



## RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL PROSPECTUS SIXTH FORM

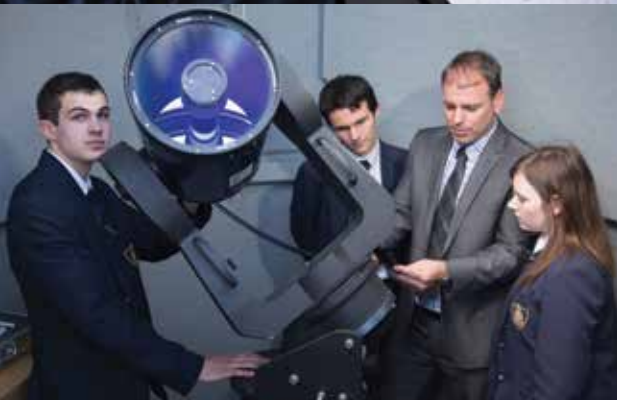




“Ripon Grammar School provides a high standard of education and care for all its students. The personal development and well-being of the students is outstanding. The students thrive in the positive atmosphere seen across the school.”

**Ofsted**





# CURRICULUM

OVER 20 SUBJECTS ARE OFFERED ALLOWING A WIDE CHOICE OF A LEVELS.



“Good quality teaching, combined with the students’ outstanding attitudes and behaviour, results in exceptionally high standards and achievement in advanced level and advanced subsidiary level examinations. The curriculum meets students’ needs well, and is enhanced by an outstanding contribution to their local community.”

## Ofsted

### ENTRY REQUIREMENT

Students entering the Sixth Form are expected to have achieved a minimum of six B grades in the GCSE examinations, and preferably at least a B grade in the subjects they intend to study. For those students who are applying to join us from another school we also require a satisfactory reference from your current school.

In addition to the general entry requirements, there are specific course requirements which explain what students need in order to pursue studies in each subject in the Sixth Form. These may entail achieving particular grades in specified subjects, and it is important that students check these before making their choices. Details of these course requirements will be in the Sixth Form Course Guide, which will be published annually in the autumn term prior to the year of entry. Should a student fail to meet general or specific course requirements, we are always prepared to discuss the situation with them before a final decision is taken.

### RANGE OF SUBJECTS

The courses on offer in the Sixth Form at Ripon Grammar School cover a wide range of A level subjects, traditional and relatively new. The decision about what these subjects might be is made on an annual basis. We expect students to regard their Sixth Form studies as an integrated two-year course. It is anticipated that students will study three A-level subjects and one AS level subject in the Lower Sixth form. At the end of the Lower Sixth form a decision will be taken about the nature of A-level courses in the Upper Sixth form. Students may cease to study the AS level subject, or follow a course of study leading to the award of four A-levels. To assist with forward planning, we ask all students on entry to indicate to us which subjects they intend to continue with into the Upper Sixth, but we will, of course, consult students as to whether they wish to change their initial ideas. Students may also follow a course in General Studies or Critical Thinking or to take up the opportunity to study Open University courses or the

AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Advice and guidance about access to these courses is provided during the first year of the Sixth Form. Further details of all courses offered will be in the annually published Sixth Form Course Guide.

### ENGINEERING STATUS

The school has acquired engineering status and this provides further opportunities for all students, and particularly for those interested in this area of the curriculum. Some students, for example, may participate in the Engineering Education scheme.

### INDEPENDENT STUDY/THE LIBRARY

In the Sixth Form there is great emphasis upon students becoming independent learners, encouraging them to develop their knowledge of information resources, their skills at selecting the most appropriate resources, and their ability to evaluate and use those resources effectively. Our school librarians aim to support the students in this work, by providing a wide range of materials in school and through inter-library loans and on-line data bases. Students are encouraged to think of the library not as a room or a collection of resources, but as a service to them, whatever their information requirements. The Sixth Form Centre, which opened in 2009, provides additional, superb study facilities. These facilities include a well-equipped Learning Centre with laptops and wi-fi access, specialist laboratories, an engineering room, a video conferencing room, a drama and dance studio and a further quiet study room.

In the Lower Sixth students will have a certain number of their free periods allocated as private study time. The private study room will be supervised to ensure students can benefit from a quiet working atmosphere.

### ASSESSMENT

The progress of students will be assessed at regular intervals during their time in the sixth form. Results of assessments will be communicated to parents three times each year.

### INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

A number of means are employed to ensure that students can look forward confidently to life beyond the Sixth Form. There are several strands to the Information, Advice and Guidance on offer including:

- Experienced and knowledgeable careers co-ordinators who work closely with Sixth Form students and are available for individual interviews.
- close links with our external careers advisors.
- as part of the Enrichment programme – e.g. a range of talks from admissions tutors/past students/employers/gap year providers.
- a visit to the UCAS Higher Education conference.
- organised Open Days to universities.
- practice interviews for ALL students.
- information evenings for parents.
- a well-resourced careers library.
- biennial careers fairs involving many local and national employers and organisations.
- guidance and possibility of some financial support for those students considering a GAP year.
- a week’s designated Work Experience in the summer term of the Lower Sixth.
- extensive guidance for any student interested in exploring the Oxbridge route

### WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY:

“The teachers take great interest in students and their ambitions; they really take time to get to know you.”

“This is a really positive, supportive environment. I couldn’t ask for a better school.”

“We are challenged and supported to reach our potential.”

“I love the opportunity to specialise in subjects I enjoy.”

“The school offers the chance to be more independent, whilst offering great support and guidance with choices for the future.”



# PASTORAL SYSTEM

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

“The students thoroughly enjoy being in this (Sixth Form) community, and benefit from good supportive relationships with teachers. They feel well consulted and listened to. Regular monitoring, and good support when making career choices, helps students achieve their potential. Good monitoring systems result in challenging examination targets being set to raise achievement.”

## Ofsted



### SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF SIXTH FORM

The vast majority of our GCSE students make the decision to continue their education in our Sixth Form, and we also have a significant number of students who join us from other local schools and from further afield. We feel that one of the great strengths of our Sixth Form is that it is small enough for all students to soon become known to staff and to their peers.

### INDUCTION PROCESS

In order to smooth the transition from GCSEs to Sixth Form studies we provide a comprehensive induction programme just after the end of the main period of GCSE examinations. Students new to the school have a half day to themselves when they have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the lay-out of the school and to meet subject teachers, before they are joined the next day by the rest of the year group. As part of the induction programme, we also run a ‘buddy’ system where volunteers from the returning Ripon Grammar School students will look after new students to help them settle in. All students have introductory academic subject sessions, as well as workshops on a range of topics such as independent study skills, teamwork and time management. Student evaluation of induction programmes indicates that students have found the experience to be very worthwhile.

### RELATIONS WITH STAFF

Central to the support structure for our Sixth Formers is the role of form tutors.



Students are divided into tutor groups and register with their form tutors twice daily.

There will be an opportunity for parents to meet with form tutors early in the autumn term; we very much encourage parents to contact form tutors, or any other members of the Sixth Form pastoral team, whenever there are queries or concerns. Contact can be made by telephone, letter or by e-mail.

### CONSULTATION WITH STUDENTS

We regularly consult with our Sixth Form students either through questionnaires, or through meetings with elected form representatives who make up the Sixth Form Committee. The committee meets regularly with the Head of Sixth Form and Deputy Head of Sixth Form to discuss any matters that are relevant to the well-being of the Sixth Form community. The Headmaster and Head of Sixth Form also meet weekly with the Head Girl and Head Boy and their deputies.

### PREFECT SYSTEM

Sixth Formers are expected to be effective ambassadors for the school and to help with a range of activities from charity week to prefect duties. Our experience shows that Sixth Formers respond well to these expectations and fulfil these tasks with good humour and with consideration for others. Towards the end of the Lower Sixth year there will be opportunities for some students, nominated by their peers and by staff, to apply to take on additional responsibilities as school officers or school prefects. There will also be the opportunity for other areas of responsibility such as the



roles of form prefects or roles within the school house system. We provide training opportunities for school officers, school prefects and form prefects, for example peer listening training may be offered to Upper Sixth students in the autumn term.

### PLANNERS

All students will be provided with a planner to assist them with juggling the demands of their studies with other commitments.

### WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY:

Students who joined the Sixth Form from within Ripon Grammar School:

“This is a really caring community which has given me wonderful memories of lovely people.”

“I really like the trust and respect that we receive as sixth form students.”

Students who joined us from other schools:

“I have never felt so at home at a school so quickly as I have here. This is due to the wonderful school environment and people.”

“I enjoy the sense of community and the mature working relationships between students and staff.”

“I have found the teachers and the sixth form team very welcoming and approachable.”





# EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS



“The vast majority of students support fully all that the school is doing. They appreciate the efforts of teachers to ensure that their children achieve very well and enjoy their time at the school.”

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## **PARTNERSHIP**

We regard the relationship between school, students and parents as a three-way partnership and to reflect this we will ask each student and parent/guardian to sign upon entry into the Sixth Form, a commitment form which describes this relationship, and some of the expectations of each participant in the partnership.

A copy of this commitment form is included at the back of this prospectus.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Great emphasis is placed upon regular and effective communication with parents by:

- reporting on progress three times a year
- inviting parents to a consultation evening with subject teachers and tutors
- organising a range of information evenings
- always being willing to discuss matters with parents either over the telephone or at mutually agreed times

## **PARENTS' EVENTS**

Parents are invited into school on a number of occasions:

- Sixth Form Open Evening (January preceding sixth form entry)
- Welcome Evening for Parents (September of L6 year)
- Parents' Evenings (in autumn terms of L6 and U6)

- Oxbridge Information Evening (February of L6 year)
- Higher Education Evening (May of L6 year)
- Celebration Evening (May of U6 year)

Additionally parents are welcome to visit school at any time to discuss any matters of concern – such meetings can be pre-arranged by telephone, by e-mail or by letter.

## **THE RGS NEWS**

The RGS News is a termly publication that updates parents about recent events at the school.

## **WEBSITE**

The school website provides up-to-date information about all aspects of school life.

## **E-MAIL**

Communication from parents via the Sixth Form e-mail address is welcome. The address is given at the back of this prospectus.

## **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION**

All parents would be welcomed as members of this active group which works tirelessly to support the school through a range of social and fund-raising events.

Through the various mechanisms described above, over the years we have built up strong relations with our parents, and will continue to strive to do so.

## **WHAT THE PARENTS SAY:**

“The school has provided an excellent education for both our children. In particular the example shown by the academic staff and the emphasis on standards of achievement have been exceptional. Both our children were especially happy in the Sixth Form and they have been given a great platform for university life and beyond.”

“My child is much more independent. They have learned how to get on with others and work in teams; these are valuable life lessons.”

“Communication with the school is excellent. We really are on the same page and this is really beneficial for our children.”

“An excellent school, which my child enjoys attending; she feels safe and is nurtured.”





# BOARDING

‘RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL IS A VERY GOOD PLACE FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN AND GROW UP IN.’

‘OUTCOMES FOR BOARDERS ARE OUTSTANDING.’

**OFSTED**

“The quality of boarding at Ripon Grammar School is good. Students enjoy the experience of boarding. They are well looked after and they develop a good sense of community.”

**Ofsted**

Sixth Form boarding at Ripon Grammar School is a popular choice. Students are well cared for in a safe and secure environment. Boarding provides an opportunity for students to become more independent and to live in a vibrant community. Boarders are accepted into the Sixth Form and many young people opt to join the boarding community at Ripon Grammar School for their Sixth Form education.

The boarding accommodation has recently been refurbished and all Sixth Form students have access to a personal study area and wireless internet access. Sixth Form boarders are expected to play an active role in the houses and they gain a great deal from this. They are encouraged to take part in the day to day running of the boarding houses and can influence decisions made in the houses. The Sixth Formers are given the opportunity to take on leadership roles whether as prefects or in supporting the younger members of the house. Life in boarding is busy and Sixth Form students thrive. They are, arguably, much better equipped to make successful transitions to university or work as a result of their boarding experience.

Boarding presents Sixth Formers with a perfect opportunity to strike the right balance between work and play. The boarding structure enables Sixth Formers to develop independent learning skills and encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning, whilst also providing care and support for those occasions, around the clock. Boarders have access to excellent study facilities, such as the superb library and individual study areas. Whilst working hard, boarders are also encouraged to be active and there are numerous opportunities to participate in physical activities such as swimming, climbing and a variety of team sports. Sixth Form boarders also enjoy participating in drama productions, music and numerous clubs and societies both in and out of school.

## GIRLS' BOARDING

The girls' boarding house is known as Johnson House. Purpose-built, the house is in a pleasant setting beside the school

playing fields. The communal areas consist of a study room with internet access, an open dining room and a recreational area, with comfortable furniture, TV, DVD, piano, games tables and wi-fi access. Johnson House caters for up to fifty girls aged between 11 and 18. The accommodation for the Sixth Form girls mainly consists of single occupancy study bedrooms in a brand new purpose built wing. Every study-bedroom provides a separate working area for each student, in addition to the bed and storage facilities. There is a washbasin in each room, with toilets and shower/bathroom nearby. Sixth Formers also have access to their own kitchen area. There are also some twin occupancy rooms in the main building which have recently been refurbished with new furniture, beds, desks and carpets. The accommodation is comparable with that provided in some university halls of residence with the benefit of having three members of staff on hand to care and support the students whilst studying for their Advanced level examinations.

## BOYS' BOARDING

The boys' boarding house is known as School House and is attached to the school in a spacious Victorian building. School House caters for up to forty boys aged between 11-18. School House contains a TV/DVD lounge specifically for Sixth Formers, two games rooms, a small study with two networked computers and a large dining room. Sixth Formers normally have self-contained single study bedrooms allowing them a considerable degree of privacy. All the sixth form accommodation has been refurbished and the accommodation is comparable with that in some university halls of residence. There is wireless internet access which is available to all Sixth Form students. The boys and girls also have access to the superb school library, which is attached to School House.

## WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY:

“Boarding has gradually introduced me to, and prepared me for, life beyond school; it has provided me with the confidence, maturity and independence to make the transition into adulthood a much smoother

one. Boarding at Ripon Grammar School has undoubtedly enriched my school life and provided me with amazing memories that I will never forget.”

“Boarding at RGS is like having a second family. A family that I know when I leave, will always be there for me. Remember, once a Johnson House girl – ALWAYS a Johnson House girl.”

“Moving to RGS and moving into Johnson House has left me with tons of memories and some of the best friends I can ever imagine having. I've got a boarding house family and countless memories to remember and take with me everywhere.”

“Boarders are in many ways made to be more independent. Boarders have responsibilities that set them up well for their independent futures which may see them going to university and hopefully moving into their own property in the future. Boarding carries a whole range of benefits and as my first year comes to an end, I can say being a boarder has contributed to this year being my favourite year in schooling to date.”

“This school has a wonderful community spirit ... As a member of the boarding community I have had opportunities to mix with other years and to be a representative for the boarding house in various competitions – House Drama, House Music and Sports Day.’

‘Coming to Ripon Grammar School and, in particular, joining boarding is one of the best decisions I've made; thank you for giving me such brilliant opportunities.’

“The staff in boarding create such a homely atmosphere and treat us fairly and with respect. I have loved being a boarder at Ripon Grammar School.’

‘Having lived abroad for most of my life, and as a new pupil at the school, I entered the boarding house this year. I've immediately found that I am more organised.’

‘Leaving here was like leaving my family, you've changed my life for the better.’





# EXTENDED CURRICULUM AND RECREATION



“Sixth Formers act as good role models for younger students and take the lead in running the school council.”

## Ofsted

### OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

There are a number of non-academic opportunities available to students that enable them to broaden their outlook and enrich their experience at Ripon Grammar School. On Wednesday afternoons students can choose from a range of enrichment options such as those listed below. Students can choose to:

- Make a contribution to the local community through our volunteering scheme, which allows students to volunteer with many local charities and specific groups such as primary schools and homes for the elderly.
- Learn how to cook successfully in order to provide meals on a budget whilst at university and beyond. There is also the opportunity to gain a food hygiene certificate.
- Take part in one or more of a range of sports. Choices available include football, hockey, netball, tennis, rock climbing and swimming.
- Develop and improve upon existing musical skills.
- Further develop ICT skills.
- Learn new dance skills.

### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Drama is a very strong component of life at Ripon Grammar School. There is an annual senior production of either a play or a musical. Recent productions have included ‘Les Misérables’ and ‘Death on the Nile’. There is also an annual house drama competition that is entirely organised by students. Students take on all roles including production, direction, set design and construction.

There are numerous musical activities organised by the school staff and by students; a large number of peripatetic teachers serve the school and help prepare students for Associated Board Examinations. Ensembles include the Big Band (a jazz and swing ensemble), the Wind Band, the School Orchestra, and the Senior Choirs. Students have also very successfully established their own rock groups.

Ripon Grammar School is very proud of its achievements in a range of sports and encourages students to take every opportunity to get involved in the activities that are available. These include hockey, rugby, football, netball, tennis, cricket, athletics, swimming and aerobics. With many of these sports there is the chance to take part in them competitively, either representing the school or as part of the numerous inter-house competitions including master chef and university challenge.

The opening of the sports hall in 2009 has widened the range of sports which can be offered and many students enjoy the opportunity to participate in rock climbing, badminton and VX.

Debating is an activity that has increased in popularity over recent years. The Debating Society holds debates at lunchtimes and provides students with the opportunity to practise their communication and public-speaking skills in a good-humoured and witty environment. It is an outlet for budding politicians, lawyers and after-dinner speakers!

The Sixth Form Reading Group is run by our librarian and provides the chance to discuss books/films.

Sixth Form students also play a lead role in the running of the School Council.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme allows students the opportunity to develop a range of skills and to gain this very useful qualification at Silver and Gold level.

The curriculum in many subjects is further enriched by school trips which often take place during holidays and over weekends. Trips have been from a number of curriculum areas to destinations both within the UK and abroad. Recent destinations have included Manchester, London, Barcelona, Iceland, Berlin and Paris. Additionally, there are opportunities to participate in World Challenge trips (Namibia in 2010, Vietnam and Cambodia in 2012 and Costa Rica and

Nicaragua in 2014), to undertake trips with Yorkshire Schools Explorers’ Society or to organise gap year experiences with organisations such as Project Trust.

Many students also participate in enterprise events such as Young Enterprise competitions or projects to raise money for the Prince’s Trust.

### WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY:

“I have enjoyed things such as having a common room where we can relax.”

“The extra-curricular activities are brilliant and there are lots of opportunities to meet friends and to grow in confidence.”

“I’ve really enjoyed organising events like house drama and charity week. There is a great sense of camaraderie.”

“I have found volunteering to be a great experience; it has helped me to become more mature by giving me greater responsibilities for others.”

“My experiences at the Walled Garden, as part of the volunteering programme, has taught me so much about myself and about the lives of others – it has made me into a more caring and confident individual.”

“This has been the best two years of my time at school.”





“The opportunities offered to me at Ripon Grammar School, both academically and extra-curricular, have helped me to develop into a more rounded and independent person, and will help me be better prepared for life at university and work.”

**Sixth Form Student**

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF  
SIXTH FORM LIFE



**CHARITY WEEK**

is one of the most exciting weeks in the school calendar! The event is organised entirely by the Sixth Form and takes place just before October half-term. A large amount of money is raised and is donated to a charity chosen by the Sixth Form students. Form prefects work with their form groups to encourage and guide the younger pupils to come up to arrange a variety of lunch time events such as fashion shows and talent shows. There is a trophy for the form group which raises the most money. It is a great week when the Sixth Form can pull together and lead and work with the rest of the school – and support a very worthwhile cause!

**SOCIAL LIFE**

is an integral part of being a Sixth Form student – there will be many opportunities to attend social functions. Getting the balance right between your social life and your studies is, though, essential!

**SIXTH FORM SOCIAL SPACE**

The Sixth Form social space consists of three common room areas which provide a haven away from the rest of the school and where Sixth Form students can read the newspapers and relax with friends when they do not have designated lessons.

**HOW TO APPLY**

If you would like to apply for a place in the Sixth Form at Ripon Grammar School, you should be aware of the following timetable:

<b>January/February</b>	Publication of the Sixth Form Course Guide
<b>End of January</b>	Open Evening for Prospective Students & Families
<b>End of February</b>	Application forms to be returned to Head of Sixth Form (The precise deadline for submission of applications will be published on application forms each year.)
<b>March/April</b>	Reports will be requested from current schools
<b>April</b>	Offers of places are sent to students
<b>Late June</b>	Sixth Form Induction programme – all students are expected to attend if possible
<b>Late August</b>	GCSE results – students who have been offered places should notify the Head of Sixth Form of their GCSE results.

**Please note that experience of recent years is that the number of applicants is likely to exceed the number of places available in the Sixth Form. A copy of our admissions policy is enclosed in the back of this prospectus.**



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