

THIRD FORM
INFORMATION AND
CURRICULUM

Challenging & Fun



CHELTEMHAM
COLLEGE

2027



"a broad and balanced curriculum, enabling pupils to experience a wide range of creative, scientific, linguistic, mathematical and technological subjects. The curriculum is engaging and ambitious"

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

Welcome to the Third Form



The Third Form (Year 9) is a highly rewarding year with lessons in a variety of subjects, a full activities and games programme and opportunities for challenge. It is where the foundations for IGCSEs and GCSEs are laid alongside establishing a strong independent work ethic through learning study skills that will last throughout your academic career.

Introduction

Tutors

Each pupil has a dedicated tutor, linked to their House. The tutor has a vital role supporting their pastoral and academic development, meeting Tutees every morning, monitoring rewards and sanctions, overseeing their reading progress, and having fortnightly one-to-one meetings, reviewing and reporting on pupil progress each half term. The tutor is the parents' first port of call for all academic matters.

Highly tailored teaching and learning

At Cheltenham College, high achievement in no way equals high stress, something which all our community, pupils, staff, and parents recognise and value highly. Our class sizes are small, and pupils are taught in sets for some subjects and Forms for other subjects.

Why do we place pupils in sets for some subjects?

Teaching in Maths, Science and Modern Languages is most effective when pupils are in sets selected by academic attainment. Sets are determined initially by performance in Common Entrance or Cheltenham's Entrance exams prior to the pupil joining the Third Form. Sets are reviewed regularly, and some pupils may move between sets to provide them with a pace of learning more appropriate to their attainment in the subject.

Moving a pupil 'down' a set is never a punishment. It is only done when the teacher and the Head of Department consider that they will be better supported in their learning by moving at a different pace; any change of set should leave them in a better position to achieve, through working at a speed more appropriate to their attainment in the subject.

We ask you to trust our professional judgement in such matters; we do not take these decisions lightly. When a pupil changes set, the Tutor will notify parents. If you would like further information about a set move, please do not hesitate to ask the Tutor.

How the Forms work

The Forms (named 3M1, 3M2, 3P1, 3P2, 3R1 and 3R2) are a pupil's key group at College and where they are taught English, Art, Music, Design & Technology, Computing, PSHEE, Geography, History and Theology, Philosophy and Ethics (TPE), as well as the Foundation Project Qualification. The advantage of this arrangement is that a pupil spends much of the week learning with a familiar group. The attainment range in each Form is broad and the Humanities subjects taught in these groups benefit from having a variety of pupils in each class.

Subjects

In each week there are 42 periods, and these are divided up as follows:

Taught in sets

- Four periods of Maths
- Three periods of Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- Two languages taught over six periods
- Three periods of Latin or Classical Civilisation
- Two periods of time-tabled games.

Taught by Form

- Four periods of English
- Two periods of Geography
- Two periods of History
- Two periods of TPE (Religious Studies)
- Two periods of Design & Technology
- Two periods of Art
- One period of Music
- One period of Floreat, our PSHEE programme
- One period of Computing
- One period for the Foundation Project Qualification.

Remaining periods

- Three periods of a beginners' language (French, Spanish or German)
- Two periods of Art
- One period of Music
- One period of Floreat, our PSHE programme
- A tutorial period on Monday mornings
- Two periods of Games (in addition to Thursday afternoon Games)
- One period of Computing.

Sport and Drama

Pupils take part in sporting activity on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday and the main sports are Hockey, Netball, Tennis and Cricket for girls; and boys play Rugby, Hockey and Cricket.

As part of the English curriculum, pupils develop an appreciation and understanding of Drama. There are also opportunities to take part in productions during the year – both on and off stage. Both Sports Science and Drama are popular subjects at GCSE and pupils learn more about these subjects as qualifications prior to selecting their GCSE choices.

Languages

Third Form pupils continue with the language they studied in their previous school (either French or Spanish); and begin studying German, Spanish or French as their second language. Pupils whose native language is not English may have classes in English as an Additional Language while the remainder of the year group is studying one of their languages. Some pupils who have individual Learning Support lessons might study only one language.

Foundation Project Qualification (FPQ)

The Foundation Project Qualification (FPQ) is an independent research project that is undertaken by all pupils in the Third Form. As an enriching addition to the curriculum, this project is focused on a topic that is of interest to the pupil and involves planning, researching, and writing. Each pupil has a member of staff who is their FPQ mentor and supports them as they progress. Pupils develop sophisticated research and writing skills which are great preparation for coursework at GCSE and Sixth Form, and the challenge of tackling the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in Upper College. Pupils' FPQs are submitted for external certification by the AQA examination board.

Digital Learning and Computing

In weekly Computing lessons, pupils explore the fundamental ideas underpinning modern technology, demystifying complex systems by revealing the simple logic and ingenuity beneath them. They study core concepts such as binary and hexadecimal, understanding how all digital processes reduce to patterns of 1s and 0s, representing electrical states within a computer. This provides insight into how systems store, process, and communicate information.

Teaching links hardware and software, showing how physical components and programmed instructions combine to create complete systems, including automated and robotic solutions to real-world problems.

Alongside this, pupils develop discipline, resilience, and precision through high-level programming in Python. Beginning with Turtle, they progress to more advanced constructs, learning to break complex problems into manageable steps and building skills transferable across subjects.

Third Form Challenge

Each month, Houses will nominate a team to participate in the Third Form Challenge event. Rounds will include orienteering, chess, dodgeball, a quiz, the bake off and

many more. Pupils will be challenged to try new things, get out of their comfort zone, and build that all important House spirit. Entirely pupil driven, it is a great way to meet new pupils, develop teamwork and aspire to leadership. Each round, Houses will accrue points which contribute towards the coveted Melvill Cup which will be awarded at Speech Day.

Learning Support

The Learning Support Team is responsible for the support arrangements for pupils with recognised learning needs and they oversee the testing of new entrants – liaising with parents and previous schools.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL Team works with pupils for whom English is not a first language. New pupils who may need support in this area are assessed on arrival. Pupils who take EAL have group classes with the EAL teachers instead of taking one of the European languages. In some cases, individual classes may be arranged.

Prep (Homework)

Prep is set daily and is usually an hour and a half each evening. Sometimes a task will take longer to finish – and pupils learn to find times when they can continue to work on their prep; for example, there is always some free time on Thursday and Saturday Games afternoons. Boarders have evening study time in House every weekday.

Assessments

Pupils continue to gain experience with assessments and examinations throughout their time at College. There are in class assessments across the curriculum in November and pupils will sit end of year examinations in the Summer Term. The latter are centrally timetabled in the Sports Hall to provide an exam hall experience. This gives pupils the opportunity to encounter the exam hall expectations and gain further knowledge of how to prepare effectively.

Looking Ahead to Fourth Form and Fifth Form

Pupils choose their GCSE or IGCSE subjects in February of Third Form and start those courses at the beginning of Fourth Form. To help pupils decide, full details of options and subjects are sent out in December, and in January pupils register online with the careers and higher education platform Unifrog to enable them to understand the subjects required for certain pathways, and make informed decisions about their choices.

In the Fourth and Fifth Forms, prep increases and organisation of work is key. Coursework requires planning and foresight. This is also when pupils begin reflecting on career aspirations and university admissions requirements, such as work experience, reading, and trips.

Keeping in touch

We would much rather hear from you and pupils than have questions build up in the background. The Tutor is the main point of contact for academic matters in the first instance.

Head and Deputy Head of Lower College (Third Form to Fifth Form)

There are two other teachers who are important for Third Form pupils: Mr Graham Cutts, is Head of Lower College and oversees the academic progress of pupils in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms. [**g.cutts@cheltenhamcollege.org**](mailto:g.cutts@cheltenhamcollege.org)

Mr Matthew Preston is the Deputy Head of Lower College and he has responsibility for the academic progress of Third Form pupils specifically. [**m.preston@cheltenhamcollege.org**](mailto:m.preston@cheltenhamcollege.org)

The Weekly Timetable

Below is an overview of the weekly timetable which includes the evening timings for boarders.

Day pupils can stay for the evening or go home anytime after the end of Period 8 (16:10).

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Time	Saturday
07.30-08.00	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	07.15-07.45	Breakfast
08.30-08.55	Morning Routine	Morning Routine	Morning Routine	Morning Routine	Morning Routine	08.15 -08.25	House Registration
09.00-09.40	Period 1	Games	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	08.30-09.05	Period 1
09.45-10.25	Period 2		Period 2	Period 2	Period 2	09.10-09.45	Period 2
10.25-10.55	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	09.50-10.25	Period 3
10.55-11.35	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	10.25-10.55	Break
11.40-12.20	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4	10.55-11.30	Period 4
12.25-13.00	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	11.35-12.10	Period 5
13.00-13.45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	12.10-13.00	Lunch
13.45-14.00	House Registration	House Registration	House Registration	House Registration	House Registration	13.00-13.10	House Registration
14.15-14.50	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6	Games	Period 6	Afternoon	Games
14.55-15.30	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7		Period 7		
15.35-16.10	Period 8	Period 8	Period 8		Period 8		
16.30-17.30	Clubs and Activities	Optional Sport	Third Form Challenge		Match Practice		
17.30-18.00	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper		
18.00-18.45	Study #1	Study #1	Study #1	Study #1	Study #1		
18.45-19.00	House Assembly	House Assembly	House Assembly	House Assembly	House Assembly		

Art

Form & Function

Supportive structured projects provided by specialist teachers during Third Form, cover the three areas of Fine Art, Ceramics and Printmaking, enabling pupils to develop a thoughtfulness required for a future love of learning and endeavour. In Art, we focus on research, gathering resources, looking at artists and their work, analysis, and development of personal theories about the artists' responses, and subsequently recording and refining personal ideas. Our projects prepare pupils with a curiosity and open mindedness that any inquisitive person should possess.

Pupils at Cheltenham are encouraged to take risks within Art, becoming stronger, more confident, and expressive individuals as a result. This develops individuality and creative spirit through exploration and endeavour, in a secure and exciting positive environment, and encourages pupils to take possession of their work and ideas, to recognise that all outcomes and results, no matter how seemingly insignificant, can lead to great things. We nurture independent learners through this model.

What does the course cover?

We choose an exciting and meaningful over-arching theme for the year, which enables pupils to experience creativity within the same topic through a ten-week rotation of the following specialist areas: Sculpture, Printmaking and Fine Art. There are formative assessments throughout each rotation of specialist areas and regular verbal feedback will be provided as work unfurls. Specialist teachers provide guidance and review progress through maintaining an online portfolio.

Recommended reading

BBC – bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings

Tate – tate.org.uk

Design & Technology (D&T)

Creativity & Innovation

Preparing for an AI-Driven Future

In a job market rapidly reshaped by Artificial Intelligence, the ability to think creatively and critically is more essential than ever. Our D&T curriculum equips pupils for this future through hands-on, independent project work and rigorous real-world problem-solving.

What does the course cover?

Pupils develop proficiency in industry-standard software and engage in a high-impact practical curriculum. By Christmas, every pupil will have 3D-printed their own designs, built and coded a robot, and manufactured physical products in the workshop. By adopting an iterative design methodology, pupils learn to prototype and refine solutions across a variety of materials. This innovation-centered approach equips them with a creative toolkit that they will 'carry' beyond the Third Form, preparing them for the challenges of the future.

Practical Excellence

Working in our professionally equipped workshops, pupils will design and manufacture physical prototypes for a range of projects while also developing the documentation and communication skills essential for success at GCSE level and beyond.

“the school fosters intellectual curiosity, talents beyond the academic sphere, skills for the modern world, the development of spiritual, moral and aesthetic awareness within themselves and a commitment to the service of others”

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

Recommended reading

Vogue – vogue.co.uk

Classics

Cultures & Customs

“Self-motivated pupils take pride in their studies. They work confidently and independently to explore wider contexts through their own research”

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

A major benefit of being a pupil at Cheltenham College is the opportunity to study a Classical subject. All pupils in the Third Form study a form of Classics, usually depending on what has been studied before. The Classics Department comprises six specialist teachers and six classrooms, all situated in a historic part of the central Quad. A rotating programme of annual lectures, competitions and trips is complemented by the lively Classics Society, featuring games, quizzes and talks by pupils and staff at twice-termly evening events.

Latin

Latin offers a chance to develop logical and analytical patterns of thought, to broaden vocabulary and understanding of one's own language, widening cultural and literary knowledge and sensitivity. The Latin language provides academic challenge, and the study of the Romans provides intrinsically interesting literature and background. Pupils study the long-standing and highly accessible Cambridge Latin Course. Work combines grammatical exercises, unseen translation and comprehension, cultural research, and presentation. The Third Form course offers the opportunity for all pupils to access GCSE study, regardless of how much Latin has been done before coming to Cheltenham.

Classical Greek

In the Spring Term, all those studying Latin are given a taster opportunity to study Classical Greek. Taught by specialists, allowing access to the richly rewarding study of not only a different alphabet from our own, but also another rewarding Classical language – which is an option that can then be studied at GCSE. Following John Taylor's Greek to GCSE course, lessons use a similar structure to Latin.

Classical Civilisation

Those not studying Latin study a wide range of aspects of the ancient world in English translation. Ever-popular myths and legends from the Greeks and Romans are studied alongside their lives and works, with a particular focus on what it meant to be 'Greek' or 'Roman'. The course also looks further afield, to the civilisations of Persia and Egypt, examining how the Classical world dealt with outsiders and reflecting on what we can learn about modern-day attitudes from our ancestors. While enjoyment and success in Third Form is a good foundation for studying Classical Civilisation at GCSE, the subject remains highly accessible for those who have studied Latin in Third Form to begin from scratch.

English

Chapter & Verse

Building on prior learning, we actively prepare for the International GCSE in English Literature and the GCSE in English Language but also seek to instil a love of language and establish a rewarding, life-long relationship with books. The year provides great opportunities for both academic progress and personal growth in a comfortable and well-resourced environment. The course is delivered by a team of ten passionate and knowledgeable English teachers who use a broad range of methods to engage and enthuse pupils.

In the study of literature, pupils learn to structure analytical essays, and to write creative, informative, and persuasive pieces in response to a variety of stimuli. Through individual presentations and through discussion in groups and pairs, we learn the art of speaking articulately and listening carefully. Pupils are encouraged to see the exciting links between literature and the other arts, such as painting, music, and film. We encourage reading widely for pleasure, independently of the teacher, and to participate in the Reading Diploma, an initiative that rewards independent reading and concludes with the award of an English Department tie, a highly sought-after accolade that features an image of Shakespeare's family coat of arms.

What does the course cover?

The course begins with a novel chosen by individual English teachers, but with a focus on building pupils' awareness of characterisation, theme and the role context plays in a text. During this term, pupils will be able to take what they have learned and apply it to their own creative writing task. In the Spring Term, classes engage with one of Shakespeare's most admired plays, *Othello*, and learn to both analyse and appreciate its rich language and powerful themes. The final term is dedicated to poetry, including the study of traditional and contemporary verse, and concluding with the wonderful Hannam Clarke recitation prize at the end of the year.

Recommended reading

After the War by Tom Palmer

A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness

The Starlight Watchmaker
by Lauren James

Geography

Landscapes & Places

At Geography's core lies the understanding of the complex relationships between people and the environment. It is these relationships that provide the foundation of the Third Form course.

An active Bingen Geography Society complements and extends the classroom-based content. The Society meets at least once every half-term to discuss contemporary issues, recently published literature, 'breaking news' case studies and the opportunity to take part in regular debating competitions.

The aims of Geography in the Third Form are:

- To link studies to the modern world and to specific recent events, demonstrating the vital importance of the subject to present and future generations
- To develop a range of geographical skills through practical work, use of maps, photographs, and satellite images, and through the regular use of ICT, such as ArcGIS
- To demonstrate the importance of field work to geographical investigation
- To encourage evaluations of findings, through discussion and debate, by making reasoned and balanced judgements on the geographical issues being studied.

What does the course cover?

The emphasis is very much on providing Third Form Geographers with an experience that is enlightening and inspiring, and that offers a traditional balance of skills as well as knowledge and understanding. Throughout the course, pupils' progress is assessed through extended writing, short-answer style questions, decision making exercises and enquiry based tasks.

Global Threats: what does Geography look like today?

This introductory topic explores the main contemporary geographical issues facing humanity on a global, national and local scale. Pupils focus on population growth, disease, terrorism, plastic oceans, super volcanoes and the changing urban landscape.

Is the world a better place?

This topic has been inspired by the book *Factfulness* written by one of the Department's heroes, the late Hans Rosling.

What is the Geography of the Middle East?

This topic explores the geopolitics of the region, human rights, the sustainability of places like Dubai, as well as investigating the dryland and rising sea levels on a global scale. This module explores global weather and climate systems, how they change over time, and the contrast between hot and cold environments.

Globalisation and Bristol Enquiry

Through fashion, trade and chocolate pupils explore the conflict between people and profit in order to gain an understanding that local, unsustainable actions can have global consequences. As part of this unit, pupils undertake fieldwork in Bristol to investigate its global links of the past and how it is achieving its aim of being a global city of the future by improving its sustainability credentials. The work undertaken enables them to learn the various methods of primary data collection using technology, such as Survey123 for ArcGIS. Pupils also study other key geographic skills to help with future fieldwork that is undertaken at IGCSE and A Level.

"Pupils enjoy individual, self-directed work ... which enables them to gain confidence and cement their own knowledge"

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

Recommended reading

Factfulness by Hans Rosling

10 Billion by Stephen Emmott

Prisoners of Geography

by Tim Marshall

Fighting the Banana Wars and other Fair-Trade by Harriet Lamb

History

War & Peace

We aim to ensure that pupils in the Third Form enjoy their study of History, as this is key to doing well. We look at 19th, 20th and 21st century History across mini units set in Britain, Europe, America, Africa and Asia, developing a sense of History's 'point' relative to the world we live in today and building analytical skills, to prepare pupils for success beyond this year.

During the Summer Term, there is an annual Battlefield Trip. We spend four days visiting exactly where our 702 Old Cheltonians fought and fell in the First World War. This makes History 'real': we can see their names, the trenches, the front lines, we find barbed wire and 'pigtales' still scarring the territory, and we also get to appreciate the frites and friendliness of the French and Belgian towns that 'hosted' the conflict, staying in Tournai in Belgium. We visit individual lone graves, and places like Tyne Cot, the Menin Gate and Thiepval where tens of thousands are remembered together.

What does the course cover?

We start by considering: why study History – and why do historians ask questions, and sometimes ones that some people don't like, about the past? This leads us into examining the choices made over which 'bits' of History are studied and why, as we begin to argue for the significant events, people and changes of the early 21st century. Conflicting interpretations on this have been constantly on the front pages, thanks to the growth of movements like Black Lives Matter, environmentalism, and the debate over imperialism and reparations.

We debate more generally choices made around memorialisation and commemoration, uncovering further the 'politics' of history,

before investigating British behaviour in the 19th century Cape Colony, and cases of arguable genocide within the American West, Cambodia and Rwanda. A focus on remembrance and the First World War, and the history of College at war leads into the Summer Term, when pupils start the Edexcel IGCSE with 1920s America. They investigate the significance of cinema as a contributory factor in the 'roaring' of the 'Jazz Age', assessing this before ending with film-making inspired by Busby Berkeley and Harold Lloyd.

By this point Third Form pupils can argue why History matters; how it might at times be 'used' to fit an agenda and why we must always seek to think critically. Alongside this, we aim to build capacity for empathy, a sense of the diversity and richness of human experience seen from different perspectives over time, and the sheer enjoyment of History as a subject.

"The supportive school and boarding environments underpin pupils' good academic progress, their access to competitive sports, educational visits and opportunities for service to the wider community"

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

Recommended reading

Regeneration

by Pat Barker

Tunnel 29

Helena Merriman

In Memoriam

Alice Winn

Mathematics

Facts & Figures

In Third Form, pupils learn logical thinking and problem solving skills in general. Mathematics is taught in ability sets throughout the Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms. Pupils work with scientific calculators which are needed for examinations.

The Maths Society meets regularly and enables pupils to research and present on mathematical topics largely outside of the syllabus.

“Mathematics plays a central role in the modern world; it is not only the language of Science and Technology but also a fascinating and challenging subject in its own right.”

Brendan Enright, Head of Mathematics

What does the course cover?

The syllabus followed is working towards the IGCSE in Mathematics from Edexcel – Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Mathematics (Specification A) (4MA1). This develops a broad approach to Mathematics which is relevant and appropriate to the many different uses of the subject in the modern world while maintaining the traditional academic rigour.

In the Third Form, pupils will recap much of the basic material met previously and then go on to study new material; Algebra and Shape feature strongly in the Autumn Term.

As pupils move from the Third Form to the Fourth Form, some pupils may move into a different set. The top set in the Third Form aims to sit the IGCSE at the end of the Fourth Form. Typically, pupils remain in the top set if they are on target to gain a Grade 9 (the top grade) in the exam. These pupils will then go on to sit Further Maths GCSE in the Fifth Form. All other pupils sit the exam at the end of the Fifth Form.

Recommended resources

NRICH by University of Cambridge,
Faculty of Mathematics

Mathematics puzzle books
by Martin Gardener

Modern Languages

Communication & Culture

“Positive relationships between pupils and staff foster a deep sense of belonging”

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

When pupils join the Third Form they have varying backgrounds in both the language studied and the standard reached. When joining College, pupils will choose two languages – one as a continuation (French or Spanish) and one as a beginner (Spanish or German). We may be able to offer French as a beginner language, but this is subject to demand. Native or near-native speakers should ideally choose from the languages in which they are less proficient, although they will have the opportunity to take a GCSE in their native language in Fourth Form.

What does the course cover?

The aim of the Third Form Modern Languages curriculum is to enable further progress in the language studied prior to arrival at College (French or Spanish), and to provide exposure to a second, new language. In all our courses we aim to promote enjoyment of language learning and instil in our pupils an appreciation of the culture of the countries where the target language is spoken. We are committed to enabling our pupils to be effective communicators in the target language, as well as providing a strong grammatical foundation for subsequent GCSE study. At GCSE, pupils are able to opt for any of the three languages we offer in Third Form, and we encourage many pupils to continue with two languages.

The department is committed to offering opportunities to practise language skills in France, Spain and Germany, with past trips discovering Salamanca, Montpellier, and Berlin. Pupils are strongly encouraged to attend our Modern Foreign Languages Society evenings, with events ranging from a crêpe and Kahoot night to taster sessions in new languages.

Recommended resources

Duolingo

BBC Bitesize KS3 Modern Foreign Languages

Music

Rhythm & Flow

The aim of the Third Form course is to give a highly varied and enjoyable introduction to a wide range of musical topics which at the same time provide a valuable introduction to GCSE work. The ethos that permeates lessons is high quality practical music making and engagement, inclusivity, and accessibility. There is a strong vocational aspect to the delivery: during a music lesson everyone in the room is a musician with something to contribute to the class 'ensemble'.

What does the course cover?

Music is a practical subject and musical learning is about thinking and acting as a musician. This means that music lessons should be about learning in and through music, with music making being the main form of discourse for learning how music works. The Third Form course focuses on developing imagination and creativity as individuals, encompassing any wide-ranging prior experiences of music and helping growth in confidence as musicians. As many forms of performance are incorporated in the course as possible, such as: individual keyboard work, class singing, percussion playing, and forming a class ensemble making use of your own instruments.

Listening to and appraising live and recorded music underpins all the above and the language of the elements of music is used and developed, creating a strong foundation for GCSE. This ensures that pupils can talk accurately about music with an appropriate level of analysis and insight, resulting in a more mature understanding of how music works. We encourage pupils to link their thoughts to a consideration of the place and function of music in society. This applies equally to all music, from religious music of the Renaissance to current pop music, and from English folk songs to Japanese video game music.

Alongside ensemble music making, there are possibilities for individual and paired work. Pupils are encouraged to perform to each other with mini-recital slots included in lessons throughout the year, and these performances generate useful feedback and learning points. Composition projects are

another opportunity for an individual or paired approach. Work is usually completed using industry standard sequencing and notation software such as Logic Pro and Sibelius, although pupils may prefer to notate their pieces using other forms such as chord patterns, lead sheets, or even through making an audio recording of their own performance.

Music contributes much to the cultural life of College and the Third Form Music course is an invitation to all incoming pupils to engage with music at whatever level they wish. The course functions primarily as a foundation for further study at GCSE. However, the opportunities for pupil centred learning and investigation ensure it is accessible and interesting for all. By the end of the Third Form Music course, Third Form pupils know more about the inner workings of music and its function in the world, as well as being more confident musicians.

If you have any queries about Music at College, please contact us at **music@cheltenhamcollege.org**.

"Our ability to express ourselves has never been more important, and Music continues to allow this in a way that no other subject can."

Alex Fox, Director of Music

Recommended reading

This Is Your Brain on Music:

Understanding a Human Obsession

by Daniel Levitin

The Cambridge Music Guide

by Stanley Sadie and Alison Latham

Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain by Oliver Sacks

Science

Challenge & Wonder

It is the mission of the Science Department to ensure that pupils gain the depth of knowledge required to understand science in the real world. We do this by developing the range of skills essential for scientific thinking and the personal qualities needed to build resilient learners and excellent scientists.

Pupils are encouraged to enter national competitions, read extensively and the department arranges trips to conferences to expose them to cutting edge scientific developments and research.

The teaching within the department develops learners who can read scientific literature critically and ensures that they become scientifically literate citizens of society.

Across the three scientific disciplines we develop the essential scientific skills required to plan and undertake investigations and interpret and analyse their results.

Housed in state of the art teaching laboratories, the department is a bright and exciting place to be. We encourage pupils to go beyond the curriculum and pursue the many avenues that science has to offer. As well as offering a stimulating science lecture series, we also have very active student run Astronomical, Eco and Sustainability and Science Societies who meet regularly.

What does the course cover?

In the Third Form pupils are taught Chemistry, Biology and Physics as separate sciences. Each of the sciences follows a bespoke scheme of work designed to pave the way for IGCSE.

A range of topics are studied across the three sciences which is supported by engaging practical work. In the Third Form the emphasis is placed on establishing a solid foundation of knowledge, developing sound practical skills, and introducing the scientific method. Pupils study a range of topics including, states of matter, the Periodic Table, rates of reaction, forces and motion, astrophysics, living world, nutrition and photosynthesis.

Recommended reading

Gulp: Adventures on the Alimentary Canal by Mary Roach

Eating the Sun: How Plants Power the Planet by Oliver Morton

The Disappearing Spoon by Sam Kean

Wonderful Life with the Elements: The Periodic Table Personified

by Bunpei Yorifuji

Theology, Philosophy and Ethics (TPE)

Reflect & Debate

TPE is a journey of inquiry into the world. It is an opportunity to explore the 'big questions,' of right and wrong, religion and science, life and death, religion and society and the nature of philosophy. The aims of the Third Form course are to introduce pupils to all three components of TPE, as well as developing their ability to write, think critically, discuss openly, and to appreciate the views of others. TPE becomes a GCSE option so the Third Form course also gives a flavour of what to expect should pupils opt to take the subject going forward.

What does the course cover?

In the Autumn Term, pupils study an Introduction to Ethics. Using thought experiments such as the 'Trolley Problem,' they acquire a more technical vocabulary to express and debate views on what counts as right and wrong, good, and bad.

Pupils explore the difficult and important topic of Medical Ethics in the second half of the Autumn Term and first half of the Spring Term. This unit shows how relevant TPE is to society and allows pupils to put their ethical terminology into practice in relation to real-life issues.

In the second half of the Spring Term pupils learn about Religion, Justice and Punishment, a module which looks at what gives human life value, how humans should be treated, and the extent to which justice is given in relation to different crimes through the punishments meted out to convicted criminals.

In the Summer Term, pupils are taught to think critically about issues arising from AI, such as bias, the ethics of AI, whether AI can be creative, about the Turing Test and more besides.

Recommended reading

The Philosophy Book

by Will Buckingham et al

A Little History of Philosophy

by Nigel Warburton

Learning Support and English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Nouns & Verbs

“[College] leaders successfully create a culture characterised by mutual respect and a sense of community”

Independent Schools Inspectorate, 2026

Learning Support and EAL

Cheltenham College aims to support every pupil's learning and actively seeks to identify and to provide for a pupil's individual learning requirements. If a specific need has been identified at their previous school, it is essential that parents or guardians inform the Head of Learning Support/SENCO and provide copies of any reports.

At the start of the Autumn Term, Third Form pupils take a series of standardised tests of literacy skills. The screening tests provide up to date school-based data about reading, writing and spelling and help to identify a pupil's strengths and any areas of difficulty. Teachers also monitor performance in lessons and class tests and refer pupils where further support may be required.

If standardised test results indicate a difficulty with literacy skills, the Head of Learning Support discusses strategies for support with parents and staff. A pupil may also be referred to the Learning Support department by a Teacher or Tutor, for monitoring, further assessment or for individual support.

Pupils can seek advice or support of their own accord, usually on a drop in basis in the first instance. Where it is felt that longer-term support would be beneficial, parents are consulted and regular extra lessons can be arranged.

Progress is reviewed each term so that lessons stop when skills have developed and a pupil is ready to work more independently. Lessons take place at times that do not result in pupils missing their subject classes and are given by teachers with relevant qualifications and experience. There is a charge for regular one-to-one lessons.

A list of pupils who have specific individual learning needs is published confidentially to staff and the database provides support information for Teachers.

These records inform Teachers, Tutors, Housemasters and Housemistresses of appropriate support strategies. Regular training keeps Teachers up to date with current developments in supporting learning needs.

Revision and study skills are developed through whole-school learning skills programmes.

SENCO@cheltenhamcollege.org

EAL at College

If English is not a pupil's first language and they are in need of support, they have English as an Additional Language lessons when their peers are learning another language.

In the Third Form, there are three lessons per week which are taken together as a class. EAL lessons aim to equip pupils with the necessary skills and confidence in the use of English language to allow them to integrate successfully in the mainstream curriculum.

The detail of lessons depends on any group's particular needs, as identified through diagnostic testing. However, the focus of the lessons will be on enhancing all four skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Vocabulary building and strengthening of grammatical accuracy are key, and lessons address this with an integrated approach. The department supports not only EAL pupils' learning of the language, but also what they are covering in other subjects. To this end there is a strong cross curricular approach and a focus on developing effective study skills, 'learning to learn'.

Individual one-to-one lessons, for which there is an extra charge, are also available if there is need for further support. Those identified with needs are encouraged to take extra lessons and the parents or guardians are informed. Work is regularly reviewed and the teacher makes suggestions and set targets for the term ahead.

Floreat

Flourish & Grow

Floreat is the name given to Cheltenham College's PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education) programme. It is a core part of the curriculum and is taught as a timetabled lesson to every year group across the College.

The overarching aim of Floreat is to prepare pupils for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of growing up and becoming adults. The programme supports pupils to flourish holistically by fostering their emotional and social development, while deepening their understanding of themselves, their relationships with others, and the wider world in which they live.

Through Floreat, pupils are encouraged to explore and develop their personal responses to a range of issues that affect their lives. This enables them to reflect on their values, beliefs and aspirations, which are essential in helping them to realise their potential. Structured opportunities for discussion and reflection allow pupils to build resilience, develop strong and positive relationships, and gain the confidence to contribute meaningfully to their communities. Ultimately, the programme aims to help pupils develop a clear sense of purpose and personal identity.

The Floreat curriculum is designed as a spiral curriculum, meaning that key themes are revisited at increasing levels of depth and complexity as pupils progress through the school. This ensures that learning is both age-appropriate and responsive to pupils' developmental needs, allowing them to build on prior knowledge and understanding over time.

While the curriculum is carefully planned, fully resourced and proactive in its delivery, it is also responsive to emerging issues and current events. This ensures that Floreat remains dynamic, relevant and reflective of the real challenges and experiences faced by pupils.

In the Third Form, pupils explore a range of topics designed to support their transition into senior school life and the early stages of adolescence. These areas include:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Long term commitment and families
- The teenage brain
- Sleep
- Mental health
- Body image
- Sun safety
- First aid
- Careers
- Substances
- Artificial Intelligence and social media
- Artificial intelligence and generated imagery
- Algorithms
- Relationships and sex education

The Chatfeild Roberts Library

Inform & Reflect

The library promotes personal reading and intellectual curiosity through displays, reading lists and of course having over 10,000 amazing books!

All pupils are automatically members of the Library, which provides books for both study and pleasure reading, with loans of up to 10 books for 3 weeks, and easy renewals.

The Library is open from 8:00 every weekday. Third Form pupils can also use the library at break, before evening supper and on Sunday afternoon between 13:00 and 16:00. Pupils may also have an activity, supervised study or class scheduled during the day and they will have sessions with the Librarian for their FPQ.

The Reading Diploma encourages pupils to extend and reflect on their reading – with three levels culminating in the Gold which comes with its own special tie.

In addition to the beautiful main library space the library has two side rooms – the Anne Cadbury and the Cadbury Room. We have facilities for printing, photocopying and device charging. Library staff are always on hand to recommend books and help in any way they can.

With comfy chairs and study desks, chess and jigsaw tables, there's plenty of space to study and relax, everyone is welcome.



Cheltenham College
Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7LD

Tel: +44 (0)1242 265 600
admissions@cheltenhamcollege.org
cheltenhamcollege.org

Registered Charity No. 311720