The Brilliant Club’s Scholars Programme gives pupils from non-selective state schools the opportunity to work with a PhD researcher to experience university style learning. It helps introduce pupils to the idea of Higher Education and develop skills, knowledge and the confidence that they could progress to a highly selective university. We work with pupils from aged 7 to 18, supporting pupils to make an informed choice when they leave school.

Why get involved?

- Develop key university readiness skills, including critical thinking and meta-cognition
- Scholars Programme graduates are almost twice as likely to progress to highly-selective universities (UCAS evaluation, 2019)
- Provide stretch and challenge and support transition to secondary school
- Robust impact reports detailing how the programme makes use of Pupil Equity Funding
  - Supports schools to meet the Education Scotland Quality Indicators

The Scholars Programme offers:

- Challenging supra-curricular courses taught by a world-class researcher
- Experience of university-style learning in small group tutorials
- Two visits to highly-selective universities

A national movement

800 Schools
40 Partner universities
15,000 Pupils across the UK
Pupil journey

Programme planning
A lead teacher at the school will be supported by a Scholars Programme Officer to plan the programme.

In-school tutorials
Their PhD tutor visits the school on a weekly basis to deliver tutorials 2-6. Pupils each receive a course handbook to support them through the programme. Pupils also have access to a virtual learning environment to get support from their tutor.

Programme starts

Launch trip
A visit to a highly-selective university to meet their PhD tutor, experience their first tutorial and learn about university life.

Final assignment and feedback
All pupils complete a challenging final assignment pitched one year above their current level. Tutors provide one-to-one feedback in tutorials 6 and 7. Assignments are marked and moderated with university gradings.

Course examples
Pupils aged 7 - 11 will study specially designed courses introducing them to exciting topics outside of their normal curriculum below you can see examples of some of the exciting courses pupils could experience.

How many engineers does it take to make an ice cream?

What is fairness?

Ancient mathematics and Pythagoras’ theorem

What are rights?

Power to the people?

Chemistry of the cupcake

The healthy heart

Lying with statistics

Pupil selection
The Brilliant Club requires that at least 55% of pupils registered on the programme fulfil at least one of the following criteria:
- Eligible for free school meals
- No parental history of higher education
- Deprivation according to postcode

School impact report
We provide a detailed impact report at the end of the programme outlining pupils’ progress against our university readiness competencies. The report also showcases pupil equity fund impact.

Graduation trip
A visit to another highly-selective university to celebrate pupils’ achievements on the programme through the graduation ceremony and learn more about university life. At some venues, parents and carers are also invited.
Programme impact
Independent analysis by UCAS shows that 56% of school leavers that completed The Scholars Programme progressed to a highly-selective university, compared to only 30% of pupils with similar backgrounds. This is a sizeable and statistically significant difference.

"Our child has loved being involved in the programme. It made her think more seriously about going to a university when she's older and given her a sense of pride in her work."
Primary school parent, Bristol

"My tutor provided me with constructive criticism of my analyses and assignments which allowed for an improvement in the standard of my work. This not only helped me to excel in my A-Levels, but it also helped me achieve a 1st in my final Brilliant Club assignment which made for a strong addition to my UCAS personal statement."
Scholars Programme alumnus, now studying at the University of Cambridge

How to get your school involved:
The school contribution is £179 per pupil, a total of £2,148 per placement, which consists of 12 pupils. This cost is subsidised through contributions from our university partners and external grants and donations.

Schools can sign up at any time in the school year. However, we advise signing up in advance of the deadlines below:

Terms offered: Sign up by:
Autumn (October - February) July
Spring (January - May) October
Summer (March - June) December

Get in touch!
Click here to enquire, or email laura.johnstone@thebrilliantclub.org to register your interest and discuss with us.