

## **Information about Varndean College**

Varndean College is a popular and successful Sixth Form College based in Brighton with over 1810 students aged 16 to 18. In the evenings it opens its doors to the community to offer a wide range of adult education courses. It also provides Family and Community Learning at several outreach centres within the City. The College draws largely from the Brighton and Hove schools but also from other East and West Sussex schools. A small number of students come from the independent sector and from overseas. This all makes for a lively and cosmopolitan mix of students.

Varndean's mission is 'through the quality of its provision and support for a diverse community, to encourage and inspire all its students to fulfil their potential'.

## **Curriculum and Achievement**

Varndean College specialises in the provision of academic and general vocational education to the 16-19 age group. At level 3 it offers over 30 A level subjects alongside a choice of vocational qualifications. Varndean is the only sixth form college in the area to be selected as an International Baccalaureate World School offering a popular IB Diploma Programme. At level 2 about 140 students follow various vocational courses and a range of core GCSEs.

In addition to examination courses and tutorial work, a broad programme of enrichment activities is available to students, including sporting activities, art, drama, music, political and environmental issues, work experience and volunteering. There is an extensive range of day, residential and international trips and good support for students to organise their own clubs and societies. A thriving Student Union enables students to contribute to the development and improvement of the College as well as the organisation of social and fund-raising activities. The work of the College in the areas of environmental and international education has been recognised through national awards.

The College has a distinguished record of achievement over a number of years. In 2018 the A level pass rate was 98.1% with more than half of our students obtaining A\* and B grades and over 75% achieving A\*-C grades. Two thirds of subjects achieved 100% pass rate. Students on the International Baccalaureate programme achieved some of the best results in the UK with an average score of 36 points, which is the equivalent to 3 A grades at A level. Success rates and high grades for vocational courses are similarly high. We are particularly proud of the fact that, at Varndean College, students do significantly better than expected, based on their GCSE results.

## **Ofsted Inspection 2018**

An Ofsted inspection in September 2018 gave Varndean confirmed it once again as a good college. Inspectors comment that:

- Governors, leaders and managers have developed a highly inclusive culture that allows staff and students to thrive.
- Teachers know their students well. They have high expectations and use their own experiences and expertise to motivate students to achieve.
- Students benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their individual needs.
- Students enjoy their learning, maintain excellent behaviour and are highly cooperative.
- The vast majority of students produce work of a high standard. Students on the International Baccalaureate produce work of exceptional quality.
- Students with high needs receive very good support and make good progress. They achieve their qualifications and move to the next stage of learning or to employment.

## **Staff**

The College staff numbered 255 in Mar 2022, consisting of 124 full and part-time teachers and 131 full and part-time support staff, plus an additional 35 Adult Education tutors. The Principal, Donna Marie Janson is supported by a Deputy Principal and two Vice Principals.

Curriculum subjects are organised into five areas each led by a Head of School, with two Assistant Heads of School. Programme Leaders are responsible for individual subject areas within the schools. Teaching staff are supported by departmental technicians, IT technicians and administrative staff. The Additional Support Team provides in-class support and individual support to students. Support staff teams include HR, Finance, Marketing, Registry and Site Maintenance.

There are extensive opportunities for professional development and effective processes for induction of new staff.

## **Support and Guidance**

In addition to the support through their academic courses, tutorial teachers provide regular one to one meetings to monitor progress and support students' progress. There is excellent additional learning support, including general support for learning difficulties, more intensive support for students with EHC plans and a well-being service. Students have comprehensive guidance and support on careers and higher education.

Varndean works in close partnership with parents. Parents have access to an on-line tracking system, receive regular up-dates on student progress, attend a series of parent's evening and are contacted whenever necessary. The college is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

## **Accommodation and Facilities**

The College's attractive building is situated on an impressive site at the head of a large green campus just 10 minute's drive from Brighton city centre. There are views to the south over the city and to the sea.

The College's facilities include:

- STEM Centre
- Learning Resource Centre (LRC)
- Open Access IT facilities, dedicated IT based teaching rooms and networked computer access in all classrooms
- On-site canteen serving range of hot meals, salads and snacks
- Fitness suite (available for staff and student use)
- Free on-site parking
- Extensive playing fields for organised sports

Prospective candidates are encouraged to visit our website at [www.varndean.ac.uk](http://www.varndean.ac.uk) for more detailed information regarding the College.