

Welcome to Sociology A-level

Welcome to Easthampstead Park Community School Sixth Form. Please read all the information in this booklet carefully, this booklet should be filed in the front of your class folder. Please note there is a task at the end of this booklet that you will need to complete and bring into the first lesson.

Have you ever wondered about the full story behind the important issues in our society? How will the unemployment that so many are now experiencing affect their lives, even after they have found work? Perhaps you feel like there is more to what you read in the papers or see on TV? For instance, why is the western world so obsessed with celebrity now? You have chosen to study sociology and you will discover how to investigate these kinds of questions for yourself and begin to understand more about your own motivations and behaviours, gaining a wide range of very valuable skills that can be applied to almost any career.

Sociology seeks to understand all aspects of human social behaviour, including the social dynamics of small groups of people, large organisations, communities, institutions and even entire societies. Sociologists are typically motivated by their desire to better understand the fundamental principles of social life, believing that an understanding of these principles will help improve people's lives through more enlightened and effective policies.

What will I be learning and what will the lessons be like?

Lessons will offer different learning opportunities with written work conducted alongside discussion and pair work, presentations, videos and practical work.

How will I be assessed?

You will be given tests/summative assessment every few weeks. You will also be assessed through feedback (oral and written) of classwork, homework, end of topic tests grade and a mock exam grade in January. You will have individual teacher time to discuss results and personalised feedback is given for each student.

Do I need to have studied Sociology GCSE before?

No, as the majority of students doing Sociology with us have not studied this subject before. Any relevant knowledge in this subject would help your understanding when discussing the subject in lessons – so reading ahead of the lesson is invaluable!

What skills do I need?

The skills required for sociology include good communication skills, a sound analytical and questioning mind, the ability to work independently and in groups, as well as the ability to listen.

Expectations on this course

From the teacher:

- All students can achieve the best grade possible
- All students will enjoy what they learn
- Subject knowledge is up-to-date as well as current resources available for all students
- Homework given weekly. This will be assessed weekly, with appropriate feedback (including guidance on how to improve your work).
- Regular Assessment with constructive, personalised feedback.
- Dedicated student time after school for any questions/queries
- All resources are placed on the Central Resource Library, so students can access their work during absence

From the student:

- All students are to uphold a respectful and courteous manner to each other and to the teacher at all times, inside and outside of school (e.g. on school trips)
- Attendance and punctuality is crucial. If you are likely to be absent for a few days, it is **your** responsibility to get all materials and catch up with all work missed, including doing any assigned homework. Persistent lateness to, and absence from, class will result in disciplinary procedures, in accordance to sixth form policy
- A high level of commitment and the willingness to work on an on going basis. You should allow at least five hours independent study of sociology per week.
- Maintain an organised work folder. Folders will checked regularly and **all** work should be brought to class, including all past papers.
- Homework to be submitted on time. Not doing so, without a valid reason, will result in consequences. Persistent lateness of homework will result in contact with parents/guardians and referral to the Head of Sixth form.
- If you have any problems during this course please talk to any of the Sociology teachers as soon as possible.

Equipment needed for each lesson

1. A folder to fit A4 notes in – I would suggest a small A4 folder for each topic rather than a big ringbinder. You will need different folders for each teacher.
2. Dividers to organise your work by theory and subsections matched to the specification
3. A4 pad where you can remove notes / assessments to file or pass to your teachers into folder, Index cards for revision
4. Pens, ruler, calculator, highlighter

Your will need to buy your text book will. Other texts and revision guides will be recommended throughout the course.

Skills needed to succeed in Sociology

- Intellectual curiosity and the ability to engage in independent research.
- To regularly review previous knowledge, analyse sources of information/methods of data collection and apply the knowledge gained to various aspects of life.
- The ability to work independently and to be relied upon as part of a team e.g. in the preparation of presentations.
- Knowledge gained must be expressed effectively in writing using evidence that can be found in theories in sociology.
- A willingness to contribute to class debate and to listen, question and consider the views of others in a sensitive manner.

The Sociology Course overview

A-level Sociology offers you the opportunity to develop the essential knowledge and understanding of central aspects of sociological thought and methods. It is designed to encourage you to demonstrate the application of a range of skills and consider the integration of sociological themes.

What does the course consist of?

You will be exploring the following areas in your 1st year of study:

- Families and Households: This area looks at aspects of the family, family structure (e.g. marriage, cohabitation etc.); change within the family (e.g. gender roles); childhood and status of children and demographic trends (e.g. birth rates)
- Education: You will study the role and purpose of education; differential educational achievement of social groups (social class, gender and ethnicity); relationships and processes within schools; the significance of educational policies and the application of sociological research methods to the study of education.
- Sociological research methods: You will look at a range of quantitative and qualitative methods of research used in sociology; their strengths and limitations.

How are the exams structured? A level Sociology

2.2 A-level

Subject content

Compulsory content

[4.1 Education with Theory and Methods](#)

[4.1.1 Education](#)

[4.1.2 Methods in Context](#)

[4.1.3 Theory and Methods](#)

[4.3 Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods](#)

[4.3.1 Crime and Deviance](#)

[4.3.2 Theory and Methods](#)

Optional

[4.2 Topics in Sociology](#)

Option 1

[4.2.1 Culture and Identity](#)

[4.2.2 Families and Households](#)

[4.2.3 Health](#)

[4.2.4 Work, Poverty and Welfare](#)

Option 2

[4.2.5 Beliefs in Society](#)

[4.2.6 Global Development](#)

[4.2.7 The Media](#)

[4.2.8 Stratification and Differentiation](#)

Assessments

Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods	+	Paper 2: Topics in Sociology	+	Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods
<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Compulsory content 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Section A: one from option 1: 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 or 4.2.4</p> <p>Section B: one from option 2: 4.2.5, 4.2.6, 4.2.7 or 4.2.8</p>		<p>What's assessed</p> <p>Compulsory content 4.3.1, 4.3.2</p>
<p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hour written exam • 80 marks • 33.3% of A-level 		<p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hour written exam • 80 marks • 33.3% of A-level 		<p>Assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hour written exam • 80 marks • 33.3% of A-level
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks • Methods in Context: extended writing, 20 marks • Theory and Methods: extended writing, 10 marks 		<p>Questions</p> <p>Section A: extended writing, 40 marks</p> <p>Section B: extended writing, 40 marks</p>		<p>Questions</p> <p>Crime and Deviance: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks</p> <p>Theory and Methods: extended writing, 30 marks</p>

What might the subject lead onto?

Sociology trains you to answer the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions about human societies, giving you a competitive edge in the job market and providing a strong intellectual background for students considering careers in the following professions or businesses: Administration; Business; Health and Welfare Service; Education; Journalism; Public Relations: Police and Research.

How can I prepare for A-level Sociology?

If you have not studied Sociology before (or even if you have) visit the library and start reading around the AS topics listed above. Look at quality newspapers and watch films and documentaries which you feel have sociological relevance and summarise/analyse from a sociological perspective. Keep the article with analysis and your summaries from novels and film/TV and create an ongoing file which you can share with your peers and staff throughout your A level studies. Consider issues relating to Culture and Identity; Families and Households; Wealth, Poverty and Welfare

Here are some useful resources...

Websites:

- **The British Sociological Society (BPS)** <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/what-is-sociology.aspx>
- www.sociology.org.uk
- www.aqa.co.uk
- www.guardian.co.uk
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>
- www.independent.co.uk
- www.statistics.gov.uk
- www.mori.com
- www.guardian.co.uk

Programmes:

- Benefits Britain
- 24 hours in police custody
- Crimewatch
- Louis Theroux documentaries
- Britain's New Super Rich

- Unreported world
- Dispatches
- Educating Yorkshire / Educating Essex / Educating Cardiff

Transition Task:
How Do Sociologists Think?

This task is designed to start to prepare you to think as a sociologist. Please complete these short tasks during the summer holiday and bring your completed work to your first Sociology lesson.

10 Key concepts you need to know in Sociology - please look these up and write a definition for each.

Key concepts	Definition
Culture	
Identity	
Socialisation	
Norms	
Values	
Roles	
Status	
Social construction	
Diversity	
Perspectives	

Summer project:

Functionalism and Marxism are two of the most important sociological perspectives we look at when explaining society. Research Functionalism and Marxism. Write some detailed notes on Functional and Marxist theory, ideally a page per theory. How do they each see society? Try to use all the above concepts. This should be handed in at your first lesson.

Focus on topics :Consider the role the family and education has in shaping the individual.

Task 1: Answer the following questions on the role of **The Family**

Who lives with you?	
Who in your family is the most influential on your opinions and attitudes?	
Who makes the most important decisions in your family?	
Describe your view of the perfect family	

Does the Family play an important role for individuals within it and if so how?	
How does the family support individuals within it?	
In what way can the family be a negative experience for the individual?	
What areas of concern does society have about the family as an institution in 2016?	
Does the Family have a positive or negative function for society and why?	
What is your view of a perfect childhood?	

Task 2: Answer the following questions on the role of Education

<p>What factors do you think influence being successful or unsuccessful in education?</p>	
<p>How do we measure educational success?</p>	
<p>Do you have any ideas as to what you would like to be doing in 10 years time?</p>	
<p>How important is education in getting to where you want to be in 10 years time?</p>	
<p>What are you parent's/ primary caregiver's view on education?</p>	

<p>Have all your friends chosen to go on to college and study A Levels, or have they chosen other paths?</p>	
<p>Did your parent/s influence your choice of post-16 education or did you make the decision independently?</p>	
<p>How do you think sociologists can / should explore these educational issues?</p>	
<p>What values and norms have you picked up regarding expectations of behavior from your family and your experiences of education?</p>	

Task 3

- 1) Read the newspapers, such as the Daily Mail, or a news website, such as the BBC news website. Find three stories about family life in Britain today which you can use to prepare a short two minute talk about why these stories highlight how the family is so important to society.**

- 2) Explain why you think education is so important to society. Write about what education provides for individuals as well as society in general. Aim to write at least 500 words showing as many different reasons for why education is so important. Use any of your own and your families experiences.**