

**Citizenship at Overstone Park School**

**Newsletter | December 2023 2023**

***Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders:***

***Falcons and Phenix (KS4 - GCSE)***

***Kingfishers and Magpies (KS3)***

At **Overstone Park School**, we recognise the importance of preparing our students to become informed and active citizens. Through our comprehensive civic education program, we aim to develop their understanding of democracy, government, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Our KS3 curriculum emphasises active learning and critical thinking skills, empowering pupils to engage in meaningful discussions, evaluate diverse perspectives, and make informed decisions.

**Key Areas of Focus:**

1. Democracy and Its Principles: Pupils will explore the fundamental principles of democracy, including the rule of law, individual liberty, and the importance of elections. They will analyse the various forms of democracy and their impact on societies worldwide.
2. Government Structure and Processes: Students will gain insights into the structure and functioning of government at different levels, from local to national. They will examine the roles of different branches of government and the mechanisms that ensure accountability and transparency.
3. Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities: Pupils will delve into citizenship rights and responsibilities. They will analyse the importance of participating in civic life, exercising voting rights, and upholding ethical behaviour.
4. Research, Inquiry, and Critical Thinking: Our curriculum encourages students to conduct independent research, critically evaluate evidence, and develop sound argumentation skills. They will learn to identify credible sources of information and distinguish between facts and opinions.
5. Active Participation and Informed Action: We foster a culture of active participation in civic life. Students will participate in school-based initiatives, engage in community service projects, and develop strategies for taking informed action on issues that matter to them.

As our students progress into the next phase of their citizenship education, our curriculum will expand their conceptual understanding and skillset to participate actively in civic spaces.

Building on the strong foundation laid in Key Stage 3 instruction on governance, democracy and human rights, learners will tackle more complex themes relevant to life as an engaged citizen. Classes will nurture their analytic abilities to deeply research issues, weigh disparate evidence, construct nuanced arguments, and derive reasoned conclusions.

Importantly, civics lessons will go beyond theory to let pupils directly experience avenues for enacting change. From local governance meetings to digital activism platforms, students will benefit from real-world exposure to the procedures and strategies citizens leverage to solve communal problems and lift collective welfare.

Supported by a wide breadth of contemporary source material, classroom dialogue, and experiential opportunities in their communities, this enriching programme of study will catalyse our students to be informed advocates and leaders in an evolving societal landscape.

By nurturing informed and engaged citizens, we empower our students to become active participants in shaping a just and equitable society. Our civic education program provides the foundation for responsible citizenship, enabling our pupils to positively impact the world around them.

In a KS4 (Key Stage 4) citizenship class at **Overstone Park School**, students build upon the foundational citizenship skills developed in KS3 and delve deeper into the concepts and complexities of active citizenship. The focus is on honing skills that enable students to engage critically with social, political, and ethical issues and become responsible and active participants in society. Here are some citizenship skills that students can gain during a KS4 citizenship class:

**- Critical Analysis and Evaluation:** KS4 citizenship classes emphasise the development of critical analysis skills. Students learn to examine complex social and political issues, evaluate arguments, and assess the reliability and credibility of sources. They develop the ability to analyse different perspectives, consider evidence, and form well-reasoned judgments.

**- Ethical Decision-Making:** KS4 citizenship classes delve deeper into ethical decision-making. Students explore moral and ethical dilemmas in society, analyse different ethical frameworks, and consider the consequences of their choices. They develop skills in ethical reasoning and apply these principles to real-world scenarios, fostering a sense of moral responsibility.

**- Social Justice and Human Rights:** KS4 citizenship classes engage students in discussions and activities related to social justice and human rights. They explore issues of equality, discrimination, and social inequalities, developing an understanding of the importance of promoting fairness, inclusivity, and respect for human rights. Students learn to advocate for marginalised groups and work towards a more just society.

- **Active Citizenship and Social Action:** KS4 citizenship classes encourage students to actively engage in their communities and take part in social action. Students learn about different forms of civic participation, including volunteering, advocacy, and grassroots initiatives.

By developing these citizenship skills in a KS4 citizenship class, students are better prepared to navigate complex societal challenges, exercise their rights, and contribute actively to the democratic process. They become informed, engaged, and responsible citizens who can critically analyse issues, participate in meaningful dialogue and work towards positive social change.