



## GCSE OPTIONS BOOKLET 2026-29

A pupil guide to Key Stage 4 courses at Springfield School



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This is an exciting time to be a Year 8 pupil at Springfield School. Year 8 pupils are able to have some choice over which subjects they choose to study from Year 9 onwards. So that they continue to have a broad and balanced spread of GCSE subjects, they will continue to have to study a range of subjects including English, Mathematics and Science as well as non GCSE areas such as Personal Development Learning (PSHE/Citizenship). However, they will be able to choose subjects, including new ones that they may not have experienced before, that they are interested in studying further.

Learning in Year 9 should feel different for pupils currently in Year 8. Teachers will use Year 9 lessons as a foundation year for the beginning of the formal GCSE programme and may well use some of the lessons towards the summer as a starting point for GCSE study. Year 9 will be an opportunity for pupils to learn more about their chosen subjects in depth and should increase their confidence, knowledge and skills in preparation for GCSE. Parents and pupils, please take the time to study this booklet and its contents before deciding which subjects to choose.

In this booklet you will find:

- General guidelines as to which subjects are compulsory from Year 9 onwards and which are optional
- Subject course outlines for every subject, compulsory or optional



# Compulsory Subjects

**English** - All pupils will study English Language and English Literature which will lead to two GCSEs by the end of Year 11.

## **Mathematics**

**Science** – The majority of pupils will follow a combined Science course which will lead to two GCSEs by the end of Year 11. Some pupils with a particular aptitude for Science will be able to follow three separate Science GCSEs. Pupils will need to speak with their Science teacher to discuss their suitability for this.

**Modern Foreign Language** – The majority of pupils will continue to follow their current language, leading to a full GCSE.

**Humanities** – The majority of pupils will have to choose between either Geography or History or could choose to do both subjects.

**ICT** – As competence in ICT is such an important skill to have in the modern world, all pupils will continue to study the subject and work towards the Pearson Level 1 Digital Functional Skills Qualification.

**PE** – As a healthy lifestyle is important in today's world, all pupils will have core PE lessons. If pupils want to specifically follow a GCSE course in PE, they will have to choose this as one of their options.



# Optional Subjects

## Art, Craft and Design

### Fine Art

(These two subjects are certified as an Art qualification so pupils can only choose **one** of these)

## Design and Technology

(Product Design and Textiles)

(These subjects are certificated as a Design and Technology qualification so pupils can only choose **one** of these)

## Computer Science

## Child Development

## Digital IT (BTEC)

## Drama

## Food Preparation and Nutrition

## Health and Social Care

## Media Studies

## Music

## PE/Sports Studies Level 2

## Religion, Ethics and Philosophy

## Sociology

## Travel and Tourism (BTEC)

In total there are **two** optional subjects pupils can choose.



It is really important that Year 8 pupils think carefully about their choices.

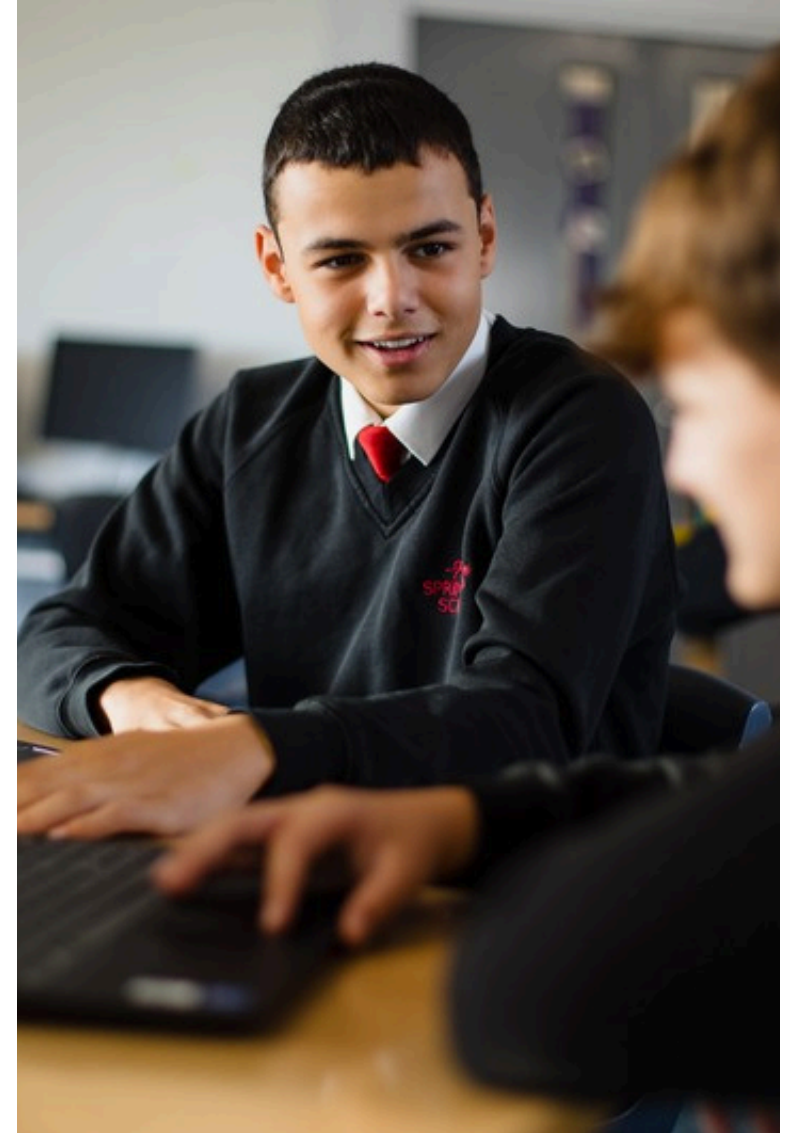
- They should choose subjects that they like, not because their friends are doing it
- They should choose the subject, not the teacher (they might not have that teacher in Year 9)
- They should speak to their teachers to find out more about the subject
- They should think carefully before choosing a subject that they may have had difficulty with in the past. For example, if they have not been very organised in the past to bring in food for Technology, should they choose Food and Nutrition...?

**Careful decision making is important because once pupils have started Year 9 it will be extremely difficult to change options once the timetable is established.**

Look through this booklet, discuss the subjects, think carefully about interests and enthusiasms.

Options choices will be confirmed by the end of June.

Please be aware that we might not be able to meet every pupil's first choice of Options. If little demand for a subject means that we will not be able to timetable that subject, a certain element of re-direction will be necessary. Where this is the case, pupils and parents will be informed as part of the process.



## Background to the subject

GCSE English Language is designed to inspire and motivate pupils, providing appropriate stretch and challenge, whilst ensuring, as far as possible, that the assessment and texts are accessible to the full range of pupils. GCSE English Literature enriches lives and opens doors. Therefore, it is designed for all pupils – accessible and enabling for pupils of all abilities through text choices and questions that provide both access and stretch.

## What will you do?

The courses will enable pupils to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods and texts as well as to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is an ideal opportunity for pupils to develop and secure the range of key skills within both English Language and English Literature. Pupils will be exposed to a wide range of challenging texts from around the world, including the Literary Heritage. Year 9 will act as a foundation year where pupils will experiment with textual analysis and crafting creative writing; analysing how meaning and effects are created in a text. By the end of Year 9 pupils will have a secure foundation on which to build towards the terminal examinations at the end of Year 11.

## How will you be assessed?

In Year 9 you will be assessed with a CAT (Common Assessment Task) which will be completed under timed conditions at the end of each unit of work as well as examinations mid-year and at the end of the year. At the end of Year 11 terminal examinations will make up 100% of the grade as follows:

**English Language:** Paper 1- Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing. Assessed written exam - 1 hour 45 minutes (80 marks; 50% of GCSE). Paper 2 - Presenting a viewpoint.

Assessed: written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes (80 marks; 50% of GCSE).

**English Literature:** Paper 1 - Shakespeare and the 19th century novel assessed written exam - 1 hour 45 minutes (64 marks; 40% of GCSE). Paper 2 - Modern texts and poetry. Assessed written exam – 2 hours 15 minutes (96 marks; 60% of GCSE).



## Background to the subject

Mathematics GCSE is designed to support pupils in developing a confidence and fluency that will provide a foundation for the rest of their learning and working lives.

All pupils are expected to be able to:

- Use and apply standard techniques
- Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically

Solve non-routine problems in mathematical and non-mathematical contexts.

## What will you do?

The Mathematics GCSE curriculum is divided into five key areas:

- Number
- Ratio, Proportion & Rates of Changes
- Algebra
- Geometry & Measures
- Statistics & Probability

These areas are revisited, consolidated and extended each year.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 will be the final year of the three-year curriculum followed in Years 7, 8 and 9. It will continue to build upon and consolidate Years 7 and 8 as well as developing the fundamental skills needed to succeed in Years 10 and 11. Pupils will be expected to make increasing use of online resources in order to independently support their own learning.

## How will you be assessed?

There are three terminal examinations, each lasting an hour and a half, which will be completed at the end of Year 11: Paper 1 - 33.33 % Calculator. Paper 2 - 33.33% Non-Calculator. Paper 3 - 33.33 % Calculator. Pupils will be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier. For the new 9-1 GCSE pupils will be required to memorise more formulae for their examinations. There is also an increased expectation that they will have, and competently use, a scientific calculator.



## Background to the subject / What will you do?

### Separate Sciences

Pupils will be selected for Separate Science GCSEs using continual assessment throughout Year 9. The following criteria will be taken into account:

- Consistent progress towards high expected grades
- Behaviour is consistently judged to be as expected or better
- Homework is consistently judged to be as expected or better
- Pupils demonstrate motivation, interest and a willingness to learn independently

Studying Separate Sciences will result in three GCSE grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These GCSEs will be terminally assessed. Lessons will involve both practical and theory work as well as making links between the topics covered and 'real life'.

### Combined Science (Trilogy)

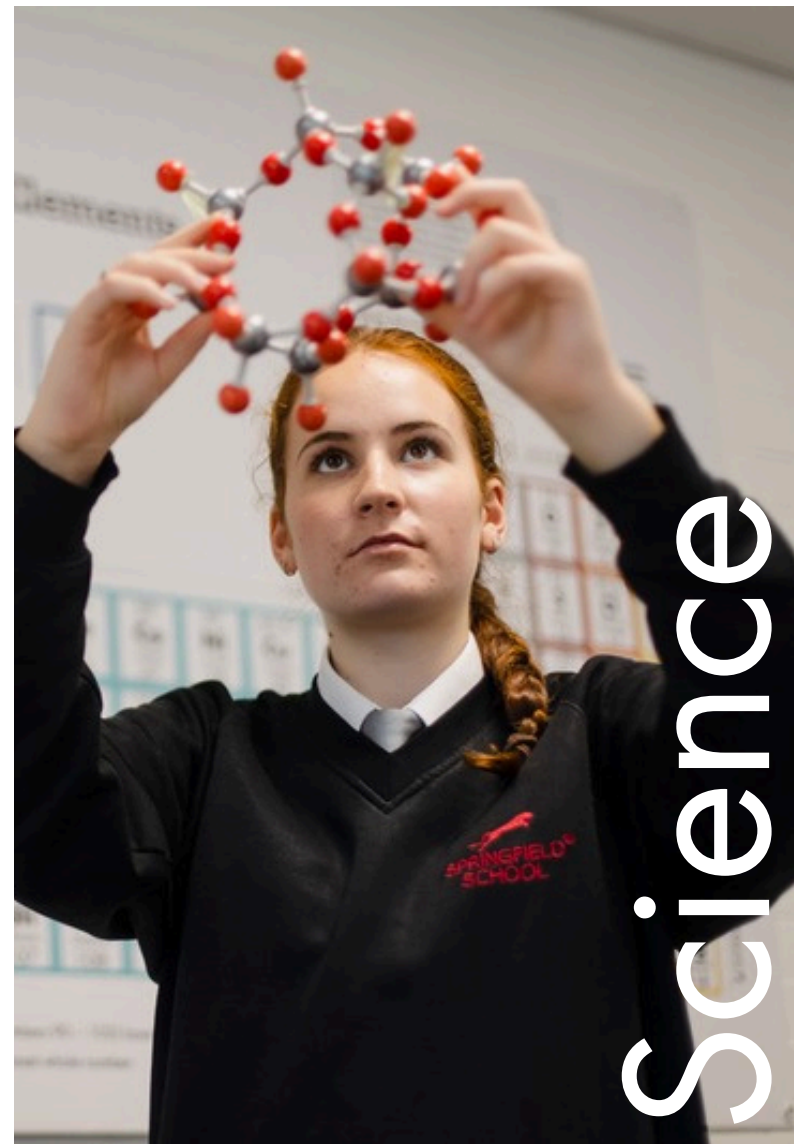
This course will result in two GCSEs at the end of Year 11. The course consists of Biology, Chemistry and Physics units which pupils will study throughout Key Stage 4. Pupils will be expected to develop their practical skills, along with their mathematical and literacy skills, which will all be assessed in the terminal examinations. These skills will be embedded in lessons throughout the Key Stage.

### What will you do in Year 9?

During Year 9 pupils will be taught a range of required practicals which will be examined in the GCSE written papers. They will be taught the key vocabulary, along with the practical methods for these experiments, to allow them to consolidate their skills. All Year 9 pupils will then be taught the Combined Science (Trilogy) course until the end of the summer term, at which point we will make the decision as to whether pupils continue on with the Combined Science (Trilogy) course or take the Separate Science GCSEs.

### How will you be assessed?

Pupils will sit six terminal examinations with equal weighting. Pupils will be tested on their knowledge and understanding as well as skills linked to numeracy, literacy, analysis and evaluation.



## Background to the subject

Pupils develop their language skills in a variety of contexts and gain a broad understanding of the culture of countries and communities where French is spoken. It encourages enjoyment of language learning and the recognition that language skills enable pupils to take their place in a multi-lingual global society.

## What will you do?

This course will enable pupils to develop their ability to write and speak in French and to understand French when it is written down or spoken. It builds on the KS3 study and prepares pupils for further study, e.g. GCSE to AS; AS to A2.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is an ideal opportunity for pupils to acquire some of the skills and cover some of the topics required to succeed at GCSE. By the end of Year 9 pupils will have a broad grasp of tenses, vocabulary and sentence construction that will enable them to communicate in a range of topics, such as the environment, healthy living and family.

## How will you be assessed?

There are four units, each worth 25%:

- 1) Listening
- 2) Speaking
- 3) Reading
- 4) Writing

All four skills will be assessed each half term.



## Background to the subject

Pupils develop their language skills in a variety of contexts and gain a broad understanding of the culture of countries and communities where German is spoken. It encourages enjoyment of language learning and the recognition that language skills enable pupils to take their place in a multi-lingual global society.

## What will you do?

This course will enable pupils to develop their ability to write and speak in German and to understand German when it is written down or spoken. It builds on the KS3 study and prepares pupils for further study, e.g. GCSE to AS; AS to A2.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is an ideal opportunity for pupils to acquire some of the skills and cover some of the topics required to succeed at GCSE. By the end of Year 9 pupils will have a broad grasp of tenses, vocabulary and sentence construction that will enable them to communicate a range of topics, such as the environment, healthy living and family.

## How will you be assessed?

There are four units, each worth 25%:

- 1) Listening
- 2) Speaking
- 3) Reading
- 4) Writing

All four skills will be assessed each half term.



## Background to the subject

GCSE Geography will provide the opportunity for pupils to understand more about the world, the challenges it faces and their place within it. The GCSE course will deepen understanding of geographical processes, illuminate the impact of change and of complex people-environment interactions, highlight the dynamic links and interrelationships between places and environments at different scales, and develop pupils' competence in using a wide range of geographical investigative skills and approaches. Geography enables young people to become globally and environmentally informed and thoughtful, enquiring citizens.

## What will you do?

Develop and extend knowledge of locations, places, environments and processes, and of different scales including global, and of social, political and cultural context. Gain understanding of the interactions between people and environments, change in places and processes over space and time. Apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches appropriately and creatively to real world contexts. This will include fieldwork opportunities both locally and abroad. It will also explore contemporary situations and issues; and develop well-evidenced arguments drawing on their geographical knowledge and understanding.

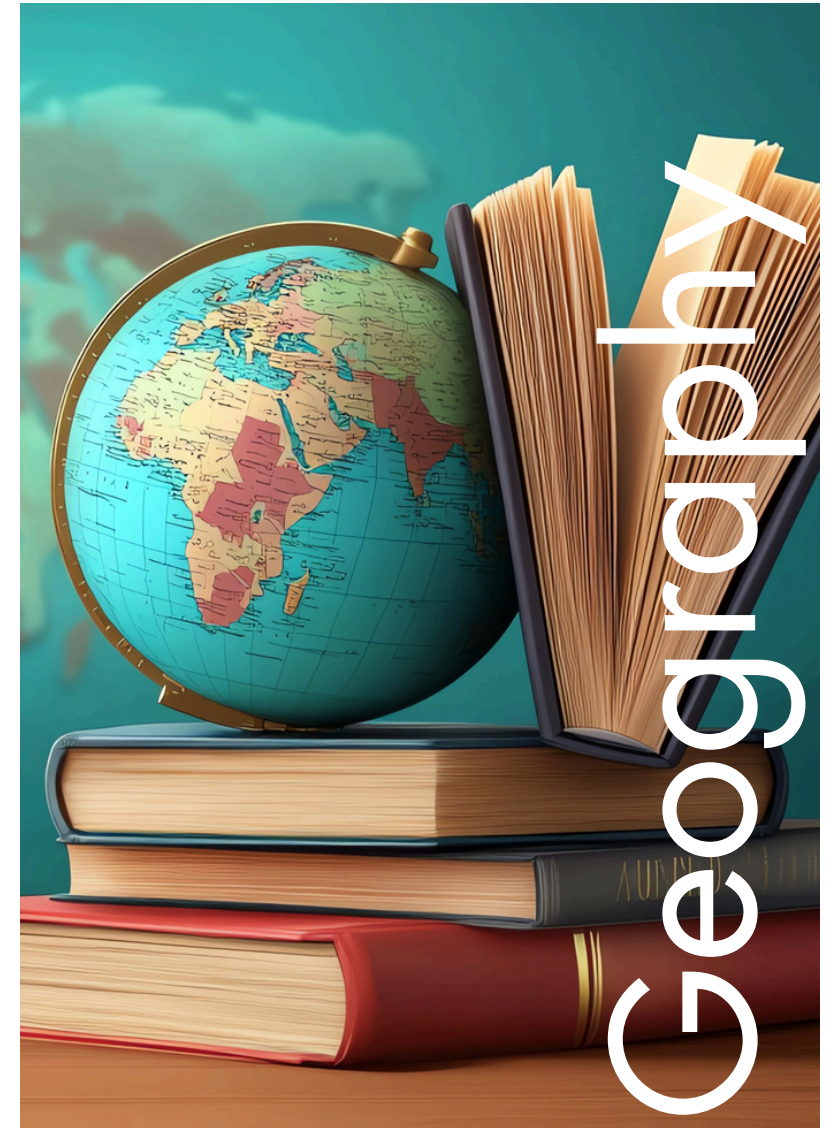
## What will you do in Year 9?

Pupils will be introduced to a range of human and physical Geography topics allowing them to recall their KS3 learning and building the foundations for their final GCSE. By the end of Year 9 pupils will have a range of geographical skills that will equip them to deal with the demanding nature of the GCSE course.

## How will you be assessed?

Pupils will be assessed through three terminal exams:

- Paper 1: Living with the physical environment
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment
- Paper 3: Geographical applications
- Pupils also need to undertake two geographical enquiries outside of the school grounds in order to collect primary data for their fieldwork investigation.



## Background to the subject

Through History at GCSE we investigate the events and mysteries of our past to help us understand our present and the world around us. History is about people – real people whose lives were sometimes exciting, such as the discovery of new medical breakthroughs, and sometimes frightening, like when Hitler increased his discrimination of the Jews in Nazi Germany. Whatever their lives were about, there's a fascinating, and sometimes tragic, story behind them.

## What will you do?

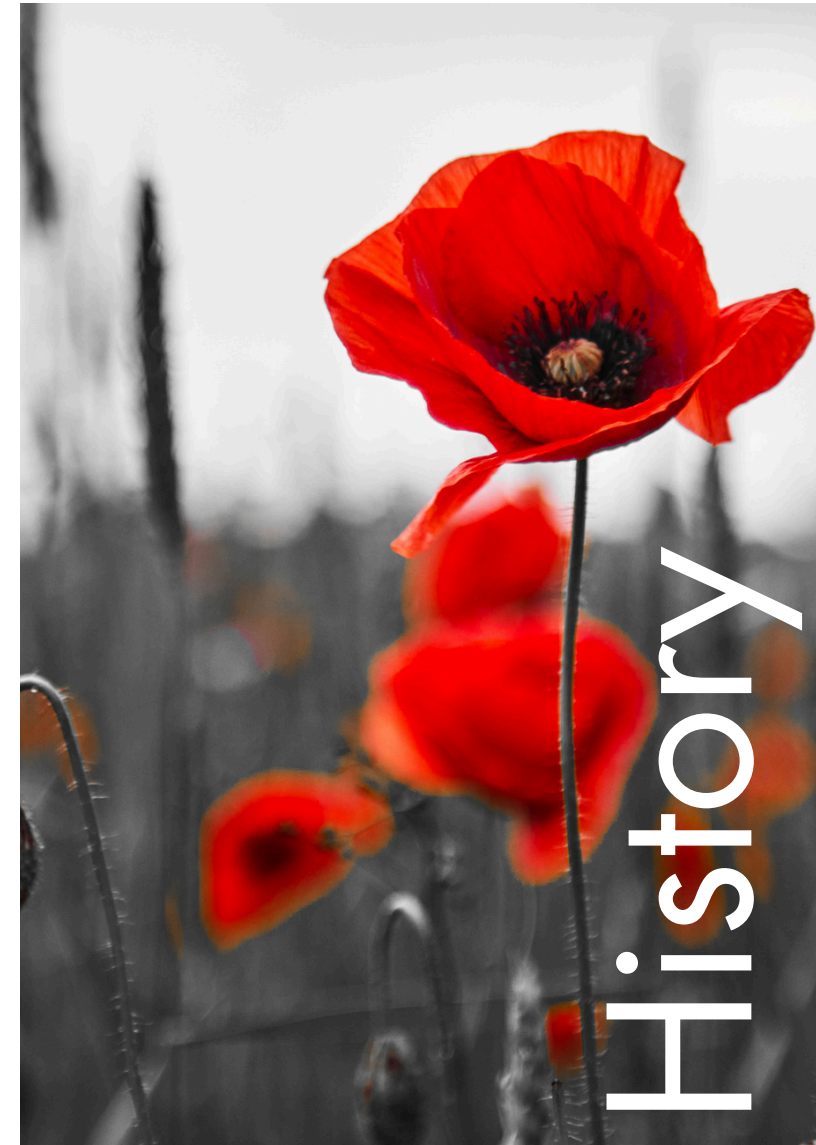
The History GCSE will look at changes through time as well as events in depth across half a century. Through source analysis and enquiry, pupils will develop analytical skills and the ability to look at evidence critically, while finding out about exciting events from our past. Pupils will look at medicine in Britain and how it has changed over time. We will study in-depth the rise and fall of Nazi Germany and the international tensions between the two World Wars, as well as the impact of the Norman invasion in 1066.

## What will you do in Year 9?

During Year 9 you will study the first part of all four AQA GCSE History topics. Our curriculum takes an interleaving approach which means you get a taste of all four GCSE topics before the end of the summer term.

## How will you be assessed?

The History GCSE will be assessed through two exams at the end of Year 11.



## Background to the Subject

Art, Craft and Design is the path for the explorer. This is a multidisciplinary course designed for students who want variety. Instead of focusing only on drawing, you will work across different "zones", such as Photography, 3D design, textiles, or graphic communication. It is perfect for creative "all-rounders" who enjoy making and building as much as they enjoy sketching.

## What will you do?

In this course, you are a designer as well as an artist. You will work with a "buffet" of materials to find your strengths.

- Photography: Learning how to use light to take photographs within the classroom
- Mixed Media: Combining different materials like fabric, paper, and paint.
- 3D Design: Working with card construction, wire, or clay to build structures.
- Graphic Communication: Exploring how imagery and typography work together.
- Surface Pattern: Designing prints that could be used for fashion or interiors.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 focuses on "The Design Process" - taking an idea from photography to sketching to mixed media, to a physical object.

- Term 1: The Digital Lens and Drawing Foundations - Learning to take photos and develop artwork using the formal elements - sketching, printing and colour work.
- Term 2: Media Fusion - In this term, you will "break the rules" by layering your photography with physical materials, collage, drawing and mixed media.
- Term 3: From Concept to Outcome - For your final project you will take your best designs from the year and transform them into a unique outcome—this could be a 3D sculptural form, a bespoke artist's book, or a decorative wall piece that showcases your mastery of materials.

## How will you be assessed?

- Component 1 (Portfolio): 60% – You must show work from two or more different areas (e.g., a sculpture project and a photography project).
- Component 2 (Externally Set Assignment): 40% – A creative challenge set by the exam board, culminating in a 10-hour supervised practical exam where you bring your ideas to life.

## FAQ - Choosing between Fine Art and Art, Craft and Design

**Q:** I'm not the best at drawing, but I have great ideas. Can I still do Art? **A:** Absolutely. Art, Craft and Design is perfect for you. It allows you to use Photography and digital tools at the start of a project to gather ideas and develop compositions. You can then "make" your project using 3D textures, textiles, or graphic layouts rather than just traditional drawing.

**Q:** Can I use a camera in both courses? **A:** Yes, but in different ways. In Fine Art, photos are usually just a reference for a painting. In Art, Craft and Design, your photography can be a major part of your portfolio, where you edit and combine photos with other materials to create "mixed media" art.

**Q:** Is there a cost for these courses? **A:** To ensure everyone has access to high-quality resources, there is a one-off payment of £20 that covers all three years (Years 9, 10, and 11).



## OCR Level 1 or 2 Cambridge National Certificate

### Background to the subject

The certificate is for pupils who wish to develop knowledge and practical skills in child development. It is designed with practical and theoretical elements which will prepare pupils for further qualifications in Child Care, Health and Social Care, Psychology, Sociology and Biology.

### The Course

All pupils will study three main topic areas:

- Health and well-being for child development
- Understand the equipment and nutritional needs of children from birth to five years
- Understand the development norms of a child from birth to five years.

### What will you do?

Pupils will cover topics such as reproduction, parental responsibility, ante-natal care, birth, post natal provision conditions for development, child illness, child safety, nutrition and hygiene.

Pupils will also be given the opportunity to investigate feeding solutions, comparing these to nutritional requirements and evaluating the outcomes. Pupils will also observe development norms in children up to the age of five. This will include researching, planning and carrying out activities with a child.

### How will you be assessed?

- Examination
- Two Centre Based units with practical task based assessment opportunities.
- Final Grade is 60% Controlled Assessment (as above) and one terminal examination 40%



## Background to the subject

Computer Science was introduced to schools as it was recognised that there was a real shortage of skilled people in this fast-developing area. This subject is not about utilising word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software in various contexts – these skills are developed in the ICT Functional Skills course that every pupil undertakes in their core ICT lessons. Computer Science is the theory behind Computing and includes designing, writing, testing and debugging source code. It is excellent preparation for higher study and employment in Computer Science. Even if this is not a pupil's final career choice, this subject will develop those critical thinking, analytic and problem-solving skills that can be applied to technical problem in fields such as engineering, financial resource management, science and medicine. Computer Science is a demanding option generally most accessible to pupils who achieve well in Maths and/or Science and to those whose interest in programming reaches beyond the classroom.

## What will you do?

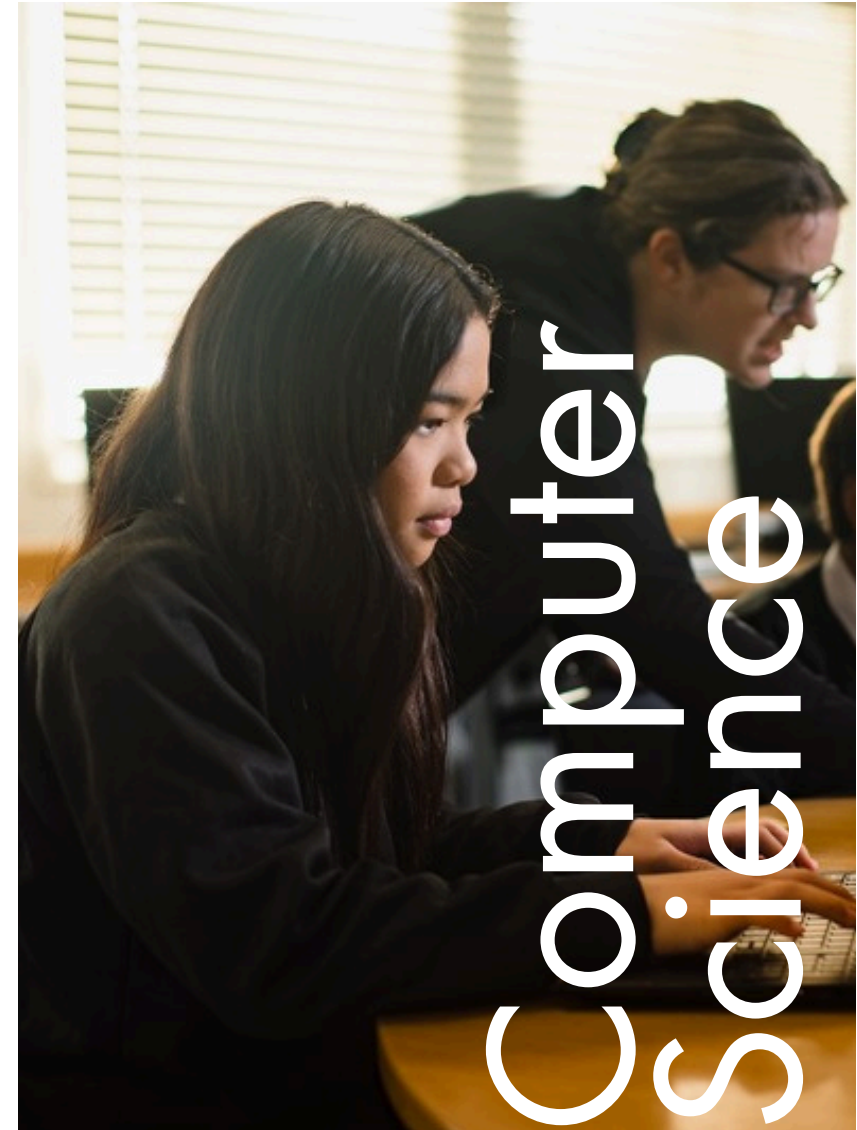
Pupils study systems architecture, memory, storage, wired and wireless networks, system security, system software, ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns and programming techniques

## What will you do in Year 9?

In Year 9 pupils will study aspects of the core units including computational thinking and programming skills (using Python) as well as units covering hardware, binary and networks that will prepare pupils for both their written theory exam and the practical programming exam at the end of Year 11.

## How will you be assessed?

There are 2 units - Paper 1: Principles of Computer Science (Written 1.5 hours): 50%  
Paper 2: Application of Computational Thinking (Practical 2 hours): 50%



## Background to the subject

The Design and Technology GCSE is a course that explores how the world we live in has been designed and made. The course is designed to foster awareness of the need to consider sustainability and the environmental impact of their designing. Design and Technology GCSE will encourage pupils to investigate all areas of Design and Technology, from traditional skills through to the most modern manufacturing techniques. Studies are completed into modern product designers like James Dyson, Ross Lovegrove, Philippe Starck and Jonny Ive.

## What will you do?

Pupils will undertake a variety of design and make tasks across the course. They will explore key concepts; from the initial design brief through to the manufacture of different products like lasercut memphis jewellery, bauhaus bird boxes, LED lighting and upcycled products. There is the opportunity to specialise in areas that are more suited to individual needs through the opportunity to discover the use of a range of materials from wood and plastic alongside our own CAD/CAM capabilities that include laser cutting and 3D Printing.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is an ideal opportunity for pupils to acquire materials knowledge and design skills ready for the rigours of Year 10 and 11.

There will be a minimum of 3 different projects to complete across the year that will build upon the work pupils have already studied in previous years.

## How will you be assessed?

There is one Controlled Assessment (50%). The Controlled Assessment is completed in Year 11. A choice of 3 design briefs are set by the Exam Board allowing pupils the choice of which area they wish to specialise in for their final project. The terminal examination is 50% - there will be one examination of two hours in the summer term of Year 11 featuring a range of questions that are set by the Exam Board. SECTION A: Design and Technology core skills and SECTION B: choice of materials.



## Background to the subject

The Design and Technology GCSE is a course that studies a range of practical and theoretical elements. The course is designed to allow pupils to generate creative ideas and modify technical techniques within a practical environment. There is an emphasis on how to consider sustainable design and the environmental impact of the practical choices made. Pupils are encouraged to study both modern and traditional Textile and Fashion works from designers such as Vivienne Westwood, Stella Jean, Kate Jenkins and Carolyn Saxby.

## What will you do?

Pupils will undertake a variety of contemporary and traditional aspects of designing and making. Working to set briefs they will modify and develop their ideas innovatively. Throughout Year 9 pupils will explore textiles creatively developing their inner style in preparation for their Controlled Assessment period at GCSE.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is an ideal opportunity for pupils to acquire both the practical and theoretical knowledge, understanding and skill set regarding Textiles and its application within Design and Technology. There will be a minimum of 3 different projects to complete across the year that will build upon the work pupils have already studied in Year 7 and 8. Projects include Construction and Decoration Skills, Two Piece Garment and an Individual Design Themed Product. These projects will provide a smooth transition from KS3 to GCSE, enabling pupils to develop a wide range of artistic and technical skills prior to beginning Year 10 and 11.

## How will you be assessed?

**Design Portfolio: 50%** - the Controlled Assessment is completed in Year 11. A choice of design briefs are set by the Exam Board, allowing pupils the opportunity to select one specific design brief theme. Pupils can make products that vary from clothing and accessories to homeware.

**Terminal Examination: 50%** - there will be one 2 hour written exam in the summer term of Year 11. The written exam features a broad range of questions that are set by the Exam Board. The paper is split into two subdivisions: Section A: Design and Technology and Section B : a choice of questions including Textiles



## Background to the subject

BTEC DIT is a Level 2 vocational qualification. This course offers a practical introduction to life and work in the digital sector. The qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE. Digital skills span all industries, and almost all jobs in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy. The UK tech industry as a whole employs over 2.93 million people and has seen 40% growth between 2017-2019. The UK has positioned itself to be the 'digital capital of Europe' as it continues to invest billions every year in digital skills and commerce. The modern world expects digital skills to be as important as English and maths. Having both technical skills and business understanding is the key to success.

## What will you do?

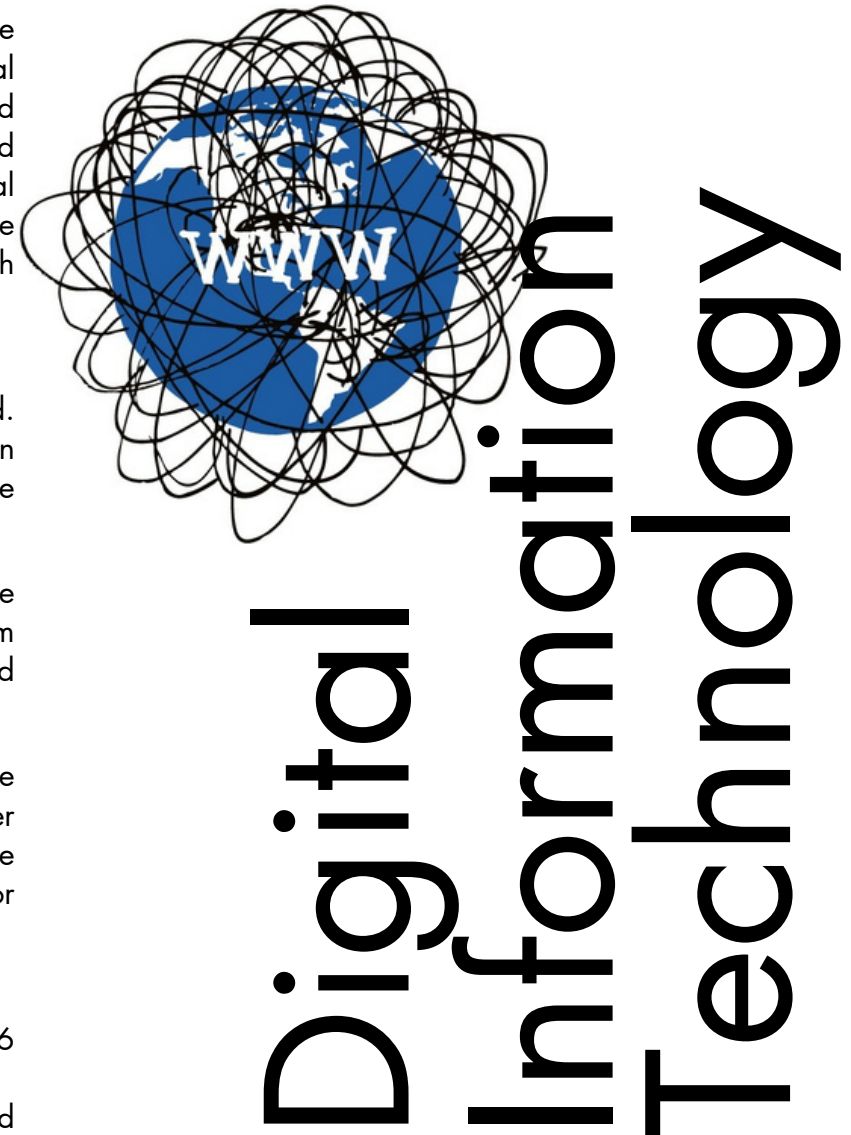
In Year 9 we will explore project planning methodologies that are used in the working world. Pupils will learn about user interface design processes and learn how to develop their own interfaces for specific scenarios. Pupils will undertake a non-examined assessment task in the Spring and/or the Summer terms.

In Year 10 pupils will explore data collection methodologies, and learn how data can be presented and manipulated. Pupils will develop a set of core skills using spreadsheets to perform calculations and present data in a meaningful way. Pupils will undertake a non-examined assessment in the Spring and/or Summer terms.

In Year 11 pupils will explore how the developments in technology over recent years have enabled modern organisations to communicate and collaborate more effectively than ever before. There are also elements of cyber security and the wider impact of digital systems on the world around us. Pupils will complete a written exam for this component in the Spring and/or Summer terms.

## How will you be assessed?

- Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques: 6 hour non-examined assessment carried out in lessons in Year 9
- Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data: 6 hour non-examined assessment carried out in lessons in Year 10
- Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices: 1.5 hour written examination taken in Year 11.



## Background to the subject

Drama GCSE is a course that encourages pupils to develop a personal interest in why drama matters and be inspired, moved and changed. Whilst considering and exploring the impact of social, historical and cultural influences on drama texts and activities, pupils will work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts generating, developing and communicating ideas. Drama GCSE allows pupils to develop a basis for their future roles as active citizens in employment and society in general, as well as for the possible further study of drama.

## What will you do?

The course consists of three components. It is through practical engagement that understanding is enriched. Pupils explore a theme, topic or stimuli and come to appreciate how the dramatic medium and strategies can be used to create drama form and communicate meaning pupils memorise and perform extracts from a published full-length play to demonstrate their ability to analysis and interpret a script, and realise this in performance.

Pupils will also study a complete and substantial play text, whilst developing performance skills and rehearsal techniques. The course requires pupils to experience live theatre as a member of the audience.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 provides lots of opportunities to develop and practise performing and devising techniques by creating drama based on a range of different stimuli. Pupils explore contrasting theatre practitioners giving them a broad knowledge and experience of styles to draw on when creating their own drama. Pupils also look at how to realise scripted plays in performance as well as studying a play in depth looking at all aspects of performance including technical and design elements such as lighting and costume.

## How will you be assessed?

**Component 1:** Devising – 40% - 60 marks internally assessed and externally moderated. There are 2 parts to the assessment: A portfolio covering the creating and developing process and analysis and evaluation of the process and a devised performance.

**Component 2:** Performance from text – 20% - 48 marks externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

**Component 3:** Theatre Makers in Practice – 40% - 60 marks. Examination – 45 marks – 6 questions based on an extract from a chosen performance text. 15 marks – Live theatre evaluation – notes can be taken into examination.



## Background to the Subject

Fine Art is the path for the specialist. If you love the feeling of a pencil in your hand or the texture of paint on a canvas, this is the course for you. Fine Art focuses on creating expressive, personal work that explores traditional and contemporary techniques. It is about slowing down, looking closely at the world, and mastering the skills of a studio artist.

## What will you do?

You will explore a wide range of "wet" and "dry" media. You won't just "draw"; you will learn the secrets of professional artists.

- Drawing & Painting: Master tonal shading, oil pastels, acrylics, and watercolors.
- Printmaking: Explore lino cutting, mono-printing, and poly-printing.
- Sculpture: Build 3D forms using clay, papier-mâché and mixed media.
- Analysis: Study the work of famous artists to inspire your own original ideas.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is your "Foundation Year." You will build a toolkit of skills and techniques based around the mark scheme on the theme of Natural Forms.

- Term 1: The Formal Elements - Advanced workshops in line, tone, color, and texture.
- Term 2: Still life - A deep dive into realism and expressive drawing.
- Term 3: Compositions - Learn how to arrange your ideas and focal points to create balanced foregrounds and develop backgrounds for final pieces.

## How will you be assessed?

- Component 1 (Portfolio): 60% – A collection of your best work created in class and for homework from year 9 to year 11.
- Component 2 (Externally Set Assignment): 40% – A project based on a theme set by AQA, finishing with a 10-hour supervised practical exam to create your final piece.

## FAQ - Choosing between Fine Art and Art, Craft and Design

**Q:** I love drawing and can spend hours on one painting. Which should I choose? **A:** Fine Art is your best match. This course is designed for "dedicated drawers and painters." It rewards students who want to master traditional techniques and spend time refining a single, high-quality canvas or sketch.

**Q:** Can I use a camera in both courses? **A:** Yes, but in different ways. In Fine Art, photos are usually just a reference for a painting. In Art, Craft & Design, your photography can be a major part of your portfolio, where you edit and combine photos with other materials to create "mixed media" art.

**Q:** Is there a cost for these courses? **A:** To ensure everyone has access to high-quality resources, there is a one-off payment of £20 that covers all three years (Years 9, 10, and 11).



## Background to the subject

The Food and Nutrition GCSE is a course that explores various practical and theoretical elements within the food industry. The course is designed to allow pupils to generate and classify technical knowledge within a practical environment, whilst exploring the science and reasoning behind it. Pupils are encouraged to recognise the importance of sustainable living, meal preparation and the need for a healthy lifestyle. This structure will allow pupils to perfect their technical knowledge throughout.

## What will you do?

Pupils will undertake a variety of practical across the course in preparation for the Controlled Assessment tasks. Pupils will work to set briefs and modify and justify their own ideas. Through the exploration period pupils will find their inner style and structure this ready for the Controlled Assessment period.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is an ideal opportunity for pupils to work to acquire variety of skills such as technical knowledge and understanding, decision making skills and problem solving capabilities, all ready for the technical aspect of Year 10 and 11. Pupils will explore technical skills such as bread and pastry making, the handling and preparation of high risk foods such as meat and fish and using and preparing specialist sauces. There will be a strong emphasis on the nutritional content of the dishes conducted through trial and experimentation with ingredients. These will be recorded and analysed throughout the course in preparation for the practical Controlled Assessments.

## How will you be assessed?

There are 2 Controlled Assessments: Task 1 Practical (Year 11) - 15% and Task 2 Practical (Year 11) - 35%. For the practical Controlled Assessment a set brief is chosen by the Exam Board. The Controlled Assessment tasks allow pupils to develop their technical skills, menu planning and nutritional analysis to a high standard. The terminal Examination makes up 50% of the qualification. There will be one examination of 1 hour 45 minutes in the summer term of Year 11 featuring a range of questions. Revision areas include food science, health and nutrition, food safety and food preparation. These questions are set by the Exam Board and revised thoroughly within school and at home.





## Background to the subject

Media Studies GCSE is a course that analyses a wide variety of media products, the ways they are made, and how they represent the world around us. Media is increasingly part of everyday life, from scrolling through social media to the newspapers and their biases. Media Studies GCSE aims to critically look at all forms of media, considering how and why they are made, and how they reflect the personal beliefs and values of the people that make them. Throughout the course you will study a wide range of media products including newspapers, magazines, video games, radio, newspapers, film marketing and television.

## What will you do?

You will learn key media concepts such as media language, audiences, and representations, as well as how some of the industries operate behind the scenes. There is also a practical element, putting the theory in practice to create your own media products using digital design software. This builds into the non-examination assessment part of the course, which allows you to use your creativity.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Year 9 is a foundational year allowing you to learn the key skills and concepts in Media Studies. As it is a new subject, you will experiment with a large range of different media products, understanding their conventions and how they are made. Year 9 also features a large creative element, learning how to use digital design software.

## How will you be assessed?

- One NEA (Non-Exam Assessment) during the course, choosing from 2 media forms to create. 30% of final grade
- Two exams at the end of year 11, one worth 30%, one worth 40%
- Exams are based on knowledge of the set products studied in years 10 and 11
- The set products are dictated by the EDUQAS exam board.

**BREAKING NEWS!**

June, 25 2025

### High-Speed Train Derailment Causes Multiple Casualties

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## Background to the subject

The GCSE Music course involves practical ways to develop a deeper understanding of how different styles of music are created and performed. As well as being a highly enjoyable subject, taking the GCSE Music course can lead to further musical study at college and beyond. It is equally useful to future career pathways leading to employment in many industries and professions. Pupils develop broader life skills and attributes, including critical, creative thinking, artistic awareness, analytical and problem solving skills, cultural understanding, self-discipline, resilience and self-confidence.

## What will you do?

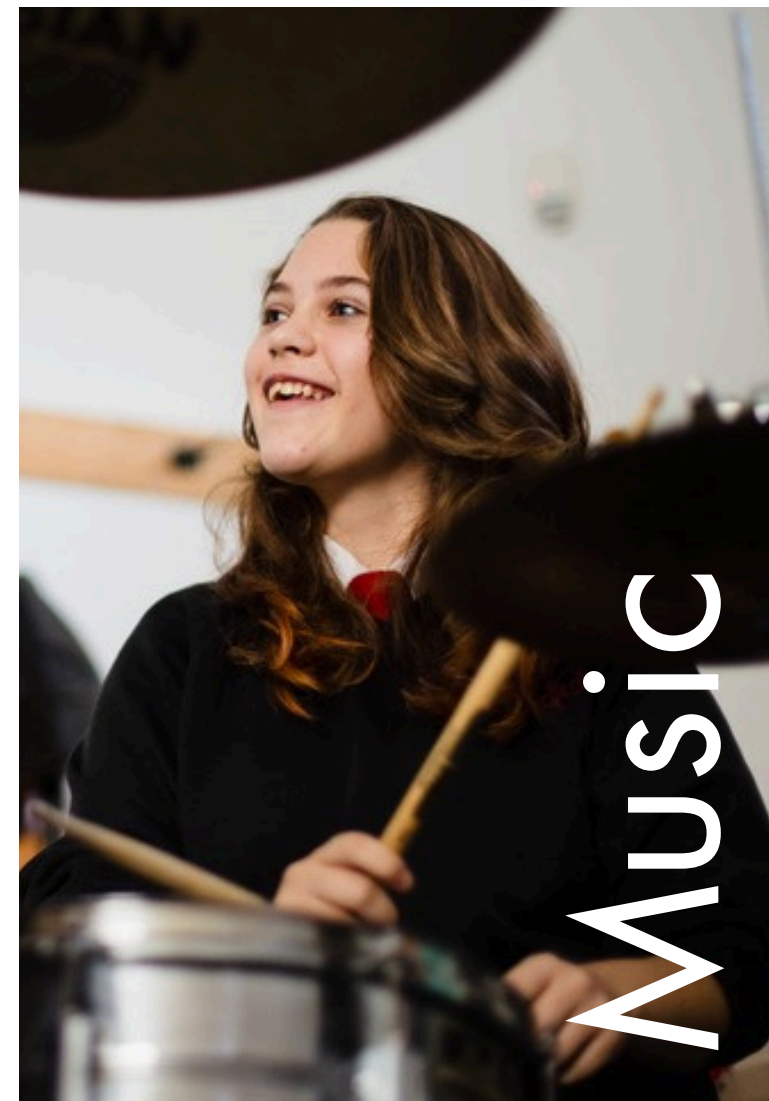
Pupils will develop musical skills in performing, composing and listening. Pupils perform individually and as part of a group, rehearsing and refining performances on their chosen instrument or voice, to develop technical control, expression, communication and interpretation in their playing or singing. Pupils will learn skills required by a composer by exploring a range of compositional starting points and different techniques for developing ideas into completed pieces. Pupils can use music software to aid the composing process. Listening to a diverse variety of music helps pupils learn how to identify the features they hear. There is a continued focus on how elements of music are used for different purposes. The listening content includes pieces from different classical periods, film music and pop music.

## What will you do in Year 9?

Pupils practise, explore and develop their own performing, composing and listening skills, building upon previous musical experiences and become more independent in their approach to creating music. As GCSE performance assessment is related to music grade exam standards, it is highly recommended that pupils undertake a form of extra curricular tuition in an instrument or voice (this can sometimes be arranged through the school). However, pupils do not need to have taken music grade exams to do this course. A willingness to play (or sing) and practise regularly is far more important. Pupils must be keen to develop their listening skills and theory knowledge as these are integrated into practical activities to build their musicianship ready for the written examination.

## How will you be assessed?

There are four practical assessments that are started in Year 10 and developed/completed during Year 11. Solo performance: 15%; Ensemble performance: 15%; Composition 1 (brief set by the exam board): 15% and Composition 2 (free choice): 15%. There is one written examination (40%) at the end of Year 11 which will test listening skills, knowledge and understanding.



## Background to the subject

GCSE PE is a challenging theoretical and practical course. It provides pupils with excellent opportunities to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. The content of the course is designed to furnish pupils with a specific and detailed The course will help to provide a pathway to further high level understanding of sporting performance. education and careers, including those associated with Sport Science. The course is set out with a balance of sporting based practical and classroom based theory sessions to prepare the pupils for their assessments.

## What will you do (Theory)?

Theory lessons will focus on preparing pupils for the two 75 minute terminal exams that include a variety of curriculum topics. These range from understanding the active participant, including the concepts of anatomy, physiology, training principles and performance data analysis, through factors affecting participation such as social groupings, role models and sports psychology, to national and international issues such as media and sport.

## What will you do (Practical)?

Throughout the course, pupils will also be expected to perform in and will be assessed in a range of sporting activities. Their best three sporting grades will then be selected and moderated by the exam board. Very good sporting performance is key and it is expected to be involved in at least two competitive community sports clubs. Compulsory attendance to 1+ school clubs is expected on this course.

## How will you be assessed?

There are two assessment strands - knowledge and understanding for the active participant – 60%. Two terminal exams in Year 11 that together are worth 60% of the overall grade. The exams are based on the range of content that will be covered in the theory lessons. The active participant – 40%. This section comprises of two parts: three practical (performer) based assessments of sporting competency that must be from one of the exam board prescribed sporting activities and an analysis of sporting performance coursework.



## Background to subject

Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (REP) is all about people, beliefs, culture, morality (what is right and wrong) and philosophy (asking big questions). It is the study of the world around us and the views that people hold. It involves debating questions such as - is there life after death, how should we live our best lives, how do we know the difference between right and wrong actions and how did we get here. This subject will suit students who are deep thinkers and have a curious mind. REP encourages students to see 'the bigger picture' or to understand why some topics can be so highly controversial. This understanding and curiosity about the world can open the door (and career path!) to other subjects such as sociology, politics, anthropology, classical studies, geography and history.

## What will pupils learn?

As well as learning facts and gaining knowledge about religious beliefs, teachings and practices, this course encourages students to develop skills of critical thinking, empathy and debate. Pupils will learn how to develop their views on issues including - the death penalty, contraception, euthanasia, pacifism, abortion, animal testing (rights), wealth, violence and freedom of expression. Our lessons take an interactive approach which encourages students to explore and examine different ethical approaches to their world. REP is a literacy based subject, therefore, students will develop extended writing skills in a subject-specific context.

## In Year 9 pupils will study:

- An introduction to philosophy
- Foundational beliefs of two world religions (Christianity and Islam)
- An ethical theme including 'Human Rights and Social Justice'
- An exploration of non-religious views including Humanism
- Introduction to sources of authority

## How will pupils be assessed?

In Year 11 students will sit two exams with AQA exam board:

- Paper 1: Religious Beliefs and Practices (50%)
- Paper 2: Philosophical and Ethical Themes (50%)



# Religion, Ethics and Philosophy

## Background to subject

Sociology is the study of how society is organised and how people experience life. Sociology investigates British culture and sociological structures in which we live and examines why things are the way they are. We look at changes that are happening in society, for example the decisions made by the government affecting educational matters, issues such as inequality and poverty and why some people struggle to have access to opportunities. Debates are examined through sociological structures of class, age, gender and ethnicity. We are interested in exploring how much autonomy people have over their own lives; why do some people commit crimes whilst others do not? Is society unfair because some people have better opportunities than others and how has the modern family evolved?

## What will pupils learn?

Pupils will analyse and evaluate different methods used in sociological investigations. They will explore and debate sociological issues within the four units of Families, Education, Crime and Deviance, and Social Stratification. Pupils will conduct sociological research and develop a range of skills including debate, analysis and evaluation of the social world. Students are encouraged and supported to critically analyse all course material and current affairs. It is therefore beneficial for pupils to possess an interest in their social world and of current social affairs.

## What will pupils do in Year 9?

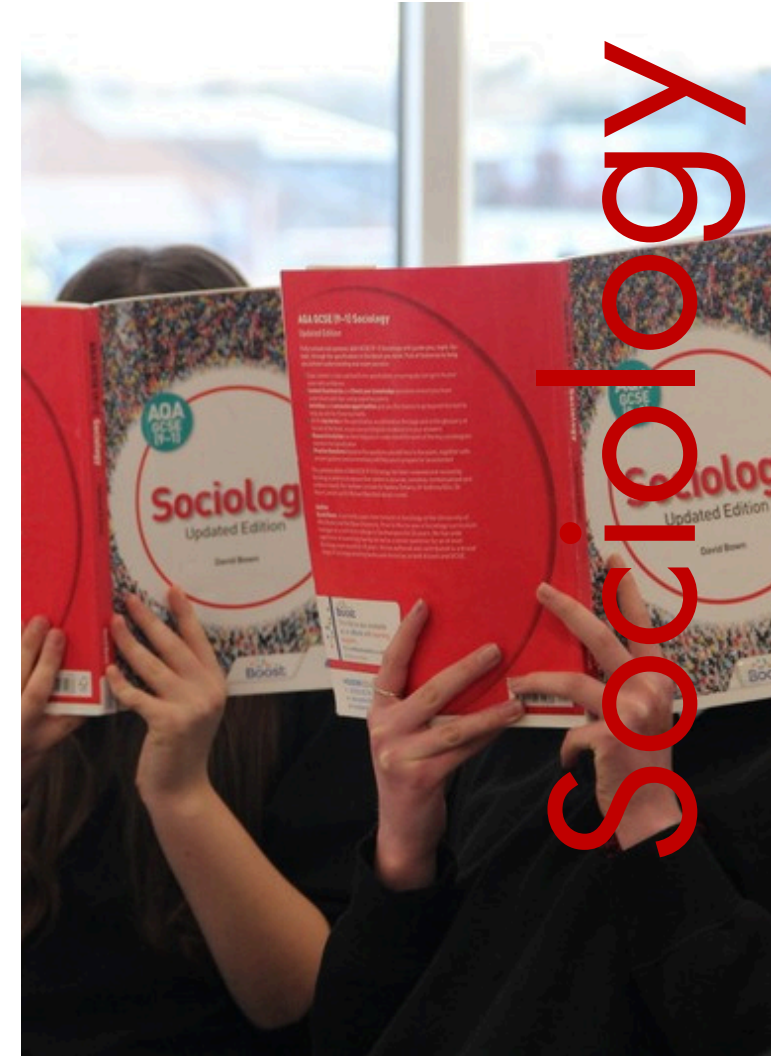
They will study:

- Introduction to sociology
- Sociological Research Methods
- Conduct own research
- The Sociology of Family

## How will pupils be assessed?

In Year 11 students will sit two exams with AQA exam board:

- Paper 1: The Sociology of Families and Education (50%)
- Paper 2: The Sociology of Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification (50%)



## Background to the subject

Undertaking Sports Studies involves studying various aspects of sport, including how contemporary issues and society influence sport and participation. Aspects of how elite sports participation is organised will be explored and how to encourage certain values from its participants. Pupils will also investigate how society is becoming shaped by technology and how technology is heavily involved in modern sport.

## The course

The course is set out with a balance of sporting based practical and classroom based theory sessions to prepare the pupils for their assessments. This includes extended writing (coursework assignments) and preparing for the exam.

## What will you do (theory)?

The theory lessons will focus on preparing pupils for the three units that include a variety of curriculum topics. These include contemporary issues in sport such as role models, issues affecting participation and Outdoor Adventurous Activities. Pupils will also plan session delivery for the leadership in sports component of the course.

## What will you do (practical)?

Throughout the course, pupils will also be expected to perform in one team and one individual sport. They will be assessed in a range of sporting activities. Their two best sporting grades will then be selected. Pupils also have to perform as a sports leader. It is expected that they will be involved in at least one competitive sports club and/or one school sports club. They will have the opportunity to plan, deliver and review safe and effective sporting activity sessions.

## How will you be assessed?

The course requires the completion of three units. The first is 'Contemporary Issues In Sport', externally assessed by OCR-set exam - 40%, and then two non-examined assessed units (NEA). One unit is 'Performance and Leadership In Sports Activities' - non-externally assessed through OCR-set assignment - 40% and 'Outdoor Adventurous Activities' with a practical assessment at an external location included (a small contribution may be necessary) - non-externally assessed through OCR-set assignment - 20%.



## Background to the subject

BTEC Travel & Tourism award is a Level 2 vocational qualification designed for pupils who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts. The qualification will enable pupils to develop transferable skills, such as planning, researching, and making decisions and judgements. The qualification compliments GCSEs by recognising the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes. The qualification will broaden pupils' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them and pupils can go on to study Travel & Tourism and college level. Studying Travel and Tourism at College and/or University can open up opportunities to a wide variety of jobs and help pupils to develop the skills needed in a customer-service based environment. This is an advantage in Portsmouth as Portsmouth is not only a popular tourist destination, but it also has one of the UK's best connected ferry ports, meaning that there are many travel and tourism based jobs locally. Alternatively, studying Travel and Tourism could lead to employment anywhere in the world.

## What will you do?

In Year 9 pupils will explore the aims of travel and tourism organisations, how different organisations work together, types of travel and tourism, the features that make destinations appealing to visitors, and different travel routes.

In Year 10 pupils will explore how organisations use market research to identify travel and tourism trends, customer needs and preferences, the selection of products and services, as well as planning a holiday to meet customer needs and preferences.

In Year 11 pupils will explore factors that may influence global travel and tourism, how travel and tourism organisations and destinations respond to these factors, the potential impacts of tourism on global destinations, how destinations can manage the impacts of tourism, and how destinations can control tourism development to achieve sustainable tourism.

## How will you be assessed?

Component 1: Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations assessed by a non-exam internal assessment.

Component 2: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism assessed by a non-exam internal assessment.

Component 3: Influences on Global Travel and Tourism assessed by a two hour exam paper.

