



The Astley Cooper School

Part of the East Dacorum Co-operative Learning Trust

PROSPECTUS

The Curriculum 2018 - 2019

At The Astley Cooper School we believe that all students should be treated equally and given access to the opportunities available.

All children should be free from discrimination and fear in school and have a secure environment in which to learn.

We ensure that all students have access to opportunities to:

- develop lively, imaginative and enquiring minds and the ability to question and argue rationally
- apply themselves to extended tasks and take responsibility for their own learning
- develop physical skills and artistic skills
- acquire understanding, knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a fast-changing world
- use language and numbers effectively
- develop personal moral values, promote respect for other cultures, religions and ways of life
- develop a concern for the environment and an understanding of the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations
- appreciate that human achievements and aspirations take their place in society in an informed, positive and active way

Detailed syllabuses and schemes of work may be examined on application to the school.

The School Day

Morning

8.25	Staff and students to tutor bases
8.30	Registration and Assembly
8.50 - 9.50	Period 1
9.50 - 10.50	Period 2
10.50 - 11.00	Private Reading

11.00 - 11.20 BREAK

11.20 - 12.20	Period 3
12.20 - 1.20	Period 4

Afternoon

1.20 - 2.10 LUNCH

2.10 - 2.15	Registration
2.15 - 3.15	Period 5

How the Curriculum is structured

Years 7 and 8

Our classes are relatively small, enabling staff to have detailed knowledge of each student and allowing more tailoring to individual needs, whether to provide extra challenge or give extra support.

We follow the National Curriculum which consists of the core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science) and the foundation subjects Art, Computing, Dance, Design Technology, Food Technology, Geography, History, a Modern Foreign Language, Music, Physical Education, Philosophy, Religion and Ethics (PRE) and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

For a small number of students, we ease their transition from primary school by replicating their KS2 classroom in our nurture group. This is to ensure all students have the opportunity to develop and recall the skills needed in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The transition groups are identified using information provided by our feeder schools.

We have developed an exciting programme of study within our PSHE programme which focuses on developing personal, learning and thinking skills. Our curriculum is designed to cultivate the learning habits of developing expertise, reflection, persistence, exploration, recall, observation and expression. We seek to promote leadership and teamwork, engender enterprise and creativity and promote independence as well as providing students with the opportunity to work with outside agencies through our broad and balanced curriculum.

Students can also achieve PiXL Edge awards by completing projects linked to our learning habits.

The school week is divided into 25 periods and the timetable runs on a fortnightly cycle.

Subject Number of hours per fortnight

KS3	
English	9
Mathematics	9
Science	8
Art	2
Computing	2
Drama	1
Geography	3
History	3
Modern Language	3
Music	2
Physical Education & Dance	4
PSHE*	1
PRE**	1
Technology	2
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Total	50

* Personal, Social and Health Education

** Philosophy, Religion and Ethics

Years 9, 10 and 11

As students embark upon courses leading to GCSE, BTEC and other qualifications, we provide an element of choice in their study programmes. New courses are introduced in Year 9 which enable students to concentrate on areas of the curriculum where they may have a particular interest or strength. Beginning Key Stage 4 in Year 9 enables students to reinforce the skills previously taught at KS3 as well as prepare for the transition into Key Stage 4.

All students in Key Stage 4 are required to study English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and two sciences within their core programme.

As students progress through Key Stage 4, additional hours are allocated to the core subjects and drop down days are created for PRE and PSHE.

The Key Stage 4 option blocks are created with the abilities and talents of each cohort in mind as well as ensuring that we meet accessibility requirements of the Humanities, MFL and the Arts combination. Students and parents are provided with an options survey to ensure the option blocks are most appropriate to each year's cohort. This is then followed by interviews with a member of staff to determine appropriate option choices for each individual student.

Students study subjects from four option blocks. Students in Key Stage 4 must study at least one English Baccalaureate subject outside their core studies.

An exciting variety of option subjects is on offer:

- Art and Design
- Computer Science
- Dance
- Drama
- Ethics
- Catering & Hospitality
- Spanish
- Geography
- History
- Media Studies
- Music
- PE
- Production Arts (Design)
- Resistant Materials
- Single Sciences

Options are chosen with guidance from senior staff.

Enrichment activities, such as clubs, ski trips, Duke of Edinburgh and visits abroad, aim to develop the skills of our students beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

We do insist upon a broad and balanced choice to enable students to gain a suitably diverse experience which will provide a firm basis for their adult lives.

Mr T Lally, Assistant Headteacher

Learning Resource Centre

Our busy Learning Resource Centre (LRC) supports all aspects of learning and extends experiences with specialised events.

The LRC is operated by a Librarian who is strongly committed to supporting all staff and students to fulfil their resource needs.

The department contains a combination of computer and desk spaces. These provide forty-seven work stations for the use of staff and students. The LRC is also home to a wide selection of books, both fiction and non-fiction. Each student receives a personal LRC account when they join the school, which gives them the opportunity to borrow two LRC items for two week durations.

The LRC is open during lesson, break and lunch times and for an hour after school. It can be used for research classes, small groups and individual students wishing to quench their thirst for knowledge.

To extend students' experiences and celebrate their passion for literacy, the Librarian is involved with specialised events and projects throughout the year. These events include World Book Day, Bookbuzz and Private Reading.

Accelerated Reader

The Librarian actively supports students' reading by working closely with the English Department to introduce students in Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 to the reading programme, Accelerated Reader. This programme is designed to develop students' reading skills. The lessons take place in the LRC and are conducted jointly by the Librarian and English department.

Homework Club

The Librarian operates a Homework Club every weekday with a friendly, upbeat atmosphere. This provides all students with the opportunity to use the LRC facilities to support them with any task from any subject set as independent study. The Librarian is also available to offer guidance to students who are struggling with these tasks.

LRC Manager/Librarian, Miss Bishop

The Sixth Form

We are very proud of our Sixth Form and the individualised approach that we offer to our students.

Sixth Form Education provides a transition between compulsory education and higher education, training or employment. Students are encouraged to achieve academic success while also developing as individuals and preparing for their future choice of employment.

Our merged Sixth Form with Adeyfield enables us, despite our small size, to offer a wide variety of courses across the two sites. We also work closely with Longdean School in our Co-operative Trust partnership to deliver combinations tailored to individual needs. All courses have specific entry requirements.

Among the Level 3 courses offered are:

A-levels in Biology, Chemistry, English, French, Geography, History, ICT, Maths and Further Maths, Media Studies, Philosophy & Ethics, Physics, Politics and Psychology.

Technical qualifications in Art & Design and Business Studies, as well as a Personal Finance qualification. BTEC qualifications in Performing Arts (Dance & Drama), Sport and Childcare.

We also offer the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) where students can gain substantial UCAS points through an extended piece of individual research.

Work-Based Learning

In an innovative exciting development, we bring together the worlds of education and business. This unique programme in Dacorum is a combination of in-school study and work in local placements. It is an ideal preparation for a traineeship or apprenticeship. Input from local

employers, Pearson and the Careers and Enterprise Company has ensured that our students will be equipped with exactly the right skills for work in designated sectors and are accredited with appropriate qualifications.

The programme includes three days a week in a placement, which is carefully tailored to the student and two days in school completing units in employment skills alongside the opportunity to improve on grades in English and Maths. Our dedicated Work-Based Learning mentor supports these students.

Academic Success

Sixth Form study is both challenging and rewarding. Students are supported in taking much more responsibility for their learning and are expected to undertake individual study outside of lessons. They are encouraged to make full use of the school's excellent ICT facilities, including a dedicated Sixth Form computer study area.

Personal Development

Every Sixth Former is encouraged to undertake a community service volunteering project which develops their personal talents and leadership skills, while also contributing to the overall running of the school. This might involve running a club, editing a newspaper, planning an event, doing lunchtime duties or being a mentor to younger students.

Some students may wish to be involved in the Sixth Form Committee, the Interact club – which raises money for charity alongside local Rotary members – or the School Council. Our Sixth Form also participate in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and the National Citizenship Service programme. Each year we appoint a Head Girl and Head Boy; these whole school appointments have a very important role within the school.

Students also help in KS3 Form Groups, run the equipment shop and help with Year 7 private reading.

Preparing for the Future

All students complete an individual learning and career plan and are supported in finding work experience tailored to their interests and future career ideas. Students are also encouraged to attend careers events and professional career days where appropriate. The process of applying to University is supported through PSHE lessons, local Higher Education providers and our own learning mentor, who knows every student well.

We work closely with The University of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, the Nuffield Science Foundation and Lloyds Bank to provide a range of opportunities for our students.

Individual Support

As well as subject teachers all Sixth Form students are allocated a Form Tutor who oversees their personal development and provides individual guidance in one-to-one tutorial sessions throughout the year.

We also offer our students financial support through our school bursary. This can be used for buying equipment, paying for additional courses, transport fares and costs incurred while on work experience.

We pride ourselves on our individual support of students so that they can make the best possible use of their time in the Sixth Form, and use this as a springboard to ever greater success in the future.

Miss C East, Head of Sixth Form

School Uniform

We expect all students in Years 7 to 11 to wear full school uniform. Our uniform is comfortable, practical and smart and provides a corporate identity for all students.

It is readily recognisable in the community and we hope students will be proud to wear it.

Uniform for all students is available online at *Sportswear International* (www.swischoolwear.co.uk).

Order forms are available from our reception.



Girls

School Blazer
School Jumper (optional)

Shirt

School Tie
Skirt or Trousers
Shoes

Coat

PE Kit (Girls/Boys)

Shirt
Shorts
Rugby Shirt (Boys)
Hooded Sweatshirt (Girls)
Tracksuit Bottoms
Socks

Boys

School Blazer
School Jumper (optional)

Shirt

School Tie
Trousers
Shoes

Coat

Black blazer with school badge*
Maroon V-necked jumper with blue stripe*
or
Maroon sleeveless jumper with blue stripe*
Plain white shirt (long or short sleeved)
with collar
KS3 double stripe / KS4 single stripe*
Conventional style in black
Plain black shoes - no boots or trainers,
no canvas shoes or plimsolls
Dark coloured, plain and no 'hoodies'

Blue polo shirt with logo*
Maroon shorts with logo*
Reversible Maroon and Blue Rugby Shirt*
Navy hooded sweatshirt top with logo
Navy tracksuit bottoms with logo*
Maroon Astley Cooper School socks*

Black blazer with school badge*
Maroon V-necked jumper with blue stripe*
or
Maroon sleeveless jumper with blue stripe*
Plain white shirt (long or short sleeved)
with collar
KS3 double stripe / KS4 single stripe*
Conventional style in black
Plain black shoes - no boots or trainers, no canvas shoes
or plimsolls
Dark coloured, plain and no 'hoodies'

Charging and Remissions Policy

School Trips

All students are expected to pay for school trips. The money will need to be paid before the due date. The cost of the trip will cover entrance fees, transport, insurance and use of the minibus if required.

We aim to balance the funding of the trip exactly but occasionally a small profit is achieved. When the profit is £3.00 or over per person it will be returned to the parent. Where the profit is less than £3.00 it is not economical for us to return the money. In such situations the profit will be carried forward to the next school trip. Where a profit is made on a smaller trip the School Business Manager may use her discretion and offer refunds.

Work Experience

Students are expected to pay for any costs incurred such as travel to and from the workplace.

Catering Service

The School offers a meal service at breakfast, morning break and lunch time for the benefit of the students. The school is now cashless including school meals. All trips and meals are paid through *Parent Pay* and a biometric system is used in the dining room.

HCC offers financial assistance for students from low income families. Parents need to apply for this online at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk> and search for freeschoolmeals. If a student has received free school meals at a previous school there is no need to re-apply as the details will automatically be transferred. If you believe you are entitled but do not appear on our list we will advise you and you will need to make a new application online.

Other Charges

The school will make nominal charges for other items such as concert and dance evenings, lockers, revision guides, planners, art packs and Design and Technology and catering materials. Details of such arrangements will be sent to parents/carers by letter.

Business and Personnel Manager, Mrs A Catterall

English

English is taught by a highly qualified and experienced team who are passionate about their teaching. There is a good balance between traditional and innovative teaching and learning that secures the basics before developing confidence in critical and expressive skills.

English is the medium by which every subject is taught. Primarily, our intention is to ensure every student attains good GCSE grades in English and English Literature (AQA). That process begins in Year 7 with English lessons that engage the students and challenge them to make good progress.

English lessons include lively discussion, imaginative ideas, controversial topics and purposeful work. Students learn to write convincingly and speak confidently to a variety of audiences. Students are encouraged and guided to develop a love of literature which they can take further with clubs and visiting authors.

English is a popular subject in the Sixth Form where students study A Level English Literature (Eduqas). Here they get the chance to develop expertise in literary and linguistic analysis to a professional standard.

Subject Leader, Mrs N Cowell

Mathematics

This department consists of an experienced and committed team of staff who endeavour to deepen and broaden our students' knowledge, skills and understanding of Mathematics.

Every student has at least four lessons of Mathematics a week. Students are encouraged to solve problems through a variety of approaches and learn to be confident numerically while being able to apply their understanding into real life situations.

In Key Stage 3, students study in line with the New National Curriculum. Students are taught lessons that cover all areas of the curriculum: Number, Algebra, Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change, Geometry and Measures, Probability and Statistics. The scheme of work enables students to become fluent in Mathematics and develop their Mathematical skills in order to solve problems and reason mathematically. This builds a solid foundation for life and in preparation for studies at Key Stage 4.

In Key Stage 4, all students are expected to take the GCSE. Students will study the Edexcel GCSE Mathematics (9-1), which is offered at two tiers, higher and foundation. Both consist of two calculator and one non-calculator examination at the end of the three year course.

For our most successful GCSE students, they have the opportunity to study A Level Mathematics (Edexcel), in Key Stage 5. We gain excellent results at A Level and this is a fantastic launch pad for a range of areas of higher education.

Subject Leader, Mrs N Siva

Science

Science is taught by a team of dedicated, enthusiastic and well-qualified teachers. Expectations are high and excellent standards are rigorously applied. Teaching staff are supported by experienced technical staff.

The Science Department is well-resourced, with six teaching laboratories and four preparation rooms.

Key Stage 3 Science

The Science Department has introduced a new scheme of work at Key Stage 3 to prepare students for Key Stage 4. Students are taught the key facts early on. Application, analysis and evaluation of information are skills that are reinforced constantly throughout this Key Stage.

Key Stage 4 Science

At Key Stage 4 students follow one of two courses:

1. AQA Single Science
2. AQA Trilogy Combined Science

Students who take Trilogy Science will receive two GCSEs. Students who opt for Single Science will receive three GCSEs.

Students at Key Stage 4 are expected to make rapid progress towards their target grades.

Post 16 Science

The Astley Cooper School offers A Levels in Biology (OCR), Chemistry (OCR) and Physics (OCR).

Subject Leader, Mr R Baker

Art and Design

Art and Design is delivered by enthusiastic and experienced artist teachers, trained in Fine Art with specialisms in Painting, Graphics and Textiles. We believe in the natural creativity of the individual and seek to provide opportunities for students to develop their talents and creative potential.

The Art and Design Department has a wide range of facilities. We occupy three adjacent classrooms, with facilities for painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, photography and computer art.

We offer a broad curriculum to engage students in the act of making, creating and problem solving. Students are encouraged to:

- Develop creativity and independent thought
- Explore a variety of themes and starting points
- Explore contemporary and traditional art
- Experience a wide range of image making techniques and materials
- Learn how to develop ideas through experimentation
- Learn how to evaluate, review and understand personal strengths
- Learn to express themselves

Our curriculum offers a balance of taught lessons, practical sessions and self-directed study. We organise trips to London art galleries and specialist workshops delivered by local artists to enhance students' learning in the classroom. We also run extra-curricular clubs.

At Key Stage 3 students learn about the various stages of the creative process and experience 2D and 3D projects, including portraits, patterns in nature, creative sculpture and landscapes. They develop their practical and observation skills and learn how visual language is used to express different ideas.

At Key Stage 4 students develop a deeper understanding of the visual world and learn how to use the creative process to build a visually exciting portfolio of work. Students undertake the Edexcel GCSE Art, Craft and Design course.

At Key Stage 5 we offer the BTEC Art and Design Foundation Diploma where students learn about vocational contexts and are offered the opportunity to develop their practice in specialisms, Fine Art, Photography, Graphics, Textiles and Fashion.

Subject Leader, Miss C Holmes

Computer Science

The department consists of well qualified teaching staff delivering courses at Key Stage 3, 4 and 5. There are two fully equipped ICT suites with the latest software (which is constantly updated) dedicated to the Computer Science courses. There are further general ICT suites available throughout the school.

We aim to deliver Computer Science and ICT skills in both a cross-curricular way (as an integrated part of all subjects) and through specific courses. Across the curriculum students will use ICT to help them research, study independently and solve problems in many different situations.

Through the teaching of the Computing Programmes of Study at Key Stage 3, our high quality computing courses equip students to use computational thinking and creativity to understand the changing world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, design and technology providing insights into both natural and artificial systems.

At Key Stage 4, students study for the OCR GCSE in Computer Science qualification. This course gives the student a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It also provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in Computer Science and helps to develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills.

At Key Stage 5, students study the OCR GCE in Computer Science. The A level qualifications will inspire and challenge students to apply the knowledge they gain with the creative and technical skills they acquire. The key benefit of the Computer Science A level is the focus on computer programming which builds on our GCSE Computer Science course and emphasises the importance of computational thinking as a discipline.

Life in Modern Britain

As technical computing skills are more widely used so is the need to understand accepting responsibility for one's behaviour online and respecting other people's points of view.

Students are taught a moral code to distinguish right from wrong when developing programmes. These students are advised of the rapidly changing laws of the UK which govern computer usage.

Computer Science Teacher, *Dr M Ryde*

Dance

As well as a number of extra curricular opportunities Dance is taught at Key Stage 3 to all students and is available as an optional subject at Key Stage 4 and 5.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum

Students at Key Stage 3 are taught dance at different times throughout the year. Year 7 take part in dance lessons within their PE curriculum. Year 8 are taught one lesson of dance per fortnight throughout the year. These are mixed gender classes. Students focus on developing their performance, choreography and evaluation skills through different themes and dance styles. The curriculum is structured into different units of work per rotation of dance lessons. These units cover themes such as different dance styles, topical issues and professional works.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Students at Key Stage 4 are offered the BTEC Tech Award in Performing Arts (Dance). This allows students to study dance as a vocational course with ample performance opportunities.

Key Stage 5 Curriculum

Students at Key Stage 5 are offered the BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate in Performing Arts (Dance). This is the equivalent of one A Level. Students follow a vocational course studying a range of dance styles with ample performance opportunities. Students study different dance styles, dance analysis, professional works, choreography and performance.

Extra Curricular Opportunities

Year 7 and 8 students are offered the opportunity to attend a Dance club which runs at lunch time throughout the year. Students are given the opportunity to perform as part of the club in all school events.

The Astley Cooper Dance Company was started in 2008 and is aimed at the Most Able and Talented Dance students. Students audition to become a member of the company and will then train once a week. The company will perform in all school events as well as entering outside events such as the *County Dance Festival*, Red Cross *Make Your Move* and the *Great British Dance Off*. Auditions are held annually and are open to all students.

Trips and Workshops

An opportunity to see live dance is offered to students each year.

We also have workshops by visiting professional artists including *Zoo Nation* and *Blue Boy Entertainment*.

British Values

- Students study a range of dance styles including those of other cultures
- Students work in groups and are accepting of other people's beliefs and values
- Students learn about key British figures within the dance industry

Subject Leader, Miss B O'Riordan

Design and Technology

Design Technology is an area in the curriculum which encourages students to consider and explore ideas to produce a practical solution. By providing diverse and stimulating activities from designing through to making, the students are given individual guidance to support their development. Design and Technology also encourages students to become confident, creative and self-motivated with the ability to work both independently and as part of a team.

The department has three well equipped rooms where the students have the opportunity to develop skills in Graphic Products, Resistant Materials and Systems and Control. This exciting and practical area of the curriculum helps to prepare students to participate in a rapidly changing industry.

In Key Stage 4 students can opt to take a GCSE in Design & Technology with the AQA Examination board and take full advantage of well equipped workshops, a computer suite with some of the latest design software and a state of the art CAD/CAM room with new and up to date machinery to enable students to gain valuable experience of an ever advancing technological world.

Resistant Materials

In Resistant Materials, students will gain knowledge and skills of working with a variety of materials and use an array of tools, equipment and state of the art machinery in our new CAD/CAM suite.

Graphic Products

Graphic Products uses visual media to communicate a message. Here students will gain valuable presentation skills and learn to design logos, high quality product packaging and advertising media and printed publications.

Systems and Control

Students will be working with structures, mechanisms, levers and electronics to design and make products that can be used in everyday life. They will use a wide range of equipment, tools and materials to produce a high quality outcome.

Subject Leader, Mr S Elliott

Drama/Production Arts (Design)

The Drama department encourages students to engage in creative and practical work, exploring real life situations, masks, play texts and storytelling.

The Production Arts department encourages students to explore in creative and practical workshops, exploring lighting, sound, set, make-up and costume.

Key Stage 3 Drama Curriculum

Drama is taught for one period a fortnight to Year 7 and one period a fortnight to Year 8, and is taught in a fully equipped Drama studio. Students explore a variety of themes, skills and devices with a focus on their making, performing and evaluating skills. Schemes of work are taught in themed units and there is one focused performance project. In some of these units, students have the opportunity to explore technical theatre and directing.

Key Stage 4 Drama/Production Arts (Design) Curriculum

Both courses begin in Year 9 with building drama or design skills in both practical and written elements, exploring key practitioners and styles of acting and design. In Years 10 and 11 the BTEC Technical Award in Performing Arts begins and three components are completed for this course:

- Component one: *Exploring the Performing Arts* - assessed internally
- Component two: *Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts* - assessed internally
- Component three: *Performing to a Brief* - assessed externally

Extra-Curricular Activities

The Drama department offers a Year 7 and 8 Drama Club that meets once a week. The club aims to build student confidence and a passion for drama.

The Astley Cooper Drama Company was formed in 2010 and is aimed at more able Drama students. The group perform in both school and external events. They have performed at the Welwyn Youth Drama Festival and as part of the National Theatre Connections Project. The company work with both script and devising material and produce performances of a high standard.

Regular theatre trips and workshops by outside theatre practitioners form part of our programme of study. Recent visits include *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Drowned Man* by Punchdrunk, *Wicked*, *One Man, Two Guvnors* and *The Woman in Black* and we have a backstage tour of the *National Theatre*.

Workshops have been run by Gecko, exploring physical theatre and mask work, and by visiting professional actors.

The Production Arts department offers a Year 7 and 8 Technical Club that meet once a week. The club aims to build student confidence and a passion for back stage theatre aspects.

The Technical Club is a group of young enthusiasts who meet to learn more about technical theatre, lighting, sound and set design, getting to support in productions.

Life in Modern Britain

- Students work in groups and are accepting of other people's beliefs and values
- Students learn about key British figures from the theatre industry
- Students are introduced to a variety of cultures and learn about their theatrical heritage

Subject Leader, Miss C McIntyre

Food Studies

This department has two well-resourced rooms with a range of equipment. Our students are taught to think creatively and to become responsible consumers in our multicultural society. We combine practical and technological skills with creative thinking to design and make food products to meet a variety of needs and lifestyles along with developing self-confidence and self-esteem.

Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3, our students have the opportunity to acquire the basic skills for life. They learn about healthy eating and changing lifestyles and produce dishes ranging from savoury pinwheels and seasonal soup to spaghetti bolognese and mini carrot cakes.

In Year 8, all our students participate in a one star and two star chef award scheme which enables our students to share healthy recipes with family and friends. The results have been extremely pleasing and it is an excellent skill in readiness for students wishing to take Hospitality and Catering as one of their GCSE options in Year 9.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, we currently offer the WJEC Eduqas Vocational three year Hospitality and Catering course which is extremely popular with our students. Our students have achieved very pleasing results since we began offering the subject.

The course is split into two components: a double practical lesson each week and a theory lesson once a fortnight with the emphasis being on developing practical skills. There is an opportunity to study a variety of food and safety laws and their impact on the food industry.

During the three year course many aspects of the catering industry are studied and in addition there are opportunities to excel in all aspects of catering as well as taking part in a local 'Young Chef of the Year' competition. A practical examination is held in Year 11 which is worth 60% of the final grade, leaving 40% for the onscreen assessment. We focus in depth on tasks set by the examination board and students produce a highly skilled meal under examination conditions with photographic evidence.

The students' practical work is a pleasure to see, showing the many skills they develop over the three years of an interesting and diverse course.

Food Studies Teacher, Miss G Hodges

Geography

Geography is a subject that is relevant today and in the future. It addresses issues as diverse as climate change, world population, living sustainably and the future of urban development. It teaches students to think outside the box to analyse, investigate and apply rigour to problems. It sits between the sciences and the arts and gives students a broad perspective on the world and the problems it faces. It is looked on well by institutions of further and higher education, as well as employers. Students who study Geography generally increase their life opportunities. Geographers go on into many career paths from town planning to engineering; from transport to medical research. It is a challenging subject. It asks students to think independently and to come up with ideas, as well as understand some complex interactions in the physical and human world. For those students who choose to study it, and work hard, it is very rewarding.

We have a committed team of friendly and supportive staff in Geography who work very hard to support students in achieving their very best. We set high standards and expectations and we expect the same from our students. Our examination results have steadily improved over the past few years and it is a continually popular option subject at KS4.

Here at Astley Cooper, we strive to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. We regularly run field trips for students at all Key Stages and currently run successful trips to a local field studies centre in Amersham in order to support students in carrying out their own geographical investigations and enquiries.

The Astley Cooper School is pleased to offer Geography as a core component at KS3 and an option choice from GCSE to A level.

History

The History department is committed to helping students achieve success and reach their full potential.

We aim to develop in students the key historical skills of analysis, argument, the use of evidence, interpretation, causation and change and continuity. Students develop these skills through a variety of creative lesson approaches including discussion, group work, role play, written work and presentation work. It is through these approaches that we aim to mould students into independent learners.

We have achieved very good examination results in recent years. Several students have gone on to study History at university including two who studied History at the University of East Anglia and the University of Nottingham (the latter achieved a First Class Honours Degree in Ancient History) and one student who is studying History at Queen Mary, University of London.

We have also run several successful trips in recent years, including trips to the National Army Museum, the Imperial War Museum and *War Horse* in the West End. Two students visited the World War One Battlefields as part of the First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme (a nationally funded programme to mark the centenary). Further to this, in February 2016 we ran a joint trip with the MFL Department to the World War One Battlefield in France and Belgium which built on the success of the Centenary Battlefield Tour. This was followed in 2017 with a residential trip to Normandy with a focus on World War Two for Year 8 and 9. This year, we introduced a trip to Mountfitchet Castle for Year 7.

We have also welcomed a number of Holocaust survivors into school to share their stories and answer student questions over the past few years. In July 2018, we welcomed Harry Bibring (aged 92) into school to share his story. These have all been with the aim of supporting learning outside the classroom for students. We have also participated in the government funded *Lessons from Auschwitz* project, which enabled two Sixth Form students to visit Auschwitz.

At Key Stage 4 and 5 (Edexcel) we regularly hold intervention sessions and revision sessions throughout the year and we pride ourselves on being on hand to support any student who needs extra help or has any queries.

Subject Leader of Humanities, Miss A Welsh

Media Studies

In an ever-changing digital age, students can begin to discover how Social Media, TV, Film and Gaming can affect and influence people on both a social and individual level. In each unit, the students will develop their critical thinking in exploring these different aspects of Media.

Additionally, Media Studies students take on the role of a producer - students will create their own films, advertising campaigns and magazines. This allows students to put their critical understanding in to practice.

Each course in Media Studies is divided between written and practical tasks, providing opportunities for students to study a variety of different skills and tasks. In addition, through coursework and trips, Media Studies provides opportunities to develop skills that are invaluable within the working world.

GCSE (Eduqas)

In KS4 students study a wide range of Media products, including - TV, Print Media, Video Games, Music Videos and Social Media.

The course itself is split between looking at theoretical approaches to Media and creating their own products. In Year 10 the students will begin to create a product designed for a brief, which is set by the exam board. These products will be centred on one of the following: Print Media, Online Media and Moving Image. This makes up 30% of the students' overall GCSE.

At the end of Year 11, students take two examinations on topics chosen by the exam board where students will be expected to apply theory and social, historical, economic and political contexts to each Media product. This examination comprises the final 70% of the GCSE.

A-Level (Eduqas)

In KS5 the A-Level course is split between practical coursework and formally examined units.

In Year 12 students will be expected to explore all areas of the media through set text, looking closely at the social, economical, historical and political elements of the products. Throughout this year students will gain a wide knowledge of the Media and how it impacts the world we live in. Each unit of work will also require a practical element, where students will be creating a product similar to the one looked at. These will be used to assess the student's understanding of the products and will make up 30% of their final grade.

Toward the end of the course students will sit two formal assessments that will test their knowledge of their set products and their understanding of the four key areas of Media: language, audience, industry, and representation. This comprises 70% of the guide and will be split over two exams.

Media Studies Teacher, Mr S Kilmore

Modern Foreign Languages

Languages are part of the cultural richness of our society and the world in which we live and work. Learning languages contributes to a mutual understanding, a sense of global citizenship and personal fulfilment. Students learn to appreciate different countries, cultures, communities and people. The ability to understand and communicate in another language is a life-long skill for education, employment and leisure in this country and throughout the world.

Teaching Methods and Approaches

In Year 7 the aim of the MFL department is to introduce and instil a love for languages into children.

All Year 7 students study Spanish throughout their time at Astley Cooper School.

Students in MFL learn through the main four skills that constitute a language: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

These skills are developed working with authentic language materials. Speaking and writing are used to encourage real life communication in the form of conversation, letters, e-mails, text messages and accounts.

Students have the opportunity to continue their Spanish studies to AS and A level.

Where possible, we also arrange for students with a second language to sit the GCSE examination at the end of Year 10.

Students have access to ICT facilities and the department subscribe to several on-line language resources which students may also access from home.

Extra Curricular Opportunities in the department include:

- GCSE (AQA) revision sessions
- Trips to Spain
- Access to Linguascope, Duolingo, Doodle, BBC Bitesize, Extra.

Subject Leader, Miss T Babouri

Music

Students follow a broad and balanced curriculum in Music. Throughout Key Stage 3 they develop their skills in listening and appraising various musical traditions, including jazz and blues, film music, popular song, African drumming and numerous composers. They have the opportunity to perform their own cover versions in groups, using an array of instruments including keyboards, guitars, voices and percussion. In addition, music ICT is widely used in the department and the students enjoy the use of GarageBand software when composing their own theme tunes, ringtones, songs and jingles.

At Key Stage 4, students are following the Eduqas GCSE music specification. There is the opportunity for the students to study an instrument in school as part of their course. Students are assessed in both solo and ensemble performances, with many opportunities to perform to an audience throughout the school year. Students are taught how to compose in a range of genres and will submit two compositions as coursework by the end of Year 11. The listening and appraising examination demands a high standard of musical literacy and students are taught to develop and apply their aural skills in analysing a diverse range of musical styles from the Baroque era to the present day.

At Key stage 5 we offer the Btec **Level 3 National Foundation Diploma in Music**, where students can further develop a range of skills relevant to their own interests in performing, composing and appraising. The course is equivalent to 1.5 A levels.

All students are able to join one of our music clubs – the Astley Cooper Singers, guitar club and various bands in each year group.

Music Teacher, Mr A O'Grady

Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE)

PRE aims to encourage all students to engage with the ultimate questions in life. Philosophy is concerned with our beliefs and our attitudes to life asking questions such as 'What is the meaning of life?', 'Does the world have a purpose?' and 'What can we really know?' Ethics is concerned with questions about right and wrong and students will focus on questions such as 'Is it right to have an abortion?', 'What rights should animals have?' and 'Is it ever right to kill?' The religious elements of the course focus mainly on philosophical and ethical issues in order to allow all students to feel the relevance of the subject within their own lives.

PRE is highly important in the development of a student's life as it encourages independence of thought and gives students the opportunity to become responsible for their own views on some of the biggest questions in life. We use a range of teaching methods such as research, role play, creative work and problem solving.

GCSE Curriculum

At Key Stage 4, students will follow the AQA Ethics course which covers a variety of different ethical issues. They approach these both from religious and non-religious points of view, and ultimately they are expected to form and support their own views on the issues. We have had some excellent examination results in recent years and Ethics is an increasingly popular option choice at KS4.

Key Stage 5

Religious Studies is also offered at KS5. Students follow the AQA examination board which covers a variety of topics focusing on religion and ethics.

Life in Modern Britain

PRE teaches students:

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety
- an understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary
- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law
- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination

Physical Education (PE)

PE helps students acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to participate successfully in a range of sporting activities.

Students learn to work in a variety of different ways: individually, in small groups and in teams. At Astley Cooper, we firmly believe that PE teaches students how to communicate effectively in a range of ways and also introduces leadership skills that are vital throughout life. All PE staff will encourage students to make regular physical activity part of their lives and to get involved in healthy physical activity regularly in school and in the community.

We offer a wide variety of sports such as football, rugby, gymnastics, netball, swimming, handball, athletics, cricket and rounders. We also have trampolines, table tennis facilities and five tennis courts.

At Key Stage 3, students in Year 7 and 8 take part in 4 lessons over two weeks.

At Key Stage 4, students are offered GCSE Physical Education. Students can choose from a variety of activities in which to participate in physical activities. Students will learn how to evaluate performance. They will also learn a range of theoretical topics including anatomy and physiology and health & fitness.

At Key Stage 5, we offer BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Sport. Three of the units are externally assessed, the remaining units are assessed through coursework. It teaches students practical skills such as coaching in the community and theoretical skills such as knowledge of how sport is run in the UK.

We also offer the extended Diploma which is the equivalent of three A Levels. Four of the units are externally assessed, the remaining units are assessed through coursework.

There are many extra-curricular opportunities for students in all years. We run a range of teams, all of which are entered into District and County Competitions as well as friendly matches with a number of local schools. We always seek to reward our high achieving students and those that always work to the best of their ability. These students are invited on rewards trips.

Opportunities to excel

- Teamwork - enables students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Leadership and Coaching (Sky 'Living for Sport') - enables students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely
- Competitions and matches inter and intra school - encourages respect for other people
- Consider the role of extra-curricular activity, including any run directly by students, in promoting fundamental British values. We have a wide range of extra curricular activities on offer including traditional games through to baseball and yoga

Subject Leader, Mr M Gatnby

Production Arts (Design)

The Production Arts department encourages students to explore in creative and practical workshops, exploring lighting, sound, set, make-up and costume.

Key Stage 4 Drama Curriculum

The course begins in Year 9 with developing an understanding of the different design aspects behind the scenes in theatre. In Year 10 and 11 the BTEC Technical Award in Performing Arts (Design) begins and three components are completed for this course:

- Component one: *Exploring the Performing Arts* - assessed internally
- Component two: *Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts* - assessed internally
- Component three: *Performing to a Brief* - assessed synoptic externally

Extra-Curricular Activities

The Production Arts department offers a Year 7 and 8 Technical Club that meet once a week. The club aims to build student confidence and a passion for back stage theatre aspects.

The Technical Club is a group of young enthusiasts who meet to learn more about technical theatre, lighting, sound and set design, getting to support in productions.

Regular theatre trips and workshops by outside practitioners form part of our programme of study. Recent visits include *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and visit to Berkhamsted Theatre.

Life in Modern Britain

- Students work in groups and are accepting of other people's beliefs and values
- Students learn about key British figures from the theatre industry
- Students are introduced to a variety of cultures and learn about their theatrical heritage

Subject Leader, Miss C McIntyre

PSHE

The PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) and Citizenship programme is designed to:

- meet the statutory requirements (sex education and careers)
- develop students' understanding and skills to be healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and maintain emotional well-being
- promote young people's well-being (physical and mental health, emotional, social and economic, education, training and recreation and protection from harm and neglect)
- develop students' core skills such as communication, leadership, working with others and exploring other cultures and beliefs

If we are successful our students will be:

- able to develop and learn to live life well
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society
- independent thinkers able to formulate their own personal opinions and able to participate in activities in school and the local community

General Information

- The lessons will be delivered to KS3 (Years 7 and 8) once a fortnight. KS4 (Year 9) also once a fortnight. Year 10 and 11 will participate in drop down days
- External workshops and practitioners will be regularly used to support the learning and the development of knowledge such as *Drugs Link*, training the students on alcohol abuse
- All students will develop key transferable skills

Life in Modern Britain

PSHE explores the fundamental British values of students understanding different cultures, beliefs, current topics and themes in society. PSHE students develop an understanding of identity and different values, and lessons enable students to gain an understanding in a safe and respectful manner. A current scheme of work in Year 7 explores the question '*What is Britishness?*' enabling students to consider the current society they live in and what makes them who they are. Students are able to acquire a general knowledge and respect for the law through a scheme of work that focuses on '*Crime*'. Students are challenged in their own personal opinions and behaviours to maintain a high standard of the values and tolerance.

PSHE Co-ordinator, Miss C McIntyre

SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)

The SEND department is led by the SENDCo and consists of a number of well trained staff, including Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) and Teaching Assistants (TA).

We recognise that our students have individual learning needs and may have specific difficulties which hinder access to the curriculum. These may require in-class support or withdrawal for specific tuition.

Teaching Assistants are trained with teaching staff, enabling them to have a good knowledge of school aims and methods of student improvement. They work closely with curriculum areas to set targets with appropriate challenge, helping individual students to achieve or surpass their expected levels.

One of the major strengths of the department is that all support staff know the students well and treat them as individuals in order to make them independent and successful learners. Through this they are able to provide personalised learning that suits the need of the individual. The department has good links with outside agencies to support learning. Many students who come to the school with English as a second language are successfully integrated into the school community and achieve good results.

Inclusion and Achievement

The Inclusion and Achievement Centre is an integral and vitally important part of the School.

It is a safe environment where students are supported academically, but also socially and emotionally. Students can access a range of support provided by staff and outside agencies. We work closely with students, parents and outside agencies to ensure that the needs of all students are met using a student centred approach.

Positive behaviour and full attendance are essential components of an effective teaching and learning environment and they support our duty to promote the welfare of our students, and keep them safe. We believe that everyone has a right to learn and nobody has a right to prevent learning. We are firm, clear and consistent in our expectations, and we work hard to help our students develop and use the social, emotional and behavioural skills they need to succeed. This policy underpins the school's commitment to enabling all our students to reach their highest levels of personal achievement by:

- encouraging positive behaviour
- encouraging and promoting an understanding of the importance of regular attendance and good timekeeping
- providing clear guidance to students, parents and staff
- making it clear we value all students and appreciate diversity
- expecting our school environment to be safe, secure, supportive, and reinforce the moral and ethical values we encourage our students to live by

Students may be referred to Inclusion if they are having difficulties in accessing the full curriculum. Our ultimate aim, however, is to reintegrate those students back into the mainstream school. This process can be a short one or, at other times, can be a lengthy process.

Other students may be referred to us for behavioural reasons. These students may work in groups or on a one to one basis. Work with these students focuses upon understanding underlying causes and behaviour and setting achievable targets to help them re-evaluate the behaviour in the classroom. This has a hugely positive impact on their learning in school.

SENDCo/Inclusion & Achievement,
Mrs L Lakhani and Mrs C Ockendon

Teaching Staff

Headteacher

Mr E Gaynor, BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

Assistant Headteachers

Mr B Daddow, BSc (Hons), NPQH

Mrs J Rourke, BA (Hons)

Mr T Lally, BSc, MA

Head of Sixth Form

Miss C East, BA (Hons)

Key Stage Leaders

KS3 Leader (Years 7 & 8) Mrs J Goodchild

KS3 Head of Year 8, Mr S Hall

KS4 Leader (Years 10 & 11) Mr J Stevenson

KS4 Leader (Head of Year 9) Mrs D Cansick

Art Department

Miss C Holmes, BA (Hons)

Miss R Padam, BA (Hons)

Mrs D Harman, BA

Design and Technology

Mr S Elliott, BA (Hons)

English

Miss N Cowell, BA (Hons)

Miss E Gant, BA (Hons)

Miss A Gilmour, BA (Hons)

Mrs K Hamilton, BA (Hons)

Mr S Kilmore, BA (Hons)

Ms H Richardson, BA (Hons)

Mrs J Rourke, BA (Hons)

Mr P Trenoweth, BA (Hons), MA

Food Studies

Miss G Hodges, BA (Hons), MA

Humanities

Miss A Welsh, BA (Hons)

Mr J Bowsher, BA (Hons)

Mr B Daddow, BSc (Hons)

Mr C Hardy, BS (Hons)

Mr A Burnaby, BA (Hons)

Computer Science and ICT

Dr M Ryde, MA, PhD

Mathematics

Mrs W Mander, BSc (Hons)

Miss N Siva, BSc (Hons)

Miss S Fernando, BA (Hons)

Mr J Rodriguez, BA (Hons)

Mr G Hurst, BSc (Hons)

Mr S Hall, BA (Hons)

Modern Languages

Miss T Babouri, BA (Hons)

Music

Mr A O'Grady, BA (Hons), MA, PME

Performing Arts and Drama

Miss B O'Riordan, BS (Hons)

Miss C McIntyre, BA (Hons)

Physical Education

Mr M Gatenby, BSc (Hons)

Mr J Stevenson, BEd (Hons)

Miss C East, BA (Hons)

Mrs S Lee-Dell, BSc (Hons)

Science

Mr R Baker, BSc (Hons)

Miss S-A Bowen, BSc (Hons)

Ms K Waller, BSc, MSc

Mr E Alaiz, BA (Hons) MA

Miss N Mena

Mrs V Leinster, BSc (Hons) PhD

SEND

Mrs C Ockendon, BA (Hons)

Mrs L Lakhani, BA (Hons)

Administrative Support

Mrs L Dorey, *PA to Headteacher*
Mrs L Cassidy, *Administration Manager*
Ms E Nicks, *Administration Assistant*
Mrs C Ouston, *Administration Assistant*
Mrs J Wybrow, *Administration Assistant*
Mrs K Palmer, *Receptionist*
Mrs L Dixon, *Post 16 Pastoral Support Administrator*
Mrs M Ribot, *Cover Administrator*

Examinations Officer

Mrs D Cansick

Finance & Premises

Mrs A Catterall, *AlnstAM Dip School Business and Personnel Manager*
Mrs C Wiseman, *Finance Administrator*
Mrs J Eccles, *Finance Administrator*
Mr P Biswell, *Facilities Manager*
Mr R Darling, *Residential Caretaker*
Mr E Foster, *Assistant Caretaker*
Mr B Nelson, *Assistant Caretaker*

ICT Systems and Data

Mr G Brewer, *Network Manager*
Mrs L Cassidy, *SIMS Support*

Student & Curriculum Support

Mrs A Allen, *Attendance Co-ordinator*
Miss J Bishop, *MSc Learning Resource Centre Manager*
Mrs J Nethercoat, *BA (Hons) Cover Supervisor*

SEND

Mrs N Green, *Assistant SENDCo*

Teaching Assistants

Mrs J Brown, *Higher Level Teaching Assistant*
Mrs A Cooke, *Teaching Assistant*
Mrs A Hewitt, *Learning Support Assistant*
Mr D Mullen, *Learning Support Assistant*
Mr R O'Brien, *Teaching Assistant*
Mrs S Traynor, *Learning Support Assistant*

Technician Support

Mr D Busbridge, *Design & Technology Technician*
Miss N Davies, *Food Technology Technician*
Mr L Featherstone, *Performing Arts Technician*
Mrs S Nazmi, *Science Technician*

Work-Based Learning

Mrs E Hodges, *BSc (Hons)*

Governing Body 2017/18

Elected Parent Governors

Mr M Bagley
Mr J Gulmohamed, *Chair*
Mrs J Moore

Co-opted Governors

Mrs A Catterall
Mrs C Howard
Mr R Tucker, *Vice Chair*
Rev A Janes
Mrs J Moore

Governors Appointed by the Authority

Mrs K Halker

Head Teacher

Mr E Gaynor

Elected Staff Governor

Mrs E Hodges

Foundation Governors

Mr G Cunningham
Mrs M Chapman

Associate Governors

Mr T Lally

Clerk to the Governors

Mrs R Carl