



St Mary's School  
CAMBRIDGE

# Sixth Form Handbook



1898-2018

## Welcome

---

I am thrilled to welcome our students and their families into the Sixth Form community. This significant next step in school life is one I hope the girls find exciting and rewarding. It is a time for them to really connect with their passions, be that their subjects or other aspects of their life. The tutor team and I look forward to supporting them in all of their endeavours.

This is a community where our students are known and know each other and the staff. It is a time and place where each girl can find her own path and will be supported in her ambitions.

We are very proud of our student body and know they will achieve great things this year. They have numerous sources of support in school and I hope they feel confident that they have someone to approach if they need help academically or otherwise. Please do get in touch if at any point in the year you have concerns or need further information.

**Miss Ruth Taylor**

**Head of Sixth Form**

## The Sixth Form Team

---

### Head of Sixth Form

Miss R Taylor [rtaylor@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:rtaylor@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

### Assistant Head of Sixth Form

Miss V Handley [vhandley@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:vhandley@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

### Senior Tutor

Mr R Quirk [rquirk@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:rquirk@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

### Rest of the Tutor Team

Mrs Brooks [pbrooks@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:pbrooks@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

Mrs Bevan [bevanv@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:bevanv@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

Dr Gundy [agundy@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:agundy@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

Mrs Landshoff [rlandshoff@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:rlandshoff@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

Mrs Latham [klatham@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:klatham@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## A Week in the Life of a Sixth Former

---

### Brookside: Our Sixth Form Home

Brookside is available to students from 8am in the morning and closes again at 6pm. They are encouraged to use it as their base and take advantage of the study areas. Each student has a locker in this building and there is a kitchen available to them as well as a gym and showering facilities. A number of lessons take place in this building including Economics, Business, and Psychology.

### Times of the School Day

Period 1	8:40
Period 2	9:35
Break	10:30
Period 3	10:50
Period 4	11:45
Lunch	12:40
Assembly/Form Prayers	13:45
Period 5	14:10
Period 6	15:05

### Tutor Time and Assemblies

Monday	Sixth Form Assembly
Tuesday	Form Prayers
Wednesday	Form Prayers
Thursday	Form Prayers
Friday	Whole School Assembly

### *Tutorial Period*

This is the equivalent to a lesson on the timetable. During this time we deliver aspects of PSHCE, careers advice and anything else which is relevant to the year group and time of year. These periods are delivered by the tutorial team once a fortnight.

### *Form Prayers*

St Mary's is a Christian School in the Catholic tradition. Form prayers offer the chance for spiritual development whether the girls have a Catholic, other faith or humanist background. The session is led by tutors and involves a discussion, for example a current affairs theme, a moral message or someone who is considered to be inspirational. These sessions are held as a tutor group.

### *Individual Tutor Time*

Tutors will draw up a timetable of individual meetings so that all girls have the chance to discuss their progress on a one to one basis. This is known in St Mary's as T&M.

## **Study periods and the requirement to be in school**

Study periods on the timetable mean that the girls are not required in lessons. The priority of these periods should be study, be it completing homework, consolidating classwork or reading around the subject. It may also be a time to make appointments with staff as needed.

Sixth Form girls are only required to be in school when they have a timetabled lesson, assembly, tutorial or other such event. If none of these apply, then the girls are allowed to leave the site on the condition that they sign out at the main school reception.

For the girls' own safety they are required to use the lanyard registration system every time they enter or leave a school building. This enables staff to know where each student is, and who is in a building in the event of a fire.

## **Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)**

The EPQ is a compulsory part of every Year 12 student at the start of the academic year. The EPQ is a self-motivated project that requires self-discipline and independent research on a topic of the girl's own choice, and so it is seen as a good option for those who want to stand out and get into a good university or an alternative post-18 pathway. It is also an opportunity to follow a passion, and not be limited by the A Level syllabus. The EPQ encourages academic engagement and thought beyond what is needed for A Level examinations, develops critical thinking, independence, resilience, and interdisciplinary skills,

and gives the girls a chance to be original and individual in their work. This is a valuable part of the girls' preparation for life beyond school.

Contact: Dr Gundy (EPQ coordinator) [agundy@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:agundy@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## **Homework**

As the girls in Sixth Form have narrowed their subject range and specialised in each area, the level of homework set in each subject will be greater than in the Senior School. The type of homework set will vary across subjects and stages of the course but will include exam style questions and independent research. As a rule of thumb girls should expect to spend around 4 hours per week working on subjects outside of lesson time. Homework will be the main component of this time, but girls should also use it to consolidate classwork and carry out their own reading and research in areas of particular interest.

## **Enrichment**

All girls have a formal enrichment session scheduled into their timetables once a fortnight on a Friday afternoon. More information about this can be found later in this booklet.

## **IT Facilities**

All Year 12 students are issued with individual digital devices for academic use. Training of the school's digital platform takes place during the September induction day. The school operates a digital platform within a Microsoft 365 structure. Students are trained in this system on their induction day where expectations and responsibilities are also communicated. As a digital school we are committed to developing digital literacy skills for all students as part of their preparation for education and work beyond St Mary's. The expectation is that students bring their device to each lesson and use it to check school notices throughout the day.

Sixth Form students are allowed to bring their own devices if they so wish and can access our wireless facilities. Each girl has independent access to our printing and photocopying system.

## **Philosophy, Ethics and Religion (PER)**

PER is taught to all students in years 12 and 13 for one lesson a week.

The course is delivered through a combination of some common activities and a carousel of courses presented by RE dept. staff according to their own expertise and interest. It can address a wide variety of topic areas associated in some way with Philosophy, Ethics or Religious thought. In addition, most of one term in the Year 12 year consists of a course discussing and reflecting on issues concerning 'Relationships, Communication and Sexual Ethics'. Visiting experts, for instance from

the university, often attend to make one-off introductory presentations on their area of particular interest, expertise or research. Alumnae of the school also contribute in this way from time to time, presenting on their own studies or development projects etc.

Recent guest contributors: Sr Pat Robb C.J. on 20 years spent running refugee camps in war zones and refugees today.

Emily Hallinan (Alumna), doctoral researcher in Archaeology (Cambridge/Cape Town) on spiritual/religious symbolism in early humans.

Rev. Colin Chambers on Nelson Mandela and reconciliation in South Africa, reflecting on the eight years he spent as chaplain to the future President on Robben Island.

Dr Shahla Suleiman, from the Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge, on contemporary experience of Muslims and the media.

Contact: Mr Daniel Bennett [dbennett@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:dbennett@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## **Games**

A double games session is timetabled once a fortnight, with a weekly Sixth Form games programme in place as well. It is important that our students have time to be active in their very busy week. In addition, there is a gym in the basement of the Sixth Form Centre for their use during the school day. Students can wear their own sports clothing in the Sixth Form, we do ask that they wear a sports t-shirt with short sleeves.

Contact: Mrs Ewing [jewing@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:jewing@stmaryscambridge.co.uk) or Miss Powell [lpowell@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:lpowell@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## Pastoral Care

---

Pastoral care has always been a strong feature of St Marys, Cambridge. This year is no different to any other in the care that you and your daughter can expect from the staff at St Mary's.

If your concerns are academic, please contact her teachers. They would always wish to know if there are concerns and an early conversation can often put minds at rest and help to address whatever the concern is. Sometimes the concern is more about her welfare or that you feel there is a general concern about progress and so in this case her tutor is best placed to answer your queries.

Miss Taylor has oversight of each student this year and will be closely involved in supporting tutors to ensure that your daughters are happy and fulfilled as the year progresses; please contact her too if necessary.

As well as the pastoral teaching staff we also have a school counsellor. Students can ask to see her if they feel the need to talk through any issue in confidence. Our counsellor has helped a number of our students since joining the school with a variety of concerns and we would always encourage our students to discuss any issue with someone they feel that they can talk to. Appointments can be booked through the school nurses.

Our school is blessed in the Chaplaincy provision we receive from Mrs Kay Dodsworth, a past senior member of staff and an extremely experienced practitioner in dealing with young women's concerns. Mrs Dodsworth is in school most days and is always available to chat through cares and concerns, as are we all.

Supporting your daughters when they are stressed and worried can also be a challenging issue for parents and we would always want you to know that you can talk to us about anything. We can confirm information for you, check how things are going and give you feedback. In their desire to do well, students can sometimes lose sight of what really matters and whilst we all know that academic results are important we also understand that an individual's worth lies not only in their success at school. It has always been our aim to help you to develop your daughter's potential and help her to maintain a balanced outlook on life, ensuring that she knows she is a person of value no matter what.

We hope your days at St Mary's School are happy ones, but we recognise that everyone has worries from time to time. It is often useful to talk to your form tutor and other teachers are here to help. If you would like to talk with someone else there is advice about Useful Contacts displayed in your form room. Your Form Tutor and Head of Year will always want to help if they know you are having problems. Miss Fleming is the Pastoral Deputy Head and her office is on the bottom corridor near ICT 3. Miss Fleming is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), see her contact details below. You can also contact Sarah Dixon who is the governor attached to Safeguarding. You can email her on the school system: [sdixon@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:sdixon@stmaryscambridge.co.uk).

## Designated Staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection



**Miss Aodain Fleming - Deputy Head: Pastoral and Boarding**

Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Senior School

T: 01223 224172 | E: [AFleming@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:AFleming@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)



**Mr Paul Mallabone - Head of Upper School**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Senior School

T: 01223 224147 | E: [PMallabone@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:PMallabone@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)



**Mr Matthew O'Reilly - Head of Junior School**

Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Junior School including Early Years Foundation Stage

T: 01223 224112 | E: [MOReilly@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:MOReilly@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)



**Mrs Kerry Owens - Deputy Head and Pre-prep Co-ordinator**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Junior School including Early Years Foundation Stage

T: 01223 224141 | E: [KOWens@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:KOWens@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you have a Safeguarding or Child Protection concern then please speak without delay to one of the above members of staff on the above numbers or alternatively please ask our reception, who will contact the member of staff for you.

## Enrichment

---

It is important for the wellbeing of our students that they do maintain a healthy work-life balance. Careful planning of their week and work should leave room for them to pursue other interest in life and we actively promote their participation in enrichment activities. Life and education should be about more than sitting at a desk and revising. We really encourage our girls to make the best use of this programme, embrace some new experience and not least some relaxation and fun.

A formal enrichment programme runs for all students on a Friday afternoon.

In addition to this there will be opportunities for Sixth Form girls to take part in departmental societies and activities and charity events.

The Music and Sport Departments continue to run their extensive programme of activities at lunchtime and after school and we know that many of our Year 12 students will enjoy these activities.

## University Preparation and Guidance

---

The Sixth Form will take part in a thorough preparation process before embarking on their university applications and more details will be sent out at a later date

As Year 12 students their priority should be discovering their passions and interests and broadening their horizons. Intellectual curiosity beyond the classroom cannot start too early. Fortunately, this comes in many shapes and a podcast or iTunes U course may open up a new interest or point of view as much as a well-thumbed text. It may seem early in the year for the Year 12, but harnessing this key trait will be very important to their academic success and contribute to the rich tapestry of their lives. The Cambridge Festival of Ideas which runs in October is a fantastic opportunity for all of us-students, parents and teachers to explore some of the most essential and thought-provoking ideas of our time and celebrate the arts, humanities and social sciences. More subject specific events are also often available in Cambridge such as the Cambridge Literary Festival.

The university application process can be a pressurised time. Entry to world-leading universities will always be exceptionally competitive but it is important to recognise that the expansion of places on most university courses in recent years will benefit good students. In short, there is arguably more opportunity to find places on top courses. Our girls want to study great courses at great universities, but similarly, top universities want the best students too.

All UK university applications occur through the UCAS system which is overseen by Miss Taylor with support from Mr Quirk as Senior Tutor. Students will be required to make 5 choices (4 if applying for medicine) and write a personal statement supporting their application. The school will provide a reference which will be shown to the student before it is sent. The logistics of university applications will begin in the summer term of Year 12.

UK universities may ask for things in addition to the Personal Statement such as aptitude tests, interviews or in the case of Oxbridge, examples of work. Tutors will help the girls navigate these requirements.

Many of our students choose to apply abroad and the school will support them here too.

A formal programme of support is available to all our students, including any who may choose to apply for university post results.

Details of the university preparation programme will be sent to parents and students in the Spring and Summer Term.

## Careers and Work Experience

---

### Careers

Mrs Mead, Head of Careers and Mrs Brydie our Work Experience Co-ordinator are based in Brookside. All students are welcome to speak with them whenever they wish although it is best to email them in advance to agree a mutually convenient time. Parents are equally welcome to contact the department for advice and support.

Over the course of the two years in the Sixth Form there will be various opportunities for the students to begin exploring areas of career interest. Students will have access to Kudos, a careers programme which enables students to explore different career options, finding out more about specific roles, training, education and themselves as they developed a personalised careers plan. Kudos helps students understand which careers might best suit them by undertaking a quiz which looks at their likes and dislikes, personality and skills and matches this with personalised career ideas. Students can also explore possible careers based on the A levels they are studying and look at post 18 options including Apprenticeships and Universities. From time to time visiting speakers will be invited into school to speak during tutor period or at lunchtime or after school. There will be workshops and opportunities to visit Careers Fairs and relevant Insight Days.

### Work Experience

Work Experience is actively encouraged at St Mary's and well supported in the Sixth Form following the recommendations of the Wolf Report. Year 12 students and their parents are very welcome at any time during the year to discuss plans or ideas for Work Experience with the Work Experience Co-ordinator, Mrs Brydie. Some of the popular Work Experience placements require early booking e.g. Medicine, Law, Architecture, Engineering, Education (placements in schools), Banking, Psychology – and it can take several attempts to find a placement. The students will need to draft a CV (with guidance) and then make a firm commitment to the placement dates agreed, which take place during the school holidays. We are also happy for students to source their own placements, if they have personal connections. In this situation the Work Experience becomes a private arrangement rather than a school arrangement.

In the Autumn Term Year 13 will be talking about their various Work Experiences over this past academic year in a Work Experience Convention. Year 12 girls will therefore be able to get a flavour of what could be available to them during their time in the Sixth Form here.

## Contact Details

Mrs K Mead [kmead@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:kmead@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

Mrs Brydie [lbrydie@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:lbrydie@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## Special Educational Needs

---

### **Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Examination Access**

#### **Arrangements**

If a student has a Special Educational Need and/or disability they may be eligible for examination access arrangements. The rules regarding examination access arrangements are made by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They are revised and updated annually.

Generally speaking, students with learning difficulties have already been identified by the time they enter Sixth form. Occasionally, however, students who have used good coping strategies so far find that they have significant difficulties as they face the increased challenges of A-levels. Sometimes concerns are raised by a teacher, but at other times students themselves, or their parents, raise a concern. The most common access arrangements that we apply for at St Mary's School, Cambridge are extra time (up to 25%) and the use of a word processor.

#### **Extra time in examinations**

In order for a student to have extra time in examinations, and so as not to give an unfair advantage, an assessment must be carried out by an Educational Psychologist or specialist assessor which confirms that the student has a learning difficulty. The report must also confirm that the student has a below average score relating to, 'speed of reading, or speed of reading comprehension, or speed of writing or cognitive processing measures which have a substantial and long term adverse effect on speed of working'. In addition to this evidence, the school must paint a picture of the student's normal way of working, clearly demonstrating the need for extra time.

The whole of Year 12 will be screened for any specific issues relating to literacy using Lucid Exact, and parents will be informed of scores and any concerns they identify.

#### **Using a Word Processor in Examinations**

Schools are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a student where it is their normal way of working within the school and is appropriate to their needs. For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. A word processor cannot be granted to a student simply because she prefers to type rather than write or they can work faster on a keyboard, or because she uses a laptop at home. Under the current rules, the deadline for applying for access arrangements is February in the year of the examination. By then we must be able to show a history of need, so it is very important to raise any concerns early. If you, or your daughter, feel that they may have a learning difficulty which affects their speed

of reading, comprehension, writing or processing please do get in touch as soon as possible.

## Contact Details

Learning Support Miss J Earley [jeasley@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:jeasley@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## English as an Additional Language

### EAL and IELTS

Year 12 students who do not have an English language qualification that meets their university entrance requirements are prepared for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination by the English as an Additional Language (EAL) department.

The IELTS academic module is not only the major UK university English requirement for non-native speaker students; it is also recognised by institutions in over 140 countries<sup>1</sup>, and therefore qualifies our alumnae to take English-medium courses in Europe or to study in Canada, Australia, New Zealand or the United States, should they wish to do so. According to the official IELTS website, 'Approximately 99% of American 4-year colleges and universities that enrol more than 1,000 international students now accept IELTS as proof of English proficiency for their international applicants'<sup>2</sup>. More than 2.7 million IELTS examinations were taken globally<sup>3</sup> in 2015, almost 80% by candidates seeking to prove that they were capable of studying in English at tertiary level<sup>4</sup>.

Candidates take four papers: 1 hour Writing and Reading papers, a 40-minute Listening test, and a 15-minute standardised interview. They receive an Overall Score, and separate marks for each paper. The highest mark awarded in IELTS is 9.0. When students take the examination more than once, they may choose any one set of scores, but may not mix scores from different examinations.

Universities state their requirements in a form approximating to "an overall x, with not less than y in a specific paper/ any paper". (This procedure is also followed by other organisations such as the General Medical Council, which requires of international medical graduates applying to practise in this country 'a score of at least 7.0 in each testing area [speaking, listening, reading and writing], and an overall score of 7.5'.<sup>5</sup>)

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ielts.org/what-is-ielts/ielts-for-study> Accessed 9 August 2016

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ielts.org/usa/ielts-in-the-usa> Accessed 9 August 2016

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ielts.org/> Accessed 9 August 2016

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ielts.org/teaching-and-research/test-taker-performance> Accessed 9 August 2016

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/registration\\_applications/13680.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/registration_applications/13680.asp) Accessed 10 August 2016

Among the universities to which our international students apply, Oxbridge require an overall score of 7.5 with no less than 7.0 in any paper; LSE, a score of 7.0 in all four components; and the Medical Faculty of Imperial College, an overall 7.0 with no mark lower than 6.5. The test can be no more than two years old when candidates start university.

Year 12 students are expected to achieve a standard sufficient for the universities to which their competence in their subject studies makes it reasonable that they should apply. Many Year 12 Students take the IELTS examination whenever they feel they can do themselves justice and not attend further classes. By the end of June of the Year 12 year, about half of the cohort have done this, but the other half continue into the Year 13 with the aim of achieving better results or giving themselves more time to improve. In the past four years we have had students who have come to us from Germany for just one, two or three terms in the Year 12. Although they have also studied other subjects during this time here, their major aim has been to improve their English.

Both Lower and Year 13 students sometimes turn to the department for assistance with presentations for special events, while Year 13 students routinely submit their UCAS Personal Statements for proof-reading and comment. International students called for interview for Medicine, Speech Therapy, Art or Architecture, Fashion and Law are also assisted by the department in preparing for these. General aptitude support will be provided by Mr Piercy, subject specific support is given by the department.

## **Contact Details**

### **EAL Department**

Ms V Bevan  
Mrs P Brooks

[bevanV@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:bevanV@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)  
[pbrooks@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:pbrooks@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

## Practical Information

---

### Personal property

It is your responsibility to take care of your belongings.

- Avoid bringing valuable possessions to school.
- Label all possessions with your name.
- Do not leave belongings unattended.
- Store belongings in the lockable locker provided and ensure the lock is locked.

If you lose an item you should:

- return to the last place that you were and search thoroughly.
- ask the member of staff who last taught you if the item has been found.
- ask the receptionist if the item has been handed in.
- report the loss to your form tutor, providing details of the loss.

### Electrical Items

Please be aware that while the school recognizes the convenience of mobile phones it accepts no responsibility for their loss. Mobile phones may be used only during break and at lunchtime. They should be switched off during lessons unless you have specifically been asked to use them for a lesson activity. Bringing iPods, MP3 players and other electrical equipment to school is also at the owner's risk. Use of battery powered items during the school day must be confined to breaks and any interference with the smooth running of the school will result in confiscation. Under no circumstances should your electrical equipment be connected to the mains at school unless it has been officially approved safe by the maintenance team.

### Bike Sheds

We actively encourage our students to cycle to school and provide bike sheds for their convenience. These can be found at Brookside, at the main entrance of the school and in front of the Art Block. Students should lock their bikes at all times and use a helmet when cycling.

## **Code of Conduct and School Policies**

These can be found on our school website at by following this direct [link](#).

## How to make the most of Sixth Form

---

Reading the news and following educational debate can leave students with the impression that the sole priority for Year 13 and Year 12 is the examination results they achieve. Of course, these are still very important in the increasingly global community we now all live in. Globalisation has provided enticing new work opportunities for well-qualified students, but it has also led to increased levels of competition and created new challenges and demands. Our responsibility is to ensure that our students are prepared for the world they will enter once they leave St Mary's. It is no longer enough to focus entirely on examination results. They not only need to achieve academically, they need to acquire a variety of other skills and to undergo a range of transformative experiences.

I encourage all students to consider how they will make the most of the opportunities available to them both in and out of school. Rather than focusing simply and solely on academic success, they need to look at their sixth-form years as an opportunity to acquire a portfolio of skills. Of course, skills learned in the classroom will comprise a major part of any such portfolio. However, if they are to be fully prepared for life beyond school they will also need to engage in a committed way to activities outside the classroom where they can develop a greater understanding of the world of work and acquire a wider range of life-skills.

Perhaps the most important life skill is the ability and willingness to learn. By learning new skills we increase our understanding of the world around us and equip ourselves with the tools we need to live a more productive and fulfilling life, finding ways to cope with the challenges that life, inevitably, throws at us. Life skills are not always taught directly but often learned indirectly through experience and practice. Our students need to be able to take control and responsibility for their own development by joining activities, considering work experience, and extending themselves through opportunities as they are presented to them this year; we will of course support and guide all students.

It is also important to make clear that academic achievement does not mean A-levels alone, and this is why all students have the opportunity to complete the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) during their time with us. This encourages students to work in a self-directed, self-motivated fashion. It allows them to explore a topic of their choosing beyond the specification and develop their own ideas. The outcome can vary from a straightforward written report to the staging of an event or the creation of an artefact such as a computer game! Students can benefit greatly from completing a project of this kind by working independently, strengthening their research, organisational or problem-solving skills, becoming more flexible in their thinking, and learning to reflect on the value of what they have done. In other words, the EPQ is yet another opportunity for them to equip themselves with skills that will help them deal with the demands of higher education and the world of work.

Aside from any formal qualifications this year, which is important for students is that they show academic engagement. How are they engaging with their subjects outside of the syllabus? This can come in a variety of ways. In Cambridge we are lucky

enough to have a wealth of opportunities across the board. Cambridge University has a public events page which is always a good place to start to investigate options. I strongly encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities. They are an excellent way of our students being able to discover new ideas and passion or to extend what they have already learnt.

However, academic engagement doesn't always need to mean going and listening to someone else. Students should not underestimate the value of reading for their A-levels. Reading not only allows them to extend their knowledge, it helps they develop their own ideas. I don't believe all of their decisions should be led by the UCAS process or their CV, but students should think how about they are going to present themselves as they move on from Sixth Form in two years. How can they show curiosity, interest, optimism, motivation and passion for whatever it is they want to do next?

Here is a profile of someone who might be studying Economics. They could have entered an essay competition, attended lectures at the Festival of Ideas and read books which extend the syllabus.

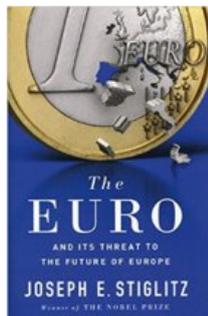
## Academic Engagement: Economics Example

### A NEW SILK ROAD?

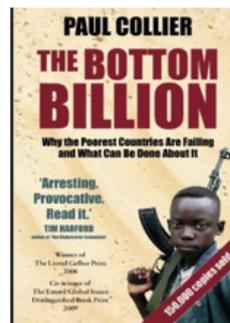
We all know that China is a global economic hub, but what kinds of social and cultural exchanges underpin its economic miracle? Paul Anderson addresses some of the cultural aspects of globalisation.

4PM – 5PM Pre-book  
→ SAT 22 OCT

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Sidgwick Site, Sidgwick Avenue, CB3 9DA



ADAM SMITH  
INSTITUTE



### EUROPE: BEYOND THE REFERENDUM

Following the extraordinary results of the EU referendum, join panellists Larry Elliott, Chris Bickerton, Sonia Delesalle-Stolper and Catherine Barnard as they discuss Brexit and the future of Europe and the United Kingdom. Chaired by Chris Mann, BBC.

7PM – 8.30PM Pre-book  
→ THU 20 OCT

St John's College Fisher Building, St John's Street, CB2 1TP



It's important to note here that academic engagement does not just mean turning up to these events, it means responding to their experience. If they go to the Brexit talk and disagree with an opinion maybe it will lead them to further research and reading, maybe it will lead them to question an economic theory.

Students must get use to reflecting and responding to their experiences rather than just ticking them off a list as being done. In order to help students with this they have set up their own Evernote account to create an e-journal. As a school we promote particular qualities and areas. Through Sixth Form we hope that students

are able to build on these and can evidence their contributions and development in these areas.

We encourage students to evidence and reflect on the following:

- Leadership/initiative
- ACP
- VAA
- Work Experience
- Academic Stretch/Engagement
- Digital Literacy
- Well being
- Extra-Curricular
- Social Responsibility
- Academic Target Setting/Ambitions
- Showcase – What I am proud of

## Other Useful Contacts

---

### **Headmistress**

Ms C Avery

[CAvery@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:CAvery@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

### **Deputy Head (Academic)**

Mr S Seidler

[SSeidler@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:SSeidler@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

### **Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding)**

Miss A Fleming

[Afleming@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:Afleming@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)

### **Assistant Head (Director of Studies)**

Ms E Hall

[EHall@stmaryscambridge.co.uk](mailto:EHall@stmaryscambridge.co.uk)