



ORMISTON  
DENES ACADEMY

# Options Choice Booklet

## 2026

**Name:**

**Form Tutor:**





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# The Options Process

This booklet contains all of the information students need to select their GCSE options. In the booklet they will find information on:

- How the process works.
- The timeline.
- How to apply for their options.
- The different subjects available.

Upon receiving this booklet, students will have had an options assembly from Mr Cooper and Miss Arnold setting out the process and the options passport. As part of the options process, we aim to give all students a breadth of knowledge and support, providing:

- Dedicated form time sessions looking at options choices and career pathways.
- PSHE lessons where they will be taught how to seek advice and given guidance around choosing their options.
- Form time which will continue to offer support around options choices.
- Lunchtime drop-in sessions with various support organisations and the year 9 options team.
- Ongoing assemblies and taster sessions on new option subjects and pathways.
- 1:1 progress meetings for students with key staff.

Selecting options is an important part of the KS4 process. When choosing subjects students should seek advice from a range of people including their subject teachers, form tutor, the SEN team (if relevant), parents/carers and any careers advice needed from Mrs Richings and websites (see page 9 of this booklet).

This is an opportunity for students to explore their interests, prepare for their future and explore potential study paths and careers that are their ticket to the next stage in their life. Students should pick subjects based on their interests and passions, and think about how they can use that subject in the future. Remember the KS4 taster sessions will give students an idea of where the subject can take them in the future.

Once students have completed their Options Passport, which details all the steps they have completed to ensure they have engaged in thoughtful reflection throughout the process, we will also arrange for them to have an interview with a member of staff about their option preferences to check they have made appropriate choices. Whilst we will attempt to accommodate all requests, certain combinations of subjects are not permitted—please read the guidance at the bottom on page 4 carefully.

Following the Easter holidays, the academy will arrange the options groups. Where possible we will endeavour to give students their first preference in each option block. However, please bear in mind that there are limits on specialist staff availability and specialist classrooms that may limit numbers on certain courses. Equally, if there is a lack of student interest then a course may not run. Students will be informed of their options after the May half term holiday.

Students must make sure they read this booklet thoroughly with their parents/carers and make informed decisions about their future.

## **Who should students ask for help?**

### **Who can help students with careers?**

Mrs Richings and Mrs Gibbons in the careers office will support students with information regarding careers:

[jrichings@ormistondenes.co.uk](mailto:jrichings@ormistondenes.co.uk) or [mgibbons@ormistondenes.co.uk](mailto:mgibbons@ormistondenes.co.uk)

### **Who should students ask about the course they want to take?**

Students should ask the subject leader (found on each subject page) or their class teacher for that subject.

### **Who should students/parents ask for more information about the options process?**

Students can ask their form tutor, their Head of Year Miss Eaton: [leaton@ormistondenes.co.uk](mailto:leaton@ormistondenes.co.uk) or their Assistant Principal Year 9 lead Mr Wallace: [mwallace@ormistondenes.co.uk](mailto:mwallace@ormistondenes.co.uk)

### **Options Timeline**

1. We will launch the options process in school during the spring term, this will be through an assembly with the year team.
2. At the Year 9 Parents'/Options Evening, students will receive their personal copy of the options booklet. Once students have received this, they will participate in a range of activities to get to know all the different courses on offer.
3. After the February half term, in some lessons we will run a series of workshops where students will experience some of the options subjects not on offer at KS3.
4. Once students have completed their Options Passport (in their options booklet) which details all the steps students have completed to ensure they have engaged in thoughtful reflection throughout the process, students will need to meet with a member of the Year 9 team or SLT to check their preferences by **Monday 23rd March 2026**.
5. Following the Easter holidays, the academy will arrange the options groups. Students will be informed of their options after the May half term holiday.

# Curriculum Choices

At Ormiston Denes Academy, we are passionate about ensuring students leave us having fulfilled their potential in a broad range of subjects and have the opportunity to **succeed at the highest level**. As such, the curriculum we offer gives the balance of a wide curriculum base in KS3 before allowing students to specialise in the subjects they enjoy the most in Year 10. PSHE, RE and PE are ingrained throughout the five year curriculum.

Key Stage 4 courses require a considerable amount of commitment of all aspects of study both in school and at home. It is therefore important to be fully aware of the expectations of each course when making a choice.

All students will need to select their choices for the courses they will study throughout the whole of Year 10 and Year 11. Each student will study:

- The core curriculum.
- Three options subjects which include:
  - a minimum of one subject from the EBacc options.
  - The remaining from the Arts or Vocational options or other EBacc preferences.

Core Curriculum (hours per fortnight)	
English Language & Literature	Non-Examined
Mathematics	Physical Education
Combined Science	PSHE/Religious Education (Core)

All Options (6 hours per fortnight)			
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Student must choose	Geography	Geography	Geography
at least one EBacc,	History	History	History
but may choose more than one. IF they wish to do the full EBacc, they must choose a language as well.	French	Spanish	German
			Computer Science
	Art**	Graphics**	Religious Education (GCSE)
	Performing Arts: Dance*	Performing Arts: Music*	Photography**
	Sports Studies	Sports Studies	Art **
	Health & Social Care	Travel & Tourism	Health & Social Care
	Hospitality and Catering	Hospitality and Catering	

\*\* Can my child take Graphics and Photography and/or Art?

Again, the subjects are separate pathways of the same GCSE Art & Design course—they **cannot** be selected together.

\*\*\* Can my child take BTEC if they don't play a musical instrument?

To be successful on the course, students need to play a musical instrument with proficiency as performance is a main component of the assessment. All options preferences will be checked by the Head of Music which may be followed by an audition.

# The English Baccalaureate

As your child begins thinking about their GCSE options for the September 2026 school year, we want to update you on an important national change that affects how schools structure their curriculum.

## **Q. Is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) being phased out?**

Yes, the government has announced that the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) – a performance measure introduced in 2010 – is being removed as part of a major curriculum reform but it comes into effect for those students choosing for the **September 2027** school year. Your child will be the last cohort through with this measure.

Though this decision has been widely welcomed for opening up broader opportunities for pupils, it is still going through consultation with the Department for Education. Regardless of this change, at Ormiston Denes Academy we feel it is important to have a balanced range of subject between both the traditionally academic and vocational subjects.

## **Q. What this means for my child?**

Your child still has freedom to select subjects that match their interests, strengths, and future goals. While English, maths and science remain core GCSEs that all pupils study, they will still need to choose an ‘Ebacc’ subject but still have flexibility in choosing the additional subjects.

Most importantly, students should choose a combination that motivates them and plays to their strengths.

# Ormiston Denes Academy Options Passport 2026

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutor Group: \_\_\_\_\_

*To ensure students have considered carefully the courses they wish to take at GCSE, they will need to confirm they have completed the following activities and the relevant member of staff has signed to confirm their participation.*

Activity	Date	Signed
Attended Parents'/Options Evening		Any teacher:
Viewed a range of option subject stands		Options staff: Options staff:
Attended the options assemblies		Form tutor:
Completed their PHSE lessons on careers.		Teacher:
Spoken to the class teacher leading the option subjects chosen.		Option 1: Option 2:
Spoken to their parents about the choices they have made.		Parent:
Experienced the taster sessions.		Session 1: Session 2:
Completed form time session 1.		Teacher:
Completed form time session 2.		Teacher:
Completed form time session 3.		Teacher:
Participated in a pathways meeting with a member of the Year 9 team.		Year 9 team:

# How to Choose Their Subjects

## 1. Research

- Read about all the courses that students could choose from in this booklet.
- Explore careers and what qualifications students will need.

Students can start with <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/> where they can chat online to an impartial careers advisor.

Students should think about:

- Which subjects particularly interest them.
- Where do their strengths and weaknesses lie?
- What study skills might they need for some subjects?
- Which subjects do their teachers recommend that they take?
- What ideas about their future career do they have at present?

## 2. Deciding

When students have gathered all their information and discussed their thoughts with their parents/carer, their form tutor and the appropriate staff, students are ready to make their decision.

Tips: Some subjects may have special requirements: e.g. hospitality and catering - students will need ingredients. Performing arts - students may need to take part in rehearsals and performances outside of the academy day and will need to perform in front of their peers and larger audiences.

Students shouldn't choose a subject just because they like the teacher: it may be that they will not have the same teacher next year. Likewise, they should not be put off a subject because they do not get on well with their present teacher.

**Make their own choices; don't just follow a friend.**

## 3. Preferences

We ask students to select preferences; we will use this information alongside their current grades and discussion with their teachers to place them in suitable subjects to help them achieve their best.

Using the option blocks of page 4, students should list their preferences for each option block below. **They should list at least three:**

Preference	Option Block 1	Option Block 2	Option Block 3
1st			
2nd			
3rd			
4th			
5th			
6th			

# Careers Information

Thinking about careers that interest students is an effective way to help them select their options preferences.

Careers staff in the academy are here to support students when making important choices about their future career.

What steps can they take to find out more about careers?

- Arrange to talk to staff who know them well about their careers choices.
- Book a 1 to 1 careers guidance appointment with Mrs Gibbons, by speaking to Mrs Richings in the careers office, or by emailing [jrichings@ormistondenes.co.uk](mailto:jrichings@ormistondenes.co.uk).
- Look at resources in the careers guidance section of our website , found under the 'For Students' tab.
- Make the most of the support within the academy and speak to Mrs Richings, Mr Cooper or Year team.
- Remember the 'good' and 'bad' reasons for choosing their options, as detailed below.
- Use the online resources (on the next page) to support your research and options choices.
- Look regularly on the Student Launchpad, there will be options information to support you.
- Think about what skills each subject can also enhance.



## Good reasons for choosing options

- They are good at the subject.
- They think they will enjoy the subject.
- It fits their career ideas and plans.
- It compliments their other choices.
- It helps give them plenty of choice post 16.
- They think they might want to continue studying it post 16.
- They have researched it fully.

## Bad reasons for choosing options

- Because their friends have chosen it too.
- They think it will be easy.
- Someone else thinks it is a good idea.
- They like the subject teacher.
- They don't like the subject teacher!
- They haven't researched properly.
- They haven't considered all options.

# Top Online Resources



Support for everything you need to know about choosing GCSE & BTEC options.

[GCSE options 2024: What GCSE options are there? - BBC Bitesize](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z988n39)



Informative website - see 'GCSEs explained'.

<https://bit.ly/BrightsideGCSEExplained>



A parents toolkit for career conversations, including a range of supportive resources.

[Parents Advice for Career Conversations - Talking Futures](https://www.talkingfutures.org.uk/)



Use the site to help students find their future career.

<https://www.icanbea.org.uk/>



Explore the job profiles to find out what a job involves and if it will suit you.

<https://bit.ly/NCSExplore>



A website for young people providing information on careers, tips, advice, wellbeing information.

[Www.thesource.me.uk](http://www.thesource.me.uk)



Read the advice on choosing their options:

<https://bit.ly/iCouldOptions>

Watch the videos on how to make choices at 14:

<https://bit.ly/iCouldChoices>



Website offers a variety of information for parents and students alike, including a number of quizzes to help match their skills and interests to jobs.

<https://bit.ly/CareerPilotChoices>



UEA Have you ever wondered, a website with supportive information for all year groups.

[UEA - Resource Centre](https://www.uea.ac.uk/resource-centre)



OAT Futures, a OAT website for information and support relating to careers and pathways.

<https://oatfutures.co.uk/>

# Local Labour Market Information (LMI)



Finding reliable information about the local and national labour market allows students to find out information about jobs and career paths and changes in the world of work. It helps to develop new perspectives, gives up to date information around the local area, and can correct misconceptions and stereotypes. The map above shows some of the top employment sectors in Suffolk.

## Some key facts:

- New job roles, and new technologies, are being created all the time.
- Some of the biggest companies in the world didn't exist 10 years ago.
- Global competition is increasing.
- People are living longer, which increases the demand on sectors like health and social care.
- The environment needs to be protected, which increases jobs in greener technologies.
- There are over 180 different job roles in the construction & maintenance industry.
- Over 12,000 people are currently employed in the energy sector in Suffolk, and job roles are increasing.
- Suffolk is one of the largest finance & insurance sectors in the UK outside London.
- Health & social care is the 2nd largest employment sector in Suffolk, with over 350 different careers in the NHS alone.
- ICT, Tech and digital creating is expanding 2.6 times faster than the rest of the UK economy, leading to a substantial increase in jobs.
- There are over 27,000 travel & tourism jobs in Suffolk, supporting 26.5 million visitors each year.

## The way we work is also changing, the future brings more:

- Flexible hours.
- Fixed term contracts (instead of permanent contracts).
- Remote working has increased.
- Self employment has increased.
- Increases in shift working.

For more information relating to LMI please visit the Careers Guidance section of our website [www.ormistondenes.co.uk](http://www.ormistondenes.co.uk).

# Essential Skills for Learning and Employment

Essential skills unlock learning in the classroom, boosting academic outcomes, perseverance, resilience and self belief. Students have less likelihood of being out of work, and increase earnings across a lifetime. They even boost wellbeing and life satisfaction. As an academy we will work to enhance the skills that students already have, using Skills Builder, a framework of 8 essential skills. These skills are highly transferable, from school to college, university and into the workplace.

The 8 Skills are:



This skill is about being able to effectively receive information, from any verbal source.



This skill is about how to communicate effectively with others, being mindful of whether they are talking to peers, teachers or in other different settings.



This skill focuses on how to solve problems, recognising that whilst part of problem solving is technical know how and experience, there are also transferable skills that individuals can develop and use in the process.



Creativity is the complement to problem solving, and is about generating ideas which can then be honed through the problem solving process.



This skill is all about individuals being equipped to manage their emotions effectively and being able to remain motivated, and ultimately to motivate others, even when facing setbacks.



This skill is about being able to plan effectively - both to achieve organisational goals, and also to set their own personal development targets.



This skill is relevant not only for individuals in a leadership position, but also for individuals working with peers in teams.



This skill applies to working within both formal and informal teams, and also with peers, teachers and

Employability, or transferable, skills, are important as these skills can make you more employable. Employability not only relates to your academic success, but also to knowledge, skills, and attitudes (which in turn includes behaviour and attendance/reliability).

There are often skills tests in an interview process, and employers can see good employability skills as important as academic achievement.

For more information see: [www.skillsbuilder.org](http://www.skillsbuilder.org)

# GCSE English Language

## Core Curriculum



## Course Description

### Introduction

Students use Year 9 to build their skills across all elements of English. They are encouraged to develop their ability to write for different audiences and purposes, as well as to interrogate language that they encounter in a range of genres. They begin the GCSE English Language course in Year 10 and, over the next two years, follow a practical course which develops their skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Students follow the AQA GCSE syllabus that builds upon the skills they developed in Key Stage 3. This course is 100% examination at the end of Year 11, but students will complete exam style assessments each half term to hone their examination technique. Students also write and perform a speech, for which they receive a separate grade on their GCSE certificate.

### Assessment type

100% examination

### 1. Reading

Students will be expected to read and respond to a variety of text types and will develop their ability to:

- Select and retrieve relevant information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of implicit and explicit meanings.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a text.
- Comment on the techniques employed by the writer and consider their effect on the reader.

### 2. Writing

Students will produce a variety of written assessments that will demonstrate their ability to:

- Write appropriately for form, audience and context.
- Use linguistic techniques to engage and influence the reader.
- Spell and punctuate accurately and for effect.
- Produce coherent and well-structured responses.

### 3. Non Examination Assessment: Speaking and Listening

Students will be expected to:

- Present.
- Respond to questions and feedback.
- Use standard English.

### Where Does it Lead?

As a core subject, English offers a pathway into the worlds of work and further study. If students wish to pursue a post-16 vocational college course, a grade 5 in English Language will put students ahead of the field. It is likely that any future employer will also want a grade 5 as evidence of their written and oral skills. The written communication and spoken communication skills taught in English are essential to most job roles in the modern economy.

If students are pursuing A level studies with a view to going on to university or into a profession, both English Literature and Language are highly valued and are useful for a number of careers in fields such as education, law and journalism. In fact, there are very few courses in which an English qualification is not beneficial.



### Course Description

In Year 9, students are encouraged to read and analyse a range of challenging texts, whilst building their ability to identify key features and explore their significance.

Throughout Years 10 and 11, students will study a number of classic and modern texts which include:

- A collection of modern poetry from the AQA Poetry Anthology.
- A modern text (An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley).
- A Shakespeare text (Macbeth).
- A 19th Century novel (A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens).

Students will study all texts in Years 10 and 11. In the first year, they will secure their understanding of plot, character and themes. This course is 100% examination and, to prepare students for this, they will be assessed at the end of each unit through an exam style question. In Year 11, students will briefly revise the content of the texts but the teaching will focus mainly on exam technique, and students will be provided with multiple opportunities to plan, write and assess exam responses. This is crucial as the English Literature exam is closed book. This means that students will not have access to any of the texts they have studied in class and will be required to answer exam responses on them from memory.

### Assessment type

This course is 100% examination and, to prepare students for this, they will be assessed at the end of each unit through an exam style question.

Students will explore:

- Relationships between characters.
- How setting and atmosphere are created and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the text.
- Links between texts (particularly poetry).
- The presentation and development of themes.
- The significance of the social and historical context to the text.
- How form, language and structure contribute to meaning.
- How the writer achieves specific effects and how these are received by the reader.
- How ideas are presented in an extract and then developed in the rest of the text.

### Where Does it Lead?

If students are pursuing A Level studies with a view to going on to university or into a profession, both English Literature and Language are highly valued and are useful for a number of careers in fields such as education, law and journalism. In fact, there are very few courses in which an English qualification is not beneficial.

# GCSE Mathematics

## Core Curriculum



### Course Description

The GCSE qualification equips students with key knowledge, skills and understanding needed for the next stage of their life. Students need to be competent, confident and able to solve problems in all areas of mathematics. The course content is split between;

Tier	Topic area	Weighting
Foundation	Number	22 - 28%
	Algebra	17 - 23%
	Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change	22 - 28%
	Geometry and Measures	12 - 18%
	Statistics & Probability	12 - 18%
Higher	Number	12 - 18%
	Algebra	27 - 33%
	Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change	17 - 23%
	Geometry and Measures	17 - 23%
	Statistics & Probability	12 - 18%

### Assessment type

GCSE Mathematics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9). The course is 100% exam based and students must take three 90-minute question papers at the same tier.

The first paper is non calculator; students will be able to use a calculator in the following two papers.

Each paper can ask questions on any topic from the mathematics curriculum. Therefore it is essential that students spread their knowledge and revision across the wide spectrum of areas within mathematics.

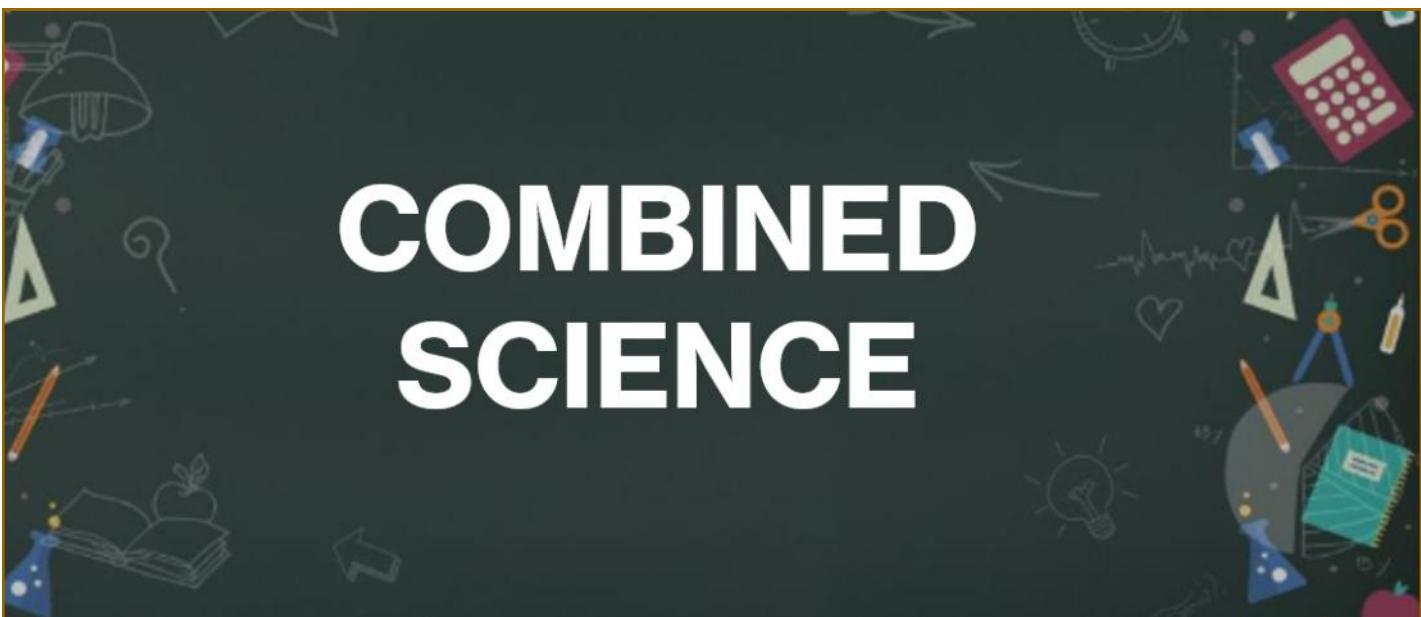
As a core subject, mathematics offers a pathway into the world of work and further study. Gaining a good GCSE Mathematics qualification is essential in order for students to take their place in the 21st century real world. Almost every single job or career will involve some element of mathematics to a greater or lesser extent.

Studying maths develops numeracy, graphical and problem-solving skills. These skills are really useful preparation for the maths used in many university degree courses, higher apprenticeships, and the workplace. It can also increase confidence and fluency in the maths used in everyday life.

### Where Does it Lead?

If students are pursuing A Level studies with a view to going on to university or into a profession, mathematics is highly valued and useful for a number of careers in fields such as engineering and finance. There are very few courses where a mathematics qualification is not beneficial.

# COMBINED SCIENCE



## Course Description

GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy) is a double GCSE taken by the majority of students. It builds on the Key Stage 3 curriculum and covers the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Science at Key Stage 4. It encourages students to explore, explain, theorise and model in science and develops a critical approach to scientific evidence.

Double award covers the biology, chemistry and physics branches of science. More details including the specification for GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy) is available at: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse>

### Assessment type

The Combined Science GCSE is examined by six 1 hour 15 minute written exams, each of which is worth 16.7% of the final grade. There are two exams on each subject biology, chemistry and physics. There are 21 required practicals that are delivered throughout the course. There will be questions relating to these practicals on the written exam papers.

Science is a subject but it's also a way of thinking: science students have been trained to think critically, research properly and be guided by the evidence. These are critical workplace skills and employers value the creativity and problem-solving skills of science.

We often tend to think of science as the three subjects Biology, Chemistry and Physics – but astronomy, engineering, genetics, geology, maths, medicine, nanotechnology, nursing, pharmacology, veterinary and zoology are also among the third-level science options.

Science never stays still, and jobs that were unimaginable 20 years ago are now thriving, with so many opportunities available to work in areas as diverse as biotechnology, data analysis, drones, nanotechnology, smart devices and so much more.

Some students will go on to work in labs, academia or industry. Others will choose further study before going on to specialise in a particular area.

### Where Does it Lead?

GCSE Core Science gives students a good grounding in science. Success in combined science can provide access to AS/A2 science courses, including applied science and psychology. In the long term, if students decide to pursue their scientific studies, it can lead to an almost limitless number of job opportunities. Highly qualified scientists are very much in demand and their skills are required in many jobs.

# Physical Education (Non examined)

## Core Curriculum



### Course Description

#### Introduction

Students will continue their programme of study across a variety of sports and activities. The central aim is to increase students' awareness of health and fitness issues, safe participation in sport, competitive and co-operative sporting opportunities and the development of personal and social skills (My Personal Best).

The activities students will take part in are from the following;

- Trampolining.
- Dance.
- Team games.
- Racket sports.
- Striking and fielding games.
- Personal health and fitness.

### Benefits of Physical Education

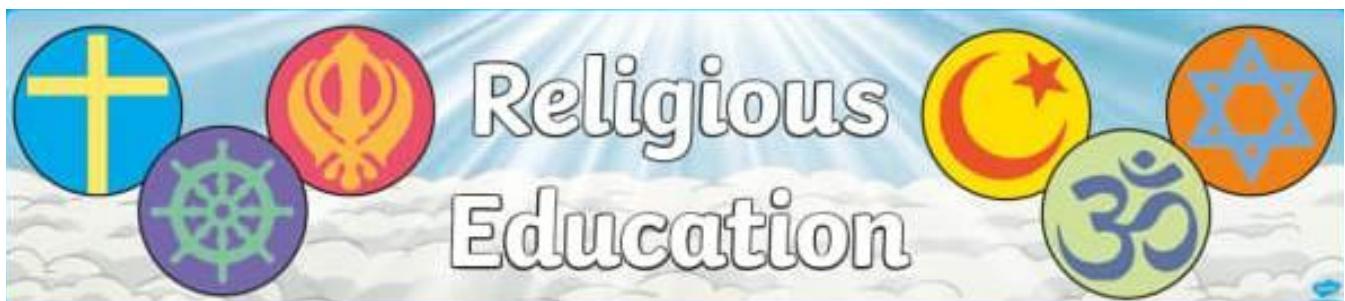
It is no secret that physical activity is necessary to a person's well-being. Because children are continuously developing, both physically and emotionally, they are especially affected by the benefits of activity, and inversely, the negative effects of inactivity.

The main benefits of physical education:

#### Improved health and fitness

- Improves self-confidence.
- Improves team work.
- Improves social skills.
- Improves leadership skills.

This is a non examined course.



## Course Description

### Introduction

The personal, social, health education/ religious education course builds on Key Stage 3 topics to help students confidently develop a more nuanced understanding of relationships and sex, religion and beliefs, drugs and substance misuse, careers and finance. Students follow a programme in which they will cover both statutory requirements and non-statutory topics following a thematic approach. Sex and relationship education is embedded within the programme of study to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. This aims to help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

The personal and social health education (PSHE) and religious education curriculums are designed in a way to support young people in:

- Becoming confident individuals who are physically, emotionally and socially healthy.
- Being responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.
- Understand and manage risk.
- Recognise personal wellbeing and embrace change.

### Students will learn by:

- Contributing in class discussions and role plays with their own points of view and responding to others.
- Visits from guest speakers.
- Self-reflection to recognise strengths and weaknesses in their personal, social, health and economic development.
- Taking an interest in current affairs both locally and nationally by watching the news or reading articles.
- Making use of ICT and the internet for simulations and to carry out research.

### Assessment type - these are non examined courses.

In PSHE/RE there is no external assessment. Their knowledge will be assessed in each lesson and guide the level of depth the teacher will take the learning. Their overall progress will be assessed each unit.

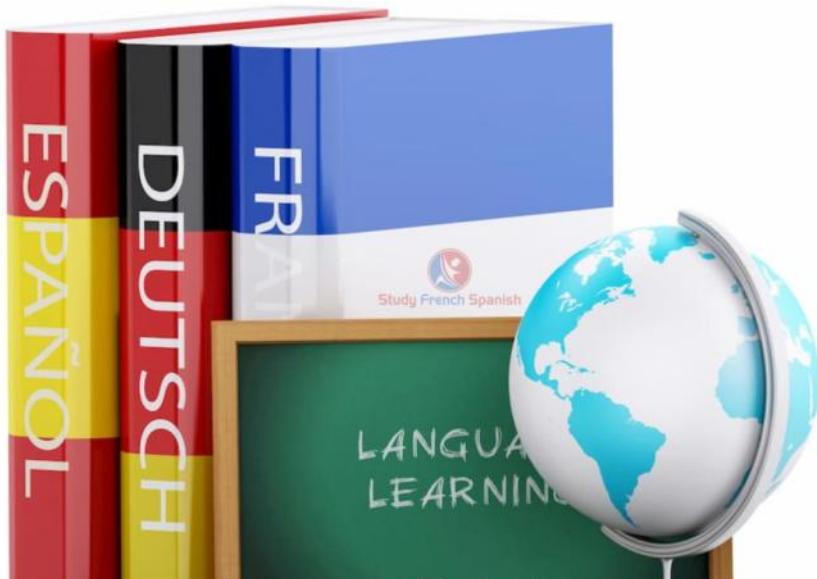
### Where Does it Lead?

The study of PSHE/RE will help students gain the confidence to participate in communities in a positive manner and become an active citizen. As this subject develops their communication and self-reflection skills it creates a strong basis for all careers. The content of this course will develop their skills and knowledge needed in the world of work and beyond.

For further information, the Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education policy can be found in the policy section of our academy website.

# GCSE Modern Foreign Languages

(French, German, Spanish) EBacc. Subject



## Course Description

### Introduction

Over the course of the GCSE, students will develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in their chosen language, studying modules on the themes of studying and my future, my personal world, media and technology, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood and travel and tourism. These will be examined with four assessments in Year 11.

Aside from the vocabulary and grammar needed to pursue their language at this higher level, students will also learn more about the countries where these languages are spoken and develop their communication skills and cultural awareness.

A GCSE in French, German or Spanish will provide students with the means to appreciate different countries, cultures, communities and people while also giving students a qualification respected by employers, sixth forms and universities.

### Assessment type

The French, German and Spanish GCSEs consist of four exams: listening, speaking, reading and writing, worth 25% each. The speaking exam is carried out by their class teacher and will involve students having a conversation with them which is recorded and sent away for grading.

## Where Does it Lead

Students with strong language skills stand out in a competitive job market. Having a language GCSE also means that students will be able to pick up other languages such as Japanese, Korean and Russian at a later date.

Students will also be able to demonstrate that they can communicate with people across cultures and languages and be in a strong position to get a job in companies with international links, or even work abroad.

Languages also have lots of transferable skills that show future employers students can rise to a challenge and step out of their comfort zone, including: translation, interpreting, journalism, travel and tourism, IT, marketing, banking, sales and teaching.

### Why Study languages?

Languages open up new opportunities for work and leisure abroad and change the way students see the world. French, German and Spanish are challenging but rewarding GCSE options which will stand students in good stead to continue with any academic pathway in their future as they also combine well with subjects like law, business and politics.

KS4 topics will deepen their existing linguistic knowledge to tackle more complex topics like what we should do about climate change to explaining why somebody is their hero. They will also learn to master functional language like ordering food, booking hotel rooms, speaking to tour companies and explaining illness and accidents with medical professionals.

### Miss Best



## Course Description

### Introduction

Students will travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes. Upon completion of this two year course, students will have the skills and experience to progress onto A-level and beyond.

### Assessment type

Paper 1 Living with the Physical Environment:  
Externally assessed written exam (35%)

Paper 2 Challenges in the Human Environment:  
Externally assessed written exam (35%)

Paper 3 Geographical Applications:  
Externally assessed written exam (30%)

### Where Does it Lead?

Geography can open the doors to a variety of careers and further education opportunities. The ability to research information from a variety of sources and present to a targeted audience in a variety of ways is a sought after skill base in any career path in this ever changing world. The ability to empathise with a variety of cultures underpins a world view built through investigative study.

### Why Study Geography?

Geography helps us to explore and understand space and place - recognising the great differences in cultures, political systems, economies, landscapes and environments across the world, and exploring the links between them. Geography also provides an ideal framework for connecting and bringing together other fields of knowledge.

Geography is, in the broadest sense, an education for life and for living. Learning through geography – whether gained through formal learning or experientially through travel, fieldwork and expeditions – helps us all to be more socially and environmentally sensitive, better informed, and more responsible as citizens and employees.

**Miss Steward**



### Course Description

This course covers a wide range of topics that build on learning at KS3 and prepares students for A levels and beyond. On Paper 1, students will learn about the development of medicine in the UK from medieval times through to the present day, with a special focus on treatments on the Western Front during the First World War. Students will learn about the key factors that have revolutionised health care. Paper 2 focuses on the changes that affected society in Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, focusing on William the Conqueror; and the history of the American West, with a focus on overarching narratives and the consequences of clashes between American migrants and Indigenous peoples. Finally, students apply their skills and knowledge to the study of Weimar and Nazi Germany in Paper 3. Here, students will work with sources and historical interpretations to evaluate the reasons for Adolf Hitler's rise to power, and the changing lives of German civilians between the world wars.

### Assessment type

GCSE exam (9-1). There are three written exams:

Paper 1: 1 hr 20 minutes (30% of course)

Paper 2: 1 hr 50 mins (40% of course)

Paper 3: 1 hr 30 mins (30 % of course)

### Why Should Students Study This Subject?

History is an important subject, as by studying the past, students gain a better understanding of contemporary culture at home and globally. By analysing arguments and using evidence, students develop critical thinking skills that can be applied to other subjects and later to the world of work. History also develops valuable literacy skills.

### Where Does it Lead?

History is a very popular subject at A level and degree level in its own right. A GCSE in history will also help with understanding of other humanities subjects such as geography and religious studies. The skills developed in history overlap with law and so it is a good grounding for legal studies. Due to the literacy requirements, it is also a good grounding for careers in education, the civil service and the media.

**Mr Hissey**



## Course Description

The Cambridge National in Sport Studies is for students who want to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of sport studies via developing practical skills that can be applied to real life context and work situations, understanding topical and contemporary issues in sport and the impact they have on the sports industry, develop skills as a performer in two sporting activities and how to lead a sporting activity session using various leadership skills. The course also explores the world of outdoor and adventurous activities in the natural setting and how these can be carried out safely whilst also analysing the benefits that these activities have to offer which also includes a residential.

The course is designed to help students think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically; whilst also developing their independence and confidence in using skills that are relevant to the Exercise, Physical Activity, Sport and Health sector and more widely.

The qualification will enable learners to develop their understanding of the sports industry and the many roles and potential careers prospects that can arise from this as well as develop skills in analysing their own performance and implementing actions and plans to better themselves.

### Assessment Type

#### Year 10

R185: Performance and leadership in sports activities – internally assessed via assessment tasks (mandatory unit).

#### Year 11

R184 Contemporary issues in sport – externally via written exam (mandatory unit).

R187: Increasing Awareness of Outdoor and Adventurous Activities—internally assessed via assessment task (optional unit).

### Where Does it Lead?

- A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects.
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Sport or a BTEC National in Sport and Exercise Science, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the sport sciences or teaching sectors.

### Why should they study the subject?

The Cambridge National Sports Studies Course gives learners the opportunity to develop sector specific skills and knowledge that will allow them to gain a full understanding of role that sports, and physical activity plays within society; but also an understanding into the various career prospects that are available as well as higher education opportunities.

**Although a practical subject, learners must be aware that a large proportion of this course will be covered through theoretical work and not just practical lessons.**

If students have a passion for sports, appreciate the aesthetics of practical performance, value the skills required for successful sports leadership and want to develop their knowledge and understanding of the contemporary issues in sport then this course is for you.

### Ms Gogar and the PE Department

# Hospitality and Catering



## Course Description

### Introduction

This qualification is made up of 2 units.

#### Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry

Students will:

- Learn about the hospitality and catering industry, the types of hospitality and catering providers and about working in the industry.
- Learn about health and safety, and food safety in hospitality and catering as well as food related causes of ill health.

#### Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in action.

- Learn about the importance of nutrition and how cooking methods can impact nutritional value.
- Learn how to plan nutritious meals as well as factors which affect menu planning. Students will learn the skills and techniques needed to prepare, cook and present dishes as well as learning how to review their work effectively.

### Assessment type

Students will be assessed through a written examination and an assignment.

Unit 1 will be assessed through a written exam (1 hour 20) which is worth 40% of their qualification. (work completed in Year 10 (summer term) and Year 11)

Unit 2 - students will complete an assignment where they will plan and prepare a menu in response to a brief. This will be worth 60% of their qualification.

## Where Does it Lead?

Related careers include: nutritionists, dieticians, health promotions officers, product development in the food industry, teachers in food technology, catering and nutrition, managers in food retail, food hygiene officers, hospitality and events management. For students who wish to develop their food studies, there are Level 3 courses available in Food or Catering and Hospitality. This could lead to a number of closely related courses in nutrition, food and health, available at various universities and catering colleges.

### Why should they should study the subject.

Catering equips students with practical cooking skills as well as theoretical knowledge and understanding of the environment in which catering providers operate, how they operate, how they meet health and safety requirements, how food can cause ill health and how they can meet specific requirements of the catering industry, nutrition and healthy eating.

Students will be cooking a lot in Year 10 to prepare themselves for their exam and we recommend they provide their own ingredients or contribute to the cost of the ingredients. Students must bring a clean apron to every practical lesson and a container in which to carry home the products they make. Students will then undertake a series of theory lessons with no cooking to prepare for the written exam.

**Mrs Getvoldsen**



## Course Description

This is a cutting edge GCSE taken by students who are passionate about the subject. It reflects the fast changing world in which we live and helps students develop the computational skills they need for an exciting digital future beyond the classroom.

It builds on the Key Stage 3 curriculum and covers the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Computer Science at Key Stage 4. It encourages students to think abstractly, procedurally and concurrently. The course is split into two inter-twinned sections; Computer Science Theory and Programming.

More details including the specification for GCSE Computer Science are available at [Computer Science \(2020\) | Pearson qualifications](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/computer-science/gcse-computer-science-2020.html)

## Assessment type

The Computer Science GCSE is examined by one 1 hour 30 minute written exam which assesses theory knowledge and one 2 hour practical (on screen) exam which assesses practical programming skills. Each of which is worth 50% of the final grade.

Computer Science is a subject but it's also a way of thinking: computer science students have been trained to think abstractly, procedurally and ahead. These are critical workplace skills and employers value the creativity and problem-solving skills of computer science.

Computer Science never stays still, and jobs that were unimaginable 20 years ago are now thriving, with so many opportunities available to work in areas as diverse as Cyber Security, Software engineering, biotechnology, drone technology, sustainable energy nanotechnology, smart devices and so much more.

## Where Does it Lead?

GCSE Computer Science gives students a fantastic grounding in computer science. Success in computer science GCSE can provide access to AS/A2 computer science courses, including Cyber Security, Data Mining, Analytics, Financial Systems and so much more. In the long term, if students decide to pursue their computer scientific studies, it can lead to an almost limitless number of job opportunities. Highly qualified computer scientists are very much in demand and their skills are required in many jobs.

**Please note:** Students who select this option should be aware there will be an additional selection process based on maths and logic abilities, Attitude to Learning in Year 9 and an interview process with the Head of Computer Science.



## Course Description

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/ Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts by studying human lifespan development, health and social care services and values, and health and wellbeing as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

### Why should they study the subject?

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop applied knowledge in the following areas:

- The life stages and key characteristics in the physical, intellectual, emotional and social (PIES) development classifications and the different factors that can affect an individual's growth and development .
- Different life events and how individuals can adapt or be supported through changes caused by life events.
- Health and social care conditions, how they can be managed by the individual and the different health and social care services that are available.
- The barriers and obstacles an individual may encounter and how these can be overcome.
- The skills, attributes and values required to give care and how these benefit the individual.
- How factors can affect an individual's current health and wellbeing.
- How physiological indicators and an individual's lifestyle choices determine physical health.

- The use of the person-centred approach.
- Recommendations and actions to improving health and wellbeing and the barriers or obstacles individuals may face when following recommendations and the support available to overcome.

### Where Does it Lead?

Study of the qualification as part of Key Stage 4 learning will help learners to make more informed choices for further learning, either generally or in this sector. The choices that learners can make post-16 will depend on their overall level of attainment and their performance in the qualification. Learners who generally achieve at Level 2 across their Key Stage 4 learning might consider progression to:

- A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects.
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Health and Social Care, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the health or social care sector.

### Assessment type

3 mandatory units

1. Human lifespan development - internally assessed.
2. Health and social care services and values - internally assessed.
3. Health and wellbeing - externally assessed.

**Ms Gogar & Mrs Sutton**



## Course Description

In the BTEC Tech Award for Music there is a strong emphasis on performing and composing, playing an instrument or singing to a good standard is required, as well as the confidence to perform in front of an audience. There is also an opportunity for use of music technology within the course and written work to evaluate, analyse and present.

### There are 3 components.

#### **Component 1 - Exploring Music Products and Styles. (internally assessed portfolio)**

Students will learn to demonstrate an understanding of various styles of music ranging from classical to pop and rock and learning different techniques and features of each style.

Students will also learn to apply understanding of learned techniques to create music - this can be either a live performance, recording of a performance or creating an original composition/ DAW

#### **Component 2 - Music Development. (internally assessed coursework)**

Students will learn to demonstrate professional and commercial skills required to succeed in the music industry, auditing, planning and reviewing work through time management, organisation and maintaining a development plan.

Students will also apply the development process through practical workshops, performance, composition and music production.

#### **Component 3 - Responding to a Brief. (external assessment)**

Students will be set a task to apply their learned techniques and skills under supervised conditions after a short period of preparation.

### Why Study Music

Music is a universal language studied around the world, bringing people together with a common interest and creating mixed communities. Learning an instrument and participating in music is proven to improve confidence, self esteem and the memory and raises cognitive achievement in all areas, also improving coordination and muscle memory.

### Where Does it Lead?

Progression can lead to A level Music, Music Technology and Level 3 BTEC Music in Music or the Performing Arts leading into an ever growing industry such as sound engineers, performers and Music producers..

### Mrs Howard

# BTEC Performing Arts—Dance



## Course Description

The BTEC Performing Arts tech award course (Dance) is a creative option for students with an appreciation and passion for performing and choreography. The study of dance as an art form contributes to students' aesthetic and social development. As a physical activity it promotes fitness and well-being.

As choreographers, students use problem-solving and creativity skills and in directing others they develop their interpersonal and communication skills. Finally, as critics, students make informed decisions about the dances they review.

The course focuses on contemporary, street dance, jazz and musical theatre styles of dance. Students in certain styles will be expected to perform bare-foot.

## Why study dance?

As well as improving their physical health, dance is good for students' mental health and teaches them skills such as problem solving, improvisation and communication.

Dance provides students with the space and platform to express themselves, they have the opportunity to choreograph and perform pieces that are valuable to them and the audience. These are sought after skills that are important for further study, careers and students' personal life.

## Where Does it Lead?

Post-16 students can take BTEC Performing Arts (Dance) or A Level Dance, as well as further study continuing on to university and vocational colleges. Job opportunities include performing, teaching, choreography, dance critique, journalism, and sports and health related careers. The social, physical fitness and critical analysis skills developed during the course are useful for a range of careers and lifestyles and are valued by employers.

### Assessment type

**Component 1**-Exploring the Performing Arts (assessed internally)

Learners will develop their understanding of the performing arts by examining practitioners' work and the processes used to create performance.

**Component 2**-Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts (assessed internally)

Learners will develop their performing arts skills and techniques through the reproduction of acting, dance and/or musical theatre repertoire as performers or designers.

**Component 3**-Responding to a Brief (assessed externally)

Learners will be given the opportunity to work as part of a group to contribute to a workshop performance as either a performer or designer in response to a given brief and stimulus.

**Miss Grimmer**



## Course Description

The Art & Design course has been designed to encourage students to be adventurous and creative over the two years. The course will enable students to express their ideas visually and help them develop and refine skills and techniques taught in KS3.

Students will study other artists' work to influence and inspire their own. There will be problems to solve and opportunities to express creative ideas and experiment with a wide range of materials and techniques. The course requires students to explore a variety of media such as: painting and drawing (using a variety of mediums and techniques) printmaking (mono printing, Lino cutting and etching) and sculpture, mixed media, using safe working practices.

Students will be expected to work from direct observation and experience in school, and this will also need to be supported by work produced at home.

**Please note, students are unable to opt for art and design, combined with photography or graphics. They are all the same course with different mediums.**

## Where Does it Lead?

Students may choose to study A Level Art or Level 3 BTEC, leading to further study at university. A qualification in art is valued by employers for the stamina involved in completing the course and the range of transferable skills acquired. There are many careers in the field of art & design such as advertising, marketing, textile and interior design, product design, architecture, animation/film, fashion, photography, illustration, publishing and media.

### Assessment type

GCSE qualification graded 1-9.

**Mrs Westgate or Mr Whitelock**

# GCSE Art and Design (Photography)



## Course Description

### Introduction

The Photography course has been designed to encourage students to be adventurous and creative over the two years. The course will enable students to express their ideas visually and help them develop and refine skills. Photography requires students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of practical skills with both digital and wet photography.

Students will develop their ideas through selecting and analysing the work of others. Learn and apply an understanding of digital and manual manipulation. Refine their ideas as work progresses through experimenting with media, materials, techniques and processes. Record their ideas, insights and observations, visually and through written annotation and create a final piece over a sustained project.

Students will be expected to work from direct observation and experience in school, and this will also need to be supported by work produced at home.

**Please note, students are unable to opt for photography and art and design or graphics. They are all the same course with different mediums.**

### Where Does it Lead?

Students may choose to study A Level Art or Level 3 BTEC, leading to further study at university. There are many different styles of photography covering a range of different career options including editorial and press photographer, medical/ clinical photographer, fashion and photographic, stylist - fashion and photographic stylist, portrait or wedding photographer.

#### Why should they study the subject?

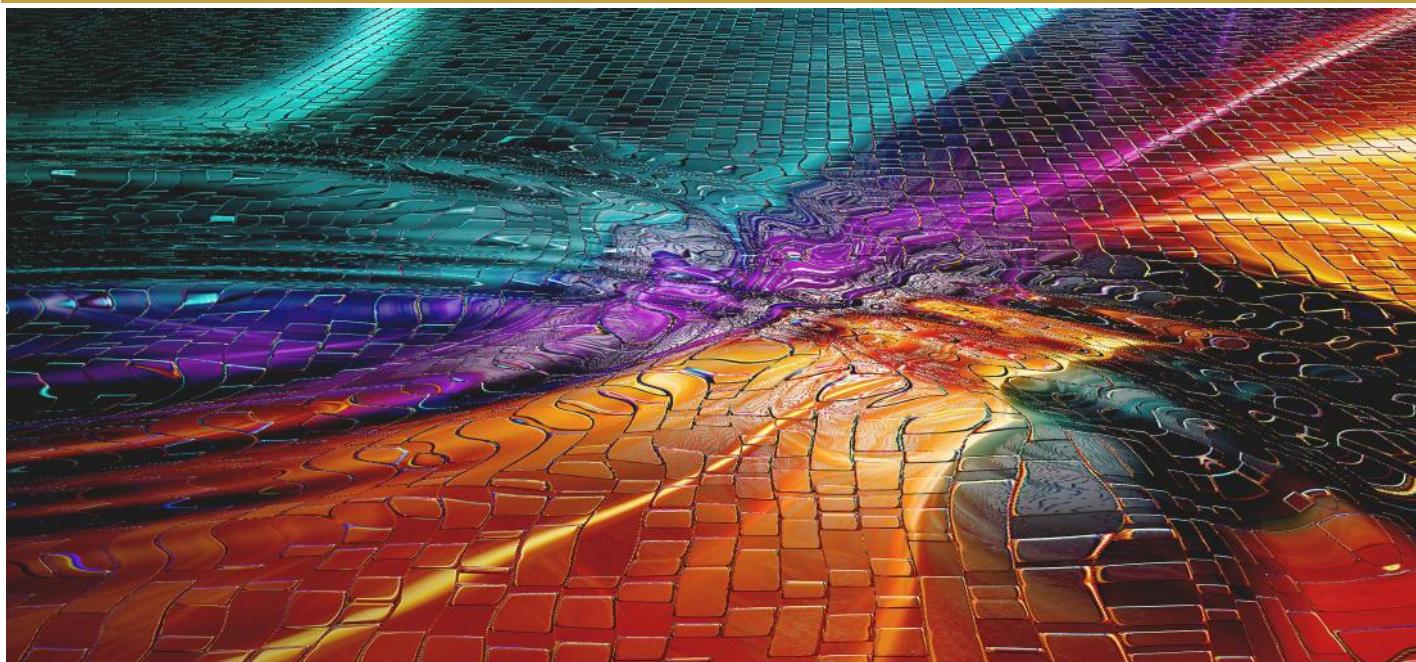
Learning about photography can open up a world of opportunities. Photography can allow for self-expression, as well as improving their technical skills. Photography is a form of art and art and culture is one of the largest contributors to the UK economy contributing £115.9 billion to the economy in 2019. Studying photography provides the opportunity to acquire new and transferable skills.

#### Assessment type

GCSE qualification graded 1-9.

**Mrs Westgate or Mr Whitelock**

# Graphics



## Course Description

Graphics is a creative and technical subject which involves designing and making work responding to a brief. The course will feature some drawing and photography skills which can be developed through both handmade and computer based design work. Students can explore a range of applications for creative work through illustration, advertising, communication graphics, computer graphics and typography.

Students will create artwork that responds to a brief. The main difference between art and graphic design is that graphic designers create work which is commercial and for a specific purpose (to advertise or inform) while artists create work for self expression.

As part of the graphics course, students will need to analyse and respond to the work of other graphic designers, develop drawing and photographic skills, experiment with digital media and develop editing techniques.

### Why should you study the subject?

Graphics combines illustration, print-making, typography and computer-based design skills. This course will help students to develop a positive and creative approach and as such has many transferable skills. Art and culture is one of the largest contributors to the UK economy contributing £115.9billion to the economy in 2019 - graphics is a form of art and design. Studying graphics, and the subset of skills, such as computer based design and photography provides the opportunity to acquire new

## Where Does it Lead?

Students may choose to study A Level Art or Level 3 BTEC, leading to further study at university. Graphics can provide an excellent starting point for lots of careers in the creative sector, including advertising, illustration, publishing, graphic design, web design, animation, motion graphics and special effects. Students can also work in the world of theatre as set painters or prop designers. This would also be a great subject if students were thinking of becoming an architect or engineer as the design and drawing skills underpin those studies.

**Please note, students are unable to opt for art graphics combined with photography or art and design. They are all the same course with different mediums.**

### Assessment type

GCSE qualification graded 1-9.

**Mrs Westgate or Mr Whitelock**

# GCSE Religious Studies



## Course Description

The course will explore the practices and beliefs of the two largest religions in the world (Christianity and Islam). This is an opportunity to understand different points of view and address some of the big philosophical questions in life: Why are we here? How should we behave? What happens when we die? The course also looks at ethical topics such as crime and punishment.

### Why should you study the subject?

Religion plays a significant part in our increasingly interconnected world. Developing an understanding of different beliefs and values prepares young people to engage with the wider world when they leave school. The course has a strong emphasis on literacy and will help develop essay writing skills. Students will also learn how to form rational arguments about important moral decisions. The lessons will provide the chance for students to debate crucial issues, which is good for personal development.

### Assessment type

GCSE (9-1) Two 1 hour 45 minute exams.

## Where Does it Lead?

The course lays down solid foundations for the study of religion and philosophy at A level and then university. It also provides valuable knowledge and skills that can be applied in other A levels, in particular history and English. A GCSE in Religious Studies can be useful in a wide range of careers such as education, health care, the police and the media.

### Mrs Nield

# BTEC Travel & Tourism



## Course Description

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Travel and Tourism is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts by studying the aims, products and services of different travel and tourism organisations, their use of consumer technologies, the features of tourist destinations, how organisations meet customer needs and preferences, and the influences on global travel and tourism as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification enables learners to develop their transferable skills, such as researching, planning, and making decisions and judgements.

The travel and tourism sector is the UK's third largest employer, accounting for 9.5% of total employment. Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK in employment terms, employing nearly 3 million people. In 2016, travel and tourism contributed 10.2% of the world GDP, and the sector now supports 292 million people in employment – that's one in ten jobs worldwide.

### Assessment type

#### 3 mandatory units

- 1.Travel and tourism organisations and destinations - internally assessed.
- 2.Customer needs in travel and tourism - internally assessed.
- 3.Influences on global travel and tourism.— externally assessed

## Where Does it Lead?

The major career options (traditional career paths) in the travel and tourism sector are:

- Holiday/ travel agent.
- Tourism manager.
- Travel officer or travel agency coordinator.
- Travel counsellor or travel consultant.
- Airlines staff.
- Tourist guide.
- Transport officer.

### Why should they study the subject?

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop applied knowledge and understanding in a range of areas:

The aims of travel and tourism organisations, how different organisations work together and types of travel and tourism, the features that make destinations appealing to visitors and different travel routes.

How organisations use market research to identify travel and tourism trends, and customer needs and preferences, and selection of products and services and planning a holiday to meet customer needs and preferences.

Factors that may influence global travel and tourism, and how travel and tourism organisations and destinations respond to these factors, and the potential impacts of tourism on global destinations and how destinations can manage the impacts of tourism and control tourism development to achieve sustainable tourism.







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