



YEAR 9 OPTIONS

SUBJECT INFORMATION BOOKLET



Name:

Form:



Options: key dates and events

Date	Event and information
Friday 17 January 2025	Options subject information booklets given to Year 9 students (and also published electronically on the Year 9 page of the school website). This contains the information about any Options subjects on offer for Year 9 students.
Monday 20 January 2025, 4.30-5.30pm	Options evening: this face-to-face event is in the main school hall. The evening will offer key information and time to visit subject 'stalls' and speak to staff about the subject at GCSE and the opportunities it will offer.
Monday 3 February – Friday 7 February 2025	Subject presentations/assemblies: Options subjects will present to the year group about their subject at KS4 and the opportunities taking that subject will offer them.
Friday 27 February 2025	Electronic Options form shared with students. The electronic form will be shared via student email. Students have a month to complete and submit their Options forms (earlier submission does not increase the chances of students getting all of their first choices).
Tuesday 4 March and Thursday 6 March 2025	Y9 Progress Review. Although the progress of students in each subject is the primary focus of discussion in appointments, there will of course be opportunities to offer further questions that may have arisen since the Options evening.
Monday 10 March – Friday 14 March 2025	Y9 Options meetings with Y9 tutors. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the subject preferences that the students are considering. Parents/carers are also invited to attend if they are able to do so during the working day. Details of exact dates for each tutor group and how to book appointments will be communicated closer to the dates.
Friday 28 March 2025	Final deadline for submission of Options forms.
Other opportunities and support	
Taster sessions	Some subjects will offer some taster classes of subjects for Year 9 students – this will take place in a timetabled lesson before final choices are made.
Assemblies and tutor sessions	There are subject-focused assemblies and some activities and discussion in tutor times over the term to support students in making the right choice for them and their potential plans for the future.

Dear Year 9 students and families,

This is the **first** of your Options booklet: in this booklet you will find a summary of all of the subjects available for you to choose from for your Options subjects in Years 10 and 11. You need to keep this safe as you will want to use this and refer to it throughout the process.

This is an important stage in your education, and we want to be able to support you to make the best decisions for your future.

In this booklet you will find information about:

- The Options subjects that you might study at KS4
- Key dates and deadlines

There are some other subjects that **all** students must take for GCSE. These are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Combined Science (unless you opt to take Separate Sciences instead as one of your option choices)

In addition, there are subjects that **all** students will continue to have lessons or opportunities in over the course of KS4. These are:

- Physical Education
- PSHE
- Careers Advice and opportunities

This booklet is a resource designed to help you think carefully about what the best next steps are for you, in order to help you to get where you want to be. You might have a really good idea about what you want to study post-16 or what career you would like in the future: you might have no idea. Both are fine. However, regardless of whether you know what you want to be when you are older or if you are totally unsure, having a balanced set of GCSE qualifications in respected subjects will help you.

Use this booklet to begin to find out about different subjects, to discuss these subjects with family at home and with your tutors. Your choices for GCSE will support your applications for life after CVC – whether that is for A-Levels, apprenticeships, college courses, University courses, jobs and careers – so we want to make sure that you have thought really hard about these and made the best choice you can.

A second booklet with more detail about the process of selecting your options and some activities to help you think carefully about your choices will follow later in this half-term. For the moment, we just want you to think carefully about the subjects that are on offer for you to choose from!

Keep discussing and asking questions throughout this process: with your family, subject teachers, form tutors, your Head of Year – we are all here to help you make these decisions.



Amelia Parker
Assistant Principal

Option subject: Art and Design – Fine Art

GCSE Art and Design enables students to pursue their own artistic work using a broad range of art processes and techniques including, but not limited to drawing, installation, lens and light-based media, mixed media, land art, printing, painting and sculpture.

Artists are visual researchers; we seek information and inspiration from the world around us. The GCSE Art course will develop students' artistic voice. Students are taught to explore, refine and document the origins and development of their ideas. This supports with the production of informed, innovative and high-quality pieces of work.

The EDUQAS Art course is made up of 2 units:

Unit 1: Personal Portfolio in Art and Design

This is worth 60% of the final grade (this is otherwise called 'coursework')

To begin the course students will conduct a miniature project based on a theme provided by Art staff; this can change yearly. Our current year 10 cohort have responded to the theme of 'contrast'. This smaller practice project supports students to understand the project process. It will also highlight areas of personal strength as well as areas of future development.

From early January of year 10 until December of year 11 students can either continue to develop from their initial starting point (e.g. contrast) or they can develop project work from a broader range of given starting points. This said, students can choose their exact topic title, should they wish. This project will evolve over the year through visual and analytical enquiry.

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment (ESA) - This is worth 40% of the final grade

This concludes with an Art Exam - 10 hours of sustained focus on chosen final piece

Supporting sketchbook/other preparatory work is worth 75% of the marks awarded for ESA. The exam is worth 25% of the ESA.

The externally set assignment is set by the examination board. This consists of 15 possible themes. Students choose one theme to explore over approximately 14 weeks and will use their research to create a final practical outcome of their choosing. The sketchbook is not made under examination conditions, but the final practical outcome is created in 10 hours over two days.

If you are interested in taking Art and Design, you will need:

- a willingness to try new things and to document *all* work, even if it is not 'perfect'.
- a strong work ethic and the willingness to communicate with Art staff; they are your best resource
- a commitment to developing your practical and analytical skills
- the ability to sustain chosen line of enquiry
- an enjoyment of the visual world around you; drawings, paintings, advertisements, film and exhibitions
- a willingness to use your insights of others' artwork to directly inform your own independent Art practice

We will help you by:

- enthusing you/reminding you of the wonder that this subject possesses
- offering our expertise by introducing you to new media, techniques and processes
- introducing you to the work of exciting artists to inform your own creative work

Post-16 Links

A-Level in Art & Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Photography, Textiles or 3D Design; Level 3 Applied Diploma in Art & Design, Design Crafts, Fashion, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Photography, Textiles or 3D Design, Level 4 Foundation in Art & Design.

Career Progression

GCSE Art is a stepping-stone towards careers including, but not limited to animation, graphic design, art therapy, illustration, games design, photography, marketing, teaching, fashion design, architecture, curation, gallery work, web design. Studying Art will support students to develop transferable skills that will be an asset to any career that they choose.



Option subject: Art and Design – Photography

Do you want to explore the world? Do you wish to explore your own ideas and develop your creative and technical skills? Do you want to learn and explore a range of photographic techniques? Do you want to learn about influential and important photographers throughout history and now? Then Art and Design – Photography GCSE is for you!



This GCSE course is the same structure as the Art and Design – Fine Art GCSE option. However, for this qualification, students specialise in photography. Areas of study include:

- Documentary photography
- Photo-journalism
- Studio photography
- Location photography
- Experimental imagery
- Installation
- Moving image: film, video and animation.

Unit 1: Personal Portfolio in Art and Design

This is worth 60% of the final grade (this is otherwise called ‘coursework’)

Students spend part of the KS4 course exploring different themes (e.g. natural forms, close-ups or distortion) – this offers them the chance to learn photographic techniques, hone their skills and to understand the creative process when pursuing a project. Students work over Y10 and Y11 on developing a portfolio of their work and ideas.

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment (ESA) - This is worth 40% of the final grade

This concludes with an Art Exam - 10 hours of sustained focus on chosen final piece

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Career Progression

GCSE Art (Photography) is a qualification which teaches essential skills that are important in many careers and roles: this might include, but is not limited to, architecture, fashion, advertising, illustration, photo-journalism, media.

Option subject: Computer Science

Computer technology is advancing rapidly. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, and businesses need technologically aware individuals. This is particularly true in the gaming, cyber-security, robotics, VR (virtual reality) and AI (artificial intelligence) industries. Today, there is also an ever-increasing demand for socially responsible industries to find individuals with technical knowledge as well. This could be within healthcare, pharmaceutical research, ecological conservation and climate research.

This computer science course will provide you with logical thinking, programming and technical skills. If you are interested in understanding how computers work, programming, problem-solving, cyber-security, gaming, or just want to make the digital world a better place, this would be the GCSE option for you.

Computer Systems - Paper 1	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming - Paper 2
1.1 Systems architecture 1.2 Memory and storage 1.3 Computer networks, connections and protocols 1.4 Network security 1.5 Systems software 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology	2.1 Algorithms 2.2 Programming fundamentals 2.3 Producing robust programs 2.4 Boolean logic 2.5 Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

Practical Programming

All students will be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task during their course of study.

What can I do with this GCSE?

Students who study computer science can continue on to study it at A-Level. Computer scientists work as software engineers, analysts and systems architects in companies across every industry sector. It is also common for computer scientists to pursue careers in science, engineering and mathematics.

Required skills and attributes

GCSE Computer Science is a challenging course and students' interest and aptitude in subjects like mathematics should be taken into account before selecting this option, since students will be learning computer-related mathematics. For students who take GCSE computer science having access to a computer (not a tablet), out of lessons is helpful as they can work independently on improving their programming skills. This will help to support their progress.



Option subject: Design Technology

The Design Technology GCSE course provides candidates with a 'holistic experience' of design and technology by removing the constraints of studying just one material. Candidates study a wide range of materials and processes choosing the most suitable as a result of investigation, testing and experimentation. Previous candidates have used wood, manufactured boards, metals, plastics, and electronics as well as graphical based materials such as paper, board and card. Traditional manufacturing techniques are studied along with more modern approaches including computer-aided design and manufacture. Successful product themes that have been studied on this course have included children's toys, games, educational devices, electronic products, storage, medical devices, music players and lighting. Candidates are exposed to a number of designing approaches that foster creativity, help solve design problems and improve products

There is the opportunity to design and make functional products, there will be one practical lesson per week.

Students will learn many new skills across a range of materials. The teaching is supportive and challenging.

Assessment

The course is made up of two units:

- Unit 1: one single written exam: core knowledge and designing skills.
- Unit 2: non-examined assessment: design and make task requiring students to respond to a design context. Work is submitted as an A3 portfolio of evidence and a 3D functioning prototype, made from suitable materials.

These units are weighted 50:50 for assessment.

Who is it for?

GCSE Design & Technology is a valuable and well-respected qualification at sixth form centres and also technical colleges. Students who are considering further study in creative and practical areas such as architecture, engineering, design, art would benefit from GCSE DT. Students who are considering further study in vocational and occupational areas such as construction, engineering, and motor vehicle engineering would benefit from GCSE DT.



Option subject: Drama

"To enter a theatre for a performance is to be inducted into a magical space, to be ushered into the sacred arena of the imagination"

Simon Callow, 'Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World'

GCSE Drama gives students the opportunity to explore the subject from a range of perspectives by devising their own, original work. Students will bring to life the work of a playwright; think like theatre reviewers, developing their own thoughts on what makes drama and theatre successful and develop as creative artists building and bringing a character to life through exploration and rehearsal. Students must study two contrasting texts for the GCSE course.

During your course you will consider:

- Acting
- Script study
- Practitioners
- A variety of styles and genres of theatre
- Devising
- Improvisation
- Playwrights



Components 1 and 2: Devising Drama (Practical) (60% of final grade with Component 3)

Students will create a devised performance in groups. They will be able to select a starting point from a range of stimuli. A range of stimuli can include; a piece of music, poem, photograph or a prop. The work must be supported by a devising log book.

Component 3: Presenting and Performing Texts

Students will study a play chosen by the drama department, which is different to the text studied in the final examination. Students will take part in two contrasting extracts from the text. Performance lengths will vary according to group size.

Component 4: Exam assessment - Performance and Response (40% of final grade)

The exam component will be assessed at the end of the qualification. Students will have to complete questions based on the set text studied in class and a review of a live performance. Please note that as a performing arts subject it will be expected for performing arts students to regularly attend an after-school GCSE session to rehearse or complete controlled coursework.

Post-16 Links:

- A-Level Drama and Theatre Studies or Performance Studies
- BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts
- Any further education or employment in which communication skills, confidence and teamwork are essential.

Careers

The skills developed through the study of drama can lead into careers in performance, theatre, arts administration; careers based on people skills and interacting with others, such as personnel or social work. Also, careers associated with presentation skills, such as marketing, media and law. The arts and culture sector are one of the fastest growing parts of the UK economy. To find out more, please speak to Miss Oldfield in the Drama department or by speaking to Year 11 students.

Option subject: Food Preparation and Nutrition

The Food Preparation and Nutrition course combines practical cooking and food and nutrition theory. Work is assessed internally through two set assignments (both include written reports 2000-3000 words) and one external exam in the second year of study. You will have the opportunity to cook a wide range of different dishes; please note you will be asked to supply ingredients for the weekly practical lessons. The cost of the weekly shop for ingredients varies, but averages at around £5 per week.

Why should I study this course?

By studying food preparation and nutrition you will:

- be able to demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment
- develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks
- understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food
- understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international) to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

What is the course structure?

The course is made up of two components, each being 50% of the qualification:

Component 1 - Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition: This is an exam that consists of two sections, both containing compulsory questions. The first part has questions based on stimulus material (such as photographs) and the second section contains short and long answer questions on food preparation and nutrition.

Component 2 - Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action: This component consists of two non-examination assessments that are internally assessed and externally moderated:

- The *Food Investigation Assessment* is a scientific food investigation which will assess your knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food.
- For the *Food Preparation Assessment* you will prepare, cook and present a menu to show your knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food.

What can I do at the end of the course?

The Food Preparation and Nutrition course provides a suitable foundation for the study of Level 3 Food, Science and Nutrition, or other food-related courses at either AS or A-level.



Option subject: Geography

GCSE Geography stimulates an interest in and a sense of wonder about places. It engages students to think about our changing world, how people and the environment interact, where places are and how places and landscapes are formed.

The GCSE geography course is a good mix of topics such as urban issues, world development, extreme environments, rivers, and hazards - to name but a few. The course will give you the chance to get to grips with some of the big issues which affect our world, and understand the social, economic and physical forces and processes which shape and change our world.

GCSE geography is designed to allow many topics to be studied and to provide an insight into a variety of the most important and relevant geographical issues. This diversity also allows all students to find topics they are interested and engaged in.



The AQA GCSE Course:

Living with the physical environment

The challenge of natural hazards: Which physical processes create natural hazards and what challenges do they pose? The hazards for investigation include volcanoes and earthquakes, extreme weather events and climate change.

The living world: What are the world's major ecosystems? Where are they located? How do they work? How are they being threatened? How can they be managed? The focus will be on tropical rainforests and hot deserts.

Physical landscapes in the UK: How have distinctive landscapes been formed by both rivers and the sea? What geological factors create variety in the landscape? How can rivers and coasts be managed to prevent erosion and flooding?

Challenges in the human environment

Urban issues and challenges: Why are urban areas growing so rapidly in certain parts of the world? What opportunities and challenges do the growth of urban areas create? How can urban living be more sustainable?

The changing economic world: Why does quality of life vary across the world? What does development mean and why is there a development gap? What are the impacts of rapid development?

The challenge of water resource management: What opportunities and challenges face the UK in terms of water, energy and food resources? How has water demand and supply led to conflicts across the world?

Geographical applications:

Issue evaluation: This part of the course examines a current and significant geographical issue. It draws upon a variety of geographical skills to critically evaluate and problem-solve.

Fieldwork: The final part of the course involves two fieldwork studies in contrasting environments; one of these is a coastal study, the other an urban study. Students will employ a range of techniques to collect, interpret, analyse and evaluate information and issues.

The Examinations

There are three exams and no coursework or controlled assessment. All exams are taken at the end of the course.

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment. This is worth 35% of the total marks.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment. This is worth 35% of the total marks.

Paper 3: Geographical applications. This is worth 30% of the total marks.

Post-16 links

GCSE Geography is an excellent basis for study at A-Level and beyond. It has the advantage of allowing study at a higher level in either a scientific or social sciences route. It also provides a great deal of knowledge, and the skills needed to study the sciences, related social sciences or other tertiary level courses. It provides a foundation for many careers, including environmental science, marketing, urban and rural planning, tourism and leisure, administration, finance and law.



Option subject: History

History GCSE helps you understand the world we live in and why it is the way it is. It gives you an understanding of events that have shaped your lives and will shape your future. Along the way you will answer interesting questions that will make you curious, make you angry, make you laugh and, most importantly of all, make you think. You will be taught to become an analytical and independent thinker who is able to reach and support your own conclusions.

The GCSE course we follow is the OCR History B: Schools History Project. It covers British and international history across a variety of timescales, each with a different historical focus.

The topics and periods covered by this GCSE are:

The Norman Conquest, 1065-1087.

William the Conqueror's conquest changed England forever. In this course we look at what late Anglo-Saxon England was like and how the arrival of the Normans re-shaped this country, for good and bad. We will learn about the stories of men and women and find out what they reveal to us about this important but turbulent period.

Migrants to Britain, c. 1250 to present.

Everyone in Britain has family who migrated here. The only thing that separates us is when that happened. This course looks at the people who have come to Britain from the 13th century to the present day. We will look at why they came, what their experiences were like and how they re-shaped Britain. We will see how those stories are connected to stories about religion, trade, war, technology and empire.

Living under Nazi rule, 1933-1945.

In this course we look inside one of the cruellest and most murderous regimes in history in order to understand how the Nazis controlled people, why people accepted their rule, how they resisted and what its effects were.



History Around Us: Ely Cathedral.

We live in a unique part of the country and at the heart of it is Ely Cathedral. In this course, we will look at how the site has been used and viewed from Saxon times to the present day. We will pay particular focus on how historians use evidence to allow you to understand this particular site but also to help you 'read' the world around you and see it in its proper context.

The Mughal Empire, 1526-1707.

This course looks at one of the greatest civilisations in world history - the Mughal Empire. It looks at its growth, its achievements and the beginnings of its decline. We will meet emperors and princesses, study art, architecture and religion and think about what it means to be part of an empire.

The Examinations

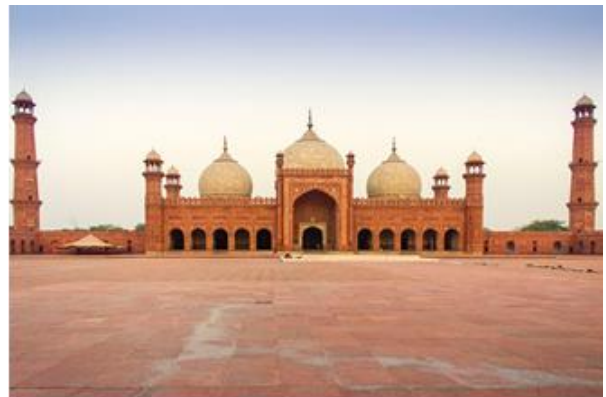
There are three exams and no coursework or controlled assessment. All exams are taken at the end of the course.

- Paper 1 examines the British history elements of the GCSE. This is worth 40% of the total marks.
- Paper 2 examines the History Around Us course. It is worth 20% of the total marks.
- Paper 3 examines the World History units. It is worth 40% of the total marks.

Post-16 Links

A GCSE in history is an excellent qualification for many courses at A-Level. Aside from A-Level history, studying history at GCSE can help you study other humanities subjects such as classics, economics, law, philosophy, politics or sociology.

People from all walks of life highly value the study of history. Qualifications in history can help you build a career in law, journalism, media, business and entertainment. Whichever path you choose, you will understand the world better if you study history.



Option subject: Modern Foreign Languages – French or Spanish

All students currently study French or Spanish and students who continue with their current language at KS4 will capitalize on their progress at KS3. Languages are compulsory for most students across many schools and students will be competing against those who have studied a language in the future.

There are many good reasons to study a modern foreign language at GCSE. Studying a modern foreign language promotes cultural awareness and understanding; it helps students to become more open-minded and empathetic towards others; it develops important cognitive skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and memory retention. MFL education can also improve overall academic achievement. It has been shown that students who study a foreign language may go on to perform better on standardized tests in other subjects in the future too. In the future, many employers will value students who speak another language well, as it will allow them to communicate with a wide range of people and be flexible in their approach. In addition, studying languages is very important for global citizenship. In an increasingly interconnected world, it is important for students to be able to communicate and collaborate with people from different countries.



Aims of the course

- To enable you to communicate confidently in French or Spanish.
- To give you a greater appreciation and understanding about life and culture in French or Spanish speaking countries.
- To enable you to obtain a worthwhile qualification in a modern foreign language, which could be useful for future employment and personal enjoyment.
- To give you a sound foundation for further study of your chosen language at A/AS-Level or as part of a vocational course.
- To enthuse you so that you feel able to continue learning languages later in life.

The course

- You will develop your skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation in your chosen modern foreign language. This will be achieved by studying a variety of topics and resources based on the AQA GCSE examination syllabus.
- You will develop these skills by working with your teacher, independently, with a partner or in small groups.
- In order to study a language at GCSE, you must have been studying that language with us in Year 9.

Assessment

- The four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) each contribute towards 25% of the final grade. Translation into English is assessed as part of the reading exam and translation from English is part of the writing exam.
- There are two tiers of entry available: foundation and higher levels. Students will take the same tier across all four skill areas (tiers cannot be mixed). Foundation tier allows students to access grades 1-5, higher tier allows access to grades 4-9.
- Tier of entry will be decided in consultation with your teacher throughout the course.
- All four skills will be assessed in formal examination situations at the end of Year 11.
- Speaking will be assessed through an oral exam, which will be conducted in school by the class teacher. This exam will take place before the start of the main GCSE exam period.
- All examinations are marked externally by AQA.

Career Opportunities

- A qualification in a modern language is viewed as important and useful by many universities and employers in many different sectors.
- Opportunities to work abroad may increase if you are competent in another language.
- Opportunities to advance your career prospects when working with UK companies who have links with France or Spain (or other countries where these languages are spoken) are increased.
- Communication skills and understanding of the English language are developed through the study of a foreign language.
- Those with language skills are highly valued by employers due to their adaptability and flexibility in the workplace. A language can often be the feature that makes the difference between one candidate and another, no matter the sector.



Option subject: Music

Music is a creative subject and studying GCSE Music allows creativity to flourish whilst developing a knowledge of different musical periods and styles. Music GCSE is open to everyone, although it should be noted that 30% of the GCSE course requires a live performance on a voice or instrument to a grade 3 standard or above. Music GCSE is 60% coursework, which allows students to build up their composing and performing skills, over the two-year course of study. Students are given the opportunity to dedicate this part of the course to exploiting their skill strengths and preferred choice of style, enabling all students to follow their own personal creative journey. We follow the Eduqas Music course.



Areas of study

- Musical forms and devices: music from the Western classical tradition
- Music for an ensemble: musical theatre, chamber music, jazz and blues
- Film music: creating and transforming atmospheres, characters and moods
- Popular music: rock and pop, bhangra and fusion

Component 1: Performing (30% of the final grade)

You will be required to perform for a duration of 4-6 minutes with a minimum of 2 pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance. One piece must link to an area of study.

Component 2: Composing (30% of the final grade)

You will need to create two compositions lasting a total duration of 3-6 minutes. One composition will be completed in year 11 and will be a response to a brief set by the exam board (Eduqas) in the final year. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief. A written log and a form of notation is required to authenticate your work.

Component 3: Appraising (40% of the final grade)

This is a written exam paper. It asks students to demonstrate a knowledge of musical elements, contexts and language. Two of the 8 questions are linked to set works which will require some knowledge to be put to memory and reading different forms of classical and rock notation.

We will help you by:

- Encouraging you to achieve your potential, offering an individual approach, expertise whilst creating varied opportunities for music making.
- Providing rehearsal spaces and resources for supporting the notation, recording and sequencing of composition work both in and beyond the classroom, in a GCSE afterschool coursework club.
- Facilitating practical based ensemble and analysis workshops in class alongside practice written tasks, to embed your understanding of how a variety of styles are constructed.

If you are interested in taking Music, you will need:

- A genuine passion for different kinds of music
- Imagination and a willingness to experiment with ideas
- An enjoyment and commitment to performing live on an instrument or voice
- A willingness to improve your awareness of theory skills
- An enquiring ear to demonstrate an understanding of the musical styles
- **A regular commitment to after-school coursework sessions and extra-curricular performances in school.**

Post 16 links:

Courses in A-Level Music or Music Technology, Theatre Studies, Performing Arts, Media studies. It is considered an academic subject and can support your entry into other post-16 courses. Musical careers include a musician, musical conductor or director, music therapy, composer, sound engineer, teaching, the film and computer games industry, advertising and marketing and music publishing.

Interested? Please contact Mr Gimson if you wish to speak to existing students studying Music.

Option subject: Physical Education GCSE

The GCSE course is designed to meet the needs of those wishing to study, and have an interest in, physical education on a more theoretical level, as well as on a practical one. Students will need to use time outside of the curriculum to develop and refine their skills in practical activities to ensure they achieve the best possible grade. It is strongly advised that students play at least one competitive sport outside of school to support the practical performance grade and understanding of the activity for the coursework element. Reading about, and watching, sport will also help to improve their knowledge and understanding of the theoretical side.

The course is made up of three units - two theory and one practical.

Unit 1 - Physical Factors Affecting Performance (30%)

- Multiple-choice, short- and extended-answer exam paper questions
- students will be looking at anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, effects of exercise, training and data

Unit 2 - Socio-Cultural Issues and Sports Psychology (30%)

- multiple-choice, short and extended-answer questions
- students will gain an understanding of sports psychology, socio-cultural influence, health, fitness and well-being

Unit 3 - Practical Performance (40%)

- performance in three sports; one individual, one game and one other (individual or game)
- coursework - analysing and improving sports performance in a particular activity
- Moderation of 3 sports and one piece of coursework.

GCSE assessment

The practical assessment will be completed by Easter of Year 11 and is externally moderated via a moderation day. Theory knowledge and understanding will be externally assessed by two exam papers taken in the summer of Year 11.

Students can submit practical elements which have been completed outside curriculum time. For example: golf, horse riding or swimming. However, it is necessary that they provide detailed and comprehensive evidence to support this, including a register of attendance at practice sessions, video evidence and evidence of competition, which will be submitted to school and can be moderated at a later date.



Option subject: Religious Studies

Religious Studies is a unique subject. It gives students the opportunity to explore some of the most challenging ideas of human history. It explores some of the most difficult ethical issues that humanity has ever faced. It looks at the past and explores how beliefs have shaped the world that we live in now. It looks at the future and considers how all this might influence what will happen next for humanity. In short, it requires students to engage with high level, critical thinking. They can challenge perspectives, understand how others view their world differently, track how beliefs have changed over time, understand how religion is viewed from the perspective of a religious believer and those who don't believe. Students develop their opinions in relation to ethical issues that are having an impact on society now. In the years to come, these may be the issues that young people are voting on. Religious Studies provides students with a balanced understanding of the most important questions that face modern society.

Students will be studying AQA GCSE Religious Studies (Full Course). The course is split into two components:

The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices (50% - exam)	Thematic studies (50% - exam)
Students study the influence of the beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. Students are required to learn about two religions in detail. The two religions that they will be studying are Christianity and Islam.	The students will then apply this understanding to four ethical themes. These will be: • Religion and life • Religion, peace and conflict • Religion, crime and punishment • Religion, human rights and social justice

Here are some of the questions that this GCSE will help students to explore:

To what extent are acts of terror linked to religion?	How did Islam become the fastest growing religion in history?	Can an all-loving God allow suffering and evil to exist?	How has religion shaped modern society?	Is it possible to prove God exists? Is it possible to prove that God doesn't exist?
Is it right to carry out painful and fatal tests on animals to benefit humanity?	Why are there so many ways of understanding and expressing people's beliefs?	Why did Michael H Hart call the prophet Muhammad the most influential person in history?	Why are 75 percent of the world's resources used by 25 percent of the world's population?	How important are religious rituals, beliefs, books and ideas in the modern world?
Are we destroying our planet?	Does society ignore discrimination?	Should euthanasia ever be legalised?	Is there anything after death?	Are the claims that Christians make about Jesus true?
How do people understand God differently?	Should we reintroduce the death penalty?	How much money is spent on nuclear weapons?	Is it acceptable to punish criminals violently?	Does science remove the need for religion?

Skills

The course will help students to develop key skills such as logic, critical thinking, written expression, analysis, independent thought, respect, tolerance, creativity and communication skills.

Post-16 Opportunities and Careers

Religious Studies can be directly linked to other subjects and everyday life, making it highly desired in numerous careers. Companies and universities recognise the skills that a course like this develops. Religious Studies can be beneficial to anyone who is looking to work in law, medical care, travel, advertising, human resources, diplomacy, publishing, business, charity, journalism, the media and teaching. Religious Studies can give a great understanding of people, whatever career path is chosen. It also encourages students to engage with important ethical issues.

Option subject: Separate Sciences

GCSE Separate Sciences give students the opportunity to develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for the three separate sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students will develop a critical approach to science evidence and methods. They will acquire scientific skills, knowledge and understanding of how science works and its role in society.

By taking science separately at GCSE level, students will cover more content, which together with the compulsory content taught during combined science lessons, will lead to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The Separate Science route is a demanding qualification and is suitable for students who have a passion for all three disciplines and who genuinely want to learn more about science.

The GCSE Separate Science route provides students with an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of all three Science disciplines, which will benefit students who want to take Science A-Levels. As there is more content (and sometimes extra topics) to cover, students following this programme of study are given more science lessons per fortnight compared to students following the compulsory Combined Science Route.

Examination Information

Students will sit 6 exams at the end of Year 11 - 2 Biology, 2 Chemistry, 2 Physics. The students will achieve 3 separate GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry and Physics). There will also be 24 required practical experiments that students must complete throughout the course. Aspects of required practical work, including correct use of equipment and analysis of outcome are also assessed in the exams.

The Course

Separate Science: Biology

AQA- Biology Paper 1	AQA-Biology Paper 2
Topic 1 - Cell Biology	Topic 5 - Homeostasis and response
Topic 2 - Organisation	Topic 6 - Inheritance, variation and evolution
Topic 3 - Infection and response	Topic 7 – Ecology
Topic 4 - Bioenergetics	

Separate Science: Chemistry

AQA- Chemistry Paper 1	AQA-Chemistry Paper 2
Topic 1 - Atomic structure and the periodic table	Topic 6 - The rate and extent of chemical change
Topic 2 - Bonding, structure, & the properties of matter	Topic 7 - Organic chemistry
Topic 3 - Quantitative chemistry	Topic 8 - Chemical analysis
Topic 4 - Chemical changes	Topic 9 - Chemistry of the atmosphere
Topic 5 - Energy changes	Topic 10 - Using resources

Separate Science: Physics

AQA- Physics Paper 1	AQA-Physics Paper 2
Topic 1 - Energy	Topic 5 – Forces
Topic 2 - Electricity	Topic 6 – Waves
Topic 3 - Particle model of matter	Topic 7 - Magnetism and electromagnetism
Topic 4 - Atomic structure	Topic 8 - Space physics

Further Study

As well as focusing on the individual sciences, each syllabus enables students to better understand the technological world in which they live and take an informed interest in science and scientific developments. There are a wide range of fascinating and crucial roles that science can prepare students for. These qualifications will provide an excellent base for study of more advanced courses, such as A-levels, which may lead to further training as scientists or practitioners in fields such as medicine or engineering or protecting the environment and combating the effects of climate change by reducing carbon dioxide emissions and limiting global warming.

