



**ST IVO  
ACADEMY**

Astrea Academy Trust  
LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED



# **KS4 PREFERENCES & CURRICULUM**

BOOKLET FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

# OUR CONTENTS

Message from our Principal	3
Road Map and Key Dates	4
Careers and Work Experience	5
Assessments and Progress	7
Grading System Explained	8
Broad and Balanced Curriculum	9
Choosing your Subjects	10
Timetable Blocks	11

## Core Subjects

English Language	13
English Literature	14
Mathematics	15
Science	17
Additional Core Subjects	18

## Preference Subjects

Separate Science	20
French	21
German	22
Geography	23
History	25
Child Development	26
Computer Science	27
Creative iMedia	28
Dance	29
3D Design (D&T)	31
Drama	32
Fashion and Textiles	33
Film Studies	34
Fine Art	36
Food Preparation and Nutrition	37
Music	38
Physical Education	39
Religious Studies	41
Sport	42
FAQ's	43

## Course Information

You can find this document on our website under 'Curriculum > ( 9 into 10 options'. On the digital version, by clicking "Course Outline' you will be taken to the course specification to find out more

## General Enquiries

[ks4preferences@astreastivo.org](mailto:ks4preferences@astreastivo.org)



## MESSAGE FROM OUR **PRINCIPAL**

Dear Students and Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our Key Stage 4 curriculum booklet. Inside, you'll find key information about the Year 9 preferences process and the subjects available to study in Years 10 and 11.

Our curriculum is designed to provide powerful knowledge, support personal growth, and help each student achieve their full potential, both academically and personally. It reflects the Astrea values of scholarship, curiosity, tenacity, respect and responsibility.

Teachers work closely with students to develop knowledge, skills, and cultural understanding, helping them succeed in exams and beyond. Our aim is to prepare students for the next stage of life as capable, confident, and independent individuals.

This is your first chance to have a say in what your curriculum looks like. The subjects you choose should be a reflection of your interests and future goals; what you enjoy, what you are good at, and what feels right for your future.



Take in the information in this booklet, speak to your teachers to learn more about courses, and ask for advice from family, your Tutor or Head of Year. Remember that this is a choice about what is right for you. I wish all students every success in making the right choices for their next steps.

**Ms Jess Pearce**  
**Principal, St Ivo Academy**



# YOUR ROADMAP



## 1. JAN-FEB

We recommend that you have discussions with your form tutor, teachers, and parent/carers to help you make informed decisions.

## 3. 26TH FEBRUARY

### Year 9 Curriculum Evening.

This will give you the opportunity to understand how your options work and speak to teachers about your subjects.



## 2. 12TH FEBRUARY

Parents and Carers Evening. This aims to provide you with information about your child's progress in subjects they are considering for KS4.



## 4. 16TH MARCH

Deadline to complete online preferences form, available after the curriculum evening

## CAREERS & **WORK EXPERIENCE**

In Year 9, students take their first steps towards future pathways through the St Ivo Careers & Aspirations Fair and begin exploring careers and courses using Unifrog.

During Years 10 and 11, Unifrog continues to support career planning through Personal Development lessons, where students explore post-16 options, career pathways and employability skills.

At the end of Year 10 you will be introduced to MyChoice@16, the online platform that you will use in Year 11 to apply for your chosen Post 16 provider/s.



## **EXPERIENCES**

- A structured work experience programme, developing employability skills and workplace awareness
- Careers information and guidance via Unifrog and our Careers Leader & Adviser, Mrs Parks
- Vocationally focused project work in some subjects, based on real business and industry needs
- STEM opportunities through the Science and Mathematics departments



## YEAR 10 STUDENTS ON WORK EXPERIENCE 2025

All Year 10 students complete a one week work experience placement, giving them first-hand experience of the workplace and helping them develop key employability skills. Preparation, reflection and evidence from this placement are supported and recorded using the Unifrog platform.

The school will launch work experience during January giving students plenty of opportunity to secure a meaningful placement for the end of summer term.

Across Years 9–11, students also benefit from a range of employer engagement activities, including talks, workshops and assemblies delivered by visiting employers and training providers. These experiences help students understand different career pathways, workplace expectations and routes into employment, apprenticeships and further education.



## ASSESSMENTS AND **PROGRESS**

Students will receive course information at the start of Year 10 which will allow them to track progress through the content and skills. Teachers continually assess students in a variety of ways and provide feedback on work.

**Assessments:** Formal mock exams will take place three times during the two years, typically in the summer term of year 10, and the autumn and spring terms of year 11.

Assessment results can be tracked on MCAS and Bromcom student portal.

**Homework** is also assessed, so meeting deadlines and managing time well is important. If any student is struggling, they should speak to their teacher or tutor for support.

For subjects with **Non-Examination Assessments** (NEAs), teachers will be able to advise what students need to do to gain the best possible marks. These will be marked to nationally agreed standards, and the marks are moderated by other teachers. Teachers will provide a timetable and deadline dates for completing assessments.



# GRADING SYSTEM

GCSEs have 9 to 1 grades.

Grade 9 is awarded to the top performing students **nationally**. The government has stated that GCSE grade 4 is a 'standard pass' and grade 5 and above is a 'strong pass'.

Sixth Forms may require higher grades, such as a 6 or 7, in subjects students want to study at A Level.

	Grading System
<b>A*</b> <b>A</b>	<b>9</b> Top Performing
	<b>8</b>
	<b>7</b>
<b>B</b> <b>C</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>5</b> Strong Pass
	<b>4</b> Standard Pass
<b>D</b> <b>E</b> <b>F</b> <b>G</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>2</b>
	<b>1</b>
<b>U</b>	<b>U</b>

## BTEC and CNAT Awards Grading

Level 2 vocational qualifications studied alongside GCSEs in Years 10 and 11.

They are equivalent to GCSEs and graded as unclassified, pass, merit, distinction or distinction\*.

# BROAD AND BALANCED CURRICULUM

OPTIONS  
STRUCTURE

BROAD &  
BALANCED

## OUTLINE

We strongly advise all students to follow a broad and balanced curriculum.

To ensure this breadth, all students must select either:

- History **or** Geography.

Most students will also need to study either:

- French **or** German

\*Some students may also take a GCSE in their home language.

## SCIENCES

If you wish to study Triple Science, it should be selected as one of the four preference subjects.

\*Please note that you can only take Triple Science if the science team believe you will be successful on this course.

## ART AND DESIGN COURSES

Students can only study a **maximum** of **one** art and design course:

- 3D design (design and technology)
- Fine Art
- Fashion and Textiles

*A broad, balanced curriculum equips students with the essential skills, knowledge and qualifications to unlock the widest range of future opportunities. We are unapologetically ambitious for every young person at St Ivo*

# CHOOSING YOUR **SUBJECTS**

**KEY**  
INFO



## **IMPORTANT!**

- Students will choose **one** subject from each timetable block (A, B, C, D)\*, which run simultaneously.
- We may adjust class switch a student between groups for certain blocks (not subjects). The number of classes may vary based on preferences received, and we aim to confirm subject choices early summer term.
- Following the broad and balanced curriculum structure students must choose Geography or History. Most students will study French with the option of German. Students can only choose one art and design course.

## **POST-16 INFORMATION**

Post-16 providers typically look at the top five to eight GCSE grades you have achieved. For example, our Sixth Form considers the top five grades. Many post-16 subjects do not require previous study, but rather for you to show your ability through your overall academic profile. For instance, here at St Ivo we offer subjects including psychology and economics which you cannot study beforehand.

## **OVERSUBSCRIPTION**

We aim to ensure that as many students as possible can take their requested subjects, but some subjects may be limited by facilities, equipment or staffing. Where we can, we will look to run multiple classes, but this is not always possible.

When students cannot be awarded their first-choice preferences, their alternative options will be discussed with them, and their options will be offered based on the balance of their other subjects, input from their teachers and consideration of their achievement so far.

We want all students to feel and be successful in their chosen courses, and aim to assign preference subjects with this at the forefront of our thinking.

## **BLOCK A**

FRENCH\*

GEOGRAPHY\*

HISTORY\*

BTEC SPORT

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

FINE ART

GCSE PE

MUSIC

## **BLOCK B**

GERMAN\*

GEOGRAPHY\*

HISTORY\*

3D DESIGN (D&T)

COMPUTER SCIENCE

DRAMA

FASHION AND TEXTILES

FILM STUDIES

FOOD AND NUTRITION

## TIMETABLE **BLOCKS**

## **BLOCK C**

FRENCH\*

GEOGRAPHY\*

3D DESIGN (D&T)

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

DANCE

FINE ART

FASHION AND TEXTILES

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## **BLOCK D**

FRENCH\*

HISTORY\*

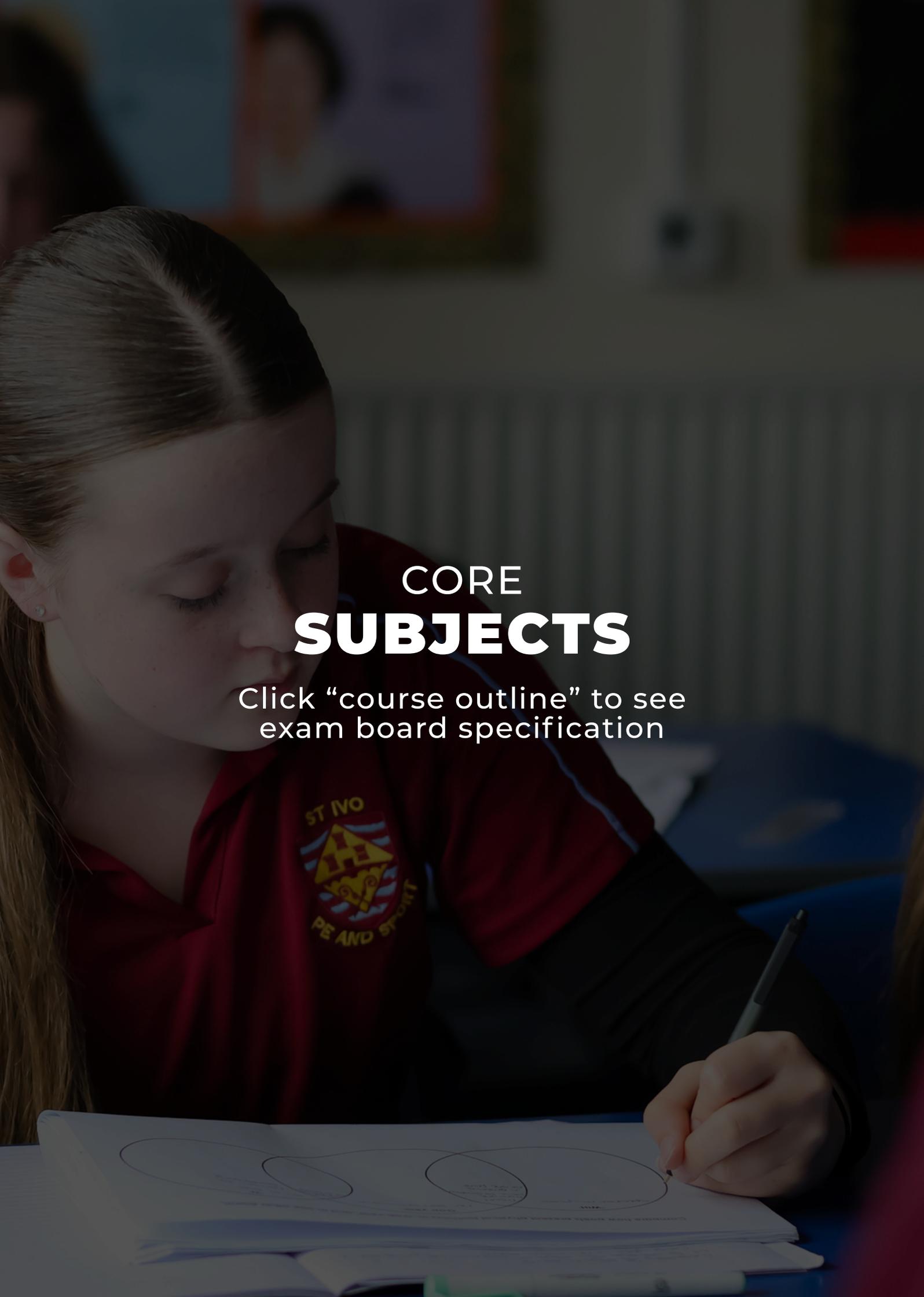
3D DESIGN (D&T)

CREATIVE IMEDIA (NEW)

FINE ART

FOOD AND NUTRITION

TRIPLE SCIENCE



# CORE **SUBJECTS**

Click “course outline” to see  
exam board specification

## CORE SUBJECT

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### COURSE OUTLINE

GCSE English Language develops confident readers, writers and speakers. You will study a wide range of engaging texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, including fiction, literary non-fiction, journalism and reviews. Lessons focus on building strong reading skills, helping you analyse language, compare ideas and think critically about different themes.

You will develop your writing through creative and real-world tasks, learning how to use Standard English accurately and effectively. Grammar, spelling and vocabulary are key areas of study. You will also practise speaking and listening skills through discussion and presentation, preparing you for further study and future careers.

### ASSESSMENT

The GCSE is assessed entirely by examination, with no coursework contributing to the final grade.

There are two written exam papers, each 1 hour 45 minutes and worth 50% of the qualification.

- Paper 1 covers 20th-century literature and creative writing
- Paper 2 focuses on 19th- and 21st-century non-fiction and transactional/ persuasive writing.
- There is also a spoken language assessment completed during the course, but it is reported separately and does not count towards the final GCSE grade.
- All exams are un-tiered, with all students sitting the same papers.

## CORE SUBJECT

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

### COURSE OUTLINE

GCSE English Literature invites you to explore powerful stories, characters and ideas from across time. You will study a complete Shakespeare play, such as Macbeth or Romeo and Juliet, alongside a gripping 19th-century novel like A Christmas Carol or Jekyll and Hyde. You will also read a modern play or novel and study a themed poetry cluster from the AQA anthology.

Lessons focus on understanding characters, themes and writers' choices, while developing skills in analysis, comparison and evaluation. You will learn how to write clearly and accurately about literature, using evidence and quotations to support your ideas. This course develops strong thinking, discussion and writing skills, preparing you for further study and beyond.

### ASSESSMENT

#### **Component 1: Shakespeare and 19th-Century Novel**

Exam: 1hr 45mins (40%)

- Section A: One extract and one essay on a studied Shakespeare text
- Section B: One question on a 19th-century novel, covering both an extract and the whole text

#### **Component 2: Modern Texts and Poetry**

Exam: 2hrs 15mins (60%)

- Section A: One essay on a modern prose or drama text
- Section B: One comparative question on poems from the studied anthology
- Section C: One question on an unseen poem and one comparing it with a second unseen poem

## CORE SUBJECT **MATHEMATICS**

### COURSE OUTLINE

You will follow the national curriculum, studying a wide range of topics including algebra, statistics, trigonometry, ratio and proportion, probability and numeracy.

The content of the GCSE course will broaden your understanding of the basics, consolidating the skills gained during Key Stage 3, and then further your achievement in mathematics. There will be opportunities to study more advanced areas of mathematics as well as resolve misconceptions and areas of difficulties. You will be tackling work from areas of mathematics such as algebra, statistics, trigonometry, ratio and proportion, numeracy and probability.

### ASSESSMENT

Edexcel Maths GCSE covers:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio & Proportion
- Geometry
- Probability
- Statistics.

Assessment consists of three equal written exams (1hr 30mins each), all taken at the same tier (Foundation or Higher) in the same exam series.

Paper 1 is non-calculator; calculators are allowed for Papers 2 and 3.

There is no coursework.

We also offer the Further Mathematics qualification through additional lesson time in the extended school day (period 6). The selection for this is invite only, the invites will be emailed to parents in the final term of year 9. The awarding body for further mathematics is AQA.



Science isn't just about experiments in a lab – it's about understanding the world around us, asking questions, and discovering how things really work. If you're curious, love solving problems, or want to explore the frontiers of knowledge, this is the subject for you.

CORE SUBJECT  
**COMBINED SCIENCE**  
**(TRILOGY)**

### COURSE OUTLINE

Combined science covers all three disciplines of Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics), but slightly less depth than Triple Award (Separate Science). Combined Science leads to two GCSE's through exams taken at the end of Y11.

Students will be entered for this course, which leads to two GCSEs. All exams are taken at the end of Year 11 and there is no coursework.

Students are, however, required to do practical experiments throughout the course that are essential to passing it.

### ASSESSMENT

At the end of the course students will take 6 exams each 1 hour and 15 minutes:

- 2 in Biology,
- 2 in Chemistry
- 2 in Physics.

Students will be entered for either the higher or foundation tier which will be decided based on their performance across the course

The scores will be amalgamated and **2 GCSEs** awarded according to their total.

Students must sit the same tier for all science exams.

## ADDITIONAL CORE **SUBJECTS**

### **CORE RE**

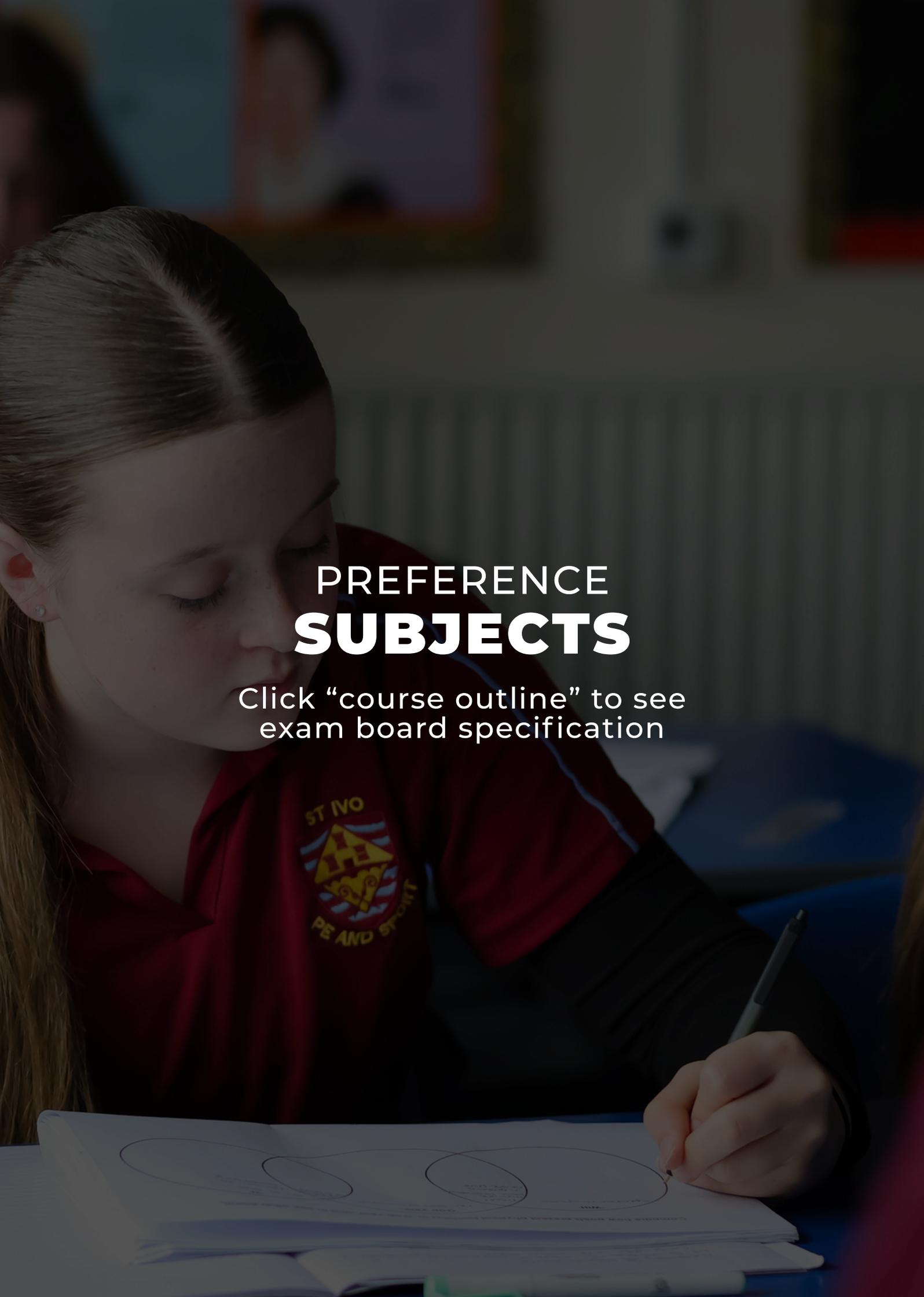
Includes the study of religion, philosophy and ethics. It allows students to study the religious and non-religious traditions that have shaped Great Britain and the world, understanding their place within a diverse multi-religious and multi-secular society. This includes links to the Personal Development experience by touching on religious, philosophical and ethical considerations of issues such as stewardship and the environment (e.g. deforestation), human rights, animal rights, peace and conflict.

### **CORE PE**

Will allow you to experience a range of sports, team games and health-related activities on a weekly basis. There are opportunities to do even more by taking part in clubs, activities and teams. In addition, you may choose to take GCSE PE and BTEC Sport.

### **CORE PD**

Personal Development permeates school life, both in the curriculum and extra-curricular offer. The taught PD curriculum is based on the PSHE Association's programme of study. It is designed to help students develop as individuals, and remain healthy and safe throughout their adult life. Parts of the programme focus on physical and emotional health and well-being, RSE (Relationships and Sex Education), and living in the wider world, including British Values and Protected Characteristics. Students will also learn how to deal with examination stress, how to manage their workload and maintain a work/life balance.



# PREFERENCE **SUBJECTS**

Click “course outline” to see  
exam board specification

PREFERENCE SUBJECT  
**SEPARATE SCIENCE  
(TRIPLE)**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Triple Science is a challenging and exciting course for students who enjoy science and want to explore how the world works in greater depth. Extra topics covered include the structure of the brain and the eye in Biology, more content on industrial and contemporary Chemistry and astronomy and additional nuclear science in Physics.

Throughout the course, students develop strong practical, analytical and problem-solving skills through a wide range of experiments and investigations.

Triple Science is an excellent choice for students considering A-levels in science or future careers in areas such as healthcare, engineering, research or environmental science. The course is fast-paced, rewarding and ideal for motivated learners who enjoy being challenged.

**ASSESSMENT**

At the end of the course you will take 6 exams, 1 hour and 45 minutes each:

- 2 in Biology,
- 2 in Chemistry
- 2 in Physics

An individual GCSE will be awarded for each Science with grades in each subject.

This option is worth **3 GCSEs.**

*\*for the specification for this course you can find each Science subject separately **here**.*

PREFERENCE SUBJECT  
**FRENCH****COURSE OUTLINE**

You will learn to use languages in a range of practical situations and will build on the vocabulary and skills learnt in Years 7-9. A variety of relevant and interesting topics are studied. These include:

**Theme 1: People and lifestyle**

- Topic 1: Identity and relationships with others
- Topic 2: Healthy living and lifestyle
- Topic 3: Education and work

**Theme 2: Popular culture**

- Topic 1: Free-time activities
- Topic 2: Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Topic 3: Celebrity culture

**Theme 3: Communication and the world around us**

- Topic 1: Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Topic 2: Media and technology
- Topic 3: The environment and where people live

**ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is Linear — all four exams are taken at the end of the course, each worth 25% of the marks.

The four papers each cover one skill:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# GERMAN

### COURSE OUTLINE

This is an exciting beginner's course which will be fast paced and challenging. You will need to have demonstrated scholarly qualities at KS3 in order to qualify for the course. You will learn to use languages in a range of practical situations . A variety of relevant and interesting topics are studied. These include:

#### **Theme 1: People and lifestyle**

- Topic 1: Identity and relationships with others
- Topic 2: Healthy living and lifestyle
- Topic 3: Education and work

#### **Theme 2: Popular culture**

- Topic 1: Free-time activities
- Topic 2: Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Topic 3: Celebrity culture

#### **Theme 3: Communication and the world around us**

- Topic 1: Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Topic 2: Media and technology
- Topic 3: The environment and where people live

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment is Linear — all four exams are taken at the end of the course, each worth 25% of the marks. The four papers each cover one skill:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# **GEOGRAPHY**

### COURSE OUTLINE

Geography helps you to make sense of the world around you. It is hands on, it is relevant, and it is fun! The course offers a wide range of topics, including world development, ecosystems, and hazards. Geography 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.

The GCSE course includes two enquiries, based on fieldwork completed. In Year 10, we visit Hunstanton to investigate coastal landscapes and in Year 11 a trip is undertaken to explore urban change in East London. You will also have the opportunity to attend an international fieldtrip whilst completing the course.

### ASSESSMENT

**Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment (1hr 30min)** - Covers natural hazards like earthquakes, tropical storms, and climate change; global ecosystems including rainforests and deserts; and UK physical landscapes.

**Paper 2: Challenges of the Human Environment (1hr 30min)** - Focuses on population growth, urban issues, global development, and the use and management of natural resources.

**Paper 3: Geographical Applications (1hr 30min)** Includes your own fieldwork and an unseen fieldwork task provided by AQA.



Geography takes you out of the classroom and into the world. Our trips to Iceland let students see glaciers, volcanoes, and waterfalls up close, it's an adventure that makes learning unforgettable!

PREFERENCE SUBJECT  
**HISTORY**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

GCSE History at St Ivo offers a rich and engaging study of the past and its relevance today.

The course includes:

- Paper 1, covering Medicine through Time (c1250–present) and a historic environment study of the Western Front during WWI.
- Paper 2 explores Superpower Relations, and the Cold War (1941–91) and Early Elizabethan England (1558–88).
- Paper 3 focuses on the USA 1954–75, including the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War.

**ASSESSMENT**

Following the course structure there are 3 papers:

- **Paper 1:** 1 hour 20 minute exam worth 30% (Thematic study 20%; Historic environment 10%).
- **Paper 2:** 1 hour 50 minutes worth 40% (British depth study 20%; Period study 20%).
- **Paper 3:** 1 hour 30 minutes worth 30%.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# CHILD DEVELOPMENT

### COURSE OUTLINE

This qualification is for learners taking GCSEs who want to explore the Early Years sector, including childcare, teaching, and healthcare. It supports informed decisions about future study and careers by offering insight into child development and learning.

Component 1: Children's Growth and Development - Covers typical development from birth to age five and the factors that influence growth.

Component 2: Learning Through Play - Explores how different types of play support development across key areas.

Component 3: Supporting Children to Play, Learn and Develop - Focuses on meeting individual needs and adapting play to support inclusion and learning.

### ASSESSMENT

The subject is assessed in 2 ways:

- Component 1 and 2 are internally assessed assignments, conducted and marked in school. These components are worth 60% in total.
- Component 3 is an external examination which requires a knowledge and understanding of how a child learns and develops. This is externally marked and worth 40% in total.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# COMPUTER SCIENCE

### COURSE OUTLINE

GCSE Computer Science introduces you to the core principles of how computers work. You will learn to think logically and creatively, analyse problems, and design, write and debug programs. The course explores algorithms, data representation and digital systems, as well as the impact of technology on individuals and society, using key mathematical skills.

*Please be aware that GCSE Computer Science is very different from an Information Technology course. It is recommended that students are currently set 3 or above in Mathematics.*

### ASSESSMENT

The course is made up of three components. Both exams are 1 hour and 30 minutes and are worth 50% each.

- Component 1: Computer Systems - Covers system architecture, memory, storage, networks, security, software, and the impact of digital technology.
- Component 2: Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming - Focuses on algorithms, programming, robust code, Boolean logic, and development environments.
- Component 3: Programming Project - A practical programming portfolio (not assessed).

NEW!

**CNAT**  
COURSE

**OCR**  
EXAM BOARD

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT **CREATIVE IMEDIA**

### COURSE OUTLINE

This course is a Level 2 Technical Award that enables students to develop applied knowledge and practical skills for use in the media industry and used in the creation of digital media products. You will develop knowledge and understanding of different sectors in the media industry.

The course covers the pre-production skills used in the creative and digital media sector. It will develop students' understanding of the client brief, time frames, deadlines and preparation techniques that form part of the planning and creation process.

You will learn about media codes used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. You will also learn how to create visual identities for clients and graphic design.

This course fuses elements of both Computing and Media, studying both the theory of media products alongside the practical creation of different media texts.

### ASSESSMENT

1 exam assessed unit – worth 40% of the final grade. 1 hour 30 min written exam in two parts.

- Part A has multiple choice and short answer questions.
- Part B has short answer questions and three extended response questions.

2 NEA (coursework) units – worth 60% of the final grade. Assignments are set by the exam board and contain two or three practical tasks that must be completed.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# DANCE

### COURSE OUTLINE

The Performing Arts BTEC course offers a practical and creative pathway into a thriving industry worth £3.5 billion to the UK economy. Students develop performance skills alongside transferable qualities such as confidence, teamwork and communication.

The course includes live theatre visits, professional workshops and a residential trip, giving insight into the industry. Students take part in the annual dance production *Ivolution*, performing alongside over 150 dancers. Key Stage 4 students also have opportunities to teach choreography to younger pupils, developing leadership skills and real-world experience that prepares them for further study or careers in the performing arts.

### ASSESSMENT

The course is made up of three components:

- **Component 1:** Exploring the Performing Arts (30%) – Study different performance styles, roles, and techniques by exploring existing work and practitioner approaches.
- **Component 2:** Developing Skills and Techniques (30%) – Build and apply practical performance skills through workshops and rehearsals, reflecting on your progress.
- **Component 3:** Performing to a Brief (40%) – Work in a group to create and perform a piece in response to a given brief and stimulus, considering audience and intent.



Dance lets you express yourself, work as a team, and perform with confidence. From choreography to live shows, every student can explore creativity while having fun and improving technique. Ivolution has over 150 students that are proud to perform in front our community!

PREFERENCE SUBJECT  
**3D DESIGN**  
(D&T)

### COURSE OUTLINE

This course is creative and thought provoking. It is designed to inspire and challenge students to develop their design and practical skills to produce creative, innovative and successful product outcomes.

Students will complete a range of investigations, designing, prototyping, modelling or making of functional and aesthetic consumer products. Students will engage with appropriate processes, models, materials and construction techniques to help take their initial ideas through to realisation. This is a good option for students who want to gain a real insight into what it means to be a designer.

### ASSESSMENT

All assessments for Art and Design courses are outlined as follows:

- **Component 1 60%:** This is a coursework portfolio of selected outcomes with preparatory work based on themes or projects set by the teacher.
- **Component 2** (Externally Set Assignment) 40%: This is an externally set assignment based on a theme set by the exam board. The 2024 theme was 'Power'. Students have approximately 10 weeks to prepare their ideas and then students take a 10-hour exam (2 days) to produce their final outcome.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# DRAMA

### COURSE OUTLINE

Drama is a fun, creative and challenging option for GCSE and will suit you if you enjoy learning practically and creatively, as well as in more traditional desk-based lessons.

Drama students learn how to:

- Create and develop ideas, which will work as a piece of drama. This will always mean having some kind of effect on an audience.
- Perform and have a clear and deliberate effect on an audience.
- Show knowledge about the world of theatre and how it is created, through written and practical work.
- Write about acting, recognise their own strengths and weaknesses, and be able to improve their own and other people's work.
- Work with others to create your own plays; read, rehearse and perform published plays; and watch an critique others' performances.

### ASSESSMENT

- **Component 1:** Written Exam (40%) - Exam in Year 11 on Blood Brothers (acting, directing, design) and a live theatre review. Students must see at least one live performance per year.
- **Component 2:** Devised Performance (40%) - Coursework in Year 11, Term 1. Create and perform original drama from a stimulus and complete a written log reflecting on the process.
- **Component 3:** Scripted Performance (20%) - Coursework in Year 11, Term 2. Rehearse and perform two extracts from a chosen play, solo or in a group.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT **FASHION & TEXTILES**

### COURSE OUTLINE

This course provides the opportunity to work with hand and machine embroidery, garment construction, felt making, printing and dyeing. Students will learn about and draw inspiration from artwork and textile designs which resonate with their own developing ideas.

This is a good option for students who are interested in fashion design and/or have creative ideas, love making things and appreciate colour, pattern and texture.

Textiles students visit the Knit and Stitch Show at Alexandra Palace to view the exciting new work of contemporary textile artists and designers, and to expand their understanding of possibilities within the field.

### ASSESSMENT

All assessments for Art and Design courses are outlined as follows:

- **Component 1 60%:** This is a coursework portfolio of selected outcomes with preparatory work based on themes or projects set by the teacher.
- **Component 2 (Externally Set Assignment) 40%:** This is an externally set assignment based on a theme set by the exam board. The 2024 theme was 'Power'. Students have approximately 10 weeks to prepare their ideas and then students take a 10-hour exam (2 days) to produce their final outcome.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# FILM STUDIES

### COURSE OUTLINE

Film is an important part of many people's lives, considered by many to be the major art form of the last one hundred years. In the 21st century it has a significant influence on the way people think and feel.

GCSE Film Studies is designed to draw on learners' enthusiasm for film and introduce them to a wide variety of cinematic experiences. Learners will develop their knowledge of US mainstream and independent film from different eras and will explore global cinema. In addition, they will have the opportunity to produce their own short films and screenplays.

### ASSESSMENT

#### **Component 1: US Film (35%)**

- US comparative study.
- US independent film.

#### **Component 2: Global Film (35%)**

- Global English language film.
- Non-English Language film.
- Contemporary UK film.

#### **Coursework – Production (30%)**

- Creating an extract from a film/screenplay of a specific genre, for example: science fiction, horror or teen movie.

**"STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE"**



**OLIVIA  
WINNER OF PRINCIPALS ARTS AWARDS 2025**

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT **FINE ART**

### COURSE OUTLINE

This course suits a range of artistic abilities and students will experiment with a variety of techniques and media to produce paintings, drawings and mixed media outcomes. Students will learn about and draw inspiration from contemporary and historical artworks which resonate with their own developing ideas.

This is a good option for students who have enjoyed KS3 Art lessons and who prefer to work in two dimensions on paper, board or canvas.

Art students visit London museums and galleries to practice drawing, find inspiration for their project work and expand their knowledge and understanding of Art.

### ASSESSMENT

All assessments for Art and Design courses are outlined as follows:

- **Component 1 60%:** This is a coursework portfolio of selected outcomes with preparatory work based on themes or projects set by the teacher.
- **Component 2 (Externally Set Assignment) 40%:** This is an externally set assignment based on a theme set by the exam board. The 2024 theme was 'Power'. Students have approximately 10 weeks to prepare their ideas and then students take a 10-hour exam (2 days) to produce their final outcome.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# **FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION**

### COURSE OUTLINE

Designed to equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages you to cook, to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and enables you to be able to feed yourself and others affordably and nutritiously later on in life.

The syllabus is divided into the following areas of content:

- Food commodities
- Principles of nutrition
- Diet and good health
- The science of food
- Where food comes from
- Cooking and food preparation

*The costs will vary according to the topic, averaging £5 weekly. Some students may be eligible for financial assistance.*

### ASSESSMENT

This is divided into 2 components:

1. Principles of nutrition. One written exam paper for June 2018. Worth 50% of the final grade.
2. Food preparation and Nutrition in Action; the coursework/practical skills element:
  - Task One: Conduct a food science investigation (15% of final grade).
  - Task Two: Create a menu and prepare dishes (35% of final grade)

The coursework element will be marked in school and sent to the exam board for moderation at the end of the course.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT **MUSIC**

### COURSE OUTLINE

GCSE Music is a practical and creative course where you will perform, compose and explore music through listening and analysis. You will study a wide range of styles, from pop and film music to classical and world music, applying your understanding in both performance and composition.

The course is designed for all students, whether or not you already play an instrument or sing, though starting lessons can help with the performance element. You will develop musical skills, creativity and confidence, supported by teachers and optional instrumental lessons, while learning how music works in theory and practice.

### ASSESSMENT

The course is split into three parts:

**Performing** (30%) – Perform solo and in an ensemble, with recordings assessed in school. Total performance should be at least 4 minutes, including 1 minute of ensemble playing. Extra-curricular music clubs help boost ensemble skills.

**Composing** (30%) – Create two pieces, one of your choice and one to an exam brief, totalling at least 3 minutes. Work is supported with teacher guidance and 1:1 tutorials.

**Listening and Appraising** (40%) – Study four areas: The Concerto through Time, Rhythms of the World, Film & Video Game Music, and Conventions of Pop. Learn to analyse and understand a range of music for the Year 11 listening exam.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### COURSE OUTLINE

Physical Education is ideal for people interested in sports and games. The theory component enables students to study the body and the reasons that we move as we do. Students also learn how we can improve our health and fitness in order to improve our sporting performance, as well as understanding what influences our involvement in sport.

The course will include the four following units:

1. Applied Anatomy, Physiology & Training - 30%
2. Socio-cultural Influences, Sports Psychology, Health, Fitness & Well-being - 30%
3. Practical Activity Assessment & Evaluating - 30% (2 team/1 individual sport or vice versa)
4. Analysing Performance - written coursework task - 10%

*There is an expectation that students will participate competitively in a minimum of two sports/activities outside of school.*

### ASSESSMENT

The majority of the final mark (70%) is based on the theory of PE and Sport only 30% of the course will be practically assessed.

Units 1 and 2 are externally assessed by a 1 hour written examination. Both other units are internally assessed and moderated externally. These assessments are criterion referenced, based on the achievement of specified outcomes. Each unit has specified criteria to be used for grading.

***\*please note that students will select GCSE/BTEC as their preference with the PE department then placing students on the best course for each individual.***



PE is about more than just sport, it's teamwork, determination, and challenging yourself to achieve new goals. Every lesson gives you the chance to push your limits and build lifelong skills. We encourage students to compete outside of school and can support in finding clubs if they need it!

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

### COURSE OUTLINE

Our GCSE covers different world religions, four contemporary ethical themes, ensuring students have a diverse choice of intriguing subjects to explore. Students will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues. Students will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills.

We study a range of religious and non-religious perspectives on these issues and the impact they have on the modern world.

These are made up of the topics above and include: Relationships and Families; Religion and Life; Religion, Crime and Punishment; Religion, Peace and Conflict.

### ASSESSMENT

The assessment is 100% examination.

There are 2 written papers at the end of the two years:

- 50% Study of religions. Beliefs, Teachings, and Practices for Christianity and Islam.
- 50% Religious, philosophical and ethical studies.

## PREFERENCE SUBJECT **SPORT**

### COURSE OUTLINE

This course offers an introductory vocational qualification that provides students with the solid foundation required for further progression into the sports industry. You will have the opportunity to develop a wide range of highly desirable and transferable skills through practical means.

You will be able to spend more time on both the practical and theoretical aspects of sport, complete your portfolios and prepare thoroughly for the written examination.

The course will include the following three units:

1. Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity
2. Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance
3. Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants Performance in Sport and Physical Activity.

### ASSESSMENT

Units 1 and 2 are internally assessed and moderated externally. They comprise written assignments and practical video evidence.

These assessments are criterion referenced, based on the achievement of specified outcomes.

Each unit has specified criteria to be used for grading. Unit 3 is an externally assessed by a 90 minute examination.

***\*please note that students will select GCSE/BTEC as their preference with the PE department then placing students on the best course for each individual.***

## FREQUENTLY **ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Q. Are there a mixture of existing subjects and new subjects?**

A. There are some new subjects available which you will not have studied before. Make sure you do plenty of research about the new subjects and also existing subjects before you finalise your choices.

### **Q. Will all courses run?**

A. The courses that run are finally decided after the preference forms are submitted. The final decision on whether courses can run is based upon such factors as the amount of student uptake, timetabling possibilities and resources.

### **Q. Is there the opportunity to change my subjects once i've picked them?**

A. Yes, we will communicate with parents/carers and students throughout the options preference process and can accommodate changes but this is subject to space being available.

### **Q. Is my timetable all exam work?**

A. No. Your timetable will also include assembly, tutor periods, core practical PE, core PSHE and core RE.

### **Q. What are BTEC Tech and CNAT Awards?**

A. BTEC Tech and CNAT Awards are vocational qualifications taken alongside GCSEs in Years 10 and 11. Designed for 14–16-year-olds, they offer insight into professional sectors while developing transferable life skills. Assessment is mostly through assignments and practical tasks. Both BTEC and CNAT Awards are Level 2 qualifications, equivalent to GCSEs, and are graded as pass, merit, distinction, or distinction\*.



**ST IVO  
ACADEMY**

Astrea Academy Trust  
LEARN, THRIVE, SUCCEED



**ANY QUESTIONS**

[KS4PREFERENCES@ASTREASTIVO.ORG](mailto:KS4PREFERENCES@ASTREASTIVO.ORG)