



CURRICULUM

“TEACHING IS OUTSTANDING, LESSONS ARE CHALLENGING AND INTELLECTUALLY STIMULATING.”

Ofsted



“RGS is an outstanding school. Students’ behaviour is outstanding and they show excellent attitudes to learning. Attendance is high, reflecting students’ enjoyment of school.”

Parental survey

LOWER SCHOOL CURRICULUM:

- Art
- Design Technology
- English
- French
- Geography
- History
- Information Communication Technology
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Science

In the second and third years, science is taught by specialist teachers as the separate subjects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students in the Lower School will also study personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCEE), and religious studies. In the third year, students will take introductory courses in German and Spanish.

ASSESSMENT

The progress and attainment of all students will be assessed and reported to parents three times a year with an annual written report from each subject at the end of the year. The emphasis will be on providing a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils in order that appropriate encouragement, support and guidance can be given.

UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM CORE PROGRAMME:

All pupils study: English, mathematics, science and French, information and communication technology, physical education/games and religious studies.

Students study biology, chemistry and physics as three separate sciences in the fourth year and in the fifth year most students will continue to study biology, chemistry and physics, although a small number of students will follow a course leading to the award of two GCSEs in combined science.

OPTIONS PROGRAMME:

In addition, all students choose optional courses from a list which includes:

- Art
- Astronomy
- Classical Civilisation
- Design Technology Product or Systems and Control
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Geography
- German
- History
- Music
- Religious Studies
- Spanish

The policy is to enter all fifth year students for GCSE examinations in the courses they have followed.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important aspect of school life:

- It is designed to support and develop the work of children in class.
- It provides opportunities for students to extend their studies into new areas.
- It gives students the chance to take responsibility for the organisation and quality of their work outside the classroom.
- It provides the opportunity to show that students can consistently produce work of the highest quality.

We place great emphasis on the value of homework in the development of self-confident, independent learners and we recognise the tremendous benefits gained from the interest and support of parents.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

In the first five years, all students will receive lessons in religious studies, following the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. In the lower school, there is an introduction to philosophy and ethics, and a study of the aspects of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

In the upper school, the focus is upon the study of contemporary ethical issues and philosophical ideas. The work complements that done by the students following the GCSE Religious Studies course.

Parents who wish for their children to be excused from religious studies lessons and/or the short service which occasionally forms part of each morning assembly should write to the Headmaster.

ENGINEERING

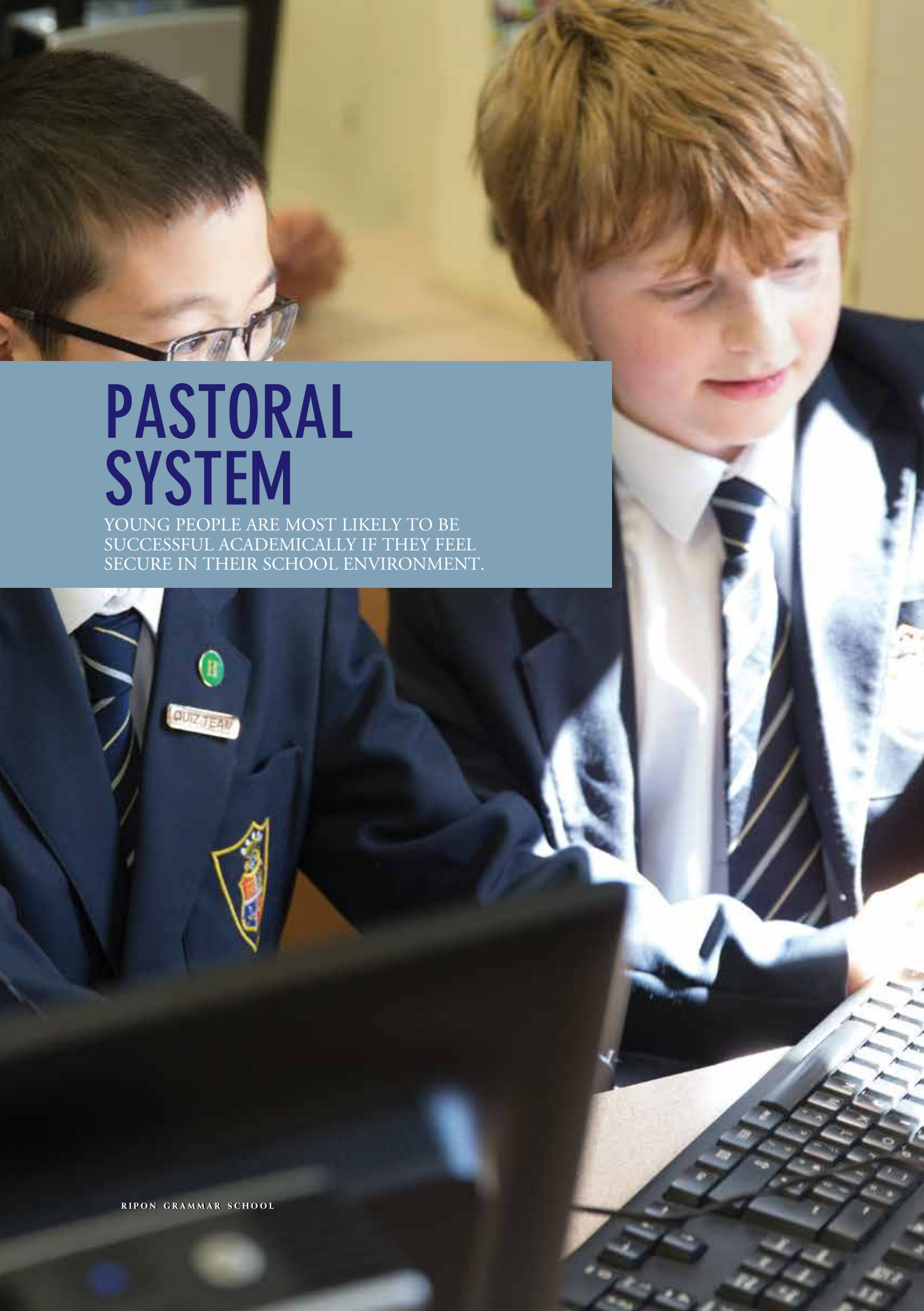
As a designated specialist engineering college the curriculum reflects the desire to allow students to make the connections between design technology, mathematics and science with engineering (STEM). This has an impact throughout the curriculum and the drive to create good problem solvers and effective learners enhances the teaching within the classroom and the opportunities created beyond it. There is a STEM co-ordinator who oversees this aspect of the curriculum.

CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

Careers education begins in the lower school and helps students make their GCSE options. During the third and fourth students are shown how to use the available sources of information and have talks from visiting speakers on general or vocational topics. Fifth and sixth formers receive individual advice and guidance so they can make an informed choice about their options.

WORK EXPERIENCE

We believe that work experience makes a valuable contribution to a student’s all-round education and preparation for later life, whether it is directly related to future career plans or a more general acquaintance with the world of work. We organise a co-ordinated programme of work for all fourth form students. This lasts for one week and usually begins in the week before the summer half term break. In addition, all lower sixth students participate in a work experience week at the end of the summer term.



PASTORAL SYSTEM

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL ACADEMICALLY IF THEY FEEL SECURE IN THEIR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.

“Students work together highly cooperatively and in discussions, and in their conduct show acceptance of others and their differences. Attendance is high and exclusions are hardly ever necessary. Students feel well supported in school and comment favourably on the range of activities they can take part in.”

Ofsted



A CENTRAL PRINCIPLE UNDERLYING THE PASTORAL SYSTEM IS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL ACADEMICALLY IF THEY FEEL SECURE IN THEIR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.

To this end, Ripon Grammar School gives great weight to the importance of effective induction and on-going guidance for each student in order to try to ensure that each young person is both happy and successful. The school pastoral system is divided into three main sections:

- Lower School KS3
- Upper School KS4
- Sixth Form KS5

RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAFF

As well as the Heads of School and their deputies, a key referral point for other members of staff and for parents is the student's form tutor. Students meet with their form tutor twice daily, and the form tutor will play a central role in guiding and supporting each student to achieve their full potential.

INDUCTION PROCESS

Links with primary schools are of paramount importance in terms of the initial induction of students into the secondary-school environment. The Head and Deputy Head of Lower School aim to visit all students in their primary schools before a Welcome Evening and Induction Day in the summer term.

Students joining Ripon Grammar School in the third year (Year 9) enjoy a Welcome Evening, an Induction Day and an opportunity to join current students in a cross-curricular team-building event in order to familiarise them with their new school, and to ease their transition.

TRANSITION BETWEEN KEY STAGES

Great care is taken as students move from one key stage to the next to ensure a smooth transition. The transition from key stage three to key stage four is marked by the transfer of responsibility to the Upper School and by a comprehensive transition programme which begins in the third year. The sixth-form office oversees the transition from key stage four to the

sixth form. A comprehensive induction programme is provided for students before entry to sixth form. Nearly all of the GCSE students at Ripon Grammar School progress into the sixth form where they are joined by students from other schools from the UK and abroad. We feel that the intake of new students into the sixth form enriches our school community, contributing to the vibrant and inclusive atmosphere which pervades our student body.

At Ripon Grammar School we believe the pastoral organisation of the school is very effective in what it sets out to achieve: a secure environment in which all students are valued as individuals, and in which they can be successful and reach their potential.

“RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL IS AN EXCELLENT SCHOOL. MY CHILD THOROUGHLY ENJOYS ATTENDING AND IS VERY HAPPY.”

Parental survey



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS



“I CANNOT FAULT ANYTHING. MY SON HAS DONE REALLY WELL. HE’S HAPPY AND A LOT MORE CONFIDENT AND HAS COME ON IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS SINCE HE BEGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL. HE MAY EVEN BE A PRIME MINISTER ONE DAY! THE STAFF ARE ALL FANTASTIC – WELL DONE AND THANK YOU!”

Parental survey

RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL BELIEVES THAT WORKING WITH PARENTS IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO A CHILD’S EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS.

Ripon Grammar School is committed to the individual achievement of each student. We work hard to make a success of the three-way partnership between the family, the student and the school. Effective communication between parent and school is essential to ensure the safety, well-being, motivation and all-round development of each child. Students here are closely monitored while enjoying the freedom to develop as young adults and to take increasing responsibility for their own lives. We hope that parents will get to know the school and the staff who are responsible for the education of their son or daughter. We ask you, as parents, to support your son’s or daughter’s learning by providing guidance and encouragement and somewhere for them to study at home.

Our students share a strong sense of identity and ethos, and students are expected to have a great deal of pride in their school; this is nurtured by high-quality tutorial, guidance and personal development.

Form tutors are the first point of contact between home and school. The form

tutors’ primary responsibility is to monitor the welfare of each student to ensure their academic and social development. The tutor meets the members of the form daily to establish and articulate clear expectations to each student, in order to inculcate appropriate standards and attitudes for engagement and success in all areas of school.

Each key stage has assigned to it, a Head of School and a Deputy Head of School who meet regularly with the form tutors to discuss pastoral issues. Heads of School/ Deputy Heads of School can be contacted by parents with any matter concerning their child by telephone or e-mail and appointments can be arranged.

Every student receives three reports during the course of each academic year; a full written report and two brief reports giving an indication of each student’s effort and achievement. A Parents’ Evening is arranged for each year group once per year and parents may also consult members of staff by arrangement at other times. In addition to our formal reporting procedures, we maintain contact with students’ families in a variety of ways:

- There is a Home School Agreement to ensure that parents and staff work

together to encourage the best possible development of each child.

- The school website contains the most up-to-date information on various aspects of school life, including copies of letters home, sports results, forthcoming events, calendars, etc.
- Every student is issued with a Personal Planner to assist them in organising their work and to provide a readily accessible point of reference between staff and parents regarding homework.
- Ripon Grammar School maintains links with parents via a termly newsletter from the Headmaster.
- RGS News, our termly magazine, is produced at the end of each term.
- The Clocktower magazine is published twice per year and provides information on former students and aspects of the school’s activities.
- Our active and supportive Parents’ Association works very closely with the school, providing social opportunities for parents, as well as fundraising for school activities.
- There is informal contact at school events such as welcome evenings, plays, concerts and sporting fixtures.





BOARDING

THE EXPERIENCE OF BOARDING MAKES A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF BOARDERS AND ENHANCES BOARDER'S PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THERE IS A GOOD QUALITY OF CARE, WHICH MEETS THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL BOARDERS WELL. BOARDERS SAY THAT THEY FEEL THAT BOARDING HELPS THEM TO GET ON WITH OTHERS, AND THEY ARE TOLERANT OF EACH OTHER.

STAFF KNOW BOARDERS WELL AND OFFER GOOD LEVELS OF SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUAL BOARDERS. BOARDERS' SUPPORT NEEDS, FOR EXAMPLE THEIR PHYSICAL DIFFICULTIES OR PERSONAL FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES, ARE DOCUMENTED CLEARLY.

BOARDERS ENJOY THE ACTIVITIES ON OFFER AND CAN DEVELOP SKILLS, INTERESTS AND NEW TALENTS. THEY HAVE USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES SUCH AS THE SWIMMING POOL AND GYM. ACTIVITIES ARE ORGANISED IN BOARDING HOUSES AND TRIPS OFF-SITE ARRANGED REGULARLY.

OFSTED

Our two boarding houses, Johnson House for girls and School House for boys, aim to provide a warm, supportive and caring background for the educational development of our boarders. The house staff, a good mix of teachers and support staff, work together to promote and safeguard the welfare of all our young people in an atmosphere of commitment to equal opportunities and of sensitivity to all their needs. We aim to provide our boarders with a real home, where they thrive and are safe, secure and happy.

Pastoral care is the essential ingredient of any successful boarding experience and we believe that Ripon Grammar School excels in this area. Both houses make the individual welfare of each and every boarder the top priority. Our staff aim to make boarding a fun, familiar, and rewarding experience for students of all ages and backgrounds.

Our houses provide either weekly or termly boarding and they provide comfortable accommodation in a beautiful setting of the 23 acres of school grounds. Boarders have their own programme of activities and access to the wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Being a boarder at Ripon Grammar School offers young people the opportunity to learn about themselves and other people. Boarders learn how to live and work with others and become part of a community. Boarders develop a strong sense of self and form strong friendships with their peers. Within a relatively small and caring community, they learn to manage their

time and get on confidently with other people. Boarders at Ripon Grammar School become part of an extended family and students from the local area, the UK and overseas bring an extra dimension to the school. Boarding gives students a sense of stability, self-belief and confidence which enables them to fulfil their potential both academically and socially.

WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY!

"As a consequence of living in boarding I have made friends from all over the world: Kenya, Hong Kong, France, Equador, Australia and New Zealand. It has been truly amazing to know all these wonderful people and growing up in the boarding house as my second home".

Sixth form student

"I have had the most amazing time in boarding and I still think choosing to come here was the best decision I have ever made. The staff were always there if I needed anything, whether it be a chat or a toothbrush. I believe being surrounded by other ambitious students encouraged me to work hard to achieve my A level grades. The opportunity to help one another with homework and seek support from the teachers who live in the house was second to none. I feel well prepared to cope with the challenges of university".

Sixth form student

"The boarding house provides a comfortable and conducive atmosphere in which to study. The staff and students made me feel very welcome and I quickly became a member of the boarding family".

"This is my fifth year as a boarder at RGS and I love it! Being a boarder is like being part of one big family and you have a real sense of community in and around school. My house parents are lovely and are always there to support me".

Fifth form student

"All the activities are well managed and spending time with friends is fun. We also have an allocated time for prep so we can do our homework and there is always someone to ask if you get stuck!"

Third form student

"Boarding at Ripon Grammar School is great. I am really pleased that I don't have to waste time travelling on the bus to and from school and I can have a game of football or play on the X box instead! I finish my homework during prep and then spend time with my friends in activities. The food is good and I enjoy the supper time treats". First form boarder

Ripon Grammar School has much to offer: an outstanding academic record, a beautiful location, steeped in history and blessed with state-of-the-art facilities which provide many opportunities for children to learn, and achieve first-class results. Few boarding schools can achieve this within a state-maintained school and at such an affordable cost. As one of the few maintained boarding schools, the only one in the whole of Yorkshire, no tuition fees are payable, so the actual cost to parents is low. Boarding at Ripon Grammar School certainly represents good value for money!



“I CONTINUE TO BE EXTREMELY IMPRESSED BY THE DEDICATION OF THE TEACHING STAFF AT RGS. THEY SEEM TO HAVE A POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS AND APPEAR MORE THAN WILLING TO GIVE THEIR TIME TO TAKE ON ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES. THIS IN TURN PROMOTES RESPECT AND ENTHUSIASM IN THE STUDENTS. THANK YOU TO ALL.”

Parental survey

EXTENDED CURRICULUM

BOTH MUSIC AND DRAMA ARE VERY POPULAR ACTIVITIES WITH STUDENTS OF ALL AGES HERE IN SCHOOL.



THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT HAS A GREAT VARIETY OF PERFORMING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS OF ALL ABILITIES. IN WEEKLY REHEARSALS THEY ARE ENCOURAGED TO STRETCH THEIR MUSICIANSHIP IN A FUN AND SUPPORTIVE ATMOSPHERE.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Chamber Choir
- Man Choir
- Senior Girls' Choir
- Junior Choir
- Chamber Orchestra
- String Ensemble
- String Quartet
- Wind Band
- Percussion Ensemble
- Guitar Ensemble
- Brass Ensemble
- Music Technology Club

The music department regularly takes groups to perform in Ripon and surrounding areas for concerts and competitions. It also hosts several concerts during the year, a carol service in Ripon Cathedral and a large-scale musical every two years.

DRAMA

Drama enjoys a high profile throughout the school over the whole year with events taking place each term. A junior and senior production takes place annually.

AUTUMN

The House Drama Competition. Each House puts on a short play, directed and produced entirely by senior students including all ages, if appropriate, on stage.

SPRING

The annual Senior school production is the highlight of the drama year. Students and staff work together for months to achieve a polished and enjoyable event. Recent productions have included 'Murder on the Nile', 'Les Miserables', 'An Inspector Calls' and 'Anything Goes'.

SUMMER

The Junior Drama Club, which meets most Monday evenings for workshop activities and improvisations, puts on a major production in the summer term, with a large cast and a massive audience, invariably to great critical acclaim. Recent productions have included 'Alice in Wonderland', 'The Tempest' and 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

The third form students take part in a week's residential course at Bewerley Park Outdoor Education Centre near Pateley Bridge. They experience a range of adventure activities, including:

- Sailing
- Pot holing
- Hiking
- Canoeing
- Climbing
- Gorge walking

All activities are supervised by fully qualified centre staff.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME

Many students take up the challenge of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme in the fourth form and continue with it for the rest of their time in school.

Expeditions and training exercises take place in the following areas:

- Yorkshire Dales – Bronze Award
- The Lake District - Gold Award



RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

OUR SCHOOL HAS AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD IN MAJOR COMPETITIONS, REGULARLY GAINING DISTRICT AND COUNTY HONOURS.



“ENRICHMENT IS PROVIDED THROUGH AN EXCELLENT RANGE OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, WHICH CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENJOYMENT. SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES ARE PARTICULARLY STRONG.”

OFSTED



“THE CURRICULUM IS WELL BALANCED ALSO, WITH EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE SKILLS, AND OFFERS A STRONG PROGRAMME FOR THE ARTS AND FOR SPORT.”

OFSTED

Many extra-curricular activities are available throughout the school. The opportunity to take up a new challenge and to develop skills to a high level is a major attraction to many students.

This can be a good way to make new friends through common interests and to start on what may become lifelong hobbies.

SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

The school has very attractive and extensive playing fields, including a full size rugby pitch and cricket square. An astro-turf and six tennis courts complete the outdoor facilities. The school also benefits from a swimming pool and a sports hall, comprising five badminton courts, a climbing wall and a small fitness suite, allowing a fine tradition of sporting excellence to be maintained.

Inter-school and house competitions occur in:

- Rugby
- Football
- Cross-country
- Cricket
- Badminton
- Hockey
- Netball
- Tennis
- Athletics
- Rounders
- Swimming
- VX
- Volleyball

Regular practice sessions are held both at lunchtime and after school. There is a comprehensive fixture list for many sports throughout the year and students consistently gain district and county colours. Teams at all age levels have won county competitions in rugby, netball and hockey.

Many opportunities exist for students to develop coaching and leadership skills through sport, including opportunities to achieve the RGS Sports Leader Award. In recent years students have achieved outstanding success in tennis, swimming, diving, golf, rugby, cricket, hockey, netball and badminton.

SIXTH FORM

“THE SIXTH FORM IS OUTSTANDING; STUDENTS ATTAIN HIGH GRADES AT A-LEVEL AND LEAVE SCHOOL VERY WELL PREPARED FOR FURTHER STUDY OR TRAINING.”

OFSTED

“I ENJOY THE STRONG RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AND THE INDEPENDENCE AT SIXTH FORM.”

Sixth-form student

“I REALLY ENJOY THE ACADEMIC ETHOS OF THIS SCHOOL, AND THE CULTIVATION OF EXCELLENCE, ALONG WITH THE STRONG PASTORAL CARE.”

Sixth-form student



THE CO-EDUCATIONAL SIXTH FORM SUPPORTS OVER 280 STUDENTS, A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF WHOM HAVE JOINED THE SIXTH FORM FROM OTHER SCHOOLS. A WIDE RANGE OF A-LEVEL COURSES IS OFFERED, PROVIDING A VERY GOOD EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND WE CONTINUALLY LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD CURRICULUM LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS.

Each student is encouraged and assisted by an experienced tutor to reach their full potential. The sixth form team is responsible for the academic and social development of every student to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in higher education and employment. Students also have access to the excellent guidance provided by our careers department.

There is a long tradition of preparing students for admission to all universities, including the Russell Group universities as well as to Oxford and Cambridge. The vast majority of students go on to higher education attaining a place at their first choice university on very competitive courses. Changes in the landscape of higher education have also made studying abroad or considering other routes into training and employment worthy of consideration; the sixth-form careers programme provides access to a broad range of information on the various possibilities.

A separate prospectus, giving full details of curriculum opportunities and how to apply for a place in the sixth form, is published annually. Entry to the sixth form requires a minimum of six grade 'B's at GCSE and academic predictions from the student's current school.

Details about our sixth form admissions policy can be found on our website www.ripogrammar.co.uk

The Sixth-form Centre provides an excellent facility for sixth-form students. The building includes a performing-arts studio, a learning centre, an independent-study base and additional laboratories, together with an engineering room. The students are also able to make use of an extensive range of sports facilities, including our swimming pool, sports hall and our Astroturf all-weather pitch.



SIXTH FORM

“THE SCHOOL OFFERS AN OUTSTANDING CURRICULUM THAT INCLUDES A WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONAL SUBJECTS AT BOTH GCSE AND A-LEVEL AND WHICH MEETS STUDENTS’ NEEDS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL. STUDENTS ARE WELL-ROUNDED, CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS.”

OFSTED

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SIXTH FORM

- Charity week: sixth formers select the school’s nominated charity and organise fund raising during a week in the autumn term.
- Prefects: sixth formers are all eligible to become prefects, from whom the School’s Senior Officers are appointed.
- House Drama: sixth-form students are responsible for directing and producing House Drama productions as part of an annual drama competition.
- Music: a wide variety of music is available with the opportunity to play at a broad range of events.
- Community work: all sixth formers have the opportunity to participate in a planned programme of community service.
- Work experience: all sixth-form students are expected to undertake one week’s work experience after AS examinations. This is intended to enhance their preparation for university and/or the world of work.
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme: all levels are offered depending on prior experience.
- There are a number of trips abroad including curriculum-based visits, and also leadership and personal development opportunities such as World Challenge expeditions.
- Sport: a broad range of competitive and non-competitive sport is on offer. Many sixth formers represent the school at various sporting events and county- level competitions.
- There is a varied enrichment programme, involving external speakers on a range of topics, as well as student-run study groups, presentations and interview workshops, community service and a wide range of other opportunities.
- To allow students to engage in independent research and study beyond the curriculum, we also offer the opportunity to undertake the AQA Extended Project Qualification alongside AS and A-level studies.
- Careers programme: all sixth-form students are provided with a broad programme of careers advice, addressing a range of post-school options from university to apprenticeships; gap years to employment training programmes and, of course, student finance. All students attend the UCAS university subject fair and a major local university open day, whilst a range of subject and faculty ‘taster days’ are also available. More detailed information is available on our school website.