



# Year 9 Curriculum Options Booklet 2026



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## **Introduction**

Choosing subjects to study is a thought provoking and sometimes daunting process. Form Tutors, Subject Teachers, Progress Leaders and Senior Leaders are all available to talk students and parents through the options process. Ultimately, the option choices will equip students with the skills and knowledge to succeed at the end of Year 11 and form the foundation of further studies and/or chosen career pathways. This booklet will inform you about non assessed subjects, core subjects and option subjects.

## **Core/Compulsory Subjects**

It is of utmost importance that students follow a broad and balanced curriculum throughout their time in school. Therefore, all students, regardless of their academic ability will study the following GCSE qualifications:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science - Trilogy (worth 2 GCSEs) or Separate Sciences (worth 3 GCSEs)

## **Non assessed Subjects**

To help become healthy well rounded adults all students will also study:

- Social Development
- Core PE

## **Option Subjects**

- Option 1 - Humanities (Geography or History)
- Options 2 and 3 see below.

## **Art GCSE**

**Business Enterprise GCSE**

**Computer Science GCSE**

**Design Technology GCSE**

**Drama GCSE**

**Health and Social Care (vocational)**

**Hospitality and Catering (vocational)**

**Music GCSE**

**PE (vocational)**

**Religious Studies GCSE**

**Separate Science GCSE**

**Sociology GCSE**

**Spanish GCSE**

**Students will rank the options subjects from the one they would most like to study to the least. This will be via a google form shared with students.**

When all students have made their choice the option blocks will be arranged to give the highest number of students their top choices.

Students should get their first choice except for with a minority of subjects that are oversubscribed. All classes have a maximum size and for some, such as DT and Hospitality and Catering, health and safety requirements enforce smaller classes.

Most students will get their first and second choices, but it is inevitable that some students will not as the subjects will be placed in the same block.

### **Important information regarding choices**

We aim to give all students their preferred choices, however this is not always possible. Alternatives may have to be considered if too many students opt for a particular course, or too few students select a particular course. The school reserves the right to make changes to the courses that will run at any time and we will attempt to find an alternative course for your son/daughter. Priority places will be given to certain students e.g. SEND students or students identified as being most suitable for a course.

### **Guidance on choosing Subjects**

Choosing the right subjects is an especially major decision.

Remember, you should choose a subject:

- Because you enjoy it and/or are good at it
- Because you are interested in it and/or you wish to know more about it and study it beyond school
- Because you need it for admission to your chosen career or course
- Because it gives you a 'balanced choice'

You must not choose a subject:

- Because you like the Year 9 teacher - they might not be teaching your class next year
- Because your friends are choosing it - your friends may have different interests and abilities

## Art

**Qualification type: GCSE Art, Craft & Design**

**Exam Board: AQA**

### What will I study?

The GCSE Art, Craft and Design course encourages pupils to develop their skills across a wide range of artistic media and processes including drawing, painting, photography, print-making, mixed media and sculpture. Seeking inspiration initially from given starting points, pupils learn how to gain ideas from others and the world around them, becoming increasingly independent as they take ownership of their own unique creative journeys. Pupils embarking on this GCSE course are expected to complete at least one full sketchbook and to fully commit to working on their artwork out of school hours.

### This subject is for you if...

- You are observant of the world around you
- You enjoy taking part in artistic activities in and out of school
- You enjoy experimenting with different techniques and are happy to learn from your mistakes
- You are imaginative, patient and take pride in producing neat, well presented work

### How is the course structured?

#### Component 1: The Portfolio of Work:

All work completed from September of Year 10 to December of Year 11 makes up the 'Portfolio of Work', worth **60% of the overall GCSE grade**. This consists of two projects: an initial teacher led project which embeds varied artistic skills and introduces pupils to the course assessment objectives, and a second pupil led project in which students are encouraged to focus on their own area of specialism.

#### Component 2: The Externally Set Task

In January of Year 11, each student will select a theme from a selection provided by AQA. This acts as the starting point for this component, worth **40% of their overall grade**. Pupils have approximately 11 school weeks to research and explore ideas relating to their chosen theme before completing a 10 hour period of sustained working under exam conditions, in which they will produce a final personal response.

### How is the course assessed?

Each component is assessed holistically out of 96 marks- a maximum of 24 marks being awarded for each of the assessment objectives shown below:

- AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

### Why choose Art?

The UK's creative sector contributes over £120 billion to the economy each year and continues to grow. GCSE Art & Design is the perfect starting point for an immense range of careers including advertising and marketing, architecture, illustration, fashion, animation, interior and urban design, special effects, film production, costume and theatre design, art therapy and graphic design. If you are interested in pursuing any creative career, GCSE Art and Design is an excellent prequel to a huge range of further and higher education courses that will set you on the pathway to success!

## Business Studies

**Qualification Type:** GCSE

**Exam Board:** Edexcel

### Why choose Business Studies?

If you're curious about how businesses succeed, enjoy solving real-world problems, or want to bring your own ideas to life - this course is for you. Business Studies is a practical and exciting subject where you'll explore what makes businesses thrive, how to manage money, and how to turn a great idea into a successful plan.

Whether you dream of running your own business one day or want to develop skills useful in any job, this course helps you grow into a confident, creative, and enterprising thinker.

### How is the course structured?

<p><b>Theme 1: Investigating small business</b> <b>Assessment type:</b> Written paper <b>Final grade weighting:</b> 50% <b>Time:</b> 1hr 30 minutes <b>Marks:</b> 90 <b>Topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship</li><li>• 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity</li><li>• 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice</li><li>• 1.4 Making the business effective</li><li>• 1.5 External influences on businesses</li></ul>	<p><b>Theme 2: Building a business</b> <b>Assessment type:</b> Written paper <b>Final grade weighting:</b> 50% <b>Time:</b> 1hr 30 minutes <b>Marks:</b> 90 <b>Topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2.1 Growing the business</li><li>• 2.2 Making marketing decisions</li><li>• 2.3 Making operational decisions</li><li>• 2.4 Making financial decisions</li><li>• 2.5 Making human resource decisions</li></ul>
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Through a mix of theoretical learning and practical tasks, you will:

- **Understand how businesses work** by investigating real-world enterprises and the skills needed by successful entrepreneurs.
- **Learn to plan and pitch a business idea**, including budgeting, presenting a business plan, and reflecting on their performance.
- **Gain financial and marketing skills**, such as completing financial documents, understanding target markets, and analysing business performance.
- Develop **transferable skills** like problem-solving, decision-making, communication, and time management that are valuable in any career path.




This course is designed to be practical, engaging, and closely linked to real-life business scenarios, helping students decide if enterprise is a career path they'd like to pursue while also keeping options open for further education.

### Is this subject right for you?

- ✓ Enjoy thinking creatively and coming up with ideas
- ✓ Are curious about how businesses grow and succeed
- ✓ Like working with others to solve real-world problems
- ✓ Are confident presenting or want to improve your confidence
- ✓ Want to learn how to manage money and make smart decisions
- ✓ Are interested in careers in business, marketing, design, or even launching your own brand one day

### Where can it lead?

This course opens up a wide range of future options. It works well alongside subjects like Computer Science, Design & Technology, and Media. You'll be well prepared for:

-  A-Levels or BTECs in Business, Economics, or related fields
-  Apprenticeships in marketing, retail, finance, or customer service
-  Careers in fashion, tech, events, hospitality, social enterprise, and more

Whether you want to start your own brand, help a charity grow, or become a future business leader, this course gives you the confidence and skills to begin that journey.

## Computer Science

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: OCR**

### Why choose Computer Science?

Computer Science is a creative, rewarding, and forward-thinking subject. From social media to self-driving cars, apps to artificial intelligence, technology is shaping the future — and you can be part of it. In this course, you'll learn how computers work, how to think logically, and how to write your own code to solve real-world problems. Whether you're interested in designing apps, protecting people's data, building the next big game, or understanding how technology can change lives, Computer Science gives you the tools to make a difference.

### What will the course involve?

<b>Component 1</b> <b>Assessment type:</b> Written paper <b>Final grade weighting:</b> 50% <b>Topics:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Systems architecture</li><li>2. Memory and Storage</li><li>3. Computer networks</li><li>4. Cyber security</li><li>5. Systems software</li><li>6. Ethical impact of digital technology.</li></ol>	<b>Component 2</b> <b>Assessment type:</b> Written paper <b>Final grade weighting:</b> 50% <b>Topics:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Algorithms</li><li>2. Programming fundamentals</li><li>3. Producing robust programs</li><li>4. Boolean logic</li><li>5. Programming language and IDE</li></ol>
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### Is this subject right for you?


- ✓ Enjoy being creative with technology
- ✓ Like solving problems or puzzles
- ✓ Are curious about how apps, websites, or games work
- ✓ Enjoy maths and logical thinking
- ✓ Want to make a difference in the world using digital skills
- ✓ Are ready to take on challenges and keep going when things get tricky

### Inspiring figures in Computer Science

- **Alan Turing** – Cracked German codes in WWII
- **Tim Berners-Lee** – Invented the World Wide Web
- **Ada Lovelace** – Regarded as the first computer programmer
- **Margaret Hamilton** – Led software engineering for the Apollo 11 moon landing
- **Karen Spärck Jones** – Helped develop search engine technology
- **John McCarthy** – Pioneer of artificial intelligence

### Where can it lead?

Computer Science is in high demand across the UK and the world. With this GCSE, you'll be well prepared for further study or careers such as:

-  Environmental data analyst
-  Game designer or developer
-  App developer
-  Cybersecurity specialist
-  AI researcher
-  Digital education specialist
-  Health technology developer

You don't have to work in tech to benefit - Computer Science teaches thinking skills that employers everywhere value.

With the rapid growth of digital industries, many future jobs will rely on skills you can begin developing in this course. There is at present a serious skills shortage in the UK and globally of people who can write computer code. In fact, the growth and evolution of new technologies means in the future there will be lots of jobs that require computer science skills that we have not even thought about yet!

## Design and Technology

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: AQA**

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise. Students must also demonstrate mathematical and scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to technology. Students will study a breadth of core technical knowledge and understanding that includes; New and emerging technologies, energy generation and storage, developments in new materials, systems approach to designing, mechanical devices and materials and their working properties.

In addition to the core technical principles, students study the following specialist technical principles including; Selection of materials or components, ecological and social footprint, using and working with materials, scales of production, specialist techniques and processes. Information Technology including CAD/CAM forms an integral part of this course, implementing and using our 3D printers as well as our laser cutter to help produce prototypes. Each specialist technical principle will be delivered through **at least one** material category **or** system such as; Papers and boards, timber based materials, polymers, textile based materials.

Students will demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of designing and making through research, environmental, social and economic challenges, design, modelling and specialist tools and equipment.

### Course Structure

**There is a written 2 hour exam in Y11 worth 100 marks and 50% of the GCSE course.**

The paper is broken up into 3 sections and can be on ANY area of Technology.

Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks) which includes a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks) which includes several short answer questions (2– 5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks) which includes a mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a 12 mark design question.

**There is a Non-exam assessment worth 100 marks and 50% of the GCSE course.** This is a design and make task; Investigating the brief, designing, making and analysing and evaluating. This will be based around the student's specialism (Resistant Materials or Graphics or Textiles)

### Opportunities

Many Technology courses are available at local colleges, you could then go on to university or another further education level, to study subjects that include, engineering, 3D design, Interior design and Product design to name a few.

Almost everything involves problem solving but especially anything related to designing or making in the manufacturing or construction industries. Career opportunities exist in product design, furniture or jewellery design, building and construction work (plumbing, carpentry, electrician or apprenticeships), engineering and tool-making, boat and vehicle repair and maintenance, product design, marketing, promotions, advertising, animation and illustration as well as production design in theatre/television/film to name but a few!

The skills that are learnt in this subject are transferable into any career; the ability to analyse a problem and develop a solution will serve you well no matter what you go on to do in your life.

## Drama

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: OCR**

### What is Drama at GCSE?

Drama is a subject that is becoming increasingly valued by businesses, who feel that our young people lack the confidence at interviews, or the ability to present. Within drama you will not only study the craft of acting and theatre, you will also learn extremely valuable transferable skills for example – collaboration, empathy, analysis, evaluation, deconstruction of a given subject and construction of performance pieces. You are able to perform but also work on production skills such as lighting, costume, sound, set/props etc.

### You should consider this course if:

You are thinking of going into medicine, law, public relations, journalism, politics, social work, hospitality, tourism and leisure and of course any form of acting or jobs in the theatre.

### Who is the course suitable for?

The course is suitable for those students who are interested in the creation of Drama as an art form and also for those who wish to demonstrate on their CV an aptitude for creativity, good presentation and language skills, confidence and team working skills.

### You will like this course if:

You enjoy your drama lesson at the moment, you like working collaboratively with others, you like to put yourself in other peoples' shoes, you enjoy the process of creating drama, you like reading plays, you enjoy going to the theatre, you like exploring topical issues, you like performing!

### Things you need to be aware of

You will be filmed at points in the course and need to be comfortable with that, we do explore a range of themes and issues, some are funny, some are moving, some are very thought provoking. You need to be prepared to think deeply about difficult situations and support others in doing so. You need to be open minded and respect different opinions to your own. Most practical work is carried out in groups of varying sizes – you must feel comfortable working with all of your peers.

<b>Component 1: Devising Drama Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification</b>	<b>Component 2: Presenting and Performing Texts</b>	<b>Component 3: Performance and Response</b>
<b>Non-exam assessment:</b> Internally assessed, externally moderated  30% of qualification	<b>Non-exam assessment:</b> Externally assessed by a visiting examiner  30% of qualification	<b>Written examination:</b> 1 hour 30 Minutes  40% of qualification
Learners will research and explore a stimulus (provided by the board), Work collaboratively and create their own devised drama.	Learners develop and apply theatrical skills in acting or design by presenting a showcase of two extracts from a performance text.	Learners will explore practically a performance text to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of drama. Learners will analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance.

## Geography

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: AQA**

Geography helps us to make sense of the world around us. The course will provide the chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world today and will affect us as we move into the future. We also learn to understand the social, economic and physical forces that shape and change our planet.

### **What will I study?**

There are 3 Themes of Study:

- **Living with the physical environment** - Natural Hazards, Living World and UK physical landscapes.
- **Challenges in the Human Environment** - Urban Issues, changing economic world and resource management.
- **Geographical applications** - Issue evaluation and fieldwork.

In Year 10 and 11 you will extend your locational knowledge, develop competence in maps, carry out fieldwork and extend general geographical Skills. Field work involves enquiry based learning with one trip out of school to Blackpool and Cleveleys.

### **How is the course examined?**

The AQA course for Geography has 3 examinations. Here is the summary of assessment:

#### **Paper 1:**

- Living with the physical environment
- 1 hour 30 minute written examination
- 35% of the qualification.

#### **Paper 2:**

- Challenges in the human environment
- 1 hour 30 minute written examination
- 35% of the qualification.

#### **Paper 3:**

- Geographical applications
- 1 hour 30 minutes written examination
- Fieldwork carried out of school.
- 30% of the qualification.

### **How will GCSE Geography help me in the future?**

The skills involved in studying Geography are skills that the majority of employers are now seeking:

**Communication Skills** – ability to present information in a clear and appropriate way through written and oral communication

**Interpretive Skills** – ability to give meaning to data

**Evaluative Skills** – ability to analyse critically and interpret evidence and to formulate conclusions

**Problem solving skills** – the ability to enquire, to think clearly, critically and constructively and make decisions based on evidence.

A few of the careers in which studying geography can give students an advantage:

Teaching; armed forces; journalism; retail; archaeology; geology; civil servant; town planning; human rights officer; law; refugee and asylum officer and diplomat or even a marine biologist.

Geography graduates have one of the highest rates of graduate employment.

## Health and Social Care

**Qualification type: V CERT**

**Exam Board: NCFE**

This qualification consists of ONE unit with MULTIPLE content areas:

Content Area	Title
1	Health and social care provision and services.
2	Job roles in health and social care and care values that underpin professional practice.
3	Legislation, policies and procedures in health and social care.
4	Human development across the lifespan.
5	The needs of the individual.
6	How health and social care services are accessed.
7	Partnership working in health and social care.
8	The care planning cycle.

These content areas will be studied in preparation for:

- The non exam assessment in Year 11
- The examined assessment in Year 11

### Assessment

#### Non- exam assessment

- This is worth 50% of the technical award
- This is an externally set assessment that is internally marked and externally moderated.
- The non exam assessment will assess the learners ability to effectively draw together their knowledge and understanding from across the whole vocational area.

#### Examined Assessment

- This is worth 50% of the technical award
- It is a written examination that is externally set and externally marked
- The examination is 1 hour and 30 minutes
- The examined assessment will assess the learners ability to effectively draw together their knowledge and understanding from across the whole vocational area

### Opportunities

This course is ideal for those students who are considering continuing health and social care in higher education or choosing a career within the health and social care sectors. Learners will be able to progress to the next level of learning in health and social care, for example, the Technical Level 3 Certificate in Health and Social Care. Students that complete this course may consider further study to progress to the following job roles:

- Nurse
- Counsellor
- Occupational therapist
- Social worker
- Youth worker

## History

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: Edexcel**

**What do we study?** We study 4 units which are assessed by 3 exams at the end of Year 11.

We follow the **Development of Medicine** from the Medieval period right up to the modern day, looking at how individuals, changes in science and technology, changing attitudes and even war have led to progress and thus improved our lives and cured killer diseases. The course also includes an in-depth look at how medicine was impacted by the conditions on the Western Front during WW1.

In our second unit we study **Elizabethan England**, where we learn about how Queen Elizabeth ruled England, the changes that she made and how they impacted the lives of people of all social classes. There is a focus on the religious wars of Europe in the Early Modern period and the early exploration of the Americas. We also study some social history finding out about Elizabethan leisure, poverty, and education.

In our third topic we explore **Superpower Relations during the Cold War 1941-1991**, learning about the changing relationship between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, looking at the dangers of a nuclear holocaust, the diplomacy (and spies!) that have prevented one so far, and understanding how the free world finally defeated the threat of Communism.

Our final topic delves into **Germany (1918-1939)** looking at how life for the people of Germany changed between the First and Second World War, focussing on life in **Weimar Germany**, the **Rise of the Nazis** and life in **Nazi Germany**, finding out how life in Germany changed once the people found themselves living under a brutal dictatorship. Students engage with original source material and eminent Historians to develop a deep understanding of one of the most interesting tragedies of modern times.

### Why study History?

People who study History **learn** more and **earn** more.

History develops vital skills such as critical thinking, using evidence, and detailed factual writing. People who study history to a high level use these skills to develop exciting careers with excellent earning potential. In the UK the average salary is around £23,000 per year. For comparison, see the below list of some of the careers that History can lead to:

- Actuary (£35,000 - 70,000)
- Civil Servant (£45,000 - 55,000)
- Economist (£47,000 - £70,000)
- Education (£33,000 - 49,000)
- Journalism (£30,000-55,000)
- Museum Curator (£45,000-57,000)
- Policy Advisor/Officer (£28,000-44,000)
- Solicitor (Lawyer) (£58,000-65,000)

### Assessment

All assessment is by terminal exam at the end of Year 11. Exams are essay based, and involve assessing knowledge, understanding and ability to work with sources and interpretations and usually have between 3 or 6 questions. The weighting of each unit is as follows:

- Medicine - 30% (Paper 1)
- Early Elizabethan England - 20% (Paper 2)
- Superpowers and the Cold War - 20% (Paper 2)
- Germany 1918-1939 - 30% (Paper 3)

## Hospitality and Catering

**Qualification type: VCert**

**Exam Board: WJEC**

### Course Overview

The WJEC VCert in Hospitality and Catering is a vocational qualification designed to give students practical and theoretical knowledge of the hospitality industry. It covers topics such as food preparation, health and safety, nutrition, and customer service. The course includes both written assessments and practical tasks, helping students develop skills for further study or careers in catering and hospitality.

### How is the course assessed?

#### Unit 1:

- 40% of the course
- 80 minute written exam in year 11
- Theory covers:
  - 1.1 Hospitality and catering provision
  - 1.2 How hospitality and catering providers operate
  - 1.3 Health and safety in hospitality and catering
  - 1.4 Food safety in hospitality and catering

#### Unit 2:

- 60% of the course. Internal assessment of cooking skills and accompanying PowerPoint
- Written PowerPoint covering
  - 2.1 The importance of nutrition
  - 2.2 Menu planning
  - 2.3 The skills and techniques of preparation, cooking and presentation of dishes
  - 2.4 Evaluating cooking skills
- Preparing and cooking 2 dishes with accompaniments

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding from across the specification.

AO2: Apply skills (including practical skills), knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks.

AO3: Analyse and evaluate information, making reasoned judgements and presenting conclusions.

The table below shows the weighting of each assessment objective for each unit and for the qualification as a whole

	AO1	AO2	AO3	Total
Unit 1	17%	14%	9%	40%
Unit 2	8%	36%	16%	60%
Overall weighting	25%	50%	25%	100%

## Music

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: Edexcel**

The GCSE Music course aims to introduce you to a wide variety of musical styles. It encourages practical music making and allows you to develop your skills in the areas of performing, composing and listening. You will increase your knowledge about music you are interested in and will learn about many new styles of music from different times and different countries.

<b>Course area</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Additional information</b>
<b>Performing</b>	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Solo Performance</b> You will perform one piece of music on your chosen instrument.</li><li>● <b>Ensemble Performance</b> You will perform one piece of music with a group.</li></ul>	For the performing part of the course you can play any musical instrument, including keyboard, or you can sing. You will need to start lessons on an instrument as soon as possible if you are not already having lessons, as this will help you to achieve the best grades for your performances. You must perform for a minimum of 4 minutes in total.  <b><i>You must be prepared to commit to practising on your instrument at home for at least 1 and a half hours per week.</i></b>
<b>Composing</b>	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Compositions 1 and 2</b> You will compose two pieces of music in different styles. These can be instrumental pieces or songs.</li></ul>	You will be asked to write your own music for this part of the course and you will use the computers to produce, record and print your compositions.
<b>Listening and appraising</b>	40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Listening paper</b> – This is a 1 ¼ hour written exam in which you will answer questions about the 8 set works that you have studied.</li></ul>	This is the only written part of the exam. You will listen to pieces of music that you have studied and will answer questions about what you are hearing.

The 8 set works that you will study are:

- **Bach:** Brandenburg Concerto No. 5
- **Beethoven:** Piano Sonata No. 8
- **Purcell:** 'Music for a While'
- **Freddie Mercury:** 'Killer Queen'
- **Stephen Schwartz:** 'Defying Gravity' from 'Wicked'
- **John Williams:** 'Main Title' from Star Wars
- **Afro Celt Sound System:** 'Release'
- **'Samba Em Preludio':** performed by Esperanza Spalding

As part of the course you will attend concerts and workshops to help you to learn more about the musical genres that we study.

**Physical Education**  
**Qualification type: VCERT**  
**Exam Board: NCFE**

Throughout Key Stage 4 all students have the opportunity to complete 1 hour a week of CORE Physical Education. This involves working in competitive situations with the hope that students foster a love for sport that will last a lifetime.

Students choosing VCERT PE will have a further two hours where they will develop their theoretical knowledge. Within the two hours there is one classroom based theory and one practical lesson that supports what is taught in the classroom. In Year 10 students develop their understanding of the theory topics within unit 1 and 2 which is assessed as a test at the end of year 11. In Year 11 students complete a synoptic project which is based around applying what was learnt within these two units.

**Unit 1** - Introduction to body systems and principles of training in health and fitness.

1. Skeletal system
2. Muscular system
3. Respiratory system
4. Cardiovascular system
5. Components of Fitness

**Unit 2** - Preparing and planning for health and fitness.

1. Lifestyle and Diet
2. Fitness Testing
3. Health and Fitness Analysis
4. Training Programmes

<b>V-CERT Health &amp; Fitness</b>	
<b>Theory Exam</b>  <b>Grade weighting: 40%</b>  1 x 1hr 30 minute paper	<b>Synoptic Project</b>  <b>Grade weighting: 60%</b>  22 hours project-based controlled assessment surrounding health and fitness.

## Religious Studies

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: AQA A**

Religious Studies at KS4 explores a huge range of topics and ideas such as, why do we believe what we do and why does religion make the headlines? This course helps students articulate reasoned responses to significant world and ethical issues.

The GCSE in RS is the AQA A Religious Studies course. This covers topics such as religious attitudes towards crime, abortion, war, matters of life and poverty. Students will study a number of different religious attitudes to these topics as well as developing their skills in debate and discussion, looking at recent cases in the news and learning to question beliefs and ideas.

Students are encouraged to think critically, see both sides of the story and evaluate different responses to controversial ethical questions. Results in RS are consistently high year in year out and students of all abilities achieve success.

A subject which challenges you to think for yourself and equips you with vital skills for a multitude of future professions and further study.

### Examination Paper

Students will undertake two examinations at the end of Year 11.

#### **Subject content**

**Component 1:** The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices of two religions: Christianity and Islam.

#### **How it's assessed**

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 6 marks for Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))
- 50% of GCSE

**Component 2:** Thematic studies

Four religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes:

- Theme A: Relationships and families.
  - **Theme B: Religion and life.**
  - **Theme C: The existence of God and revelation.**
  - **Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.**
  - **Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.**
  - Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice.
- (We study the ones in bold)

#### **How it's assessed**

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 3 marks for Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))
- 50% of GCSE

## Separate Sciences

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: AQA**

Throughout KS4 all students have six hours a week of Science lessons. This involves studying concepts in biology, chemistry and physics and will lead to 2 GCSEs in Combined Science (Trilogy). This is awarded 2 linked grades.

Students have the opportunity to study for a separate GCSE in each of the three sciences. This would mean students would get separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. If students choose this option they would get an additional two hours of science lessons each week in year 10 and an extra 3 hours a week in year 11.

### Course content

The Separate Science course is designed to run alongside the Combined Science course. You will study concepts from all 3 sciences in more depth. Some topics are exclusive to the separate science courses. These are found in the table below:

<b><u>Biology</u></b>	<b><u>Chemistry</u></b>	<b><u>Physics</u></b>
Monoclonal antibodies Aseptic technique and bacterial growth Plant disease and defences The brain The kidney The eye Plant hormones DNA structure Cloning Theory of evolution Speciation Mendel's work in understanding genetics Pyramids of numbers and biomass. Food security and sustainability.	Transition metals Particulates Titrations Titration calculations Atom economy Percentage yield Fuel cells and batteries Alkenes, alcohols and carboxylic acids Polymerisation Identification of ions (e.g flame tests) Alloys Ceramics The Haber process	Static Electricity Pressure in gases Nuclear fission and fusion Moments, levers and gears Pressure in fluids Reflection of waves Sound waves Waves for detection and exploration Lenses Black body radiation Induced potential, transformers and The National Grid Space physics

### Assessment

Students can take a Higher tier paper (grades 9-4) or Foundation tier paper (grades 5-1) in each of the separate sciences. The tier does not need to be the same for each Science.

Each separate science GCSE is assessed by 2 exam papers, each with equal weighting. These papers are 1 hour 45 minutes long.

## **Sociology**

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: AQA**

### **What is Sociology?**

Sociology is a social science, which involves the study of human social life, groups and societies in a systematic way. Sociologists investigate and explain the social world and our behaviour in it and the ways in which society influences us and shapes our daily lives.

### **Why study Sociology?**

Sociology prepares students for a lifetime of change, developing their appreciation of diversity, writing and study skills, as well as a knowledge base about human behaviour, social organisation, and culture. If you are the type who doesn't necessarily follow the crowd (but are fascinated by their behaviour), the type who is truly interested in what is going on in the world, then the world of sociology and the subjects found therein should interest if not fascinate you.

The field helps us look more objectively at the society in which we live. It directs attention to how the parts of society fit together as well as the causes and consequences of social change and it helps us better understand ourselves and the motivations of others around us.

### **What topics are studied?**

In this course, you will come across many controversial social issues some of which include: the quality of parenting, reform of the education system, the causes of teenage crime and the role of the media in deviancy amplification. Below are the units that will be studied. There are two exam papers, both are 1 hour 45 minutes.

1. The sociological approach
2. Social structures, social processes and social issues
3. Families
4. Education
5. Crime and deviance
6. Social stratification
7. Sociological research methods

### **Career Options**

Sociology is a good general subject. It can be combined comfortably with sciences or with arts subjects. Sociology is particularly useful to those considering a career in business, teaching, journalism, social research or social planning, the police, social care and administration.

## Spanish

**Qualification type: GCSE**

**Exam Board: AQA**

### **Languages improve the quality of your life**

In any environment, speaking a language can open the door to a whole new world. Whether on holiday, meeting people at work, socialising or discovering other cultures, your child's language skills will widen their horizons, create new opportunities and increase their appreciation of what's out there. Not only that – it's likely they'll be paid more too!

### **English is not enough!**

We live in a multilingual world and employers are increasingly aware of the advantages of recruiting people with language skills. It's true that a lot of people speak English, but **most of the world does not**. The public sector needs young people who can communicate with people from other communities. This could be in the army or police force, as a health professional or working for the local council. In the private sector there is a constant need for language skills, whether it is for communicating with colleagues, customers, partners or owners.

### **Show off your skills with a GCSE in languages.**

Learning a language affords students the opportunity to develop a number of key skills. Students develop confidence in public speaking, become aware of the need for attention to detail and develop the ability to analyse texts from different sources. In addition, students are able to problem solve and think outside of the box, as well as work as part of a team or as an individual.

Whatever your child decides to do, languages will be an advantage.

### **Course details**

The AQA GCSE Spanish course develops students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in Spanish, focusing on practical communication and cultural understanding. The Spanish GCSE specification has been reviewed and now includes clearer instructions, more predictable tasks, and greater focus on language students will find useful – all designed to make the exam more accessible and supportive for all learners.

### **Themes Covered:**

1. **People and Lifestyle** – Personal identity, relationships, daily life.
2. **Popular Culture** – Leisure activities, media, technology.
3. **Communication and the World Around Us** – Travel, environment, global issues.

### **Assessment Overview:**

Students will take four exams at the end of the course, each contributing 25% to the final grade.

- Listening: Comprehension of spoken Spanish, including a dictation task.
- Speaking: Role-play, reading aloud with a short conversation, and a photo card discussion.
- Reading: Understanding written texts and translating from Spanish to English.
- Writing: Responding to prompts and translating from English to Spanish.

Students can be entered for either the Foundation tier (grades 1–5) or Higher tier (grades 4–9), based on their proficiency.