



BISHOP RAWSTORNE
Church of England Academy



KEY STAGE 4 OPTIONS BOOKLET

FOR STUDENTS CHOOSING OPTIONS IN ACADEMIC YEAR
2023-2024

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is intended to help parents and students plan for the next three years of schooling. It explains the different curriculum pathways our students will follow in order to meet their individual needs, and how different courses will be assessed and organised. The core curriculum that all students will follow is explained and information is provided on the various optional courses that students can choose to study.



Programme of Activities

The information contained in this booklet, along with the careers advice and school and teacher advice that students have received, will help to make informed choices.

KS4 Options Booklet - sent by Friday 19 April 2024

The options booklet will be sent to parents as an attachment and link in the letter which introduces the options programme.

Week commencing 22 April, students will be given an options booklet to take home. Parents will receive confirmation of the blue or yellow pathway that the students will be following in the week of the Parents Options Information Evening.

Parents Options Information Evening - Thursday 2 May 2024

Opportunity to learn more about GCSEs and the process for choosing options and the subjects available to students.

Parents Evening - Thursday 9 May 2024

Meet subject teachers via School Cloud to discuss assessment results and student progress and to discuss the students suitability for their preferred GCSE choices.

Online Options Form Emailed Out - Friday 10 May 2024

A link to the electronic form used to complete option choices will be emailed to first parental contacts on our school system. The form must be completed by the end of the day on Tuesday 21 May 2024.

Deadline for Submitting Options Forms - Tuesday 21 May 2024

All option choices should be submitted by this date.

Confirmation of Options - Thursday 27 June 2024

We will aim to provide written confirmation of options by this date.

Further Information

After the presentation at the options information evening there will be opportunities to ask our curriculum leaders subject specific questions on the options offered.

If you require further information about a subject after this please contact the curriculum leader for that subject, or for more general queries regarding options please contact Mrs Walton (Head of Year 8) or Mr Wood (Assistant Headteacher, Data and Timetabling).



CURRICULUM PATHWAYS

SUMMARY

Two pathways:

- Blue pathway
- Yellow pathway

Pathways based on student attainment at KS3.

German is compulsory on the blue pathway.

Triple Science is available for more able students, or those who can demonstrate a real passion for the sciences.

The school believes it is vital that curriculum provision at key stage 4 is varied and flexible in order to meet the needs of individual students. As a result, all students will be grouped into one of two pathways when making their options choices for key stage 4.

The composition of these groups has been based on their attainment at Key Stage 3 across all subject areas. This will ensure that each student is following an appropriate quantity and range of subjects in Years 9, 10 and 11. The pathway which a student will follow will be confirmed in an email message in the run up to the Options Information Evening.

Blue Pathway

For these students English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Science*, a humanity (Geography or History), a Modern Foreign Language (German) and Religious Education are compulsory.

In addition to this, all students are able to choose two additional enrichment options. This will lead to a maximum of 10 GCSE awards. PE and PSHEe/Citizenship will also be studied.

Yellow Pathway

For these students English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Science*, a humanity (Geography or History) and Religious Education are compulsory.

In addition to this, all students are able to choose two additional enrichment options. This will lead to a maximum of 9 GCSE awards. PE and PSHEe/Citizenship will also be studied.

Students following the yellow pathway do not have to study a Modern Foreign Language, thus reducing the number of examinations these students will be required to sit. However, all students at Bishop Rawstorne are entitled to study a modern foreign language if they so wish. If a student is on the yellow pathway and wishes to study German, then they have the option to opt into studying that particular modern foreign language. but would need to discuss this further on the parents information evening.

**Most students will study a science course leading to the possibility of 2 Science GCSEs at the end of the course. For more able students in Science, or for those who can demonstrate a real passion for the Sciences, a Triple Science route is available as an enrichment option choice. This will result in separate GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.*



EXAMINATIONS ENTRY POLICY

All students will be sitting GCSE examinations or the equivalent. It is the policy of the school to enter all students for examinations in subjects they have studied, providing that all assessment requirements have been complied with.

GCSE REFORMS

A few years ago the government reformed GCSE qualifications and the way in which they are graded. Students are now graded according to a new 10-point numerical scale, with Grade 9 being the highest achievable.

As part of these reforms, there has been a move from the old C grade at GCSE being classed as a 'good pass'. It has now been replaced with grade 5 being a strong pass and grade 4 being a standard pass (where a grade 5 is equivalent to a low B/high C grade and grade 4 equivalent to a low C grade). These reforms are illustrated in the table below:

New GCSE Grading Structure									
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
Students who in the past would have achieved a grade A or above will now achieve a grade 7 or above			Students who in the past would have achieved a grade C or above will now achieve a grade 4 or above						
A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	
Current GCSE Grading Structure									

HIGHER AND FOUNDATION LEVEL PAPERS (TIERED ASSESSMENT)

In some subjects, the nature of the examination is such that students of different abilities may take higher or foundation level papers. The school has to decide how to enter students in such a way as to maximise their chances of success. Decisions regarding tiered assessments will be made in consultation with students and their parents, usually late in Year 10 or Year 11.



STUDENT GROUPINGS

The school aims to deliver the curriculum using a variety of methodologies at a level which is appropriately challenging whilst meeting the needs of individual students, some of whom are gifted in one particular area and perhaps not so gifted in another.

Meeting Students Learning Needs Appropriately

In each subject, within the resources available to the school, we aim to place students in a teaching group which most effectively meets their learning needs, and enables them to make progress by building on their current level of achievement. This may involve setting or banding in subjects from the enrichment options.

A Wide Choice of Opportunities

The subjects in the option blocks have been arranged in such a way as to provide a broadly based and balanced combination of subjects. We may not be able to accommodate everybody's first choices, but we aim to offer breadth which enables students to maintain a wider choice of career and further education opportunities.

The school reserves the right to adjust courses depending upon staff availability, resources and student demand.



CHOOSING A COURSE

SUMMARY

When choosing options follow interests and also consider subjects which students enjoy

Be sure to consider any future careers which might be of interest

Further advice is available if required - just ask!

Fill in the options online form by 21 May 2024

Options may be limited for late replies

We recommend that the following points are considered when choosing courses:

Interests

a) What is your child interested in? Do any of the subjects offered match up at all with their own interests? How is the course assessed?

Success and Enjoyment

b) Which subjects have they been most successful in so far? Which ones have they enjoyed most?

Future Careers

c) Which subjects will be most helpful to them in their future career? It is important that they should know which subjects will be needed for any particular career.

Don't Limit Future Possibilities

d) If they have not decided about a career yet, it may be better to make sure that they choose different types of subjects rather than two subjects which are very similar so as not to limit any future possibilities.

Further Advice

Please do not hesitate in asking for guidance beyond the information programme provided.

Careers advice is available from the students' group tutor, careers' adviser, Mr Almond or the Head of Year, Mrs Walton.

Any difficulties students may have in choosing subjects can be addressed by email or we can arrange for a telephone conversation at a mutually convenient point.

How to Make Your Choices

When you have made your choices please record these by completing the online options form, which will be sent by email.

(To prevent duplication of options this will be sent only to the 1st parental contact on our school system – we will email the other parental contact(s) to inform them that this has been sent out to a parental contact other than themselves).

The online options form should be completed by no later than Tuesday 21 May 2024. If the form is submitted after this date option choices may be limited.



THE KS4 TIMETABLE

GCSE courses at Bishop Rawstone are three years in length beginning in Year 9.

KS4 Curriculum

The KS4 curriculum is made up of compulsory and optional subjects.

Students' time will include:

1. Subjects all students will study towards achieving a GCSE.
2. Subjects students can choose to study depending on their interests.
3. All students study some core subjects, without a GCSE being obtained.

SUBJECT	HOURS OF STUDY / QUALIFICATION
ENGLISH	4 hours per week in Year 9, 5 hours per week in Year 10 and 4 hours per week in Year 11. GCSE English Language & GCSE English Literature
MATHEMATICS	4 hours per week. GCSE Mathematics
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	2 hours per week. GCSE Religious Education
SCIENCE	5 hours per week. GCSE Combined Science (dual Award) OR 7 hours per week. GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics
GERMAN	2 hours per week. GCSE German For those who don't study GCSE German there will be extra literacy and numeracy in Year 9 and humanities and numeracy in Year 10 and Year 11
HUMANITIES	2 hours per week. GCSE Geography OR GCSE History
OPTION 1	2 hours per week. GCSE of student's choice
OPTION 2	2 hours per week. GCSE of student's choice
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	2 hours per week in Year 9 and 1 hour per week in Year 10 and Year 11. Compulsory element of the national curriculum.
PSHE AND CITIZENSHIP	Delivered through a combination of extended form times, rolling weekly lessons, dedicated PSHE days and other activities outside the timetable. Compulsory element of the national curriculum.



CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

There are two subjects which are a compulsory part of the KS4 curriculum at Bishop Rawstorne which students do not get a GCSE qualification for:

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education/Citizenship (PSHE) Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Citizenship

PSHE and citizenship is a compulsory part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

Studying aspects of personal, social and health education, together with citizenship, contributes to achievement of the curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve.
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.



PSHE and citizenship is embedded throughout our curriculum, but also delivered through a combination of extended form times, rolling weekly lessons, dedicated PSHE days throughout the year and other activities outside the timetable. During these sessions staff and outside agencies provide learning opportunities on different issues and themes.

Physical Education (PE)

Physical Education is a compulsory element of the National Curriculum. Students in Year 10 and Year 11 will have one hour a week of core PE.

Throughout their lessons students will continue to develop the knowledge and skills gained in Key Stage 3 by participating in a wide range of activities. Activities include (but are not restricted to) football, netball, handball, rugby, badminton, basketball, table tennis and fitness. New activities are also introduced to promote the importance of participating in physical activity and the impact that this has on mental well-being e.g. yoga.



In Key Stage 4 we aim to provide positive experiences for all pupils therefore creating a passion for participating which will see pupils maintain a lifelong enjoyment of physical activity.

Students can also work towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award and the physical and skill based elements of the award throughout key stage 4 core PE.



COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

BLUE PATHWAY:

GCSE English (Literature & Language)
GCSE German
GCSE Mathematics
GCSE Religious Education
GCSE Science

YELLOW PATHWAY:

GCSE English (Literature & Language)
GCSE Mathematics
GCSE Religious Education
GCSE Science



GCSE ENGLISH (LITERATURE & LANGUAGE)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Caroline Lane

Examination Board:
WJEC

2 GCSEs will be studied:
English literature in Year
10 and English language in
Year 11

Assessment:
100% exam based
Untiered
Students of all abilities
achieving grades 9 to 1

English language must be studied by all students until they leave school. Students will work towards achieving two GCSEs by the end of Key Stage 4: GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature. Students will follow courses leading to GCSEs awarded by the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC), also known as EDUQAS.

Points of note:

- All students will sit two GCSEs: English Language and English Literature.
- It is 100% exam based with students being externally assessed for English Literature at the end of Year 10 and English Language at the end of Year 11.
- Untiered (no higher or foundation tier) so students of all abilities sit the same paper and grades can range from 9 to 1.

EXAM	COMPONENT
English Literature (Year 10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare • Poetry 2hrs - 40%	Component 1, section A Component 1, section B Poetry from 1789 to present day (anthology)
English Literature (Year 10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-1914 drama/prose • 19th Century Prose • Unseen Poetry 2hrs 30min - 60%	Component 2, section A Post-1914 prose/drama Component 2, section B 19th century prose Component 2, section C Unseen Poetry from 20th/21st Century
English Language (Year 11) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing 1 hr 45 mins - 40%	Component 1, section A Reading 20th century literature Component 1, section B Writing - creative
English Language (Year 11) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing 2 hrs - 60%	Component 2, section A Reading two unseen non-fiction texts Component 2, section B Transactional writing
Spoken Language Unweighted	Component 3, spoken language Students will be graded at a distinction, merit or pass



GCSE GERMAN (Compulsory on blue pathway)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Kate Lawley

Examination Board:
Edexcel

GCSE German is compulsory on the blue pathway and optional for yellow pathway students.

Areas of Study:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

Extra-curricular/Trips:
Educational study visit to Germany; weekly lunchtime support sessions; after school revision sessions (Year 11)

Assessment:

- 100% exam based with four exams in Year 11:
 - Three externally-examined papers assessing listening, reading and writing.
 - One speaking assessment set by the examination board and conducted by a teacher
- Examinations are tiered to cater for students across the entire ability range: higher (grades 9-4) and foundation (grades 5-1). Students must take all papers at the same tier.

Why Study Languages?

The GCSE German qualification is focused on the important ways that languages foster communication, broaden perspectives, introduce new cultures and develop students into global citizens. Learning a language will take you on a journey of enrichment that can endure for a lifetime.

Making the Right Choice

For students on the blue pathway, GCSE German is compulsory. For yellow pathway students who have studied German in Years 7 and 8, the choice to continue German to GCSE level is optional.

It is essential that language choices are made in consultation with Modern Foreign Language teaching staff, who will be able to discuss students' potential and prospects and will advise upon the suitability of courses.

What Will Students Learn?

A new GCSE qualification in German (first examination 2026) has recently been accredited. The coverage of vocabulary, grammar and phonics in this qualification will enable students to communicate across a range of thematic contexts (see left) which are relevant to students' current and future needs.

Lesson Structure

Students undertake a wide range of activities within lessons in order to prepare them for Year 11 examinations. Vocabulary learning and independent study is essential for examination success and the department has access to interactive resources to facilitate this.

Foreign educational study visits are of particular benefit to those students following the GCSE language courses, as any opportunity to practise the language in an authentic setting is invaluable.



GCSE MATHEMATICS

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Rob Hosker

Examination Board:
Pearson (Edexcel)

Formal GCSEs start Year 10

Student grouping is reviewed yearly from Year 7, ultimately informing students' Year 10 GCSE group and tier of entry.

Assessment:

- 100% exam based - 3 papers, 2 tiers:
- Higher (grades 9-4) and Foundation (grades 5-1)
- Students must take all three papers at the same tier
- All examinations will take place in May/June 2027.

In Year 9, students will continue to follow the Key Stage 3 scheme of work they began in Year 7. The scheme of work allows students to stretch themselves to the best of their ability, and contains a large amount of content that will be assessed at GCSE level. Unlike some other subjects, there is no need to begin formal GCSE studies at the start of Year 9. These will begin in Year 10 as has been the case historically, as detailed in the next few paragraphs.

All students will follow a course of study leading to a single mathematics GCSE qualification awarded by Edexcel in Year 11.

Students will study in ability groups across the whole year group. This set will be decided upon by the school and will be based upon on-going assessments as well as class teacher input.

The GCSE Mathematics examination will comprise of three papers, all examined in June 2026. The subject content has changed slightly and will now focus upon the following areas:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1.Number | 4.Geometry and measures |
| 2.Algebra | 5.Probability |
| 3.Ratio, proportion and rates of change | 6.Statistics |

Throughout Years 7 – 9, student groupings will be looked at following all three formal assessments, alongside teacher feedback. This will then inform the grouping for the following academic year, and ultimately their Year 10 GCSE group and tier of entry. Student performance in previous assessments as well as teacher feedback will be considered as part of any decisions on which grouping is most appropriate for the students at this stage in their studies.

Assessment Breakdown

Paper 1: non-calculator	Paper 2: calculator	Paper 3: calculator
What's assessed Content from any part of the specification may be assessed	What's assessed Content from any part of the specification may be assessed	What's assessed Content from any part of the specification may be assessed
How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • non-calculator • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment 	How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • calculator allowed • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment 	How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • calculator allowed • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment
Questions A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.	Questions A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.	Questions A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.



GCSE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Phil Ascroft

Examination Board:
Pearson (Edexcel)

Area of Study:

- Christianity
- Islam
- Philosophy and ethical issues

Assessment:

- 100% exam based
- Untiered
- Students of all abilities achieving grades 9 to 1

Religious Studies is a core academic subject at Bishop Rawstorne and it is a compulsory part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

As a church school we expect all of our students to undertake a qualification in religious studies. It is academically rigorous and personally inspiring.

The specification aims to enable students to:

- develop students' knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism.
- develop students' knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts and scriptures of the religions they are studying.
- develop students' ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject.
- provide opportunities for students to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life.
- challenge students to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contribute to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community.

The content for religious studies GCSE includes the compulsory study of two religions; we will study Christianity and Islam. This covers beliefs and teachings, practices, sources of wisdom and authority and forms of expression and the ways of life of both religions.

The philosophy and ethical elements of the course will cover Christian theological teachings about marriage and family and matters of life and death. Furthermore, students will study Muslims theology about crime and punishment as well as peace and conflict.



GCSE SCIENCE

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:

Laura Petts

Examination Board:

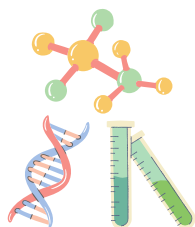
AQA

Combined Science: Trilogy (2 GCSEs) OR Triple Science (3 GCSEs)

Triple Science will involve using one enrichment option

Assessment:

- 100% exam based
- Six exam papers - two for each science discipline
- Tiered - higher or foundation



Science is a core subject comprising of Biology, Chemistry and Physics and is studied by all students.

The school follows the new AQA Science qualifications consisting of GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy OR GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics (Triple Science).

Full details of these courses are available on www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse.

All students will complete a transition module at the start of Year 9 before beginning the GCSE which will then run through until the end of Year 11. Students will be placed in an appropriate set which reflects their ability in the subject based on a range of prior assessments.

Which Science Course?

Most students within the year group will study Combined Science: Trilogy. This double award is equivalent to two GCSEs.

Students who are looking to study the sciences post-16 and demonstrate a particular flair for science may choose to opt to study 3 GCSEs in the separate science subjects. Students must use one enrichment option choice for this award and it will lead to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Triple science requires a 'little extra' in terms of enthusiasm and interest and is recommended for those with a strong academic history at KS3. This route provides a seamless transition into AS or A-level sciences. A large proportion of triple science students' progress onto A-level science courses.

Page 40 in the optional subjects section of this booklet contains more information on GCSE Triple Science option.

A comparison of the two courses is below:

GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE TRILOGY	GCSE TRIPLE SCIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers all three science disciplines, leading to 2 GCSEs being awarded. • 6 papers: 2 Biology, 2 Chemistry and 2 Physics. Each will assess different topics. • 1 hour 15 mins each • Tiered • Papers equally weighted - 16.7% each with 70 marks. • 21 compulsory practicals; these are assessed within the written examinations. • Combined Science will have a 17 point grading scale, from 9-9, 9-8 through to 2-1, 1-1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers 3 separate science subjects - Biology, Chemistry & Physics - leading to 3 GCSEs being awarded. • 6 papers: 2 Biology, 2 Chemistry and 2 Physics. Each will assess different topics. 1 hour 45 mins each. • Tiered • Papers equally weighted for each subject - 50% each with 100 marks. • 26 compulsory practicals - 1 for GCSE Biology, 8 for GCSE Chemistry and 8 for GCSE Physics - these are assessed within the written examinations.



HUMANITIES SUBJECTS



ALL PATHWAYS:

All students must choose one humanities subject - either GCSE Geography or GCSE History.

If students wish to study both GCSE Geography and GCSE History they can choose the other one as one of their two options choices.



GCSE GEOGRAPHY

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Laura Devin

Examination Board:
Pearson (Edexcel)

Students choose one
Humanities subject -
Geography or History

Units of Study:

- The physical environment
- The human environment
- Geographical investigations

Extra-curricular/Trips:

- Year 9 - coastal landscapes trip
- Year 10 - urban change trip

Assessment:

- 100% exam based
- Untiered
- Three exams

Geography is currently growing faster than any other subject in secondary schools (Times Educational Supplement).

Why Study Geography?

The study of geography stimulates an interest in and a sense of wonder about places, and will help you make sense of a complex and constantly changing world. Geography is a highly valued subject by employers and colleges as it prepares you to become team workers, active participants, independent and creative thinkers and makes you more aware of the world in which you live. It can be a launch pad for all kinds of future careers from engineering to economics, from agriculture to architecture, from environmental health to archaeology and from meteorology to medicine. According to the report, “What do graduates do?”, graduates in geography have one of the highest rates of full-time employment six months after graduation.

The Russell Group of twenty leading universities lists geography as one of the main ‘facilitating’ subjects alongside maths, english and science that they like to see for entry to their university courses. Choosing geography as a rigorous academic subject can therefore strengthen a student’s chance of attaining a place at a leading university, as well as being one of the English Baccalaureate qualifying subjects at GCSE level.

Geography fascinates and inspires: the beauty of the earth, the terrible power of earth-shaping forces - these things can inspire and take us out of our normal day-to-day lives. Geography is also a “living” subject and will feature on the news in some form every night – migration, flooding, development, pollution, transport and so on. Students are encouraged to apply their knowledge and understanding to real-life 21st century UK challenges as part of the course. Geographical investigation nourishes curiosity and can lead to a life-long love of the great outdoors.

What Will Students Learn?

We have developed a course leading to the examination based on syllabus A from Edexcel

(<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-a-2016.html>). The three year course will help students to:

- develop a knowledge and understanding of current events from the local to the global area;
- investigate the Earth and its peoples;
- study the features of the Earth, mountains, rivers and seas and how they are formed;
- understand other cultures in the UK and across the world;
- develop a range of skills which include map reading, GIS, data collection, ICT and problem solving;
- collect data in the field, and analyse and present findings.



Assessment Breakdown

In line with all subjects, geography assessment will be linear to ensure that all GCSE examinations are taken at the end of the course.

PAPER	CONTENT	EXAM
Paper 1	The Physical Environment The changing landscapes of the UK (including geology, coasts and rivers) Weather hazards and climate change (including hurricanes and drought) Ecosystems, biodiversity and management (including tropical rainforests and deciduous woodlands)	37.5% (One 90 minute exam)
Paper 2	The Human Environment Changing cities (including two major city case studies – Manchester and Mexico City) Global development (including one major country case study - India) Resource management (energy)	37.5% (One 90 minute exam)
Paper 3	Geographical Investigations Investigating physical environments – coastal landscapes fieldwork Investigating human environments – urban environments fieldwork UK challenges – resource consumption, sustainability, population, economics, landscape or climate change	25% (one 75 minute exam)

Visits and Trips

A variety of experiences will be made open to students who choose geography; including compulsory visits to the coast in Year 9 to study coastal landscapes and to Manchester in Year 10 to investigate urban change investigation.

In previous years we have run highly successful trips to Iceland and Italy and will look to do so again where possible.



GCSE HISTORY

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Scott Hornby

Examination Board:
AQA

Students choose one
humanities subject -
geography or history

Areas of Study:

- The USA , 1920-73
- Conflict and tension,
1919-1939
- Britain, power and the
people, 1170 to the
present day
- Elizabethan England,
1568-1603

Extra-curricular/Trips:
Residential trip to Krakow in
Year 10

Assessment:

- 100% exam based - two
papers 50% each
- Untiered



"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

George Santayana - American philosopher

Why Study History?

History is valued highly by both employers and universities. It encourages students to be open minded and independent thinkers. It fosters the development of valuable and transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical analysis of information and construction of arguments and so provides ideal preparation for further academic study in numerous fields. Students of history in Britain have gone on to fulfil a range of high-profile careers across many spheres of life, from politics and law to journalism and the entertainment industry. The Russell Group, which represents 24 of Britain's leading universities, lists history as one of the 'facilitating' subjects recommended for students wishing to apply to prestigious universities and keep their future academic and career options open. It is also one of the English Baccalaureate qualifying subjects.

The respected 'Which?' consumer group commented in their 'Which Subject? Which Career?' guide:

'Historians are regarded as having had an education that trains their minds to assemble, organise and present facts and opinions and this is a very useful quality in many walks of life and careers...history is an excellent preparation for very many other jobs'.

Students considering studying History should have good reading levels and literacy skills. This subject will then help you further develop your literacy skills and draws strong links to English – something which will not only help you in the future, but also support you with studying your other GCSE subjects.

Studying History informs the present and gives you the skills you need to prepare for the future. Apart from being very interesting, history is useful for a host of different careers, and life too! In fact, history is very practical and teaches you vital skills that employers want.

What Will Students Learn?

All students who choose to study History will follow the AQA GCSE History course. This specification allows for a study of a broader range of historical eras whilst developing key historical skills. The assessments are broken down into two papers:

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world helps students to understand key developments and events in modern world history.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation enables students to understand key developments and events in the history of Britain.

Assessment Breakdown

Students will explore four distinct areas of study:

PAPER	CONTENT	EXAM
Paper 1	<p>Section A - The USA, 1920-73: The economic boom of the 1920s; American society in the 1920s including organised crime, racism and entertainment; the Great Depression, President Roosevelt and the New Deal; Post Second World War culture; the Civil Rights movement; the development of the 'Great Society'; the impact of the women's rights movement.</p> <p>Section B - Conflict and tension, 1919-39: Peace-making after the First World War; the League of Nations and international peace; the causes of the Second World War.</p>	Exam 50%
Paper 2	<p>Section A - Britain, Power and the People, 1170 to present day: Impact of the Magna Carta and the origins of Parliament; Peasant's Revolt; English Civil War; significance of the American Revolution; Reforming Britain including Chartism, the anti-slavery movement and workers' movements; Rights and equality including Suffragettes, workers' rights and rights of minority groups since the Second World War.</p> <p>Section B - Elizabethan England 1568-1603: Elizabeth's court and relationship with Parliament; Life in Elizabethan times - the 'Golden Age'; Troubles at home and abroad, including religious problems, Mary Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada.</p> <p>The final part of the Elizabethan England topic will be a study of the historic environment of Elizabethan England. Students will be examined on a specific site in depth which will relate to the content of the rest of this topic. By studying this historic environment, it will enrich students' understanding of Elizabethan England. The site students will study and be examined on in the 2026 examination will be the Globe theatre in London.</p>	Exam 50%

Residential Visit

In Year 10, GCSE History students are also offered the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to Krakow, Poland. This includes a visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, which was the largest Nazi concentration and death camp and now as a museum serves as a poignant memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

ALL PATHWAYS:

Choose two additional enrichment options from the list below:

- GCSE Art and Design
- GCSE Computer Science
- Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Creative iMedia
- GCSE Design & Technology
- GCSE Drama
- Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Engineering Manufacture
- GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition
- GCSE French
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History
- GCSE Music
- Music BTEC (Pearson's Tech Award Level 1/2 in Music Practice)
- GCSE Physical Education
- GCSE Textiles
- GCSE Triple Science



GCSE ART AND DESIGN

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Jo Armitage

Examination Board:
AQA

We actively encourage students to attend sessions after school to make use of the facilities at school.

Areas of Study:
Wide range of interests within art such as drawing, painting, printing, textiles, graphics, 3D design and digital photography.

Assessment:

- Portfolio - 60%
- Externally set assignment - 40% (ten hour session taking place over two days in exam conditions)

Why Study Art and Design?

Studying art gives students, the opportunity to develop practical skills, problem solve and to express ideas and use visual language. They will be encouraged to become independent learners, to take risks and they will acquire the ability to investigate, analyse and experiment.

Students opting for the subject should be creative thinkers who are prepared to have a go and give their best. It is a very time-consuming subject but many art students enjoy dedicating time to their art and often find it good for their wellbeing. All projects cover various skills and offers opportunities for each student to develop their work in a personal way. Art enables students to progress into a wide range of careers in fields such as Illustration, marketing, advertising, design, architecture, fashion, publishing and the media- jobs that are here to stay! Many past students have gone on to build successful careers in the arts.

What Will Students Learn?

The AQA GCSE Art and Design syllabus is a general course and caters for a wide range of interests within art such as drawing, painting, printing, textiles, graphics, 3D design and digital photography. The exploration of different media plays a really important part in the course and students are encouraged to try 'a bit of everything'!

This course follows on comfortably from the KS3 syllabus so students will recognise tasks such as the research of other artists, designers and cultures, observation drawing from primary and secondary sources and designing tasks. Whilst there are no formal written tasks, it is a course requirement for students to analyse and evaluate their work, and the work of a range of artists in the form of personal, analytical annotation. The course depends on students completing a wide range of homework and preparation tasks, some of which can be completed in sessions after school. We actively encourage students to attend these sessions and to make use of the facilities at school.

Assessment

Assessment consists of

Component 1: Portfolio, 60%

Component 2: Externally set assignment, 40%.



Component 1

In Year 9 students will produce work for 2 different projects developing their skills and experimenting with a range of media, refining and building on techniques learnt during KS3 and exploring new techniques and processes.

During Year 10, students work through 2 projects again extending their use of different media and strengthening knowledge and understanding. All work produced in Year 10 will contribute to building their final portfolio of coursework. Each project has been designed to allow each artist the freedom to follow different 'paths' to suit their skills and preferences.

In Year 11, all students complete a mock exam project that then becomes the third component of their coursework.

Component 2

The externally set task, unit 2, requires students to pick a starting point for their exam piece from a question paper. These questions are very open-ended and allow each student the space to explore and experiment with their ideas whilst using lots of different media, processes and techniques. They are then required to produce a sketchbook documenting all of their ideas and experimentation to support an unaided 10 hour session to complete a final piece(s) of artwork. This exam takes place over two days in exam conditions but many students enjoy the experience saying it's a pleasure to have 2 full days in the Art room and doesn't feel like other exams. All work is then submitted for the final assessment. The work is marked using 4 assessment objectives based on looking at the work of artists/crafts people, experimenting with media and refinement of work, making observations by drawing and photography and producing a personal and meaningful response.

Equipment Required

Due to the nature of the subject, students need access to a range of art equipment including sketchbooks. Students will have the opportunity to purchase good quality art materials and sketchbooks from school at the start of the course at cost price. It would also be highly advantageous to have access to a good quality camera to record observations.



GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

"Everyone should learn how to code; it teaches you how to think" Steve Jobs

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Mike Steel

Examination Board:
OCR

Areas of Study:

- Computer Systems
- Computational thinking
- Algorithms and programming
- A programming project

Assessment:

- 100% exam
- Non-assessed programming project

Why Study Computer Science?

GCSE Computer Science takes you a long way into understanding how to solve problems by using computers. At its heart is the understanding of algorithms and how to write computer programs based on well-planned algorithms.

Computer Science is an extremely diverse subject where you can find yourself developing the next big mobile application, the latest wearable electronic fashion, providing technology evolutions to solve a medical issue or even making sure that our country is safe from hackers.

Computer Science is valued highly by colleges and universities and opens the door to many exciting and well-paid careers. This course has been developed to encourage independent thinkers, develop collaborative learning and problem solving skills. You will acquire and apply creative and technical skills, knowledge and understanding of computing in a range of contexts.

What Will Students Learn?

The GCSE Computer Science course is divided into three units:

UNIT	TOPICS COVERED	ASSESSMENT
<p>Computer Systems This unit covers the basic principles behind computer science as well as practical aspects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems Architecture • Memory • Storage • Wired and wireless networks • Network topologies, protocols and layers • System security • System software • Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns 	1hr 30min examination (50%)
<p>Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming This unit covers the basic principles behind computer science as well as practical aspects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algorithms • Programming techniques • Producing robust programs • Computational logic • Translators and facilities or languages • Data representation 	1hr 30min examination (50%)
<p>Programming Project This practical unit requires you to solve problems by writing program code.</p>	<p>The programming language you will use will be Python or something similar and you will produce a working product that you will then evaluate. This element of the course will best prepare you for the computational thinking exam paper.</p>	



LEVEL 1/2 CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN CREATIVE iMEDIA

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Mike Steel

Examination Board:
Cambridge Nationals

Areas of Study:

- Creative iMedia in the media industry
- Visual identity and digital graphics
- Interactive digital media

Assessment:

- 40% Exam
- 60% Project work



Why Study Creative iMedia?

Information Technology is about the real world, practical application of theory. IT professionals are the users of technology, utilising established building blocks and existing operating systems, software and applications, to create a system to solve a problem. Learners taking this qualification will study the fundamental aspects required in two of the three IT occupational areas: Creative, Data Management and Technical.

What Will Students Learn?

Students will learn how pre-production skills are used in the creative and digital media sector. Students will learn how the client brief, time frames, deadlines and preparation techniques form part of the planning and creation process. This will allow the students to acquire the underpinning knowledge and skills required to create digital media products and gain an understanding of their application.

In addition to this, students will learn how to design and create professional IT solutions in a range of areas (using software such as Adobe Flash, Photoshop and Dreamweaver), taking into account purpose and audience for each one. Furthermore, students will create effective user interfaces that meet the user requirements and enable a top quality creative product to be created.

Assessment

The course consists of three units, two of them are based on coursework and the third is a written exam completed in the summer of Year 11:

UNIT	TOPICS COVERED	ASSESSMENT
<p>Creative iMedia in the Media Industry In this unit you will learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned, and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media industry • Factors influencing product design • Pre-production planning • Distribution consideration 	1hr 30min written examination (40%)
<p>Visual Identity and Digital Graphics In this unit you will learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned, and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media industry • Factors influencing product design • Pre-production planning • Distribution consideration 	Completing a set assignment (30%)
<p>Interactive Digital Media In this unit you will learn to design and create interactive digital media products for chosen platforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan interactive digital media • Create interactive digital media • Review interactive digital media 	Completing a set assignment (30%)



GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Lisa Gornall

Examination Board:
AQA

Areas of Study:

- Core technical knowledge
- Specialist technical knowledge
- Design and making principles

Assessment:

- 50% exam - two hour paper in summer of Year 11
- 50% non exam assessment

Why Study Design & Technology?

This course is designed to develop creativity, design thinking, solving real world problems and working to a client and user centred brief.

Students studying design and technology can go on to a variety of further and higher education courses such as engineering, 3D design, graphic design, textiles, fashion etc as well as vocational courses and apprenticeships. These can lead on to career paths such as architecture, product design, interior design, engineering, jewellery design... the list goes on!

What Will Students Learn?

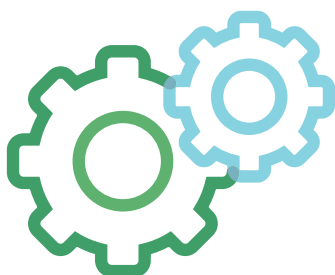
In Year 9 and 10 you will work on a range of short projects that will teach you skills in design communication, prototyping, computer aided design and manufacture and practical skills. You will work with and learn about a range of materials including plastics, metals, woods, fabrics and fibres, paper and card and smart materials. You will develop knowledge and understanding of the subject through hands on projects as well as theory lessons.

Theory sessions will focus on the three main sections of the exam:

Core technical knowledge	This includes looking at future developments in technology, material areas and sustainability issues surrounding design. As well as this you will learn about a systems approach to designing including electronics.
Specialist technical knowledge	For this section of the course and exam you will focus on one or two main material areas such as plastics and paper and card and will learn about these materials in depth including properties, uses and industrial processes.
Design and making principles	You will learn about the work of other designers and companies such as Dyson, Apple and Braun. You will also develop skills in design communication such as sketching in 3D isometric and orthographic projection.

At the end of Year 10 you will start your non exam assessment (NEA). This will involve choosing from three contexts set by the exam board before starting to research, design, prototype and finally make and evaluate a solution to a brief. You will be able to work in your choice of materials and processes in order to realise a final design which meets the needs of a client.

In Year 11 you will continue to work on the NEA until the deadline (approximately Easter time). You will also embed your knowledge further through theory sessions leading to a final two hour exam in 2026.



GCSE DRAMA

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Naomi Smith-Hughes

Examination Board:
AQA

Students need to be prepared to rehearse after school and at lunchtimes in order to develop practical and written GCSE work for assessment.

Extracurricular/Trips:
Visiting live productions is a compulsory part of the GCSE Drama course.

Areas of Study:
Perform scripted and unscripted work to a live audience

Assessment:

- Written exam - 60%
- Practical Work - 40%

Why Study Drama?

GCSE Drama prepares students well for further study at college such as BTEC Performing Arts, Musical Theatre and Acting qualifications. The GCSE course also prepares students for A Level qualifications such as: Theatre Studies and Performing Arts.

What Will Students Learn?

The GCSE Drama course is predominantly an acting course where students are required to perform both scripted and unscripted work to a live audience. However, the written component is worth 60% of their final mark in Drama and students must be prepared to write essays, reflective journals and theatre reviews are core parts of the GCSE course. As a GCSE course, Drama offers students the ability to develop self-confidence, and to develop previous skills in acting, through practical controlled assessment. Over the three years, they study theatrical conventions, techniques and practitioners, and apply these to their own theatrical work. This subject demands a high level of independent research, rehearsal and performance. Students are encouraged to watch 'live' theatre productions as often as possible in order to prepare for the written and practical examinations. Students must be able to perform pieces in front of a live audience as an actor or as a technical candidate.

Assessment

The emphasis for this GCSE is on performance and skills in drama; it should not be taken solely 'to gain confidence' but more to develop existing passion and commitment towards performance in front of a live audience.

1. **Component 1** - Written exam (1 hr 45 minutes - worth 40%)
2. **Component 2** - Devised work based on visual and written stimuli (worth 40% of the final grade - 20 marks of this are practical)
3. **Component 3** - Completely practical. Scripted performance (worth 20% of the final grade) Students will be expected to perform two scenes from a scripted play of their choice which adheres to a strict minimum and maximum time limit. This will be assessed by a visiting AQA external examiner.



WRITTEN EXAMINATION (60%)	PRACTICAL WORK (40%)
<p>The written examination is made up of the 2,500 word devising log (component 2) and the written examination at the end of Year 11 (component 1).</p> <p>During their study of component 2 (devised acting work) students will write a 2,500 word devising log essay which reflects upon and evaluates practical work created by the group in their component 2 devised performance and this must be completed in school, under strict timed conditions. This devising log can be written or filmed (blog format) and must include photographs of the rehearsals, discussion about skills, style, genre, performance space etc. This is a compulsory part of the GCSE and is worth 60 marks (40% of the final GCSE grade)</p> <p>The remaining 40% of the final grade is assessed in component 1 (Year 11 external written exam). Students will be expected to write essays explaining how they would stage and perform key sections and characters from the set text (Blood Brothers). They will also be expected to write a live theatre review, describing, explaining, analysing and evaluating a performance they have seen.</p>	<p>Candidates are required to submit two pieces of practical acting work, both scripted and unscripted (component 2) Specifically, one performance is videoed in school and must be created by the students working on a theme or topic of their choice; the second performance takes place at the end of the course when an external examiner attends school to watch the students performing two scenes from a play chosen by the teacher (component 3).</p>



LEVEL 1/2 CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN ENGINEERING MANUFACTURE

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:

Colin Rockley

Examination Board:

OCR

GCSE equivalent course

Areas of Study:

- Principles of engineering manufacture
- Manufacturing a one-off project
- Manufacturing in quantity

Assessment:

- Written exam - 40%
- Non exam assessment - 60%

Why Study Engineering Manufacture?

Engineering Manufacture is a discipline of engineering dealing with different manufacturing practices and processes using the machines, tools and equipment that turn raw materials into new products. It allows students to develop the skills to use tools and equipment to make products from the requirements of a design specification.

Additionally, it looks at new and emerging technologies and students will use relevant computer applications such as CAD/CAM software to control a range of CNC equipment to manufacture products.

Engineering manufacture benefits to students:

- It's a vocationally related qualification that takes an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment.
- The Cambridge Nationals in Engineering have been founded on the recommendations of the Wolf Report and created in partnership with industry-leading employers and engineering professional institutions.
- The course is industry relevant, geared to engineering sector requirements.
- Enjoyment of the course and its practical elements!

What Will Students Learn?

Students opting for this subject must be self-motivated and have a desire to learn new skills, enjoy problem solving as well as practical tasks.

Additionally, candidates need to actively participate in team work activities and possess personal determination to succeed.

COMPONENT	TOPICS	ASSESSMENT
R014 Principles of Engineering Manufacture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing processes • Engineering materials • Manufacturing requirements • Developments in engineering manufacture 	Exam 40%
R015 Manufacturing a One-off Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning the production of a one-off product • Measuring and marking out • Safely use processes, tools and equipment to make a product. 	NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) 30%
R016 Manufacturing in Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for manufacture • Develop programmes to operate CNC equipment • Safely use processes and equipment to make products in quantity. 	NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) 30%

The OCR Engineering Manufacture Level 2 Technical Award count towards the progress 8 and attainment 8 indicators for schools.



GCSE FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Gill Duckworth

Examination Board:
EDUQs

This single GCSE qualification replaces all the other food based GCSEs and is exciting and innovative

Areas of Study:

- Cooking and food preparation
- Diet and good health, nutrition
- Science of food
- Where food comes from
- Food choice and food commodities

Assessment:

- Food science experiment - 15%
- Practical exam - 35%
- Written exam - 50%

Why Study Food Preparation and Nutrition?

This GCSE will equip students with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It will encourage students to cook and enable them to make informed decisions about food and nutrition in order to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritionally, now and in later life.

The GCSE is exciting and innovative. It will give students who enjoy the practical aspect of food preparation and nutrition a real chance to develop high level skills. The academic rigour applied to the course through the nutrition and food science elements will ensure that even the ablest of students are stretched to their full potential.

What Will Students Learn?

The GCSE is organised to cover the following areas:

- Cooking and food preparation (twenty core skills including knife skills, use of the cooker, sauce making, equipment use and so on)
- Diet and good health
- The principles of nutrition
- The science of food
- Where food comes from
- Food choice and food commodities

Throughout Year 9 and 10 students will be taught the basic skills and knowledge required by the specification, through both practical and theory sessions.

The second half of the course (Year 11) is split into three assessments:

ASSESSMENTS	WHEN	TIME	PROJECT	MARK
Task 1 A food science experiment, eg explore the use of raising agents in sponge mixtures. There will be a choice of two exam board set tasks to choose from.	September Year 11	8 hours	1,500 – 2,000 words	15%
Task 2 A three hour practical exam where a selection of dishes, on a particular theme, will be planned, prepared, cooked and served. Again there will be a choice of two tasks set by the exam board.	November Year 11	12 hours	15 pages max	35%
Exam Testing knowledge and application of the whole syllabus via a range of short and longer more challenging questions	May/June Year 11	1hr 45mins	N/A	50%



GCSE FRENCH (Option on blue pathway only)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Kate Lawley

Head of French:
Geraldine Baybutt

Examination Board:
Edexcel

GCSE French is an option for the most able linguists in Year 8 on the blue pathway.

Areas of Study:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

Assessment:

- 100% exam based with four exams in year 11
- Three externally-examined papers assessing listening, reading and writing.
- One speaking assessment set by the examination board and conducted by a teacher

Why Study French?

In an increasingly competitive and challenging global marketplace, the ability to speak a Modern Foreign Language such as French is not only desirable, it can be the pathway to career enhancement. The GCSE French qualification is focused on the important ways that languages foster communication, broaden perspectives, introduce new cultures and develop students into global citizens. Learning a language will take you on a journey of enrichment that can endure for a lifetime.

Making the Right Choice

GCSE French is an option for the most able linguists in Year 8 on the blue pathway - those currently in Band 1 and already studying French. These students have the opportunity to study both German and French to GCSE level when selecting French as one of their two options choices.

It is essential that language choices for students are made in consultation with Modern Foreign Language teaching staff, who will be able to discuss students' potential and prospects and will advise upon the suitability of courses.

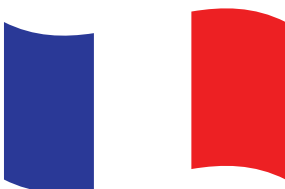
What Will Students Learn?

A new GCSE qualification in French (first examination 2026) has recently been accredited. The coverage of vocabulary, grammar and phonics in this qualification will enable students to communicate across a range of thematic contexts (see left) which are relevant to students' current and future needs. For the dual linguists the order in which the themes are covered will differ between the 2 languages studied.

Lesson Structure

Students undertake a wide range of activities within lessons and home study in order to prepare them for Year 11 examinations. Vocabulary learning and independent study is essential for examination success and the department has access to interactive resources to facilitate this.

Foreign educational study visits are of particular benefit to those students following the GCSE language courses, as any opportunity to practise the language in an authentic setting is invaluable.



GCSE GEOGRAPHY

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Laura Devin

Examination Board:
Pearson (Edexcel)

Students choose one
Humanities subject -
geography or history

Units of Study:

- The physical environment
- The human environment
- Geographical investigations

Extra-curricular/Trips:

- Year 9 - coastal landscapes trip
- Year 10 - urban change trip

Assessment:

- 100% exam based
- Untiered
- Three exams

Geography is currently growing faster than any other subject in secondary schools (Times Educational Supplement).

Why Study Geography?

The study of geography stimulates an interest in and a sense of wonder about places, and will help you make sense of a complex and constantly changing world. Geography is a highly valued subject by employers and colleges as it prepares you to become team workers, active participants, independent and creative thinkers and makes you more aware of the world in which you live. It can be a launch pad for all kinds of future careers from engineering to economics, from agriculture to architecture, from environmental health to archaeology and from meteorology to medicine. According to the report, “What do graduates do?”, graduates in geography have one of the highest rates of full-time employment six months after graduation.

The Russell Group of twenty leading universities lists geography as one of the main ‘facilitating’ subjects alongside maths, English and science that they like to see for entry to their university courses. Choosing geography as a rigorous academic subject can therefore strengthen a student’s chance of attaining a place at a leading university, as well as being one of the English Baccalaureate qualifying subjects at GCSE level.

Geography fascinates and inspires: the beauty of the earth, the terrible power of earth-shaping forces - these things can inspire and take us out of our normal day-to-day lives. Geography is also a “living” subject and will feature on the news in some form every night - migration, flooding, development, pollution, transport and so on. Students are encouraged to apply their knowledge and understanding to real-life 21st century UK challenges as part of the course. Geographical investigation nourishes curiosity and can lead to a life-long love of the great outdoors.

What Will Students Learn?

We have developed a course leading to the examination based on syllabus A from Edexcel

(<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-a-2016.html>). The three year course will help students to:

- develop a knowledge and understanding of current events from the local to the global area;
- investigate the Earth and its peoples;
- study the features of the Earth, mountains, rivers and seas and how they are formed;
- understand other cultures in the UK and across the world;
- develop a range of skills which include map reading, GIS, data collection, ICT and problem solving;
- collect data in the field, and analyse and present findings.



Assessment Breakdown

In line with all subjects, Geography assessment will be linear to ensure that all GCSE examinations are taken at the end of the course.

PAPER	CONTENT	EXAM
Paper 1	The Physical Environment The changing landscapes of the UK (including geology, coasts and rivers) Weather hazards and climate change (including hurricanes and drought) Ecosystems, biodiversity and management (including tropical rainforests and deciduous woodlands)	37.5% (One 90 minute exam)
Paper 2	The Human Environment Changing cities (including two major city case studies – Manchester and Mexico City) Global development (including one major country case study - India) Resource management (energy)	37.5% (One 90 minute exam)
Paper 3	Geographical Investigations Investigating physical environments – coastal landscapes fieldwork Investigating human environments – urban environments fieldwork UK challenges – resource consumption, sustainability, population, economics, landscape or climate change	25% (one 75 minute exam)

Visits and Trips

A variety of experiences will be made open to students who choose geography; including compulsory visits to the coast in Year 9 to study coastal landscapes and to Manchester in Year 10 to investigate urban change investigation.

In previous years we have run highly successful trips to Iceland and Italy and will look to do so again where possible.



GCSE HISTORY

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Scott Hornby

Examination Board:
AQA

Students choose one
Humanities subject -
geography or history

Areas of Study:

- The USA , 1920-73
- Conflict and tension, 1919-1939
- Britain, power and the people, 1170 to the present day
- Elizabethan England, 1568-1603.

Extra-curricular/Trips:
Residential trip to Krakow in
Year 10

Assessment:

- 100% exam based - two papers 50% each
- Untiered



"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

George Santayana - American philosopher

Why Study History?

History is valued highly by both employers and universities. It encourages students to be open minded and independent thinkers. It fosters the development of valuable and transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical analysis of information and construction of arguments and so provides ideal preparation for further academic study in numerous fields. Students of history in Britain have gone on to fulfil a range of high-profile careers across many spheres of life, from politics and law to journalism and the entertainment industry. The Russell Group, which represents 24 of Britain's leading universities, lists history as one of the 'facilitating' subjects recommended for students wishing to apply to prestigious universities and keep their future academic and career options open. It is also one of the English Baccalaureate qualifying subjects.

The respected 'Which?' consumer group commented in their 'Which Subject? Which Career?' guide:

'Historians are regarded as having had an education that trains their minds to assemble, organise and present facts and opinions and this is a very useful quality in many walks of life and careers...history is an excellent preparation for very many other jobs'.

Students considering studying History should have good reading levels and literacy skills. This subject will then help you further develop your literacy skills and draws strong links to English – something which will not only help you in the future, but also support you with studying your other GCSE subjects.

Studying History informs the present and gives you the skills you need to prepare for the future. Apart from being very interesting, History is useful for a host of different careers, and life too! In fact, history is very practical and teaches you vital skills that employers want.

What Will Students Learn?

All students who choose to study history will follow the AQA GCSE History course. This specification allows for a study of a broader range of historical eras whilst developing key historical skills. The assessments are broken down into two papers:

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world helps students to understand key developments and events in modern world history.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation enables students to understand key developments and events in the history of Britain.



Assessment Breakdown

Students will explore four distinct areas of study:

PAPER	CONTENT	EXAM
Paper 1	<p>Section A - The USA, 1920-73: The economic boom of the 1920s; American society in the 1920s including organised crime, racism and entertainment; the Great Depression, President Roosevelt and the New Deal; Post Second World War culture; the Civil Rights movement; the development of the 'Great Society'; the impact of the women's rights movement.</p> <p>Section B - Conflict and tension, 1919-39: Peace-making after the First World War; the League of Nations and international peace; the causes of the Second World War.</p>	Exam 50%
Paper 2	<p>Section A - Britain, Power and the People, 1170 to present day: Impact of the Magna Carta and the origins of Parliament; Peasant's Revolt; English Civil War; significance of the American Revolution; Reforming Britain including Chartism, the anti-slavery movement and workers' movements; Rights and equality including Suffragettes, workers' rights and rights of minority groups since the Second World War.</p> <p>Section B - Elizabethan England 1568-1603: Elizabeth's court and relationship with Parliament; Life in Elizabethan times - the 'Golden Age'; Troubles at home and abroad, including religious problems, Mary Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada.</p> <p>The final part of the Elizabethan England topic will be a study of the historic environment of Elizabethan England. Students will be examined on a specific site in depth which will relate to the content of the rest of this topic. By studying this historic environment, it will enrich students' understanding of Elizabethan England. The site students will study and be examined on in the 2026 examination will be the Globe theatre in London.</p>	Exam 50%

Residential Visit

In Year 10, GCSE History students are also offered the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to Krakow, Poland. This includes a visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, which was the largest Nazi concentration and death camp and now as a museum serves as a poignant memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.



GCSE MUSIC

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Jenny Ball

Examination Board:
EDUQAS

You must be able to play an instrument or sing and have an interest in music theory.

Four Areas of Study:

- Musical forms and devices
- Music for ensembles
- Film music
- Popular music

Assessment:

- Practical externally assessed tasks as well as a written examination:
 - Performance - 30%
 - Composition - 30%
 - 1hr 15 mins written exam - 40%

Why Study Music?

Students will study the skills and techniques involved in becoming a creative musician, in order to develop their ability to compose and perform successfully. The GCSE course has three main contrasting elements, all of which are designed to develop students as musicians. Both practical tasks are internally and externally assessed as well as a written examination at the end of the course.

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- engage actively in the process of music study
- develop performing skills individually and in groups to communicate musically with fluency and control of the resources used
- develop composing skills to organise musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources
- recognise links between the integrated activities of performing, composing and appraising and how this informs the development of music
- broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity
- develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians
- develop awareness of a variety of instruments, styles and approaches to performing and composing
- develop awareness of music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music
- recognise contrasting genres, styles and traditions of music, and develop some awareness of musical chronology
- develop as effective and independent learners with enquiring minds
- reflect upon and evaluate their own and others' music
- engage with and appreciate the diverse heritage of music, in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

Making the Right Choice

To study this course you need to be able to:

- play an instrument (this includes singing).
- have an interest in music theory.
- enjoy being creative using your imagination.
- be independent in rehearsal time.
- listen to various types of musical genres and styles.
- be involved in extra-curricular activities in music.



What Will Students Learn?

The four areas of study below provide a rich source of material for students to work with when developing performance and compositional skills.

1. Musical forms and devices.
2. Music for ensembles.
3. Film music.
4. Popular music

As well as the four areas of study above, students will cover two set works in detail which they will be assessed on within their examination in Year 11.

Assessment Breakdown

UNIT	TOPICS COVERED	ASSESSMENT
Unit 1	Performance: A minimum of two pieces, once must be an ensemble performance of at least one-minute duration. The other piece(s) may be a solo/ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice.	30%
Unit 2	Composition: Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by the exam board. Learners will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.	30%
Unit 3	Examination: 1hr 15mins exam This component is assessed via a listening examination in Year 11. There will be eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study. Area of study 1: Musical forms and devices Area of study 2: Music for ensemble Area of study 3: Film music Area of study 4: Popular music. Two of the eight questions are based on their set works.	40%



MUSIC BTEC (PEARSON'S TECH AWARD LEVEL 1/2 IN MUSIC PRACTICE)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Jenny Ball

Examination Board:
Pearson's (Edexcel)

Suitable if you are interested in music practice, technology, recording and production.

Students cannot study both GCSE Music and BTEC Tech Music.

Areas of Study:

- Component 1:
Exploring music products and styles
- Component 2: Music skills development
- Component 3:
Responding to a music brief

Assessment:

- Component 1:
Internally and externally assessed in Year 9
- Component 2:
Internally and externally assessed in Year 10
- Component 3:
Externally assessed in Year 11

Why Study the Music BTEC Tech Award?

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Music Practice is for learners who want to continue with music looking at the current music industry through performance, composition or music production. Students who study this course do not need to be able to play an instrument as they can study the music technology/music production side or they can begin to look at the performance skills on an instrument. The qualification enables learners to develop their skills, such as using musical elements, composition, performance and music production, using realistic vocational contexts. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through realistic vocational contexts. The main focus is on four areas of equal importance, which cover the:

- development of key skills by responding to a musical brief using musical skills and techniques
- processes that underpin effective ways of working in the music sector.
- attitudes that are considered most important in the music sector, including personal management and communication.
- knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, processes and attitudes in the sector, such as musical skills and styles.

This Tech Award complements the learning in GCSE programmes by broadening experience and skills participation in different types of musical techniques for different musical styles. The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills in a practical way through exploration and development of techniques and styles.

Making the Right Choice

To study this course, you need to be able to:

- have an interest in playing an instrument or music technology (you don't need to be able to play an instrument).
- have an interest in different styles and genres of music.
- have an interest or enjoy being creative using your imagination.
- be independent in rehearsal/ assessment learning time.
- be involved in extra-curricular activities in music.



What Will Students Learn?

There are three components that students must complete and achieve all three within this qualification.

1. Exploring music products and styles: Learners will explore the techniques used in the creation of different musical products and investigate the key features of different musical styles.
2. Music skill development: Learners will have the opportunity to develop two musical disciplines through engagement in practical tasks, while documenting their progress and planning for further improvement.
3. External synopsis: responding to a brief: Learners will be given the opportunity to develop and present music in response to a given music brief.

Assessment Breakdown

UNIT	COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT
Component 1	Exploring Music Products and Styles Non-exam internal assessment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson. The Pearson-set assignment will be completed in approximately 12 hours of supervised assessment.	May of Year 9
Component 2	Music Skills Development: Non-exam internal assessment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson. The Pearson-set assignment will be completed in approximately 15 hours of supervised assessment.	May of Year 10
Component 3	Responding to a Music Brief This is an external assessment based on a key task that requires learners to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole qualification in an integrated way.	Year 11



GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Dani Hornby

Examination Board:
OCR

Students must have regularly attended extracurricular enrichment after school, represented school in fixtures and regularly take part in sport outside of school.

Areas of Study:

- Physical factors affecting performance
- Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology
- Practical performance
- Analysis and evaluation of performance

Assessment:

- Written exam - 60%
- Practical work - 30%
- Coursework - 10%

Why Study PE?

In addition to the core physical education programme, students can opt to study GCSE PE as a KS4 qualification. This is a GCSE option that require prospective students to have **regularly attended extracurricular enrichment after school, represented school in fixtures and regularly take part in sport outside of school.** This is due to the high levels of practical performance required across three different activities.

What Will Students Learn?

COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT	MARK
<p>Physical Factors Affecting Performance</p> <p>1.1 Applied anatomy and physiology skeletal system, muscular system, movement analysis, cardiovascular system, respiratory system, effects of exercise</p> <p>1.2 Physical training Components of fitness, principles of training, types of training, prevention of injury</p>	Written paper 1 hour 60 marks	30%
<p>Socio-cultural Issues and Sports Psychology</p> <p>2.1 Socio-cultural influences Engagement patterns in physical activity, Commercialisation of sport, ethical and socio-cultural issues in sport</p> <p>2.2 Sports psychology Characteristics of skillful movement, Classification of skills, goal setting, mental preparation, feedback and guidance</p> <p>2.3 Health, fitness and well-being Physical, social and emotional health, diet and nutrition</p>	Written paper 1 hour 60 marks	30%
<p>Practical Performances</p> <p>This component will assess core and advanced skills in three activities taken from the approved activity list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One from the 'individual' list • One from the 'team' list • One from either list 	Non-exam assessment (NEA) 20 marks x3 sports	30% (10% for each sport)
<p>Analysis and Evaluation of Performance</p> <p>This component draws upon the knowledge, understanding and skills a student has learnt and enables them to analyse and evaluate their own performance in one activity and design an action plan for improvement of a skill or component of fitness.</p>	Non-exam assessment (NEA) 20 marks	10%



Accepted List of Practical Activities:

TEAM ACTIVITIES	INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES	SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES
<p>Acrobat Gymnastics (cannot be assessed with gymnastics)</p> <p>Association Football (cannot be five-a-side or assessed with futsal)</p> <p>Badminton (cannot be assessed with singles)</p> <p>Basketball</p> <p>Camogie (cannot be assessed with hurling)</p> <p>Cricket</p> <p>Dance (this can only be used for one activity)</p> <p>Figure Skating (this can only be used for one activity)</p> <p>Futsal (cannot be assessed with football)</p> <p>Gaelic Football</p> <p>Handball</p> <p>Hockey (must be field hockey, not ice hockey or roller hockey)</p> <p>Hurling (cannot be assessed with camogie)</p> <p>Ice Hockey (cannot be assessed with inline roller hockey)</p> <p>Inline Roller Hockey (cannot be assessed with ice hockey)</p> <p>Lacrosse</p> <p>Netball</p> <p>Rowing (cannot be assessed with sculling, canoeing or kayaking. This can only be used for one activity)</p> <p>Rugby League - (cannot be assessed with rugby union or rugby sevens - cannot be tag rugby)</p> <p>Rugby Union - (can be assessed as sevens or fifteen a side. Cannot be assessed with rugby league, cannot be tag rugby. This can only be used for one activity)</p> <p>Sailing</p> <p>Sculling</p> <p>Squash - (cannot be assessed with singles)</p> <p>Table Tennis - (cannot be assessed with singles)</p> <p>Tennis - (cannot be assessed with singles)</p> <p>Volleyball</p> <p>Water Polo</p>	<p>Amateur Boxing</p> <p>Athletics</p> <p>Badminton (cannot be assessed with doubles)</p> <p>Boccia</p> <p>Canoeing (cannot be assessed with kayaking, rowing or sculling)</p> <p>Cross Country Running</p> <p>Cycling (track or road cycling only)</p> <p>Dance (this can only be used for one activity)</p> <p>Diving</p> <p>Equestrian</p> <p>Figure Skating</p> <p>Golf</p> <p>Gymnastics (floor routines and apparatus only)</p> <p>Kayaking (cannot be assessed with canoeing, rowing or sculling)</p> <p>Rock Climbing (can be indoor or outdoor)</p> <p>Sailing</p> <p>Sculling (cannot be assessed with rowing, canoeing or kayaking)</p> <p>Skiing (outdoor/indoor on snow; cannot be assessed with snowboarding. Must not be dry slopes)</p> <p>Snowboarding</p> <p>Squash (cannot be assessed with doubles)</p> <p>Swimming (not synchronised swimming)</p> <p>Table Tennis (cannot be assessed with doubles)</p> <p>Tennis (cannot be assessed with doubles)</p> <p>Trampolining</p> <p>Windsurfing</p>	<p>Blind Cricket</p> <p>Goal Ball</p> <p>Polybat</p> <p>Powerchair Football</p> <p>Table Cricket</p> <p>Wheelchair Basketball</p> <p>Wheelchair Rugby</p>



GCSE TEXTILES

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:
Jo Armitage

Examination Board:
AQA

We actively encourage students to attend sessions after school to make use of the facilities at school.

Areas of Study:

Wide range of textile techniques and processes including printing, embroidery, felting, applique and construction techniques.

Assessment:

- Component 1: Portfolio, 60%
- Component 2: Externally set assignment, 40% (ten hour session taking place over two days in exam conditions)



Why Study Textiles?

Studying textiles gives students the opportunity to develop practical skills, problem solve and to express ideas and use visual language. They will be encouraged to become independent learners, to take risks and they will acquire the ability to investigate, analyse and experiment. Students opting for the subject should be creative thinkers who are prepared to get stuck in and give it their very best. It is a very time-consuming subject, but many textiles' students enjoy dedicating time to their work and often find it good for their wellbeing. All projects cover various skills and offers opportunities for each student to develop their work in a personal way. Textiles enables students to progress into a wide range of careers in field such as design, illustration, marketing, buying, manufacturing, merchandising etc. Many past students have gone on to build successful careers in textiles.

What Will Students Learn?

The syllabus encourages the use of a range of textile techniques and processes. Students are inspired to try a bit of everything from printing, embroidery and felting, to applique and construction techniques. This course follows on comfortably from both the KS3 Art and Textiles syllabus so students will recognise tasks such as the research of other artists, designers and cultures, observational drawing from primary and secondary sources, designing and making tasks. Whilst there are no formal written tasks, it is a course requirement for students to analyse and evaluate their work, and the work of a range of artists in the form of personal, analytical annotation. The course depends on students completing a wide range of homework and preparation tasks, some of which can be completed in sessions after school. We actively encourage students to attend these sessions and to make use of the facilities at school.

Assessment

Assessment consists of:

- Component 1: Portfolio, 60%
- Component 2: Externally set assignment, 40%.

Component 1

In Year 9 students will produce work for 2 different projects developing their skills and experimenting with a range of media, refining and building on techniques learnt during KS3 and exploring new techniques and processes.

During Year 10, students work through 2 projects again extending their use of different media and strengthening knowledge and understanding. All work produced in Year 10 will contribute to building their final portfolio of coursework. Each project has been designed to allow each student the freedom to follow different 'paths' to suit their skills and preferences.



In Year 11, all students complete a mock exam project that then becomes the third component of their coursework.

Component 2

The externally set task, unit 2, requires students to pick a starting point for their exam piece from a question paper. These questions are very open ended and allow each student the space to explore and experiment with their ideas whilst using lots of different media, processes and techniques. They are then required to produce a sketchbook documenting all of their ideas and experimentation to support an unaided 10 hour session to complete a final piece(s) of textiles work. This exam takes place over two days in exam conditions, but many students enjoy the experience saying it's a pleasure to have 2 full days of creating and making. All work is then submitted for the final assessment.

The work is marked using 4 assessment objectives based on looking at the work of artists and designer, experimenting with media and refinement of work, making observations by drawing and photography, and producing a personal and meaningful response.

Equipment Required

Due to the nature of the subject, students need access to a range of art and textiles equipment. Students will have the opportunity to purchase good quality art materials and sketchbooks from school at the start of the course at cost price. It would also be highly advantageous to have access to a sewing machine to continue experiments at home.



GCSE TRIPLE SCIENCE

COURSE OVERVIEW

Curriculum Leader:

Laura Petts

Examination Board:

AQA

Triple Science leads to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Triple Science will involve using one enrichment option

Assessment:

- 100% exam based
- Six exam papers - two per subject
- Tiered - higher or foundation

Students who chose triple science as one of their option choices, will change from studying GCSE Combined science to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Why Study Triple Science?

Students who are looking to study the sciences post-16 and demonstrate a particular flair for Science may choose to opt to study 3 GCSEs in the separate Science subjects. Students must use one enrichment option choice for this award it will lead to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Triple Science requires a 'little extra' in terms of enthusiasm and interest and is recommended for those with a strong academic history at KS3. This route provides a seamless transition into AS or A-level Sciences. A large proportion of Triple Science students' progress onto A-level Science courses.

Further details of the courses is available on www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse.

PAPER	CONTENT	EXAM
GCSE Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 - Topics 1-4: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response and Bioenergetics. • Paper 2 - Topics 5-7: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution and Ecology. • 10 compulsory practicals; these are assessed within the written exams. 	2 papers - 1 hour 45 mins each (50% each with 100 marks)
GCSE Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 - Topics 1-5: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; Energy changes. • Paper 2 What's assessed? Topics 6-10: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere and Using resources. • 8 compulsory practicals; these are assessed within the written exams. 	2 papers - 1 hour 45 mins each (50% each with 100 marks)
GCSE Physics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 - Topics 1-4: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter and Atomic structure • Paper 2 - Topics 5-8: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism and Space. • 8 compulsory practicals; these are assessed within the written exams. 	2 papers - 1 hour 45 mins each (50% each with 100 marks)



FURTHER INFORMATION

We hope this booklet has helped you to make an informed decision regarding the options choices.

If you require further information about a subject please contact the curriculum leader for that subject.



If you have a more general query regarding options please contact Mrs Walton (Head of Year 8) or Mr Wood (Assistant Headteacher, Data and Timetabling).

You can also contact the school office via email at office@bishopr.co.uk.



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FORTITER ET FIDELITER
Bravely and Faithfully