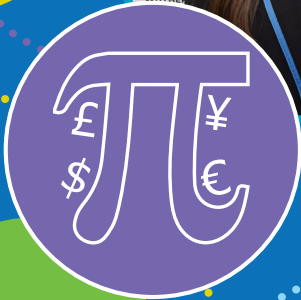
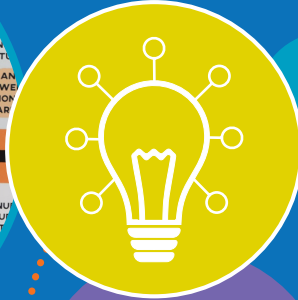




Harwich and Dovercourt High School

Prospectus 2024-2025



*HDHS is a Reading School:
Reading for Purpose and
Reading for Pleasure*

SIGMA TRUST

Harwich & Dovercourt High School is a member of the Sigma Multi Academy Trust, which is a group of eight like-minded Secondary schools, and 4 Primaries, sharing the same visions and ethos, working in a local partnership to improve the educational outcomes for young people in the area. The Sigma Trust both supports and challenges HDHS to continuously improve its provision on behalf of the students and the community we serve.

We believe strongly in the principles underpinning the Trust, that by working together we are stronger, as characterised by the Greek letter sigma, Σ , meaning “the sum of”.

This is best summed up in a quote from Aristotle, translated from Greek, which means “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

WELCOME

This prospectus is intended to provide stakeholders with an overview of the very many varied activities we are proud to offer our students. HDHS plays a great role within the Community in supporting learners through both primary and secondary phases, into post 16 education, University and the world of work. We can offer a high quality education and a determined focus on achievement whilst placing great value on many other areas of school life which play a pivotal role in developing educated, culturally aware, secure young adults ready to make a positive contribution to society.

In reading this outline it is our intention that you understand how HDHS seeks to develop skills at certain times in each student’s journey through the school. You will read references to Key Stages and our changing focus as students get closer to examination dates and significant milestones. After having had a broad experience of subjects at Key Stage 3 (Years 7-8), our students benefit from starting to consider their future through the Transition Year at the start of Year 9. This allows teachers and students adequate time to cover content of increasing complexity with higher academic demands throughout Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11). The school is committed to providing a broad range of both academic and vocational pathways at Key Stage 4 and through to a growing range of A Level and Key Stage 5 vocational qualifications.

Harwich and Dovercourt High School is a vibrant, supportive community. Many of the activities that contribute to this are delivered outside of lessons. We are proud of the huge range of extra-curricular opportunities and the competitions that we offer to our students. Our key stage communities provide a platform where every student’s efforts are valued and nurtured. I hope that the following information generates questions and is the start of a positive partnership with parents in meeting their children’s needs.

Kate Finch
Headteacher



“Pupils benefit from the school being a ‘reading school’. Across the curriculum, there are many opportunities for pupils to read challenging texts. As a result, pupils use a wide range of vocabulary.” –OFSTED October 2021

HDHS IS A READING SCHOOL:

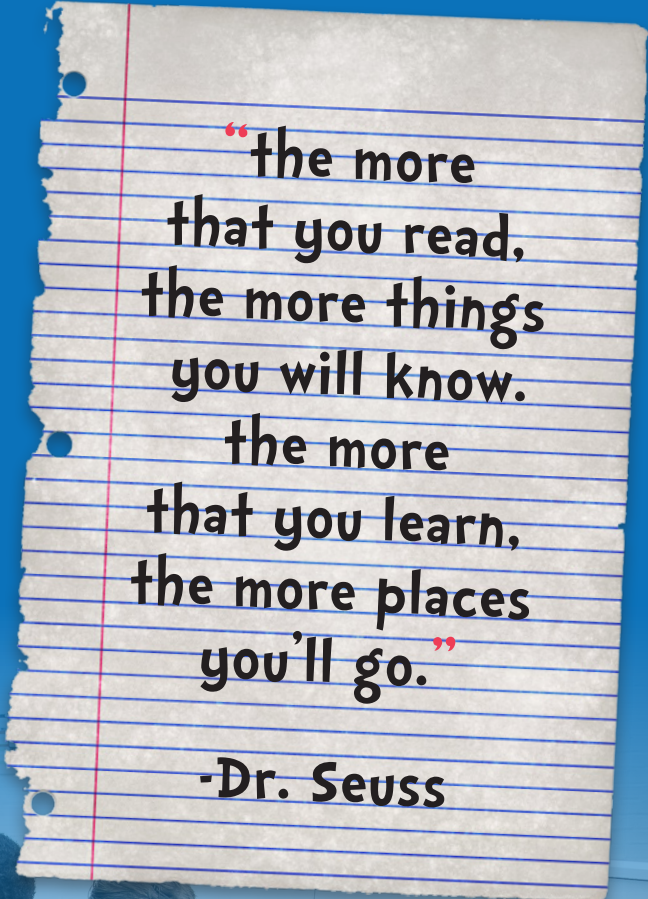
Reading for pleasure and reading for purpose

At HDHS we firmly believe that literacy is an essential skill to enable students to read, write and speak as experts in every subject across the curriculum. These skills are vital during school years but most importantly beyond school to make sense of the world around us. As such, the better we are at these skills, the more successful we can expect to be in life. At HDHS we recognise that improving all aspects of literacy can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment.

We believe that reading, and particularly **reading for pleasure**, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. It has been shown to improve health and wellbeing, as well as improving compassion and empathy for others. Our aim is to develop each student's potential to the point where they are reading at, or above, their chronological age and being confident to use reading as a valuable springboard to enhance learning. We want every student to find that one book that is special to them and that they can use to navigate through life. We want every student to have the opportunity to reap all the **rewards and opportunities** that reading provides.

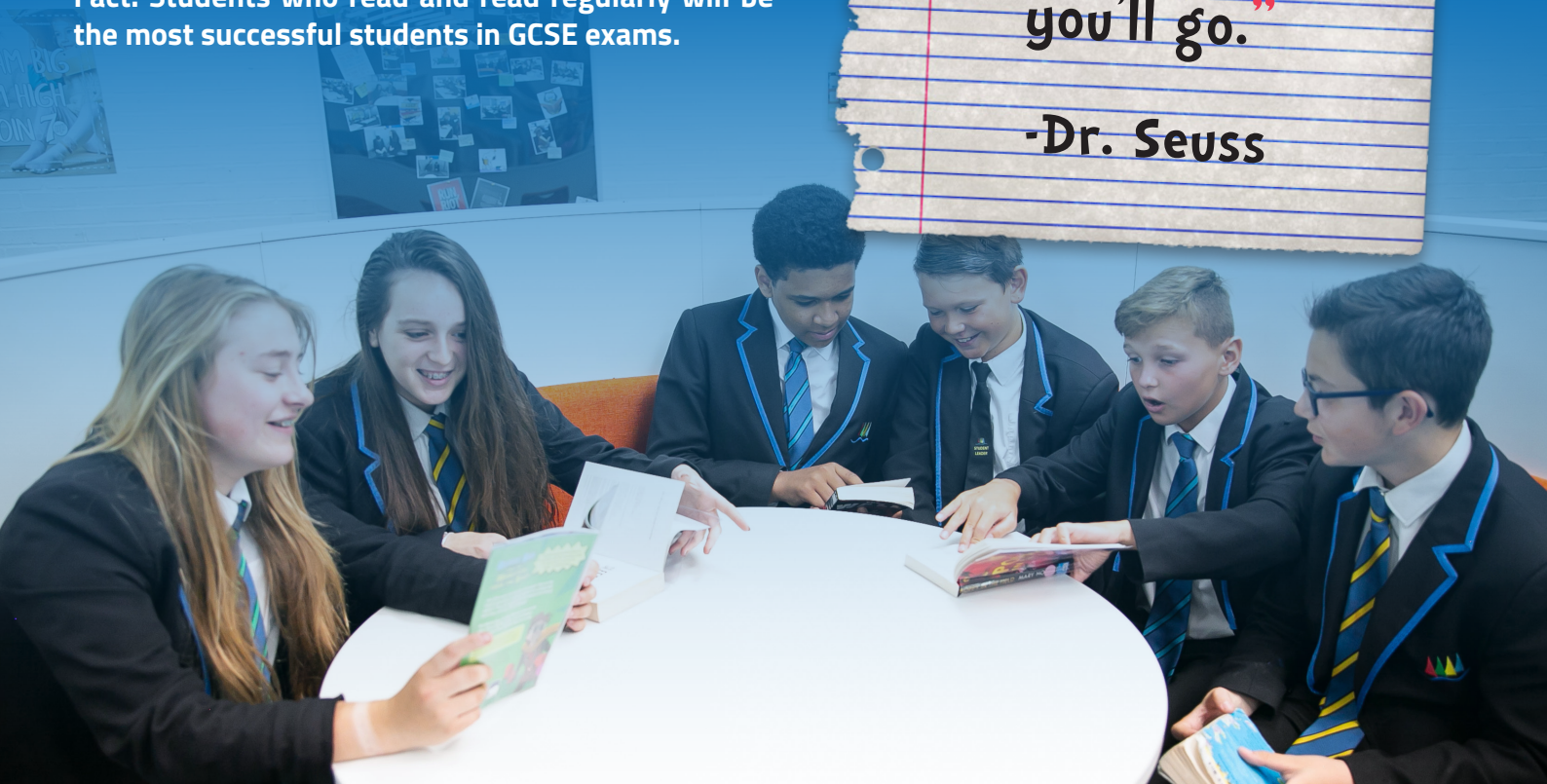
At HDHS we view reading as a significant and valuable component of everything that we do and it is at the forefront of our curriculum. Reading not only has tremendous power when it comes to fuelling the development of all aspects of language ability, its importance to the entirety of a human life in this day and age really can't be overstated. Research has shown that students who read on average for a minimum of twenty minutes a day will score in the top 90 percentile in standardised assessments, whereas a student who only reads on average 5 minutes a day will score within the 50 percentile in standardised assessments. At HDHS we actively promote our students getting their **'Twenty'** by providing opportunities in lessons and encouraging our students to read outside of lessons.

Fact: Students who read and read regularly will be the most successful students in GCSE exams.



“the more
that you read,
the more things
you will know.
the more
that you learn,
the more places
you'll go.”

-Dr. Seuss



Reading is for both pleasure and purpose and that is the **culture** that we are creating at HDHS. We want our students to see reading as enjoyable - it can make you smile, laugh, think, feel, find yourself.....it is magic!

Unfortunately not all students will go to a book to find pleasure, however it is imperative that students realise that reading is necessary in terms of purpose: to discover new learning; to comprehend ideas, theories and concepts; to develop vocabulary; to develop concentration.

At HDHS, we:

- Celebrate reading for enjoyment
- Promote reading for pleasure
- Explicitly teach vocabulary appropriate to each subject area
- Use effective strategies to support comprehension and vocabulary acquisition
- Promote classroom talk to enable quality written work
- Provide opportunities for students to develop as confident speakers across the curriculum
- Provide intervention with all aspects of literacy where needed

“Reading is the gateway skill that makes all other learning possible”

- Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States of America.



PASTORAL ORGANISATION

All pupils are assigned to a tutor group which will be the hub of their pastoral support through their 5 years at Harwich and Dovercourt High School. With the help of Progress Year Leaders, Assistant Progress Year Leaders and Student Services Assistants, tutors supervise pupils' behaviour, attendance, achievement and wellbeing. Each morning tutors will check pupils' uniform and equipment as well as guiding pupils in a programme of learning which includes Thought for the Week, assembly, literacy, reading and Preparedness.

If a student has any problem or query, their tutor is the first port-of-call.

ADMISSIONS

A copy of the HDHS Admissions Policy is available on the school's website at <https://www.hdhs.org.uk/parents/admissions/>

CURRICULUM

All of our students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We teach 4 lessons per day, each 75 minutes long. Alongside the core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, PSHEE, Citizenship and Careers, PE and Dance, students in Year 7 and 8 also study: Art, Music, Drama, History, Geography, Philosophy & Ethics, French and/or German, Computer Science and Design Technology.

At the end of Year 8, students choose six subjects to continue to study during their Transition Year, including at least one creative subject. Students are strongly encouraged to study the full English Baccalaureate by selecting History or Geography and a language as two of their choices.

At the end of Year 9 students choose four subjects for their Key Stage 4 Options, which they then study in Years 10 and 11.



“Pupils in all year groups access a wide range of vocational and academic subjects and qualifications. Pupils are given clear support to pick the right course for them.”

– OFSTED October 2021



HARWICH AND DOVERCOURT SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Harwich and Dovercourt Sixth Form College (HDSFC), is based on the main school site with its own common room and private study areas. It offers a range of routes through post-16 education, including a full suite of traditional A levels, Applied General Qualifications (such as Level 3 BTECs), the EPQ, Vocational Awards and work experience, both within the school environment and the wider community. As a small Sixth Form our pastoral team and dedicated tutors know the students well and are able to mentor each one to fulfill their potential and meet their future goals.

Since September 2020, our Sixth Form has been part of the Sigma Sixth Tending offer. This means that, in addition to the range of subjects offered locally at HDSFC, our students can access courses based at Sigma Sixth Tending (at Tending Education Centre). Therefore Year 11 students can remain based at HDSFC and study a wide range of courses in Years 12 and 13, preparing them for any future employment or further education that they may aspire to.

“We provide challenge, raise expectations, create opportunities and build futures.”



CHILD PROTECTION

The School follows the statutory guidelines for Child Protection as set out by the Department for Education under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and, as such, is based on Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023). The safeguarding Team is comprised of 12 staff all trained to DSL level. A copy of the policy is available upon request. Comprehensive information to support the health, safety and welfare of our students can be found on the school website at <https://www.hdhs.org.uk/parents/safeguarding/>

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Success and enjoyment is not just about examination performance, it is also about the breadth of experiences we provide, ensuring our students leave us able to make good adult decisions and having fulfilled their aspirations and potential. We are recognised for our quality Citizenship, Personal, Social and Health Education programmes. We offer many sporting opportunities and a wide range of after-school clubs in many subject areas. We also hold some very popular evenings within school, such as the Sports' Awards, Media Awards and our ever-popular Hair Show.

Over the past few years over 100 trips and visits have taken place, including curriculum visits, theatre trips, conferences, recreational activities, visits abroad, residential visits, geography field trips and even a skiing trip to Austria. In addition to this there have been numerous sporting fixtures and a wide range of after-school clubs, activities and lessons.



*“Whether in the classroom or on the playground,
the school is a safe and friendly place to be.”*

- OFSTED October 2021

CURRICULUM & ACHIEVEMENT SUPPORT ACADEMY

Through effective school systems, individualised classroom learning, together with quality-first teaching we strive to meet the educational needs of all students within the school. Any barriers to learning that cannot be overcome in this way will be assessed and addressed by the SENCO – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the student, parents and subject teachers.

Special educational needs fall into one or more of four areas, each of which must be supported appropriately:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical

We draw on a range of provision including: bespoke personalised curricula, specialist teaching (individually or in small groups), reading programmes, and support from outside agency personnel. In addition to this we have teaching assistants who provide some in-class support and also lead on bespoke interventions e.g. reading, numeracy, Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA). We also have SEND Leads who are teachers with additional responsibility for supporting SEND learners.

At Key Stage 4 we provide a specialist alternative curriculum pathway for SEND learners. The progress of all students is carefully tracked and monitored.

DISABILITY PROVISION

The Disability Discrimination Act 2004 states that access to most areas of public buildings/schools must be given to people with disabilities. To this end the school has the following facilities to ensure all students can access the curriculum:

- Ramps to allow wheelchair access
- Stairlifts where appropriate
- Accessible parking bays
- Accessible toilets and showers in various blocks around the school site and the Sports Centre

“To learn to read is to light a fire”

– Victor Hugo

*“Working, Reading and
Learning Together”*



English and Communication



“Challenge your limit, never miss an opportunity”

The Faculty of English and Communication is housed within K block building which is where students are taught English, Psychology and Sociology and have access to a Learning Resource Centre, Library and Lecture theatre. These outstanding facilities enhance a lively, active and successful learning experience for all our students.

Our Faculty motto is **‘Challenge your limit, never miss an opportunity’**. We aim to provide our students daily with opportunities to present the best versions of themselves; to achieve their potential, develop confidence, and be challenged academically.

As a faculty, we see our role as one that continues and contributes to the excellent foundations of the study of English at primary school level and to nurture the academic development for the study of English and also to foster a love and passion for the subject. We aim to create independent learners and creative thinkers who can confidently read, write and speak to communicate their ideas and express their views and share their voices.

Our English and communications curriculum is one that provides opportunities to constantly be learning, thinking, reading and developing as a student/person/character/citizen. Students will travel the world and travel through time over the course of their English and Communications study at HDHS and meet interesting, inspiring and thought provoking characters and experience memorable, challenging, exciting, fascinating, emotional and life changing events.

“Nothing Will Work Unless You Do.”

–MAYA ANGELOU

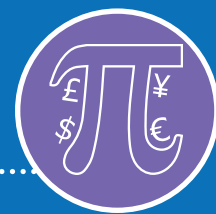
You’ve got to do the work if you want to see results.



“The limits of my language are the limits of my world”

– Ludwig Wittgenstein

Mathematics and Enterprise



Mathematics forms part of the bedrock of understanding that every student needs to develop successfully as a young adult. Mathematics along with English are two of the key benchmarks used by educational organisations and employers to gauge competency. The Mathematics & Enterprise Faculty has a justifiably high profile at HDHS. Every student is challenged at an appropriate level in order that they can make better than expected progress from their starting points. A variety of approaches are adopted dependent on students' prior attainment and needs. Staff at HDHS work with primary school colleagues to ensure no time is lost at transition and that learning pathways are appropriate for students' needs. Students make good progress in Maths as a consequence of this personalised approach.

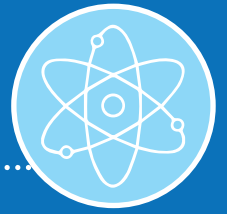
Opportunities are sought to develop numeracy and problem solving skills through both the Mathematical curriculum and practical Maths experiences in subjects such as Science, Design Technology, Computer Science and the Arts.

As students progress into Key Stage 4 the practical applications of Mathematics support a focused approach to examination success. In addition the Faculty offers Business, Computer Science and IT courses as transition year choices, available from Year 9. Students can study an OCR National Qualification in Enterprise and Marketing developing the knowledge and practical skills required to become an entrepreneur. Our IT course develops skills in the use of computer generated design alongside other IT skills, whilst the Computer Science GCSE offers a highly academic exploration of the code that enables programmes and apps to function.

“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope”
– Kofi Annan



Science



Science is a way to open a world of discovery and opportunities for our students. We intend to develop a deep understanding and love of how our world works through our varied curriculum options. The Science faculty fosters students' naturally enquiring minds by providing a practical, stimulating curriculum which, as students move through the school, gives them the opportunity to achieve good understanding, good grades and opportunities for them to show deep understanding of key scientific concepts. In addition to academic achievement, our faculty prepares students for the ever changing world we live in, by linking the content to issues such as climate change and recycling. We want students to look at the world around them and use the scientific knowledge and the scientific method of questions to prepare them for the future. As well as focussing on the purely academic side of the subject, the science faculty develops practical skills, team work, communication, numeracy and literacy. We achieve this by taking the abstract ideas in science and relating them to the context of the students' everyday lives, through our tailored curriculum and extra curricular opportunities.

All students study Science at Key Stages 3 and 4 as part of their Core curriculum. Scientific skills are supported by developing those of problem solving, enquiry, presentation and creative thinking. At Key Stage 4 students have the opportunity to take AQA GCSE Combined Science Trilogy and in this way we enable all students to obtain a good academic base of scientific knowledge. Those who wish to use Science as a base for future studies can obtain individual GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The Science curriculum is also supplemented by a range of extra-curricular clubs and learning opportunities. Our extra-curricular provision includes: taking students to CPE (Cambridge Physics Experience) events which increase participation in Physics and challenge perceptions and stereotypes of Physics and Cambridge University; overseas trips that encourage students to develop their curiosity about the world around them, give them insight into how science works, and appreciation of its relevance to their everyday lives; regular and varied STEM competitions so students can try their hand at a range of projects which combine all of the STEM subjects and the opportunity to enrich their learning by taking part in various day long activities.



*“You cannot build your vocabulary unless you meet new words,
and to meet them you must read”* – Mark Peploe and Bernado Bertolucci

Arts and Innovation



The Arts and Innovation Faculty consists of Art, Design Technology and Media.

The ability to design, create, draft and problem solve is central to success in a variety of areas. A range of experience is gained within Technology where students will learn; drawing, CAD/CAM, manufacturing using a variety of materials and processes, systems and control, and food preparation and nutrition. These skills are all transferable into KS4 when students will be able to opt for separate subjects within these areas.

Media studies provides students with a successful pathway into university and the world of work as well as an understanding of the world around them. This subject is now available as a post-16 option. Students are able to continue their journey with access to specialist equipment and opportunities to experience real life media opportunities in addition to supporting vital English skills.

The Art education programme provides exciting opportunities for students to be creative and underpins many skills needed in a very visual world. Art explores a variety of skills, processes and disciplines which is an essential and integral role in the development of a young person. It supports creativity, communication and expression, as well as nurturing identity, ideas and emotions. All skills lead into a successful GCSE programme, supporting pathways across the Faculty and enhancing our students' education across all areas.



Languages and Culture



As a new department within the school, the Faculty of Languages and Culture strives to provide young people with access to the experiences and skills necessary to equip them for life. Students have the opportunity to develop excellent communication and language skills within the Modern Foreign Languages curriculum whilst developing a deeper cultural understanding of French and German speaking societies. All year 7 students will study French or German at KS3 with the opportunity to study a language at GCSE level.

The faculty has a duty to develop the cultural capital of all students to ensure our students are knowledgeable about a wide range of culture, whilst understanding that they have a vital role to play within our own diverse society. Through our newly developed Culture and Global Studies curriculum students will study a wide range of topics ranging from global responsibility surrounding climate action, to political theory and movements, along with the study of key influential figures and their impact on the world.

*“If we are to preserve culture
we must continue to create it.”*
– JOHAN HUIZINGA

Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education, Citizenship & Careers

PSHEECC is embedded within the ethos of the school. It promotes students' well-being and self-esteem enabling them to take responsibility for their future life choices. It also incorporates statutory Relationships, Sex & Health Education content.

HDHS aims to enable students to:

- Value others and feel valued.
- Respect others and be respected.
- Be independent, but also interdependent.
- Behave responsibly and to understand the consequences of actions.
- Have a concern for justice and uphold the rights of others.
- Treat others the way they wish to be treated.
- Live a healthy, safe and successful life.
- Achieve and to be ambitious.
- Be motivated to maximise their academic and personal achievements.
- Receive careers advice and guidance provided by qualified professionals.

*“One language sets you
in a corridor for life. Two
languages open every door
along the way.”*

– FRANK SMITH



Humanities



The Humanities Faculty is central to the way HDHS delivers its curriculum and its educational philosophy. Humanities are the cornerstone of traditional education and the development of thinking skills. The Humanities Faculty currently offers History, Geography and Religious Studies qualifications at GCSE. These areas of study require the development of a range of skills which are essential to our lives. Humanities subjects use reflection, perspective, enquiry and independent learning techniques to develop an holistic appreciation of immediate and wider community.

At Key Stage 3 the Humanities Faculty leads on developing independent learners with enquiring minds, leaving them ready to seize both academic and social opportunities. Lessons which provide the opportunity for students to develop their own views, listen to and consider others and apply their understanding to a range of current issues, leads to enthusiastic, happy learners. Humanities develops important life skills and allows students to apply them successfully, to a range of academic and vocational subject areas.

At Key Stage 3 students study both History and Geography which gives students the foundations for if they choose to study either or both of these subjects at GCSE. Students also study Ethics and Philosophy in year 7 and 8. These lessons give students the opportunity to develop an understanding of the core beliefs, practices and sacred texts of the six main world religions, as well as atheism & agnosticism. This enables students to appreciate diverse viewpoints in contemporary debates and articulate their own informed opinion, supported by facts, theories & philosophies. Students examine contemporary ethical controversies on topics such as gender socialisation, allowing them to interrogate opposing belief systems, worldviews and concepts of God. Understanding the influence of these beliefs on individuals, behaviour and national life will develop our students capacity to empathise with people from different geographical, religious and cultural backgrounds.

Humanities plays an important role in the spiritual and moral life of the school. The curriculum stimulates debate and understanding about a variety of cultures and how our British values anchor young people's knowledge. The Faculty promotes the school's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural programme providing resources for tutor groups and has clear links with the 'Thought For The Week' community assemblies.



*“Life can only be
understood backwards,
but must be lived forwards.”*

– KIERKEGAARD

VOCATIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS



The Vocational Faculty within the school, celebrates creativity and practical skills alongside academic success. It is comprised of Performing Arts, Drama, Music, PE & Sport, Dance, Hairdressing, Health & Social Care and Child Development as well as a number of new pathways at Key Stage 5 such as Public Services, Construction and Employability. This diverse range of subjects allows students to embrace their talents whilst allowing them the opportunity to try out new skills and disciplines. Students develop courage, resilience, confidence and empathy.

A range of Sports and Performing Arts are taught through topic rotations at Key Stage 3 to allow students to experience a variety of activities. At Key Stage 4 students are able to choose Dance or PE as examination subjects allowing them to maintain a healthy lifestyle in school. A broad range of extra-curricular clubs and trips are offered so that students can further develop their passion within these disciplines. These include competitive team sports and numerous opportunities to perform, both within school musical theatre productions, local and national events, such as The Big Town Dance, Harwich Arts Festival, NT Connections and many more industry linked events.

Within this nurturing environment students mature quickly to become self-motivated, independent, confident young adults. Communication, planning and research skills, a positive work ethos and a holistic approach to client-centred care are just some of the transferable abilities students gain that are beneficial to further studies or future employment.

The whole school setting and 'traditional' curriculum does not suit every learner. Whilst we encourage all students to pursue national curriculum subjects as they are the most commonly recognised 'benchmarks', we also cater for alternative learning needs.

The most established of our vocational areas is the Hair Salon. Students in the Salon will study towards a Technical Award (GCSE equivalent) and VRQ Level 1 qualification to develop a broad and comprehensive understanding of the hair and beauty sector and to develop knowledge which spans the entire vocational sector and related industries. Hairdressing and beauty therapy has been, and remains, an extremely popular vocational area that many young people are enthused by and aspire to.

The provision of alternative education at the school will be bespoke, on a 'case-by-case' basis, and in discussion with all stakeholders. This will ensure that the correct decisions are made to support our students to succeed in their education at HDHS, and equip them with the appropriate skills for their future careers.





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SIGMA TRUST

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