

Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge 2016 Visit: Callum Marsh

On the 17th of June 2016, I and 12 fellow students from West Hill School travelled to Sydney Sussex College at the University of Cambridge. Here we were introduced to our own en suite accommodation and had a guided tour around the centre of the city.

At 2 pm, we were taken to the Knox-Shaw room, where we received an introduction about Cambridge by Dr Kirsten Dickers. Following this, we then had a tour of the College. This was one of the highlight moments of the visit for me personally, especially as I got to stand on top of the flagstone in the College Chapel's Antechapel under which Oliver Cromwell's head was buried (reputedly in a biscuit tin).



On top of this, the tour guide, who was an undergraduate student, told the group of her modest background which certainly changed my impression of how anyone can get into Cambridge, not just the élite. After the very entertaining tour, we went punting down the River Cam, where we learnt a lot about the history of Cambridge as well as seeing some of the amazing pre-Victorian architecture. After some free time, we had our dinner before going back to the Knox-Shaw room to compete in a quiz. Following this, we watched a film and played some board games with another visiting school before going back to our accommodation to sleep.



The following day, after eating our breakfast and packing our bags, we received a taster session from Jenifer Varzaly. Here, she introduced us to the causes and consequences of the global financial crisis which truly opened my eyes to university lessons. It was very interesting and the further detail compared to GCSE studies only made the subject even more interesting. Subsequent to this, we walked to the Law Faculty, where we met Mrs Ali Lyons. Here we had an introductory Law lecture which showed us one of the subjects open to us at the College and University.

We then returned to Sydney Sussex College for our lunch before going to the Whipple Museum of the History of Science. This was a very interesting visit, especially viewing some of the first microscopes which led to the development of our knowledge of cells and micro-organisms.

Following the museum visit and another walk around Cambridge, we set off back to West Hill.



The visit really opened my eyes open to the diversity of people who study at Cambridge and the support that they receive. It helped me to understand that financial restrictions will not prevent me from studying at Cambridge. The College was very traditional with the original old chapel and architecture from the Tudor times which appealed to me as it is a much more pleasant view than buildings of modern architecture. Overall, the visit was more than worthwhile as it has given me added motivation to achieve my goal of getting to a university of such standard and reputation. Furthermore, it has brought my goal closer as I now fully understand the reality that I could afford to study at the University and receive a much wanted degree.

