

## Widening Participation work at Churchill College

Churchill College carries out a huge amount of academic outreach work:

- We help to widen access to Cambridge by engaging with a wide variety of schools and colleges, stimulating aspiration and encouraging applications.
- We work specifically with schools in Surrey, Sussex, South Wales and the London boroughs of Croydon, Merton, and Sutton as part of the university's area links scheme. Please see <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/study-us/undergraduates/schools-and-colleges-liaison/> for further details (could go elsewhere)
- We speak to KS4 (15-16 year old) students about A-level subject choices and why they matter for university applications.
- We speak to Year 12 students about making competitive applications
- We demystify the application process and help prospective students make informed decisions about applications to competitive entry universities.
- We assist prospective students' access appropriate resources enabling them to read more widely, over and above school curricula.

Alongside this we have established a project for black students in Year 9 from Croydon (one of the College's link areas). This project aims to ensure that academically able students will strongly consider going into sixth form and then work towards applying to selective entry universities. It is not designed to engage the most academically able pupils already on track for academic success. Rather, it aims to nurture pupils with the potential to succeed if mentored over time; candidates who would be unlikely to self-select for university mentoring schemes and other outreach opportunities.

The focus of the project is aspiration, leadership and community. We want pupils to be able to discuss what they believe to be barriers to, and opportunities for, leadership in the UK today and it will introduce pupils (directly and indirectly) to a variety of black leaders. The project will continue to be rolled out for pupils in subsequent years as they work towards their GCSEs. It is our hope that it will enable pupils to see themselves as the future of the UK, as active agents of change and as community leaders. We want pupils to be able to see how education empowers them to fulfil their potentials and also help them to access the best education available. Just before the national lockdown in 2020 we were pleased to welcome a visit from our first Year 9 cohort from Croydon schools.

Whilst face-to-face events are currently not possible, and whilst we are currently without a full time Widening Participation Officer, Churchill continues to engage virtually with students across all of our link areas. The quality of our links and our database has made it relatively easy to reach students even as learning to adapt to the new situation has been a steep learning curve. The College will be delighted, when visits to and from Cambridge become possible again, to engage once again in person with students and staff across our area links. This will include, in the academic year 2021-22, continuing to work with the original cohort of students from Croydon as they prepare for their GCSEs in Year 11, as well as engaging new students in Years 9 and 10 with the project.

The College is also aware that in educating the most intellectually able people we are equipping the next generation. Students will become the researchers and policy-makers of the future, urgently responding – dynamically, logically and creatively – to great global questions such as social justice and climate change.

It is with this mind that we continue to strive to widen participation and increase access to educational opportunity, whether at this University or at the many of the other excellent universities in this country and across the world.

Churchill College Admissions Office / Widening Participation team  
4 March 2021