

Oxford Spires Academy

KS4 Options

2024-25



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Pupils study an ambitious and enriching curriculum that is well suited to their needs and prepares them well for their next steps.

Ofsted (Nov 2023)

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Welcome

This year you will be making your subject choices for Year 10. At this stage, the curriculum will still be broad, so that you can continue to extend your knowledge and skills in a central core of subjects. At the same time, you will begin to make choices in other areas, based on your own abilities and preferences.

It is important that you keep as many options open as possible. You should bear the A Level curriculum in mind. You should not be too quick to see yourself as a 'Scientist' or a 'humanities' student, as combinations of these subjects will be encouraged right up to A Level. Universities will be looking for students with breadth as well as depth in their subject knowledge.

This booklet contains information for each GCSE and BTEC subject, covering the basic outline of the course, the nature of any coursework expected and the method of assessment. It is written to guide you through your choices and assist you in making the best decisions. Each subject has also produced additional material to help you understand the subject in more detail. You should discuss these decisions with your parents/carers, Form Tutor and other staff in the relevant subject areas.

The following core subjects are compulsory to all students:

- GCSE English Language and English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics and Statistics
- GCSE Science – Combined Science/Triple Science
- GCSE History or GCSE Geography or GCSE Religious Studies

You will then choose your preferences for two other subjects to study depending on the pathway we have suggested for you. All students will student at least 9 GCSEs.

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Oxford Spires Academy is a highly inclusive school and pupils describe it as a 'beautiful community'

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The Process



5th Feb 2024: Year 9 options process begins

- Subject information shared with students and families.
- Options assemblies every day for Year 9 students to learn about subjects on offer



29th Feb 2024: Student workshop

- All students will take part in a Goals and Aspiration workshop led by external leader Sander De Groot



29th Feb 2024: Year 9 Options Evening

- Further information about the subjects on offer
- Parent and carer workshop led by Sander De Groot (6pm the Theatre)



13th March: Year 9 Parents' Evening

- Discuss suitability and final choices with subject teachers



18th March (week commencing): Students submit final choices



10th June: Final GCSE options confirmed

Please DO:

- Think carefully about why you like a subject.
- Think about your own skills and abilities.
- Think about what you want to do after Year 11.
- Talk to people – your family, your teachers and Year 10 students on the courses that interest you.

Please DO NOT:

- Choose a subject because you think it is easy; you must find out about the course content.
- Choose a subject because your friend is doing it; it must appeal to you and you will need to achieve in it.
- Choose a subject because you like the teacher; you can never guarantee you will have that teacher.

If you have any questions regarding Options, Please contact Mr Dixon at mdixon@spires.anthemtrust.uk or Mrs Booth kbooth@spires.anthemtrust.uk



Teachers are skilled at adapting their teaching to address any misconceptions

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Helpful Information

What do the GCSE grades mean?

GCSE grades begin at grade 1 and go up to grade 9.

Grade 4 is considered a “Standard pass” and Grade 5 is considered a “Strong pass”

As parents will be more familiar with the old letter grading system, the grades are roughly equivalent to:

Grades 7 to 9 = old grades A* & A

Grades 4 to 6 = old grades B & C

Grades 1 to 3 = old grades D to G

What is a BTEC or vocational subject?

While GCSEs are mostly assessed at the end of Year 11 in formal exams, vocational courses are assessed through a portfolio of completed assignments with shorter exams during the course. While students have fewer exams to take, they do have to produce good regular work to achieve a pass. The courses are designed to be more applied to the workplace and study real life applications of the subject. Sport is offered at Level 1 and 2 and Engineering is offered at Level 1 only. Grades awarded are: Level 1 Pass, Level 2 Pass, Merit and Distinction.

What does Level 1 and Level 2 mean?

This describes the level of difficulty at which a student is working. Level 1 means the students are achieving the equivalent of GCSE grades 1 to 3.

Level 2 means they are achieving the equivalent of grade 4 or higher.

A Level content is equivalent to Level 3.



Students value the strong support they receive that prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

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Helpful Information

What is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?

The EBacc is a nationally recognised measure of performance. It means you have studied the most academic subjects: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Computer Science, Geography or History, Languages.

While it is not compulsory for students to study the EBacc subjects, it is highly recommended if you can. A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a student will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.

The government's ambition is to see 90% of students studying the EBacc subject combination at GCSE by 2026.

How will I pick my subjects

Your tutor will plan a tutor time in a computer room and you will be able to input your option choices online. You will be asked to choose a range of subjects in order of preference.

What happens next?

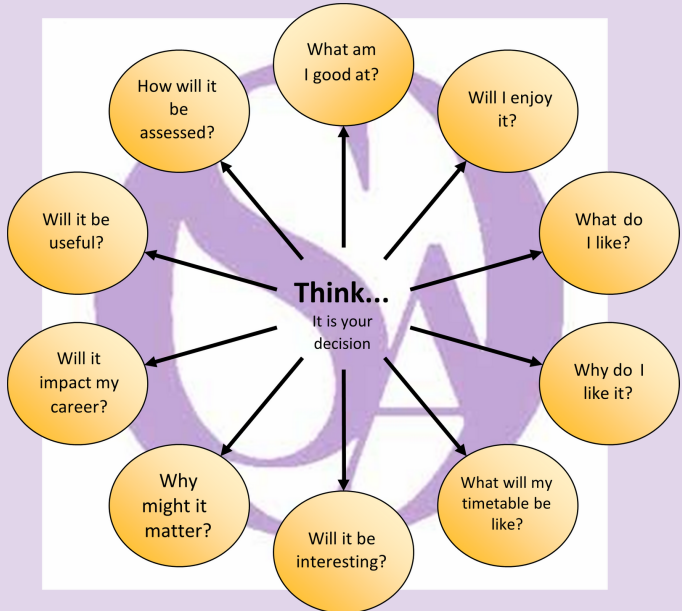
Once students give us their options, the subjects will need to be organised into the best fit timetable blocks taking every student's choices into consideration. Your tutors and teachers will also review your choices and talk to you if they think you need to reconsider any of your options.

Are my choices guaranteed?

Unfortunately, No. It may be that the blocks will not fit all your preferred options or there may not be enough teachers available to meet the demand in each subject. Options cannot be guaranteed until you receive your options letter confirming your choices. After you receive your letter you will be able to discuss them with your tutor and, if there is space, you may be able to change your options before the end of the summer holidays.

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How can I choose?



But who will help me decide?

- Form Tutor
- Subject Teacher
- Parents / Carers
- Mr Dixon
- Mrs Booth
- Careers

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Art and Design

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

What will I study?

Art and Design GCSE provides a foundation for A Level Art and future careers within the creative industries; in areas such as: advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; publishing; software and computer games; and television and radio. The creative industries are the fastest growing employment sector.

Studying Art and Design you will develop transferrable skills such as effective communication, problem solving, project management, effective research skills, working independently, working collaboratively, and working to a brief. The study of Art and Design allows you to:

- Develop your visual skills
- Experience new and exciting materials, techniques and processes
- Be creative, enthusiastic and imaginative
- Experiment and take risks with your work
- Develop your ability to think innovatively
- Develop cultural awareness and an aesthetic appreciation
- Practice practical application of your own ideas.

GCSE Art and Design covers a range of practical experience across a range of specialisms alongside in-depth written assignments. You will have the opportunity to experiment with different media, techniques and processes in order to explore your strengths and preferences. There are a wide range of options within the different endorsements. The aim of the course is to develop your visual language skills and for you to build a comprehensive portfolio of work that showcases your skill and ideas and to progress to further courses or employment.

Component 1 Personal Portfolio (60%).

Your portfolio of work will be internally and externally moderated. The portfolio is made up several project units across a range of internally set themes. The coursework (60%) is developed through Years 10 and 11. Coursework will include a range of research, written analysis and practical responses which all build up to refined final outcomes.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment - Exam (40%) You will also create an exam portfolio (40%) based on an externally set theme (set by the exam board), which you will develop and prepare for from January to April in Year 11 and will lead to a final 10 hour exam.

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Art and Design

Course Content – Year 10

In Year 10 you will complete work around set themes and project briefs; focusing on observational drawing, experimenting and building skills across a range of specialist areas, such as drawing, painting, ceramics, photography, printmaking etc. You will develop skills in recording ideas and creating refined responses. You will build your Art historical knowledge and analytical skills by linking your work to the work of others/ artists. You will learn to explore, select and review techniques and processes that will help develop your personal response.

Course Content – Year 11

In Year 11 you will continue to work on projects started in Year 10, refining your artistic responses. You will receive the exam board brief and start to create your portfolio to support your final 10 hours exam.

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Business

Exam Board: OCR

Would you like to be your own boss in the future and run your own business and understand what goes on in the world of work for your future career?.

Would you like to learn business skills such as communication and decision making to help you with your future?

GCSE Business is an excellent choice for anyone either wanting to run their own business, work in the corporate world or someone who just has an entrepreneurial interest that they would like to explore further! or work for a business in the future. Students have the chance to build and develop key skills including communication, teamwork, decision making and situational analysis- all of which are vitally important in the world of work! Building on key skills such as teamwork, decision making and communication, this course helps equips you better for your future in whatever direction you choose this to be.

What will I study?

The course is divided into 7 units.

- Business Activity
- Marketing
- Operations
- Human Resources
- Finance
- Ethics and the Environment
- The interdependent nature of Business

How will I be assessed?

Two exams at the end of the course, each 90 minutes long. Some questions will be multiple choice, some will be extended writing to test your ability to explain why you made a particular decision.

If you enjoy taking the knowledge and concepts you have learnt and applying them to real life scenarios. If you are interested in exploring the success of a wide range of businesses that exist today and you are determined and hard-working with a drive towards bettering your analytical and problem-solving skills.

What Can You Do Next?

Business can lead on to many vocational qualifications at college and is a good stepping stone for you in A-Level subjects, especially economics, accountancy and of course A Level Business. Business can be a good subject if you are applying for apprenticeships as it shows you have a good understanding of the world of work.

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Computer Science

Exam Board: OCR

Computer Science in GCSE is a rigorous and challenging academic subject that fits well with students who have a strong command of language, are creative, yet sufficiently self-resilient to keep at solving a problem using the language Python3 until they succeed. The course aims to lay a firm foundation for students wishing to progress to A-Level computer Science. You should be interested in how computers work and be eager to learn Python 3 programming to solve specific problems you are tasked with. An interest in programming is essential to success in this course.

What will I study

There will be two written exams, each worth 50% of the total mark. Both exam papers are non-calculator papers. During the course you will complete several programming projects, teaching you knowledge and experience needed in section B of the second paper exam.

The OCR J277 course provides excellent progression into AS and A Level Computer Science (H046 & H446).

Paper 1 Computer Systems – 80 marks – 90 minutes

- Systems architecture, memory and storage – how computers are designed and work.
- Data representation – how numbers, characters, sound and images are stored as binary codes.
- Wired and wireless networks – how computer networks are designed and work.
- Systems software and security – the role of the operating system and keeping networks safe.
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns

Paper 2 Computational Thinking, Algorithms And Programming – 80 marks – 90 minutes

Section A: 50 marks

- Computational thinking and algorithms – methods for sorting and searching lists.
- Logic and languages - Boolean logic and computer related mathematics.
- Programming – in Pseudocode & Python culminating in a coding projects using arrays, files and string handling. This experience is tested in section B.

Section B: 30 marks

- Assesses students' practical programming skills and their ability to design, write, test and refine programs.

Design and Technology

Exam Board WJEC Eduqas

Design and Technology GCSE will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. The course is challenging, demanding but most importantly rewarding. Through its application of mathematics and science to solve material problems it provides learners with a cross curricular opportunity to develop a deeper and greater understanding of their GCSE subjects.

Component 1 - DT in the 21st Century - Written examination: 2 hrs

A mix of short answer, structured and extended writing questions assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of:

- Technical principles
- Designing and making principles along with their ability to analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in design and technology.

Component 2 - Design and make task Non-exam assessment: approx 35 hrs

A sustained design and make task, based on a contextual challenge set by EDUQAS, assessing candidates' ability to:

- Identify, investigate and outline design possibilities
- Design and make prototypes
- Analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in design and technology.

Course Content – Year 10

In the first year the subject is taught through design and make tasks (DTMs). These tasks provide pupils with a vehicle to develop knowledge and skills in

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Developing a design brief and specification
- Generating and developing design ideas
- Manufacturing a prototype
- Analysing and evaluating design decisions and prototypes

The tasks are carefully managed in a safe environment, allowing pupils to make progress and grow in confidence, which results in them being more creative and take risks with their solutions to design problems. The subject is not material specific and will requires pupils to develop knowledge working with a range of materials.

Course Content – Year 11

In the second year they will start work on component 2 (NEA). They will be given a context from the examination board and will be required to identify a design opportunity, within that context, and use the design process to manufacture a solution.

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Drama

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

WNEA - Devising (40%), Visiting External Examiner - Performance from text (20%), Written Paper - Theatre Makers in Practice (40%)

Drama GCSE is about developing life skills, being creative, performing and working collaboratively. If you enjoy working in groups often under pressure, sharing ideas, negotiating, discussing and performing, creating and performing, reflecting and reviewing your work and the work of others, watching live theatre and analysing the impact on the audience - Drama GCSE could be for you!

You will practically explore a range of stimuli, take responsibility for your own creative decision making, organise rehearsal time - in order to refine and develop your own scripted and devised pieces for performance. The ability to evaluate your work and the work of others, is essential – this is done through a written portfolio that documents the process of creation. You are encouraged to see as much live and live streamed theatre as possible, 'magpieing' ideas to shape your own practitioner inspired performances, gaining a deeper understanding of the role of; actor, designer and director. Drama at GCSE is great fun but academically very challenging, it places a heavy emphasis on high quality performance and academic understanding – it's for the confident and creative who want to be centre stage!

Component 1- Devising

You will create a piece of original drama based on a given stimuli – this may be a book, poem, picture or piece of music. As you create your performance you make a written record of the creative process. After you have performed your piece of original devised drama to an audience, you will reflect on the creative process and analyse its success by means of a written portfolio. The written supporting portfolio is made up of six questions, designed to guide your individual evaluation.

Component 2 - Performing

You will perform two sections from a published script for an external examiner. These can be monologues, duologues and ensemble pieces involving up to six performers. It is advisable for you to pick two different groupings – for example a monologue contrasting with a ensemble, however, they must come from the same text. You will also need to complete a short, written rationale that explains your creative intention.

Component 3 – Theatre Makers In Practice

Finally, a written exam draws together the practical and theoretical elements of drama and theatre. You will complete a live review based on a piece of live or live streamed theatre you have seen and studied. You will study one performance text as an actor, as a designer and as a director in order to answer questions on The Crucible by Arthur Miller.

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Drama

Course Content – Year 10

In Year 10 you will complete a unit on practitioners, to gain understanding in how to create work in a specific style. You will learn how to use a range of explorative strategies, to develop ideas for the given stimuli for Component 1. You will complete Component 1 – both the original performance and written portfolio (40% of the course). Finally, at the end of Year 10 you will complete a mock Component 2 performance exam.

Course Content – Year 11

In Year 11 you will complete your scripted performance exam and after Christmas you will start the preparation for the Component 3 exam exploring *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. Work you have completed in Component 1 and Component 2 will also help you understand the role of actor, designer and director.

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English Language

Exam Board: AQA

This course will be assessed through two exams: Paper 1 Explorations in creative reading and writing; Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives.

Paper 1 Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing - 1hr 45 mins exam

The aim of this paper is to engage students in a creative text and inspire them to write creatively themselves by:

In section A, reading a literature fiction text in order to consider how established writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to capture the interest of readers.

In section B, writing their own creative text, inspired by the topic that they have responded to in section A to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives - 1hr 45 mins exam

The aim of this paper is to develop students' insights into how writers have particular viewpoints and perspectives on issues or themes that are important to the way we think and live our lives. It will encourage students to demonstrate their skills by:

In section A, reading two linked sources from different time periods and genres in order to consider how each presents a perspective or viewpoint to influence the reader

In section B, producing a written text to a specified audience, purpose and form in which they give their own perspective on the theme that has been introduced to them in section A.

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English Literature

Exam Board: AQA

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel - 1 hr 45 mins exam

Section A - Shakespeare 'Macbeth'. You will need to write in detail about an extract from the play and then write about the play as a whole.

Section B - The 19th century novel 'A Christmas Carol'. You will need to write in detail about the extract from the novel and then write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2 - Modern texts and poetry - 2 hrs and 15 mins exam

Section A - Modern prose or drama 'An Inspector Calls'.

You will be required to answer one question from a choice of two. There will be no extract to work with and you will need to recall knowledge from your study of the play.

Section B - Poetry 'Power and Conflict'

You will answer one comparative question on one named poem that will be printed and appear in the paper with a second poem that you will need to recall from your study of the 15 poems within the anthology.

Section C - Unseen poetry

You will answer one question on one unseen poem before comparing this poem to a second poem.

Getting GCSE Ready

In Year 9, you will prepare for your two English GCSEs by learning many of the skills you will need to be successful on the course. The Year 9 curriculum covers an exciting and broad range of texts and topics that will help you to feel confident about the different types of texts that you will study at GCSE level. In Year 9 your reading and analysis of William Shakespeare's tragedy 'Romeo and Juliet' will assist your understanding and appreciation of the tragic conventions of your GCSE set Shakespearean text 'Macbeth'. Throughout Year 9 you will have also developed your appreciation and understanding of the different methods that a writer uses to convey meaning, as well as being able to identify and explore contextual links, themes and writer's intent.

All the skills that you have learnt during Key Stage 3 (close analysis, shared and guided writing, note making, and inference) will continue to be developed as you transition into Key Stage 4. Although you will complete two GCSEs in English the GCSEs are taught simultaneously as the skills required by GCSE Language are also used within GCSE Literature.

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Hospitality & Catering

Exam Board: WJEC

This qualification in Hospitality and Catering is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food origin and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical skills, development and understanding of the food and catering practices and industry.

Food Preparation Skills Are Integrated Into Four Core Topics:

- Hospitality & Catering provision
- How hospitality and catering providers operate
- Health & Safety in hospitality and Catering
- Food safety in hospitality and Catering

Unit 1 Hospitality And Catering Exam

Written examination: 1 hour 20 minutes (40% of the qualification) (80 marks)

This will assess students' knowledge and understanding in relation to the 4 core topics. The exam will have a range of short and extended answer questions.

Unit 2 Practical Controlled Assessment

Non-examination assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated.

12 hour practical exam

60% of qualification (120 marks)

Students receive and respond to a learner assignment brief over a time frame of 9 hours

- 3 hours - To carry out a nutrition and food choice analysis (no resources permitted)
- 2 hours - To create a production plan for the two dishes
- 3.5 hours - To make and present two high quality dishes that meet the assignment brief requirements
- 3.5 hours - Self evaluation on cooking and the whole assessment performance.

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Humanities - Geography

Exam Board Pearson Edexcel B

Why should you choose this subject?

Studying geography at GCSE will help you to understand many aspects and features of our complicated world. It is a subject about the past, present and the future. You should take this course if you are interested in the world around you and want to understand more about people, places and the environment. Geography also helps prepare you for a wide range of careers and is a qualification that is favoured by employers in this country and beyond!

How will I learn?

In geography lessons, you will get the chance to make BIG decisions about the planning and management of major projects, investigate crimes and the expensive mistakes made by the worlds' superpowers! You will use ICT to help you learn about real life issues and you will visit some different places to experience what you have learnt about in class. This will build on the skills and knowledge you learnt in Year 7, 8 and 9 and develop your thinking so you will be able to succeed in exams and assessments. We will also go on two fieldtrips. One focusing on quality of life around Oxford and the other looking at coastal processes at the beach.

How will I be assessed?

There will be three exams and each one will be 1 hour and 30 minutes long. Each will contain a mixture of different style questions ranging from multiple choice to longer written answers.

Paper 1 – Global Geographical Issues will assess topics including: hazardous earth, development dynamics and the challenges of an urbanising world.

Paper 2 – UK Geographical Issues will assess topics including: The UK's evolving physical landscape, the UK's evolving human landscape and geographical investigations (fieldwork).

Paper 3 – People and Environment Issues is a decision making assessment. The topics included in this include: people and the biosphere, forests under threat, consuming energy resources.

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Humanities - History

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas

The course will develop students to become effective, independent and resilient learners and use historical enquiry to enhance critical and reflective thinking. Students will develop the ability to ask relevant and considered questions about the past and to critically investigate historical issues and sources.

Changes In Crime And Punishment In Britain, c.500 To The Present Day

This topic will cover how Crime and Punishment in Britain has changed since the Anglo-Saxon period to present. We will cover topics such as Vagrancy, heresy and treason in the 16th Century and 17th Century; the growth of smuggling and highway robbery in the 18th Century; Bow St. Runners; Peel and the setting up of the Metropolitan Police in 1829; the purpose of punishment in public over time, from humiliation to public execution; the concept of banishment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the use of prisons to punish and reform in the nineteenth century.

Elizabethan England

This course is designed to give you a clear understanding of the upheaval that occurred during Elizabeth's reign, and how it is still relevant today. You will look at; The coronation and popularity of Elizabeth I. The importance of popular entertainment; cruel sports; the Elizabethan theatre. Contrasting lifestyles of rich and poor; homes and fashion. Causes of poverty; issues of unemployment and vagrancy. The fate of Mary, Queen of Scots. Reasons for the Armada; war in the Netherlands. Course of the Armada – events in the Channel, Calais, 'fireships' and return to Spain. Catholic and Puritan threats to Elizabeth's life.

Germany In Transition, 1919-1939

Why did millions of Germans vote for the Nazi party? How did Germany defeat in WW1 lead to the Nazi party? How were different groups treated by the Nazis? These are the kinds of questions we will explore in this course, alongside events like; The aftermath of WWI on Germany. Issues faced, 'Golden Age' and the failure of the Weimar Republic. Hitler's process to becoming the Fuhrer, the use of propaganda, rallies, radio and cinema in controlling the German people. Resistance of the German people and causes of WWII.

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Humanities - History

The Development Of The USA, 1929-2000

In this course we will look at how the USA developed from isolationist country to the dominant Super Power. We will also explore how the lives of US citizens changed during this time, from Rock-n-Roll to the first games consoles, from racism to equality. Topics will include; The causes and consequences of the Wall St. crash and the Republican response. The development of the status of black Americans through Little Rock High; Montgomery Bus Boycott; the roles of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Changes in youth culture and student protest including the changing role of women. International relations change in the Cold War such as; the Cuban Missile Crisis; US involvement in Vietnam. As well as changes in music, entertainment, media and literature.

This is a linear qualification in which all exams are taken at the end of the course in the summer of Year 11. All assessments will be by examination. Exams will look for students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied. Analyse, evaluate and use sources (contemporary to the period) to make substantiated judgements in the context of historical events studied. History is a useful qualification for those who wish to go onto study any A level subject. The GCSE is also looked for by universities and can assist in jobs such as journalism, law, teaching, politics or media.

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Humanities - Religious Studies

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas

The course is split into three main sections. Each year students are given a bespoke course book that contains all the notes they need for class and for revision. It also has spaces to complete exam practice questions and space for feedback and crucial redrafting to increase progress.

Religious Studies enables you to:

- Learn to put your views across in speech and in writing in a structured and confident way
- Be able to respond to complex issues maturely
- Appreciate the way that thought and belief have developed.
- Explore your own belief and opinion about a wide variety of topics; from the way society should live and the basis for valid rules, to the way we understand and describe spirituality and a sense of the 'other'.

Philosophy and ethics in the modern world

Students will explore philosophical and religious responses to a wide range of topics including the nature of good and evil, human rights, euthanasia and concepts of wealth and poverty .

Christianity: beliefs and practices

Teachings, beliefs - This includes the life and teachings of Jesus, confirmation, Eucharist and different types of worship. Practices – This includes teaching about infant and adult baptism, confirmation, Eucharist and different types of worship.

Islam: beliefs and practices

Teachings, beliefs - This includes the life and teachings of Muhammad (pbuh), beliefs about God (Allah) and beliefs about life after death. Practices - The Five Pillars of Islam, festivals and Jihad.

Why study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies helps students to develop the core critical thinking and interpersonal skills they will require in life. They will do this by exploring a range of philosophical and ethical issues from a wide variety of perspectives. These will include Christian, Humanist and Buddhist/Islamic views. Students will develop the ability to empathise with and think critically about the ideas and the different responses to them before formulating their own conclusions.

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Mathematics

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

You will study three years of mathematics. The teaching will be widely varied and will include group work, individual work, investigational work and independent study.

You will study and develop various mathematical techniques related to numeracy (working with numbers), algebra (working with unknown quantities), geometry (working with shapes) and data handling (working with real-world information).

In addition to the content of the GCSE Mathematics course, you will also develop skills in reasoning, forming logical arguments, spatial awareness and interpreting and communicating skills.

The assessment for this course is purely examination based, with 3 exams lasting 90 minutes each. Only one of the exams will be non calculator. If you have any questions about GCSE Mathematics then see your class teacher or speak to Dr Barker.

Concepts

The learning structure for our mathematics curriculum is based around some key principles:

Fluency, Mathematical reasoning, Multiplicative reasoning, Problem solving, Progression, CPA approach – Concrete – Pictorial – Abstract, Relevance, Modelling, Reflection, Linking

We aim to cater for students of all abilities through stretch, challenge and support. Our resources are structured to deliver engaging and accessible content across differentiated tiers supported by worked examples, key points, literacy and strategy hints.

Paper 1: Non Calculator Papers 2 & 3: Calculator allowed

Foundation Tier - Topic Area

Number 22-28%, Algebra 17-23%, Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change 22-28%, Geometry and Measures 12-18%, Statistics and Probability 12-18%.

Higher Tier - Topic Area

Number 12-18%, Algebra 27-33%, Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change 17-23% Geometry and Measures 17-23%, Statistics and Probability 12-18%.

Success In Maths

Students should focus in the moment. Don't think too much about what is next, think about what is now. Success in maths comes from: excellent behaviour; doing your best every single lesson; being in every lesson, doing everything that your teacher instructs you to do; completing every homework set to the best of your ability; revising for assessment and revising properly for end of year or external exams.

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Media Studies

Exam Board: Eduqas

What is Media Studies?

Would you like to be able to communicate with others effectively, understand how meaning is created and how technology is changing not only the types of entertainment we enjoy, but the very nature of our society and how we see ourselves as individuals? Media Studies equips you with the tools to navigate the fast pace of change in the way we receive information and entertainment. The ability to spot the ways the media manipulates us, and the ability to create effective and sophisticated communication through media products will give you excellent transferable skills for any path you choose. It will also help you understand the way social media can harm and benefit you, helping you to be empowered. We cover a wide range of creative industries from music videos to video games, this could be your first step to a successful career in this huge sector of the economy.

What will I learn?

The course focuses on developing understanding of how the media industries function, and the effect they have on us as individuals, and society. It also develops your skills in decoding the hidden meanings within media products, and who has the control of the messages and news that shape our view of the world. Finally, you learn the practical skills of photography and design so you can create your own media product.

- Media Language – how meaning is created through decisions made in the production process of media products.
- Media Representations – the ways in which groups of people and events are presented in the media, stereotyping and how this affects identity.
- Media Industries - how different industries go through processes to create, develop and produce.
- Media Audiences – how different audiences respond to products and what engages them.

You will then use all this knowledge to create your own media products for the NEA.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 – 1 hr 30-Minute Written Exam

Section A: Exploring Media Language and Representation –This may feature Advertising, Magazines, Newspapers, or Film Posters. This will assess your ability to analyse media products and discuss your understanding of representations through different case study products we have studied in depth.

Section B: Music - This will assess knowledge and understanding of media language, representation, media industries and audiences.

Section C: Exploring Media Industries and Audiences - This will assess your knowledge and understanding of key media Industries. You will need to show you understanding of the process involved in different industries and how audiences respond to different products. This could feature Newspapers, Film, Radio or Video Games.

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Media Studies

Component 2 – 1hr 30-Minute Written Exam

Section A: Television - this section will assess your knowledge of how meaning is created and contexts around media products. You will use an extract from a British Sit-Com to respond to questions showing understanding of Genre, characters, setting and narrative.

Section B: Music Videos, Artists and Online Participatory Media - This section will assess knowledge and understanding of representations and how the music industry creates stars and uses websites to help make more money.

Component 3 – NEA Media Production.

You will create your own media product for a specific audience, using cameras, lights and design software. The briefs are set by the exam board and change every year.

Course Content –Year 10

In Year 10 you will study, Advertising, Magazines, Film, Video Games, Radio and Newspapers. You will also start creating your NEA media product.

Course Content –Year 11

In Year 11 you will study, Television, Music Video and complete the NEA Coursework Component.

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Modern Foreign Language

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Language is more than words... Language is communication. Language is culture. Language is connection.

Built on a foundation of inclusivity, accessibility and transparency, the Pearson Edexcel qualifications take a compassionate, student-centred approach and cater to the needs of all learners, regardless of background, ability or reason for studying a language. Combining clear, concise and straightforward assessments with engaging, meaningful and relatable content, the new Pearson Edexcel GCSE Modern Languages qualifications are fit for the future, equipping students for life and careers in a global setting. So, If you enjoy communicating with others, finding out how language works and discovering different countries and cultures then you will excel in Modern Foreign Language GCSE.

We offer French, German or Spanish and these subjects will enable you to share your interests and opinions with other speakers of your chosen language. You will have an international dimension to your GCSEs, which is increasingly important and sought by higher education institutions as well as employers.

You will develop a range of skills which will be useful in whatever career route you choose, for example, the ability to communicate effectively with others, to speak out in public, to use different problem-solving strategies and so on. All of this will give you opportunities to work abroad or for British companies who have international links. Employers are increasingly looking for those who are able to offer a foreign language.

The language, grammar and skills you have already learned during Key Stage 3 have prepared you to take on a GCSE in your chosen language.

You will build on the topic areas you have been studying and have the opportunity to move on to new topic areas such as basic language of the internet, job advertisements/applications, work experience, customer service and transactions.

This GCSE will cover subjects linked to the themes;

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

Assessments

Speaking - 25% Exam at the end of the course - conducted by your teacher

Writing - 25% Exam at the end of the course

Listening - 25% Exam at the end of the course

Reading - 25% Exam at the end of the course

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Music

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Music GCSE is about being the best musician you can be. It will provide you with the opportunity to;

- Develop your performance skills (ideally grade 5 or above)
- Develop your composition skills
- Work on improving your listening, appraising and theoretical understanding of music.

If you want to develop these skills and already play a musical instrument or sing, music would be a great choice for you! You will work collaboratively with other musicians on ensemble performance tasks, you will also gain experience of using a range of music programmes; MuseScore and Logic to compose, providing the perfect foundation to go on and study Music A level or Music Technology. The final written exam is based on a range of music taken from various periods and genres, designed to engage and challenge your understanding of music. If you do not play an instrument or sing, read music or have a good understanding of music theory – you will be at a massive disadvantage. Music GCSE is very different from music at KS3.

Component 1- Performing

You will take part in numerous performances over the duration of the course. For your final submission you must submit two performances, a solo on your main study instrument and an ensemble. This means you will need to perform for at least 4 minutes in school in front of your teacher, and you will need to perform on your own and also within a group. – for vocalists. The assessment is all based on your ability to play an instrument or sing to a high standard.

Component 2 - Composing

You will complete several compositions over the duration of the course – a range of ‘free’ compositions and composition work that must be completed to a given brief. At the end of the course, you will submit your best response to a given brief and your best ‘free’ composition. Once again, the quality of your composition will be significantly better if you already have a good understanding of basic music theory before starting GCSE.

Component 3 – Listening and Appraising

Finally, a written exam draws together the practical and theoretical elements of music. This unit is subdivided in four Areas of Study (AoS). You will need to know and understand music from a range of different periods and places; AoS 1 – Instrumental Music 1700 -1820, AoS2 – Vocal Music, AoS 3 – Music for Stage and Screen and AoS 4 – World Music Fusions. There are both short answer questions, dictation questions and an extended response essay style question.

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Music

Course Content – Year 10

In Year 10 you will complete a units on: Musical Language and Composition using a range of computer programmes. Performing, Music Theory and Music Vocabulary. Solo and Ensemble Performing and Composing plus develop knowledge on all four AoS for Component 3.

Course Content – Year 11

In Year 11 you will complete units on: Analysis and Listening – Consolidation of AoS. Final Solo and Ensemble Performances, Final Compositions and Exam Technique and Preparation.

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Photography

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Photography GCSE provides a foundation for A Level Photography and possibly Art A Level and future careers within the creative industries; in areas such as: advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; publishing; software and computer games; and television and radio. The creative industries are the fastest growing employment sector.

Studying photography, you will develop transferrable skills such as effective communication, ICT Skills, problem solving, project management, effective research skills, working independently, working collaboratively, and working to a brief. The study of Photography allows you to:

- Develop your visual skills
- Experience new and exciting digital techniques and hand manipulation processes
- Be creative, enthusiastic and imaginative
- Experiment and take risks with your work
- Develop your ability to think innovatively
- Develop cultural awareness and an aesthetic appreciation
- Practice practical application of your own ideas.

GCSE Photography covers a range of practical experience within a more focused specialism alongside in-depth written assignments. You will have the opportunity to experiment with a variety of techniques and photographic processes to explore newfound compositional skills. The aim of the course is to develop your visual language skills and for you to build a comprehensive portfolio of work that showcases your photography skill and ideas and to progress onto further courses or employment.

Component 1 Personal Portfolio (60%)

Your portfolio of work will be internally and externally moderated. The portfolio is made up several project units across a range of internally set themes. The coursework (60%) is developed through Years 10 and 11. Coursework will include a range of research, written analysis and practical responses which all build up to refined final outcomes.

Component 2 Externally Set Assignment - Exam 60%)

You will also create an exam portfolio (40%) based on an externally set theme (set by the exam board), which you will develop and prepare for from January to April in Year 11 and will lead to a final 10 hour exam.

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Photography

Course Content – Year 10

In Year 10 you will be introduced to DSLR Cameras and Compositional skills, you will complete work around set themes and project briefs; focusing on camera techniques and photoshoots inspired by photographers. You will start by exploring Street Photography, with a focus on Henri Cartier Bresson and contemporary artist Slinkachu. You will develop skills in recording ideas and creating refined responses. You will build your Art historical knowledge and analytical skills by linking your work to the work of photographers. You will learn to explore, select and review techniques and processes that will help develop your personal

Course Content – Year 11

In Year 11 you will continue to work on your personal portfolio around internally set themes up until January, when you will begin your exam unit. You will receive the exam board brief and start to create your portfolio to support your final 10 hours exam.

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Physical Education

Exam Board: AQA

Assessment

This is a linear qualification, this means that all students will sit their exams and submit non-exam assessments at the end of the course. You will be assessed across two exam papers (worth 60% of the GCSE) and practical performance (worth 40% of the GCSE).

Unit 1

In unit 1 students study the human body and movement in physical activity and sport.

You will learn applied anatomy and physiology (the human body and how it works in sport), movement analysis, physical training and how to interpret data.

Unit 2

In this unit students will study socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport.

You will learn socio-cultural influences on sports participation, sports psychology, health, fitness and well-being and how to interpret data.

Non-Examination Assessment

You will be assessed across a range of sports, whereby performance in 3 sports will be selected as your assessment. You will be assessed in the role of performer/player in a team and individual sports. You will also learn how to analyse performance to bring about improvement in your chosen sport.

On completion of this course, students will be able to access the Level 3 (Post-16) courses in sport and physical education with a view to working in the sporting industry.

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Level 1/ 2 Technical Award in Health & Fitness

Exam Board: NCFE

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness is designed for learners who want an introduction to health and fitness that includes a vocational and project-based element. The qualification will appeal to learners who wish to pursue a career in the health and fitness sector or progress onto further study. The NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness (603/7007/5) complements GCSE qualifications. It is aimed at 14 to 16 year olds studying key stage 4 (KS4) curriculum who are interested in the health and fitness sector. This qualification is designed to match the rigour and challenge of GCSE study. The qualification is graded at level 1 pass, merit, distinction and level 2 pass, merit, distinction and distinction* (equivalent to GCSE grades 8.5 to 1).

Examined Assessment 40% - written exam set by NCFE

Non-exam assessment 60% - written piece of coursework set by NCFE

This qualification will promote the learner's understanding of:

The structure and function of body systems, the effects of health and fitness activities on the body, health and fitness and the components of fitness, the principles of training, the impact of lifestyle on health and fitness, testing and developing components of fitness, health and fitness analysis and setting goals, planning, developing and taking part in a health and fitness programme and understanding how to prepare safely.

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Science

Exam Board: AQA

Course Content

All students study the academic content of the Combined Science GCSE with the aim of helping them to make sense of the science they come across in everyday life. They come to appreciate what science can tell them about themselves, the environment and the universe. The Combined Science GCSEs are designed to meet the diversity of students' needs and aspirations and is a double GCSE giving students a double grade worth twice as much as all other GCSEs. Students will study the moral and ethical issues behind current science in the news. They are encouraged to assess the risk behind the science they come into contact with every day and start to make decisions based on scientific knowledge and scientific methods which will help them in decision making throughout their lives.

Students will study genetics, the human body, evolution, how the body behaves in extreme conditions, growth and development and the brain in biology lessons. In chemistry, students study air pollution, how materials are made, the chemistry of salts, the periodic table, chemicals in the natural environment and chemicals in industry. In physics, students study the universe, the electromagnetic spectrum, the generation and use of electricity, forces, electricity and radioactivity.

Year 10 Course Outline

In Year 10 all pupils will study biology, chemistry and physics following the same curriculum. Some classes will follow a foundation tier path that allows them more time to concentrate on core elements of the subject. There is a focus on practising the many skills needed for success at GCSE such as experimental procedure and accuracy with technical language

Triple Science

Towards the end of Year 10 some students will begin to study Triple Science, this involves studying an extra GCSEs worth of content over the remaining teaching time of the course without extra teaching hours. The decision is made on a student by student basis depending on aptitude shown in assessments as well as teachers' judgement as to whether they can still be successful in completing three GCSEs to a high standard, or if focusing on getting two strong grades would be better for the student. It should be noted that students who remain on the Combined Science pathway are in no way disadvantaged from further science study at A Level or beyond.

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Statistics

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Course Content

Statistics is a very key application of the universal language of mathematics. It has been very important in recent times due to the pandemic. Statistics, like mathematics is all around us. It is used in sport, in science and in humanities. The statistics GCSE further develops the students' ability to understand data and how to interpret the data also.

- In years 10 and 11 we look at collecting data, processing data, displaying data, and interpreting data.
- Each half term the students will sit a development test to ensure all students are still on track for their statistics GCSE.
- As there is also a lot of statistics in the mathematics GCSE there is a strong basis for the statistics GCSE already.

A good grade in a statistic GCSE is a great GCSE to have as it is not taught in many schools. It provides a great base for the A level statistics modules in A level mathematics. Studying statistics can be useful to also talk about in interviews when applying for jobs or further study. The jobs you could be applying for are jobs such as data scientist or any other jobs in the finance or mathematics sector.

To pursue a career in computer science or mathematics you will normally be expected to have a very good GCSE maths grade and study maths and further maths at A Level. Taking GCSE statistics is excellent preparation for this course.

Analysing data and looking a trends is an essential skill in many non-mathematical subjects the content that is taught in GCSE statistics is an excellent grounding for studying biology, psychology, criminology and sociology.