

The Science Department

Science at St. Paul's is one of the leading departments in a successful school. Pupils enjoy Science, both for the care they receive and for the attention paid to planning for their learning which enhances their experience of the subject. The Science department is committed to providing excellent opportunities for pupil including opportunities to study Science in the Sixth Form. Increasing numbers of students are studying Sciences at A-Level and are two groups each of Biology, Chemistry and one for Physics in Year 12. In addition, vocational subjects are offered in the sixth form in the form of BTEC Applied Science (Diploma and Extended Certificate) and a Level 2 Science Bridging Qualification, in 2025 we will also be offering T-level Health Science.

The Science team work well and closely together, and share a sense of common purpose. Much information is shared informally, particularly with regard to teaching and learning strategies. There is a good balance of experience and subject specialisms within the team.

The Science curriculum is delivered by up to 19 staff, led by a Head of Science. Each subject specialism has its own teacher in charge: Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Vocational Science. The Heads of Specialism are responsible for curriculum development, monitoring and pupil performance in their specialist area.

There are 14 laboratories which are supported by preparation and storage areas and they are all connected to the school's IT network. This includes two prep laboratories and a large staff workroom. The department and teaching staff are supported by 3 technicians. The department is well equipped with physical, textbook and IT resources for pupils.

To ensure continuity as pupils begin secondary school we liaise with Science Co-ordinators at our main Catholic feeder schools. At Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils are taught in half-year blocks which permit setting and movement as required. We foster strong links with our feeder schools by maximising opportunities for liaison through training, visits to the primary schools and team teaching.

Pupils follow a co-ordinated science programme based upon the National Science Curriculum and supported by a range of resources. Pupils are taught using a flexible setting model which allows rapid progress to be made ready for GCSE courses.

When GCSE options are made, choices are guided and pupils choose either Combined Science (OCR Gateway Specification) or separate Science from science suite in OCR Gateway.

There are many opportunities offered to students for their future careers and pathways. We have forged many links and partnerships with local and national companies. This has been possible due to the creation of STEM manager who works closely with the careers team.

Pupils are provided with learning resources in all courses which guide and support the learning within the classroom.

In recent years the department has made great strides forward in terms of teaching and learning, thinking skills, monitoring, tracking and targeting pupil performance and achievement. Expectations of pupil progress and attainment are high. As a result, pupil enjoyment, experience and attainment of science have improved tremendously as indicated by consistently good GCSE results and rising numbers opting for Science in the Sixth Form.

The Department is characterised by good humour, mutually respectful relationships and a strong and shared sense of purpose. We're a busy team who work very well together!