

ORIEL COLLEGE OUTREACH OFFICER

Report for Academic Year 2022-2023



Oriel
College

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

me for help!

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BACKGROUND

Consolidation was the overall goal for outreach at Oriel in 2022-23 – consolidating our school relationships, our strategies and our programmes for outreach in years to come. What flux we found ourselves in following the pandemic has largely stabilised, granting us solid ground for expanding on successful programmes in the future. Although link schools still struggle with various obstacles to accessing outreach support (lack of capacity in timetabling, staff turnover, budgetary limitations) we have worked both within and around these limitations to assist teachers, support staff and students at schools in our regions.

Across the academic year 2022-23, Oriel organised and/or participated in 128 distinct outreach events – an increase on last year’s total. These events varied in terms of format, though in-person events were largely preferred and, as such, 74% of all events run across the year were in-person – an increase on last year. These events reached a total of over 3700 students, a significant increase on 2021-22. This is accounted for by the fact that many events this year comprised of large groups (some as large 100 students), sometimes across multiple schools for a single session or visit. I am proud to have managed this increase in the past year.

Partnerships and collaborations continue to be a key part of the College’s outreach strategy, allowing Oriel to engage in targeted work with a diverse range of students. The College’s primary outreach partnership with Generating Genius flourished this year with events organised as part of the collaborative STEM@Oxford programme punctuating the academic calendar. Alongside STEM@Oxford, the College has been working with the social mobility and education charity The Brilliant Club for the first time. We have also organised a teachers’ conference in collaboration with the *Oxford for West Midlands* consortium, and run various events in conjunction with our counterpart colleges at the University of Cambridge.

Building on the success of the Humanities Residential in 2022, the College also expanded its offering to host 4 residential programmes for disadvantaged students at Oriel across the Hilary Term vacation. These residentials took place between 3-12 April and saw 78 Year-12 students participate in subject-based programmes, plus 30 Year-10s from Birmingham schools as part of the Healthy Activities and Food (HAF) programme. This expansion of our residential initiatives is a great sign for the years to come, and I look forward to the next round of residential visits in 2023-24.

Finally, after nearly 5 years of serving in the role of Tutor for Admissions and Outreach, Rev Dr Robert Wainwright stepped down from the post in June. During his tenure, Rob oversaw admissions and outreach work at the College – including throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and the return to in-person events thereafter. The new Tutor for Admissions and Outreach is Professor Julien Devriendt, Fellow and Tutor in Physics as well as Professor of Astrophysics at the University. I, alongside Julien and our team of enthusiastic Student Ambassadors, look forward to creating exciting new initiatives and events for pupils across our link regions.



Students attending a tour of College during Outreach Day

ADMISSIONS STATISTICS

The Annual Admissions Statistical Report for 2023 can be found here:
www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/AnnualAdmissionsStatisticalReport2023b.pdf



ACORN:

A measure of a postcode's level of socio-economic disadvantage.

The proportion of students admitted to Oriol College from an ACORN category 4 or 5 postcode (the most deprived categories) across the period from 2020-2022 was 11.2%. Applicants from an ACORN category 4 or 5 postcode accounted for 13.1% of all UK applicants to the College in the period. This compares to a university rate of 16.8%.

At the admissions level, there was a slight disparity between offers made to ACORN 4 or 5 applicants, and offers made to other applicants. 20.5% of ACORN 4 or 5 applicants across the period received an offer of a place compared to 23.3% of other applicants. Across the wider university, 20.1% of ACORN 4 or 5 applicants received an offer of a place placing Oriol slightly above the university average for offers made.

POLAR:

A measure of the rate of progression to higher education in a postcode.

The proportion of students admitted to Oriol College from a POLAR quintile 1 or 2 postcode (the postcodes with the least progression to higher education) across the period 2020-2022 was 13.0%. Applicants from a POLAR quintile 1 or 2 postcode accounted for 14.5% of all UK applicants to the College in the period. This compares to a university rate of 15.9%.

Oriol's offer rate for candidates from postcodes with the lowest progression to higher education remains broadly in line with the university rate. 20.7% of applicants from a POLAR 1 or 2 postcodes received an offer of a place compared to 23.4% of other UK applicants. Across the wider university, 21.1% of POLAR 1 or 2 applicants received an offer of a place.

At the level of offers made to candidates from disadvantaged and underrepresented postcodes, Oriol is in line with the wider university average. However, as with previous years, the largest gap the College sees occurs at the application level – compared to the wider University of Oxford, Oriol doesn't receive as many applications from candidates from ACORN category 4 or 5, or POLAR quintile 1 or 2 postcodes. Outreach is an essential means of attracting the best students regardless of background, and closing the application gap is an important target for the College. Metrics like these shape how outreach programmes are conceived and conducted, and are considered when we target students for initiatives such as residential.



Oriol student Ambassadors at The Classics Study Day



Year 12 tour from Baxter College (Worcestershire)

ACTIVITY FOR 2022-2023

In order to effectively target the College's outreach efforts, Oriel works primarily with 'link schools'. These are non-selective state schools and colleges within any of Oriel's seven link regions (these regions correspond to the seven local authorities: Walsall, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Kensington and Chelsea, and Richmond upon Thames). Link schools have access to the full outreach programme including free visits to Oxford for pupil groups, visits to and talks at schools, and support for Oxbridge applicants.

Coach hire reimbursement

Link schools are also eligible for coach hire reimbursement from the college when organising a visit. This ensures that visits are cost-neutral for schools, and has allowed for hundreds of pupils across Key Stages 3-5 learn about universities and higher education.

TOTAL EVENTS THIS YEAR

18%

LONDON LINK SCHOOLS

41%

WEST MIDLANDS LINK SCHOOLS

45%

HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE

25%

MULTI-REGIONAL, NON-REGIONAL,
AND GENERAL EVENTS

The breakdown of link area schools in contact was as follows:

Area	Total non-selective link schools/colleges	Schools in contact	%	Schools not in contact	%
RBKC	7	6	86%	1	14%
Richmond	12	10	83%	2	17%
Dudley	22	13	59%	9	41%
Walsall	16	13	81%	3	19%
Wolverhampton	18	12	67%	6	33%
Worcestershire	30	24	80%	6	20%
Herefordshire	16	9	56%	7	44%
TOTAL	120	87	73%	33	27%

Across all of the College's link regions, we were able to increase the number of schools in contact. Contact represents the first step towards staging an outreach intervention, and although many of the new relationships are still in a fledgling stage, there is much room for these relationships to develop and flourish in the coming year.

Dudley, Wolverhampton and Herefordshire remain an area of focus with regard to establishing contacts. Many schools in these regions are academies in Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) and we hope to build up a greater relationship with the MATs in our link regions. This will hopefully allow us more consistent contact with some schools in our link regions.

The breakdown of events by link area was as follows:

Link area	Number of events	% of total
RBKC	7	5%
Richmond	11	9%
Dudley	6	5%
Walsall	24	19%
Wolverhampton	11	9%
Worcestershire	34	27%
Herefordshire	10	8%
Other (incl multi-region)	25	20%
TOTAL	128	100%

Events this year included the typical array of Higher Education Explained talks, personal statement workshops and subject taster sessions, and the distribution of events across regions is mostly as expected. For Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond, and Worcestershire the percentage of events run with schools in these regions

reflects the proportion of total link schools in each region (for instance, Worcestershire accounts for 25% of link schools, and 27% of events were run in the region). Further support and contact is needed with our other regions, however, and there will be great focus on building this contact and engagement in the year ahead.

ANALYSIS BY LINK REGION

Kensington and Chelsea

(proportion of total link schools: 6%)

Only a small number of link schools are in the borough. Schools have relatively high progression to university with some schools having consistent Oxbridge success. Despite this there is significant economic disparity in the borough and consistent support remains important.

Richmond

(proportion of total link schools: 10%)

Richmond again remains an area where little intervention is required. Staff at schools are well informed and there is a good level of support in place for students. Small, concentrated support is likely what will be best for schools in the region.

Dudley

(proportion of total link schools: 18%)

Dudley is a metropolitan unitary authority and the College's second largest link region in terms of link schools. Although there are strong relationships with certain institutions in Dudley, engagement across the region remains low with only 59% of schools in contact and only 5% of events run this year for Dudley schools.

Many schools in the region are part of a Multi-Academy Trust (15 schools, 68%) and the contact we have had in the last year has often been with a contact at one of these trusts. Building a relationship with Multi-Academy Trusts will be important to establish firm contacts with staff at schools in the region. Oriel and Girton College, Cambridge are currently planning a Schools Tour for the region, simulating the successful programme run annually in Walsall.

Walsall

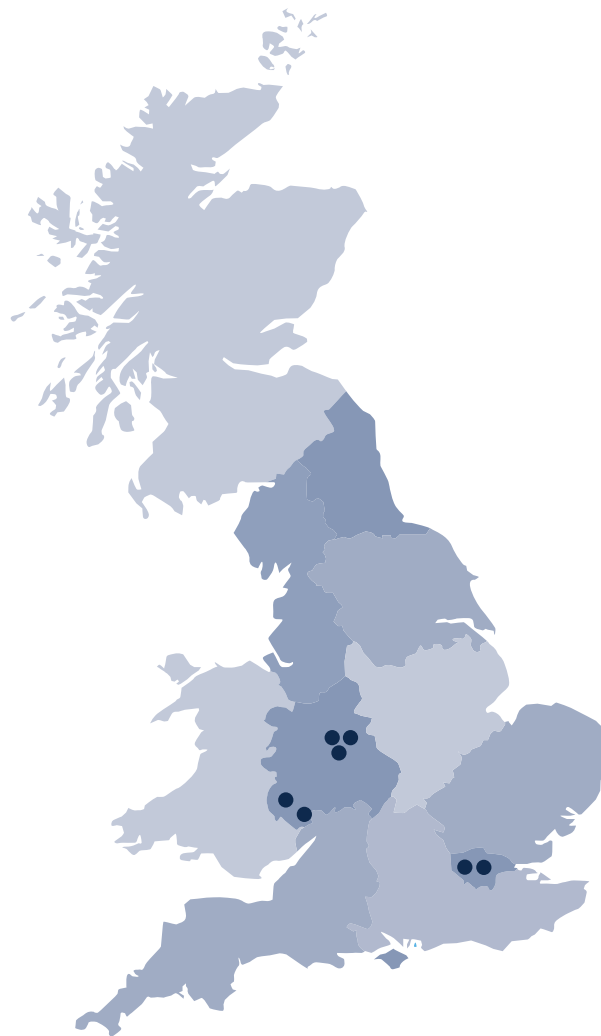
(proportion of total link schools: 13%)

Walsall is one of the College's best-engaged regions, and firm relationships have been maintained with schools and staff across the authority. Despite this, there are a number of schools which have not returned contact with us in a number of years. It may be worth expanding the Walsall Schools Tour next year to include a teacher and staff information session in order to help staff members who may not know about the outreach support available from Oxford and Cambridge.

Wolverhampton

(proportion of total link schools: 15%)

Engagement with teachers in the region remains high, and staff are enthusiastic about outreach support with many seeking multiple interventions for students. In spite of this, events for Wolverhampton schools remain low. In 2021-



22 academic year there were capacity issues for schools whose lingering effects may still be proving an obstacle for visits to the College. Local events in the region may assist in ensuring that students receive outreach support.

Worcestershire

(proportion of total link schools: 30%)

Worcestershire is the largest of all the College's link regions in terms of schools, and so the region represents a large proportion of all events run this year. Link schools in Worcestershire are quite dispersed across various towns in the county, and so a tour model isn't quite as feasible as in more densely populated regions such as Walsall or Dudley. Contact with schools in the region is good, however, and the proportion of events run is representative of the county's share of schools

Herefordshire

(proportion of total link schools: 13%)

Contact with schools in Herefordshire increased marginally, though there seems to be a lack of awareness regarding outreach support from Oxford. Many schools are rurally located and only go as far as GCSE, so there is the potential that staff see university outreach as superfluous. In order to reach more teachers and students there will be a hub event hosted in early 2024 at Hereford Sixth Form. Oriel has a good relationship with the sixth form college and the College has a large catchment of schools across the county.

CONSORTIUM AND COLLABORATIVE WORK

Collaboration is an important part of outreach work, allowing us to combine our resources with other colleges and organisations to reach more young people than would be possible alone.



Generating Genius collaboration

UNIQ Summer School

In a first for outreach at the College, Oriel hosted 33 Year-12 students as part of the UNIQ summer residential programme from 28-31 June. UNIQ is the University of Oxford's flagship access programme for state school students which runs across the year to support young people with high potential from backgrounds that are under-represented at the University of Oxford. The summer residential part of the programme is supported by colleges at the University, and this year over 1200 students took part.

Oxford for West Midlands

Oxford for West Midlands is a college consortium consisting of Oriel, University and Keble Colleges, all of which have outreach responsibility for regions in the West Midlands. The consortium hosted the Virtual West Midlands Virtual Teachers' Conference again this year across two evenings (8 and 15 February). The conference was attended by just over 60 delegates this year and teachers participated in sessions covering outreach initiatives at the University of Oxford and the Oxbridge admissions process.

The consortium has also been in discussions regarding a formal partnership with social mobility charity, The Brilliant Club.

Generating Genius

The College continued its partnership with Generating Genius this year to participate in the collaborative STEM@Oxford programme. Generating Genius is an access charity that works with students from African and Caribbean backgrounds, helping them to attain the information and skills needed to pursue degrees and careers in STEM. The STEM@Oxford programme in particular is a collaboration between Oriel and Generating Genius focussed on supporting 30 Year-12 students considering degrees in STEM at top universities such as the University of Oxford.

This year the STEM@Oxford programme got off to a spectacular start with a launch event in the House of Lords, sponsored by the Provost. This was followed by a visit to the College on 13 April with students learning about personal statements and getting the chance to visit the Medical Sciences Teaching Centre. We look forward to hosting the STEM@Oxford cohort at Oriel again on 31 August for a day of subject exploration.

The Brilliant Club

The Brilliant Club is a social mobility charity that works with disadvantaged pupils from primary through secondary school to support students accessing top universities through curricular enrichment programmes. Through the Scholars Programme, PhD tutors share their subject knowledge with small groups of pupils aged 8-18, giving the pupils an experience of what university-level teaching might be like. This year, Oriol hosted a graduation event for 28 pupils on the Scholars Programme, as well as tours for Brilliant Club groups in Oxford throughout the year. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that one of our own Student Ambassadors at the College is a Brilliant Club alumnus himself, and his praise for the programme is very high!

Oxford for West Midlands is currently investigating the possibility of a formal partnership with The Brilliant Club as a consortium. We believe The Brilliant Club could assist in reaching out to schools across our respective link regions, and that Oxford-focussed outreach could be a meaningful addition to the Scholars.

Cambridge Collaborations

• West Midlands Webinar Series

The College once again supported the West Midlands Webinar Series with the delivery of a session on subject exploration, super-curricular resources and study skills. The series, coordinated across six Oxford and Cambridge colleges, took place from the 6 October to

17 November and saw students from across the West Midlands attend sessions covering all aspects of the Oxbridge application process.

• Walsall Schools Tour 2023

The collaborative Walsall Schools Tour ran again this year with the first leg of the tour taking place from 20-24 March. During this week, myself and my colleague at Newnham College, Cambridge, visited 11 schools and delivered 12 talks for Year-10 and 12 students in the region. As with last year, the focus was on raising aspirations for Year-10 students in the region and thus the Walsall visit was followed up by 3 Year-10 group visits to Oriol on 9-11 May. During these visits we had the opportunity to further interact with 89 students from 9 of the schools, and these students will be welcomed to Newnham College in October for a further exploration of university options and study skills.

• Dudley Schools Tour 2024

Oriol and Girton College, Cambridge are hoping to adjust and employ the Walsall Schools Tour model for Dudley in order to boost engagement with schools in the region. At present, it seems like a full tour in the Walsall vein would prove ineffective due to lack of staff contact. As such, it is proposed that the tour will be adjusted to incorporate a virtual launch event for teachers and a shorter more condensed tour of the region. We hope that we can highlight the importance of events like these to school staff in advance of visiting the region in order to boost school engagement while we are there.

Year 12 students from Hereford Sixth Form Academy



EASTER RESIDENTIALS



Philosophy Joint School Study Day

The College was excited to host four one-night residential programmes this year across the Hilary term vacation: three programmes for Year-12 residents and one for Year-10 students as part of a collaboration with the Birmingham City Council HAF Programme. 78 Year-12 students and 30 Year-10s participated in the programmes which took place across 3-12 April. The Year-12 programmes were subject-based, granting prospective applicants from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds the opportunity to explore their subject area and learn more about applications to highly competitive universities such as the University of Oxford. The Year-12 residents were as follows:

Philosophy Joint Schools Study Day (3-4 April)

For students considering Philosophy joint-honours degrees, particularly the Philosophy and STEM joint honours courses such as Physics and Philosophy, and Maths and Philosophy.

Classics Study Day (4-5 April)

For students considering degrees in Classics.

Women in Sustainability Residential (11-12 April)

For female and non-binary identifying students who have an interest in exploring the topic of Sustainability through academic study.

Across each of these residents, students had the opportunity to hear from tutors at the College, chat with Student Ambassadors and visit some of the University of Oxford's museums. Programmes like these are so important in informing young people and making them feel welcome at Oxford – this was achieved with 50% of participants indicating in feedback that they are more likely to consider

an application to Oxford or Cambridge after attending the programme. The comments from participants have been extremely heartening and I am assured that the residents have had a major impact on the young people who were involved.

One comment I would like to highlight:

“I absolutely loved it – I wanted to see if Oxford was for me and I enjoyed the atmosphere so much... I loved the tour of Oxford, as well as Oriel itself, the ambassadors were lovely and so welcoming... The actual lectures were amazing - especially I loved how they combined previously thought to be contrasting subjects (e.g. science and religion) and how they were both challenging... yet not too overwhelming.”

The College also had the opportunity to host a residential for 30 Year-10 students from two schools in Birmingham in collaboration with the Birmingham City Council HAF programme across 10-11 April. The HAF programme is designed to address the holiday experience gap for young people from low-income households and, students on the Oriel residential took part in a variety of experiences – taster lectures, museum visits, tours of the city – to learn about higher education and universities.

It was an exciting prospect to host four one-night residents at Oriel this year, building on the single residential we were able to offer in 2022. Alongside the UNIQ summer programme, the College is providing a valuable opportunity to many young people – an opportunity to briefly live like an Oxford student. I am assured that experiences like these make young people feel more welcome and informed about the excellent opportunities available to them here at Oxford.

LOOKING AHEAD



Sitting down to write this report at the end of a busy year provides such a valuable opportunity to look back over all that has taken place in the last twelve months, and to evaluate where we might improve. Feedback from students and schools is so essential for us to improve and extend the support we offer. Distilled from this assessment are a number of key objectives which will guide my work for next year:

- **Continue to expand contact with link schools** by making it easier for teachers and staff to access our communications – for instance, by having a subscription-style newsletter that teachers can sign-up for via the website. Further cooperation with multi-school institutions, such as academies, and multi-school events with hub schools will be key to increasing contact with teachers and support staff.
- **The Student Ambassador programme** continues to be an area of focus for me. Although we had an increase in the number of students involved in outreach activities at the college last year, there is room for further engagement and we are currently investigating ways in which we can recruit and reward students.

- **Digital media** is still incredibly important for Oriel outreach, and something that we want to enhance in 2023-24. Being able to provide resources and guidance to students across our link regions that is accessible online will provide a meaningful addition to the College's outreach initiatives and supplement the work we do with schools in our link regions.

Taking a step back to write this report, I was somewhat surprised by how long it had become. In the short space of one year so much has taken place – so much that, had I not had a record of it all, I would surely have left out some of the amazing work we have done. And yet there are always areas where we can improve, more young people we could reach, and more work we could be doing. With support from all the members of the College community – students, tutors, alumni – 2023-24 will bring all the more success for outreach at Oriel. I look forward to taking that step back once more in 12 months' time to see just how much further we have come.



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