



**EWELL CASTLE
SCHOOL**

GUIDE TO GCSEs AND OPTIONS

For courses starting in September 2024

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Pupils,

I hope that you will find this handbook helpful as you discuss, as a family, the choices your daughter or son will be making shortly. My colleagues and I are keen to help and advise in this process. At Ewell Castle School, we always try to answer the question: “What is in the best interest of each individual?” not forgetting that the ultimate academic goal is to prepare members of the School for sixth form, university and beyond.

I need hardly mention that the two years of preparation for GCSE examinations are the most significant and important to date, and GCSE grades are a key factor in admission to university or employment. Indeed, they will be an important indicator of academic potential, available to universities or employers at the normal point of application during the Upper Sixth.

There are several guiding principles that I always tend to fall back on when talking to young people about their future academic options:

- Are you playing to your strengths and being true to yourself?
- Which subjects do you love the most? When the going gets tough, that passion will motivate you through the challenge
- Do not pick a subject you dislike because you think it is “more respected”
- Do not make choices based on which teacher you think you might get or because your best friend is picking a certain subject
- Pupils – listen to your parents – they have your best interests at heart!
- Parents – listen to your children – they will be studying these subjects for two years!

I wish you all the very best in your thinking and discussions,

Silas Edmonds

Principal of Ewell Castle School



INTRODUCTION

During the course of the next few weeks, pupils will be making GCSE subject choices, and we hope that the information provided in this booklet will be helpful. The booklet contains a number of sections giving you brief details about each subject as well as a section on career guidance. Please read through the booklet and use the contents to help you with your decision making.

During January, we will give pupils short introductory sessions on each of the different GCSE subjects, and there will also be a GCSE Options Evening on Thursday 18th January, where you will have the opportunity to speak to subject teachers. This will be followed up by a Parents' Consultation Evening on Thursday 7th March.

Option choices should be made on the interactive form section of My School Portal. This will be open from Thursday 18th January through to a final deadline of Friday 15th March. We ask you for five choices, in order of preference. We will aim to satisfy four out of these five choices, but will need to, in rare circumstances, ask for a sixth choice.

I realise how daunting this process can be - please be reassured we are here to help you every step of the way.

Ms C Hoddell

Senior School Assistant Principal and Director of Studies

FROM THE HEAD OF YEAR 9

Dear Parents/Guardians and Year 9 Pupils,

We embark on an exciting time in your/your child's journey at Ewell Castle. Pupils, you have the freedom to have a say in the subjects that will help shape the academic landscape ahead of you.

Teamwork and communication are vital in making these decisions. Conversations must take place in order for meaningful choices to be made. Pupils, speak to your parents/guardians, speak to your teachers and those who help you at school. Quite often, you will be surprised to learn how well they really know you! You have much support at your fingertips to help you make good choices. Parents/guardians, we need your help to facilitate these conversations to help your young person navigate this process.

There may be subjects here that you do not know much about. Parents/guardians you can use this booklet and the upcoming Options Evening on Thursday 18th January to help with your understanding of each option subject. Pupils you will also have a representative from each subject visit our Year 9 Assemblies in January to help make your decisions.

It should be remembered that during this options process, a focus on the individual is imperative. Look at the questions in this booklet that will help you narrow down your next steps. Make note that all the questions contain the word "you". Pupils, you are the most important person in making these decisions.

I look forward to seeing the myriad paths Year 9 choose to move forwards with.

Ms A Materna

Head of Year 9

MAKING A CHOICE – PUPILS

WHICH SUBJECTS DO YOU LIKE?

It is important to study the subjects that you enjoy. You will find it easier to sustain interest and effort if you enjoy the learning! Think about what attracts you to a subject – the approach, content, practical work, experiments, and projects – but do not choose a subject just because you like the teacher!

WHAT ARE YOU GOOD AT?

This should influence your choice because it will could help you to achieve the high grades necessary for the future.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN RECOMMENDED TO DO?

Your parents and teachers may offer conflicting advice. You might then find it helpful to speak with your Form Tutor, Head of Year, Deputy Head or Principal. Remember that there are no easy GCSE courses, and it is your choice. You must follow these courses for the next two years.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

How far ahead have you looked? Is your choice flexible? Discuss these points with any of the staff mentioned above and our Careers Adviser, Miss Monk. It is also important to seek a balance of subjects to give you the opportunity to use and develop as wide a range of skills and subjects as possible. This will also enable you to keep your options open beyond GCSE. Remember that your choice could limit future options at A-level and beyond.

WHY YOU SHOULD NOT CHOOSE A SUBJECT

You should not allow yourself to be influenced by:

- a) whether you like, or dislike, your present teacher in a particular subject
- b) what your friends are deciding, since their interests and plans for the future may be quite different from yours.

EXPECTATIONS OF GCSE/KS4 AND NEAs

In general terms, the GCSE specifications place emphasis on understanding, skills, and the application of knowledge. However, the recall, selection and communication of knowledge (facts) still account for a considerable proportion of marks. The content enables teachers to spend time on experimental and investigative work and to allow pupils to develop useful skills. As many of these skills cannot be assessed by a final examination, there is provision for internal assessment by NEA (Non-Examination Assessment - formerly Controlled Assessment or Coursework in some subjects). Further details are given in the subject pages later in this booklet.

Our experience in preparing candidates for GCSE indicates that a positive attitude to work is essential throughout the course and candidates are expected to be much more efficient in the organisation of their work at every stage. Where projects or pieces of work for assessment are required for certain deadline dates, you should be punctual. If candidates fail to meet deadlines, they will interfere with work in other subjects and their result in more than one subject could be the poorer in consequence.

GCSE grades are crucial to a pupil's future academic path; hence we want to ensure pupils achieve their potential in this respect. Pupils should, by now, appreciate the significance of homework and other work outside the classroom. As a pupil progresses up the School, so does the expectation and capacity for this work increase. A GCSE pupil should expect to be spending in the region of two hours per evening on homework and this may approach three hours in Year 11. You will have written, reading and research assignments, you will have work due in the same week, and other work to be planned over a longer period of time. Increasingly you will recognise that the extent of homework is open-ended, and you will decide what is a feasible maximum – as opposed to a minimum!

Not everyone manages this expectation and assistance is available. This area is a primary role for your Form Tutor and Head of Year. You must feel comfortable and confident to seek guidance – please do not wait until the teacher identifies a problem.

UCAS AND CAREERS

In July, Year 9 pupils will reach the end of National Curriculum Key Stage 3. The GCSE examinations in two years' time will be the means of assessment at the end of Key Stage 4.

The pupils will receive a Grade 9 – 1 or a U which would be an unclassified grade. Broadly speaking, it is generally understood that Grade 4 is seen as a 'pass', with Grade 5 being considered a 'good pass'; Grades 9-7 will be seen as the equivalent of the previous A and A*, with Grade 9 being reserved for the very highest performers (i.e. in line with and exceeding the very top of the old A* grade). With regards to entering Ewell Castle School Sixth Form, pupils need to have achieved at least a 6 or 7 in the subjects they wish to study. More information is available in the Sixth Form Options Booklet.

Only Mathematics, Combined Science and Modern Foreign Languages have a tiered entry, with the Higher Tier grades being Grade 9-4, and Foundation Tier being Grade 5-1.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Ewell Castle School has a policy to support identified pupils throughout their GCSE curriculum. A variety of strategies and programmes such as Learning Support as an option, exist to assist pupils with their subject choices, The choice of taking Learning Support is decided through a collaborative process between school, pupil, and home. The choice of Learning Support replaces one GCSE option and does not constitute as a GSCE qualification.

For internal and external examinations, identified pupils may be granted exam concessions known as Access Arrangements. These arrangements could include extra time, reader, scribe, use of a word processor or bilingual dictionaries. These arrangements must follow the regulations set out in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), which are updated annually. These arrangements are based on the pupil's normal way of working in school and any concerns should be highlighted to the Head of Learning Support- Miss Kuti, as early as possible to ensure the appropriate support is in place.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

EAL pupils may be taught extra English in small groups or individually. These lessons can be for up to two hours per week and will be taught by specialist EAL teachers. Pupils are withdrawn from language lessons for one-to-one or small group sessions for this purpose.

Depending on their progress in Years 10 and 11, pupils may be in a position to sit the mainstream GCSE English 9-1 Language and/or Literature examination, in addition to the IGCSE ESL examination which all EAL pupils who have had additional support will be required to sit (see English as an Additional Language Policy for more details). The mainstream English teacher and specialist EAL teacher will liaise during the course as to the suitability of each candidate for external examinations.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Ewell Castle School encourages all pupils to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. The programme will start in Year 9 with a view to gaining the Award in Year 10. For those who wish to continue with the Duke of Edinburgh there will be the opportunity to take the Silver Award in Years 10 and 11, and the Gold Award in the Sixth Form.

Throughout their time in Year 10 and Year 11, pupils will be encouraged to take advantage of the many trips and activities that the School arranges.

PSHE

Ewell Castle School believes that strong PSHE education enables our pupils to develop into healthy, independent, responsible, and well-rounded members of society. Our PSHE curriculum is strongly tied to our RSE, relationships, health education and pastoral care programme, as well as our shared values of personal integrity, social responsibility, mutual respect and lifelong resilience. Our School vision is to inspire our pupils to engage and excel; our PSHE provision endeavours to make this manifest in our pupils' ability to make a positive contribution within and beyond our school community.

CAREERS

Our Careers Adviser, Miss Monk, is available to discuss the impact of subject choices on careers and university applications.

Many degree courses and careers will have specific requirements for subjects.

University entry requirements are largely A-level based. However, to take A-levels you will nearly always need a GCSE in that subject or one that is closely related, so your GCSE options may impact your university options.

To check which A-levels are best studied for a given university course, Which? University have produced a useful online guide: The Uni Guide.

You are advised to consult the entrance criteria for specific courses which are published on university websites.

If you are not sure what you might want to take at university or what you want to do as career, just ensure you've got a good mix of GCSE subjects.

Towards the end of Year 10, all pupils will be expected to undertake a careers psychometric profiling exercise. At the beginning of Year 11, a one-to-one careers meeting with the Careers Adviser will help with direction in respect of long-term education and career decisions.

Finally, towards the end of Year 11, all pupils are expected to engage in work experience. This process is overseen by the Careers Office.

A GUIDE TO COURSES

All GCSEs are now linear qualifications with all examinations taken at the end of the course – usually the end of Year 11. There is no opportunity for retaking modules nor may modules be sat prior to the terminal examination series. Equally, NEAs are submitted at the end of the course and moderated marks for these assessments are not available until after all examinations have been completed and the results issued.

Some core subject qualifications are IGCSEs. This stands for “International General Certificate of Secondary Education”. It is the ‘international’ version of the GCSE qualification as it is available in many countries around the world. In the UK, the IGCSE is typically taught at international or independent schools, rather than at state schools.

One of the benefits of studying an International GCSE is that the language used in questions is often much simpler and more direct than in GCSE exam papers. This will be of particular benefit to pupils with certain learning support needs e.g. dyslexia or pupils with English as an Additional Language. The topics are also often studied in much more depth rather than breadth and this supports our approach of developing Higher Order Thinking Skills.

These qualifications are very good preparation for the A-levels. They are also accepted as equivalent qualifications by the top universities, sixth-form colleges and other independent schools around the world.

CORE (COMPULSORY) SUBJECTS

In Year 10 and Year 11 you must study English, Mathematics and Science.

ENGLISH – Initially, all pupils will study both English Language and English Literature. Most pupils will take examinations in both subjects, however, it may be advised that some pupils are best suited to taking just one in order to ensure a Grade 4 or better. English is taught in sets.

MATHEMATICS – Pupils are in sets for Mathematics and have already started building on the requirements of the IGCSE course. Some very able mathematicians may also be offered the opportunity to enter for a Further Mathematics qualification at the end of Year 11. This decision will be made in conjunction with the Head of Mathematics throughout their time in Year 10/11 with the final decision being made after the mock examinations in Year 11. Pupils wishing to progress to A-level Mathematics would need to achieve at least a Grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics.

SCIENCE – Pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 are taught in sets. Pupils will study either Combined Science (two GCSEs) or Separate Sciences (three GCSEs). Initially, most pupils will do the Combined Science double award. Pupils who are identified as most able in Science will go on to study the three sciences separately. Pupils whose target grade is 4 or 5 may be advised to complete a double award in Science, in order to ensure a Grade 4 or better. If a pupil wishes to take a science at A-level, they will need to have achieved at least Grade 7 at GCSE in that particular science, or a 7-7 in Combined Sciences and a Grade 7 in Mathematics.

In addition, all pupils will follow a Games/Physical Education programme. Pupils in Year 10 will continue to follow the Games programme they have followed in previous years. If pupils in Year 11 and above are not part of the School sports team that term, they will follow a programme that involves a free choice of Games option. The focus sports of the School are cricket, football, hockey and rugby.

SUMMARY OF CORE SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	GRADING	EXAM BOARD	CODE	TIERING	Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)	PAGE
English Language (IGCSE)	9-1	Pearson Edexcel	4EA1B	No	Yes	12
English Literature	9-1	AQA	8702	No	No	13
Mathematics (IGCSE)	9-1	Pearson Edexcel	4MA1	Yes	No	14
Further Maths (L2 Certificate)	9-1	AQA	8365	No	No	15
Combined Science Trilogy	9-1	AQA	8464	Yes	No	16
Biology	9-1	AQA	8461	Yes	No	17
Chemistry	9-1	AQA	8462	Yes	No	18
Physics	9-1	AQA	8463	Yes	No	19

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

In addition to the Core subjects, most pupils will undertake FOUR optional subjects from the following list: **Art and Design, Business, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Dance, Design and Technology (Product Design), Drama, Economics, French, Spanish, Geography, History, Music, Photography, Physical Education and Religious Studies.**

Please note the following guidelines/observations regarding choices:

- A balance of choices from the Arts, Technologies, Languages and Humanities, may be beneficial, as may be consideration of a balance of the more/less practical options;
- There will inevitably be some limitations imposed by the timetable and there may be competition for places in some optional subjects. In this case, aptitude and endeavour will be used as criteria for selection. Pupils and parents will be involved in the decision-making process and every effort is made to match choices with aptitude. Similarly, if demand for a subject is insufficient, it may not be possible to run that subject.
- Some subjects may incur costs in respect of resources for controlled assessments, necessary curriculum trips or fieldwork, e.g. Design & Technology, Geography, Art, Physical Education, Drama and Classical Civilisation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE - IGCSE

Exam Board:	Pearson Edexcel
Course Code:	4EA1B
Outline of course:	<p>Component 01: Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing (4EA1/01)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contemporary non-fiction texts from Part 1 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology • Develop skills to analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects • Explore links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives • Develop transactional writing skills for a variety of purposes and audiences • Use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately <p>Component 03: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing (4EA1/03)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment A: Poetry and prose texts – one 30-mark essay question based on any two poetry or prose texts from Part 2 of the Pears on Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology, including a 6-mark commentary on why these texts were selected • Assignment B: Imaginative writing – one 30-mark imaginative writing task • Internally assessed <p>Component 04: Spoken Language Endorsement</p> <p>The spoken language presentation may take a variety of forms, including:</p> <p>a) a speech or talk by a pupil, followed by questions from the audience.</p> <p>b) a formal debate or dialogue, such as an interview where the pupil is able to prepare extended responses to questions or prompts, which have been shared in advance, followed by questions from the audience.</p> <p>In all cases, the presentation should be prepared and last no longer than ten minutes.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Component 1: 2 hours 15 minutes written examination</p> <p>Component 2: Two pieces of written coursework</p> <p>Component 3: Recorded speech</p>
Information about the Core Subject:	Teaches skills required to read fluently and critically in a wide variety of high-quality literary and non-fiction genres, and to use written English accurately and effectively in different styles and contexts.
Possible careers / future pathways:	You will need English Language to progress to further education - it is a subject which keeps all options open.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8702
Outline of course:	Study of: <i>An Inspector Calls</i> , Shakespeare (<i>Macbeth</i> or <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>), <i>A Christmas Carol</i> , Poetry (anthology)
Method(s) of Assessment:	Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel, 1 hour 45 minutes examination Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry, 2 hours 15 minutes examination
Information about the Core Subject:	A skills-based approach to help pupils read and engage critically with a wide range of literature. Pupils are encouraged to articulate fresh, individual and justified responses to texts from a variety of genres, periods and cultures.
Possible careers / future pathways:	This GCSE (9–1) in English Literature specification focuses on skills-based learning. The ability to acquire and apply knowledge and understanding within frameworks for study is transferable to other subjects. Reading critically and evaluating, making connections across reading and analysing the impact of language, structure, form and presentation, are all essential skills whatever you choose to do next.

MATHEMATICS - IGCSE

Exam Board:	Pearson Edexcel
Course Code:	4MA1
Outline of course:	<p>Pupils should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts • Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems • Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions • Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context
Method(s) of Assessment:	2 papers x 2 hours of equal value
Information about the Core Subject:	<p>Mathematics will cover Number, Algebra, Ratio, Proportion, Geometry, Measures, Probability and Statistics.</p> <p>Two tiers available: Foundation (1 to 5 grades) and Higher (4 to 9 grades).</p> <p>There are two equally weighted written exam papers at either Foundation or Higher.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	Financial services, accountancy, engineering and those that require a numerical background. Pure sciences, social sciences, engineering and computing. There are also uses in the Arts, such as sculpture, drawing and music.

LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8365
Outline of course:	This course is run in conjunction with IGCSE for high achieving pupils in Year 10 and Year 11. Its aim is to prepare them and fill in the gaps between A-level and IGCSE.
Method(s) of Assessment:	2 written exam papers: Paper 1 - 1 hour 45 minutes (50%) Paper 2 - 1 hour 45 minutes (50%)
Information about the Core Subject:	Pupils will cover the following areas: Number, Algebra, Co-ordinate Geometry, Calculus, Matrix Transformations and Geometry. This is not a GCSE but extends the pupils.
Possible careers / future pathways:	Financial services, computer programming and engineering and those that require a numerical background.

COMBINED SCIENCE TRILOGY

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8464
Outline of course:	<p>This is a linear qualification. There are six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.</p> <p>Each paper is worth 16.7% of the course.</p> <p>There is no controlled assessment but a successful completion of all the required practicals in the three Sciences is a requirement to pass the course.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Biology Paper 1: Topics 1-4 - Cell biology, Organisation, Infection and response and Bioenergetics</p> <p>Biology Paper 2: Topics 5-7 - Homeostasis and response, Inheritance, Variation and Evolution and Ecology</p> <p>Chemistry Paper 1: Topics 8- 12 - Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; and Energy changes</p> <p>Chemistry Paper 2: Topics 13-17 - The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources</p> <p>Physics Paper 1: Topics 18-21 - Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure</p> <p>Physics Paper 2: Topics 22-24 - Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and electromagnetism</p> <p>Each exam is worth 70 marks and is 1 hr 15 minutes long. The questions include multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response. There are two tiers of examination – Foundation and Higher.</p>
Information about the Core Subject:	<p>GCSE specifications in Combined Award Science enables pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science, through different types of scientific enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills, both in the laboratory, in the field and in other learning environments develop their ability to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions, both qualitatively and quantitatively.
Possible careers / future pathways:	The GCSE Combined Science Trilogy gives pupils the option to progress to A-levels in Science or other subjects.

BIOLOGY

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8461
Outline of course:	<p>This is a linear qualification. The core content tells a coherent and logical story through biology with exciting, relevant topics such as cloning. The exams have been simplified for better understanding, with an increasing demand as pupils progress through each question.</p> <p>Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.</p> <p>Each paper is worth 50% of the course.</p> <p>There is no controlled assessment but a successful completion of all the required practicals in the three sciences is a requirement to pass the course.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Biology Paper 1: Topics 1-4 – Cell biology, Organisation, Infection and response and Bioenergetics.</p> <p>Biology Paper 2: Topics 5-7 – Homeostasis and response, Inheritance, Variation and Evolution and Ecology</p> <p>Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes and is worth 100 marks, 50% of the total grade. Questions types include multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.</p>
Information about the Core Subject:	<p>The GCSE specification in Biology should enable pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding of biology • develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of biology through different types of scientific enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them • develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills, both in the laboratory, in the field and in other learning environments • develop their ability to evaluate claims based on biology through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions, both qualitatively and quantitatively.
Possible careers / future pathways:	Pupils studying Biology at GCSE will be able to carry this subject on to A-level.

CHEMISTRY

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8462
Outline of course:	<p>This is a linear qualification. The content is divided into ten main topics. The exams have been simplified for better understanding, with an increasing demand as pupils progress through each question.</p> <p>Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.</p> <p>Each paper is worth 50% of the course.</p> <p>There is no controlled assessment but a successful completion of all the required practicals in the three sciences is a requirement to pass the course.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>This is a linear qualification. There are two papers each worth 50% of the total grade. Each paper assesses different parts of the syllabus. The number of marks for each exam is 100 and each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes.</p> <p>Chemistry Paper 1: Topics 1-5 – Atomic structure and periodic table, Bonding, structure and properties of matter, Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes and Energy Changes.</p> <p>Chemistry Paper 2: Topics 6-10 – The rate and extent of chemical change, Organic chemistry, Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere and Using chemistry.</p> <p>Types of questions include multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.</p>
Information about the Core Subject:	<p>GCSE study in Chemistry provides the foundations for understanding the material world. These key ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of conceptual models and theories to make sense of the observed diversity of natural phenomena • the assumption that every effect has one or more cause • that change is driven by differences between different objects and systems when they interact • that many such interactions occur over a distance without direct contact • that science progresses through a cycle of hypothesis, practical experimentation, observation, theory development and review • that quantitative analysis is a central element both of many theories and of scientific methods of inquiry.
Possible careers / future pathways:	Pupils studying Chemistry at GCSE can carry this subject on to A-level.

PHYSICS

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8463
Outline of course:	<p>This is a linear qualification. New topics have been included in the current course, to enthuse and motivate pupils. The exams have been simplified for better understanding, with an increasing demand as pupils progress through each question.</p> <p>Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.</p> <p>Each paper is worth 50% of the course.</p> <p>There is no controlled assessment but a successful completion of all the required practicals in the three sciences is a requirement to pass the course.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>The exam consists of two papers assessing various aspects of the course.</p> <p>Physics Paper 1: Topics 1-4 - Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure.</p> <p>Physics Paper 2: Topics 5-8 - Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism; and Space physics.</p> <p>Questions in Paper 2 may draw on an understanding of energy changes and transfers due to heating, mechanical and electrical work and the concept of energy conservation from Energy and Electricity.</p>
Information about the Core Subject:	<p>GCSE study in Physics provides the foundations for understanding the material world. Key ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of models, as in the particle model of matter or the wave models of light and of sound • the concept of cause and effect in explaining such links as those between force and acceleration, or between changes in atomic nuclei and radioactive emissions • the phenomena of 'action at a distance' and the related concept of the field as the key to analysing electrical, magnetic and gravitational effects • that differences, for example between pressures or temperatures or electrical potentials, are the drivers of change • that proportionality, for example between weight and mass of an object or between force and extension in a spring, is an important aspect of many models in science • that physical laws and models are expressed in mathematical form.
Possible careers / future pathways:	Pupils studying Physics at GCSE can carry this subject on to A-level.

SUMMARY OF OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	GRADING	EXAM BOARD	CODE	TIERING	Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)	PAGE
Art and Design	9-1	AQA	8202	No	Yes (100%) (see Unit 2 on course info page)	21
Art and Design (Photography)	9-1	AQA	8206	No	Yes (60%)	22
Business	9-1	Pearson Edexcel	1BS0	No	No	23
Classical Civilisation	9-1	OCR	J199C	No	No	24
Computer Science	9-1	AQA	8525B	No	No	25
Dance	9-1	AQA	8236	Yes	Yes (60%)	26
Drama	9-1	AQA	8261	Yes	Yes (60%)	27
Design Technology - Product Design	9-1	AQA	8552	No	Yes (50%)	28
Economics	9-1	AQA	8136	No	No	29
Geography	9-1	AQA	8035	No	No	30
History	9-1	Pearson Edexcel	1HI0BN	No	No	31
Modern Foreign Language – French	9-1	Pearson Edexcel	1FR0	Yes	Yes (25%)	32
Modern Foreign Language – Spanish	9-1	Pearson Edexcel	1SP0	Yes	Yes (25%)	33
Music	9-1	Eduqas	C660QS	No	Yes (60%)	34
Physical Education	9-1	AQA	8582	No	Yes (40%)	35
Religious Studies	9-1	AQA	8062	No	No	36

ART AND DESIGN

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8202
Outline of course:	<p><i>“GCSE Art and Design provides pupils with a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore their interests in ways that are both personally relevant and developmental in nature.</i></p> <p><i>This two unit specification enables pupils to develop their ability to actively engage in the processes of Art and Design – to build creative skills through learning and doing, to develop imaginative and intuitive ways of working and develop knowledge and understanding of media, materials and technologies in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures.” (AQA)</i></p> <p>Unit 1: Portfolio of Work 60%. This is work from all of Year 10 and the Autumn Term of Year 11 and consists of approximately three projects. Most of the work is completed in sketchbooks accumulating in a timed exam at the end of each project.</p> <p>Unit 2: Externally Set Task 40%. Pupils choose an exam title from the start of the Spring Term. Again, they develop their ideas in a sketchbook and sit a ten hour (two-day exam) at the beginning of the Summer Term.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Work is marked against the exam board’s assessment grid consisting of four assessment objectives in: Artist/contextual research, experimenting with materials, ideas and the final piece.</p> <p>All work is continuously assessed from the start of Year 10 and feedback is given on a weekly basis, as all work is accountable for the end GCSE grade.</p> <p>Both Unit 1 and 2 are assessed by moderation from both Art teachers, a broad selection of pupils’ work is selected at random by an external moderator from the exam board in the Summer Term of Year 11.</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>....you have a lot of imagination, ideas and creative flair; if you can or want to problem solve, if you enjoy looking at life from different perspectives, if you are aware or want to be aware of the world around you, if you like experimenting and finally, if you just love Art!</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>A-level Art or Photography, BTEC in art or specific design fields, undergraduate degrees in fine art (painting, sculpture), photography, architecture, various design fields e.g. interior design, fashion, history of art, textiles, printing, curator, teacher, therapist, animator plus many more!</p>

ART AND DESIGN (PHOTOGRAPHY)

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8206 8206
Outline of course:	Pupils are required to work in one or more areas of photography such as portraiture, location photography, experimental photography, moving image or fashion photography. Pupils will develop and apply the knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to the selected area of study. Pupils must explore the way contextual sources inspire the development of ideas and themes and they must demonstrate the ability to use photographic techniques and processes on cameras, technology, media and materials.
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Coursework during Year 10 and the first term of Year 11 accounts for 60% of the GCSE and marked out of 96 as per the four assessment objectives. There is no time limit to the number of hours however we do facilitate exam time to create final pieces on several occasions.</p> <p>During the second term of Year 11 the exam component is completed, which is worth 40%. There is preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time; also marked out of 96 as per the four assessment objectives.</p>
Choose this subject if...	You have a lot of imagination, ideas and creative flair; if you can or want to capture meaningful moments, if you enjoy looking at life from different perspectives and have an interest in digital technology, if you are aware or want to be aware of the world around you, if you like experimenting and finally, if you just love Photography!
Possible careers / future pathways:	A-level Photography. Professional photography in journalism/press, documentary making, advertising art director, film/video editor, graphic designer, magazine features editor, television camera operator.

BUSINESS

Exam Board:	Pearson Edexcel
Course Code:	1BS0
Outline of course:	GCSE Business is a hugely popular subject in our School. Pupils will learn about the fundamentals of business in Unit 1, with a focus on how to start up a new enterprise and the inherent problems involved. In Unit 2, pupils study big, established multi-national businesses and will evaluate what works well and why.
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Unit 1 - Investigating small business. Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes. Taken in the Summer Term of Year 11. 50% of the qualification. Topics assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise and entrepreneurship • Spotting a business opportunity • Putting a business idea into practice • Making the business effective • Understanding external influences on business. <p>Unit 2 - Building a Business. Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes. Taken in Summer of Year 11. 50% of the qualification. Topics assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing the business • Making marketing decisions • Making operational decisions • Making financial decisions • Making human resource decisions. <p>Both examination papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.</p>
Choose this subject if...	GCSE Business would be the obvious choice for pupils who have a real interest or genuine curiosity for the subject. One acid test of this is a keen interest in TV programmes such as The Apprentice and Dragons' Den. Another is a genuine fascination with family and relatives involved in enterprise. But note that if you want to do really well in this subject, one needs not only to be inspired (e.g. by Dragons' Den, family aspirations) but also show a great willingness to understand the strategy employed in successful businesses. It is the written word that is very important in GCSE Business – for example, the ability to explain points, analyse problems, make judgements on solutions based on evidence. As this is both a quantitative as well as a qualitative subject, pupils choosing this GCSE should be of a confident level in mathematics.
Possible careers / future pathways:	GCSE Business will appeal to pupils hoping to study Business, Economics and related subjects at A-level or Level 3 BTEC. Also note that GCSE Business is useful evidence of commercial awareness, which is a key employability attribute sought by most employers of young people.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Exam Board:	OCR
Course Code:	J199C
Outline of course:	<p>There are two units with a number of components in each, offering a mixture of literature, history, archaeology and ideas. They cover Greece and Rome.</p> <p>Unit 1 - Myth and Religion</p> <p>We look at the stories surrounding Greek and Roman Gods and focus on the role of Heracles. We also learn about the foundation stories of Ancient Rome. We investigate the role of religion in the Ancient World including festivals and the Greek and Roman interpretation of Death and the Underworld.</p> <p>To support this unit, we will study a variety of literature including Virgil, Ovid, Plutarch and Livy.</p> <p>Unit 2 - War and Warfare in the Ancient World</p> <p>We investigate three different military systems: Sparta, Athens and the Roman Army. We focus on specific campaigns notably Salamis, Thermopylae, Actium and Trajan's campaign against the Dacians.</p> <p>We learn about archaeological and literary evidence including the Iliad and the Aeneid. We also investigate how the Classical World viewed war, its heroes and its victims.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	There are two 1 hour 30-minute exams at the end of Year 11. Each is a mixture of short and extended answer questions. There are no NEAs. Each unit is 50%.
Choose this subject if...	The study of the Classical World is a fascinating opportunity for all pupils. It is a diverse subject covering aspects of history, myth, drama, literature and archaeology. It is about people and what makes us the way we are. It allows pupils to question and make sense of the world they live in. It is also a great way to improve your written skills. We organise a range of trips including; to Italy, the British Museum and Fishbourne, which are relevant to the topics we teach.
Possible careers / future pathways:	GCSE Classical Civilisation prepares pupils for further study at A-level and beyond. It trains the mind and broadens the experience giving a range of insights into other subjects. Careers where a Classics qualification is regarded as especially valuable include law, teaching, business and accountancy.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8525B
Outline of course:	<p>This is a linear course covering the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Fundamentals of Algorithms 2- Programming 3- Fundamentals of data representation 4- Computer systems 5- Fundamentals of computer networks 6-Fundamentals of cyber security 7- Relational databases and structured query language (SQL) 8- Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Paper 1: Computational thinking and programming skills – 50% of the GCSE</p> <p>A mix of multiple choice, short and longer answer questions assessed in a written two-hour examination. You would be required use pseudocode to express your understanding of programming concepts. This covers content from items 1 and 2 above.</p> <p>Paper 2: Computing Concepts – 50% of the GCSE</p> <p>A mix of multiple choice, short and longer answer questions assessed in a 1 hour 45-minute written examination covering content from items 3 to 8 from the above list.</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>You have an interest in programming and are passionate about finding out how computers and computer systems work from the ground up. You will learn how to implement algorithms using the Python programming language. This is a course that is practical and theoretical, and it is advantageous if you enjoy mathematics.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>GCSE Computer Science is applicable in any career path involving programming, software development, games development, web development and engineering.</p>

DANCE

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8236
Outline of course:	<p>Component 1: Performance and choreography</p> <p>Performance Set phrases through a solo performance (approximately one minute in duration) Duet/trio performance (three minutes in a dance which is a maximum of five minutes in duration)</p> <p>Choreography Solo or group choreography – a solo (two to two and a half minutes) or a group dance for two to five dancers (three to three and a half minutes)</p> <p>Component 2: Dance appreciation Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills Critical appreciation of own work Critical appreciation of professional works</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Component 1: Performance and choreography</p> <p>Performance Internally marked and externally moderated Performance 30% of GCSE - 40 marks Choreography 30% of GCSE - 40 marks</p> <p>Component 2: Dance appreciation Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes - 40% of GCSE - 80 marks</p> <p>Questions Based on pupils' own practise in performance and choreography and the GCSE Dance anthology.</p>
Choose this subject if...	You wish to develop your creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity, whatever your previous experience in the subject. The study of this subject and of professional works will develop your ability to critically appraise dances of different styles and cultural influences, providing a springboard for engaging practical tasks. We realise that most GCSE Dance pupils choose dance for the practical rather than theoretical focus, that is why the written assessment is clear, well-structured and easy to understand. There are a variety of question styles, which include multiple choice, short and extended answer.
Possible careers / future pathways:	GCSE Dance is a beneficial way for any pupil to explore their passion further, learn new skills and express themselves through an evolving art form. GCSE Dance could help any pupil wishing to dance professionally, be involved in musical theatre or progress to teach dance in the future. Not only does it have those career progressions, but GCSE Dance also allows the pupils to learn how to control their body and learn to communicate non-verbally, practicing good health and mental wellbeing.

DRAMA

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8261
Outline of course:	<p>Component 1- Understanding Drama Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre Study of one set play from a choice of six Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers</p> <p>Component 2 Devising Drama (Practical) Process of creating devised drama Performance of devised drama (pupils contribute as a performer or technical designer - lighting/sound/set/costume/puppet) Analysis and evaluation of own work</p> <p>Component 3 Texts in Practise (practical) Performance of two extracts from one play (pupils contribute as a performer or technical designer - lighting/sound/set/costume/puppet)</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Component 1: Understanding Drama Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes (Open book) 80 marks; 40% of GCSE</p> <p>Questions Section A: multiple choice (4 marks) Section B: four extract-based questions on the set play (46 marks) Section C: one two-part question (from a choice) on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production (30 marks)</p> <p>Component 2: Devising Drama (practical) Devising log (60 marks) and Devised performance (20 marks); 40% of GCSE. This component is marked internally and moderated by AQA.</p> <p>Component 3: Texts in practice (practical) 50 marks; 20% of GCSE</p>
Choose this subject if...	You enjoy performing and working creatively as a member of a group. You enjoy challenging yourself to reach your highest potential in drama. You like seeing plays and getting involved in drama, both inside and out side of School. You collaborate well with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively.
Possible careers / future pathways:	Whatever the future holds, pupils of GCSE Drama emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills, applicable both in further studies and in the workplace. The GCSE specification ensures continuity for pupils progressing to A-level Drama and Theatre.

D&T: PRODUCT DESIGN

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8552
Outline of course:	<p>Pupils choosing Product Design at GCSE will complete one substantial “Design & Make” controlled assessment, which is an assessment of their design intentions, creativity and problem solving.</p> <p>The GCSE culminates in a two-hour examination in the Summer Term.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>One two-hour written exam worth 50% of the GCSE. This 100-mark examination focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Technical Principles (20 marks): A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding • Specialist Technical Principles (30 marks): Several short answer questions (2-5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in-depth knowledge of technical principles • Designing & Making Principles (50 marks): Short answer and extended response questions, including a 12-mark design question. <p>One substantial Design & Make task, worth 50% and consisting of twenty A3 pages (30-35 hours of work). This 100-mark controlled assessment focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation of a design need • Designing • Making • Analysis and Evaluation <p>The exam board releases Controlled Assessment challenges on 1 June in the year prior to the submission of the Controlled Assessment.</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>You like a challenge and have a ‘can do’ attitude and understand that no product or design is ever perfect and, as such, can be developed, pushed forward, refined, etc. You are resilient and creative; happy to sketch, design and draw for extended periods of time. You can take ownership of your work; where it goes next, how it develops, etc. You are interested in products and architecture around you.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>The Product Design GCSE naturally leads to the Product Design A-level.</p> <p>The GCSE itself has inroads into similar creative subjects, such as interior design, fashion design, architecture and civil engineering.</p> <p>The investigatory, creative and problem-solving aspects of the controlled assessment are also strong ‘cross-curricular’ skills.</p>

ECONOMICS

Exam Board:	OCR
Course Code:	J205
Outline of course:	<p>GCSE Economics will develop your understanding of how the world works from local businesses to global corporations. You will learn about the impact global markets have on society and you will explore this fascinating and practical subject in greater depth and build foundational knowledge. There are many factors that build global economies, and you will be able to understand these as well as the economic elements that can bring them down.</p> <p>Please note that GCSE Economics is available for pupils identified as most able in Mathematics.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Paper 1: Introduction to Economics (Micro-Economics) Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks 50% of this GCSE</p> <p>Paper 2: National and International Economics (Macro-Economics) Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes 80 marks 50% of this GCSE</p> <p>Topics assessed: How markets work: Economic foundations, resources, how prices are determined, production, costs revenue and profit, competitive markets, market failure. How the economy works: Introduction to the national economy, Government objectives in managing the economy, international trade, the role of money and financial markets.</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>You would like an awareness of how modern-day society works and what roles you play in affecting the economy. It will give you a greater appreciation of the world around you. You will also develop a greater understanding of how businesses function, as well as recognise and apply theories to specific economic challenges and be able to apply your own independent thinking.</p> <p>GCSE Economics will give you the desire to learn more at A Level and beyond and provide you with a solid foundation for studying Economics at Sixth Form. It is the written word that is very important in GCSE Economics – for example, the ability to explain points, analyse problems, make judgements on solutions based on evidence. As this is both a quantitative as well as a qualitative subject, pupils choosing this GCSE should be of a confident level in Mathematics.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>Studying GCSE Economics will allow you to develop key skills for the future. Taking your learning further by studying A Level Economics and going on university could lead you to various fulfilling professions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chartered accountant • Economist • Investment analyst • Political risk analyst

GEOGRAPHY

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8035
Outline of course:	<p>Paper 1: Living with the physical environment Section A: The challenge of natural hazards Section B: Physical landscapes in the UK: Coasts and Rivers Option Section C: The living world</p> <p>Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment Section A: Urban issues and challenges Section B: The changing economic world Section C: The challenge of resource management: Energy Option</p> <p>Paper 3: Geographical applications Section A: Issue evaluation Section B: Fieldwork</p> <p>Geographical skills are assessed throughout all three papers.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Paper 1 & 2 Each: Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes 88 marks (including 3 marks for SPGST) 35% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 3: Written exam: 1 hour 76 marks (including 6 marks for SPGST) 30% of GCSE</p> <p>Pre-release resources made available from 15 March in the year of the exam.</p>
Choose this subject if...	You are interested in the world around you, want to learn about issues which will affect your life in the future and can develop different skills then geography is for you!
Possible careers / future pathways:	Geography is one of the most adaptable subjects and is often one that works well with both arts and science subjects. Geographers are one of the most employable people due to their ability to adapt their skills and interpret it for a human focused audience. Therefore, you will find Geographers in all walks of life from lawyers and politicians to public service workers and film.

HISTORY

Exam Board:	Pearson Edexcel
Course Code:	1HI0BN
Outline of course:	<p>Pupils study four topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 (20%) 2. Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39 (30%) 3. Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present and Whitechapel, c1870–c1900: crime, policing and the inner city. (30%) 4. Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88 (20%) <p>We study the first two in Year 10 and the second two in Year 11.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>All units are assessed by an exam at the end of Year 11. There is no NEA component.</p> <p>The weighting for each unit is indicated above.</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>History is a very popular choice at GCSE and A-level. It gives pupils a valuable understanding of the world that they live in. It also trains them to use, evaluate and analyse a wide variety of pieces of evidence. History is highly regarded as a rigorous academic subject by employers and universities. Most importantly History is a fascinating, engaging and enjoyable subject!</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>GCSE History prepares pupils for further study at A-level and beyond. Careers where a history qualification is regarded as valuable include law, teaching, business and accountancy.</p>

FRENCH

Exam Board:	Pearson Edexcel
Course Code:	1FR0
Outline of course:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and culture • Local area, holiday and travel • School • Future aspirations, study and work • International and global dimension
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Paper 1: Listening and Understanding in French Written Examination Foundation (35 minutes + 5 minutes reading time) and Higher (45 minutes + 5 minutes reading time) Tiers 25% of the total qualification</p> <p>Paper 2: Speaking in French Internally conducted and externally assessed Foundation Tier: 7-9 minutes Higher Tier: 10-12 minutes 25% of the total qualification</p> <p>Paper 3: Reading and Understanding in French Written examination Foundation Tier: 40 minutes Higher Tier: 1 hour 25% of the total qualification</p> <p>Paper 4: Writing in French Written examination Foundation Tier: 1 hour Higher Tier: 1 hour 15 minutes 25% of the total qualification</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>You are already studying French, enjoy it and are doing well.</p> <p>You would like to study engaging and popular topics.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>Languages are great for a wide variety of careers especially those involving translation or communication with people from non-English speaking countries. This can include careers in tourism, government, politics, media, publishing and journalism. You can also work in education, fashion or law.</p>

SPANISH

Exam Board:	Pearson Edexcel
Course Code:	1SP0
Outline of course:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and culture • Local area, holiday and travel • School • Future aspirations, study and work • International and global dimension
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Paper 1: Listening and Understanding in Spanish Written Examination Foundation (35 minutes + 5 minutes reading time) and Higher (45 minutes + 5 minutes reading time) Tiers 25% of the total qualification</p> <p>Paper 2: Speaking in Spanish Internally conducted and externally assessed Foundation Tier: 7-9 minutes Higher Tier: 10-12 minutes 25% of the total qualification</p> <p>Paper 3: Reading and Understanding in Spanish Written examination Foundation Tier: 40 minutes Higher Tier: 1 hour 25% of the total qualification</p> <p>Paper 4: Writing in French Written examination Foundation Tier: 1 hour Higher Tier: 1 hour 15 minutes 25% of the total qualification</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>You are already studying Spanish, enjoy it and are doing well.</p> <p>You would like to study engaging and popular topics.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>Languages are great for a wide variety of careers especially those involving translation or communication with people from non-English speaking countries. This can include careers in tourism, government, politics, media, publishing and journalism. You can also work in education, fashion or law.</p>

MUSIC

Exam Board:	Eduqas (part of WJEC)
Course Code:	C660QS
Outline of course:	<p>Component 1: Understanding music Listening Contextual understanding</p> <p>Component 2: Performing music Music performance</p> <p>Component 3: Composing music Composition</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>Component 1: Understanding Music This component is assessed via a listening examination. 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 extracts set by Eduqas (WJEC.) The exam is 1 hour and 15 minutes and worth 40% of GCSE marks.</p> <p>Component 2: Performing music A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/ or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice. Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification</p> <p>Component 3: Composing music Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC. 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. Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes. Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification</p>
Choose this subject if...	You enjoy listening to music and want to understand more about what it is you are listening to. You enjoy performing, even if you aren't enormously experienced and you are willing to try out your performing in creative ensembles. You are willing to take risks and express yourself through composition, following given briefs and in your chosen style.
Possible careers / future pathways:	This subject leads perfectly into A-level Music and Music Technology but will also support study in all subjects that require lateral thinking, discipline in analysis and creativity. All employers and universities appreciate the level of commitment required for musical endeavours and having a qualification that covers all areas of musical discipline is valuable. The simultaneous breadth and rigour of GCSE Music make it a hugely well respected, as well as extremely enjoyable subject to take.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8582
Outline of course:	<p>PE is a linear qualification, assessed at the end of the two-year course.</p> <p>The course is divided into three components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Human Body and Movement in Physical Activity and Sport 2. Socio-Cultural Influences and Well-being in Physical Activity and Sport 3. Practical performance in physical activity and sport
Method(s) of Assessment:	<p>The course will be assessed through written examinations and centre-assessed practical performance, as well as a self-analysis and evaluation:</p> <p>Paper 1: The human body and movement in Physical Activity and Sport. This is assessed through a written paper of 1 hour 15 minutes. It is worth 78 marks, or 30% of the GCSE</p> <p>Paper 2: Socio-Cultural Influences and Well-being in Physical Activity and Sport. This is assessed through a written paper of 1 hour 15 minutes. It is worth 78 marks, or 30% of the GCSE</p> <p>Practical: Assessed internally by subject teachers and then externally moderated by the examination board. It carries 100 marks and is worth 40% of the GCSE. 30% is based upon performance in 3 sports, the other 10% is based upon a self-analysis and evaluation of performance in sport.</p> <p>For their practical performance, pupils will be assessed in three sports. One team sport, one individual sport and then either a team or individual sport. The activities taught and assessed will be based on the make-up and specialisms of the group. Pupils who take part in activities that the School is not able to facilitate can be assessed through the use of video footage/assessment at external centres.</p>
Choose this subject if...	<p>Pupils should choose GCSE Physical Education if they play a team sport in School or play for a team or an individual sport outside School on a regular basis. Pupils must commit to, and attend, one fitness club each week before School and all School training sessions and fixtures. The course will appeal to those who consider sport to play a part in their healthy, active lifestyle and have a genuine interest in the way their body works, developing skills and fitness and are interested by the modern world of sport and its ever-changing nature.</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>GCSE Physical Education will provide a firm grounding for the A-level in Physical Education. Sport specific careers may include teaching, professional coaching and training, leisure management, sports nutrition, sports analyst/scientist or sports psychology. If combined with a Science at A-level, physiotherapy is an option well worth consideration.</p>

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Exam Board:	AQA
Course Code:	8062
Outline of course:	<p>Component 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam [NB beliefs already included in the core, short course].</p> <p>Component 2: Thematic Studies: two religious, philosophical and ethical themes (Relationships & Families, Religion, Peace & Conflict – taught in the core, short course); two textual themes (Mark’s gospel); religion and life; religion and society.</p>
Method(s) of Assessment:	Each component is assessed in a final examination of 1 hour 45 minutes each. Pupils are assessed against two objectives: Assessment Objective 1 is to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs, while for Assessment Objective 2 pupils need to analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.
Choose this subject if...	<p>An examined course in Philosophy and Ethics allows pupils an opportunity to grapple with timeless philosophical questions of life, and also enables them to relate a range of beliefs, both theistic and atheistic, to pressing and contemporary issues. Pupils do not need any particular faith background to follow this course. Indeed, diversity is encouraged as it makes for better class discussions!</p> <p>While building on knowledge and skills developed at Key Stage 3, pupils now have a chance to focus on understanding where people’s beliefs come from, and how others view the world and life’s big questions. There is an emphasis on weighing up different views, as well as developing and exploring your own. Religion is a fundamental part of many people’s lives, and this is reflected in what they write, think, say and do. Understanding others’ beliefs helps us to understand far more about world news, literature, music and film, for example. The study of ancient texts is particularly exciting as an inter disciplinary subject which draws on historical, linguistic and literary skills.</p> <p>Religious Studies is a subject highly regarded by employers and universities. Most importantly it is a fascinating subject!</p>
Possible careers / future pathways:	<p>Aside from the fascination of discussing the really important questions of life, there are good practical reasons for studying RS. When pupils go out from School into work or further education, they will meet and work alongside people with outlooks and beliefs different from their own. Studying RS gives you a better chance of understanding their views and being able to explain your own.</p> <p>Many of the skills developed in this course are invaluable in further study and to employers: being able to evaluate opinions; understand sources; interpret language, symbolism and metaphor; being able to clearly express your ideas and develop an effective argument. Religious Studies is, of course, based on Theology and Philosophy, two of the oldest academic subjects and the subjects upon which the top universities were founded!</p>



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