

Your GCSE Options



Welcome

February 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope you find this document useful. Choosing options is an exciting process, though a little daunting. We have not structured them with performance tables in mind so there is still considerable choice and we have maintained a strong offer in the arts and technology subjects. The only things that are compulsory are those designated by law, so nobody is forced to study a language or humanities subject if they really don't feel it suits them. If they are your cup of tea you can also choose more than one. This gives students the ability to choose courses that they enjoy and help develop their talents. Of course a wide choice also brings its own challenges.

We would ask people to look seriously at our BTEC courses. In the past people have considered these an option to suit those for whom a full curriculum of GCSEs might be too challenging. That is no longer the case. They are harder than before, still taught rather differently and offer routes to some attractive university programmes. More broadly both GCSEs and BTECs offer the chance to start professional life without going into further education. It may seem early, and not a traditional idea, but there are some terrific apprenticeships of all kinds on offer at 16 and 18 years of age. It would be sensible to look at these with an open mind, even at this early stage.

The second thing to reflect upon is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is a qualification comprising 6 GCSEs at grade 5 and above in English, Mathematics, two sciences, History or Geography and French or German. At the moment it is a performance indicator for schools but it may turn into a qualification in its own right and may well become a significant yardstick in the world of work and academia. It is highly likely that university departments, certainly in the higher status universities, will regard it as a feature in selection of candidates.

Many schools are making Humanities and Languages compulsory for all in response to the government's initiative. Many more are insisting that those capable of passing them should be made to take a Humanities and Languages option. Our governors looked at changing the options to make some subjects compulsory for some students, which would certainly help us in the league tables. However, we feel it better to allow families to make the choice, while being fully informed of its significance.

If your child chooses not to study for the EBacc there is a danger that in four years' time they will not be able to gain access to the university course or a profession that they want. It is also possible that some sixth forms will look for it for at least some courses. We do not know precisely how key this qualification will be but there is a real chance it will become very important in some areas, particularly for students who are more able academically.

We are happy to leave the decision to you and your child. We appreciate that you may be happy to take the risk of not opting for the EBacc in order to allow them to study a combination of subjects they enjoy and feel will offer them more.

Your child will have a discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership Team in school and there will be a chance for you to talk it through further at the options evening. If your child's options do not include the EBacc, and we feel they could pass it, we will write to you again. We will not look for a return, nor follow it up. We are merely seeking to ensure you feel we have paid sufficient respect to your freedom to choose and allowed you to do so in full knowledge of the issues surrounding the EBacc.

I hope you find the options process a pleasant one and that it leads to a programme of study over the next two years that is enjoyable and successful.

Best wishes

NJ Willis, Headteacher





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Introduction



For the past three years you have studied the same subjects as everyone else, with little or no choice. In Year 10 there is some choice in the subjects you can study.

This booklet is to help make sure you follow the right courses for your abilities, needs and interests. Selecting the right courses is important. It could affect your future.

Who chooses?

Every student will have an interview with a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team in early March to help select the right courses.

You, your parents, and your teachers all play an important part in deciding on the best courses for you. You and your parents should indicate your preference on the course selection form which will

be given to you in March.

Once you have chosen your subjects, if your teachers feel that the courses you have selected are not the best ones for you, we will discuss them with you again and, if necessary, with your parents. We will not make any changes without discussing them with you. In the end, it is your choice.

We shall do our very best to allocate students to their preferred courses fairly. Please note, however, that:

- Some courses may become oversubscribed so that we cannot guarantee your choices.
- In the event of an option course having a very small take-up, it will not run.

Your Choices

All students study English, Maths, Science, core PE and PSHE. These subjects take up 18 out of your 30 lessons each week.

Option subjects take up the remaining 12 lessons.

Both GCSE and BTEC options take three lessons a week.

ASDAN Skills is the only double option taking six lessons a week.

Whatever you choose, the total number of lessons must add up to twelve. This means you can choose:

- 4 single options
- 2 single options + ASDAN Skills

These are the options we offer:

- Art and Design GCSE
- Business BTEC
- Computer Science GCSE
- Dance GCSE
- Design & Technology: Food Preparation & Nutrition GCSE
- Fashion and Textiles Technical Award
- Materials Technology Technical Award
- Design Technology GCSE
- Drama GCSE
- French GCSE
- Geography GCSE
- German GCSE
- Health and Social Care BTEC
- History GCSE
- IT BTEC
- Music GCSE
- Physical Education GCSE
- Religious Studies GCSE
- Skills for Life ASDAN (double option)
- Sport BTEC



Certification



The majority of courses in this booklet lead to GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) qualifications. Please see the individual course pages for details.

Your child will be sitting the new specifications which means they will have some subjects graded 9-1, where 9 is the highest award.

BTEC will continue to be graded at Level 1, or Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction* at Level 2.

Please speak with individual subjects regarding the overall assessment grade to be used.

In some subjects it may be more appropriate for some students to aim for the Entry Level Certificate. This is provided by the same examination boards as the GCSE, and offers assessment at a more basic level.

Non-Exam Assessment

In most courses the final written examination will be only one part of the overall assessment, and non-exam assessment will form an important part of the final grade.

In all these courses you must be prepared to complete non-exam assessments on time and to the best standard you can manage.

Non-exam assessment is work undertaken in the classroom but under exam conditions.

In some courses this will begin in Year 10.

Some questions to think about

What do I want to do when I leave school?

You may already know exactly what career you wish to follow. If so, you should choose the subjects which may be needed as qualifications. If you are a more academically able student, you should also bear in mind the 'Ebacc' qualification that Mr Willis refers to in the introductory letter to this booklet. Your Form Tutor will have information that can help decide whether this path might be most suitable for you.

Remember, you may change your mind about your career in the next two years and it is not usually possible to change your chosen subjects part of the way through a two-year course. For this reason it is best to have a balanced range of courses to keep career options open.

We hope most of you will stay in education at Wallingford School until you are 18. You may wish to consider which subjects you might go on to study or what training course you might apply for when making your Year 10 choices.

Most Year 9 students have no settled ideas of what they would like to do after leaving school. Again, you need a balanced set of courses from the range available. This will leave you with plenty of possible careers to choose from later on.

What subjects do I enjoy?

Only you know the answer to this. If you like a subject, you will not mind working hard at it. Hard work is essential whatever you choose.

What subjects am I good at?

As well as thinking carefully about this yourself, you should use the advice of your teachers and form tutor.

How do I enjoy working?

Some subjects will require you to do a lot of coursework. Others will be assessed mainly by exam. Think about which way of working you prefer. If you are not confident in exams you should consider coursework based courses or BTEC courses where there may be a smaller exam element.



English

GCSE



Why study English?

The study of English allows you to explore the language in which you think and speak. By the end of the course we hope you will feel confidence and enjoyment in using the most flexible and influential language in the world!

What will I study?

The course will lead to two separate GCSEs: one in English Language (OCR J351) and one in English Literature (OCR J352).

English Language will involve exploring and producing non-fiction; understanding and analysing prose fiction; and writing creatively. You will study texts from a variety of genres and eras.

English Literature will involve: reading and responding to Shakespeare and contemporary

drama; studying 'classic' novels and more recent novels from other cultures; understanding and analysing a wide range of poems.

How will I study?

English is studied through a variety of whole class, group and individual tasks: discussions and debates; play readings and poetry performances; non-fiction and creative writing tasks.

How will my work be assessed?

Achievement in English Language and Literature will be graded from 1-9, with 9 being the highest level.

Spoken Language will be awarded Pass, Merit or Distinction.

English Language

100% final exam, without tiers; there will be no coursework or controlled assessment.

- Paper 1: Communicating information and ideas (2 hours)
- Paper 2: Exploring effects and impact (2 hours)

Spoken Language (formerly Speaking and Listening) will still be assessed but reported separately and given a 0% weighting

English Literature

100% final exam, without tiers; closed book; there will be no coursework or controlled assessment.

- Paper 1: Exploring modern literary heritage texts (2 hours)
- Paper 2: Exploring poetry and Shakespeare

Please see Ms Lancaster for more information.

Mathematics

GCSE

Why study Maths?

Nationally, the Mathematics GCSE is split into two tiers, Foundation and Higher.

We use this flexibility to provide courses that allows you to fulfil your mathematical potential and so achieve your best possible grade.

The allocations to these courses are based on performance in Year 7, 8 and 9, but they are not rigid and transfers between sets can take place in Year 10 and 11, particularly after assessments.

These courses build on the work done in Key Stage 3 and offer you the opportunity to acquire new mathematical knowledge, to enhance numeracy skills and to develop further your problem-solving techniques.



What will I study?

The six areas of Mathematics that you will study are:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

In addition to these areas, you will be assessed on 'Functional elements' of mathematics, where more focus will be put on problem solving and the ability to think about the context of a question. You will also be required to memorise formulae.

How will my work be assessed?

You will be assessed at the end of Year 11. You will sit three papers of equal weighting each 1 hour and 30 minutes long. One will be a non-calculator paper and the other two will be calculator.

There is no coursework or controlled assessment in Mathematics.

The grades available depend on the tier studied:

- For Higher, grades 4-9 are available
- For Foundation, grades 1-5 are available

Please see Mrs Ramsay for further information.

Science

GCSE



Why study Science?

The study of science enables you to make informed choices and decisions about a wide range of issues that will have an impact on your life from IVF treatments, to cloning, to whether we should release nano-scale robots into human bodies to fight illness.

Science is a compulsory subject. Some students will study triple Science, resulting in a GCSE in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, but most of the year group will follow a combined science course leading to two GCSEs. The decision about which course you take will be made by your Science teachers to ensure that you stand the best chance of succeeding and achieving highly in Science.

What will I study?

You will study a wide range of content across the whole spectrum of the sciences.

The aims of the course are:

- To learn how science affects our everyday life and how to evaluate scientific information and evidence presented by, for example, the media.
- To learn how ideas can be explained using science, and how theories are developed.
- To develop your ability to explain things in a scientific way and communicate your ideas to other.
- To develop the skills you need to carry out practical work safely and accurately.
- To prepare you for further studies and careers which need a Science background.

How will I study?

Your lessons will be a variety of practical tasks, discussion based lessons and written work. We aim to ensure that there are a range of activities in every lesson and our primary objective is to enable you to learn and reach your full potential.

How will my work be assessed?

Each topic will have a formal test which will give you feedback on both content and analysis strengths and developments. You will be examined at the end of the course to test your understanding.

Please see Miss White for further information.

Physical Education

CORE

Year 10 Core PE Pathways Programme

In Year 10 you will study a variety of activities, which are tailor suited to the class. There is an emphasis on participation and engagement, ensuring that you develop a range of transferable skills, including self-confidence and the ability to work with others.

- Invasion Games - Netball, Football, Rugby, Hockey, Lacrosse, Handball and Basketball.
- Racket Sports - Badminton and Tennis
- Fitness
- Dance and Trampolining
- Striking and Fielding - Rounders and Cricket

You will participate in two lessons a week, one indoor and one outdoor.

There is the opportunity for students to undertake the Sports Leaders Level 1 Award where students are taught how to coach and lead others and have the opportunity to teach local primary school children.

Fixtures and practices continue to run for Year 10 students, enabling and encouraging participation in sporting activities.



Art & Design

GCSE



Why study Art & Design?

GCSE Art & Design is a course which gives you a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore your interests in art and design in ways that are personally relevant and truly developmental in nature. You will develop creative, imaginative and practical skills and learn to appreciate works of art produced by artists, crafts people and designers from different times and cultures.

What will I study?

Art is not just about drawing and painting but encompasses working and experimenting with a range of different media in 2D and 3D including printmaking, mixed-media, sculpture, ceramics, digital photography and image manipulation.

How will I study?

- Unit 1: Portfolio of Work (60% of your final grade). During the course you will be expected to complete at least two theme-based projects for Unit 1. You will explore, experiment and develop ideas in your sketchbook towards a series of final outcomes in varied media.
- Unit 2: Externally Set Task (40% of your final grade). AQA will set a question paper containing a selection of starting points and you will be required to produce a personal response from one of these that you have chosen. You will then have a set period of preparation time before commencing a sustained and focused study in which to develop your own unaided work.

How will my work be assessed?

Throughout the course you will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Developing ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding.
- Refining ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes.
- Recording ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms.
- Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical and analytical understanding, realising intentions and, where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral or other elements.

Please see Mr Bowen for further information.

Business

BTEC

Why study Business?

Business plays an interesting and crucial role in getting students ready for the world of work. Students who are interested in researching companies, presenting ideas and producing reports are perfect for this course.

What will I study?

You will study four units:

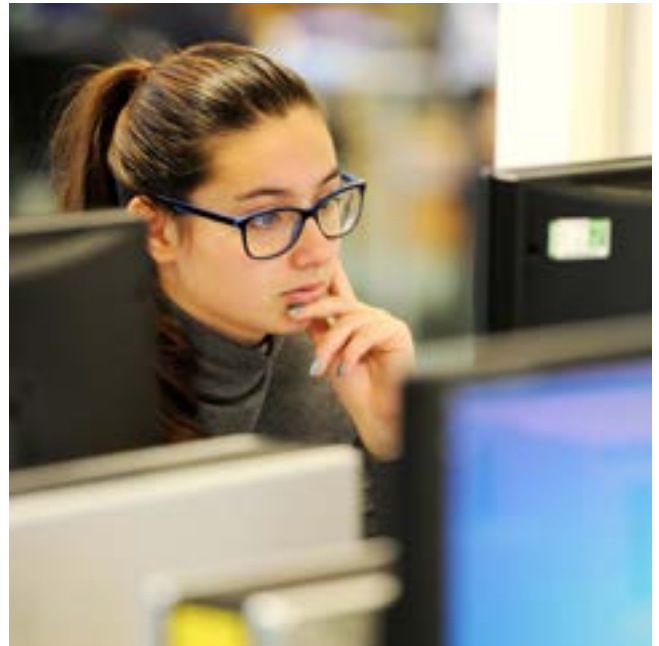
- Enterprise in the business world
- Finance for business
- Promoting a brand
- Recruitment, selection and employment

How will I study?

You will study through teacher led activities supported by visits to local and national businesses, the use of ICT and independent learning. You will also be encouraged to keep up to date with businesses in the news.

How will my work be assessed?

This course is assessed both internally (your teacher will mark your coursework) and externally via onscreen tests and a paper based exam. You will then receive either a Level 1 Award or a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* at Level 2.



Computer Science

GCSE



Why study Computer Science?

You have grown up in a world where technology is evolving rapidly, creating new subject areas to explore and changing the way people work in every area from medicine and fashion to engineering and economics.

Computer Science explores the principles of digital technology and a way of working called 'computational thinking', with coding as a core of the course. You've got to be able to think logically, solve puzzles and be tenacious when the going gets tough. But it is also really creative and you'll get a real buzz out of getting something to work yourself, especially when programming.

What will I study?

There are a range of topics in the subject content area:

- Principles and concepts of Computer Science
- Analysis of problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs
- The components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to computer science

How will I study?

You will have a mix of controlled assessment and theory lessons. You will be learning the skills to take a systematic approach to problem solving. You will be independently designing, writing, testing and refining your programs, applying your growing knowledge of computer science and IT systems to your program development.

How will my work be assessed?

There are two components to the assessment; written exams that make up 80% of the total award and examines your theoretical knowledge and your ability to problem solve and computational thinking skills. These will be made up of a range of multiple choice, short answer, long-answer and extended response questions (like a mini essay).

There is also a practical component to the GCSE called the Non-Exam Assessment (NEA). This assesses your ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve a practical programming problem. This is worth 20% of the award.

Please see Ms Canning for further information.

Dance

GCSE

Why study Dance?

This is a fantastic course for students who enjoy all aspects of dance and wish to extend their practical skills to include technique, performance and choreography skills. You will become more confident in expressing yourself and communicating ideas as well as working in groups and individually. The course also builds on your appreciation of dance pieces performed by others, including professionals.

What will I study?

You will develop your own performance skills performing as part of a group and individually. You will also develop your own choreography skills through applying different devices and principles. Through observation and analysis you will learn to evaluate your own dance choreography and performances, as well as pieces from professional companies, to include consideration of the lighting, set design costumes and accompaniments that they use.



How will I study?

Lessons are mainly practical based and you will work individually on tasks, as well as part of groups, in order to develop technique, choreography skills and performance skills. A proportion of the lessons will be focussed on preparation for the written exam.

How will my work be assessed?

Practical exam 60%

- Set phrase solo
- Duet/trio performance
- Choreography piece

Written exam 40%

- Dance Appreciation; a 90 minute written exam.

Please see Miss Jolly for further information.

DT: Food Preparation & Nutrition

GCSE



Why study Food Preparation & Nutrition?

Are you interested in healthy eating? Do you love cooking? This is the course for you. It is a creative and stimulating course for students of all abilities. The course focuses on developing practical cookery skills and new techniques. You will also learn about nutrition and healthy eating which are essential for life. This qualification will lead to a wide array of jobs including Food Technologist, Chef, Food Buyer, Environmental Health Officer and Nutritionist.

What will I study?

- What food is made up of, why we need it and how it affects our long term health.
- How food can be prepared and cooked skilfully and safely to produce delicious, nutritious meals for different people and situations.
- What happens to ingredients in food when you prepare and cook them.
- Where food comes from and how it is produced and sold.
- How the food choices people make affect the health and well-being of the global environment and its natural resources.
- Which foods different cultures eat throughout the world.

How will I study?

The emphasis in Year 10 is on developing your practical skills and developing your understanding of nutrition and healthy eating. We make lots of dishes including Chicken Kiev, Mediterranean Quiche and Fish Pie. We learn how to fillet fish and portion a whole chicken, make pasta, enrobing, how to improve the presentation with garnishes and layered desserts.

How will my work be assessed?

Your GCSE grade will be awarded as a result of completing two units of work:

- A written examination worth 50% of the total marks.
- Two Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) tasks; a 3 hour practical exam worth 35% of total marks) and a Food Science Investigation (15%).

Please see Ms Ward for further information.

DT: Fashion & Textiles

Technical Award

Why study Fashion & Textiles?

This practical based course will introduce you to a broad variety of skills including designing, construction methods and decorative techniques allowing you to create imaginative and innovative textiles products. It provides an excellent foundation for students wishing to progress on to A-Level Fashion & Textiles or to degree level courses. These skills can be applied to a wide range of careers from Fashion Designer, Stylist, Costume Designer, Fashion Photographer and Journalist.

What will I study?

- Construction techniques enabling you to make high quality finished products.
- Investigation of surface decoration techniques to add colour & decoration to fabric.
- Research and design skills.
- How designers work and how products are made in industry.
- A wide range of fibres, fabrics and components.
- Consideration of the industrial processes and commercial practices.



How will I study?

The emphasis of the Technical Award is on developing and refining your practical skills. In Year 10 you will do this by completing a number of design and make projects focusing on 12 core practical skills. These projects will give you the opportunity to:

- use a commercial dress pattern to make a garment.
- use specialist processes and equipment such as the overlocker and CAD/CAM machines.
- experiment with a range of decorative techniques such as stencilling, machine and free hand embroidery as well as tie-dye and batik.

During the summer term of Year 10 you will start work on your individual Unit 2 Extended Making Project that will allow you to continue to develop the skills you have learnt throughout the year.

Throughout the two years your single lessons are spent developing your knowledge and understanding of Textiles theory in preparation for the written exam.

How will my work be assessed?

- Yr 10 - Unit 1: Skills demonstration of 12 core skills (Coursework Portfolio) – 30%
- Yr 11 - Unit 2: Extended making project (Coursework Project) – 30%
- Yr 11 - Unit 3: Fundamentals of fashion and textiles (Written Exam) – 40%

Please see Miss Isaac or Miss Dornin for further information.

DT: Materials Technology

Technical Award



Why study Materials Technology?

Learn how to make a range of high quality prototypes, samples and products using woods, metals and polymers. It should particularly appeal to students who are looking for a course that is practical in nature and will prepare them for further study and employment within related industries. These new Technical Awards give you a hands-on practical approach to learning. With a greater focus on skills, you can concentrate on the area you're really interested in. You also gain valuable transferable skills in team-working and communication.

What will I study?

You will learn to apply technical and practical expertise to ensure that the product you make is fit

for purpose. You will learn both traditional skills and use modern technologies.

In Unit 1: Skills Demonstration, you will undertake a number of projects that will allow you to be assessed against 12 practical skills. You do not have to undertake 12 projects; a single activity could cover multiple skills: preparing materials and marking out; cutting and shaping by hand; forming, bending and laminating; casting or moulding; non-permanent joining techniques; permanent joining techniques; machining and power tools; quantity production; CAD/CAM; finishing techniques; quality control and accuracy; and teamwork.

In Unit 2: Extended Making Project, you will make a single product that showcases a range of technical skills from Unit 1.

How will I study?

Over the two years of the course, you will undertake a number of mini projects that will allow you to be assessed against 12 practical skills.

For your final extended making project, you will produce a final project that will showcase the skills and knowledge you have learnt and developed during the course. This will be accompanied by a portfolio that will show the planning and development and testing stages.

How will my work be assessed?

You will produce a portfolio as evidence of each skill. Teamworking is demonstrated through a small group project. There are two internally assessed units based on coursework and a written examination:

- Unit 1 - 30%
- Unit 2 - 30%
- Unit 3 (1 hour 30 min written examination) - 40%.

Please see Mr Holden for further information.

DT: Design Technology

GCSE

Why study Design Technology?

The new and reformed GCSE Design Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasing technological world.

You will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on design and technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. You will have the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

You will study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. You will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth. This will be through the Graphics or Resistant Materials disciplines and you should indicate which discipline would be your preference when completing the options form.

Further study for both courses would be through Product Design A Level.

This course would suit a student who wanted a greater understanding of a range of design work and processes.

What will I study?

In addition to the Core, Specialist, Design and Making technical principles, you will use CAD/CAM to aide product development and manufacture and consider and address environmental, sustainable, social and moral issues that affect the process.

How will I study?

You will focus on developing key practical skills in Yr 10, as well as developing your theory and design knowledge. You will learn to use a variety of tools and machines as well as CAD/CAM to aid the development and manufacture of your products, which will be a folder of design work and a 3D product.

How will my work be assessed?

Two units are assessed. Both units are worth 50% of the final grade.

- Written exam, 2 hours, 100 marks - a mixture of multiple choice core theory and specialist extended written and design questions.
- Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) - This is coursework and is a project comprising of a design folder and a 3D product.

This GCSE differs from the Technical Award in Materials Technology which is weighted differently, with two practical components worth 30% each.

Please see Mr Holden for further information.



Drama

GCSE



Why study Drama?

Drama will teach you performance skills in different theatrical styles, for different audiences. You can choose to act, design, stage manage or create technical support for a performance.

Above all it is a subject that concerns itself with the development of personality. Drama will help you develop your personal and social skills, in that you will become more confident in expressing yourself, communicating ideas and working with others.

What will I study?

You will be following the Edexcel GCSE in Drama syllabus, made up of three sections, two of which are completed during the course based around exploration of theme and texts (70%). The third section is an end of course performance (30%). The

two exploration units are as follows:

- Drama Exploration I -This unit is concerned with the use of Drama to explore ideas and issues, responding to stimulus material selected from different times and cultures. 20% is practical, 10% written coursework response.
- Drama Exploration II -This will involve the in-depth study of two plays from a performance point of view. 30% is practical and a 30% written exam response. A Live-Theatre performance review of 1000 words. 10% Exam.

How will I study?

Throughout the course written work will involve keeping a Drama notebook. This will be supplemented by closer focus on particular aspects such as the elements of Drama in preparation for the written portfolios. These notebooks act as a record of the your practical work and show how you respond to and develop a variety of stimuli from different cultures and historical periods (including two well-known scripted plays).

How will my work be assessed?

The final marks come from the your work throughout the course and a final written exam.

- Practical performance exam [30%] in practical presentations. This is from two established scripts of between 20 and 30 minutes in length.
- Practical devised performance exam [20%] based upon a stimulus from the exam board.
- Coursework portfolio [20%]
- Written exam [30%] based on practical work and texts studied throughout the course.

Please see Mr Palmer for further information.

French GCSE

Why study French?

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying French is an excellent choice for you! It is a real skill for life.

You will:

- be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language.
 - take part in the French Exchange to Grenoble and learn about the countries where French is spoken.
 - add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, something many employers and higher education providers look for.
 - create greater opportunities to work abroad, or for companies in the UK with international links.
- Many employers look for people with language skills.



What will I study?

Having already completed three years of Language study, you're well prepared to do this GCSE course! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you'll need for GCSE. You know how to talk about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, where you live, school, holidays, food and drink. You'll build on this knowledge during your GCSE course, and move on to new topics such as media, new technologies, customs and festivals and global issues such as poverty and the environment.

How will I study?

In class you will study in groups, pairs and individually, practising all four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. There will also be an emphasis on learning grammar and a wide range of vocabulary.

How will my work be assessed?

We follow the Edexcel specification with all skills assessed at the end of the course.

- Listening - 25%
- Speaking (conducted by your teacher, marked by examiner) - 25%
- Reading - 25%
- Writing - 25%

Please see Mrs McGarrick for further information.

Geography

GCSE



Why study Geography?

Geography will help you understand the world around you; the landscape (physical geography), the people (human geography) and how one may affect the other, sometimes in quite spectacular ways. Employers and universities know that geography students develop a wide range of transferable skills; not just map skills but also things like fieldwork, teamwork, literacy and analytical skills.

Students wanting to directly use geography have gone on to the following areas of work: Environment Agency, flood defence, town planning, ecological conservation, marketing and business consultancy, law, meteorology, economic development, health careers, international development aid organisations and teaching!

What will I study?

We cover a wide range of topics to enable you to be well informed on all sorts of current issues, including: natural hazards, weather and climate, ecosystems, development, economic activity and the challenge of resource management. We also study rivers, coasts and hot deserts.

How will I study?

Geography is a subject that can use a wide range of learning styles. Visual, logical and verbal skills are used all the time. We try to fit in discussion and consider opinions, to help you develop confidence with the issues we study (intra- and interpersonal skills). You will develop map skills, analyse photos and learn to interpret the world around you, using ICT and a range of fieldwork skills.

There are 2 days of compulsory fieldwork required for this course.

How will my work be assessed?

In total there are 3 exams:

- 2 exams each worth 35%. One exam is human geography and one is physical geography.
- 1 exam worth 30%. This is split between fieldwork questions and an issue evaluation.
- Fieldwork forms a crucial part of this course and is assessed in exam form. Students will be expected to write up their fieldwork to support them with revision.

Please see Miss Lee for further information.

German

GCSE

Why study German?

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE German is an excellent choice for you! It is a real skill for life.

You will:

- be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language.
- take part in the German Exchange to Bad Wurzach and learn about the countries where the language is spoken.
- add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, something many employers and higher education providers look for.
- create greater opportunities to work abroad, or for companies in the UK.



What will I study?

Having already completed three years of language study, you're well prepared to do this GCSE course! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you'll need for GCSE. You know how to talk about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, where you live, school, holidays, food and drink. You'll build on this knowledge during your GCSE course, and move on to new topics such as media, new technologies, customs and festivals, and global issues such as poverty and the environment.

How will I study?

In class you will study in groups, pairs and individually, practising all four skills of speaking, listening, reading & writing. There will also be an emphasis on learning grammar and a wide range of vocabulary.

How will my work be assessed?

We will be following the Edexcel German GCSE specification with all skills assessed at the end of the course.

Please see Mrs Arnold for further information.

Health & Social Care

BTEC



Why study Health & Social Care?

This BTEC award will allow you to gain a clearer understanding of the health of individuals and how society supports them. You will also gain an understanding of the importance of communication, how to analyse an individual's needs and gain a wider knowledge of the different Health & Social Care sectors.

What will I study?

You will study the following units, two being core units (compulsory) and the others from a choice of specialist units:

Core Units

- Human Life Span Development
- Care Values

Specialist Units

- The Impact of Nutrition on Health and Wellbeing
- Effective Communication

How will I study?

You will study through both pupil and teacher-led activities, the use of ICT and independent learning. This course is assessed through one examined unit and three assessment based units.

How will I be assessed?

The coursework will be internally assessed by teachers and externally verified by the exam board, and the exam units will be externally assessed by examiners. You will then receive either a Level 1 Award or a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* at Level 2.

Please see Mrs Thomas for further information.

Why study History?

History teaches many valuable and transferable skills which you will be able to apply in other subjects and in your future career and studies. History helps develop your skills of understanding, analysis, summary, inference and essay writing. Studying the past will help you to develop an understanding of the world you live in today.

What will I study?

The course covers a range of medieval, early modern and modern history. Students will study: Medicine in Britain, 1250 to present, considering the changes in medicine over the years, with particular focus on injuries and treatment in the First World War; Elizabethan England 1558-1588, with a focus on Elizabeth's religious policies, the situation she faced abroad and Elizabethan society; Super power relations, looking at the relationship of USA and USSR throughout the second half of the twentieth century in the Cold War; and Weimar and Nazi Germany, where we consider how the Nazi Party came to power in Germany and how life for the German people changed as a result of this.

How will I study?

History is taught through a wide range of methods, which appeal to different learning styles. Lessons feature a variety of activities, including discussion work, group and pair work, source analysis, written work, PowerPoints, group presentations and much more. Be prepared to share your ideas.

How will my work be assessed?

- Thematic study and historic environment (Medicine in Britain 1250 - present date) -30%
- Period study an British depth study (Elizabethan England 1558 -1588 / Super power relations (Cold War) 1941-1991) - 40%
- Modern depth study (Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-1939) - 30%



IT

BTEC



Why study IT?

You will get the chance to gain essential IT knowledge and skills, as well as explore the sector and potential careers. This is a practical introduction to life and work in industry. You will be able to:

- explore the role IT plays in business and the world around us.
- develop key technical skills to meet specific user needs.
- put what you have learned into practice.

What will I study?

The course is divided into different units and you will be exploring current and emerging digital technologies including hardware and software, the internet and the World Wide Web. You delve deeper into how digital technology impacts on organisations

and individuals and engage with the issues raised by technology usage.

For practical use in organisational contexts you will develop an understanding of the importance of the analysis of data in organisational decision making. You will need to use skills and techniques to develop, test, use and review a solution to model data and design an interactive product to meet an organisational brief.

How will I study?

The course has internally and externally assessed components, and you will have a mix of theory and practical lessons, with hands on experience to develop your understanding of the subject.

How will my work be assessed?

You will have an external short answer exam to assess your knowledge of IT. You will also be assessed on your practical skills in handling data and producing an interactive product.

Please see Ms Cleaver for further information.

Why study Music?

You will:

- be able to study Music in much greater depth than you have at KS3.
- develop a deeper understanding of a wide range of musical styles, genres and traditions from all over the world.
- understand how to explain what you hear in music accurately, with reference to the subtleties in the rhythm, harmony and instrumentation.
- be more informed about how to perform music to bring out the full effect of a piece or song.
- improve your instinct for how notes can be made to fit together to create a range of musical effects. This will give you more confidence for improvising and composing your own music.



What will I study?

The AQA course is delivered through four areas of study:

- Western classical tradition 1650–1910
- Popular music
- Traditional music
- Western classical tradition since 1910

How will I study?

- Component 1 – Understanding Music (40% of the marks)
- Component 2 - Performing Music (30% of the marks)
- Component 3 - Composing (30% of the marks)

All of the units will be covered during lessons, but due to the nature of the performance unit, you will also be expected to take extra-curricular instrumental lessons (voice, or any other musical instrument). You should aim to be able to sing or play a piece of music to Grade 3 standard at the very minimum for assessment. You will need to read music notation.

How will my work be assessed?

Component 1 takes the form of a listening exam, where you will listen to musical extracts and answer questions based on what you hear. You will also be expected to notate a short melody or rhythm at some point during the exam. You will have to write critically about one of the set pieces in the areas of study.

Component 2 requires two performances (individual and group) on your instrument or voice.

Component 3 requires you to write two compositions. One composition is to a brief, the other is a free composition and compose a piece of music stimulated by two or more of the areas of study.

Please see Ms Hammond for further information.

Physical Education

GCSE



Why study PE?

The study of Physical Education will help you develop a large range of transferable skills, encompassing both theory and practical elements. Students who choose Physical Education usually show a strong interest and passion for exercise and sport and regularly play outside of school.

What will I study?

The course is 60% theory and 40% practical. Within the practical you will cover a range of sports and complete a fitness programme.

The theory covers a broad spectrum of subject content and some of the units are listed below.

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Biomechanics
- Social cultural issues
- Psychology
- Training principles and methods
- Diet and nutrition
- Drugs in sport
- First aid and injuries
- Components of fitness
- Healthy active lifestyle

How will I study?

Including Core PE lessons you will have five PE lessons a week, of which three will be theory lessons. The theory lessons will be classroom based and will work on the examination part of the course. You will experience a variety of learning styles and teaching methods to give you the best opportunity to learn all the information needed for the final exam. The other two lessons will be practically based and will focus on your ability in a range of activities.

How will I be assessed?

The course is broken down into 60% theory and 40% practical. The practical is assessed by three practical performances, each worth 10% of their overall grade. The final 10% of the practical is assessed through completing a Personal Exercise Programme.

The understanding of the theory is assessed through two examination papers, covering all aspects learned from both the theory and practical lessons, including the topics listed above.

Please see Mr Dodson for further information.

Religious Studies

GCSE

Why study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies will help you improve your understanding of people and religious influences on their lives. This course will appeal to those who are interested in exploring a variety of important issues in the world today such as social justice, human rights, peace and conflict, the environment, medical ethics, and religious freedom. You will focus on two major world religions, Christianity and Islam, although there will be some opportunity to explore other religious ideas, beliefs and attitudes.

What will I study?

We follow the AQA A specification, which covers religious, philosophical and ethical thought and teaching.

Component 1: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices in Christianity and Islam. This component covers beliefs and teachings about the nature of God, the afterlife, authority, as well as exploring a wide range of religious practices and festivals.

Component 2: Themes – We study four themes from a choice of:

- Theme A: Relationships and Families
- Theme B: Religion and Life
- Theme C: The Existence of God and Revelation
- Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict
- Theme E: Religion, Crime and Punishment
- Theme F: Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice

How will I study?

We use a variety of teaching and learning methods to ensure that all students are catered for and enjoy the lessons. We study issues in class that often lead to group work and research. We enjoy plenty of class discussions and focus on the skill of debate as this is a crucial part of our work in RS. This will be a vital skill that we learn to translate into written discussion.

You will be expected to keep your class book up-to-date and you will have the opportunity to complete guided practice exam questions to get you familiar with the exam requirements.

How will my work be assessed?

There is no coursework. Instead there are exams at the end of Year 11.



Skills for Life

ASDAN (double option)



Why study Skills for Life?

The ASDAN award scheme is a nationally recognised certificated course. The aim of the programmes is to enable young people to understand themselves and others better and to become more prepared for making the transition to adult life. The world you are entering needs adults who are not only capable of acquiring and applying the necessary academic and occupational knowledge and skills, but flexible enough to adapt to the rapid changes taking place and equipped to make active and creative contributions to local, national and international community life.

What will I study?

These awards have been designed by practitioners as a means by which Key Skills can be developed, assessed and accredited, and personal

achievements formally recognised, within the framework of the Progress File. Challenges and activities will develop the following skills:

- Communication
- Working with others
- Improving own learning and performance
- Problem solving

You will be given a Progress File, which you complete in order to achieve the Bronze or Silver Award. You will have an increased sense of ownership and control of your own learning – vital in raising levels of motivation, achievement and self-esteem. You will be able to:

- assess your own learning.
- set clear and achievable goals.
- identify, express and reflect on your own view of progress and development opportunities.
- summarise achievements and compile a portfolio of supporting evidence.

How will I study?

This is a module-based course and so is assessed through 100% coursework. You will choose from twelve modules, each with sub-sections that need to be evidenced. You will learn through a variety of tasks, for example, working in the school garden, trips into Wallingford, providing help in the local community and visits from external agencies.

How will my work be assessed?

Your work will be assessed through the completion of your Progress File. When you have completed a task and gathered evidence your teacher will sign the section to show its completion. The aim is for you to complete up to Bronze level by the end of Year 10 and complete the Silver level in Year 11.

Please see Mr Choi for further information.

Why study Sport?

Sport BTEC has been designed to build on learning from Key Stage 3 for students who may wish to explore a vocational route throughout Key Stage 4. It also provides a good foundation for learning at post 16 education. It is a good option over the GCSE PE option for those students who prefer a more coursework led assessment over the traditional examination.

What will I study?

You will study a range of topics through both theory and practical lessons. There are some compulsory units as well as optional units:

- Fitness For Sport And Exercise
- Practical Sports Performance
- The Mind And Sports Performance
- Training For Personal Fitness
- Leading Sports Activities
- The Sports Performer In Action

How will I study?

You will study through both student and teacher-led activities, through online exams and independent learning. This course is 25% externally assessed through online exams and 75% internally assessed through coursework assignments. The coursework component requires you to carry out both primary and secondary research.

How will I be assessed?

The coursework will be internally assessed by teachers. There are two externally assessed online examinations. You will then receive either a Level 1 Award or a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* at Level 2.





Important Dates & Notes

Week beginning 6th February 2017

Interviews with members of Leadership Group

Wednesday 22nd February 2017

Year 9 Options Evening for Parents and Students

Thursday 16th March 2017

Year 9 Parents Evening

Monday 20th March 2017

Deadline for Options Forms to be returned to Form Tutor



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