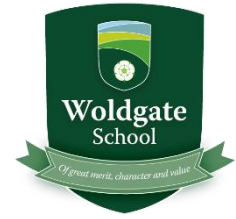


Sociology



Our vision:

At Woldgate School we believe that studying Sociology gives students the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of society and understand how it functions. By studying how institutions such as the family, the education system, and the mass media influence our behaviour and experiences, students are encouraged to look at society in a more critical way and engage in the world around them. Sociology staff have a passion for the subject and utilise contemporary examples and issues to ensure pupils are always engaged. Students will gain a holistic appreciation of Sociology through the use of a range of teaching strategies that promote independent, student-led, active learning, such as structured debates and discussions, and practical activities.

Sociology is a subject that encourages critical thinking, allowing students to develop informed opinions and an understanding of a range of social issues. They will be challenged to look beyond appearances and assumptions and see the “bigger picture.” Sociology will equip students with the ability to apply sociological theory to different areas of society, as well as developing strategic skills such as the ability to interpret data, assess the impact of social policies, and consider the relative value of a range of evidence.

Sociology matters because it encourages students to engage in society, challenge injustice, and understand other people’s experiences and motivations.

Everything you do in Sociology should be worthy of great merit, character, and value.

Of great merit: Critical	A key aim of Sociology is to provide students with the opportunity to develop a critical voice and give them the skills to question why society functions in the way that it does. The Sociology curriculum ensures that all pupils examine debates within Sociology including conflict vs consensus and structuralism vs social action. As a result of studying Sociology, students will develop critical thinking skills that allow them to consider the validity or strength of an argument and reach their own conclusions. They will be able to debate current affairs and consider issues with a global outlook.
Of great character: Awareness	Sociology at Woldgate School develops a respect for social diversity and encourages an awareness of the importance of social structure and social action in explaining social issues. We investigate how people's gender identity, ethnicity, sexuality, and social class can impact on their experiences in society. Students are encouraged to develop their own sociological awareness through active involvement with contemporary society and engagement with news articles and media resources.
Of great value: Respect	Through Sociology students will be equipped with a greater level of understanding and respect of the challenges facing individuals and groups beyond their own experiences. Respect for other cultures, whilst also studying the shared norms and values that form British culture, will encourage students to see themselves as global citizens.

Our teaching:

Through the delivery of compulsory A Level topics and the selection of optional topics we aim to foster a rich knowledge of sociological ideas and debates. Students begin their learning in Sociology by being introduced to the key sociological perspectives, including specialist terminology and concepts that will be revisited in every subsequent unit.

The **substantive knowledge** that students will learn includes:

- Knowledge of social patterns and official statistics
- Key features of social policies that have affected a range of institutions. For example, the impact of the Divorce Reform Act or the Equal Pay Act on family structures and family life.
- The characteristics of a range of sociological research methods such as observations, interviews and field experiments.
- Details of significant social and political events.
- Concepts such as patriarchy, alienation, and social solidarity.

In Sociology **disciplinary knowledge** involves using evidence to construct a claim. We encourage students to 'think like a sociologist' building and evaluating an argument by applying a range of sources and theories. Thinking like a functionalist requires a different approach to thinking like a Marxist. Students' development of these skills are systematically revisited throughout the A Level course.

Our curriculum:

The department follows the AQA A Level Sociology specification and the subject is increasingly popular. In addition to the compulsory topics of Education, Crime and Deviance and Theory and Methods, we study the optional topics of Families and Households and Media.

Curriculum sequencing:

The curriculum is planned in this way to introduce students to the key sociological perspectives (functionalism, Marxism, feminism, social actions theories and postmodernism) before applying them to a range of different topics. Concepts such as the influence of feminism are studied in the Education unit before being developed in Families and Households and Media. Once students have been introduced to a range of sociological studies in the Education unit, we then explore the methods used in sociological research. This allows students build on their prior knowledge as well as revisiting key concepts, with opportunities to apply their existing knowledge to new topic areas.

Our assessment

Summative and formative assessments provide timely feedback to students, with opportunities for them to respond and improve their work. Exam questions and model answers are referred to regularly to familiarise students with the question styles and assessment objectives for each of the three exam papers.

Assessment in Sociology includes the following:

- Use of low stakes retrieval tests at the start of every lesson to improve students' retention of content.
- Extended writing tasks, assessing both substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Students are given the opportunity to respond to personalised feedback to improve their work.
- End of topic assessments, comprising of exam style questions.
- Mock exams

How families can support

An interest in current affairs and politics is useful for students when discussing contemporary society. Parents can help with this by encouraging students to take an active interest in the news and to engage with social media content from accounts such as The Guardian, BBC News, and Woman's Hour. Subscribing to podcasts such as The Sociology Show or Thinking Allowed will expose students to sociological content beyond that included in the curriculum. In addition, discussing news stories and encouraging young people to express their opinions on world events would also be helpful.