

Durrington High School

St John's College, Inspire Scholars Programme

2025-2026 Year 10 - Cohort 3



We hope your child enjoyed their first year as a member of the St John's Colleges Inspire Scholars Programme and enjoyed the variety of extra curricular sessions they were able to attend. We are excited to announce that we are continuing our partnership this year with the University of Oxford and therefore have a number of further exciting opportunities for your child to engage with the thought provoking and challenging material/extra-curricular sessions on offer through the programme.





Who is selected to be part of the Inspire Scholars Programme?

Your child has been selected to be part of the Inspires Scholar Programme in recognition for their academic achievement, potential and commitment to studies.—criteria established by the University of Oxford. Being selected to take part in the programme is a fantastic achievement and all invited students should be proud of this achievement.

What are the benefits of being a member of the Inspire Scholars Programme?

The Inspires Scholar Programme is designed to help your child explore their interest, expand their academic horizons and enable them to take part in a range of exciting opportunities, from classes in subjects they may not have studied before, to University of Oxford visits, virtual and residential summer schools.

As an Inspire Scholar, students will have the opportunity to:

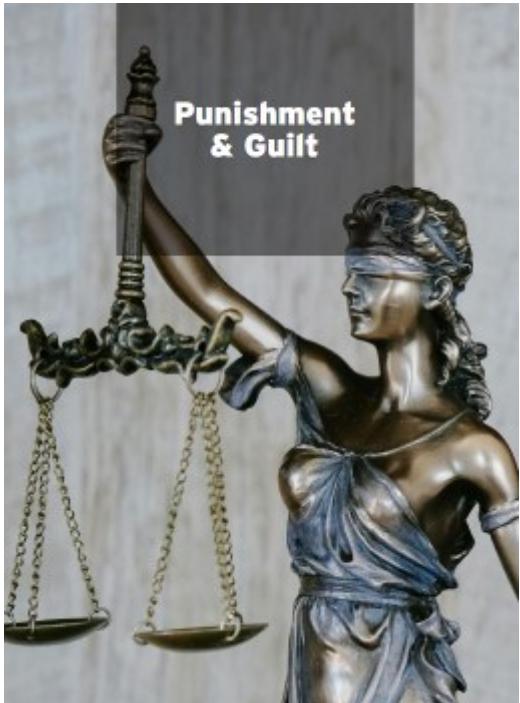
- Delve more deeply into some of their favourite subjects, explore them in new and unexpected ways, and encounter some entirely new fields of study
- Develop their critical thinking skills
- Debate, discuss, and puzzle through some of the most pressing issues facing our world
- Get creative and take part in practical projects and experiments
- Build confidence in their academic ability and potential
- Learn more about university life and study by visiting St John's College
- Meet current St John's undergraduate students



The Inspires Scholar Programme Extra Curricular Classes

Over the course of the academic year members of the Inspire Scholars Programme will have the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of extra-curricular classes created by University of Oxford professors and accredited teachers, that will focus on subjects that go beyond their usual curriculum. **These will be on different subjects/topics to what they did in year 9.**

While each subject session is planned by the University, the sessions are run by our own specialist staff, with each subject session will involve two workshops completed over a 4 week period. At the end of the year students will have the opportunity to present and share what they have been learning about in these classes with parents/carers. Please find below an outline of the extra-curricular classes that year 9



Extra-Curricular Class - 1: Psychology—Punishment and Guilt

Work Shop A: Purpose of Punishment

In the first workshop, students will debate the purpose or rule of punishments in society, by exploring questions such as what is the point of punishing people, who does it protect, does it help offenders and is it a moral obligation to punish wrong behaviour? After this students will explore different legal systems around the world and apply their sense of justice to hypothetical scenarios.

Work Shop B : Determining Guilt

This workshop begins by asking students "how do we know who to punish?" Using real historical cases students will explore the implications of wrongful convictions, before examining different interview techniques and then applying this to their own hypothetical interview.

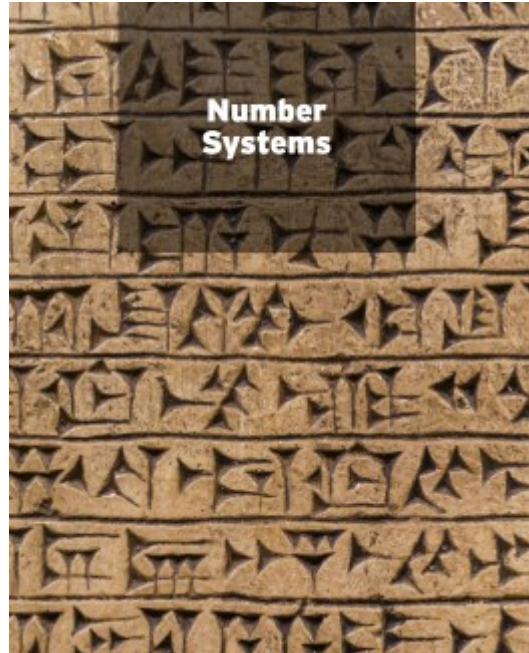
Extra-Curricular Class - 2: Maths: Number Systems

Work Shop A: Babylonian Numbers

This workshop delves into how ancient number systems worked, and how this compares to how we count and understand numbers today. Pupils will learn how to convert modern day numbers into ancient systems.

Work Shop B : Comparing Numbers

This workshop explores the Mayan numbers system, binary and hexadecimal system in computing and the Octal system of the Simpsons Universe, before students create their own number system.



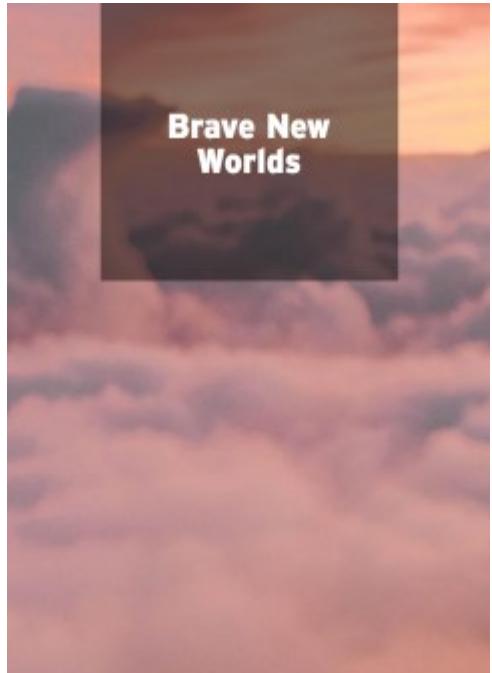
Extra-Curricular Class - 3: English Literature—Brave New Worlds

Work Shop A: Utopias

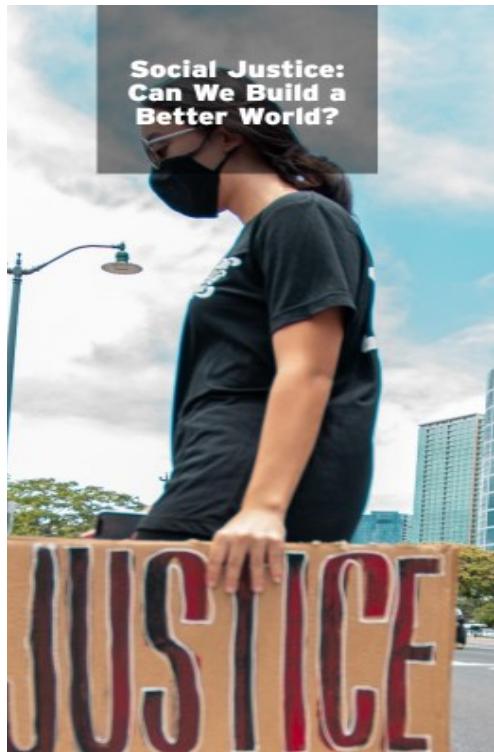
Students will start by looking at the origins of Utopian literature in Tudor England, and reflecting on the characteristics which make up a “utopia” before working in groups to design, debate and critique their very own utopias.

Work Shop B : Dystopias

In the second session students will explore the reverse of utopias: dystopias. Returning to their utopias from workshop A students will consider what would happen if their utopias were turned on their heads. Students will then study modern dystopian fiction before creating their own dystopian worlds.



Brave New
Worlds



Extra-Curricular Class - 4: Philosophy: Social Justice—can we build a better world?

Work Shop A: Global Justice

Students will be introduced to key philosophical questions about equality and fairness, and learn about different approaches to these questions. Through discussions and debate they will be called upon to consider some of the thorniest ethical issues facing the international community today.

Work Shop B : Poverty

In this second session, students will focus on poverty, examining the causes of poverty, the difference between countries and consider the question—“do we have a moral duty to end poverty?”



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Extra-Curricular Class - 5: English/Drama—Show and Tell: Verbal and Non Verbal Story Telling.

Work Shop A: Verbal Storytelling

Starting with an interactive word game, students will create their own stories and consider the role of stories in their everyday lives. They will then look at the role of verbal storytelling throughout history, from the Old English epic poem Beowulf through to the work of modern poets such as Patience Agbabi.

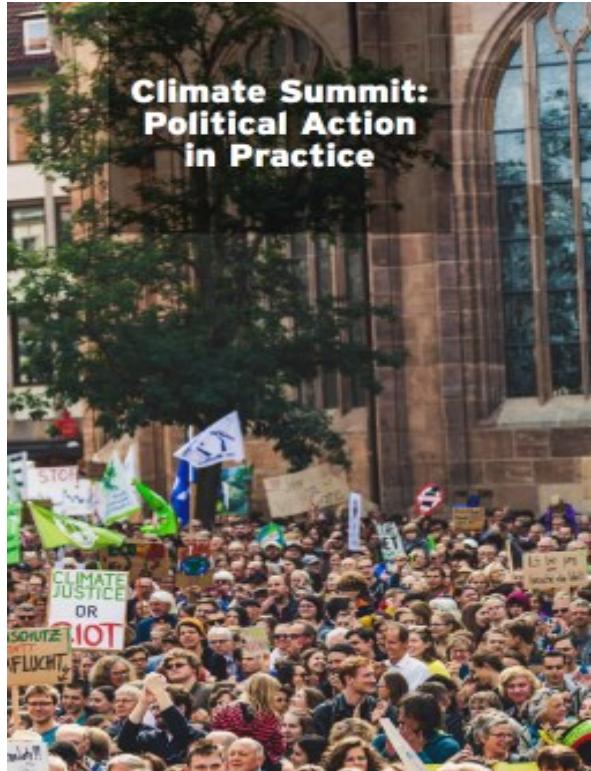
Work Shop B : Non-verbal Storytelling

Students will reconsider how the stories from their first session could be told without words, before delving into the world of physical theatre and constructing their own narratives using scenario cards and freeze-frames.

**Show and Tell:
Verbal and
Non-Verbal
Storytelling**



Climate Summit: Political Action in Practice



Extra-Curricular Class - 6 Politics : Climate Summit: Political Action in Practice

Work Shop A: Local and National Politics

In this workshop, students will look at what governments can do to address the problems posed by climate change, at both a local and national level;. They will debate who is responsible for tackling climate change—is it the jobs of individuals, governments or organisations?

Work Shop B : International Relationships

In this second workshop students will move from the national to the international, as they participate in an international conference examining the causes and costs of climate change from the perspective of a range of countries, before presenting their own briefing for the UK government based on what they have learnt.

University Lectures

After the success of last years public lecture by Professor Kathy Romer, we are also exploring opportunities for other university lecturers to provide subject specific talks and sessions over the course of the year. As and when these are confirmed we will share the dates and topics with students and



Other Useful Information and Benefits of Membership to the Inspire Scholars Programme

In addition to the range of extra-curricular classes, members of the Inspire Scholars Programme will have access to a wealth of other opportunities and support.



Virtual Summer School

St John's College runs a week long online summer school for all Inspire Scholars students. These virtual summer schools enable students to explore Oxford and their academic interests remotely through:

- Through provoking academic taster sessions from Oxford tutors
- Videos, podcasts, articles and activities from the University of Oxford's Gardens, Libraries and Museums.
- Career Interviews from a range of professionals
- The chance to submit work, win prizes and be featured on the college website.

Residential Summer School Opportunities

As a member of the programme Durrington will be able to nominate a small number of students to attend the St John's College Residential Summer school free of charge.. The summer school will give students the opportunity to experience student life at St John's college, live like Oxford University students, explore the city and take part in activities ranging from academic taster sessions, to punting and a formal dinner in St John's Hall.



Inspire Priority Visits

Membership schools are given priority in regards to visiting St John's College. A typical Priority Visit includes:

- An Oxford Explained session, introducing what university is with a focus on Oxford.
- A Critical Thinking workshop, which encourages scholars to engage in discussion and debate or an academic taster session.
- A College Tour and guided visit to one of Oxford's museums.



Access to Positively You

A new partnership with a leading education workshop provider, Positively You, means that members of the scholars programme will be given exclusive access to their site which contains interactive video content and high-quality printable study and revision resources. Titles include:

- Super Speedy Study Skills
- Resilience

<https://hub.positivelyyou.org.uk/login-page/>

Username: StJohnsCollege Password: StJohnsPYHUB23



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Critical Thinking Workshops:

In addition to attending the extra-curricular classes, once students have registered they will be able to use the above link and password to find out further details about the programme, including information on the face to face and virtual summer schools. Furthermore once registered students can access the "Critical Thinking Workshops". The focus of these 4 workshops for this academic year is yet to be decided, but the topic and resources will be released between January and April 2025. As an example last years theme was "Does Crime Always Deserve Punishment?". Each month between Jan and February a link to each workshop will be emailed to students for them to work through at their own pace. Each workshop has articles, videos, challenges, interactive elements and interviews that students can engage with.

Aside from reading the articles and watching the videos/interviews, students can engage with 4 types of tasks within each workshop. **Think pieces** allow students to explore their own opinions to issues raised in the articles and possibly discuss these with friends and family. If students see a **vote now** symbol, they can vote in a poll and see how their opinion compares with others. They can also write their opinion and ideas in our **Have your say** forum discussion with students from across the UK. Finally, they can complete our **Super Challenges**. These are slightly harder but are designed to push student's thinking. Students can submit one per workshop to the university for a chance to win a prize!

Oxford University Visit

Date TBC

As members of the Scholars Programme students will have the opportunity to visit St John's College Oxford for the day. During the day students will get the opportunity to explore the historic city, tour St John's College grounds and student accommodation, speak with the college admission team and current undergraduate students about the application process and life at Oxford University, having lunch in the historic dining hall and take part in a taster lecture.

Further details regarding the exact timings, agenda and costs for the trip will be shared closer to the date.



Reminder about resources available for parents/carers

Another major feature of the programme is the high level of parent/carer support on offer. Parent/Carers can access their own portal via the QR code to the side. Like the student portal you will need the following password to access this page: **SJCInspireGuardian**

On this page you will find recordings of webinars from University of Oxford lectures and admissions officers on a wide range of topics including:

- How do I support my academically able scholar?
- Inspiring Critical Thinking
- Nurturing Motivation

This page will also notify of you of any future parent



Supporting your child: Building and maintaining motivation LIVE webinar for parents/carers.
6pm, 21st October 2025.
Register using the QR Code.

*If you have any questions regarding the Inspires Scholar Programme please contact Mr Borrett at **sborrett1@durring.com**. Please note that some members of the Oxford Inspires Programme may also be part of our DHS Platinum Academy. The Platinum Academy is a different programme and provides sessions for high attaining students in year 10 and 11, aimed at supporting them in their next steps, raising aspirations and preparing them for their GCSE exams. If your child has been selected to be part of Platinum Academy then you will receive a separate information booklet regarding this through the post at a later date in the Autumn term.*

