Croydon High celebrating outstanding achievement and diversity of ambition for their Class of 2017

Once again, Croydon High School has maintained its local reputation for excellent academic results with a 100% pass rate at A Level and a fifth of all girls achieved straight A*-A grades. Over 38% of all grades awarded were A* or A, highlighting the number of highly aspirational girls in this cohort.

Croydon High’s Headmistress, Emma Pattison, and the staff at Croydon High School would like to congratulate all the girls who worked so hard to achieve such excellent results. It is not possible to tell every story, of course, but particular mention must be made of the following girls who were awarded straight A* or A grades.


Currently a fantastic 77% of the cohort are leaving Croydon High to go on to their first choice destination – almost 50% of places at prestigious Russell Group universities.

Emma Pattison commented that this year she has been particularly aware of the breadth of experience and learning the girls have enjoyed during their sixth form years which has led them to make informed and diverse choices for their next steps.

“These are truly remarkable girls in so many ways. They have achieved excellent academic results whilst throwing themselves wholeheartedly into a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. During their years here, they have developed into compassionate and engaged young women who are ambitious for their future success and personal happiness.”

The Extended Project Qualification is a great example of enhanced academic learning. This award, representing an additional half an A Level, is increasingly valued by prestigious universities who believe it effectively showcases students’ research and presentations skills as well as their self-motivation and breadth of education. This year’s cohort opted to study a fascinating range of topics ranging from Alternative therapies for cancer to The trial of Oscar Pistorius. Results were as impressive as the subject matter, with 72% of the group awarded A* - A grades and over 97% A* - B.

Diversity of interest and ambition is celebrated at Croydon High, where every girl’s individual talents and aspirations are unique and enhanced by the school’s approach to teaching and learning.

As Emma Pattison explains, “Personalisation, with regards to learning, is a key part of the Croydon High experience. Teaching staff offer extremely high levels of individual support and really know the girls in their care. They work closely with the girls to develop their self-knowledge, which enables them to make good and appropriate choices in terms of their future plans.”
For an excellent example of a girl who knows her own mind and aspirations, look no further than Alita Butcher-Wallis. Alita is a true all-rounder and a Senior Prefect who regularly wowed audiences with her dramatic performances and beautiful singing in school productions. She is also a successful debater and a strong campaigner for Human Rights issues. Despite being an obvious candidate for Oxbridge, Alita chose, instead, and was offered, a place on the perfect course for her – the highly regarded Liberal Arts degree at Exeter. Her remarkable three A* grades and an A* for her EPQ secured this offer. Congratulations Alita!

Laura Baliman is celebrating after confirming her place to read English at Magdalene College, Cambridge. Laura’s A*AA grades, with an A* EPQ, reflect not only a huge amount of hard work and dedication, but also a genuine love for learning and passion for her subject. As Lauren Austen, one of Laura’s English teachers commented, “Laura is one of those students who comes to her classes filled with enthusiasm and opinion on texts she has read outside of the curriculum – she just has a really genuine love for literature and we have no doubt she will thrive at Cambridge.”

Laura said “I am delighted to have achieved my dream of going to Cambridge University and it would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the teachers and community of Croydon High, who had faith in me through difficult times and helped me fulfil my greatest ambitions.”

Head Girl Fariha Baba, who has contributed so enormously to school life over the past two years (including running a spectacular Model UN event for the whole school the day after her last exam) is rewarded for all her efforts with two A* and two A grades and an A* EPQ. That all adds up to a place at Warwick to read Maths - where we have no doubt she will excel.

Caroline Ip is heading to St Andrew’s to read Art History, after she also gained A* AA grades and an A* EPQ. Caroline has achieved so much during her time at Croydon High, including chairing a highly acclaimed Sixth Form Conference on behalf of the National Council of Young Women and winning the regional final of the renowned ARTiculation competition; a nationally acclaimed public speaking initiative designed to promote the appreciation and discussion of art. Head of Art at Croydon High, Liz Smith, commented “Caroline’s A* in Art is richly deserved; she is a hugely talented artist who works so hard to extend herself in every aspect of her studies. She has a wonderful future ahead of her at St Andrew’s.”

Hiya Varma had her heart set on a career in Medicine from very early on. She attended the school’s MedSoc club regularly and spent her holidays working at Croydon University Hospital as well as hospitals in India. An EPQ on Gene Therapy and A* AB grades are sending her to Manchester to realise her dream.

For Mr and Mrs Coulthwaite, there was a certain sense of déjà vu as they celebrated with Nicola, who is their third daughter to attend Croydon High School. But Nicola was certainly not going to be put in the shadow of her high achieving sisters with outstanding results of her own. Her A* A* A grades, with an A* EPQ were richly deserved, after a school career where she has thrown herself in to so much. Her outstanding performances on the Netball and Hockey tour of South Africa and her consistent efforts in supporting the school - and especially the PE department - at many events was greatly valued. Nicola is very excited to be realising her dream of studying Sport and Exercise Science at Bath. She said, “The teachers at Croydon High bring a new meaning to the phrase "bending over backwards for you. I am so privileged to have been taught there and I know that I have had the best set up possible for a life in sport!”

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Many of the girls celebrating today have spent their whole school life at Croydon High, but equally there are those who joined the school later and have excelled. Olivia Dickinson, from Oxted, joined the Sixth Form and from the start, threw herself wholeheartedly into Croydon High life. She became a Senior Prefect, achieved first place for her Economics essay in the Autumn Statement Challenge and regularly volunteered at the Croydon Contact centre for the elderly. Olivia’s mother, who was with her daughter as they collected her results said, “Olivia has flourished here at Croydon High – her confidence has really grown and most importantly, she has been so happy.” Olivia is on her way to Birmingham to read Economics armed with AAB grades – and an A* EPQ.

Being far from home made Songyu Tan from China more determined to make her mark at Croydon High. She arrived for Sixth Form with very little English, but worked hard to improve her language skills. “As a Chinese student, I made a real effort to mix with girls from other backgrounds,” said Songyu. She became a House vice-captain, volunteered for local charity Waggy Tails supporting disabled children and achieved A* AA grades which send her to Durham to read Natural Sciences.