



## **Ripon Grammar School**

### **BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

The Biology department is a very successful department at Ripon Grammar School. Academic results are good and large numbers of students take Biology at A Level, typically around 50 in each of the Lower and Upper Sixth forms. The department is well respected by students and a large number of students go on to take Biology-related degrees at university.

The department has developed and improved considerably over recent years, but we are now looking for someone to take the department on its next step to move it from good to outstanding. The department has worked hard to create a culture where students have an independent, mature approach to their studies, where teachers and students work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding and where the highest standards of effort and attainment are expected.

The department is housed on the ground floor of the Science Block and also uses specialist laboratories in the Sixth Form centre where many of the sixth form lessons take place. There are ten Science laboratories in total. The department is very well-equipped enabling the full range of practical work to be carried out.

The department consists of three full time and one part time teacher, as well as two part time laboratory technicians, one of whom works in the Science Block and one in the Sixth Form Block.

Students are taught Science in Year 7 with a highly successful course created with a very significant focus on the development of scientific skills as well as introducing key areas of knowledge and understanding. Although the three Sciences are taught separately from Year 8 upwards, the three Science departments work closely together in the Science Faculty to co-ordinate approaches in many key areas of teaching and learning.

All members of the Department teach throughout the 11-18 age range with a good proportion of A-level teaching. The school operates a 40-period week with 40 minute lessons. Biology has a mixture of single and double lessons.

- Y7** Students are taught Science by one teacher for six periods a week with a significant emphasis on the development of scientific skills.
- Y8** Students are taught Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate subjects, with two periods a week for each subject. We use our own course that is constantly reviewed and developed.
- Y9** Students start the AQA GCSE Biology course with two periods a week.
- Y10** Students continue the AQA GCSE Biology course with three periods a week (one single and one double).

**Y11** Most students complete the AQA GCSE Biology course with three periods a week. A small group of students who find the pace of separate sciences challenging switch to AQA GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy); these students continue to be taught by three subject specialists.

**Y12/13** Biology is a popular and successful subject in the school at A-level. We follow the OCR specification with students receiving seven periods a week of teaching in Y12 rising to eight periods in Y13. Each set is taught by two teachers.

Examination results have improved in recent years with around 70% grade 7+ at GCSE and around 70% B+ at A level.

The department is keen to take opportunities to take the students on visits outside school. Recent trips (pre-Covid) have included the Deep in Hull, a local brewery, Malham, the Thackray museum in Leeds, the Life centre in Newcastle and a residential trip to the University of Edinburgh. We also have a very successful student-led Biology Society where students present on topics of their choosing each week to their peers. There is also a Y7 Science Club.

This is an exciting opportunity for the successful applicant to work with committed colleagues to take the department on the next step of its development to move it from good to outstanding.

**Richard Grime (Head of Science)**

**January 2021**