



*Year 9*  
*Options & Choices*  
*2024*



*Growing in Body, Mind and Spirit*



# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	Introduction	Page 2
	Compulsory subjects	Page 3
<b>Compulsory Subjects</b>	English Language and Literature	Page 4
	Mathematics	Page 5
	Science	Page 6
	Living Education and Citizenship	Page 8
	Physical Education	Page 9
	Religious Education	Page 10
<b>The Options Process</b>	KS4 option entitlement areas	Page 11
	Option routes	Page 12
	The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)	Page 13
<b>EBacc subjects</b>	Geography	Page 15
	History	Page 17
	Languages	Page 19
<b>Option Subjects</b>	Art and Design (Fine Art)	Page 21
	Art Textiles	Page 22
	Business	Page 23
	Computer Science	Page 24
	Dance	Page 25
	Design and Technology	Page 26
	Food Preparation and Nutrition	Page 27
	BTEC Digital ICT	Page 28
	Music	Page 29
	Music Technology	Page 30
	BTEC Performing Arts	Page 31
	GCSE Physical Education	Page 32
<b>Other Information</b>	Questions for Consideration	Page 33
	Careers Advice	Page 34
	Exam Board Abbreviations	Page 36
	Important Dates	Page 37



## **OUR FUTURE - YOUR CHOICES - YOUR SUCCESS!**

Options Evening is all about providing parents with the information to help you join in the process and support and guide your children in choosing subjects to achieve success at GCSE. Your inclusion in this process helps to further enhance the home-school partnership.

We believe that we cannot offer our pupils a better start in life than a good set of GCSE results. We will do all we can to help and support our pupils. Their choice of subjects studied in Years 10 and 11 is a very important part of this success.

### **CHOICES**

In Years 7-8, pupils have had little choice about which subjects they study. Most of these are specified in the National Curriculum. In Year 9 they have selected a language option and they now have some important decisions to make regarding their other option subjects. Most of the subjects they study are again compulsory, but in Year 10 they will now be able to choose **three** optional subjects which they wish to take to GCSE in Years 10 and 11.

### **GCSE EXAMINATIONS**

No GCSE examination is easy! Pupils will need to work hard at home and be willing to give time, energy and enthusiasm to all their subjects. Whichever route is chosen, we aim for the best possible set of results for each of our pupils.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Vitally important to being successful is actually being in school.

Practice examinations and Non-Exam Assessments (NEA) in certain subjects take place throughout the year and missing these or the lessons that prepare pupils for these examinations can mean the difference between passing and failing the course.

#### **This booklet -**

- Outlines step by step what happens throughout the process
- Gives details of what each subject (both compulsory and optional) consists of
- Outlines the choices that have to be made
- States when the forms must be returned
- Raises issues that should be discussed before choices are made
- States who to contact if assistance or clarification is needed

# WHICH SUBJECTS ARE STUDIED IN YEAR 10?

## Compulsory Subjects

English (GCSE Language and Literature)  
Mathematics  
Science (Combined or Separate 'Triple' Sciences)  
Living Education and Citizenship  
Physical Education  
Religious Education (GCSE)  
Three option choice subjects.

## Option choice routes

Your child will opt for either of the following two routes:

- the EBacc route
- the non-Ebacc route

For information about these routes, please see page 12



## Compulsory Subjects

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE (EDUQAS C700QS & C720QS)

All pupils will gain GCSE qualifications in GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature.

#### GCSE English Language

##### Content

Component 1 – 20<sup>th</sup> century literature reading and creative prose writing (40%)

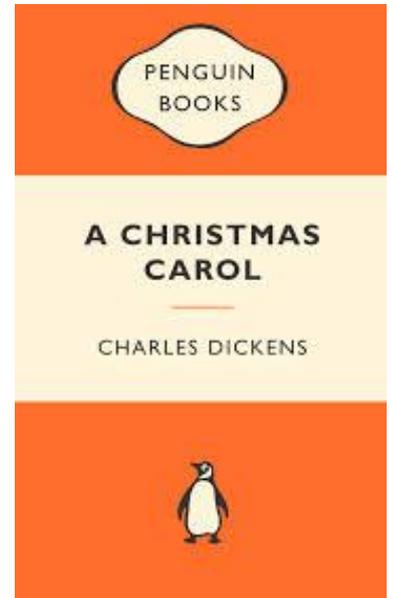
Component 2 – 19<sup>th</sup> century and 21<sup>st</sup> century non-fiction reading and transactional/persuasive writing (60%)

Component 3 – Spoken language: non-exam assessment

##### Assessment

#### English language examinations (100%)

- Component 1: Written exam 1 hour 45 minutes (40%)
- Component 2: Written exam 2 hours (60%)
- Component 3: Spoken language will be assessed separately and will be recorded alongside the GCSE level



#### GCSE English Literature

##### Content

Component 1 – Shakespeare (Macbeth) and poetry from 1789 (40%)

Component 2 – Post 1914 prose/drama (An Inspector Calls), 19<sup>th</sup> century prose (A Christmas Carol), unseen poetry (60%)

##### Assessment

#### English literature examinations (100%)

Component 1: Written exam 2 hours (40%)

Component 2: Written exam 2 hours 30 minutes (60%)

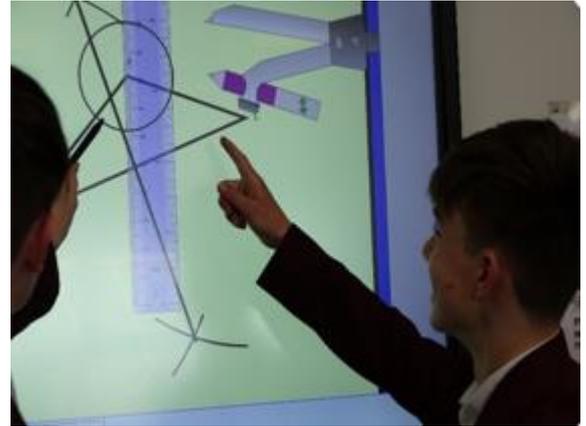


# MATHEMATICS (OCR J560)

## Content

The course is designed to enable pupils to:

- Enjoy their mathematics and make clear links to its use in the real world
- Master and apply numeracy skills
- Solve problems effectively with confidence and reason mathematically
- Further their understanding through discussion and independent learning
- Progress onto further academic or vocational studies



## Course Structure

At present we are following the OCR GCSE (9-1) Mathematics Course (J560). The nature of this course allows for maximum flexibility and enables the department to tailor the studies of each pupil to match their abilities. This has been a key factor in our successes over recent years, allowing every pupil to achieve the best results they can, whatever their ability. Pupils can be entered for either foundation or higher tier with both levels allowing pupils to access a grade 5.

The course will be split into 6-week sections covering the main topic areas. Assessments at various learning checkpoints will be used to inform teachers whether pupils are on track to achieve target grades. These results, alongside ongoing teacher assessment, will decide on the best level of entry for each pupil.

## Assessment

There are three terminal examinations taken at the end of Year 11, which will decide the grade a pupil is awarded.

- **Paper 1 Calculator paper 1 hr 30 mins**
- **Paper 2 Non-calculator paper 1 hr 30 mins**
- **Paper 3 Calculator paper 1 hr 30 mins**

} Each paper is worth  
33.3% of the total GCSE



## SCIENCE

In Year 10 all pupils will receive seven lessons of science per week and the course will cover all three science disciplines: biology, chemistry and physics. At the end of Year 9 pupils will have the opportunity to select to study either Combined Science (Trilogy) or Separate Sciences (Triple Science). Details of both courses are below.



Pupils will continue to be taught as groups of similar ability according to achievement at Key Stage 3 and their predicted attainment level at the end of Key Stage 4. All science GCSEs will have higher and foundation tier papers.

### COMBINED SCIENCE (AQA Trilogy 8464)

#### Double Award

#### Content

Pupils studying the AQA Trilogy Course will cover all three science disciplines: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This is a double award GCSE and pupils will achieve two GCSE grades.

#### Assessment

There is no longer any coursework or non-exam assessment element to the course. Instead, pupils will be assessed on their practical skills within their exams with at least 15% of the marks coming from questions relating to practical skills. To prepare for this and develop pupils' scientific skills they will complete 21 required practical investigations throughout the program of study.

At the end of Year 11 pupils will sit six 1 hour 15 minute exam papers, consisting of two biology, two chemistry and two physics exams. Each exam will be marked out of 70 and will count for 16.7% of the total GCSE.



Combined Science double award provides excellent preparation for all post 16 courses including biology, chemistry, physics, Applied Science, PE, geography and engineering.

# SEPARATE SCIENCES (Triple Science) (AQA 8461, 8462, 8463)

## Biology, Chemistry, Physics

The Triple Science option should only be considered by students who believe they can manage the extra demands of learning a third more content and completing longer terminal exams.



## Content

This is a demanding course because of the pace of the lessons and the extra commitment required. Pupils need to be resourceful and dedicated learners who demonstrate excellent independent study skills.

The course is divided into 3 separate sciences; biology, chemistry and physics and covers similar topics in Combined Science in greater depth and breadth.

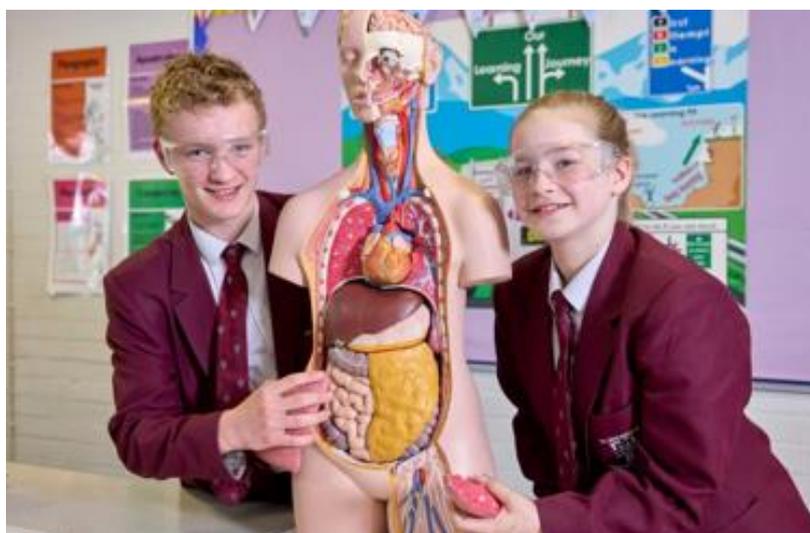
## Assessment

All three GCSE awards: GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics follow a linear exam structure and will all be externally assessed at the end of Year 11. Although there will be no non-exam assessment, pupils will be assessed on their practical skills within their exams with at least 15% of the marks coming from questions relating to practical investigations. To prepare for this and develop pupils' scientific skills they will complete a minimum of 8 required practical investigations in each of the three separate sciences.

Each science has two examination papers of 1 hour 45 minutes.

Triple Science will stretch the most able pupils and may be appropriate (although not essential) for those pupils whose career choice necessitates a focused study of the sciences, or a progression to university to study chemistry, physics, or biology.

**In order to teach the curriculum for the 3 separate sciences compulsory afterschool lessons will be held every Tuesday after school, exact timings to be confirmed (provisionally until 4.45pm).**



# LIVING EDUCATION & CITIZENSHIP

## Content

Reflecting the latest thinking on PSHE, the curriculum is organised into three main areas:

- Health and Wellbeing (Personal identity, Healthy lifestyles, Keeping safe)
- Relationships (Healthy relationships, Relationships and Sex Education, Valuing difference)
- Living in the Wider World (Rights and responsibilities, Economic wellbeing, Employability and Careers)



## Additional Information

As a Church of England high school, it is our firm belief that all young people should be able to think about and discuss events and issues arising from the world around them as they share in the diversity of their community and ultimately the community of God.

Living Education gives pupils the opportunity to understand the importance of tolerance and respect for their neighbours in fostering positive social interactions. In addition, we hope to help pupils understand why people hold different beliefs and express these in different ways through historical events, politics and art.

The Bible clearly states that every individual person is unique and made “in the image of God” and through Living Education at St Michael’s our young people are given the chance to explore how this translates to the world in which they live. This involves classes working through sensitive content and issues in a climate of trust and mutual respect.

The subject aims to consistently challenge prejudice and handles sensitive, controversial and topical issues in ways such that all pupils’ views are valued and given worth. Pupils also learn how to stay safe and develop risk management strategies which they can call upon later in life.

It is our passion to be able to fully develop pupils’ ability to express their own views and consider their personal ideas of spirituality. Living Education (PSHE) seeks to enable them to debate and discuss ultimate questions and bigger life issues with other members of their local communities.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## Content

Physical Education in Year 10 and 11 is compulsory for all pupils. The course is partly school based but good use is made of community facilities too, in order to offer new and diverse opportunities with a view to encouraging future life participation. The pupils are involved in planning, performing and evaluating. The greatest emphasis is placed on the actual performance aspect of the subject. The individual components of the course are drawn from the areas of games, fitness, athletic activities, dance, climbing and swimming.



## Assessment

Pupil assessment is carried out in accordance with the school policy on assessment. This, in line with National Curriculum requirements, is chiefly by teacher observation with some self-assessment via Microsoft Form. The course is not examined externally.

## Additional Information

Some activities will involve pupils visiting sports centres and here, voluntary contributions made by parents will offset the cost of hiring the facilities. Where an activity involves cost, advance warning will be given to parents.

Pupils with a particular interest in this area of the curriculum may refine their skills and extend their experience by taking advantage of the opportunities for extra-curricular sport.



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (AQA Specification A)

## Content



All pupils study RE and will gain a GCSE qualification. RE provides an opportunity to reflect on beliefs and values through the study of two religions and a range of moral issues. Pupils will explore the views of two religions, Christianity and Judaism, and will consider key beliefs and religious practices. They will investigate moral issues in the light of different interpretations of sacred texts and the views of modern religious leaders.

RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' thinking skills and they will develop the ability to analyse and evaluate different arguments. Some pupils have commented on the way in which the thinking skills gained in RE have equipped them for the requirements of A Level, for example, A Level General Studies.

The programme of study will include the following:

### A study of Christianity and Judaism

- Beliefs and teachings
- Practices
- Sources of wisdom and authority
- Forms of expression and ways of life

### A study of moral issues and philosophy

- At least four of the following:
  - Religion and relationships
  - Religion and life
  - The existence of God and revelation
  - Religion, peace and conflict
  - Religion, crime and punishment
  - Religion, human rights and justice



## Assessment

All pupils will work towards a GCSE qualification.

**Two examinations at the end of Year 11 each worth 50% of the overall GCSE. Both examinations are 1 hour 45 mins.**

There is no coursework component to this course.

## Key Stage 4 option 'entitlement areas'

Option subjects in the Key Stage 4 National Curriculum are divided into 'entitlement areas' with the recommendation that pupils selecting their options choose from different 'types' of subject.

The entitlement areas are: (options offered at St Michael's in each entitlement area are in the boxes below)

<b>Humanities</b> History Geography	<b>Languages</b> French German	<b>Arts</b> Dance Music BTEC Performing Arts	<b>Technology</b> Art and Design Art Textiles Food Preparation and Nutrition Design and Technology
---	--------------------------------------	---	--

It is also recommended that schools offer a variety of 'technical' subjects.

<b>Technical subjects</b> GCSE Business Computer Science BTEC Digital ICT NCFE Music Technology GCSE PE
--

The options process at St Michael's is aimed at encouraging pupils to maintain a 'broad and balanced' curriculum, selecting option subjects from a variety of different entitlement areas.

## Option Routes

### The EBacc Route

Pupils who opt for this route will choose to take either combined or separate 'triple' science in their science lessons.

<p><b>CHOICE 1</b> (Choose one:) <i>Geography</i> <i>History</i></p>	<p><b>CHOICE 2</b> (Choose one:) <i>French</i> <i>German</i></p> <p><b>Pupils must have studied the language they chose in Year 9.</b></p>	<p><b>CHOICE 3</b> (Choose one from:)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><i>French</i></td> <td><i>German</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>History</i></td> <td><i>Geography</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>Art and Design OR Art Textiles</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Computer Science</i></td> <td><i>Dance</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>Design &amp; Technology</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>Food Preparation &amp; Nutrition</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>GCSE Business</i></td> <td><i>Music</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>GCSE PE</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>BTEC Performing Arts</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>BTEC Digital ICT</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><i>NCFE Music Technology</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>French</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Geography</i>	<i>Art and Design OR Art Textiles</i>		<i>Computer Science</i>	<i>Dance</i>	<i>Design &amp; Technology</i>		<i>Food Preparation &amp; Nutrition</i>		<i>GCSE Business</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>GCSE PE</i>		 		<i>BTEC Performing Arts</i>		<i>BTEC Digital ICT</i>		<i>NCFE Music Technology</i>	
<i>French</i>	<i>German</i>																									
<i>History</i>	<i>Geography</i>																									
<i>Art and Design OR Art Textiles</i>																										
<i>Computer Science</i>	<i>Dance</i>																									
<i>Design &amp; Technology</i>																										
<i>Food Preparation &amp; Nutrition</i>																										
<i>GCSE Business</i>	<i>Music</i>																									
<i>GCSE PE</i>																										
<i>BTEC Performing Arts</i>																										
<i>BTEC Digital ICT</i>																										
<i>NCFE Music Technology</i>																										

### The Non-EBacc Route

Pupils who opt for this route will choose to take either combined or separate 'triple' science in their science lessons.

<p><b>CHOICE 1</b> (Choose one:) <i>Geography</i> <i>History</i> <i>French</i> <i>German</i></p> <p><b>If selecting a language, pupils must have studied the language they chose in Year 9.</b></p>	<p><b>CHOICES 2 and 3</b> (Choose two)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><i>Geography</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>History</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>French</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>German</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>GCSE PE</i></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Art &amp; Design</i></td> <td><i>OR</i></td> <td><i>Art Textiles</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Design &amp; Technology</i></td> <td><i>OR</i></td> <td><i>Food Preparation and Nutrition</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Dance</i></td> <td><i>OR</i></td> <td><i>BTEC Performing Arts</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Computer Science</i></td> <td><i>OR</i></td> <td><i>BTEC ICT</i>     <i>OR</i>     <i>GCSE Business</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>GCSE Music</i></td> <td><i>OR</i></td> <td><i>NCFE Music Technology</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Geography</i>			<i>History</i>			<i>French</i>			<i>German</i>			<i>GCSE PE</i>			<i>Art &amp; Design</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Art Textiles</i>	<i>Design &amp; Technology</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Food Preparation and Nutrition</i>	<i>Dance</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>BTEC Performing Arts</i>	<i>Computer Science</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>BTEC ICT</i> <i>OR</i> <i>GCSE Business</i>	<i>GCSE Music</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>NCFE Music Technology</i>
<i>Geography</i>																															
<i>History</i>																															
<i>French</i>																															
<i>German</i>																															
<i>GCSE PE</i>																															
<i>Art &amp; Design</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Art Textiles</i>																													
<i>Design &amp; Technology</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Food Preparation and Nutrition</i>																													
<i>Dance</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>BTEC Performing Arts</i>																													
<i>Computer Science</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>BTEC ICT</i> <i>OR</i> <i>GCSE Business</i>																													
<i>GCSE Music</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>NCFE Music Technology</i>																													

Pupils selecting to follow the non-EBacc route are encouraged to choose options from the different 'entitlement areas,' maintaining the curriculum breadth and depth and avoiding selecting subjects with too similar content and skill coverage.

## **THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE / the 'EBacc' route**

We would expect all pupils who have a target of a grade 5 in a language and History and/or Geography to seriously consider following the EBacc route.

### **What is the EBacc?**

The 'English Baccalaureate' or 'EBacc' is a combination of subjects the Government believes provide a 'broad and balanced' education.

To achieve the EBacc pupils must gain at least a Grade 5 in the following:

- Mathematics
- English Language / English Literature and both must be studied
- 2 Sciences (Combined, Separate or Computer Science)
- A Humanities subject (History or Geography)
- A Foreign Language

The EBacc has been awarded since 2010 when it was introduced as a school performance measure, but since 2015 there has been significant emphasis placed on pupils achieving the EBacc combination at GCSE, with the Government saying their ultimate intention is for 90% of pupils nationally taking this combination with only a small minority being able to 'opt out.'

St Michael's is in the top 100 schools nationally, meaning it would be 100% of our pupils who should be being 'stretched and challenged' by taking this combination.

Pupils at St Michael's will all take GCSE Maths, English Language, English Literature and Sciences, whether separate Sciences or combined.

To achieve the EBacc, pupils must select as two of their three choices:

- a language GCSE (either French or German)
- a humanities subject GCSE (either History or Geography)

### **Why choose the EBacc route?**

The EBacc represents a set of GCSE subjects that will ensure young people have plenty of options for their further education and future career. The subjects of the EBacc are considered to be the 'academic' choices; the subjects which provide a broad and balanced education and the key skills for future success.

At launch, the government linked the GCSE subjects in the EBacc to the Russell Group's list of so-called 'facilitating subjects.'

## Universities and A Levels

There are presently no universities that specify their entry requirements would give preference to pupils who have achieved the EBacc combination of subjects at GCSE.

Most university websites do, however, state that the EBacc subjects taken as A levels happen to be the ones most regularly asked for by college and university courses.

From the website 'Apply to Uni' it states:

'The *English Baccalaureate* is not a qualification. However, by taking the subjects outlined in the English Baccalaureate, **you will be giving yourself the best options and opportunities for further education**, by ensuring you have the broad base of core academic **subjects that universities and colleges prefer.**'

It is the position of the governing board that all option subjects at GCSE should be open to a free choice. However, the minimum EBacc uptake at St Michael's, as agreed with the governing board, is 50%, with the current staffing and timetable appropriate to this curriculum. With our high academic intake of pupils, we continue to signpost the EBacc subjects and to provide pupils with the best advice and guidance to support their next steps.

The destinations data and examination outcomes demonstrate that pupils achieve well and go on to aspirational and sustained pathways for further study. This demonstrates that the curriculum offer is broad, balanced and fit for purpose.

### **Not thinking of higher education / university?**

Some pupils will not wish to continue education to college or university level and may look to take up an apprenticeship. They may feel this approach is less applicable to them. It is St Michael's policy to offer equal opportunities for all and we would also encourage them to think carefully about studying the EBacc.

### **Further reading / information:**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/761031/DfE\\_EBacc\\_Leaflet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761031/DfE_EBacc_Leaflet.pdf)

<http://www.applytouni.com/courses/languages/english-baccalaureate/>

# Subjects of the EBacc: Humanities

## GEOGRAPHY (Edexcel Geography A 1GA0)



### Content

Pupils will appreciate the relevance of Geography in our changing world and will gain an understanding of the interaction of people and the environment.

The course provides opportunities to study both Physical and Human Geography. Pupils will collect and analyse fieldwork data in preparation

for the Geographical Investigations exam. The following topics will be studied:

- The Physical Environment
  - The Changing Landscapes of the UK
  - Weather Hazards and Climate Change
  - Ecosystems, Biodiversity and Management
- The Human Environment
  - Changing Cities
  - Global Development
  - Resource Management
- Geographical Investigations
  - Fieldwork in Physical Environments (River Wyre)
  - Fieldwork in Human Environments (Grasmere – Completed in Y9)
  - UK Challenges



### Assessment

In Geography we intend to follow the Edexcel GCSE Geography A specification (1GA0). Pupils will have three written exams at the end of Year 11.

- Paper 1 – The Physical Environment (37.5%) – 1hr 30min
- Paper 2 – The Human Environment (37.5%) – 1hr 30min
- Paper 3 – Geographical Investigations (25%) – 1hr 30min

## **Why study Geography?**

Studying Geography will help pupils progress as independent learners. They will become critical and reflective thinkers and will develop enquiring minds. It also helps develop communication and teamwork skills.

Pupils will also develop research and analysis skills, with fieldwork enabling pupils to collect and look for patterns in data.

Employers love the mix of technical and social skills people get from studying Geography, which they see as very transferable.

## **Geography can lead to a career in:**

Business

Exporting and importing

Travel and tourism

Logistics

Architecture

Planning

Land management

Surveying

Geology

Conservation



# HISTORY (Edexcel 1H10)

## Content

Pupils will cover a broad range of historical periods whilst studying this GCSE, including:

### **Medicine in Britain c.1250-present & The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918: Injuries, treatment and the trenches.**

Ideas about the causes of disease and illness through time.

Approaches to prevention and treatment of disease and illness.

A range of case studies, including; the Black Death, The Great Plague & Smallpox.



### **Henry VIII and his ministers, 1509-1540**

Henry VIII & Wolsey 1509-1529, including; Henry the Renaissance Prince, Wolsey's rise to power, foreign and domestic policies, reasons for fall from power.

Henry VIII and Cromwell 1529-1540, including; Cromwell's rise to power, fall of Anne Boleyn, Anne of Cleves marriage and Cromwell's downfall.

The Reformation and its impact, 1529-1540, including; the break from Rome, opposition to religious change, Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Pilgrimage of Grace.

### **Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939**

The Weimar Republic 1918-1929

Hitler's rise to power, 1919-1933

Nazi control and dictatorship, 1933-1939

Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939

### **Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-1991**

Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1958

Cold War crises, 1958-1970, including; Cuban Missile Crisis, the Berlin Wall and the Prague Spring

The end of the Cold War, 1970-1991, including; Détente, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Regan and Gorbachev

## Assessment

Pupils are assessed through linear examinations at the end of the two year course. Pupils sit three separate exam papers, each focusing on specific course content and evaluating certain historical skills.

Paper 1: Thematic study & Historic Environment (1 hour 15 minutes, 30% of qualification).

Paper 2: Period study & British Depth Study (1 hour 45 minutes, 40% of qualification).

Paper 3: Modern Depth study (1 hour 20 minutes, 30% of qualification).

### **Why study History?**

Pupils will learn about specific key events, eras and societies in national and world history. They will be aware of the reasons people, events and developments are accorded historical significance.

Pupils will be encouraged to examine evidence, think critically and reach their own conclusions about the past. They will be analytical, reflective learners, growing in confidence and independence and presenting their arguments convincingly.

### **History can lead to a career in:**

Law

Journalism

Police

Politics

National and local government

Armed forces

Teaching

Archaeology

Heritage



## Subjects of the EBacc: Languages

### FRENCH (Edexcel)

### GERMAN (Edexcel)

Both languages have the same content and examination structure. Pupils must have studied the language in Year 9 to take it in Year 10.

This is a brand new GCSE course, designed to engage pupils with topics and skills which are relevant to their current and future needs.

#### Content

The course consists of thematic contexts which include:

- My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, studying and my future
- My neighbourhood, travel and tourism
- Media and technology



Students will use all the grammar and vocabulary taught within these contexts to listen, read, speak and write about different subjects, which include:

Family, friends, equality, TV & film, music, sports, food & drink, mental & physical wellbeing, shopping, social media & gaming, tourist attractions and the natural world.

#### Assessment

All four skills will be examined at the end of Year 11.

Each paper is worth **25%** of the overall GCSE grade. Pupils can be entered at either Foundation or Higher tier with both levels allowing pupils to access a grade 5.

Listening: Pupils are required to listen to a recording and answer questions in English. There is also a dictation section where pupils write what they hear (single words and full sentences)

Reading: Pupils are required to answer questions in English about a range of texts. They are also required to translate into English.

Speaking: This examination is conducted with the class teacher in Year 11. Pupils must read aloud a short passage, take part in a role play, describe a picture and take part in a conversation.

Writing: Pupils must write using a range of grammar and vocabulary to answer set bullet points. They must also complete a translation into French / German.



## Why study a language?

Languages give pupils the edge because they are academically rigorous and challenging to learn and therefore not mastered by many. In applying yourself to a second language, we improve our aptitude for study itself, especially our listening and communication abilities.

When you learn one language, your brain is hardwired to a specific skill set, so the next language will actually become much easier to absorb - your brain is actually just built to learn yet another new language.

Employers are also increasingly seeking out candidates with language qualifications and the rapidly changing global job market means language-related jobs are booming.

It is easy to fall back on outdated excuses like 'Everybody speaks English' or 'English is the world language!' Plans were recently announced that French could be set to replace English as the official working language of the EU. In this increasingly globalised world, it has been suggested that languages have become like currency - the more you speak, the higher your value rises.

### Languages can lead to a career in:

Business

Exporting and importing

Travel and tourism

Digital marketing

Social media

Sales

Translating

Technology

Engineering

Teaching



## Other option subjects

### ART AND DESIGN (FINE ART - AQA 8202)

#### Content

This Art and Design course explores practical, critical and contextual work through a range of 2D and 3D processes. During the two year course pupils will be introduced to a variety of experiences using a range of media, processes and techniques and will be encouraged to explore different ways of working. For example: drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking and mixed media. Pupils will demonstrate these skills through the development, refinement, recording, realisation and presentation of their ideas through a portfolio and by responding to an externally set assignment at the end of the course.

In Year 10 pupils will work on a number of different projects which will help them to develop their drawing skills as well as introducing them to a variety of artists and new and exciting techniques.

The work is all practical.

#### Assessment

##### Component 1:

##### Portfolio, 60% of GCSE marks

This will comprise of two projects each covering a different theme. Each project will require detailed research, planning and preparatory sketches leading to finished pieces of work. This work will be carried out in both class work and home learning.

##### Component 2:

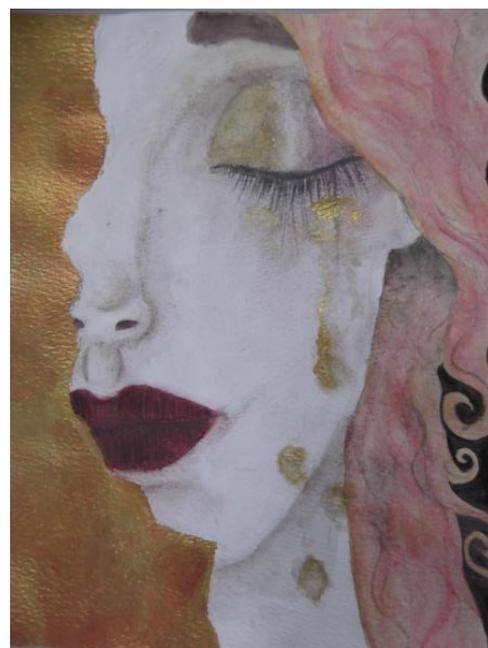
##### Externally Set Assignment, 40% of GCSE marks

There will be a ten hour supervised task under examination conditions. This is a practical task with several weeks of preparation time. There is no written examination.

Where can Art lead to?

Any job/career that requires aesthetic judgement, for example: Advertising, marketing, publishing, illustration, architect, art therapy, window dresser, museum work, shop buyer, designer (interior, fashion, graphic, exhibition, textile), artist, teacher, curator, landscape gardener, hairdresser...the list is endless.

*Pupils who study Art and Design will not be able to study Art Textiles.*



## ART TEXTILES (AQA - 8204)



### Content

This is a creative course which gives pupils the opportunity to develop skills using a wide range of textile materials and techniques. Pupils do not need any previous experience of textiles and fabrics to choose this course. All necessary skills will be taught using equipment in school. Pupils just need enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to learn.

### Pupils will:

- Learn how to develop creative ideas through investigating artists and designers, both historical and contemporary
- Develop skills when using a wide range of decorative textile techniques including computerised machinery
- Learn how to record ideas, observations and insights as their creative work progresses
- Learn how to make original final products including garments



### Assessment

100% practical work - there is no written examination for GCSE Art Textiles.

- Component 1 is worth 60% - Portfolio Project work
- Component 2 is worth 40% - Externally set assignment

In the externally set assignment pupils choose from a number of different starting points and complete work over the period of one term. There is then a ten hour practical exam split over two days, when pupils produce a textiles piece under exam conditions.

Final assessment takes place when, at the end of Year 11, pupils put up an exhibition of their best work, from all projects and assignments. This is then internally assessed and standardised before being externally assessed by an AQA moderator and a final grading level awarded by the exam board AQA.

*Pupils who wish to study Art Textiles will not be able to study Art and Design.*



# BUSINESS (Pearson Edexcel 1BS0)

GCSE Business aims to provide pupils with an in-depth understanding of the business world and is an ideal option for all budding entrepreneurs!

Pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of key business areas including; qualities of an entrepreneur, business operations, marketing, human resources, finance and strategies which enable a business to start, survive and continue to grow into global empires.

Studying business will teach pupils a wide range of skills and knowledge that will support their development into a variety of different career paths such as: accountancy, advertising, banking, investment and financial services, general management, HR/personnel, management consultancy, public relations, retail management and more.

*There is a large amount of maths within the specification, so pupils need to enjoy this subject area if opting to study GCSE Business.*

## Content

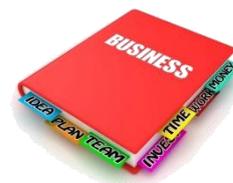
- Theme 1 - Investigating Small Businesses
  - Enterprise and entrepreneurship
  - Spotting a business opportunity
  - Putting a business idea into practice
  - Making the business effective
  - Understanding external influences on business
- Theme 2 - Building A Business
  - Growing the business
  - Making marketing decisions
  - Making operational decisions
  - Making financial decisions
  - Making human resource decisions



## Assessment

Pupils will have two written exams at the end of Year 11.

- Paper 1 (Theme 1 Content) – 50% (90marks) 1hr 45min
- Paper 2 (Theme 2 Content) – 50% (90marks) 1hr 45min



Both exams will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended writing questions.

# COMPUTER SCIENCE (OCR J277)

## Content

The OCR GCSE in computer science course is suitable for anyone who has a keen interest in how a computer works, including topics on abstraction, decomposition, logic algorithms and data representation. This course also includes analysing problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems including designing, writing and debugging programs in a text based programming language (Python).

## Assessment

The course is broken down into two written exams of equal weighting.

### Paper 1 Computer Systems (50% 80 marks)

This component will assess:

- 1.1 Systems architecture
- 1.2 Memory and storage
- 1.3 Computer networks, connections and protocols
- 1.4 Network security
- 1.5 System software
- 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technologies



### Paper 2 Computational thinking, algorithms and Programming (50% 80 marks)

This component will assess:

- 2.1 Algorithms
- 2.2 Programming fundamentals
- 2.3 Producing robust programs
- 2.4 Boolean logic
- 2.5 Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

## Where can Computer Science lead?

Any job/career that requires computational thinking, problem solving and programming skills. Some example jobs are: games/app developer, web developer, systems analyst, engineer, programmer, networks manager, software architect, data scientist.

# DANCE (AQA 8236)

## Content

Dance in Years 10-11 continues as a predominantly practical subject, developing the skills acquired in Years 7, 8 and 9 with pupils having the opportunity to study a variety of dance styles. Pupils will be taught to choreograph solo, duet and group dances, they will become confident and competent performers and develop the ability to analyse and interpret dance. Dance theory and evaluative skills are an important part of developing a knowledge and understanding of dance techniques and an appreciation of dance as an expressive art form.

Pupils who opt for this subject must have a genuine interest in dance and they must be prepared to give their own time after school to develop skills. This is not a subject for the faint hearted and is also not just a subject for girls!

## Assessment

### **Practical (60% of the overall GCSE)**

#### **Performance 30%**

1. Two short solo performances where pupils replicate two set phases of movement created by the exam board (Scoop and Flux). This is worth 12 marks.
2. Two different phases (Shift and Breathe) are used as the starting point for a duet performance between 3 and 5 minutes long. This is worth 24 marks.

#### **Choreography 30%**

Pupils can choose to create either a solo or group choreography based on a brief provided by the exam board in the September prior to examination. Pupils are assessed on their ability to choreograph a dance to show an intention. The solo must be 2 ½ minutes long and the group choreography (of 2-5 dancers) 3 minutes long. This is worth 40 marks in total.

### **Theory (40% of the overall GCSE)**

#### **Written paper = 40% of final mark – 1 ½ hour exam**

The theory exam paper is worth 80 marks and will test candidates on the following:

- Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills
- Critical appreciation of six professional dance works. This includes a study of movement, set design, costume, lighting and musical accompaniment of a variety of dance styles
- Their own practical work



## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (AQA 8552)

Design and Technology gives young people the skills and abilities to engage positively with the designed and made world and to harness the benefits of technology. They learn how products and systems are designed and manufactured, how to be innovative and to make creative use of a variety of resources including digital technologies, to improve the world around them.

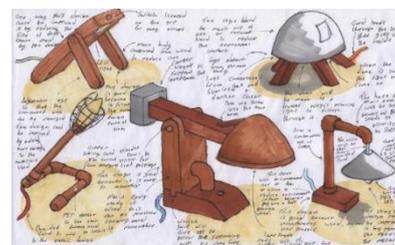
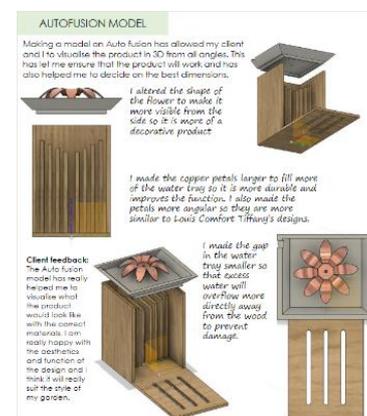
### Content

- Presentation and communication techniques including 3D sketching, technical drawing and marker rendering
- Understanding of social, moral and environmental issues which affect designers, companies and consumers
- Developing knowledge of materials such as woods, plastics, metals and textiles as well as smart and modern materials
- CAD/CAM software such as Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, 2d Design and Onshape
- Manufacturing skills; anything from joinery to 3D printing
- Minor projects will include a modern lighting solution, pewter cast jewellery, and inclusive kitchen utensils



### Assessment

- There is a theory exam which is worth 50% of the overall GCSE.
- The non-exam assessment is also worth 50%. This will begin towards the end of Year 10 and will be completed by Easter in Year 11. The contexts will change each year but the focus will be on solving real problems and meeting the needs of a client.



### Additional Information

Graduates taking degrees in design, engineering and architecture feature highest on a recent survey of employment rates after University.

Design and Technology gives the pupils the skills necessary to access these career opportunities. However, it also equips pupils with many transferable skills such as problem solving, team work and thinking creatively that are encouraged in any career choice.

## **FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION (EDUQAS C560)**

This GCSE course is for pupils who enjoy cooking. It provides opportunities for them to develop their cooking skills further and experiment with ingredients. It teaches them how to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and provides the knowledge they need to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and in later life.



Studying Food Preparation and Nutrition can lead to a variety of well-paid career options. This course could lead pupils into roles such as a Chef, Restaurant Manager, Sports Nutritionist, NHS Dietician or Nutritionist, Teacher, Food Product Developer, Food Buyer, Food Safety Inspector, Quality Manager, Food Technologist, Food Scientist, Microbiologist and many more.

This course will also allow pupils at 16+ to progress onto a variety of vocational courses including Chef Diplomas and Catering and Professional Chef Apprenticeships. With traditional A levels in Science, progression onto a range of University degree courses is possible for example; Nutrition, Food Science or Dietetics degrees.

### **Content**

The course is divided into six areas of study:

1. Food commodities - Food groups and ingredients
2. Principles of nutrition – The role of the main nutrients in the diet
3. Diet and good health – Energy requirements, planning balanced diets and nutritional analysis
4. The science of food – The effect of cooking food, food spoilage, food safety and hygiene
5. Where food comes from – Food provenance, environmental issues and food manufacturing
6. Cooking and food preparation – Food choice, making recipes and developing recipes and meals

### **Assessment**

All pupils will complete:

- A written examination, 1 hour 45 minutes (50% of the overall GCSE grade)

Non-examination assessment (50% of the overall GCSE grade)

## **BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology (Edexcel: 603/7050/6)**

Digital skills span all industries, and almost all jobs in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy. The BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology gives pupils a broad introduction to several aspects of 'digital' – from user experience and interface design to data management and IT systems.



### **Content**

Using realistic vocational contexts, pupils will have the opportunity to explore, develop and apply highly sought-after key skills such as data management and data protection, project planning, and the design of user interfaces and dashboards as a way to present and interpret data. They'll learn about the iterative design process, cyber security, virtual teams, codes of conduct, and legal and ethical issues. In addition, pupils will gain an understanding of relevant employability skills and personal attributes, such as self-management and communication skills and the ability and willingness to evaluate and critically analyse their own performance. The course consists of three components:

#### **Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques**

Pupils will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project. They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface.

#### **Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data**

Pupils will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making. They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information.

#### **Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices**

Pupils will explore how organisations use digital systems and the wider implications associated with their use.

### **Assessment**

This is a Level 2 qualification and results are awarded on the following grading system: Level 2 Distinction\*, Level 2 Distinction, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Pass, Level 1 Distinction, Level 1 Merit, and Level 1 Pass.

Component 1: Project set by Pearson, internally assessed and externally moderated (30% of the qualification)

Component 2: Project set by Pearson, internally assessed and externally moderated (30% of the qualification)

Component 3: 1 ½ hour written exam (40% of the qualification)

# MUSIC (AQA 8271)



## Content

Music is offered as a GCSE examination subject with opportunities to pursue additional courses leading to specialised examinations. The course is designed for all abilities, aiming to provide knowledge and understanding and to develop skills as a basis for further study or leisure or both.

The GCSE course is very much a continuation of the work done in Years 7 - 9 with an aim to promoting an appreciation and enjoyment of music through three activities – Understanding Music, Performing and Composing.

Pupils will be expected to perform both as individuals and within small ensembles and to prepare compositions of different styles and genres.

They will also study and experience a wide variety of musical styles including Popular, Traditional and Classical and will appraise a range of specified study pieces.

## GCSE Assessment

### Component 1 Understanding Music 40%

1 ½ hour written paper which focuses on Listening and Contextual Understanding of the specified study pieces.

### Component 2 Performing 30%

Two pieces (one solo and one as an ensemble). Total performance time must be a minimum of 4 minutes. These are internally assessed and externally moderated.



### Component 3 Composing 30%

Two compositions, one being a free choice and one to be based on a brief set by the exam board. Combined composition time must be over 3 minutes. These are internally assessed and externally moderated.

Pupils will be given opportunities to expand their musical experience through concert visits and workshops and would be expected to show their interest in music through involvement in any of the many extra-curricular activities offered at St Michael's.



# MUSIC TECHNOLOGY (603/7008/7)

## NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Music Technology

This is a vocational qualification and successful pupils will be awarded: NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Music Technology.

### Content

This course focuses on aspects of technology used within the music industry and enables pupils to achieve a nationally recognised Level 1 or 2 qualification.

It is predominantly a practical exploration of music technology, with pupils working at Digital Audio Workstations to develop recording, composing and mixing skills, working with both MIDI and audio applications.

Pupils will study 5 units of work:

1. Introduction to music technology and the music business
2. The Digital Audio Workstation
3. Musical elements, musical styles and music technology
4. Multi-track recording
5. Sound Creation – Film and Animation music

### Coursework and Assessment

Evidence of progress will be presented by the way of a portfolio for which pupils will be required to make use of ICT for research and presentation. Portfolios must show both work in progress and completed assignments; this can be in the form of video and/or audio recordings, short reports, specific assignment notes, observation records, discussion notes and class presentations.

The course is assessed in 2 ways:

- A 1½ hour written assessment including listening examples, assessing the knowledge and skills gained throughout the course
- A 17 hour practical non-exam synoptic project, evaluating the application of these skills

Pupils can achieve a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction Plus grade.

### Assessment Summary

17 hour non exam synoptic project	60%
1½ hour written exam	40%



## **BTEC TECHNICAL AWARD IN PERFORMING ARTS Level 1/Level 2**

### **Content**

Pupils will enjoy this course if they want to study a subject that is both practical and creative.

The aim of this course is for pupils to explore and develop a wide variety of skills for a successful performance. They learn to work co-operatively with people to acquire and develop the skills of an actor, director and performance support artists. They will explore and perform the work of established practitioners and devise their own work.



The qualification is the equivalent to a GCSE in Drama and is an established foundation for higher level study in the Performing Arts. Whilst this is a Performing Arts qualification, the key focus at St Michael's will be on Drama as we already offer KS4 qualifications in Dance, Music and Music Technology.

In order to successfully complete this course, pupils must be prepared to spend time after school preparing performances with other members of their group.

### **Assessment**

- **Component 1: Exploring the Performing Arts**

This is worth 30% and is internally assessed through written evidence.

This assessment is based on an investigation of the styles, creative intentions and roles undertaken by professional practitioners when they create a performance.

- **Component 2: Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts**

This is worth 30% and is internally assessed.

The assessment is based on pupils developing and reviewing their own Performing Arts skills and recreating a piece of the established theatre repertoire.

- **Component 3: Performing to a Brief**

This is worth 40%. It is an externally set task where students respond to a brief and must create a group performance piece within a set time frame. The work is marked by an external examiner.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Pearson Edexcel 1PE0)

Physical Education can also be taken as an examination subject. Pupils will follow a course to GCSE level as well as participating in the compulsory Core Physical Education course described previously.

## Content

Pupils will choose **three physical activities** from a set list. One must be a team activity, one must be an individual activity, and the final activity will be a free choice from either category. The list of sports we are able to offer is available on request. Pupils are able to be assessed externally providing they meet the strict criteria and the sport is on the Government's approved sports list. There is a piece of coursework completed under supervision. Pupils will have to do the research and gather evidence prior to writing the supervised piece. These together are worth 40% of the GCSE.

N.B. There is a considerable amount of theory and an interest in science would be an advantage.

## Assessment

- **Practical coursework** 30% (105 marks)
- **Written coursework** 10% (20 marks)
- **Written examination** 60% (160 marks)

The written examination consists of two papers. One is a 1 ½ hours paper on fitness and the body systems (36% of the overall qualification – 80 marks) and the other paper is 1 ¼ hours (24% of the qualification – 60 marks).

## Additional Information

The GCSE Physical Education course is there to attract pupils with particular skills in this area and could prove particularly useful if career aspirations are directed towards teaching, physiotherapy or working in the leisure industry. Pupils must be physically capable of participating in the activities at a competent level and must show a commitment to the acquisition of theoretical understanding of the subject. This written aspect is an integral part of the course and necessary for success at GCSE.



A keen interest and willingness to represent school teams and attend practices regularly would be expected of those who opt for this course to help consolidate skills previously learned and would be advantageous in the final practical analysis.



### Questions for Consideration

*Questions your child needs to discuss with you before making a choice*

- **Is the course suitable for me? Is it a subject I can do?**

- **Do I like the subject I am choosing?**

- **Do I need a particular subject for a chosen career?** (Check with Miss Curtis if you are unsure)

- **Am I choosing it only because my friends are?**

(This is not a good idea: Friends can change and in any case they cannot do your work for you. Also, you may not be placed in the same group).

- **Am I choosing it just because I like the teacher?**

(This is not a good idea: You may not have the same teacher next year).

- **How much time am I prepared to give to each subject?**

(If you are thinking of taking a subject to GCSE you need to be willing and able to commit time to it. Learning for lessons needs to be done at home, so will the learning and revising for the examinations. Your attendance needs to be good).

- **Will the subjects I have chosen, limit my choice of career or further education course?** (Check with Miss Curtis if you are unsure)

- **How many GCSE subjects will I be studying?**

In Year 10 you will select THREE choices following either the EBacc or Non-EBacc route. All pupils on both routes will study NINE GCSEs, however, pupils who choose to study Separate (Triple) Sciences will study ten GCSEs. Colleges and universities are agreed that it is the QUALITY not the QUANTITY that is important.



## **Important Information**

Please be aware of the following -

- We do everything to ensure the vast majority of our pupils are allocated their first and second choices.
- We do not decide in advance which subject combinations will be possible - we choose the best combinations that match the most pupils' choices.
- Some pupils may be disappointed - if this happens we will try our very best to offer a suitable alternative.
- If the numbers selecting a particular course are small, the course may not run.
- Place your choices in preference order. If there is a clash, pupils will always be allocated to their first choice.

## **Careers Advice**

- How many GCSEs do you need to be a dentist?
- What grade do you need to achieve in Mathematics to train as a nursery nurse?
- Why is science important to photographers?
- Is it a good idea to study a T-level?
- Which subjects can you study at A-level without having studied them at GCSE?
- Are there any GCSE subjects that prestigious universities have blacklisted which could affect my chances for entry in the future?

### **How do I get the answers to questions like these?**

You are not alone if you find the idea of making your options choices a bit scary, but it is actually your opportunity to take control of your education and shape the way you want your future to be.

The options you choose in Year 9 will affect how you spend your time at school for the next three years. The choices you make may also influence what course or job you decide to do after you leave school or college.

All pupils in Year 9 will have a chance to think about the choices available to them in careers lessons delivered as part of Living Education. They also explore the available Post-16 options available to them and learn about the variety of different courses on offer.

Miss Curtis has responsibility for Careers Education within school and liaises closely with Claire Easterbrook, our Careers Advisor, who visits school twice weekly. Mrs Easterbrook also offers drop-in advice sessions to support Year 9 pupils in making their options choices. Individual careers interviews can also be arranged for any pupils who might need some extra information, advice and guidance and these can be organised through tutors.

In addition, pupils are being encouraged to use an online careers resource known as Unifrog. Pupils can navigate the site by completing a series of questions to explore more about their likes and dislikes. Unifrog allows young people to access information about where particular GCSE subjects could lead including further education and specific professions. Pupils can use the software to explore careers they are interested in to discover what GCSE, A-Level or even Degree subjects are required to continue their training and development in a particular field. The use of this software allows young people to take control and aim high by exploring the opportunities open to them as well as developing their ability to be self-reflective about what careers or further education options may best suit their interests.

Each pupil in Year 9 will receive information about this resource in their Living Education and Curriculum Enrichment lesson this year. The website can be accessed via the main Unifrog website.

We hope you will enjoy making full use of this exciting resource with your children and will be able to support them in exploring their future dreams and career aspirations using all the resources on offer through school

## **Examination Board Abbreviations**

AQA	Assessment & Qualifications Alliance
OCR	Oxford, Cambridge & RSA Examining Group
EDUQAS/WJEC	Welsh Joint Education Committee
EDEXCEL	University of London Examinations & Assessment Council
NCFE	Northern Council for Further Education
BTEC	Business and Technology Educational Council

## Important Dates

- **Wednesday 7 February** Short reports to parents / carers
- **Thursday 22 February** Consultation Evening
- **Monday 26 February at 9am** Microsoft Form stating choices returned
- Pupils and parents informed of allocation of option choices during Trinity Term

If you have any concerns or require any further clarification please contact:-

Mrs C J Hooley (Deputy Headteacher) or  
Mr J Allcock (Assistant Headteacher) or  
Mr D J Gow (Pupil Manager Year 9) or  
Miss E L Curtis (Careers)