



The Citizenship Department

“The students were bright and engaged. It is always a pleasure to visit your school. I like the ethos, and I think the attitude of the students (and evident dedication of the staff) is commendable. Bright, engaged students and dedicated staff. Not a bad combination.” (Huw Edwards, BBC News, Visit to The Bishop’s Stortford High School)

It is a great privilege to work in an outstanding and brilliantly led School which balances standards and care, challenge and nurture, perfectly. TBSHS encourages, empowers, enlightens and enthuses the teachers. The Department plays a significant role in the ethos of the School which strives to nurture compassionate characters and citizens of integrity, industry, intelligence, innovation, imagination, humility and honesty.

Thought-provoking Citizenship lesson seminars on theological, ethical and philosophical matters are the foundation. Students are encouraged to think, to write, to speak, to create, to collaborate, to reflect and to decide in a respectful, disciplined and polite environment. Here, through a variety of pedagogical methods, students learn equally from staff and one another whilst, critically, staff have the humility to learn from students and listen to their perspective and feedback as well all seek to foster a growth mindset. A team approach is essential with students and staff working in a common cause of mutual respect, good will and giving. A key part of each lesson is reflection on past studies to monitor and develop depth of understanding.

The world is brought into the classroom (what is in the news often features in the lessons) and the classroom is brought to the world. The on-line programme Show My Homework is used by the School to encourage creative and independent learning away from the classroom. The Department runs successful Citizenship and Religious Studies Visits to Wimbledon, Westminster and Peterborough. The Department play a significant role in fostering the student leadership wonderfully demonstrated in the Interact Charity Group (a team that have raised over £75,000 in four years and volunteered in the community also). The Department organises high profile guest speakers with a local, national or international reputation. The Department assists the organisation of the Saint Michael’s Christian and Easter Services and leads on a daily *Thought For The Day*. The Department have organised three live BBC broadcasts from the School: “Any Questions” (twice) and “The Big Questions.” The Department leads Citizenship Education for all in the School.

Every hour of every School Day at TBSHS, the Citizenship Department hosts its own version of “The Big Questions” in the classroom where the ultimate questions of meaning and purpose are reflected upon in an inter-disciplinary manner. The member of staff is in the chair, probing, listening, encouraging, empowering, learning, enthusing, safeguarding and giving an appropriate voice to all through varied activities. The students are the learners, the teachers, the panellists, the audience, the stars.

