The greatest discovery of my generation is that HUMAN BEINGS can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of MIND.

WILLIAM JAMES
What will I study?
Our A Level offers an engaging and effective introduction to Psychology. You will learn the fundamentals of the subject and develop skills valued by universities and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research.

Some of the topics you will study include Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Research Methods, the Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology, Abnormal Psychology such as Phobias, Depression and OCD and additional options such as Cognition & Development, Schizophrenia and Forensic Psychology. These topics have practical applications, for example, demonstrating how to organise your notes more effectively will help you with revision. Many of our students who have progressed on to a career in Medicine have found the Abnormal Psychology invaluable to their training and the study of Forensic Psychology for those thinking of a career in Law.

As Psychology is classed as a science, there is a significant amount of Biology in the course and therefore you should have a strong science background. Mathematical ability needs to be higher than GCSE grade 4 so that you can apply your mathematical knowledge at a level needed to fully support scientific knowledge, understanding and problem solving.

How will I be assessed?
Your exams employ a variety of familiar types of question such as multiple choice, short answer and extended essays, which target the skills of knowledge and understanding, application and evaluation.

Paper 1: Introductory topics in Psychology
Written exam: 2 hours

Paper 2: Psychology in context
Written exam: 2 hours

Paper 3: Issues and options in Psychology
Written exam: 2 hours

All examinations will be in May/June of your Upper 6th year.

Where does this course lead?
An A Level in Psychology can take you anywhere. It is one of the most transferable subjects you can study providing you with a variety of skills. Over a quarter of our students progress on to Psychology degrees with the intention of becoming psychologists. We also have students who have progressed on to careers in medicine, vet science and a range of health professions, dentistry, law, teaching, business and the media to name but a few.

What support will I receive?
A range of support is available to you within the department. You can have one-to-one tutorials with any member of the department whenever you need them, as many as you like. There are group tutorials prior to an exam. We have AQA examiners teaching in the department who can guide and support you on any of the papers. You will experience a variety of teaching and learning styles and receive high quality resources, which are tailored to the needs of all students.

You will be assessed regularly against the exam criteria and offered constructive feedback identifying what you are doing well and areas where you could still improve. You will have regular meetings with your tutors to discuss your progress and Action Plan for continuous improvement.

Carmel continuously encourages me to achieve to the best of my ability, and has massively helped with my confidence.

Choosing Psychology has enabled me to explore my initial interests at greater depths. There’s never a dull moment when you’re discussing strange theories about the human mind and why someone may fear something so harmless as a pickle! This is why I would recommend this subject as it keeps you engaged both in and outside of lessons due to the fascinating nature of it.

The Psychology tutors offer fantastic support through helpful advice, opportunities to visit universities and providing resources to aid my university application such as becoming a member of the British Psychological Society.

I hope to study Psychology at the University of Bristol after leaving college. Although I will miss life at Carmel, I am confident that the skills I have learnt during my time here will benefit my life in the future.

Justine Gorrieza
St Gregory’s
Studying: Psychology, Sociology, Maths

Life Behind Bars Conference
What is the department like?
The department has just over 300 students and 4 members of staff. Psychology students study in the West Park building which provides a modern and spacious, state-of-the art learning environment. Our department’s facilities include a suite of well resourced teaching bases equipped with interactive white boards, multi-media projectors and wireless internet connection. We use these resources to maximum effect to support your learning. Students also have access to a computer suite and study areas.

What else will I do?
You will benefit from guest speakers and practitioners visiting the college, such as consultant psychologists, who will lead workshops and lectures. We also attend specialist lectures organised by the exam board and you will also be given the opportunity to go on trips and visits. As part of the Enrichment Programme, the Psychology department offers PsychSoc for those thinking about studying Psychology at university.

Former Carmel Student, Dr Shelly Morris-King

Shelly came to Carmel from St Hilda’s High School and studied A Level Psychology as one of her four subjects. She left Carmel to read for a Psychology degree at York University. After graduating she chose to do a Masters Degree in Health Evaluation at Liverpool John Moores University followed by a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Leeds University. Shelly has worked as a Chartered Clinical Psychologist at a high security hospital in the North West.

“I worked predominantly with patients with a history of violence and aggression, and supervised a group therapy programme. I also do the odd psychology lecture at different universities and have especially enjoyed returning to Carmel recently to teach psychology students. It’s great to see how much Carmel has developed since I was here. Going to Carmel was an amazing experience for me, and I’m sure that I wouldn’t be where I am now without the support and encouragement I was given by the tutors there.

I didn’t just get my A Levels at Carmel; I really grew up there, learnt a lot about myself, made some great friends and really decided what it was I wanted to do with my life.”

Shelly completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Neuropsychology at Glasgow University and became Principal Neuropsychologist at the Brain Injury Unit, Mossley Hill Hospital. She is now working as a Consultant Psychologist at the Walton Centre.

Psychology is interesting because it delves into the reasons people behave the way they do which is explained from a variety of different approaches.

Studying Psychology also develops transferable skills, such as maths to interpret data, evaluating research studies and the use of science in the field of Bio-psychology. I have also developed my essay writing ability which will benefit me enormously whilst at university.

After I leave Carmel, I hope to go on to study Biological Sciences at the University of Liverpool.

Joe Garden
St Margaret’s Academy
Studying:
Psychology, Biology, PE

Visit to Cambridge
**Studying at Carmel has been a pleasure. I have met such a wide range of people and really explored my interests to help me decide my future. I have particularly enjoyed studying Psychology as it has really helped me to expand my knowledge and understanding of people.**

Studying Psychology can open so many doors to many different career paths. I am going to study Midwifery at university and I have acquired many skills from my Psychology studies which I have applied to interviews, other classes and everyday life. The staff are really supportive and help you whenever you need it, whether it be help with the course or even with your UCAS application.

I have thoroughly enjoyed studying Psychology and it’s such a valuable A Level to have. I would highly recommend this course to anyone, whether you know exactly what you want to do or not because of the many transferable skills that can be applied to so many different careers.

**Olivia Rowe**
Prescot School
Studying: Psychology, Biology, Chemistry

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**Meet the Tutors**

Emma Spencer  
Head of Psychology

Karen Dunstan  
Beckie Hardie  
Darryl Wood  
Anna Hartley

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**Stretch and Challenge**

Within the department we offer:

- Activities targeted to all high achieving students
- Support with UCAS applications including Oxbridge applications and interview practice
- Stretch and Challenge tutorials to help achieve an A*
- Support tailored to students of all ability levels.

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**What are the entry requirements for this course?**

GCSE grade 5 in English Language and Mathematics.

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**Do I need to have studied Psychology before I start my course at Carmel?**

No, we assume that our students have never studied the subject before and start with the basics.

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**Why do I need a grade 5 in Maths or English Language?**

This is a recommendation from the exam board. The subject is academically rigorous and requires a high level of written, oral and numerical skills. It is not about reading people’s minds.

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**How successful are our Psychology students?**

We are incredibly proud of the excellent grades achieved by our Psychology students. In 2019, at the end of the two year linear course, there was an overall pass rate of 99% and 71% achieved A*-C grades. Many of these students have now gone on to further their studies in Psychology at university.

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**More Information**

For general information visit the British Psychological Society: [www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)

For a glance at the kind of things you are likely to study: [www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk)