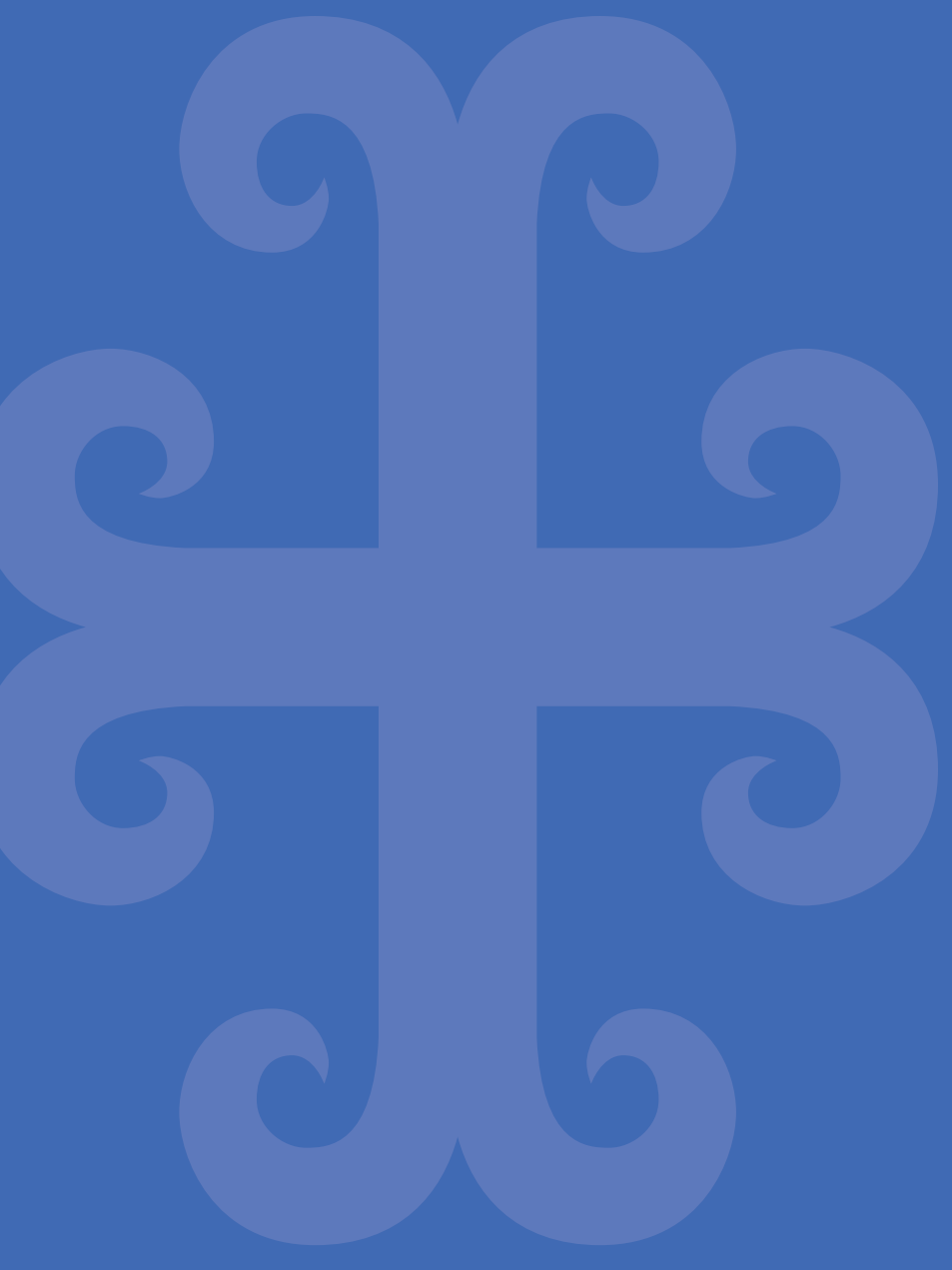


DOWNSIDE'S FUTURE

Dom Leo Maidlow Davis, Head Master, outlines his vision



DOWNSIDE
SCHOOL

Downside aims to be the United Kingdom's leading Catholic co-educational boarding school. Our education will be supportive, intellectually stimulating and academically ambitious. By education we understand the cultivation of each pupil's spiritual, intellectual, creative, social and sporting gifts.

For four centuries, Downside has been educating children in the Benedictine tradition, always adapting its teaching and facilities for the times. Pupils leave equipped with the personal qualities – foresight, fairness, strength and balance – to lead others, for the improvement of their society.

enthusiastic teachers, supported by sensible sanctions and rewards.

A Full-Boarding School. We will remain a traditional, seven-day-a-week boarding school, led by talented and purposeful House Masters, House Mistresses and Chaplains, dedicated to the spiritual, intellectual and emotional welfare of each child.

Distinction in the Arts. We will become one of the outstanding schools for arts in the United Kingdom, performing first-rate choral, orchestral and popular music, imaginative and inspiring drama, and creating thoughtful visual art.

the CCF, sports teams, music, the performing arts and the School Student Council. We believe that pupils learn to lead by being given trust and responsibilities.

A Balance of Tradition and Innovation. We aim for a balance of traditional and modern teaching methods, using the latest technological advances, within a curriculum where innovation is critically evaluated and our Catholic heritage treasured.

Openness with Families. We will maintain effective communication with families, supported by concern for their children and shared Christian

Strength in Sports. Downside aims to have well-coached, trained and motivated teams in the major sports, to offer a wide range of minor sports, and to play successfully and competitively against other schools, within a full and balanced fixture list. Our teams will be generous in victory as well as gracious in defeat.

Preparation for Adult Life. All Upper Sixth Form (Year 13) pupils should be ready to leave Downside. They will be sad to say goodbye to friends, they will hold the School in esteem and affection, but they will be equipped to move on, in most cases to university. We will have given them a spiritual and intellectual formation with which to lead their lives.

2. CURRICULUM

Downside believes that a broad, traditional curriculum, from the Lower First Form (Year 5) upwards, remains the best foundation for adult life, and the basis for diversification and specialisation at university level. The most able pupils will be stretched through inspiring and demanding teaching; our Learning Support Department will help those with specific learning difficulties.

St Oliver's House (Years 5 to 8)

In the Lower and Upper First Forms (Years 5 and 6) pupils will follow a broad, traditional curriculum consisting of Ancient and Classical Civilisation, Art, Design, Drama, English, European Studies, Geography, History, ICT, Mathematics, Music, Numeracy and Literacy, Physical Education, Religious Studies and Science. Pupils in these Year Groups will be taught by preparatory school teachers, with subject specialist teachers for Design, Music and Religious Studies.

In the Lower and Upper Second Forms (Years 7 and 8) pupils will receive subject specialist teaching in the Senior School. The curriculum will remain broad and traditional, consisting of Art, Biology, Chemistry, Design, English, French, Geography, History, ICT, Latin, Mathematics, Music, Physics, Physical Education and Religious Studies.

All pupils in St Oliver's House will be fully prepared for Common Entrance at 13+, or Common Scholarship.

Senior School (Years 9 to 13)

Third Form (Year 9)

The Third Form (Year 9) pupils will follow a broad, traditional curriculum including: Art, Biology, Chemistry, Design, English, French, Geography, History, ICT, Latin, Mathematics, Music, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Physics and Religious Studies. For the most able, there is Classical Greek; others may choose German or Spanish.

GCSE (Years 10 and 11)

In the Fourth and Fifth Forms (Years 10 and 11), pupils will follow courses leading to the award of nine or ten GCSEs. The core curriculum will be made up of Religious Studies, English, Mathematics, and IGCSE Science, taught by specialist teachers. Pupils will then choose another four subjects, including at least one language, from the following list: Art, Classical Greek, Design, French, Geography, German, History, Latin, Music and Spanish.

A Level (Years 12 and 13)

Pupils will prepare for four AS Levels in the Lower Sixth Form (Year 12) and may carry all four subjects through to A Level (Year 13), if they wish. More able pupils will sit up to five

A Levels. The following subjects are offered, with other options under annual review: Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Classical Greek, Design, Drama and Theatre Studies, Economics, English Literature, French, Geography, German, History, Latin, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Religious Studies and Spanish.

Pupils will continue their Catholic education with a non-examined Religious Studies course throughout their Sixth Form. Those aiming for entry to Oxbridge will be invited to join a discussion group specifically for Oxbridge candidates.

Academic standards will be continually raised, with an emphasis on teaching and learning, the regular assessment of pupils and staff, and through trips and subject societies.

3. PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Whilst a Downside education is richer than statistics can quantify, we believe that setting targets for academic performance helps to motivate pupils and staff.

Common Entrance

50%, as an average across all subjects at Common Entrance, is the minimum requirement for a pupil to join Downside at 13+.

GCSE

We are aiming for 60% A*/A and 100% A*/C over the medium term, with a long-term target of 80% A*/A.

A Level

We are aiming for 75% A/B grades over the medium term, followed by a gradual rise to 85% A/B grades in the longer term.

'DOWNSIDE AIMS TO BE THE UNITED KINGDOM'S LEADING CATHOLIC CO-EDUCATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOL. OUR EDUCATION WILL BE SUPPORTIVE, INTELLECTUALLY STIMULATING AND ACADEMICALLY AMBITIOUS.'

Our aim is to work with families to continue the formation of the whole person in the knowledge, love and service of God and neighbour.

1. PRINCIPLES

Benedictine Ideals. We wish to inspire in pupils the love of truth, not scepticism, criticism not cynicism. As St Benedict urged his monks, we urge our pupils to prefer nothing to the love of Christ.

High Academic Expectations. We want all pupils to surpass their academic expectations. We will achieve this through demanding and stimulating lessons, taught by able and

High Standards of Behaviour. We will remain a courteous, orderly and civilised community achieved through a balanced approach to work, recreation, rest and prayer.

Breadth and Depth in Extra-Curricular Activities. We will continue to offer an exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular activities, and to employ staff and external specialists with enthusiasms that they are keen to share and develop.

Leadership. Downside will offer pupils opportunities to lead throughout their time at School, as House Prefects, School Prefects, Monitors, through

ideals. Families are welcome to religious, intellectual, cultural, sporting and social events in the School and Abbey Church, and are encouraged to participate in their children's life at Downside.

Generous Service. Giving to others is central to Downside's Catholic ethos. This means loving our neighbour, serving the local community and those beyond it. We will continue to support the OMV Pilgrimage to Lourdes, CAFOD family fast days, charity fundraising activities, community service and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Pupils learn about service by practice.

4. CO-EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SIZE

St Oliver's House (Years 5 to 8)

St Oliver's House will consist of four Year Groups: the Lower and Upper First Forms (Years 5 and 6), modelled on 15 pupils in each, and the Lower and Upper Second Forms (Years 7 and 8) modelled on 30 pupils in each. We aim for 50% full boarders, and 85% Catholics in St Oliver's House.

Senior School (Years 9 to 13)

Downside's Senior School is modelled on 68 pupils per Year Group. We are aiming for a 60/40 boy/girl split over the medium term. Of the 340 pupils in the Senior School, we aim for 85% full boarders, and 85% Catholics.

Over the medium term we will move to a structure of five senior houses of 68 in the senior school: Barlow, Roberts and Smythe for the boys, Caverel and Isabella for the girls.

5. INVESTMENT IN BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Besides sustaining the programme for refurbishment of the boarding houses, we plan increased investment in ICT, enhanced library provision, the upgrading of the art, technology and science areas, as well as other classrooms. We will also improve communal facilities for academic staff.

In addition, we will seek finance from the *Campaign for Downside* to fund a Performing Arts Centre, and the full refurbishment of the swimming pool.

6. EXCEPTIONAL PASTORAL CARE

Downside is already renowned for its outstanding pastoral care, shown in the fruitful co-operation between the School and monastic community. We want boarders to feel at home at Downside, to develop trusting and positive relationships with their House Master or Mistress and Chaplains, to contribute generously to the life of the community, to learn from failure, to rejoice in success and to maintain hope at all times.

We ensure that pupils understand the behaviour expected of them and know that rules will be applied with justice and respect for the individual.

7. STRENGTH BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Downside aims to be known for its outstanding extra-curricular and sporting opportunities.

All teaching staff offer an activity of their choice, and outside expertise is used to enhance the extra-curricular activities programme.

Expert coaching will be provided for major team sports in every Year Group, for the benefit of pupils and staff. The key playing surfaces and training areas are being renovated. We will implement an enhanced rewards system for individual and team excellence in sports. Teams will represent the School in uniform sportswear.

8. STEWARDSHIP

A component of the Benedictine vision of glorifying God in all things is the reverence for the place and space of the School community's life. This is reflected in the stewardship of the material environment in both the immediate and wider world.

9. PRESERVING DOWNSIDE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Downside needs the means to flourish, and so to continue its work and witness.

Former pupils of Downside – known as Old Gregorians – often maintain a lifelong affection for the School and a deep respect for its Catholic and Benedictine mission. Working closely with St Gregory's Society, our past pupils' association, our Development Office will provide opportunities for Catholic children from less privileged homes to come to Downside, and will ask those who have had the privilege of a Downside education to safeguard the School and Abbey for generations to come.



Dom Leo Maidlow Davis
Head Master

January 2007