

Year 8 into Year 9



2015 - 2017

“No one can predict to what heights you
can soar.
Even you will not know until you spread
your wings.”

Year 8 into 9

KS4 OPTION INFORMATION

Making the Choice

In general terms what does the curriculum look like?

The timetable week contains 25 x 1 hour periods; plus Mentor Group time.
This 25 period week is split into compulsory Core subjects and Option subjects.

	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Core	English 4 hrs Maths 4 hrs Science 4 hrs PE 2 hrs RE/LIFE 1 hr Consolidation 1 hr	English 4 hrs Maths 3 hrs Science 4 hrs PE 1 hr RE/LIFE 1 hr	English 4 hrs Maths 4 hrs Science 6 hrs PE 1 hr Consolidation 1 hr
Options	<p>Students can choose <u>three courses</u> from a list of options, each occupying <u>3 hrs per week in Year 9</u> and then <u>4 hrs per week in Year 10</u>.</p> <p>Students study the same three courses over the two years.</p> <p>As a default, students will complete and sit exams in these three option subjects at the end of Year 10.</p> <p>The expectation is that all students will study at least one EBacc option subject in Year 9/10.</p>		<p>In Year 11 students will be guided to choose subjects to fill the <u>9 hrs of option time in blocks of 3 hrs</u>.</p> <p>For most students this will be:</p> <p>one further subject (studied for 6 hrs per week)</p> <p>plus (for 3 hrs per week) either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a second further subject or - consolidation of a core subject (English, maths or science)

Options

The option courses which students can choose from, to start in Year 9 are:

- Art and Design GCSE
- Computing GCSE
- Engineering GCSE
- Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE
- French GCSE
- Geography GCSE
- History GCSE
- Information and Creative Technology BTEC
- Music BTEC
- Performing Arts (Acting) BTEC
- Physical Education GCSE
- Product Design GCSE
- Textiles Design GCSE

Change to GCSE grades

Grades in most GCSE subjects, for current Year 8 students, will be graded 9-1; with 9 being the highest grade. Approximate grade comparator:

New GCSE Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Current GCSE Grade	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	A*	

Terminology that may help you and your child

CORE	These are compulsory subjects such as English and maths
OPTION	Students can pick THREE option subjects to study over Year 9 and 10 and a further subject(s) in Year 11
Key Stage 4	Programmes of study for students in Years 9, 10 and 11
Level 1	GCSE grades 4-1 or equivalent (grades 4-1 are replacing grades D-G at GCSE)
Level 2	GCSE grades 9-5 or equivalent (grades 9-5 are replacing grades A*-C at GCSE)
Level 3	'A' Level grade A*-E or equivalent
GCSE	A course graded 9-1. These are assessed by a mix of examination and coursework (see individual subject guides for further information)
BTEC/OCR National	A vocational qualification graded pass/merit/distinction/distinction* and equivalent to a GCSE. It is mostly portfolio/coursework based, usually with a small exam element (see individual subject guides for further information)
EBacc (English Baccalaureate)	The EBacc subjects are : Maths, English, Sciences (including Computer Science), Geography, History and Modern Foreign Languages. For students to achieve the full EBacc they must attain grade 5+ in Maths, English, at least two sciences, one of History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language

What sort of future planning should students be doing?

Where possible, if students have a goal to aim for, this can help focus their choice of courses. Having said that, we fully understand that many students will either not have a career path planned out or may change their plans. Our curriculum has the flexibility to accommodate this and we would also encourage students to choose a broad range of courses over Key Stage 4 to keep their future options open.

The Level 2 Threshold criteria, set by the government, which may become the admissions criteria for further or higher education establishments and employment, expects students to have achieved good grades in :

- **GCSE Mathematics**
- **GCSE English**
- **Any three GCSE qualifications from the Sciences, Geography, History or Languages**
- **A further three qualifications which can be either BTEC/OCR National, GCSE or other approved qualifications**

We will therefore support students in the core curriculum and through their option choices to achieve this threshold.

What if students cannot do their chosen course?

We hope that the courses offered will be available to all the students who want them but we will ask you to give us two alternative/reserve choices.

Despite every effort to give all students their preferred choice, this may not always be possible. Alternatives may have to be considered if:

- Too many students opt for a particular course
- Too few students select a particular course
- We wish to advise a better range of courses to meet a student's needs

Combinations of courses are chosen which are impossible to timetable.

We will write to you in the summer term to confirm your choices.

Can students change their mind?

We always do our best to ensure that all students' choices can be matched but please bear in mind that students who submit options after the deadline may not find it possible to be placed on their first choice courses. As soon as the options deadline has passed, work begins on timetabling. Alterations to choices may not be possible from this point onwards.

Once a decision has been made and a course begun, it is extremely difficult to make any changes. It is therefore essential that time and thought be given to the combination of courses to be taken.

What support is there to decide which options to take?

1. Subject staff will be available at the KS4 Options Evening on **Monday 11 January 2016, 6pm** to discuss option courses
2. Careers advisors, colleges, employers, training providers and universities will be available at the Careers Fair on **Tuesday 19 January 2016, 5-7pm**

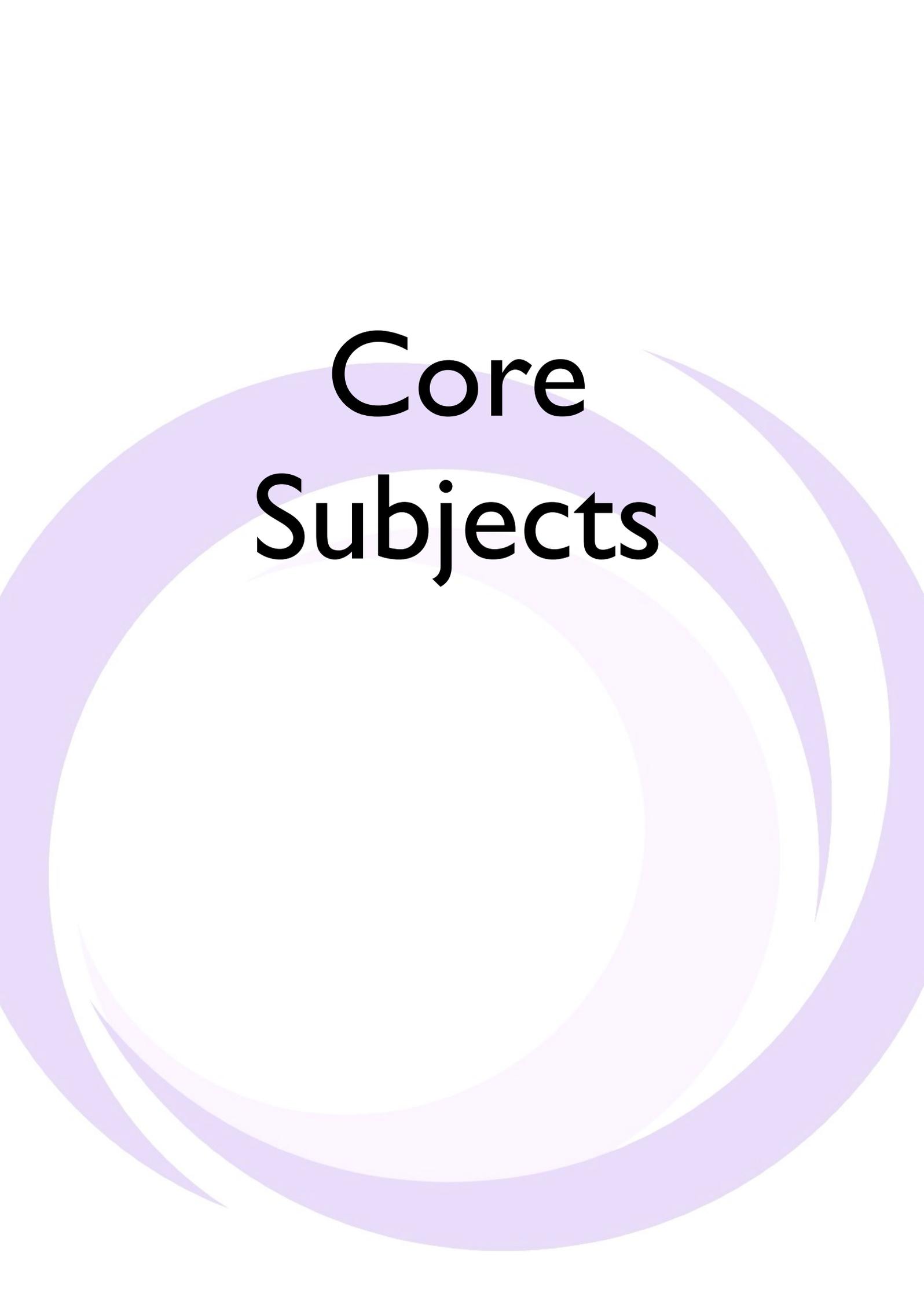
Students are welcome to discuss option choices in relation to their future career plans and current level of performance with subject and VMG staff during the academy day, over the next couple of weeks.

Option English and maths

Within the academy we are constantly assessing students' performance in the key subjects of GCSE Maths and GCSE English and strive for this to be the best it can possible be. We may identify some students who would benefit from using option time to improve their grade(s) by studying extra maths and/or English. This will replace one of their option choices. The academy reserves the right to make this decision where we feel it will be in the best interests of the student. Where this applies students and parents will be kept fully informed and we would ask that you work with us to help your child see that this is a positive opportunity to improve their life chances. Many thanks.

Deadline for option forms to be returned to student reception:

Monday 1 February

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, concentric purple circles of varying shades, creating a sense of depth and movement. The circles are centered on the page and partially overlap each other, with the outermost circle being the most prominent.

Core Subjects

English Language

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	WJEC
Method of Assessment	-	100% examination

Course Information and Structure

In English Language we look at a range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries which includes developing the skills to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. In addition to this, students are required to explain, comment and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers.

Activities include developing skills in formal and informal situations, covering personal, creative and informative writing.

Assessment

This is an un-tiered examination. Reading and writing will each contribute to 50% of the final qualification. 20% of the marks for the written examinations will be allocated to accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

20th Century Literature Reading and Creative Prose Writing

This 1 hour and 45 minute examination will test the reading of an unseen extract from one 20th century literary prose text and creative prose writing.

19th and 21st Century Non-fiction Reading and Transactional Writing/ Persuasive Writing

This 2 hour examination will test the reading of two high-quality unseen non-fiction texts, for example letters, extracts from autobiographies or biographies, diaries, articles and digital and multi-modal texts of various kinds from newspapers and magazines, and the internet. There will also be a section that will test transactional, persuasive and/ or discursive writing.

You will also be required to complete one formal presentation or speech. Achievement in Spoken Language will be reported as part of the qualification, but it will not form part of the final mark and grade.

Student Comment

“English is an important subject to study because it will help widen your vocabulary which will help you when you leave school. You need basic English skills in every job so you need to do your best to achieve the best possible grade.”

Progression Routes

This highly valued qualification is essential for many further/higher education courses and careers. Career options include journalist, nurse, engineer, teacher, police force, law, medicine.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Miss Conroy.

English Literature

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	WJEC
Method of Assessment	-	100% examination

Course Information and Structure

Students will develop their ability to write a critical analysis across a wide range of varying literary texts. In their study of Shakespeare students study the plot, the characters and the themes portrayed in 'Macbeth'. There will be skill development in analysis of a range of poems from the 20th and 21st centuries and students will also be required to study novels such as 'Lord of the Flies' and 'A Christmas Carol'.

Assessment

This is an un-tiered examination. You will not be permitted to take copies of set texts into the examination.

Shakespeare and Poetry

This 2 hour examination will have two sections. The first will test your knowledge and understanding of a Shakespeare text. You will be expected to comment on Shakespeare's use of language, structure and form and show an understanding of key themes, characters and ideas within the text. The second section will test knowledge and understanding of poetry from 1789 to the present day.

Post 1914 Prose/Drama

This 2 hour and 30 minute examination will test your knowledge and understanding of the post-1914 prose/drama, a 19th century prose novel and also two unseen poems from the 20th and/ or 21st centuries.

Student Comment

"I have thoroughly enjoyed studying Literature and have found the texts studied and the lessons really engaging."

Progression Routes

Career options include research based work, analyst, lecturer, personal assistant, solicitor, teacher, author.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Miss Conroy.

Mathematics

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	Edexcel
Method of Assessment	-	100% examination

Course Information and Structure

This course will allow you to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts in the key topics of number, algebra, geometry & measures, statistics & probability, ratio, proportion & rates of change. You will use your knowledge and understanding to make connections between mathematical concepts and be able to apply the functional elements of mathematics to solve problems in real-life situations. In addition you will have the opportunity to develop your ability to acquire and use problem-solving strategies, apply mathematical techniques to every day and real-world situations, reason mathematically and interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms.

The course is delivered in a linear format, providing flexibility and accurate assessment feedback throughout. After school lessons are provided for both tiers.

Assessment

Assessment in mathematics is made up from three separate exams completed at the end of year 11 which make up 100% of the marks from the course, with no coursework in the subject. All three papers are 1 hour 30 minutes in length and each worth 80 marks, with paper 1 being a non-calculator exam and paper 2 and paper 3 both calculator exams. There is a new grading structure being introduced from 2015 (first exam in 2017), from grade 9 to 1, to replace the familiar A* to G grading scale. There are two tiers of entry, foundation goes from grades 1-5 and higher goes from 4-9. In the assessments there is now a greater emphasis on problem solving and mathematical reasoning, with more marks now being allocated to these higher-order skills.

Student Comment

"Maths is a good subject subject to study because it will help you throughout life as it an important part of many jobs. It's also highly important for you to have maths skills for when you start to earn money, open a bank account, buy your own house etc.."

Progression Routes

This highly valued qualification is essential for many further/higher education courses and careers. Career options include accountant, actuary, architect, banker, engineer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mr Upex.

Life/Religious Studies

Course Details

There is no final qualification.

Course Information and Structure

Students will study a range of moral issues throughout the course, with particular focus on Christian and Muslim attitudes to these issues. Students will be expected to recognise that Christianity and Islam are two of the many religious traditions in Great Britain and that within Christianity and Islam there may be more than one perspective which might be linked to different forms or denominations of Christianity and Islam but might be more personal.

Students will also follow a sex and relationship education unit of work during the course.

Religious Studies is not about making people religious or training to be priests! It is about making sense of the world we live in. It is about asking questions, listening to the opinions of others and forming opinions. Most of all it is about people. Skills required to do well in Religious Studies include:

- Taking part in discussions
- Literacy
- Research
- Listening to the views of others
- Recognising that people's attitudes may be different

Assessment

Students will be assessed through Praising Stars Assessments every half term.

Student Comment

"This is a great subject because you learn about moral issues and you are able to share your opinions with others and no one prejudices you. You learn life skills such as respect."

Progression Routes

GCSE Religious Studies (short course) will equip you with the skills needed to study Philosophy and Ethics (Religious Studies) at A/AS Level. Students often go on to study a degree in Religious Studies, Theology, Philosophy, Law, Sociology and Social Sciences. Possible careers include medicine, education, law, army, journalist or social worker.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mrs Dunn.

Science

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	AQA
Method of Assessment	-	100% examination

Course Information and Structure

This is a GCSE level course which follows on from the work completed in Key Stage 3. The course units are split into Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Those studying triple science will achieve three separate qualifications, one in each of the three disciplines. Those doing double science will achieve two GCSEs in GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy.

Students will study a variety of topics covering all three disciplines including cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis, inheritance and evolution, ecology, atomic structure, bonding, the Periodic Table, quantitative chemistry, chemical and energy changes, rates, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere, forces, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism and electro magnetism, particle model and atomic structure.

Assessment

Students who follow the double award Trilogy course will take two examination papers for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, each paper is worth 16.7% of the final mark.

Triple Science students will complete three examination per subject, with each worth 33% of the final mark.

Students will be guided towards the most appropriate pathway to match their ability.

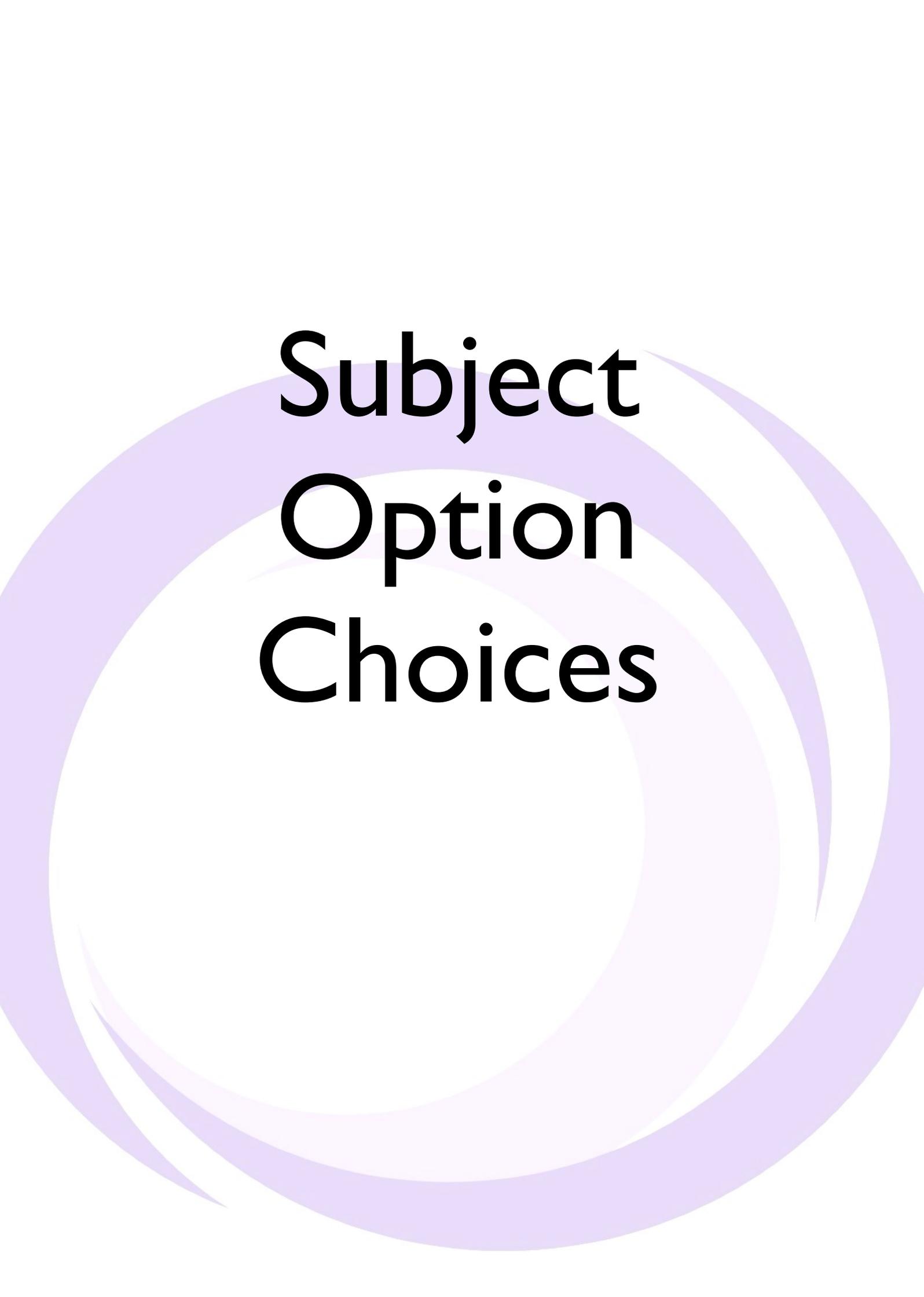
Student Comment

"I am enjoying Science. Make sure you try hard and have a positive attitude as this will make it easier for you to learn and take things in. Science will help you when you leave school because it opens up a lot of opportunities for you."

Progression Routes

The double/triple science options will provide you with the skills and knowledge required to study science at a higher level. You will be well equipped to study Biology, Chemistry or Physics A-Levels if you wish. Career options include medical, engineer, environmental work, sports science, technology, chemical industry.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mrs Chiverton.



Subject Option Choices

Art and Design

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	AQA
Method of Assessment	-	Portfolio (60%) and externally set assignment (40%)

Course Information and Structure

This is an exciting course that builds upon and extends what you have learned in Key Stage 3 whilst helping to foster new art and design skills. The focus of the course is to develop your understanding of the key processes involved in creating a piece of art work. All work is project based with a major emphasis on research and development of a given theme. You will have the opportunity to work in a range of media including fine art, textiles, 3D sculpture, painting and drawing. Through the coursework component of this course you are expected to develop an extensive folder of artwork

2 coursework projects including drawings, sketches, and analysis of artists' work.

Skills required to do well:

Commitment

Follow ideas through to a conclusion

Organisation

Presentation

Independence

Imagination and Creativity

Assessment

Component 1: Portfolio, what's assessed

A portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study.

Component 2: Externally set assignment, what's assessed

Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. It is assessed through a preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time

Student Comment

"Art has helped me with confidence in the classroom and confidence with working as a team."

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Level practical creative subjects. Possible careers include designers (e.g. fashion, jewellery) painter, sculptor, photographer, art therapist, teacher.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mrs Smith or Ms Rice.

Computing

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	OCR
Method of Assessment	-	80% examination and 20% controlled assessment



Course Information and Structure

This is a course that has real relevance in our modern world. While learners will no doubt already have some knowledge of computers and related areas, this course will give them an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works and look at what goes on “behind the scenes” by providing them with the theory of how computers function. In addition pupils will learn how to program using low and high level languages.

Computer systems

This unit covers the body of knowledge about computer systems on which the examination will be based. Topics include; systems architecture, memory, storage, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, protocols and layers, system security, system software, ethical and legal concerns.

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

This unit is designed to test your understanding of programming. Topics include; algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic, translators and facilities of languages and data representation.

Programming Project

This unit is designed to test your programming capability and your ability to test your solutions. This will be using the programming language Python.

Assessment

Unit 1 - Computer systems, 1 hour and 30 minutes examination (40%)

Unit 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming, 1 hour and 30 minute examination (40%)

Unit 3 - Programming project , 20 hours, Non-Exam Assessment (20%)

Student Comment

“Computing is challenging as it involves a lot of problem solving especially when it comes to programming, but it feels so good when you solve a problem and can create your own programs from scratch.”

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Level subjects that include, Information Communication Technology, graphics and eventually Degree’s in similar subject areas. Possible careers include becoming a web designer, digital photographer, animator, graphic designer, games developer and software developer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to your ICT teacher. You may be ready to take this course or you may want to consider the GCSE ICT course as a pathway for taking the GCSE.

Engineering

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	AQA
Method of Assessment	-	40% examination and 60% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

Unit 1 – 1 Hour Exam

Students will be asked questions on the impact of new technologies on engineered products. Engineering drawing is also a key feature of the exam. They will also be asked to write specifications, complete production plans, then identify materials, components, and construction processes for a specific product chosen by the exam board.

Unit 2 – Controlled Assessment

There are 2 parts to the controlled assessment. Part A is Design and Communication. Students are required to design and manufacture a prototype of a crushing device for recycling cans. This involves investigation, designing, use of scientific principles, computer aided design to produce a product for a client. Part B involves manufacturing. Students create a tool makers clamp using the lathe, milling machine, heat treatment and a range of hand processes. They will also need to produce production plans, risk assessments, plus a series of objective tests.

This course will give students an experience in metal fabrication, and the use of a range of new technologies including, laser cutting, 3D printing, CNC machining, and using computer aided design software. The course will also raise their awareness of the importance of accuracy and working within very small tolerances.

Please be aware that a number of courses in Design and Technology are being reformed. We therefore reserve the right to change this specific course to a similar course if we feel it will be more suitable for students.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 1 hour examination (40%)

Unit 2 - 45 hours controlled assessment (60%)

Student Comment

"This is a very challenging course with a large amount of coursework. There is also a considerable amount of scientific principles and maths within the course which I was not expecting."

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Levels including Product Design, Engineering, Manufacturing, and Design & Technology. Career opportunities include mechanical engineer, product designer, production engineer, architect and interior designer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mr Burton.

Food Preparation & Nutrition

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	WJEC
Method of Assessment	-	50% examination and 50% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

This very new GCSE course equips learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages learners to cook, enables them to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and allows them to acquire knowledge in order to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life. There will be opportunities to learn and perfect creative cooking techniques in the preparation and cooking of food.

Food and Nutrition is a topic of national interest. Minister for School Reform Nick Gibb said:

“At the heart of any food qualification should be a focus on developing practical cookery skills and a strong understanding of nutrition. That’s why we’ve created the cooking and nutrition GCSE so that rather than designing food packaging, students will now learn the essentials of food science, nutrition and how to cook healthily.”

Pupils must be self motivated as the course has deadlines which must be met. The course has a broad range of activities which are both catering environment and ICT based.

Assessment

Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition, 1 hour and 45 minutes examination (50%)

This assessment will consist of two sections both containing compulsory questions. Section A will be questions based on stimulus material, and Section B will be structured, short and extended response questions to assess content related to food preparation and nutrition.

Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action, 20 hours controlled assessment (50%)

You will complete two assessments.

The Food Investigation Assessment is a scientific food investigation which will assess your knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food.

The Food Preparation Assessment is where you will cook and present a menu to demonstrate your knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food.

Student Comment

“This is a new exciting course which I am hoping will combine my practical skills with my scientific knowledge. It will also help me to be able to cook for myself when I leave home.”

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Levels or BTEC courses in the Catering industry. This qualification will start your journey towards an exciting career within the food manufacturing industry as well as giving you vital life skills.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Miss Collin.

French

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	AQA
Method of Assessment	-	75% examination and 25% non-exam assessment



Course Information and Structure

We encourage students of all abilities to develop their French language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence. The AQA GCSE French qualification stimulates students' cultural knowledge whilst developing their language skills.

Students study the following themes on which the assessments are based.

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

Learning a foreign language will offer you the chance to communicate more effectively, understand other cultures and develop an awareness of the nature of language. It will also help you develop additional skills, such as presentation and problem solving, and can open up opportunities to travel and meet new people abroad.

Assessment

Paper 1: Listening (25%), 35 minutes – 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes – 50 marks (Higher Tier)

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

Paper 2: Speaking (25%), 7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) – 60 marks, 10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) – 60 marks

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes. Stimulus materials include role play, photo card and general conversation. Non-exam assessment.

Paper 3: Reading (25%), 45 minutes – 60 marks (Foundation Tier), 1 hour – 60 marks (Higher Tier)

Understanding and responding to different types of written language. Comprehension questions in English and French, and translation of short texts from French into English.

Paper 4: Writing (25%), 1 hour – 50 marks (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes – 60 marks (Higher Tier)

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes. Stimulus materials include structured and open-ended writing tasks, and translation of short texts from English into French.

Student Comment

“The ability to speak more than one language gives me an edge when applying for jobs in the future, and opens the door to a range of exciting careers both in this country and abroad.”

Progression Routes

Some basic foreign language skills can prove essential in all kinds of careers, including jobs in accountancy, computing, customer services, engineering, finance, marketing, the media and, of course, travel and tourism. Potential careers in languages include translator/interpreter, teacher of English to speakers of other languages, travel, tourism, hospitality and catering, European Union official, importer/exporter.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Ms Hansford.

Geography

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	AQA
Method of Assessment	-	100% examination



Course Information and Structure

Living with the physical environment

The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the processes and forms associated with tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes in different environments, and the need for management strategies governed by sustainability and consideration of the direct and indirect effects of human interaction with the Earth and the atmosphere. In this unit students will learn about natural hazards, tectonic hazards, tropical storms, extreme weather, climate change, coasts, rivers, ecosystems, and hot deserts.

Challenges in the human environment

This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change both spatially and temporally. They are studied in a range of places, at a variety of scales and must include places in various states of development. The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments. In this unit students will study urbanisation, population, globalisation, economic development, resource management and energy.

Geographical applications

This unit will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the specification using secondary sources. The resource sheet is available from the 15 March for students to work through before the exam. The second part of this paper will assess students understanding of the fieldwork they have completed in two contrasting environments.

Assessment

Paper 1 - Living with the physical environment

1 hour 30 minutes, 35%

Paper 2 - Challenges in the human environment

1 hour 30 minutes, 35%

Paper 3 - Geographical applications

1 hour, 30 %

Student Comment

“You should study Geography if you enjoy learning about people and their societies, economies, cultures and the environment and you are keen to learn and develop a wide range of skills.”

Progression Routes

Geography is a broad based academic subject which is well respected by employers. Geography graduates have one of the highest rates of graduate employment. Geographers enter a very wide range of career areas and put simply there is no such thing as a geography job, there are jobs that geographers do. Studying geography provides you with valuable skills and a firm base for life-long learning.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Miss McGee.

History

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	Edexcel
Method of Assessment	-	100% examination



Course Information and Structure

Thematic Study and Historic Environment

The thematic studies require students to understand change and continuity across a long period of history. You will examine how medicine changed over time and compare different time periods.

The historic environment will involve students learning about the British sector of the Western Front during the First World War. This environment is linked to the thematic study. You will examine injuries and treatments in the trenches.

Period Study and British Depth Study

The period study focuses on a substantial and coherent medium time span of at least 50 years whereas the depth study concentrates on a short time span.

In the period study you will learn about the American West from 1835-1895. Topics in this unit include The Plains Indians – beliefs and way of life, Migration and impact on the Indians, Development of the Plains and Conflict and conquest.

In the depth study you will learn about Elizabethan England from 1558-1588. Topics include The 'Virgin' Queen, Plots against Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, War with Spain – The Armada.

Modern Depth Study

This involves students studying Germany from 1918-39. Topics include The Weimar Republic 1919-29, Hitler's Rise to Power, Nazi dictatorship, Life in Nazi Germany.

Assessment

Paper 1 – Thematic Study and Historic Environment 1 hour and 15 minutes (30%)

Medicine in Britain 1250 – present

The British sector of the Western Front 1914-18

Paper 2 – Period Study and British Depth Study, 1 hour and 45 minutes (40%)

Early Elizabethan England 1558-1588

The American West 1835-1895

Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study, 1 hour 20 minutes (30%)

Germany 1918-39

Student Comment

Students have commented on the variety of learning experiences in history. Many students have gone on to study history at A level. Although students have had opportunities to participate in fieldwork trips many would like to experience more!

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Level Subjects including History, Law, Politics, Sociology and Economics eventually Degree's in similar subject areas. History is very highly regarded by employers with its ability to debate, analyse and evaluate evidence as well as producing well organised and structured written work.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mr Parker.

Information & Creative Technology

Course Details

Qualification	-	BTEC
Exam Board	-	Edexcel
Method of Assessment	-	25% examination and 75% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

The Online World

How do websites work? How do emails reach your computer? How does the use of computer applications affect your daily life? This unit provides an introduction to the modern online world. Starting with your own experiences, you will extend your knowledge of online services and investigate the technology and software that supports them. You will learn more about a range of services including email, online data storage, collaborative software, search engines and blogging.

A Digital Portfolio

You will learn how to create a digital portfolio that includes a series of web pages with links to content that you have created. You will learn how to make use of multimedia assets such as images, sound and video to make your portfolio appealing and engaging.

Website Development

In this unit, you will investigate the features and uses of websites by exploring what they are and how their integrated components and applications interact with each other. You will also learn how to design, develop and test a website for a brief. Once this is completed you will review your website, having obtained feedback from others.

BTECs are vocationally related qualifications, where learners develop knowledge and understanding by applying their learning and skills in a work-related context. Additionally, they are popular and effective because they engage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop skills that are essential for the modern-day workplace.

Assessment

The Online World 1 hour and 30 minutes, online test (25%)

A Digital Portfolio 30 hours, coursework (25%)

Website Development 60 hours, coursework (50%)

Student Comment

*"In ICT, I get to be creative, I design logos, websites and animated banners
The theory is really interesting too. I have found out about shopping online and how technology works."*

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Level subjects that include, Information Communication Technology, graphics and eventually Degree's in similar subject areas. Possible careers include becoming a web designer, digital photographer, animator, graphic designer, games developer and software developer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Miss Peacock.

Music

Course Details

Qualification	-	BTEC
Exam Board	-	Edexcel
Method of Assessment	-	25% examination and 75% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

This course allows students the opportunity to immerse themselves in all facets of music making. Through the different units, students will gain an understanding of the different aspects of the music industry, from the jobs, through to performing, composing and creating a musical product. This course is ideal if you have skills in music making and playing that you want to develop. You will take charge of your progress as a performer and develop rehearsing and warm up techniques. You will plan, develop and deliver a musical product. You will work with others in order to complete the final concert or CD.

During the composition unit, you will follow a brief and compose music from a starting point such as music for film, advertising, TV or a piece for a concert. You will develop your ideas through the use of, for example, melody, chords, and textures. You will also experience using technology, including sequencing and recording of your ideas using Garage Band and Guitar Pro software.

During the performance unit, you will develop your skills in order to perform confidently and accurately to an audience. You will learn to use expression and how to interpret different pieces of music.

Assessment

Unit 1 Music industry (25%)

External 1 hour exam on the Music industry, covering jobs, organisations, venues and agents.

Unit 2 Managing a Music product (25%)

Students will plan and organise the creation of a Music product. E.g. CD or musical concert

Unit 4 Composing Music (25%)

Students will compose one piece of music from 4 original ideas. They can be written for any instruments and in any style. Students must produce a score or recording of their final composition

Unit 5 Music performance (25%)

Students will develop their own performing skills and review their practice throughout the course. This unit culminates in a final performance either in an ensemble **or** a solo.

Student Comment

"Music has got me wanting to progress what I've learnt and take it on maybe as a career. Music has also got me into a musical theatre course at college where I now use all these skills in my practical work."

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Level practical creative subjects. Possible Careers include music therapy, instrumental tutor, professional musician, teacher, sound engineer, studio technician and vocalist/performer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mrs Trenholm.

Performing Arts (Acting)

Course Details

Qualification	-	BTEC
Exam Board	-	Edexcel
Method of Assessment	-	25% examination and 75% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

Students will study three Units.

Individual Showcase

Students will prepare a piece of performance focusing on Acting or another performance skill such as Singing or Dance.

Preparation, Performance and Production

This Unit requires the creation of a performance using a number of students and is performed to a specific audience. You will not only need to demonstrate your performance skills, but also your knowledge of the production process.

Acting Skills

You will study and develop your acting skills in great detail and then demonstrate your ability by performing a piece of scripted drama.

Students find that their drama skills develop rapidly as a result of this course and they will learn a great deal about acting and the theatre.

Assessment

Your assessment will be continuous throughout the course. You will be graded on your effort in lessons as well as your understanding and ability in the performance skills.

Student Comment

“My drama skills developed rapidly as a result of this course and I have learned a great deal about acting and the theatre.”

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study A Level Drama or a Level 3 BTEC in Performing Arts. Career options can include: Actor, Director, Stage Manager, Sound designer, Stage designer, Teacher. Drama and the Arts also develop confidence, social skills and self esteem; all essential life skills for any career.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mr Taylor.

Physical Education

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	Edexcel
Method of Assessment	-	60% examination and 40% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

Fitness and Body Systems

This unit focuses on four key topics:

- 1: Applied anatomy and physiology
- 2: Movement analysis
- 3: Physical training
- 4: Use of data

Health and Performance

This unit focuses on four key topics:

- 1: Health, fitness and well-being
- 2: Sports psychology
- 3: Socio-cultural influences
- 4: Use of data

Practical Performance

This unit focuses on three practical activities from a set list.

One must be a *team* activity.

One must be an *individual* activity.

The final activity is a *free* choice.

Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)

The production, monitoring and analysis of the PEP.

Assessment

60% Examination

Fitness and Body Systems: 36% of qualification

Health and Performance: 24% of qualification

40% Non-examined assessment

Practical Performance : 30% of qualification

Personal Exercise Programme (PEP) : 10% of qualification

Student Comment

“GCSE PE is fun, well structured and if you try hard you will succeed in both practical and theory. You learn how the body works and why exercise is so good for your health. I love my PE lessons.”

Progression Routes

GCSE PE is the ideal preparation for the A level in PE, as well as for vocational qualifications such as BTEC's in Sport and Exercise sciences. The course develops not only your sporting /coaching/leading ability in a range of sports, but offers you a range of transferable skills such as team work, leadership, independence and energy, all of which employers look for. Typical jobs taken by people who study the PE GCSE are: physiotherapy, fitness instruction and the armed forces.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mrs Hill.

Product Design

Course Details

Qualification	-	AQA
Exam Board	-	GCSE
Method of Assessment	-	50% examination and 50% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

Unit 1 – Two Hour Examination

Students will be asked questions relating to the whole course content. These include:

- **Product Analysis**
- **History of Product Design**
- **Product Evolution**
- **Batch Manufacture**
- **Packaging & Labelling**
- **Drawing Techniques**
- **Sustainability**
- **Materials**
- **Use of ICT in Product Design**
- **Target Markets**

Unit 2 – Controlled Assessment

Students are required to design a self-assembly product using manufacturing aids such as jigs, moulds, templates, formers, and dies, alongside the use of standard components and new technologies such as the 3D printer, laser cutter, vinyl cutter, and CNC machines. There is also a design folder consisting of an investigation, design development and evaluation sections. Students must also suggest modifications for commercial production.

It will give students an experience in metal fabrication, and the use of a range of new technologies including, laser cutting, 3D printing, CNC machining, and using computer aided design software. The course will also raise their awareness of the importance of accuracy and working within very small tolerances. Product Design students will study paper/card as the core material. Plus woods, metal, plastics, and fabrics. To gain the top marks the practical work has to be good enough to buy and demonstrate using a wide range of materials and processes.

Please be aware that a number of courses in Design and Technology are being reformed. We therefore reserve the right to change this specific course to a similar course if we feel it will be more suitable for students.

Assessment

Unit 1 – 1 hour examination (40%)

Unit 2 – 45 hours controlled assessment (60%)

Student Comment

“This is a very challenging course with a large amount of coursework. However, you get the opportunity to work in a wide range of materials, and I like the idea of creating my own packaging as well.”

Progression Routes

Students can progress to study a range of A-Levels including Product Design, Engineering, Manufacturing, and Design & Technology. Career opportunities include Mechanical Engineer, Product Designer, Production Engineer, Graphic Designer, Fashion Designer, Marketing, Architect, and Interior Designer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mr Burton.

Textiles

Course Details

Qualification	-	GCSE
Exam Board	-	AQA
Method of Assessment	-	40% examination and 60% controlled assessment

Course Information and Structure

Design and Technology is a practical subject area which requires the application of knowledge and understanding when developing ideas, planning, producing products and evaluating them. The distinction between Designing and Making is a convenient one to make, but in practice the two often merge. For example, research can involve not only investigating printed matter and people's opinions, but also investigating e.g. proportions, adhesives, colour, structures and materials through practical work.

The course includes;

Showing practical skill and understanding when handling fabrics and components

Making quality products (sometimes in quantity)

Learning how to use CAD / CAM textile systems in pattern making, fabric design etc.

Please be aware that a number of courses in Design and Technology are being reformed. We therefore reserve the right to change this specific course to a similar course if we feel it will be more suitable for students.

Assessment

Coursework

Controlled Assessment 60%

Portfolio to include practical work and recording of all results 45 hours Exam 40% (2hour paper)

Section A – Design question Based upon a topic set by the exam board.

Section B – Covers all aspects of the course.

Student Comment

"Textiles is a good subject to take because it allows you to explore your creative side. I really enjoy it because there is a lot of practical work involved and you get to use your own ideas to design all of your own work. It's really fun and interesting and it allows you to work independently."

Progression Routes

Possible careers include clothing /fashion designer, graphic designer , interior designer, stage /set designer and textile designer.

Advice and Guidance - For further information you should speak to Mrs Smith or Ms Rice.