

Subject Area: Politics

Curriculum Intent: The English word ‘politics’ is derived from the title of Aristotle’s seminal work *Politika*, meaning ‘affairs of the cities’. In its modern globalised form, politics can now be said to encompass ‘the affairs of the world’ in the sense that – to use Harold Lasswell’s memorable phrase- it determines “who gets what, when and how” on a global scale. Given the plethora of urgent global issues facing humankind and the interconnected nature of cultural, historical, economic and environmental issues, it can be stated with confidence that there has never been a more urgent need to study politics. The world needs informed citizens equipped with both an understanding of the political process and the knowledge and skills to influence decision-making on a local, regional, national and global level. The aim of the politics curriculum at TSFA is to imbue students with an inquisitive mindset and to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to be able both to take part in and influence the political process. Politics students should leave TSFA with the ability to navigate the best course for themselves through an understanding of the power structures in the 21st Century Britain and the USA, and to appreciate how decisions are made that affect their lives. At its most basic level, this will involve with engaging with the news in order to understand what is actually going on in the world. Students all regularly research the news, reporting back to the rest of the class on issues and news they find both interesting and relevant to the course. All politics students also visit Parliament during the course of their A-level and have an opportunity to take part in a live questioning session with a member of the House of Lords in a ‘Learn With Lords’ session on Zoom. This kind of experience is crucial in developing students’ confidence in their own ability to access institutions and engage with decision makers. Deep and secure knowledge is vital in politics as this underpins analysis and evaluation. In order to maintain and develop knowledge, students sit regular knowledge tests covering all aspects of the two-year course. This knowledge is then applied and developed through the writing of essays and in debates and discussions in class. Regular quality feedback being given to support student progress, both ad hoc feedback in lessons and formal written feedback for assessed essays. Our politics curriculum supports the ethos of the college in developing ‘life-ready learners’ by encouraging critical analysis and reflection and by developing their civic virtues. Respect and tolerance are always exhibited in politics lessons, ensuring that students feel comfortable and secure in expressing their ideas and views.

Dates	Content	Assessment	Rationale
YEAR 12 Terms 1 and 2	<p>PAPER 1: Democracy and participation Current systems of representative democracy and direct democracy A wider franchise and debates over suffrage, pressure groups and other influences, rights in context</p> <p>UK Elections and Voting Different electoral systems, referendums and how they are used, electoral systems analysis</p> <p>Political parties Established political parties-Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, emerging and minor UK political parties- Greens, SDP, UK political parties in context</p> <p>Voting Behaviour and Media Class voting and other social factors influencing voting patterns Case studies of three key general elections The influence of the media</p>	<p>Throughout the course, regular assessment takes place in class in addition to progress checks. Knowledge is developed and revised with knowledge quizzes and Seneca learning tasks. Essays are set every two weeks to develop exam technique and essay writing skills.</p> <p>PC1 Democracy and Human Rights Essay PC2 Electoral Systems- source question Pressure Groups- essay</p>	<p>The Democracy unit introduces the concept of democracy, its different forms and functions. A deep understanding of democracy is a prerequisite for the rest of the course. The study of the franchise gives the historical context in the UK, leading in to debates about further extension today. A study of the different electoral systems follows, with an emphasis on what makes a ‘good’ electoral system. The advantages and disadvantages of FPTP etc build upon the idea of participatory democracy and fairness. Students can apply their understanding of the functions of democracy to critique the systems. They will also be able to make critical links to the fate of third parties and emerging parties under the FPTP system. Political parties are then studied, building on the idea of participatory democracy. The history, achievements and policies of the parties are studied to give context and understanding of which groups have traditionally supported each party. This will support the psephological analysis of voting behaviour and the different models explaining voting behaviour and the influence of the media</p> <p>CEIAG: Jobs such as psephologist, pollster, electoral commission member discussed and key skills</p> <p>PS/CV’s: Citizenship role in democracy links to all civic virtues</p>
Terms 3 and 4	<p>PAPER 1: Core Political Ideas: Liberalism Core ideas and principles+Differing views/tensions within liberalism</p> <p>Core Political Ideas: Conservatism Core ideas and principles+ Differing views/tensions within conservatism</p> <p>Core Political Ideas: Socialism Core ideas and principles+Differing views/tensions within socialism</p> <p>PAPER 2: Non-Core Political Ideas: Anarchism Core ideas and principles Different types of anarchism and tensions within anarchist thought</p>	<p>PC3 Core Ideologies: Liberalism essay Voting behaviour source question</p> <p>PC4 Core ideology: Socialism essay Political Parties essay</p>	<p>The core ideas introduce students to the big political ideas that underpin political thinking and modern parties. Key thinkers within each ideology are taught- their contributions and analysis of events that shaped their thinking and writing e.g. the English Civil War for Thomas Hobbes. Liberalism is taught first as it is easier conceptually and chronologically, it is the oldest political ideology. Subsequent ideologies being compared and contrasted with liberalism. It makes sense to study the non-core ideology (anarchism) from Paper 2 after the non-core ideologies.</p> <p>CEIAG: Students develop a deep understanding of different conceptions of society, the state and the economy.</p> <p>PS/CV’s: Links to ideological views of the role of the state in supporting the poorest in society- service, compassion and justice</p>
Terms 5 and 6	<p>Paper 2 :The Constitution: Nature of and sources of constitution, changes since 1997, role and powers of devolved bodies, debate on further reform</p> <p>Parliament: Structure and role of Commons and Lords, legislative process, relationship between Parliament and the Executive</p> <p>Prime Minister and Executive: Structure, role and powers of the Executive, Factors affecting relationship between PM and Cabinet, PM Power Case Studies: 1945-97 and post-’97</p> <p>Relations between branches: Supreme Court- role, principles, legislative role, influence on policy-making Relationship between Parliament, Executive and judiciary, EU- aims, role and impact on UK government</p>	<p>PC5 Parliament- essay (synopticity element) PM source question Non-core ideologies essay- anarchism</p>	<p>The constitution is taught as the first topic on Paper 2 to give an understanding of the roles and powers of the various institutions to be studied. Parliament is taught next as the central institution in the UK. The relations between the executive, legislature and the HoC and HoL is explored along with the role of the Crown in Parliament. The relationship between the PM and the executive and cabinet is explored next, building a deeper understanding of the workings of government. Three PMs are studied in depth as case studies: Thatcher, Blair and Johnson. These link with the election case studies for the Paper 1 topic on elections. Year 12 ends with an analysis of the relationship between the Supreme Court and Parliament and the executive. All of Paper 2 government will be revised in the comparative study of the USA.</p> <p>CEIAG: Possible careers- researcher, MP, barrister, translator, PA etc</p> <p>PS/CV’s: links to rights, constitutional matters, Parliament all relevant to justice, courage, wisdom and service.</p>

<p>Year 13 Terms 1 and 2</p>	<p>US Constitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The nature of the US Constitution •The principles of the US Constitution •Interpretations and debates around the US Constitution <p>Comparisons to the UK - Similarities and differences between each constitution, their nature, sources, provisions, separation of powers, checks and balances</p> <p>Federalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The main characteristics of US federalism •Interpretations and debates around the US Constitution and federalism <p>Comparisons to the UK – how far the UK model of devolution parallels the US federal system</p> <p>US Congress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The structure of Congress and powers •The functions of Congress •Interpretations and debates around Congress <p>Comparisons to the UK – membership of each House in each country, power of each House, relationship between the two houses in each system</p>	<p>PC1 12-mark analyse question on the US/UK constitutions 12-mark examine question on federalism and devolution</p> <p>PC2 Essay- functions of Congress 12-mark analyse question on Congress/Parliament</p>	<p>The Constitution underpins the roles, powers and relations between the various branches of government and states and between federal and state governments and citizens. This is essential to provide contextual and historical understanding before detailed study of each branch. A comparison between the UK and US constitutions follows.</p> <p>The comparative study of the US Congress, presidency and Supreme Court follows the study of the constitution as the roles and powers of each branch of government all flow from the US Constitution. The relationship between the three branches of government can thus be analysed and understood in the context of the Constitution.</p> <div data-bbox="1626 449 2077 709" style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <p>CEIAG: Analytical, comparative and evaluative to be emphasised as excellent transferable skills highly valued by employers.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="2160 449 2611 709" style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p>PS/CV's: The comparative element of the course requires great attention to detail in drawing out similarities and differences. Ideas of justice and compassion brought out in the US Constitution and separation of powers.</p> </div>
<p>Terms 3 and 4</p>	<p>US Presidency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Formal sources of presidential power as outlined in the US Constitution and their use. •Informal sources of presidential power and their use. •Interpretations and debates of the US presidency. <p>Comparisons to the UK – role and power and limitations of the President and Prime Minister, extent of accountability to legislature</p> <p>US Supreme Court and civil rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and role of the Supreme Court • The appointment process for the Supreme Court • The Supreme Court and public policy • The protection of civil liberties and rights in the US today • Race and rights in contemporary US politics • Interpretations and debates of the US Supreme Court and civil rights <p>Comparisons to the UK – the basis for their power, impact on government and policy, relative independence of each Court, effectiveness of rights protection in each country, impact/effectiveness of interest groups in protecting rights</p>	<p>PC3 12-mark analyse question on the PM/President Essay- Imperial President</p> <p>PC4 12-mark analyse on UK/US Supreme Court 12-mark examine question on rights protection in the US/UK Essay- interest groups vs Supreme Court in defending rights</p>	<p>Within the specification there is a unit called 'comparative theories' where students are taught to compare between the USA and UK applying three key theories to deepen their analysis. Rather than teach the Comparative theories unit as a standalone unit at the end of the course this unit has been included at the end of each unit to allow revision of Paper 1 and Paper 2 throughout Year 13.</p> <p>US Presidency and Supreme Court studied comparatively, making links to and revising Paper 2 UK government content on the UK prime minister and supreme court.</p> <div data-bbox="1626 1024 2077 1285" style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <p>CEIAG: Links to pressure groups, NGOs, lawyers, judiciary and jobs in the public sector.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="2160 1024 2611 1285" style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p>PS/CV's: Role of BLM and other pressure groups in defending rights and highlighting injustice- clear links to service, compassion, courage and and justice.</p> </div>
<p>Terms 5 and 6</p>	<p>US Democracy and participation</p> <p>Electoral systems in the USA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presidential elections and their significance, campaign finance • Debates surrounding elections in the USA including the electoral college and the role of incumbency <p>The key ideas and principles of the Democratic and Republican parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distribution of power and changing significance of the parties • The current conflicts and tendencies and changing power and influence that exist within the parties. Coalition of supporters for each party • Debates surrounding party unity, party policy and voting groups <p>Interest groups in the USA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their significance, resources, tactics and debates about their impact on democracy <p>Comparisons to the UK – nature of the party system, degree of unity within major parties, policy profiles, debates around campaign finance, methods and extent of influence of pressure groups</p>	<p>Essay questions set on Paper 1 and 2 content during revision and Achieve sessions.</p> <p>Seneca and knowledge quizzes used throughout the course to keep knowledge fresh across the 2 years.</p> <p>12-mark analyse question on campaign finance 12-mark examine on political parties Essay on interest group Essay on electoral college</p>	<p>The final unit covers a large amount of material including elections, pressure groups and political parties. In their study of the US Constitution, students will have learnt about how the Founding Fathers intended the USA to be governed and this unit builds upon this knowledge by analysing how democracy functions in practise.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to analyse across the USA course as the essay questions are synoptic in nature. The comparative theories section will encourage links between all of the Paper 2 UK Government units.</p> <div data-bbox="1626 1604 2077 1864" style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <p>CEIAG: Links to jobs in finance, advertising, polling, interest groups etc.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="2160 1604 2611 1864" style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p>PS/CV's: Links to justice, compassion, courage, service in study of electoral systems, political parties and campaign finance.</p> </div>