, attests to the positive choice that Arden would be for you. Last year over 130 students secured a place at University, including the University of Cambridge and other Russell Group universities. 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

The Governors and leadership of the Sixth Form are committed to providing the best possible education for all post-16 students at Arden. We strive to achieve this by creating and maintaining an environment in which all students thrive, both through excellent teaching and a range of character developing opportunities.

Mr G Harley-Mason, Chair of Governors

Guidance

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.

In a change to previous years, we are going to 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 Sixth Form 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 A Level 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.

A detailed hand-out for each of these subjects will be available from subject staff on Open Evening. There will also be an electronic copy placed on our website.

The success or failure of A Levels can depend totally on what subjects are chosen, so please put as much thought into this as possible. We would advise you to speak to your current teachers and 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	Biology	Business
Chemistry	Computer Science	Drama & Theatre Studies
Economics	English Language & Literature	English Literature
French	Further Mathematics	Geography
German	Government & Politics	History
ICT (Technical Award)	Law	Mathematics
Music	Photography	Physical Education
Physics	Product Design	Psychology
Religious Studies	Spanish	



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

The Sixth Form 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 Supervised Private Study Room is a dedicated space for those who work best in silence.

Our busy Sixth Form Common Room provides a friendly social space that helps reinforce the warm camaraderie and academic buzz of Arden's Sixth Form. Whilst there are usually people studying here, the space also boasts its own bistro café with a branded Costa machine.

We are very proud to be a school-based Sixth Form. Arden's 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

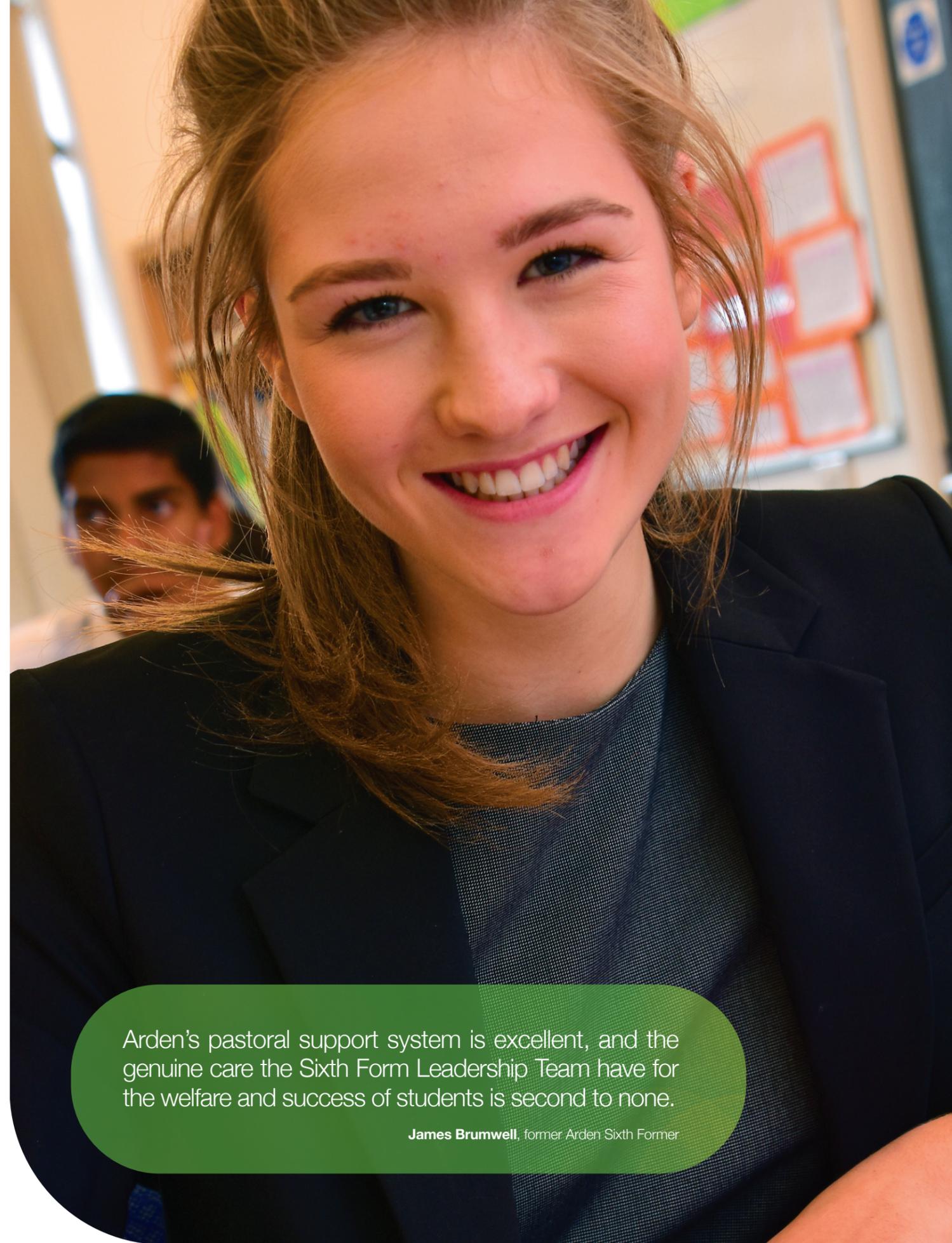
Arden prides itself on a pastoral support system where everyone is valued and cared for. A personal tutor is assigned to you on joining the Sixth Form who will guide you through the complexities of A Levels. These two years can often be a time of high pressure; we are here to support, as required.

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 years of teaching and pastoral experience. Arden supports every individual student through their 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 held each year are augmented by regular progress reports. These important academic snapshots record personal development towards established targets, helping both the student and their parents gauge progress and help iron out any personal or academic issues in good time.



Arden's pastoral support system is excellent, and the genuine care the Sixth Form Leadership Team have for the welfare and success of students is second to none.

James Brumwell, former Arden Sixth Former

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 to Sixth Form involves a one-to-one conversation with a senior member of staff who will talk through your application, GCSE results and subject choices.

Arden holds a dedicated Induction Weekend at Symonds Yat early in the new term. This action packed outward-bound weekend is great fun and offers the 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.

Career and Further Study Guidance

At Arden, the assistance you will be given in terms of careers advice and applying to university is of the highest order.

Every student in the current Year 13 undertook a mock interview last year. This involved facing an external visitor to school in a one-to-one setting and having to answer a range of questions. Whilst many admitted it was a daunting prospect, the feedback was 100% positive.

The UCAS process is a well-established practice and at Arden, the staff involved have a huge amount of experience in the process. From guidance and support with choices, through to personal statement help, we are with the students every step of the way. Arden also run Parents' Information Evenings throughout the year to keep everyone fully informed.

We hold Apprenticeship Information Evenings and were very proud of our recent Apprenticeship event which saw 23 employers come in to talk with prospective applicants.

Arden also has an independent Careers Advisor who is available for consultation throughout the year. He provides guidance on all types of Post-18 options.

Destinations After Arden

We are immensely proud of the destinations Arden graduates reach. We have a consistent record of students receiving and taking up offers at a diverse range of opportunities.

Last year, 80% of Arden's Sixth Form cohort went straight into a University place, with 34% studying at a Russell Group University. Arden graduates are currently studying at both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. We have also successfully supported many students through the rigorous application process and obtaining the results to gain a place on degrees in 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 Sixth Form cohort have taken up places on Apprenticeships, ranging from Digital Marketing to Legal.

The truth is that all the staff team have been fantastic and we really appreciate all of their help; they are a credit to your school and a testimony to your effective leadership and trust in them.

Jagrup Dhugga, parent of a former Arden Year 13 student

Beyond the Classroom

Personal Development

The relationships you will build with your teachers will also 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. There are many positions of responsibility within the Sixth Form at Arden. Our Sixth Form Council helps lead and develop the Sixth Form and the wider school, enabling you to develop valuable leadership and management skills.

We encourage you to be intellectually curious and extend your interests in subjects and careers in which you feel an aptitude and affinity.

Performance

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.

Work Experience

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.

Due to a unique link with Touchwood Shopping Centre, last year, thirty students were able to spend a week taking part in the 'Touchwood Challenge'. Commenting on the success of this, Andrew Cole, General Manager for Touchwood, said: "The Touchwood Challenge was a huge success whereby students got to experience a real sense of achievement. They showed an enormous amount of interest in the task and remained completely committed from start to finish. Not only did it help spark creativity, it delivered inspiring learnings for us all, and plenty for our marketing teams to think about."

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. Over the year, there are numerous visits to Galleries and Drama productions. Needless to say, the Arts aren't the only subjects where visits play a valuable role; students also attend Scientific and/or Geography lectures and Business Studies and Economics students visit financial institutions.

These opportunities are very enjoyable for Arden students and put their Sixth Form 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.

Excellent teaching. I am also impressed and reassured by the support and welcome given to the external learners.

Parental Survey 2016

I personally found the level of staff support from particular teachers outstanding, and this teaching that went above and beyond helped me in attaining the grades that I came out with.

Ellie Royle, former Arden Sixth Former



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 enrichment 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?'

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 Equality 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.

Whilst most students will have spent their entire secondary school career at Arden, ensuring they are deeply immersed in Arden's special ethos, some have joined at the Sixth Form stage. They bring with them fresh enthusiasm and ideas on how the school could further improve and develop.

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.

What, for us as parents is more important, is that, the enthusiasm and passion has not waned. In fact the opposite, we have had two experiences of meeting form teachers and subject teachers. Each and every staff member we have met, has been outstanding. The commitment to our son and the willingness to genuinely help him, is beyond expectation. His teachers seem to know him and his capabilities more than his previous school. Without a doubt the staff at Arden Sixth Form, certainly the ones we have experienced, are a cut above other institutions we looked at and have experienced.

Amanda Tullah, Parent of Year 13 student



Applying to Arden

Arden Admission Criteria

Due to a change in the grading of GCSEs the admission criteria has been updated for **September 2017**. The admission requirements are exactly the same for both Year 11 Arden students and external students. These are detailed below:

Students must have achieved a grade 5-9 in Maths and English plus three other GCSE subjects at Grade C or above.

In addition to these basic requirements, each subject has specific entrance requirements which need to be met to be enrolled onto the course. These subject requirements can be found on our website.

Potential applicants are strongly advised to study the additional requirements document before submitting their application.

The Sixth Form Application Process

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

**Application Deadline:
3.30pm Friday 6 January 2017**

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 website www.arden.solihull.sch.uk

Successful applicants will receive a Conditional Offer by the end of February. If you then meet the conditions of the offer, you will need to enrol formally on Thursday 24 August at Arden Sixth Form in readiness for the start of the new school year in September 2017.

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).