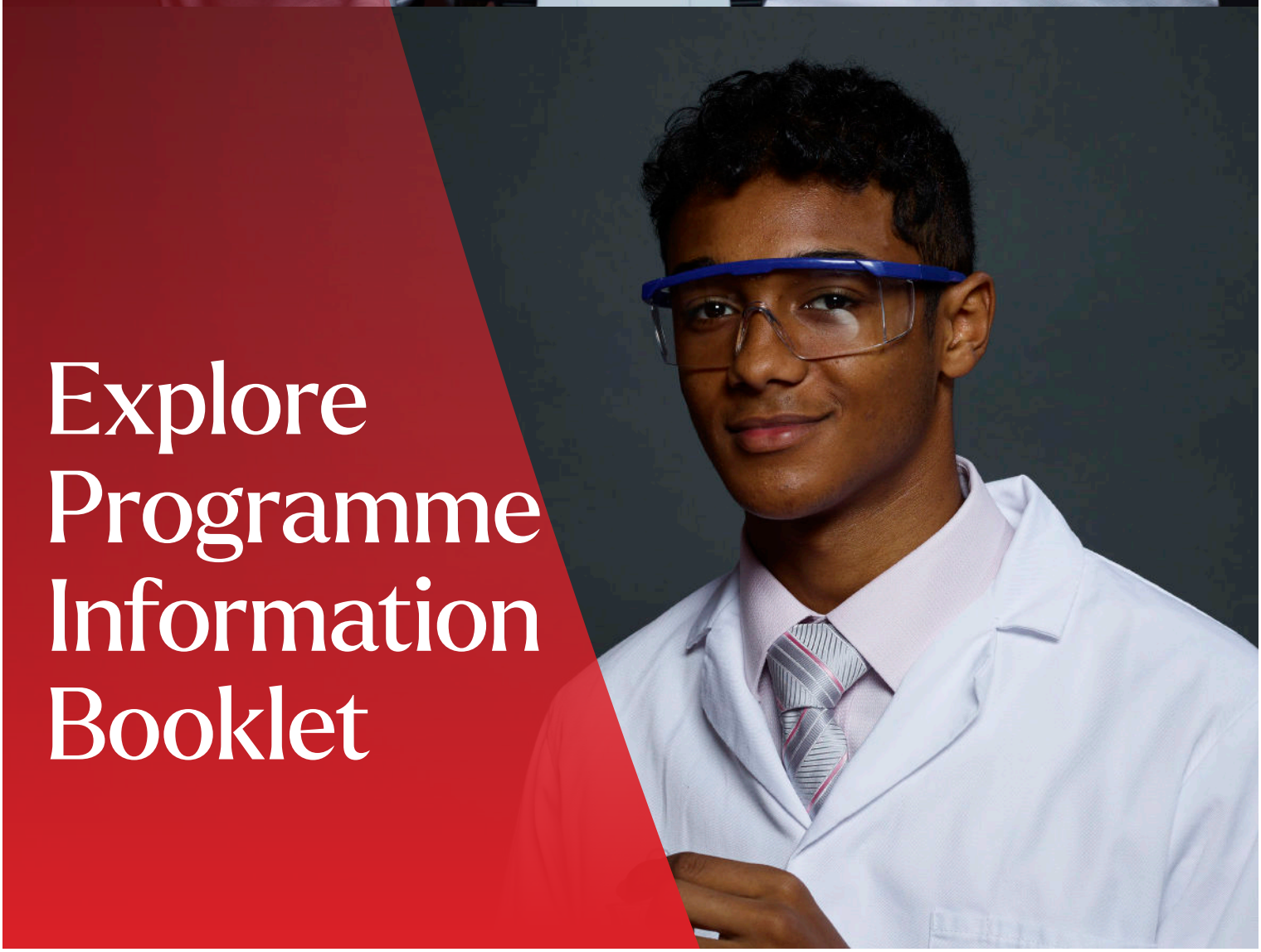
Hurst



Explore Programme Information Booklet

Welcome

Dear Parents,

The ***Explore*** programme, which runs as an optional addition to the standard academic offering, is designed for those who crave further academic challenge, wanting to go beyond the confines of their GCSEs. Should your child opt-in, they will have a small reduction in the number of study periods available to them each fortnight. The programme itself runs until the end of the Michaelmas term of the Fifth Form year, after which, your child will return to the full complement of study periods as preparation for the first set of GCSE mock exams starts to come into focus.

Towards the latter stages of the programme, should they wish, your child will be able to build on their work to that point and pursue a Level 2 qualification. Teachers will provide guidance at the appropriate point of the journey in terms of the feasibility and likely outcome of the pursuit, but the decision will be that of you and your child.

I hope this booklet will provide you with the key information required for your child to decide if the programme is right for them, as well as an overview of the two different pathways (***Explore*** STEM and ***Explore*** Global Perspectives) available to choose between should they wish to participate. Note that if your son or daughter holds an academic award, they will automatically be enrolled into the programme.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Dr Graham Moir

Deputy Head (Academic)

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Explore STEM

Overview

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is at the core of some of the world's largest companies, and with the 'Magnificent Seven' (Amazon, Apple, Google, Meta, Microsoft, Nvidia and Tesla) continuing to dominate stock markets, it has never been more important for tomorrow's scientists and innovators to get to grips with emerging technologies at a young age.

This pathway will offer an intellectually challenging hands-on exploration of STEM disciplines, encouraging pupils to engage with complex concepts, sharpen critical thinking skills and develop innovative solutions to real-world problems.

Through a dynamic programme centred around emerging trends within the world of STEM, pupils can expect to work both independently and collaboratively to:

Explore Concepts Across STEM Disciplines

Gain insight into the core concepts of STEM, including their roles within, and impact upon, global issues. The programme will allow pupils develop an understanding of various STEM career paths and challenge them to develop some of the key skills required for success in these fields.

Solve Problems and Think Critically

By thinking critically and creatively, pupils will be challenged to develop their understanding of how to approach real-world problems methodically, using a combination of scientific research, technological tools, engineering design, and mathematical reasoning.

Collaborate and Communicate

STEM professionals do not work alone, they work in teams. Throughout the programme, pupils will work on group projects, where communication and collaboration are key. They will practice explaining ideas clearly whilst listening to others as groups work together to solve problems and present their findings.

Some of the themes that pupils are likely to ***Explore*** within this pathway are:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Communication and Cyber Security
- Chaos and Predictability
- Data Science
- Epidemiology and Ethical Science
- Mathematical Physics
- Quantitative Finance
- Sustainability and Renewable Energy

Explore Global Perspectives

Overview

In an increasingly globalised world, where the interdependence between cultures, economies, markets and societies is at an all-time high, understanding issues from different perspectives across the globe has never been more important. Whether you are an aspiring leader or simply someone who wants to see the world through a wider lens, this pathway will challenge you to broaden your horizons as well as give you the opportunity to build the skills and understanding required to thrive in our interconnected world.

Through a dynamic programme where themes covered will be driven by global events and issues, you can expect to work both independently and collaboratively to:

Explore Different Viewpoints

Step outside of your own cultural and societal framework and gain insights into how geography, history, politics, law and traditions influence global interactions. By understanding the perspectives of others, you will become more attuned to the nuances of world events and how they shape global dynamics.

Sharpen Your Critical Thinking Skills

This programme is not just about memorising facts. It is about thinking deeply and critically around key issues. From climate change to global conflicts, you will learn how to analyse problems from every angle and make informed decisions.

Connect the Dots Between Global and Local

Have you ever wondered how something happening on the other side of the world affects you? You will see how global events like pandemics, trade deals, or even social media can impact your community. Understanding these connections will help you see how the world fits together.

Some of the themes that pupils are likely to ***Explore*** within this pathway are:

- Arts in Society
- Climate Change and Sustainability
- Conflict and Peace
- Globalisation
- Law and Criminality
- Media and Communication
- Political Power and Action
- Poverty and Inclusion
- Technology, Industry and Innovation
- Values and Beliefs

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