



KING JAMES'S
SCHOOL
KNARESBOROUGH

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

2021/22

The Government and Politics Department is based within the History department at King James's School for good reason. We like to think of History as an opportunity to learn from the past, including from our many mistakes and great developments, whereas Politics is a chance to build a better future and learn from our past.

The very meaning of Politics is to find solutions to the many and varied problems of running a state - where and how best to distribute resources, how best to run a functioning economy and ensure provision for every sphere of society whether that be jobs, trade, housing and land or education and medical resources and how best to meet certain challenges when they arise. In an age where our young people have lived through some of the most significant and challenging political dilemmas brought about in the wake of a Constitutional Crisis in the UK following the Brexit referendum, an increasingly perilous ecological crisis and a global Pandemic that has claimed millions of lives, the study of Government and Politics has never been so critical.

Government and Politics encourages debate of issues which may seem quite simple but in reality are quite complex. We look first and foremost at the meaning of Democracy and how effectively it is provisioned in the UK. A topic which has never seemed so important in the era of "fake news", of governments around the globe who have challenged and indeed broken the law. In a world where some who protest democratically and peacefully are arrested or removed from their state legislature (Hong Kong) and indeed have risked and given their lives to defend it - some political analysts have been prompted to coordinate a democratic audit and the results are very interesting! We examine the rise of conspiracy based political movements and the resurgence of the far right as well as those based on traditional ideological perspectives. We look at Feminism - a crucial movement which has achieved much in the way of laying the foundations for a more equal society in terms of opportunity.

Government and Politics is also a study of the functions and mechanics of government and how laws are passed and the various institutions which can shape our laws which affect all of our lives so much. We learn about the impact of corporations and professional lobbyists behind the scenes and pressure and interest groups as well as encouraging political participation amongst our students.

Students are taught by a two different teachers in Years 12 and 13 with a passion and enthusiasm for the subject they teach. Maintaining a factual knowledge of current affairs is a must and we recommend a range of reputable news sources - also teaching about ideological bias and the impact of corporate ownership (on the Left and Right) of major news networks.

Lessons involve discussion and debate, analysis and evaluation and of course, wide reading and extended writing. Government and Politics is an essay based subject and students must approach their essays in a balanced manner.

We believe that Government and Politics is one of the most crucial subjects a students can learn - it empowers students to grow up to think independently and critically about they see and hear and learn to sift the truth from the spin.