



SACRED HEART
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

GCSE OPTIONS

2026 - 2028

Part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust

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GCSE OPTIONS

2026 - 2028

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INTRODUCTION



At the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, our core values of Nurturing, Perseverance, Courage, Ambition, Tolerance and Respect are at the heart of everything we do.



We set high expectations to ensure that every pupil excels across all aspects of school life. Our intention is to ensure pupils make outstanding progress and that the curriculum removes any potential barriers to learning. We want our pupils to leave with knowledge and skills which will not only create excellent life opportunities but will also prepare them exceptionally well for life beyond our schools.

Pupils experience a broad, deep and knowledge rich curriculum. Our secondary curriculum helps pupils to achieve high standards and make excellent progress.

We offer a rich and varied Key Stage 3 to ensure pupils have a clear idea of subjects they like the most and offer a wide range of choices at this stage for their Key Stage 4 options. This diversity of exposure at Key Stage 3 is aimed to enable all pupils to take ownership of their learning and leads to improved outcomes. These courses aim to develop a mastery of the skills required to complete a subject in Key Stage 4.

At Key Stage 4, the courses are carefully planned to ensure that content is thoroughly revisited and this undoubtedly prepares pupils for external examinations at the end of the course.



*Louise Dwyer
Headteacher*

WELCOME

Dear Pupil, Parents and Carers

The move from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 is an exciting time. Pupils are asked to make choices which will have an impact on their future study and career paths. We hope that you feel excited by this prospect. It is an opportunity for pupils to study the subjects that interest them in more depth and to begin to think about their career and academic ambitions for the future.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide pupils in Year 9 and their parents and carers with a balanced overview of information about the subjects on offer at Key Stage 4 to help you to make informed choices to support your future ambitions and interests.

THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is made up of two elements: the Core curriculum and the Options curriculum.

There are some subjects which make up the Core curriculum and these are:

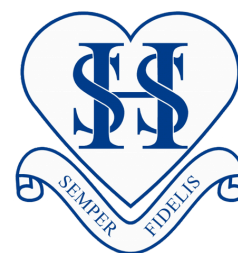
- Religious Education
- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Core PE
- PSHE

All pupils will study a GCSE in Religious Education. As a faith school, Religious Education is at the very heart of our school curriculum. The study of Religious Education at GCSE level provides an important moral and spiritual education whilst also being recognised as a rigorous academic qualification.

At Sacred Heart, pupils are supported in achieving success through a broad and balanced Key Stage 4 curriculum. While all pupils study a range of core subjects to ensure a strong foundation, they now have greater flexibility to personalise their learning by selecting from a wide choice of option subjects.

In addition to the information provided to you on Options Evening, pupils will receive a one to one with a member of the senior team, and Careers advice from our Careers Lead. This ensures that their choices are informed and aligned with their interests, strengths, and future aspirations.

We wish all of our pupils the very best as they commence this next important and exciting phase of their academic studies.



SACRED HEART
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

The Government has phased in significant changes to GCSE qualifications over recent years.

This means:

- A new grading system from 1 to 9 (9 being the highest grade).
- More challenging subject content and assessments (for example, 20% of the grade for English Language is awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar).

GCSEs are primarily assessed through exams but may still involve non-exam assessment, practical or oral assessments in some subjects. These take place throughout Years 10 and 11. Almost all GCSEs have written examinations taken at the end of Year 11.

It is important for pupils to choose courses which suit their needs and abilities, for example taking practical or non-exam assessment (coursework) based courses may help to balance the workload and assessment during Years 10 and 11, and ease the pressure slightly at the end of the GCSE course.

Once students have selected their options, a timetable is organised to allocate as many first-choice subjects as possible. If a first choice cannot be offered, a reserve option will be used instead, so it is important to choose reserve subjects carefully. For oversubscribed subjects with limited places, a student's attitude to learning throughout Key Stage 3 will be considered during the allocation process.

THE FUTURE

Your GCSE results are a very important part of your academic journey. The results you get can affect the following:

- The sixth form or college you go to
- The qualifications you take next
- Your eligibility for a university course
- The universities you can apply to
- Your career prospects

GCSEs can determine the sixth form or college you go to. Entry requirements for school and college sixth forms vary - ranging from four to five grade 4/5s with perhaps 6s in the subject you want to study, through to at least six GCSEs at grade 7 for the most selective colleges.

Your GCSE performance is usually a good indicator of how well you will do in A Level or other advanced studies. Some sixth forms and colleges may say you cannot do a particular subject at GCSE. Sixth forms and colleges also offer vocational courses (more practical and hands-on such as BTEC Level 3 qualifications. Most universities accept BTEC qualifications too...

GCSEs COULD BE USED TO ASSESS ELIGIBILITY FOR A UNIVERSITY COURSE

Regardless of the subject you want to study, the majority of university courses look for at least a grade 4/5 in English, maths and perhaps science. Some university courses go further and ask for specific subjects at GCSE, with certain grades, so check directly with universities if you're in doubt.



GCSEs CAN AFFECT YOUR FUTURE CAREER

The career you may wish to undertake could have specific expectations for achievement in your GCSEs to progress within the future. Here are a couple of examples:

- Engineering courses such as chemical engineering: you will usually need A Levels or equivalent in chemistry and maths, and physics for other engineering courses, which in turn means you will need to have good GCSE grades in science and maths.
- Medicine: competitive courses like medicine may ask for a whole suite of good GCSEs. Most medical schools specify that applicants must offer GCSE grade 8/9 in each of English (language or literature), maths and all science subjects. Combined science is acceptable as an alternative to single sciences.
- Social work and secondary school teaching: these professions will not consider you without at least a grade 4 or 5 in maths and English language at GCSE.
- Nursing and primary school teaching: grade 4 or 5 in English, maths and science.



CORE SUBJECTS

GCSE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE
GCSE MATHEMATICS
GCSE SCIENCE
CORE PE
PSHE

GCSE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CORE SUBJECT



Why study Religious Education?

As a core GCSE for all pupils in a Catholic school, RE is a compulsory subject. Whether you are inquisitive and empathetic or analytical and argumentative, GCSE RE has something to offer all pupils. As a Catholic Trust with Christ at the center of all that we do, we hope that studying religion will help every pupil to deepen their own faith. GCSE Religious Studies provides opportunities for pupils to understand more about the world, the religious challenges it faces and their place within it. This GCSE course will deepen your understanding of religions and their effect on society. It will develop pupils' competence in a wide range of skills and approaches and enable young people to become religiously informed and thoughtful, engaged citizens.

How will I be assessed?

GCSE Religious Education	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Foundational Catholic Theology	Exam (90 minutes)	37.50%
Paper 2 - Applied Catholic Theology	Exam (90 minutes)	37.50%
Paper 3 - Study of a World Faith	Exam (60 minutes)	25%

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Pupils will study the 'big questions' concerning life and death, sin and forgiveness, good and evil and the foundations of religious belief. The study of religion engenders critical thinking, encourages philosophical thought, decision making skills, collaboration and independent working skills. GCSE RE creates opportunities for young people to develop their skills of dialogue, interpretation and analysis in a coherent context. All these are vital skills in a modern workforce where communication, collaboration and cooperation are core skills.

What are the post-16 opportunities?

The multitude of skills developed in this subject are so transferable that a GCSE in RE supports most post-16 opportunities. A Level Philosophy and Ethics are the logical post-16 options for a pupil who thrives in RE. As many of the skills developed in the subject are transferable, they will also prove useful in vocational post-16 courses such as the armed services, the police service, social work and health professions as well as religious vocations such as chaplaincy, priesthood or other religious orders. Many employers value GCSE RE due to the variety of skills the subject develops and the enriching respect for the individual.



"Education is not about knowing things or taking lessons but about being able to use three lingos: those of the head, the heart, and the hands... learning so that you can think about what you feel and do, can feel what you think and do, and can do what you feel and think. Unity within a person."

POPE FRANCIS



GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

CORE SUBJECT

Why study English?

English is an essential skill for entry to post-16 qualifications but also for everyday life. How we communicate with others both verbally and in written form is a highly prized skill. English helps us to understand others as well as ourselves. You will have the opportunity to study a wide variety of texts both fiction and non-fiction as well as being able to experiment with your writing in a range of genres literary and non-literary. In GCSE English Language we study the AQA syllabus and you will study a wide range of texts from a variety of modern and 19th Century fiction and non-fiction sources.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

During the two year course you will develop analytical skills and a detailed understanding of how writers' choices influence the reader / audience. We will focus on developing your skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening.

How will I be assessed?

Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing	Exam (105 minutes)	50%
Paper 2 - Writers' viewpoints and Perspectives	Exam (105 minutes)	50%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

GCSE English Language gives you an excellent basis for further academic study at A Level, but equally it is an essential qualification for all courses and professions. English is good for any career that involves communication, writing and / or literary knowledge. These include: advertising and marketing, writing and journalism, law, consultancy, business, teaching, performing arts, academia, government, linguistics, foreign languages, media and design.

Careers in the sciences, engineering, technology and maths also need more English than you think. Writing proposals, academic papers & articles and communicating with others is key to getting funding for projects and reaching people with your work.

“Words are sacred. They deserve respect. If you get the right ones, in the right order, you can nudge the world a little.”

TOM STOPPARD

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

CORE SUBJECT



Why study English Literature?

Studying English Literature is a highly valuable and enriching experience. It enables us to develop new ideas and have a window into the lives of different time periods and cultures. It allows you to understand and experience the different values and beliefs that writers bring to their texts. GCSE English Literature is a core subject and is taken by all Key Stage 4 pupils. In GCSE English Literature we study the AQA syllabus and you will study a wide range of texts from the Literary Canon as well as more contemporary texts.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

During the two year course you will develop analytical skills and a detailed understanding of how writers' choices influence the reader / audience. You will be able to explore the effects of language and how writers shape meanings in their texts. You will also practice the skill of formal, academic writing learning how to structure your ideas fluently and coherently.

You will study four set texts:

- Shakespeare play, "Romeo and Juliet"
- The modern play "An Inspector Calls"
- A collection of poetry on the theme of Power and Conflict
- A nineteenth century novel, "A Christmas Carol"

How will I be assessed?

You will sit two exams at the end of the course for GCSE English Literature, which will allow you to demonstrate your knowledge, understanding and skills in response to your set texts as well as unseen poetry. These are closed book exams.

Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel	Exam (90 minutes)	40%
Paper 2 - Modern Texts and Poetry	Exam (135 minutes)	60%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

GCSE English Literature gives you an excellent basis for further academic study at A Level, but equally it is an essential qualification for all courses and professions. GCSE English Literature is known as a facilitating subject which means that it is highly regarded by universities and is identified as being essential or desirable for particular undergraduate courses.



"One glance at a book and you hear the voice of another person, perhaps someone dead for 1,000 years. To read is to voyage through time."

CARL SAGAN

GCSE MATHEMATICS

CORE SUBJECT

Why study Mathematics?

Maths is an important life skill essential to a wide variety of careers but also to everyday life. The word mathematics comes from ancient Greek, "learning" and from Hebrew "thinking". A good foundation in Maths gives us the ability to think logically and creatively. The course builds on topics that you have studied at Key Stage 3 with an increased focus on applying mathematics in context, problem solving, reasoning and the functional element of the subject. This subject will provide you with a set of transferable skills that will prove invaluable for the rest of your life.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

All pupils in Years 10 and 11 study a maths course which leads to GCSE entry at one of two different levels – Foundation or Higher. The course content is divided into six broad areas of mathematics:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and Rates Of Change
- Geometry and Measures
- Probability
- Statistics

How will I be assessed?

Maths is assessed through three equally weighted, one and a half hour written examinations taken at the end of Year 11.

The papers will assess all elements of the GCSE curriculum. The examination has two different levels of entry: Higher level or Foundation level. The tier you are entered for will be determined by your class teacher and informed by the results of your class assessments and mock exams.



Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 (calculator)	Exam (90 minutes)	33.3%
Paper 2 (non-calculator)	Exam (90 minutes)	33.3%
Paper 3 (calculator)	Exam (90 minutes)	33.3%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Pupils achieving a good grade at higher level maths can continue their studies through A Levels which can lead to study of a degree in a wide range of professions. GCSE Maths is a requirement for all degree courses and many jobs. It teaches accuracy and precision in work.

The analytical and problem solving skills you learn are valuable in many different careers, for example accountancy, teaching, business, engineering, medicine, architecture and computer studies.



“Without mathematics, there’s nothing you can do. Everything around you is mathematics. Everything around you is numbers.”

SHAKUNTALA DEVI



GCSE SCIENCE

CORE SUBJECT

Why study Science?

At GCSE, pupils undertake one of two different courses. Each individual pupil will follow the most appropriate course for them.

1. Combined Science: Trilogy – this leads to two GCSE qualifications, but pupils will still study all three science disciplines.

2. GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics – this leads to three GCSE qualifications.

At GCSE pupils study all three science disciplines: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Many pupils will follow the Combined Science: Trilogy course that leads to two GCSE grades. Although the two grades awarded are for 'science', our pupils are still taught biology, chemistry and physics discretely. Pupils that are able to demonstrate particular aptitude for their science subjects, and achieve highly

will be invited to follow the course that leads to three GCSE qualifications. These pupils will cover additional content in their lessons to prepare them for the additional demands of this course. The more we find out the more we realise we do not know and understand. The world needs

scientists to shape the next chapter in human history and the people who will be these scientists are currently studying in our schools. You are already a natural scientist. As you grow you ask questions about the world around you: What makes my eyes blue? How does my phone know my location? How do I contribute to global warming? So, in the name of science, start asking why and become a scientist yourself. Science is curiosity. It is learning about the world around us, asking questions and finding explanations to answer these questions. Science has shaped society as we know it: the biology of how your immune system protects you from disease, how the chemistry is fundamental to the production of your make-up, perfumes and deodorants you wear and the physics behind how your hair straighteners, beats headphones and other electronics work. Every aspect of life, every subject in school, every new technology involves and fundamentally relies on this fascinating subject. Science, the big idea that seems so complex and far removed from everyday life, is in fact the framework supporting everything we do and it all begins with asking that question.

GCSE SCIENCE

CORE SUBJECT

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Science teaches and develops essential transferable skills such as following instructions, analysing information, presentation and scientific communication. Science encompasses content and skills that are explored in other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics, English, geography, history, PE and RE and having a solid understanding of science will complement learning across the full range of subjects.

You will study nine hours of science over a two week period, where you will cover a range of topics from all three science disciplines, biology, chemistry and physics.

How will I be assessed?

Science is 100% assessed by final exams, there is no coursework element but pupils are required to complete a number of core practicals throughout the course. Pupils will sit six external exams in the summer of Year 11.

GCSE Combined Science - Trilogy	Assessment	Value
Biology Paper 1 - four topics Biology Paper 2 - three topics	x2 exams (75 minutes)	33.3% of the GCSE Combined Science grade
Chemistry Paper 1 - five topics Chemistry Paper 2 - five topics	x2 exams (75 minutes)	33.3% of the GCSE Combined Science grade
Physics Paper 1 - four topics Physics Paper 2 - three topics	x2 exams (75 minutes)	33.3% of the GCSE Combined Science grade

Separate Sciences

GCSE Biology - Separate Sciences	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - four topics	Exam (105 minutes)	50% of GCSE Biology
Paper 2 - three topics	Exam (105 minutes)	50% of GCSE Biology

GCSE Chemistry - Separate Sciences	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - five topics	Exam (105 minutes)	50% of GCSE Chemistry
Paper 2 - five topics	Exam (105 minutes)	50% of GCSE Chemistry

GCSE Physics - Separate Sciences	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - four topics	Exam (105 minutes)	50% of GCSE Physics
Paper 2 - four topics	Exam (105 minutes)	50% of GCSE Physics

What are the post-16 opportunities?

A solid foundation in science will be beneficial in every walk of life. For pupils who wish to continue their studies or career along a science specific route there are a number of options. Pupils may choose to apply for apprenticeships in a variety of areas such as electricians, engineering and social care or choose to study A Level or BTEC science courses. There are a huge variety of science based degrees available, such as engineering, medical based degrees, astronomy, natural sciences, biology, chemistry and physics to identify some of the more well known qualifications. There are also a huge range of science based degrees available on the UCAS website such as animal science, sport and exercise science, paramedic science, nuclear science, climate science and many, many more, take a look, Science is everywhere!

PE

CORE SUBJECT

PE and physical activity is proven to enhance physical health, boost mental wellbeing, build resilience, lift academic achievement and create active habits for life.

All Key Stage 4 pupils will follow our core PE practical programme of study.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Pupils will tackle complex and demanding physical activities. They will get involved in a range of activities that develop personal fitness and promote an active, healthy lifestyle. Pupils will use and develop a variety of tactics to overcome opponents in team and individual games. Pupils will also take part in further outdoor and adventurous activities in a range of environments which present intellectual and physical challenges and which encourage pupils to work effectively as part of a team.

How will I be assessed?

Core PE is a non-examined subject.



“Exercise and recreation are as necessary as reading. I will rather say more necessary, because health is worth more than learning.”

THOMAS JEFFERSON



PSHE+

CORE SUBJECT

PSHE prepares young people for life in modern Britain and is an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. The programme will equip pupils with a sound understanding of risk and with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions.

The study of PSHE is tailored to the needs of our pupils and will:

- Promote independence and responsibility, preparing young people for future roles as parents, employees and leaders.
- Help to improve employability skills by developing the personal and social skills demanded by commerce and industry.
- Offer financial understanding that will be vital for them making future informed decisions.
- Contribute to the health and wellbeing of individuals by encouraging individual responsibility for health.
- Promote opportunities for our young people to play a full and active part in society.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Pupils will learn about:

- Fundamental British Values
- Relationship, Sex and Health (RSHE)
- Careers
- Economic and Financial wellbeing
- Citizenship
- Drugs

Relationship, Sex and Health Education is supported in our schools by the Christian faith programme called 'Ten Ten'. This is a dynamic programme that helps communities to grow in faith, love, understanding and compassion. The programme focus is 'Life to the Full' and teaches RSHE within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church.

How will I be assessed?

PSHE is a non-examined subject.





NON-CORE GCSE SUBJECTS

GCSE FRENCH

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

GCSE HISTORY

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

GCSE FRENCH

NON-CORE GCSE SUBJECT

Why study French?

Where can language learning take you? The possibilities are endless. Even a basic knowledge of a foreign language can open so many doors. In today's global economy language skills are highly valued and sought after.

French is the official language of 29 countries and spoken in 44 countries. By learning French you will open up exciting opportunities and new horizons for both leisure and work purposes.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Learning a second language will help boost your memory. You will become a more effective communicator. You will gain a greater insight into how your own language works. You will be able to interact more confidently with people from different backgrounds and adjust more easily to new environments. Studying another language encourages us to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries and develop new ways of seeing the world.

You will learn French by studying the following thematic contexts on which the assessments are based. There is a new emphasis on reading aloud and dictation which encourages pupils to gain an understanding of the sound-spelling correspondences.

- People and lifestyle
- Popular culture
- Communication
- The world around us
- Health
- Education
- Customs and festivals
- Free time activities
- Travel and tourism
- The environment

How will I be assessed?

GCSE French is assessed at the end of Year 11 by 4 external examinations which are equally weighted: Pupils can be entered for either the Higher or Foundation Tier.

Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Listening	Exam (F: 35 mins; H: 45 minutes)	25%
Paper 2 - Speaking	Exam (F: 7-9 minutes; H: 10-12 minutes)	25%
Paper 3 - Reading	Exam (F: 45 minutes; H: 60 minutes)	25%
Paper 4 - Writing	Exam (F: 1hr 10 minutes; H: 1hr 15 minutes)	25%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Pupils achieving a good grade at GCSE can continue their studies at A Level. Many universities offer language modules, with an option to study abroad, through a variety of faculties, as well as a language degree. They also offer combined courses such as Business with French. However, if you do not want to continue the subject post-16, colleges, Universities and future employers will recognise and value this qualification in its own right. In addition, those pupils wanting to study other languages post-16 will find them more accessible as the skills acquired at GCSE are easily transferable to other languages. Just some of the possible future careers include the media, journalism, United Nations, company management, publishing, teaching, translating, interpreting, armed forces, the police, the civil service and law.



“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.”

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN



GCSE GEOGRAPHY

NON-CORE GCSE SUBJECT

Why study Geography?

Geography is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study at GCSE level. So important, in fact, that the Guardian newspaper in 2015 named Geography as a 'must-have GCSE and A Level' to help you make sense of the world. Geography focuses on the world today. It involves the study of places, people and the relationships between the human and natural environments. The subject highlights issues that are happening in the world right now. Geography is widely viewed as one of the most useful optional GCSE subjects, as it provides skills which colleges, universities and employers look for in applicants.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

You will learn how to investigate issues in the real world. You will improve your literacy through your report writing and you will also learn how to put forward your own point of view and convince others that you are right. You will make practical use of your numeracy skills when you interpret data and construct graphs. Your memory skills will also be boosted as you learn key memory techniques to help you remember case study information (facts and figures about places). The Geography syllabus covers a range of exciting and relevant Physical Geography topics including: Natural Hazards, The Living World and UK Glacial and Coastal Landscapes. With a further study into Human Geography, including: Urban Issues and Challenges, the Changing Economic World and the Challenge of Managing Natural Resources. Fieldwork is a vital part of the GCSE Geography course.

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations at the end of Year 11:

Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Living with the Physical Environment	Exam (90 minutes)	35%
Paper 2 - Challenges in the Human Environment	Exam (90 minutes)	35%
Paper 3 - Geographical Applications	Exam (75 minutes)	30%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Such a wide variety of skills gained in GCSE Geography will be useful to you after you leave school. These skills are highly sought after by sixth form colleges, universities and employers. Pupils who have studied GCSE Geography have gone on to work in the following sectors: environmental engineering, law, science, meteorology, business, information technology, management, finance, banking, marketing, research, manufacturing, teaching, childcare, arts, design and media, town planning, working abroad and many more.



“Geography explains the past, illuminates the present and prepares us for the future. What could be more important than that?”

MICHAEL PALIN

GCSE HISTORY

NON-CORE GCSE SUBJECT



Why study History?

Learning about past events and the people who have influenced history will allow you to understand how the world got to the point it is at now and how it will continue to develop in the future. Studying History will also help you to answer questions about the world in which we live such as: Why do wars happen? Why do we have a welfare system? How have we come to live in a multicultural society?

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

History is a very diverse subject and you will develop a range of skills that will help you in further study, employment and real-life situations. Studying History provides pupils with skills which are not confined to the study of the past. Skills of analysis are invaluable in many jobs, and the ability to analyse and then prioritise information is vital to decision making. This not only provides a skill set for a pupil but it also keeps career options open. The AQA spec allows you to learn a wide range of relevant themes. Through the study of Germany 1890-1945, you will develop an understanding of Germany during a turbulent time of change, the development and collapse of democracy and the impact this had on the German people. In addition, the depth study will explore the diverse interests of the great powers and how they were affected by and influenced change.

How will I be assessed?

You will sit two exams at the end of Year 11.

Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Understanding the Modern World	Exam (120 minutes)	50%
Paper 2 - Shaping the Nation	Exam (120 minutes)	50%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Studying GCSE History provides you with many transferable skills and is highly regarded by universities and employers. It can lead to some exciting career options, including: journalism, law business, politics, archaeology, marketing and teaching.



“Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.”

C. WRIGHT MILLS

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

NON-CORE GCSE SUBJECT



Why study Computer Science?

Studying Computer Science develops your ability to solve complex, interesting and challenging problems. It encourages you to think laterally, deeply and focus on developing solutions to real life problems. It allows you to investigate how computers work and how they are used. Computer Science underpins a great deal of what we do and understanding this will enable you to study a wide variety of subjects, including Computer Science, in the future.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

You will learn to work independently and as part of a team. You will develop critical thinking skills and how to analyse problems. This will enable you to solve problems using real life examples. You will develop computer programming skills and learn to apply these to the problems you have been given. You will develop written and oral communication skills that are essential to communicating with a wide range of audiences and for different purposes. There is a balance between theory and practical work. Through the Computer Systems unit you will learn about systems architecture, memory and storage, computer networks, connections and protocols, network security, system software and ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology.

How will I be assessed?

Computer Science is 100% externally assessed. Pupils also complete a programming project to apply their knowledge and understanding practically.

Element of Course	Assessment	Value
Paper 1 - Computer Systems	Exam (90 minutes)	50%
Paper 2 - Computational Thinking - Algorithms and Programming	Exam (90 minutes)	50%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Pupils achieving a good grade at GCSE could choose to study A Level Computer Science or ICT, BTEC courses and a wide variety of specialist courses including game design or app creation. This could lead to a career within computer science, computer aided design, programming, engineering, electrical engineering, IT or applied science. This could be as a software developer, systems analyst, computer games tester, web designer, electrician, IT security coordinator, social media manager, medical illustrator, computer games developer, project manager or technician.



“The rise of Google, the rise of Facebook, the rise of Apple, I think are proof that there is a place for computer science as something that solves problems that people face every day.”

ERIC SCHMIDT



COURSEWORK SUBJECTS

BTEC PERFORMING ARTS

BTEC MUSIC PRACTICE

CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL CREATIVE iMEDIA

GCSE ART AND DESIGN

WJEC VOCATIONAL AWARD CONSTRUCTION

WJEC VOCATIONAL AWARD ENGINEERING

WJEC VOCATIONAL AWARD HOSPITALITY & CATERING

BTEC SPORT, ACTIVITY & FITNESS

BTEC HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE



BTEC PERFORMING ARTS

COURSEWORK SUBJECT

Why study Performing Arts?

A BTEC in Performing Arts can help you take your first steps towards a career onstage or behind the scenes. You'll learn essential skills such as acting, dance and musical performance, stage management, production and set design.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

The qualification gives pupils the opportunity to develop sector-specific knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment. The main focus is on four areas of equal importance which cover the:

- Development of key skills that prove your aptitude in Performing Arts, such as reproducing repertoire or responding to stimulus.
- Process that underpins effective ways of working in the Performing Arts, such as development of ideas, rehearsal and performance.
- Attitudes that are considered most important in the Performing Arts, such as the development of ideas, rehearsal and performance.
- Attitudes that are considered most important in the Performing Arts, including personal management and communication.

This Award complements extracurricular activities and any external lessons in drama, dance, music and singing.

How will I be assessed?

BTEC Performing Arts	Assessment	Value
Component 1 - Exploring the Performing Arts	Internal Assessment	30%
Component 2 - Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts	Internal Assessment	30%
Component 3 - Responding to a Brief	Exam	40%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Pupils who successfully complete their BTEC qualification in Performing Arts might consider progression to: A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects; study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Performing Arts, which prepares pupils to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying for a degree in the Performing Arts of Production Arts areas. Additionally, pupils could go on to have a career in the performing arts as an actor, dancer, singer or musical performer.

“The arts are the one thing that appeal right across all forms of politics, race, creed – everything.”

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER



BTEC MUSIC PRACTICE

COURSEWORK SUBJECT

Why study Music?

Music is a vibrant and dynamic subject perfect for creative and imaginative students with plenty of opportunity to undertake assignments in areas that interest you. This subject will provide you with a set of transferable practical skills that will prove invaluable for the rest of your life.

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Music Practice will allow you to develop your existing musical interests and skills, such as, gaining an understanding and appreciation of a range of different kinds of music, using musical elements, music creation, performance and music production and your personal skills, such as self-development, responding to a brief, planning and time management through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment. Within Sacred Heart's Music Department, we recognise the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes which will complement your GCSEs. Music enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, lateral thinking and complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter which future avenues you choose, those who can arrange, compose, perform, present and show-case music in a way that is aesthetically pleasing will always have an advantage.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

The course includes the opportunity to either perform, compose or produce music of your choice, individually and in a group, through study of a range of musical styles and the ever growing Music industry. BTEC Music values all music styles, skills and instruments. Music enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, lateral thinking and complex analysis and critical thinking skills. This qualification comprises 3 components, all focused around practical Music skills. This qualification has no timed written exam.

How will I be assessed?

BTEC Music Practice	Assessment	Value
Component 1 - Exploring Music Products and Styles	Coursework	30%
Component 2 - Music Skills Development	Coursework	30%
Component 3 - Responding to a Music Brief	Coursework Task - Externally assessed	40%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

The Music industry is a vibrant, exciting and highly competitive industry that contributes £5.2 billion to the UK economy and generates a further £2.7 billion in export revenue. Live music alone creates £3.7 billion! The music industry is constantly evolving and offers many different and exciting new work opportunities supporting more than 190,935 full-time jobs in the UK. Music is a great way to open the door to careers in the creative industries and is a highly regarded qualification at every level because it combines multiple skill sets at once. When performing in a group, band, orchestra or choir you are multitasking, continually adjusting to ensure that you fit in with everyone else. When composing you are being extremely creative, using your imagination and collaboration skills. You will be able to demonstrate tremendous manual dexterity, so a qualification in Music can help in many other career paths that require manual dexterity (ie: Doctor; Surgeon; Dentist etc.). Finally, new technologies are creating a whole new range of possibilities where Music is being used in innovative ways.



CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL CREATIVE iMEDIA

COURSEWORK SUBJECT

Why study Creative iMedia?

Digital created content has taken the world by storm and we see it almost constantly around us. Websites, movies, adverts and mobile apps affect our daily lives. Learning how they are created and why we create them has become an important part of our digital future. Studying Creative iMedia introduces you to just this and will suit students with a degree of creative or artistic flair providing the skills to create your own applications.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

The Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia will equip pupils with a range of creative media skills and provide opportunities to develop a range of desirable and transferable skills. Skills such as research, planning, reviewing, working with others and communicating creative concepts effectively will be developed throughout the course. Using these skills, pupils will ultimately create a number of fit-for-purpose creative media products.

How will I be assessed?

Cambridge National Creative iMedia	Assessment	Value
Mandatory unit - R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry	Exam (75 minutes)	40%
Mandatory unit - R094: Visual identity and digital graphics	Controlled Assessment	25%
Optional unit	Controlled Assessment	35%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

The Cambridge National in Creative iMedia equips pupils with the wide range of knowledge and skills needed to work in the creative digital media sector. They start at pre-production and develop their skills through practical assignments as they create final multimedia products.

Cambridge Nationals provide a strong base for progression to Further Education, whether it is on to our Level 3 Cambridge Technicals or A Levels, or to an apprenticeship or work.



“Creativity is intelligence have fun.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

GCSE ART AND DESIGN - ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN COURSEWORK SUBJECT



Why study Art?

The Creative Industries sector employs over two million people (DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates 2018). Studying art and design provides the opportunity to acquire new skills and develop knowledge in a variety of art forms leading to possible careers in; architecture, advertising, animation, graphic design, film, costume design, make-up design, art therapy, conservation, exhibition design, fashion design, game design, illustration, interactive media design, museum curation, product design, production design, styling, teaching, textile design, theatre direction, visual effects and web design.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

As well as developing a range of art and design skills; drawing, painting, graphic design, three-dimensional design and textile design and critical and aesthetic awareness; fine motor skills, planning, decision making, problem solving, composing, meeting deadlines, researching and self-motivation are all additional skills you will form during the study of art.

The GCSE course offered is a broad course exploring practical and critical/contextual work through a range of 2D and/or 3D Art and Design processes and techniques working in the following areas of Art and Design; Fine Art, Graphics, Three-Dimensional Design and Textile Design. Two coursework projects are developed over one year and one term.

How will I be assessed?

Art & Design is made up of coursework and an externally set assignment.

GCSE Art and Design	Assessment	Value
Portfolio of Work from Year 10 and Year 11 - Project 1 - Project 2	Coursework	60%
Externally Set Assignment from AQA	Exam	40%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

We have strong links with the Northern School of Art where each year many of our students go directly to study Art and Design (Fashion, Graphics, Architecture, Three-Dimensional Design, Games Design, Film & Production, Interactive Design, Photography, Textiles etc) or alternatively continue their art studies at a local sixth-form college. Both provide routes for studying a BA (Hons) degree in a chosen area of art or design and a career in the creative industries.

“Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.”

THOMAS MERTON

WJEC VOCATIONAL AWARD CONSTRUCTION COURSEWORK SUBJECT



Why study Construction & The Built Environment?

Through a range of practical experiences, external examinations and written assignments, the WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Construction and the Built Environment (Technical Award) provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for a career in the construction sector. Pupils will focus on the construction industry and the skills needed in a range of sectors as part of their Key Stage 4 learning.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Pupils will acquire and apply knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in sector or subject contexts that have many of the characteristics of real work. Skills covered will include safety and security in construction and planning and developing construction projects. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs.

How will I be assessed

Unit 1 is mandatory, students will then study towards either unit 2 or 3.

WJEC Construction and the Built Environment	Assessment	Value
Unit 1: Introduction to the Built Environment	On-screen examination: 90 minutes	40%
Unit 2: Designing the Built Environment	Controlled assessment	60%
Unit 3: Constructing the Built Environment	Controlled assessment	60%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

The successful completion of this qualification, together with other equivalent qualifications, such as in maths and the sciences, could provide the pupil with opportunities to access a range of qualifications including apprenticeships, vocationally related and occupational qualifications. These include: Level 3 qualifications in construction, such as Diplomas in Construction and the Built Environment; Level 2 qualifications in construction, including specialist areas such as plumbing, bricklaying and carpentry, apprenticeships in construction.

“It is not the beauty of a building you should look at; its the construction of the foundation that will stand the test of time.”

DAVID ALLAN COE

WJEC VOCATIONAL AWARD ENGINEERING

COURSEWORK SUBJECT

Why study Engineering?

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Engineering is for learners who want to acquire technical knowledge and technical skills through vocational contexts by studying mechanical, electrical/electronic and engineering design as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs.

The qualification will broaden the learners experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Components 1 and 2 are assessed through internal assessment. Internal assessment for these components has been designed to relate to achievement of application of the conceptual underpinning for the sector through realistic tasks and activities. The components focus on:

- the development of core knowledge and understanding of engineering sectors, their interconnections and how they relate to the roles of employees in engineering industries.
- knowledge and skills of the stages involved in planning and implementing an engineering project.
- the development and application of skills such as problem solving, design, creativity, communication and collaboration.

Internal assessment is through assignments that are subject to external standards verification.

“As engineers, we were going to be in a position to change the world – not just study it.”

DAVID ALLAN COE

How will I be assessed?

BTEC Engineering	Assessment	Value
Component 1 - Exploring Engineering Specialisms and Design Applications	Internally assessed	30% Total grade
Component 2 - Investigating an Engineering Project	Internally assessed	30% Total grade
Component 3 - Responding to an Engineering Brief	Externally assessed (synoptic)	40% Total grade

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Learners who generally achieve at Level 2 across their Key Stage 4 learning might consider progression to:

- A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects.
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as BTEC National in Engineering, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in an engineering area.



GCSE FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

COURSEWORK SUBJECT

Why study Food Preparation and Nutrition?

Have you ever done everything correct in a recipe but still find the end result hasn't worked? The answers lie in this course. Explore the wonder of food science, looking into the properties which make food react and behave as it does. Broaden and develop your practical skills to excite the taste buds to instil in the consumer a sense of balance, health and nutrition.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

The GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure pupils develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.

How will I be assessed?

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition	Assessment	Value
EXAM: Paper 1: Food Preparation and Nutrition	Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes 100 marks	50% of final GCSE
NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT (NEA): Task 1: Food investigation	Written Report	15% of final GCSE
NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT (NEA): Task 2: Food preparation assessment	Written Portfolio	35% of final GCSE

What are the post-16 opportunities?

A successful GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition will enable you to study the subject further:

- NVQ level 2/3 and BTEC courses in Hospitality / Professional Cookery
- Higher Education Degree courses in: Food and Nutrition Science / Food Manufacturing

Studying Food Preparation and Nutrition can lead to exciting and well paid career options. Consumers are becoming increasingly reliant on the food industry to develop solutions for their nutritional needs. This course could lead you into roles such as a Chef, Food Product Developer, Buyer (who travels the world sourcing new food products for manufacturers), Food Safety Inspectors, Nutritionists, Dieticians, Quality Managers, Teacher, Food Engineer, Food Scientist, Food Technologist, Food Photographer, Food Stylist, Home Economist, Hotel and Restaurant Manager, Microbiologist, working in food magazines, radio and television.



“To eat is a necessity, but to eat intelligently is an art.”

LA ROCHEFOUCALD

BTEC SPORT, ACTIVITY & FITNESS



COURSEWORK SUBJECT

Why study BTEC Sport?

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Sport, Activity and Fitness gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through realistic vocational contexts. They will explore the different types and providers of sport and physical activity, as well as the equipment and technology available. Building on this, they will look at individuals' differing needs, to gain an understanding of how to increase participation in sport while further developing their knowledge and understanding of anatomy and physiology in a contextualised way. They will then apply their knowledge and skills to planning and delivering sports activity sessions for participants in practical sessions.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

This qualification enables learners to develop sector-specific skills such as sport analysis and sports leadership, and personal skills such as communication, planning, time management and teamwork, through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment.

“Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.”

JOHN F KENNEDY

How will I be assessed?

BTEC Sport, Activity and Fitness	Assessment	Value
Component 1 - Preparing participants to take part in Sport and Physical Activity	Internal Assessment	30%
Component 2 - Taking part and improving other participants' sporting performance.	Internal Assessment	30%
Component 3 - Developing fitness to improve other participants' performance in sport and physical activity	External Assessment (Exam)	40%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

Colleges and sixth forms throughout the region offer a vast array of vocational level 3 qualifications such as BTECs in Sport/Leisure Studies/Exercise Science, as well as A level PE.

Pupils that are particularly gifted in Sport may consider applying to our high-performing trust sports academy - T6 Sports Academy, based at Trinity Sixth Form in Middlesbrough. Here, they will be able to combine their post-16 studies with a timetabled programme of playing, training and coaching sport.

The sport and leisure industry is huge and offers opportunities in many different areas including; coaching, teaching, lifeguarding, fitness training, sports journalism, physiotherapy, sports analysis, nutrition and sports management.

BTEC HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

COURSEWORK SUBJECT



Why study Health & Social Care?

Careers in social care are concerned with helping vulnerable people in the community and providing them with support so that they can benefit from a much more improved way of life. Health and social care is an especially broad career sector. Careers in health and social care are some of the most important in the world. In the Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care, pupils will focus on how people develop through the different life stages and the factors that can affect that development as well as Health and Social Care Services and the barriers to accessing services.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Pupils will acquire and apply knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in sector or subject contexts that have many of the characteristics of real work. Pupils will acquire skills with regards to communication, understanding how specific life events can have a significant impact on a person, and understanding the barriers that people may have when it comes to accessing different health and social care services that could help them. Pupils will also develop the skills to be able to create a health and well-being improvement plan for a set of specific scenarios.

“To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived; that is to have succeeded.”

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

How will I be assessed

BTEC Health and Social Care	Assessment	Value
Component 1 - Human Lifespan Development	Internal Assessment	30%
Component 2 - Health and Social Care Values	Internal Assessment	30%
Component 3 - Health and Well-Being	Exam (120 minutes)	40%

What are the post-16 opportunities?

The successful completion of this qualification, together with other equivalent qualifications, such as in maths, English and the sciences, could provide the pupil with opportunities to access a range of qualifications including apprenticeships, vocationally related and occupational qualifications. These include: Level 3 qualifications in Health and Social Care. These qualifications can also lead the pupils into careers such as Nursing, Care Work and Child Care.

BEYOND YEAR 11...

We aim to raise aspirations, challenge stereotypes and encourage Sacred Heart's pupils to consider a wide range of progression options post-16, in terms of further and higher education and ultimately, their career.



Now is a key time for you to begin researching the types of careers that appeal to you the most. This is an exciting opportunity for you to reflect on your strengths, skills and personal qualities. Some of you may find it difficult to know exactly what they want to do in the future; this is perfectly normal.

It is important to keep a broad and balanced combination of subjects and to draw upon the advice of school staff and family members to help inform the decision process. The staff at NPCAT have a wealth of experience in advising pupils about the options process and the courses that will suit them best.

Ms Bennett, our Careers Advisor at Sacred Heart, will be in school to support you. She has great links to further and higher education as well as apprenticeship providers. Ms Bennett also works with industry partners and is fully up to date with trends in the labour market, ensuring you gain the skills, knowledge and qualification required for jobs of the future..

Careers Education forms an important part of our PSHE+ curriculum which all pupils study until they leave us in Year 11.

Every pupil will have opportunities to interact with employers and Post 16 providers throughout Key Stage 4 and undertake a block of Work Experience whilst they are in Year 10. There are all vital experiences in ensuring all pupils at Sacred Heart are given the opportunity to make well informed decisions about their futures.



T6 SIXTH FORM

T6 in Middlesbrough enables Sacred Heart's pupils to remain in the NPCAT family and Catholic education right through to the age of 18.



TRINITY SIXTH FORM

Our growing trust sixth form offers a broad and balanced curriculum including A levels and BTEC courses.

Investment in the T6 campus is significant and ongoing - recent additions include high-spec fitness and engineering suites, with much more planned.

In the last set of government league tables, T6 students achieved highest added value in Middlesbrough – they made more progress in their time with us than those attending any other college in the town.

BTEC results are among the best in the country, with

students achieving an average of a grade higher than expected.

T6 also offers a bespoke approach to work experience directly linked to career goals, with students working in disciplines such as law, engineering, medicine and teaching. A significant proportion of leavers go on to study at prestigious Russell Group universities, with students winning places at both Oxford and Cambridge in recent years. Those choosing not to go to university have accessed much sought-after apprenticeships in a range of fields.

OTHER FURTHER EDUCATION OPTIONS

NPCAT Careers Advisors offer impartial information and guidance and encourage pupils to follow the best options for whatever career pathway they wish to follow. We have close links with other Further Education providers such as Redcar & Cleveland College, Shape Training, the Northern School of Art and Askham Bryan College, offering additional academic and practical options to our pupils, including apprenticeships.



TRINITY SIXTH FORM
FOOTBALL ACADEMY

T6 FOOTBALL ACADEMY

T6Football Academy provides all young people across Teesside, North Yorkshire and the City of York the chance to follow their dreams and passion for football while studying and gaining the relevant qualifications to set them on their way to a career in their chosen field.

We have created a 16-19 academy programme that develops the best young local and regional footballing talent who have perhaps just missed out on professional contracts or have ambitions to play at the highest level they possibly can post-16. The football academy is based at T6 – Trinity Sixth Form in Middlesbrough, where students have access to an array of hi-tech sports and teaching facilities tailored specifically towards elite sporting and academic performance.

These include sports massage and treatment suite, strength and conditioning studio, Technogym fitness suite, technology enhanced classrooms, performance analysis studio, and multipurpose sports hall.



SACRED HEART
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SECONDARY
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