



HOLMLEIGH PARK YEAR 9 OPTIONS

COURSE INFORMATION
FOR SEPTEMBER 2026



YEAR 9 OPTIONS

We are at the stage of the school year when students in Year 9 need to select the subjects that they want to study in key stage 4 (Years 10 and 11). Over the next few weeks we aim to provide you with all of the information and support you need in order to be able to make these important decisions.

In Years 10 and 11, all students currently study a core curriculum which comprises GCSE English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (Combined or Triple) and the non-examined subjects of careers, PSHE and core PE. In addition to this all students must select a further three subjects to study. Please look carefully at the options booklet before making your decisions.

| Core Subjects – All students will study these subjects | Ebacc Block. Please select 1 subject | Open Block Please select 2 subjects, plus 1 reserve |
|---|---|--|
| • English Language | • French | • Art and Design |
| • English Literature | • Geography | • Business Studies |
| • Maths | • History | • Computer Science |
| • Statistics | • Spanish | • Drama |
| • Science | | • French |
| • PSHE | | • Geography |
| • Core PE | | • Health and Social Care |
| | | • History |
| | | • Hospitality and Catering |
| | | • Information Technology (IT) |
| | | • Media Studies |
| | | • Music |
| | | • Physical Education |
| | | • Photography |
| | | • Religious Studies |
| | | • Science (Triple) |
| | | • Spanish |
| | | • Textiles |



What is the course about?

Students will read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction, as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism.

Course content

Students will:

- Read and evaluate texts critically and make comparisons between texts.
- Use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately.
- Summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts.
- Acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing.
- Listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively.
- Write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately.

Assessment

Students will sit two examinations at the end of a two year course. In addition, students will also complete their Spoken Language Assessment, which will be a speech on a topic of their choice.

Career pathways

English Language is a good foundation subject for any of the A Levels or BTECs students may go on to take.

What is the course about?

Students will develop their reading and comprehension skills. They will build upon their inferential skills and will explore aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings. Students will also enhance their critical reading skills - identifying themes; supporting a point of view by referring to evidence in the text; recognising the possibility of and evaluating different responses to a text and will evaluate a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features.

Course content

Study of the following will be included:

- Shakespeare – Romeo and Juliet
- Unseen Poetry
- 19th Century Text – Jekyll and Hyde.
- Modern Text – An Inspector Calls.
- Love and Relationships cluster of poems.

Assessment

Students will sit two examinations at the end of a two year course.

Career pathways

English Literature is a good foundation subject for any of the A Levels or BTECs students may go on to take.

What is the course about?

In GCSE Maths, students will build on the skills they have been developing since primary school. Students will go deeper in to the study of algebra, number, geometry, ratio, probability and statistics. By the end of the course, students will have gained the skills to approach problems of multiple disciplines confidently, applying their mathematical knowledge and skills.

Course content

The course covers the following key topics:

- Algebra
- Probability
- Number
- Statistics
- Shape, space and measure
- Ratio and proportion

Assessment

Three exams which all cover all of the course content and are of equal worth. One non-calculator and two calculator papers, all sat at the end of Year 11.

Career pathways

A good Maths GCSE is beneficial for further study of the sciences, geography, engineering, medicine etc.

Mathematical experts are in demand across all kinds of industries the world over, a large number of math careers are based within business or science and technology-related sectors, with math graduates occupying roles such as accountant, actuary, statistician, technician, economist or market researcher.

What is the course about?

Data is crucial to the way our lives work – from communicating with friends to how we develop and trial new medicines. Statistics is all about using data to find answers to questions. By the end of the course, students will have gained essential, real-world data literacy skills, enabling them to interpret data, assess risk, and make informed decisions in areas like finance, health, and social media.

Course content

What are the main topics covered in the course?

- Collection of data
- Time series
- Processing and representing data
- Probability
- Summarising data
- Index numbers
- Scatter diagrams and correlation
- Probability distributions

Assessment

Two exams, both calculator papers and each of them assesses all content. Both papers are sat at the end of Year 11.

Career pathways

Collecting, interpreting data and making informed decisions is part of every day life so a good GCSE Statistics is beneficial for further study of sciences, geography, engineering, healthcare, psychology, finance, etc.

What is the course about?

Students will study equally the three strands of science, gaining an understanding of the basics that underpin life as we know it. From learning in biology about living organisms and how they function from a cellular level up to the ecology of an ecosystem. In Chemistry, from the very fundamentals of an atom to life sustaining processes such as water processing and the realisation that the earth's resources are finite. In physics, students study the underpinning principles that rule matter to applying these to electricity generation.

Course content

- **Biology:**
Cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, evolution and response, ecology.
- **Chemistry:**
Atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure and properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere, Using resources.
- **Physics:**
Energy, electricity, particle model of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves, magnetism and electromagnetism.

Assessment

The course is assessed at the end of the course via six x 1 hour 15 minute exams. These are separated into two papers in each of Chemistry, Physics and Biology. These exams are split roughly into equal amounts of topics, but the skills that underpin these are gained from across the entire course.

During the course of study, students will complete "required practicals" these form part of assessed content in their exams.

Career pathways

Science is a core subject at GCSE. Good grades are needed to progress to any of the science A Levels (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Applied and Environmental Science). It is also particularly useful in its links with geography and PE.

Careers linked to science are huge in number, through medical and care to engineering.

What is the course about?

Students will study the three strands of science gaining an understanding of the basics that underpin life as we know it. In biology, students will learn about living organisms and how they function from a cellular level up to the ecology of an ecosystem. In chemistry, students will learn about the very fundamentals of an atom, to life sustaining processes including water processing and the realisation that the earth's resources are finite. In physics, the topics students study include the underpinning principles that rule matter, how these are applied to electrical generation, and the study of the universe and space.

By studying triple science (also called separate science) students will study all of the aspects of the combined science but in greater depth. This is a good and recommended route for any students hoping to study science at A Level.

Course content

What are the main topics covered in the course?

- **Biology:** Cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, evolution and response, ecology.
- **Chemistry:** Atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure and properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere, using resources.
- **Physics:** Energy, electricity, particle model of matter, atomic structure, Forces, waves, magnetism and electromagnetism, space.

Assessment

The course is assessed at the end of the course via six 1.45 hr exams – two papers in each of Chemistry, Physics and Biology.

During the course of study students will complete "required practicals" these form part of assessed content in their exams.

Career pathways

Studying triple science opens the door to A Level biology, chemistry and physics. It will benefit students interested in medicine, veterinary science, engineering, forensics etc. Research shows that science graduates tend to have higher earnings and that the range of careers open to them is very wide and varied. Many of these careers are not obvious to students until they begin to delve deeper into the world of work.

What is the course about?

At GCSE, students will cover three themes: people and lifestyle, popular culture, communication and the world around us.. Throughout the three themes studied at GCSE, students will develop four skills that are vital for any learning: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Students will engage with a variety of topics such as environment, global issues, future studies and employment. The course aims to enable 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.

Course content

Topics include:

- Identity and relationships with others
- Healthy and unhealthy living
- Education and work
- Free-time activities
- Customs and festivals
- Celebrity culture
- Travel and tourism, including places of interests
- Media and technology
- The environment and where people live
- Jobs, career choices and ambitions

Assessment

Four terminal examinations:

- Speaking examination. Divided into three tasks: role play, photocard description and general conversation on two themes.
- Listening examination on all topics.
- Reading examination.
- Writing examination.

Career pathways

Studying a language at GCSE will open more doors in the future. The analytic approach used at GCSE is a useful skill for any subject students would like to study at A Level. 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, journalism, education fashion or law.

What is the course about?

Students study a wide variety of topic areas in both human and physical geography. Studying geography helps students to explore and understand space and place – recognising the great differences in cultures, political systems, economies, landscapes and environments across the world, and exploring the links between them. Through studying geography, both in the classroom and through fieldwork (a compulsory element of the course), students are more socially and environmentally sensitive, better informed, and more responsible as citizens and future employees.

Course content

What are the main topics covered in the course?

- Natural hazards (tectonic, weather and climate change)
- Ecosystems, including tropical rainforests and hot deserts
- Rivers and coasts, such as the challenges of flooding and erosion
- Urban issues and challenges in the UK and India
- The changing economic world – economic development with examples of Nigeria and the UK
- Resource management (food, water and energy)
- Fieldwork, two day trips to human and physical environments

Assessment

At the end of Year 11, students sit three written exams:

- Paper 1: Living with the physical environment
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment
- Paper 3: Geographical applications, which involves questions from a pre-released resource booklet and fieldwork-related questions ranging from 1 to 9 marks in length.

All three exam papers are 90 minutes long.

Career pathways

Geography is a highly regarded and sought after qualification. Its study at GCSE, A Level and beyond lead to variety of types of employment. Geography students are in demand for a variety of careers, such as in politics and law, business, journalism, the media, education, law enforcement and the armed forces. GCSE geography is an excellent way to pursue the subject at A Level or onto other humanities subjects. The qualification is seen by employers and universities as academic and in high demand.

What is the course about?

Students will explore political, economic and social history from 1,000 years ago in Norman society, through to modern day Britain and the wider world. Students will engage with key issues such as power, conflict and health, ranging from the creation of the NHS to people's experiences under Nazi dictatorship. All units will require students to understand an unfolding narrative of developments and events from the Battle of Hastings all the way through to the Cold War. Students will understand what drives change and how the past influences the present, focusing on the contributions of key individuals and groups.

Course content

Students will study a broad range of historical topics. These are:

- The People's Health, c.1250 to present
- The Elizabethans, 1580–1603
- Environmental Study: Big Pit in Wales
- Viking Expansion, c.750–c.1050
- Living under Nazi Rule, 1933–1945

By studying these topics students will develop the fundamentals of history, an understanding of interpretation and sources and engage in the process of building a historical enquiry. These key skills will be addressed throughout the range of topics.

Assessment

This qualification is linear, so students will sit their exams at the end of the course in Year 11. There are two exams:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1: British History Thematic study and Depth study The People's Health, c.1250 to present The Elizabethans, 1580–1603 40 marks each (80 marks total) 1 hour 45 minute paper | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 3: World History Period study and Depth study: Viking Expansion, c.750–c.1050 Living under Nazi Rule, 1933–1945 40 marks each (80 marks total) 1 hour 45 minute paper |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 2: History Around Us Environmental Study: Big Pit in Wales | |

Career pathways

History is an academic discipline which requires the ability to read and write analytically and is highly regarded by sixth form colleges, employers and universities. This history course is excellent preparation for a specific A Level in History, but also for other subjects within the wider humanities and social sciences. History students are in demand for a variety of careers in politics and law, journalism, education, business and the media.

What is the course about?

This Art and Design GCSE course has been designed to encourage an adventurous and enquiring approach to art and design over the course of Year 10 and 11 that covers all aspects of art. There will be many ways for students to develop, refine, record and present their ideas. This may take the form of painting, drawing, print design, photography and sculpture where students will be encouraged to experiment and review their artwork. GCSE Art and Design involves students developing a personal portfolio of artwork.

Course content

Students will study two units of work.

Unit 1 – Natural Form: Building up your art skills in drawing, painting, printing and in some cases 3D skills. You will work either in a portfolio or sketchbook developing these skills.

Unit 2 – a sustained unit currently based on Identity – a portfolio of work leading to a final piece. The second component is the exam in which you will develop a portfolio of work leading to a final piece which is completed in the 10 hour period.

Assessment

The course is delivered to the students over two years and is made up of two units; the course work portfolio (60%) and the controlled assignment (40%).

Coursework portfolio – contains the student's best work created over the course, assessed internally and refined by the student with guidance from the teacher before the deadline of January 2023.

Controlled assessment – 10 hour exam, sat over two days, in response to a question chosen from the paper. Ample time is given to the students to prepare for the exam with support from the teacher.

Career pathways

Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking, complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing have an advantage. Art makes students look at things anew. Communicating with colour, shape and form awakens the imagination.

Many of the top universities encourage applicants for creative courses. Whether you're designing houses as an architect or creating cutting edge art as a fine artist, the one thing that all jobs in this family have in common is creativity. So if you're an ideas person and you like creating things that are useful and visually appealing, take a look at some of these jobs.

What is the course about?

The BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise has been designed to help students develop their entrepreneurial skills through practical, skills-based learning. Assessment is through task-based assignments so students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills in work-related scenarios. Students will explore, develop and apply their knowledge helping to develop key transferable skills such as research and data analysis to support their progression to further learning and the workplace.

Course content

Main topics of the course:

- Component 1: Exploring Enterprises. Students will examine different enterprises to develop knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of enterprises and the skills needed by entrepreneurs to be successful.
- Component 2: Planning for and Pitching an Enterprising Activity. Students will explore ideas and plan and pitch a micro-enterprise activity to an audience and use feedback to review their business plan.
- Component 3: Promotion and Finance For Enterprise. Students will explore the different promotional methods used by enterprises and the factors that influence how enterprises identify and target their market. They will explore financial documents and how to use them to monitor and improve the performance of an enterprise in order to make decisions and recommend strategies for success.

Assessment

Two internal units (Component 1 and 2) – worth 30% each. These are regarded as coursework, but also include a presentation about the student's micro-business idea.

One external examination (Component 3) – worth 40%. Two hour examination.

Overall, the course is 60% coursework and 40% exam.

Career pathways

At Sixth Form, we offer the OCR Cambridge Technicals Diploma in Business. This is an excellent route into various opportunities at good universities, apprenticeships as well as the world of work. In terms of careers, there are many routes that this course leads to that are activity or industry focused. For example, marketing, finance, management, accounting, insurance, construction, fashion, travel and tourism, just to name a few. There are many options available with a business studies background.

What is the course about?

In computer science, students will gain a greater insight into understanding the fundamental principles of how modern day computers work and communicate including systems architecture, memory and network protocols. Students' problem solving skills will also be developed by exploring programming, including designing, writing and debugging programs. To succeed in this course, students will need to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically and have a natural curiosity.

Course content

J277/01 - Computer Systems

- Systems architecture
- Memory and storage
- Computer networks, connections and protocols
- Network security
- Systems software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

J277/02 - Computational Thinking, algorithms and programming

- Algorithms
- Programming fundamentals
- Producing robust programs
- Boolean logic
- Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

Assessment

The course is assessed through two traditional written exams. Both exams are weighted at 50% of the GCSE qualification and are 1 hour and 30 minutes in length.

- Paper 1 (J277/01) assesses more theoretical concepts
- Paper 2 (J277/02) assesses students' computational thinking and programming skills.

Career pathways

Studying a GCSE in Computer Science gives you the foundation needed to prepare you for further study at A Level and beyond. At university, there is an opportunity to further study specific areas of computer science, depending on your interest and skills. The technology industry is booming and there are a plethora of jobs and careers with attractive salaries in a variety of areas such as cyber security, forensic computing, game design, software engineering, web development and many more. With GCHQ and the Cyber Central hub in the local area, there are so many opportunities for young people to get involved.

What is the course about?

This course is designed to ignite and engage your creativity, passion and interests. It provides the freedom for you to experiment and take risks and has a high percentage of practical assessment. GCSE Drama will also help you to develop your confidence and learn to become an independent thinker who is able to work with others.

Course content

- Component 1: Devising (30%)
Working in small groups you will devise an original piece of Drama. You can be assessed on your performance, technical or design skills.
- Component 2: Presenting and Performing (30%)
Based on a set text that we study; you will present two practical extracts. Again, you can be assessed on your performance, technical or design skills.
- Component 3: Written exam (40%)
A 90-minute exam in which you will review a piece of live theatre seen during the course and also explain how you will direct a set text.

Assessment

- 60% of your marks come from practical and written coursework that you produce during the course. The remaining 40% comes from a written exam, which takes place at the end of Year 11.
- In each unit, you choose which area you wish to specialise in.

Career pathways

Students can progress to a A Level, BTEC or CTECH qualifications in Performing Arts which prepare them to enter employment within the performing arts sector. Alternatively, students can progress to higher education by studying a degree in the performing or production arts..

What is the course about?

This course concentrates on the hospitality and catering industry. You will develop the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they have to take into account to be successful.

You will have the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this qualification, you will also develop food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management, planning and communication.

Course content

Students study topics including:

- The Hospitality and Catering Industry: Employment in this sector and how jobs and recruitment are impacted by climate, seasons and location.
- Hospitality and Catering in Action: Functions of nutrients in the human body and how these change depending on specific needs.
- Students will need to understand and consider factors when proposing dishes for menus and how they meet the clients needs, cook dishes that have been proposed and how to adapt these dishes to make them cost effective and fit in with current trends.

Assessment

- Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry – externally assessed, online examination, 90 minutes. Grading: Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction, Level 1 Distinction *, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction, Level 2 Distinction *.
- Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action – internally assessed. Completion of controlled assessment in school under exam conditions. The exam board will set the task and students have to safely plan, prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes.

Career pathways

This course is the perfect mix between academic and practical work – over half of the lessons will be practical. The hospitality and catering industry is one of the biggest employers in the UK. There is also a shortage of qualified food scientists and technologists. This could be a stepping stone for students to work in the catering industry, for example, waitressing or in the kitchen as a chef. Students could also work in the hospitality industry, alternatively they could venture into journalism, personal trainer, food lawyer, farmer, food stylist, reduction development, environmental welfare, or becoming a nutritionist or dietitian.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL (OCR)

What is the course about?

Health and Social Care introduces students to the specialist knowledge and skills needed to work in various care settings. Students will be introduced to core values such as confidentiality and its need within care settings. Students will also focus on communicating with individuals to maintain their dignity and sense of being valued. Other units that will be studied include food and nutrition and understanding how our body systems work.

Course content

Topics include:

- The essential values of care and the rights of individuals. The rights of individuals and the values of care required when working in a health, social care or early years environment. Using role play and case studies, students gain understanding of how to apply these values.
- Communicating and working with individuals in health, social care and early years settings. Students learn about the importance of effective communication to connect with individuals using care services, and how communication impacts on an individual's care. They will take part in role plays and presentations.
- Understanding body systems and disorders. Focusing on the respiratory, digestive and cardiovascular systems, their structure and function, and the illnesses and disorders that can affect them. Also how to take and interpret key measurements, eg BMI.
- Understanding the nutrients needed for good health. Students explore the importance of diet at all life stages. They find out about the key nutrients required for good health and apply their knowledge in practical situations. Students will have the opportunity to cook during this element of the course.

Assessment

The course consists of four units.

Three units are coursework based, completed in school.

The fourth unit has a written one hour exam, normally sat in year 10.

Career pathways

Health and social care can be studied at college. You may also be able to enrol in an apprenticeship in a care setting, such as a nursery or care home. Beyond this, health and social care can be studied at degree level at university. Employment opportunities include nursery nurse, health care assistant, dental nurse, midwife, nurse, teacher, education welfare, nutritionist.

What is the course about?

Students will study a range of topics including augmented reality and analysis of spreadsheets. In order to be successful on this course students will be keen problem solvers and be willing to learn from mistakes, showing resilience. The course will be delivered through a range of practical lessons for the Non Exam Assessments and theory lessons to learn the more detailed and specific aspects around how computers and networks work.

Course content

Topics include:

- R050 - IT in the digital World: You will learn the theoretical knowledge and understanding to apply design tools for applications, principles of human computer interfaces and the use of data and testing in different contexts when creating IT solutions or products. You will understand the uses of Internet of Everything and the application of this in everyday life, cyber-security and legislations related to the use of IT systems, and the different types of digital communications software, devices and distribution channels.
- R060 - Data Manipulation using Spreadsheets: You will learn the skills to be able to plan and design a spreadsheet solution to meet client requirements. You will be able to use a range of tools and techniques to create a spreadsheet solution based on your design, which you will test. You will be able to evaluate your solution based on the user requirements.
- R070 - Using Augmented reality to present Information: You will learn the basics of Augmented Reality (AR) and the creation of a model prototype product to showcase how it can be used appropriately for a defined target audience to present information. You will also learn the purpose, use and types of AR in different contexts and how they are used on different digital devices. You will develop the skills to be able to design and create an AR model prototype, using a range of tools and techniques. You will also be able to test and review your AR model prototype.

Assessment

The course is assessed through both examination and Non-Exam Assessment . The NEA makes up 60% of the course and the exam is 40%. The exam is 1 hour and 30 minutes and will be taken in Year 11.

Career pathways

The course will provide you with the skills to further study IT at university. There are many career paths related to IT such as software development, cyber security, web design and system administration.

What is the course about?

Media Studies is the study, analysis and deconstruction of media platforms such as print media (magazines, newspapers etc); broadcast media (TV, film and video); and e-media (social media; the internet and any other electronic media product) in an ever changing world where technology is becoming exceedingly prominent in today's society. Through creative and analytical thinking, students will identify the codes and conventions of each media platform and begin to challenge, change and apply their own understanding through various media theory and debates. The GCSE course in Media Studies is a new specification which relies heavily on the analysis and understanding of the four key areas of the theoretical framework: media language, media audiences, media representation and media industry; as well as the creation of media products.

Course content

Studies include:

- Media language and analysis. How media products communicate specific meanings.
- Media representation, in terms of the representation of gender, disability, age and ethnicity within media products and evaluate these representations with links to ideology within society.
- Media audiences. Audience types, engagement and categorisation through demographic and psychographic analysis.
- Media industries and the processes behind the creation of media products, from initial conception to production and regulation, distribution and marketing.
- Media theory associated with the four key areas of the media.

Assessment

The course is assessed through exams and coursework assessment.

Media 1: Exam – 1 hour 30 minutes – short answer questions and analysis, 35%.

Media 2: Exam – 1 hour 30 minutes – essay and extended answers, 35%.

Non exam assessment: The creation of a media product, from scratch, including a statement of intent (based on a brief provided by AQA), 30%.

Career pathways

Media Studies GCSE can progress study into Sixth Form with the Media Studies A Level course, as well as being a pathway into many careers and further qualifications, due to the sheer volume of media in society today. These career paths include, but are not limited to: advertising and marketing, broadcasting; broadcast journalism; editor/editorial assistant; events organiser; journalist; television/radio presenter; market researcher; social media manager; special effects coordinator; video game designer; web developer; and many, many more.

What is the course about?

If you have a passion for Music, then the BTEC Music course is for you. Whether you are a performer or a composer, this course offers you the flexibility to explore the music you are passionate about whilst also discovering new styles and genres.

This is a creative subject with a focus on music practice, so there is no written exam in the summer of year 11. The coursework tasks are designed to give you as much freedom as possible in how you respond, allowing you to work to your own strengths and interests, and to focus on what excites and appeals to you.

Singers are encouraged to take BTEC Music - singing is an instrument too!

Course content

- **Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles** (worth 30%)
You will learn and submit information about four genres of music i.e. Reggae, House, Rock 'N' Roll, Disco. You will also produce 3 'products' in response to a brief set by the exam board.
- **Component 2: Music Skills Development** (worth 30%)
This piece of internally assessed coursework is completed between September and December of Year 11. You will choose two of the following: Performance, Composition or Remix. In response to a brief set by the exam board, you will set yourself a target and record your journey working towards reaching that target.
- **Component 3: Responding to a Music Brief** (worth 40%)
The exam board will present four genres of music and ten songs. Your task is to choose a song and re-create that song in the style of your chosen genre. For example, you might choose to re-create Oasis' 'Wonderwall' in a reggae style or A-ha's 'Take on Me' in a punk/ska style.

Career pathways

The music industry covers a vast array of opportunities from journalist to blogger, live sound to recorded music, composer to performer, classroom teacher to instrumental tutor, The list is endless.

The BTEC course provides many transferable skills which will enhance your employment prospects. The discipline of learning an instrument, along with resilience and determination, thinking and creating, using your initiative, and being able to communicate ideas are all invaluable assets. Universities and employers are always impressed by the skills musicians have.

Music is highly regarded as a subject for working in harmony with other subjects in leading to a professional career such as medicine, law and accountancy.

What is the course about?

The GCSE Physical Education specification combines practical performance with theoretical knowledge, focusing on the science and socio-cultural aspects of physical education. Key topics include anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training, sports psychology, socio-cultural influences, and health, fitness and well-being. Students need strong analytical, communication, and practical sports skills to succeed.

The course is delivered through a mix of classroom lessons, focusing on theoretical content, and practical sessions to develop and assess performance in physical activities. Assessment includes two written exams (60%) and practical performance in three sports plus an analysis and evaluation task (40%).

Course content

- Applied anatomy and physiology: skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular and respiratory system.
- Physical training: components of fitness, principles of training.
- Socio cultural influences: social groups participation, commercialisation, ethics i.e. drugs.
- Sports psychology: skill classification, goal setting, mental preparation, feedback.
- Health fitness and wellbeing: diet, nutrition, wellbeing.

Assessment

Students will be assessed in two written exams (60%), practical performances (30%) and coursework (10%).

Written exams:

- Physical factors affecting performance (30%).
- Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology (30%).
- One team sport (e.g. rugby or netball).
- One individual sport (e.g. badminton or athletics).
- A choice of either a team or individual.

Practical performances:

In three different activities (each is worth 10%):

Coursework

(10% of overall grade.)

Career pathways

The two immediate pathways in the Sixth form are A Level Physical Education and Cambridge Technical Sports Studies. It is not essential you have studied a sports course in Year 11 to study in the Sixth Form, however it is highly recommended. Students wishing to continue study on to university have options ranging from sports coaching to sports medicine depending on their particular strengths and interests.

What is the course about?

The GCSE Photography course is an exciting opportunity for students who want to develop their creative ideas through lens based media. The course is very accessible and students study through a range of starting points. The course is creative and shares many aspects with art and textiles. Students will need to have an interest in art and a curiosity of the visual world. Portfolios are created using the computer developing IT skills alongside creative thinking and technical competency. Students will need to have access to a point and shoot camera at home or mobile phone camera and USB stick to complete their homework.

Course content

Each unit introduces new genres and artists and allows students to develop technical skills in camera and artistic outcomes using the digital editing programme Adobe Photoshop. There are also opportunities to learn how to create basic lighting techniques in the studio and create photograms in the darkroom.

Work is mainly created through the DSLR camera and editing with the computer, although there are some handmade aspects that allow students to develop skills related to graphics and illustration. Students work towards independence in idea and outcome as the course progresses and leave with the ability to create exciting and successful artworks from their photographs.

Assessment

The course is delivered over two years and is made up of two units:

- Course work portfolio (60%) – contains the student's best work and is assessed internally and refined by the student with guidance from the teacher before the deadline.
- Controlled assignment (40%) – 10 hour exam, sat over two days, in response to a question that the students choose from the paper. Ample time is given to the students to prepare for the exam with support from the teacher.

Career pathways

Progression is usually into the Sixth Form where students can refine and develop their skills further. Our A Level photographers go on to become very successful in pursuing a wide range of careers in the visual industries. All of our students who apply to university have gained places on their first choice courses. Previous students have gone on to open their own photographic studios, worked in graphic design for companies such as Sony and Dyson, become successful illustrators and documented high profile events such as the Olympics. Other pathways that have been successfully pursued include games design, forensic photography and media related jobs.

What is the course about?

The Religious Studies GCSE provides students with a fascinating introduction to two of the world's major religions (Christianity and Buddhism) and thoughtfully considers how these religions relate to four modern themes. To begin, students explore the two main religions. They start with Christianity as the largest and most historically significant religion in the UK. After this, they move on to Buddhism, an Eastern religion which greatly contrasts with Christianity. After studying these religions, students study four modern themes: relationships and families, religion and life, the existence of God and revelation, and religion, crime, and punishment.

Throughout RS, students will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, and truth, enabling them to form and sharpen their own opinions on deeply important topics. Importantly, students do not have to be religious to study RS; rather, they simply need to be someone with curiosity who wants to better understand the beliefs of others and the world we live in.

Course content

Study of the following will be included:

- Christian beliefs and practices
- Buddhist beliefs and practices
- Four themes: (A) relationships and families; (B) religion and life; (C) the existence of God and revelation; (E) religion, crime and punishment

Assessment

The course is assessed through two 1 hour and 45 minutes exams. Each topic uses the same format for the questions being asked:

- Paper 1 – Christianity Beliefs and Practices and Buddhist Beliefs and Practices.
- Paper 2 – Thematic studies – looks at the four areas of morality above.

Career pathways

GCSE Religious Studies provides an excellent foundation for most A Level studies and religious studies can be studied as an A Level in its own right. In particular English, history, geography, psychology and politics. These A Levels use the specific skills of developing arguments and evaluating evidence. Beyond this, religious studies provides an excellent foundation for careers which deal with people on a daily basis as it helps you to appreciate how different people see the world we live in. Healthcare, medicine, law and education are all good examples.

What is the course about?

At GCSE, students will cover three themes: people and lifestyle, popular culture, communication and the world around us. Throughout the three themes studied at GCSE, students will develop four key skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Student will develop further the knowledge they have gained so far, and engage with a variety of interesting topics such as environment, celebrity culture, future studies and employment.

The course aims to enable students of all abilities to develop their Spanish language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

Course content

What are the main topics covered in the course?

- Identity and relationship with others
- Healthy living and lifestyle
- Education and work
- Free time activities
- Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Celebrity culture
- Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Media and technology
- The environment and where people live

Assessment

Four terminal examinations:

- Speaking examination. Divided into three tasks: role play, reading aloud and photo card with general conversation.
- Listening examination on all topics.
- Reading examination.
- Writing examination.

Career pathways

Studying a language at GCSE will open a variety of doors in the future. The analytical approach and skills used at GCSE are useful for any subjects students would like to study at A Level or in further education. Languages are great for a wide variety of careers especially those involving translation or communication with people from non-English speaking countries. Many employers seek those with language skills. This can include careers in tourism, government, business, politics, media, publishing, journalism, education, sport, fashion or law.

What is the course about?

The Art Textiles GCSE course is an exciting insight into the world of textiles. It has been designed to encourage students to design and make products in textiles with creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques. It allows full credit to be given to candidates who undertake innovative, creative and professional work.

Course content

Students will cover two units of work:

- Unit 1 – based on 'Sealife'. This is a skills-based unit exploring many different textiles techniques including printing, embroidery, embellishment, couching and many other textile techniques.
- Unit 2 – sustained unit of work based on the techniques in Unit 1, leading to a final piece. This unit is currently based on the theme 'Messages'.

Assessment

Two components to the course:

- Coursework – made up of two units of work – worth 60%. The first unit is a skills-based unit and the second unit is a sustained unit which will develop into a final piece.
- Exam – a portfolio of work leading to a 10 hour exam – worth 40%.

Career pathways

Studying Textiles at GCSE shows an employer you are creative and imaginative, with original ideas and strong presentation skills. It also demonstrates a good level of organisation and self-awareness and an ability to develop the way you look at and think about the world around you. It also builds your cultural knowledge and passion for design and the arts.

Taking a GCSE in Textiles will enable you to study art, graphics, textiles or fashion at A Level or BTEC, and eventually an arts degree such as fine art, fashion and theatre design, or university degrees in disciplines such as architecture, advertising, animation, film and media, marketing, illustration, education or museum work.



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