

The background of the entire page is a photograph of two female students in school uniforms. They are wearing maroon sweaters with a crest on the left chest and white collared shirts underneath. The student in the foreground is wearing glasses and is looking down, writing in a notebook. The student behind her is also looking down. The image is slightly blurred to create a sense of depth.

Keswick  School

11-18 Co-educational Boarding and Day

# Sixth Form Prospectus

*“Excellence, Aspiration and Opportunity”*

# Welcome to the Sixth Form

## What can Keswick School offer to you?

We are delighted to welcome into our highly aspirational Sixth Form students from across Cumbria and, with our boarding students, from around the world. This adds to our wide and distinctive student community which is both friendly and inclusive.

Staff and Sixth Form students work in partnership together and so whether you are joining us from Year 11 at Keswick School, or another school, you will be supported and guided to fulfil your potential. We offer exceptional preparation for A Levels as well as life beyond Sixth Form. Our students progress onto a wide range of destinations, both at university and apprenticeship level.

You will benefit from an experienced and highly qualified team of teaching and pastoral staff. The experience and skill of the teaching body, coupled with a strong pastoral system which is committed to the success of every student, means that we have a strong record in A Levels and other level 3 vocational qualifications.

We have a purpose-built Sixth Form Centre. This gives the students work spaces which are separate from the main school. The study areas are Wi-Fi enabled, and are permanently staffed by the Sixth Form Learning Supervisors, who support students

with their private independent study. The Head of Sixth Form and Heads of Year have permanent offices in this building and are readily available.

The school offers excellent learning facilities in all subjects, including dedicated IT suites, Wi-Fi and an award-winning library, staffed by a professional librarian. We have outstanding provision for music, drama and dance in the Crosthwaite Music Centre, the Judi Dench Performing Arts Theatre and the dance studio.

In 2018 we completed the build of the new International Languages Centre, containing dedicated modern classrooms equipped with superb IT facilities to support teaching and learning, and the addition of a new physics lab to the science teaching rooms. There is a sports hall, a gym, a climbing wall and a range of outdoor pitches offering first-rate recreational opportunities.

Above all, we recognise that whatever step you take after your GCSEs in Year 11, it must be a positive step that will take you forward and lead to success. We endeavour to help you achieve this, but it must be a shared commitment. We are looking for students who want to return to school, and who want to succeed.







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# The Tutorial Programme

Students undertake a tutorial programme, guided by their Form Heads, which supports the timetabled Personal Development lessons in Year 12. The main themes of this will be the development of the necessary academic and interpersonal skills required to make a successful transition to higher education or the workplace. For the former, we encourage students to undertake super-curricular activities which broaden their profile of academic skills, knowledge and understanding.

Personal Development lessons cover themes such as health and well-being, personal safety, managing money and travelling abroad. We also have a timetabled week of Year 12 work experience and also offer a PD and careers programme of enrichment activities from outside providers, who offer sessions on areas such as student life, student finance, applying for apprenticeships, and gap years.

## Study Support

All students who are following the usual programme of 3 advanced level courses plus an EPQ or core maths, Games and Personal Development will have on their timetables a minimum of seven periods of supervised private study (SPS).

Students are expected to register for these periods and spend them in the Sixth Form study rooms or another approved learning space in the school. If we feel any students require extra support for their study we shall place them on the study support programme.

## The Broader Curriculum

In addition to the subject courses outlined, the Sixth Form undertake a broader curriculum encompassing careers information, enrichment, advice and guidance, and in Year 12, games. The support in Year 12 and Year 13 for the UCAS process, as well as for students who wish to seek apprentice training or employment, is extremely thorough. The Sixth Form has a consistently high percentage of offers made from universities and apprenticeship places achieved.

As a Sixth Form we strive to offer a broad and varied curriculum which extends beyond the classroom. We promote work experience through a dedicated week in the spring term, while our team also continually seek out enrichment opportunities in the way of MOOCs (online courses), lectures, open days and other activities that will broaden and enrich our students' experiences. These are posted on a regular basis on our X feed which can be found on our Sixth Form

website, and we use Unifrog, an award-winning online platform, to support the Sixth Form careers provision. We also offer mock interviews, which are especially popular with those applying to Oxbridge, courses such as medicine, nursing, midwifery and veterinary medicine, and apprenticeships.

Sporting activities are made available to the students on Wednesday afternoons. These include rugby, hockey, football, running, fitness, cricket, tennis and athletics: the range of activities varies from year to year. Students are encouraged to compete for the school in a range of team and individual sports, and to take part in extracurricular outdoor education activities such as sailing, rowing, canoeing and skiing; we also have strong links with local sports clubs and encourage participation at these. The sports programme is compulsory in Year 12 (unless students have a timetabled lesson) and optional in Year 13.

There are many clubs running within school which link with curricular areas or with particular interests, such as the French Literature and Film group, which meets once a week to discuss French literature and cinema; there is no requirement to be studying French A Level for students wishing to attend. A similar club, the German Literature and Film group, caters for students with a particular interest in German literature.

Many of our Sixth Form courses include trips and other out of school activities to support students in their learning. Some of these take advantage of the opportunities offered in the local area, such as a biology field visit to Derwentwater which focuses on ecology, and a geography trip to the West Cumbrian coast. There are also many day and residential visits to cities and other areas of the country linked to different curricular areas; for example, students of politics spend several days in London and visit the Royal Courts of Justice and Supreme Court, as well as attending Prime Minister's Question Time in the House of Commons. Centres of expertise are visited, such as the Life Centre in Newcastle where students learn about DNA technology.

Various trips abroad are made: to name a few, art students visit cities such as Venice, Paris, Florence or Amsterdam; students of RPE travel to Venice, and those studying business spend time in Brussels, with trips to the European Parliament, the Port of Antwerp and factories making Coca Cola, Stella Artois and chocolate. During the spring term, Year

12 students of French take part in an exchange with students from the Lycée Saint Sauveur in Brittany. In addition, Sixth Form students are able to take part in a range of university open and taster days, and we also invite into school visitors such as politicians, representatives of the NHS, business people and even a former contestant from 'The Apprentice'.

Sixth Formers are encouraged to take opportunities in a wide range of activities in school, often taking a leading role. Examples include engineering clubs, school drama productions, contributions as subject coaches to younger pupils, music activities like choir, as well as a club run by students which aims to educate about LGBT+ issues'. Participation in 'Leading Change Project', a national competition, gives students the chance to experience running a real life business. This sort of community service is essential in building the interpersonal soft transferable skills much in demand in higher education and the workplace. We are dedicated to delivering character education through the extended curriculum activities we offer.

These activities promote our stated intention to send out into the wider world responsible, independent, level-headed and compassionate young people.





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*“Students in the Sixth Form flourish” (Ofsted, 2024)*





# The Sixth Form and the School

Any member of Year 12 may take the opportunities offered to undertake volunteering during Year 12, such as leading clubs, subject coaching and peer mentoring. In the summer term you may apply for the position of School Prefect. You should offer skills or attributes which could be of use to the school; this might include help with a curriculum area, assistance in running the school library, support with a lower school form group or organisation and supervision of younger pupils at break and lunchtime.

From the prefect body the Head Girl and Head Boy and a team of senior prefects are chosen. The Head Boy and Head Girl are key representatives of the school and are involved in a wide range of activities. For example, they set up within school the 'Make Your Mark' event run by the Youth Parliament, which involves them in publicising and organising ballots on issues of relevance to young people; they address meetings involving a variety of audiences; and they coordinate and chair meetings with the senior prefect team. The Deputy Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy are the co-chairs of the School Council, which is a committee of students from all year groups: it is the driving force for student voice.

Regular School Council meetings are attended by all members and the Headteacher of the school, facilitating the discussion of important issues raised by students. The School Council is a key part of the school community."

Several senior prefects are appointed as Heads of Year 7, 8 and 9 prefects, and are involved in leading various activities such as Futures Friday, quizzes and inter-form competitions: they work closely with the senior teachers who are Heads of Year.

The Heads of Duty organise and support a large team of prefects involved in specific supervisory duties around the school. The Heads of Charity prefects develop and coordinate a variety of charity events in school, working with both national and local charitable organisations such as Comic Relief, Mind, Pride in North Cumbria, Music Against Malaria, Macmillan Cancer Support and the Keswick Lions.

Through volunteering and the prefect system the Sixth Form gives practical demonstration of its ability to enhance the whole life of the school, and the staff value greatly the contributions that Sixth Formers make. There will be many opportunities to volunteer.

# Pastoral Care

Keswick School is committed to providing a strong and supportive system of pastoral care. We aim to provide the guidance, support and direction which will enable the students gradually to assume more responsibility for their own learning and conduct and so leave for higher education or the world of work as independent, confident and effective young people.

Each student is allocated to a form group of about 25 students and remains with the

same form head throughout their time in the sixth form. The form head works closely with students on a day to day basis.

The Head of Sixth Form is responsible for the overall pastoral and academic care of the students, supported by heads of year.

Staff work hard to establish a good relationship with each student.

# Role of Parents

Parents continue to have a vital role to play in supporting the students, and in working with the school to ensure their success.

The sixth form team monitors the progress of the students in lessons and supervised private study. A number of formal assessments and reviews take place at structured intervals throughout the year and parents are invited and encouraged to share in an involvement in students' progress through the sixth form. Meetings are held through the school year to enable parents to meet with form heads and teaching staff. In addition, regular reports are sent home.

We ask for letters or emails explaining absences from school and parents are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any matter concerning welfare or progress. If there are particular concerns, special reports can be prepared at short notice.

The pastoral and teaching staff are always happy to speak with parents and you are invited to ring the school to make an appointment.

We envisage that, over their two years in the sixth form, students are able and willing to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning and progress.







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applications”*





# Progression from the Sixth Form:

## *Information, Advice and Guidance*

Because the vast majority of our students move on to higher education, we offer a very detailed and comprehensive programme of support for the UCAS process. More general preparation for applications is given through the Form Heads, Mrs Avery (Careers), the Heads of Year and the Head of Sixth Form directly. Through this we also fully support students who wish to apply to study for a higher or degree apprenticeship or to seek further training or employment, pathways that are becoming increasingly popular.

Keswick School Sixth Form maintains its own website and X account, which, along with Unifrog, endeavour to provide the latest information relating to current opportunities specifically aimed at Year 12 and Year 13 students, such as open days, summer schools, work experience opportunities, university choices and apprenticeships. They are also a source of information for key dates and school documentation that students and parents can access independently from any mobile device. We encourage and direct students to these to research courses and career opportunities.

At the start of the summer term we organise higher education mornings for Year 12 students: they receive guidance and information about university applications, and also about other pathways such as apprenticeships.

A similar presentation is also provided for parents on a separate evening. We cover topics such as applications, course choices, student finance, student life and employment opportunities. University applications are made using the UCAS 'Apply' service; students are given guidance to support them throughout this process, and have the opportunity to take part in a practice interview with the Head of Careers, school governors, parents with specific expertise or professionals associated with the school. We also send some of our applicants to a neighbouring school where they can have practice interviews with specialist teachers with whom they are not familiar.

We have a long tradition and much experience in supporting students who wish to apply to the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge or who hope to study medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine. We utilise the outreach support of our Oxford and Cambridge link colleges, and organise residential trips to the Oxford and Cambridge Universities' summer open events. Every student in Year 12 is invited to participate in our day visit to the summer open day run by the Universities of Newcastle and Northumbria, in order to get an insight into the courses on offer and a feel of what it is like to work and live in a university environment.

We also host representatives from various universities to talk about what their institutions have to offer. For example, representatives from Scottish universities come into Keswick School to promote applications to Scottish institutions, whilst we also have a long tradition of working closely with Newcastle University, Durham University and Lancaster University in providing advice and guidance to support our students in preparing for higher education.

If students would prefer to take a gap year before embarking on their chosen pathway, we offer advice, guidance and talks on this subject. Topics include studying, travelling and opportunities for volunteering overseas. We also have a good relationship with providers such as Gen2 for those students who wish to pursue a higher or degree apprenticeship or employment with such organisations.

Work experience opportunities are encouraged and promoted, particularly to gain practical experience in support of applications. In addition to the dedicated work experience week allocated for the spring term, we encourage students to undertake work experience during the holidays to avoid disruption to their courses, or utilise study periods for weekly commitments. The Cumbria Centre for Leadership Performance's 'Dream Placement' initiative, which offers work experience placements with local businesses, is also promoted, with students securing places every year.







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