



Biology Department Profile

Coloma has a strong Biology Department. Members of the department are keen to share good practice and are supportive of one another. All full time teachers are expected to teach across the ability range up to and including A Level.

The Science department has ten laboratories and Biology is usually taught in laboratories. Each laboratory has an interactive whiteboard and display boards for pupils' work. We have an experienced full-time Biology technician who supports the Biology department with preparation of practicals.

Key Stage 3

Students study a 2-year course through which they are encouraged to develop their understanding of biological principles and concepts through a combination of practical activities and application of knowledge.

In Year 7 all classes are initially taught in mixed ability classes until the autumn half term, after which they are loosely set. Year 8 are placed in sets according to their ability. Within Key Stage 3, each pupil covers a range of fundamental topics including cells, reproduction, digestion, movement, body systems and photosynthesis. In year 9 students begin studying the AQA GCSE course and cover the sections on communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, variation and adaptation.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, girls are set according to ability. We aim to match the courses that each student follows to their ability and needs at that time, and use regular monitoring and assessment to support these decisions. The AQA GCSE course is followed by all groups; currently three sets follow the Biology GCSE course and three follow the Trilogy course. The majority of students are entered for Higher Tier. Internal tests are set each half term and are marked by the class teacher. There are main school examinations at the end of year 10 and mock examinations in Year 11. The progress of each girl is monitored by the Biology department. All students from years 9-11 have access to Kerboodle, including an on-line book as well as a variety of interactive resources.

Key Stage 5

A Level is a popular option with both internal and external candidates. All students follow the AQA course.

Biology Challenge and Olympiads

Students in years 9 and 10 compete in the Biology challenge. Students in years 12 and 13 are encouraged to compete in the British Biology Olympiad and Intermediate Olympiad.