



KS4 OPTIONS BOOKLET



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PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Dear Students,

In much of life there is little choice regarding the path we follow, who our family are, where we are born, and indeed what subjects you study for much of the time at College. The electives are your first experience of subject choice; there will be few of you who will not have regretted choosing an elective at some point because it wasn't what you were expecting. A wrong elective choice is only for six weeks; the GCSEs you are about to choose will stay with you for at least the next two years. It is therefore important, that you consider with great care which options you choose by reading the course descriptions in this booklet, speaking with your teachers and parents and, if it would help, our Careers Advisor, Mrs Meynell. In all of this decision-making, you should also consider what you want to do when you leave College.

The subjects we offer are intended to offer a broad range of choices whilst ensuring you continue to study a balanced curriculum that will leave as many future careers, courses or A levels open to you for your post-16 options. If you are a student ultimately aiming for university, with target grades of 6 or higher, then you will need to study three sciences alongside a language and humanities subject. If you are currently considering a vocational route such as an apprenticeship, please consider practical-based courses such as graphics, technology, IT and sport, which will support these aspirations.

You should ensure that your choices also offer the opportunity to develop skills beyond those in the core academic subjects and a range of enrichment courses in the arts, performance, technology and sport should be considered to give your curriculum additional breadth.

Yours sincerely,

SP Williams

RUSSELL GROUP UNIVERSITIES

The Russell Group universities represent 24 of the UK's top higher education institutions and promote excellent teaching and research. You will find them all at the top of the UK rankings, as well as some global league tables. Some of the universities are Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Imperial College London, King's College London, Leeds, Liverpool, London School of Economics, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Queen Mary University of London, Queen's University Belfast, Sheffield, Southampton, University College London, Warwick and York.

ENTRY CRITERIA: FACILITATING SUBJECTS

To apply for these universities, the group recommends that students take the facilitating subjects. These are:

- English Literature
- History
- Modern Languages – French, German, Spanish
- Classical Languages – Latin, Ancient Greek
- Maths and Further Maths
- Physics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Geography

These subjects are known as facilitating because they are required by many universities to access degree courses. For example, lots of science degrees require students to have two or sometimes three A levels in maths, physics, chemistry or biology.

Many specialist courses at A level and beyond also take a large part of their content or structure from facilitating subjects. For instance, engineering includes elements of maths and physics, and communication and culture includes skills from English and media studies, so choosing a facilitating subject will prepare you for a range of courses.

Therefore, your options have been designed to ensure that you are able to access post-16 courses in the facilitating subjects, so that you have the best possible chance of getting into the best universities.



GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

CURRICULUM INTENT

"A book is a device to ignite the imagination."

Year 10 and 11 are taught Literature and Language separately in order to prepare them to sit the AQA GCSE summative exams at the end of Year 11. Often these strands are taught by two separate teachers, who follow distinct programmes of study designed to prepare them appropriately for their examinations. However, the units have been aligned carefully so that the two strands complement each other, allowing for deeper consideration of themes, or consolidation and extension of skills.

YEAR 10 LITERATURE UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT ONE CORE TEXT: AN INSPECTOR CALLS

Building on their understanding of modern playscripts, and how texts are informed and influenced by the contexts in which they are both written and read, students study JB Priestley's play in full. Teachers use a range of strategies, including film study, to consider the play as a performance piece as well as exploring and analysing its literary qualities. Students also consolidate and extend their analytical structures so that their writing explicitly meets the assessment objectives set by AQA.

UNIT TWO CORE TEXT: A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Students will read this canonical ghost story, which exemplifies Dickens' ideals of charity and social responsibility. Students will look closely at the way in which Dickens' language choices create and develop character, whilst exploring the ways in which our perceptions of poverty, family and redemption are formed and have changed since the novel was published. Students use feedback from their analytical writing in unit one to improve their analytical skills, applying them to this more challenging text.

UNIT THREE CORE TEXT: POWER AND CONFLICT POETRY – SPLIT OVER TWO TERMS (3 & 6)

Students read, analyse and make links between 15 poems, set externally by AQA. The poems explore what creates power and what can take it away, as well as the conflicts – both external and internal – created by an imbalance of power. The anthology is arranged chronologically so that students can also develop their understanding of how political and historical contexts have influenced the way the key concepts have changed over time. Whilst building on previous analytical work, this unit explicitly develops the comparison skills learnt and practised in earlier years.

YEAR 10 LANGUAGE UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT ONE CORE TEXT: INEQUALITY READING ANTHOLOGY

Students will study a range of non-fiction texts exploring the ways in which writers present their views of inequality across time. This unit introduces students to the non-fiction based Language paper 2 questions, building on skills developed through earlier non-fiction units, whilst looking more explicitly at the way in which the examination questions are structured and marked. Teachers and students will make links

between the inequality covered in this unit, and the way in which the theme is presented in 'An Inspector Calls' which is studied at the same time.

UNIT TWO CORE TEXT: DYSTOPIAN WRITING

Students will read a range of texts to inform their understanding of this genre, and how to use it for their own creative writing. By developing their awareness of how different writers exploit conventions of genre, as developed by the study of gothic and mystery stories in KS3, students develop a range of creative writing skills. Teachers will also cover the technical accuracy requirements of GCSE writing, using the time in class to address any misconceptions and offer students interesting ways of expressing themselves. This unit includes a range of creative tasks that are directly linked to the skills exemplified in the texts selected.

UNIT THREE CORE TEXT: CONFLICT WRITING

Building on their experiences of dystopian writing in unit two, students will consider the ways in which different writers explore ideas about conflict in writing. Although it includes some non-fiction texts, this unit concentrates predominantly on fictional representations of conflict and introduces the ways in which the GCSE Language paper 1 questions are structured and marked. Students will make links between the ways in which conflict is presented in these poems, and the conflict poems that they will study with their Literature teacher.

UNIT FOUR CORE TEXT: SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Students learn about the six part Aristotelian rhetoric structures using a range of exemplars from great speeches across time. They then apply this structure to a topic of their own choosing, using class and prep time to carefully draft, edit and practise an individual speech. This speech is recorded and used as the students' AQA Spoken Language assessment.

UNIT FIVE CORE TEXT: JOURNEYS ANTHOLOGY – NON-FICTION READING

Students read a range of texts from across the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries which explore the themes of travel and challenges. Texts such as Touching the Void, the diaries of Captain Scott and Bill Bryson are used to develop students' understanding of how non-fiction texts seek to convey impressions and ideas. Building on the skills introduced in unit one of Year 10, this scheme looks to consolidate the ability of students to identify, comprehend and explain writers' choices, as well as develop the comparison skills needed for the examination.

UNIT SIX CORE TEXT: CREATIVE WRITING – EXPLORING NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

Building on the narrative structure work completed in Year 9, this unit seeks to consolidate students' understanding of linear narratives – looking at how templates such as Rags to Riches, The Quest and Tragedy can be used and exploited. Teachers use a range of written, spoken and video texts to develop students' analysis of the way in which these structures can be used and altered to create tension. Teachers will link explicitly to 'An Inspector Calls' and 'A Christmas Carol' in this unit, as well as give students the opportunity to develop their own narratives.

UNIT SEVEN CORE TEXT: OPINION WRITING – THE WORLD OF WORK

Students will cover the AQA writing forms as they explore how to write for the world of work. This unit includes writing letters of application and complaint, as well as formal written structures and developing academic register. This unit is placed to accompany Year 10 work experience so that students' own experiences can be used to inform and develop discussion around what makes effective formal writing.

YEAR 11 LITERATURE UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT ONE

CORE TEXT: MACBETH

Students will explore Shakespeare's play from the perspective of actors and directors, as well as the more traditional literary analysis approach. Using the analytical skills developed through their study of 'An Inspector Calls', 'A Christmas Carol' and the power and conflict poems, students will explore Shakespeare's choices carefully - reading the whole text. Teachers will use this opportunity to consolidate ideas about tragedy, hubris and authorial intent established in earlier study.

UNIT TWO

CORE TEXT: UNSEEN POETRY

Applying skills most recently covered in their study of the power and conflict poems, students will be taught strategies for analysing unseen poems in examination conditions. This unit seeks to move students from 'identification and explanation' to 'analysis and evaluation' of poets' techniques, giving students the opportunity to address any areas of misunderstanding or weakness in their own writing. This scheme also applies the previously learnt comparison skills to the unseen poems, thereby developing the students' ability to apply their ideas independently.

UNIT THREE

REVISION FOR SUMMATIVE LITERATURE EXAMS

Using both formative and summative data, as well as their own knowledge of the students, class teachers will prepare students for the rigours of their external examinations. Teacher-led analysis of the students' strengths and areas for development informs the lessons on a day-to-day basis, however they will cover all the core texts taught in Years 10 and 11, as well as regular revisiting of the writing skills needed for success in the students' final exams.

YEAR 11 LANGUAGE UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT ONE

CORE TEXT: EXPLORATIONS IN CREATIVE READING AND WRITING

Students study a broad range of fiction texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, exploring the choices made about language and structure by the writers. Lessons focus on examination-style questions, whilst also developing students' own vocabularies so that they can write clearly and coherently about what they have read. The unit pairs reading and writing tasks, so that students have the opportunity to apply the skills they have analysed to their own writing.

UNIT TWO

CORE TEXT: WRITERS' VIEWPOINTS AND PERSPECTIVES

Students will read a range of paired texts, linked to a transactional writing task, to prepare them for their external examinations. Skills taught and consolidated include summary, language analysis and comparison of texts and writers' perspectives. There is a focus on consolidation of fundamental technical accuracy, giving students opportunities to examine both the effect of grammatical choices as well as applying it to their own writing. Students cover the full range of possible writing tasks for the exam and are taught how to plan and proof read in exam conditions. Teachers will use their marking and feedback to give students time and opportunity to improve their writing across the unit.

UNIT THREE

REVISION FOR SUMMATIVE LANGUAGE EXAMS

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ALL YEARS

Alongside each unit of study there is a wider reading list that comprises a range of fiction and non-fiction texts selected to encourage and develop a student's understanding of the unit they are currently studying. Wherever possible, the wider reading lists includes links to online or free versions of texts, and audio versions that students are able to access without charge. At the moment these lists are used by teachers to encourage the individual interests of their students. During lockdown, we sent these lists home to parents to encourage and support students in their wider reading whilst they were having less school contact, and this has continued through the publication of the Christmas Reading Lists to parents and students.

The library team runs a 'Book of the Month' reading challenge that introduces students to new and seminal literature. Our student librarians are instrumental in this process, regularly reviewing new publications and advising the librarian about their suitability. In addition, the library runs a very popular 'Christmas read' and 'Summer read' lottery that allows students to select a wrapped book to read over the holidays. The library regularly refreshes its themed displays, often in line with the tutorial focus for the term.

COVID -19 ADJUSTMENTS

The English curriculum was restructured for Year 11 students to adapt to changes in the Literature exam.

A 19th century text was removed from the programme of study so that students could consolidate the texts already studied. The time gained will also allow for the evaluation and intervention of poems studied during lockdown, as well as an increased focus on Unseen Poetry which will now carry greater weight in the final marks.

Sourcing of online versions of texts to support students who are studying from home are accessible through SMHW.

Sourcing of audiobooks and online readings of core texts to support students who struggle to read independently.

Development of discrete writing units in all year groups to allow time to develop writing stamina and resilience, as well as to give students increased opportunity to draft, edit and redraft their writing.

Development of writing units to include grammar for writing skills in all years. For example, in Year 10 the dystopian language unit will be taught as paired lessons – lesson one focussing on comprehension and analysis of writer's craft, then lesson two applying the same approach to students' own writing.

Revision and teaching of core skills for writing with a focus on grammar for writing – this was identified as a particular problem during lockdown as many students were completing work on computers and so spelling/grammar was being corrected automatically.

Elective time used in terms 1 & 2 to address gaps in literature, afterschool intervention in terms 1 & 2 to address gaps in language.

GCSE TRIPLE SCIENCE

CURRICULUM INTENT

AQA Triple Science is a trio of courses that are modern and linear, stimulating students' interest in how science works. The majority of students for this course will be entered in the higher tier with target grades of 5 to 9.

BIOLOGY

Students will study:

Year 10

- 4.1 Cell Biology
- 4.2 Organisation
- 4.3 Infection and Response
- 4.4 Bioenergetics
- 4.5 Homeostasis and Response

Year 11

- 4.5 Homeostasis and Response
- 4.6 Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
- 4.7 Ecology
- Revision

Students will gain a good understanding of living things from the intricacies of ecosystems to the simplicities of individual cells. Students will experience key practicals that support and consolidate scientific concepts, and develop their investigative and practical skills, including performing sampling techniques, investigating biological changes and using microscopes to make scientific drawings. 10% of the marks in a biology paper will be for mathematical skills, which may include percentage change as well as performing multi-step calculations.

CHEMISTRY

Students will study:

Year 10

- 4.1 Atomic Structure
- 4.2 Structure, Bonding and Properties
- 4.3 Quantitative Chemistry
- 4.4 Chemical Changes
- 4.5 Energy Changes
- 4.6 Rate and Extent of Chemical Change

Year 11

- 4.7 Organic Chemistry
- 4.8 Chemical Analysis
- 4.9 Chemistry of the Atmosphere
- 4.10 Using Resources
- Revision

Students will perform investigations that follow a range of chemical changes, including conducting experiments into how chemicals respond to different conditions, and performing analysis on samples of organic and inorganic substances. Students' intrigue regarding how chemical reactions work and the components of these reactions, right down to sub-atomic particle level, will be addressed throughout the course. 20% of the marks in a chemistry paper will be for mathematical skills, including calculations of concentrations and using data from rate of reaction graphs and gradients.

PHYSICS

Students will study:

Year 10

- 4.1 Energy
- 4.2 Electricity
- 4.3 Particle Model of Matter
- 4.4 Atomic Structure
- 4.5 Forces

Year 11

- 4.5 Forces
- 4.6 Waves
- 4.7 Magnetism and Electromagnetism
- 4.8 Space Physics
- Revision

Students will develop confidence with recalling, identifying, using and rearranging equations to perform a range of calculations. In addition, tasks such as calculating speed from a graph using a tangent, will be commonplace as 30% of the marks in a physics paper will be for mathematical skills. Students will undertake key practicals that require them to make links between a range of variables, including using specialist equipment to investigate infra-red radiation, forces and the speed of waves, in addition to gaining further understanding into the laws that we currently use to explain why all matter and energy exists.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Each course is designed to develop scientific thinking, enhance experimental skills and the ability of students to analyse and evaluate within a science context. Each science GCSE qualification provides a solid foundation for studying A level chemistry, physics or biology, giving a general background for those wanting to specialise in one or more of the separate sciences in their further education. Furthermore, studying the Triple Science course provides access to a variety of career options in areas such as sport and fitness, engineering, medicine and healthcare.

ASSESSMENT

Each of the science disciplines is assessed with two 1 hour 45 minute written papers (as a terminal examination); each paper is worth 50% of the final GCSE.

GCSE MATHEMATICS

CURRICULUM INTENT

The GCSE Mathematics programme of study is designed to build upon the progress students have made at KS3. At the College, students start to transition into GCSE study during Year 9 where they consider all overlapping content from both KS3 and KS4 curricula and then tackle GCSE-only content during Years 10 and 11. Alongside the defined knowledge and skills set out in the national curriculum, our teaching does not lose sight of introducing arithmetical knowledge for life as well as, when appropriate, going beyond what is required to better prepare our students for post-16 study.

Course type: Two tier – Foundation (Levels 5-1) / Higher (Levels 9-4)

CONTENT COVERED

The GCSE programme of study covers six areas of mathematics: number; algebra; ratio, proportion and rates of change; geometry and measures; statistics; and probability. Students are expected to be competent and confident within each area ultimately being able to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

A full breakdown of our curriculum design and content can be found on the College website.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Although GCSE mathematics is not optional, the study of mathematics is fundamental in understanding and representing the world around us and empowers students with a set of skills that enables them to solve problems in a structured and logical way. Our aim is that the GCSE course will provide students with a varied and useful 'toolbox' of skills which they can apply to a wealth of practical problems whilst also preparing for A level and beyond.

As well as being fundamental for students to function successfully within society, mathematics is essential for those wishing to follow a wide range of career paths such as accountancy; data analysis; computer programming; logistics; engineering; financial services; architecture; or even, after recent years, epidemiology – the list goes on.

ASSESSMENT

Exam board: Edexcel (1MA1)

Type: 100% examination

Paper 1: 90 minutes 80 marks – Non calculator

Paper 2: 90 minutes 80 marks – Calculator allowed

Paper 3: 90 minutes 80 marks – Calculator allowed



GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

CURRICULUM INTENT

Computer Science is the science of computation. Through this course students will develop their problem-solving skills and learn about how both computers and humans analyse and implement solutions to problems. Students will learn programming techniques and develop graphical applications using the Python programming language. In theory lessons, students will study topics such as how data is represented within a computer, how the internal components of a modern PC work, the cybersecurity threats facing modern businesses and the complexities of networking and software.

CONTENT COVERED

This course follows the WJEC EDUQAS GCSE in Computer Science. The course has 2 components, each worth 50%:

Component 1: Understanding Computer Systems:

Component 1 is the theory unit, where students gain a strong understanding of key concepts within Computer Science.

- Computer hardware, such as the inner workings of the CPU, input devices, types and uses of storage.
- Computer software, covering the wide array of software which can run on computers, from operating systems to applications. We look at the relationship between the user and software, and how software has evolved to aid the running of machines.
- Networking, whether it be how a small local network allows communication between devices, or how vast amounts of data can be transferred around the world in seconds. We address the issue of cyber-threats, such as hacking, and how these can be mitigated through appropriate security measures.
- Data representation, building on KS3 understanding to explore more fully how data can be encoded and stored in computer systems which can only use on/off switches to do everything from text to images and motion graphics.
- Computational logic extends data representation to create decision making models that allow computers to be programmed to take on the toughest problems common algorithms, exploring a selection of the established solutions to common problems, such as searching and sorting data. Students will learn how merge sort and bubble sort work, and be able to identify the relative merits of linear and binary search.
- Ethical considerations of computing, exploring the legal, ethical and cultural impacts of computing, such as privacy.

Component 2: Computer Programming:

Component 2 is a programming unit, focussed very strongly on the practical application of understanding. Working in Python 3 we learn a range of basic skills, such as selection and iteration, through writing programmes for both the command line. This is extended to take user input and reading and writing files, before diving into graphical user interfaces. By this stage, students are creating fully realised graphical micro-apps, and games. Students will have the opportunity to develop their own solutions to given problems beyond the scope of the specification, developing their creativity alongside problem-solving and coding skills.

For final assessment, students work with an exam board provided brief; testing, investigating, correcting and extending a given solution to the problem, demonstrating their ability to both understand and write successful code.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Computer Science is applied mathematics – problem solving is an essential skill for this course. Students should consider Computer Science if they enjoy being given a problem to solve, and like trying solutions and learning from mistakes. Practical work gives students a chance to be creative, and developing their own solutions and extensions to projects is encouraged. Theory work will develop knowledge and problem-solving skills that are useful to any career, and essential for engineering or software development.

The course leads on to A level Computer Science, which is a widely respected qualification.

ASSESSMENT

This course is assessed by two exams:

- Component 1:** Understanding Computer Science – written examination paper covering the theory aspects. 1 hour 45minutes (50%)
- Component 2:** Computer Programming – an on-screen examination. 2 hours (50%)

GCSE HISTORY

CURRICULUM INTENT

GCSE History is an exciting and rewarding course. Through the study of a variety of topics and time periods, students will investigate many diverse aspects of the past, from the causes of World War II to life under William the Conqueror. Students will engage with key issues and developments, and endeavour to understand what drives change and how the past can influence the present in which we find ourselves.

CONTENT COVERED

Year 10

- The USA 1920 – 1973
- Conflict and Tension 1919 – 1939

Year 11

- Norman England: 1066 – 1100
- Britain, Health and the People 1000 AD to the Present Day.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

The study of the past is fascinating in itself. This increases when we realise how important the past is in understanding the world we live in today. GCSE History develops transferable skills of enquiry and analysis. In addition, as assessment places emphasis on essays, History enables students to make progress in structuring arguments, evaluate evidence and develop critical thinking. Higher education providers and employers hold GCSE History in high regard for the skills that students develop through its study.

ASSESSMENT

Paper 1 Understanding the Modern World – 1 hour and 45 minutes paper (50%)

Section A

Period Study: USA 1920 – 1973

Students will study a fascinating period of American history. This will focus on the 'Roaring Twenties', the 'Great Depression and New Deal', and America after World War II. From the KKK, rise of the Mafia and Prohibition, through to teenagers, rock and roll, Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights campaign. Students will examine the political, cultural, economic and social aspects of these developments.

Section B

Wider Depth Study: Conflict and Tension 1919 – 1939

This element examines the attempt at instituting lasting peace after the First World War. Ideas of national self-determination, internationalism and the challenges to this process will be studied. The module then moves on to the causes of the Second World War, looking at how and why conflict occurred and the difficulties in resolving the issues which caused it.

Paper 2 Shaping the Nation – 1 hour 45 minutes paper (50%)

Section A

Thematic study: Britain, Health and the People 1000 AD to the Present Day

This is new to the GCSE syllabus. The thematic study provides the opportunity for students to gain an understanding of how medicine and public health has developed in Britain over a long period of time. Students will focus on various factors, such as war, through which medicine and public health developed. This fascinating course gives students the chance to investigate medicine from the Black Death through to the development of the National Health Service.

Section B

Depth study: Norman England 1066 – 1100

The establishment of Norman rule over England forms the focus of this British depth study. It will explore the major aspects of Norman rule, looking at the religious, political, social and economic consequences of the Norman arrival. This section also includes a study of an historical environment that relates to the content being studied, perhaps a local Norman castle or a battle site.

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

CURRICULUM INTENT

The study of geography stimulates an interest in and a sense of wonder about places. It helps us to make sense of a complex and dynamically changing world. Geography explains how places and landscapes are formed, how people and their environments interact and how a diverse range of economies, societies and environments are interconnected. Whether it is the threat of global warming, the consequence of our ageing population or controversial planning decisions in our local area, the media provide a constant reminder of the importance geography has in our lives.

COURSE CONTENT

Year 10

- Distinctive Landscapes (Coasts and Rivers)
- Urban Futures
- Dynamic Development
- Sustaining Ecosystems
- Fieldwork/Geographical Skills

Year 11

- Global Hazards
- Resource Reliance
- UK in the 21st Century
- Changing Climate
- Fieldwork/Geographical Skills

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Studying GCSE Geography will enable students to develop:

- A clear overall view of the world in the first part of the 21st century.
- An 'awe and wonder' which will allow students to fully appreciate and learn from the world around them, understanding their responsibilities to other people, the environment and the sustainability of the planet.
- Communication skills, graphical and cartographical skills, technological skills, including ICT and GIS, interpersonal skills through debate and discussion, and literacy and numeracy and problem-solving skills.
- A sound foundation for any student who intends to continue to study the subject at a higher level.

ASSESSMENT

The OCR B Geography GCSE (Geography for Enquiring Minds) has three examination components:

- 1. Our Natural World** (35% of the GCSE) assesses students' knowledge and understanding of global hazards, changing climate, distinctive landscape and sustaining ecosystems. Our Natural World is a 75 minute written exam and will include a variety of short and extended exam questions totalling 70 marks.
- 2. People and Society** (35% of the GCSE) assesses students' knowledge and understanding of urban futures, dynamic development, UK in the 21st century and resource reliance. People and Society is a 75 minute written exam and includes a variety of short and extended exam questions totalling 70 marks.
- 3. Geographical Exploration** (30% of the GCSE) focuses on synoptic assessment of material from a range of topics across both our Natural World (01) and People and Society (02) and will feature a decision-making exercise. Geographical Exploration is a 90 minute written exam and will include a variety of short and extended exam questions totalling 60 marks.



GCSE SPANISH, FRENCH & GERMAN

CURRICULUM INTENT

At Catmose College, we offer three languages Spanish, French & German each of which follow the AQA GCSE course.

With the rise of technology and apps to translate words and phrases for you, you might ask yourself why learn a foreign language? It has, however, never been a more important time to learn a foreign language.

Being able to speak another language is a lot more useful than you would think as it not only helps your communication in the language, but also builds interpersonal, intercultural and public speaking skills – the soft skills which organisations value highly. Studies have shown that it can also improve your ability to multitask, block out distractions and problem solve. During the course, many skills are practised such as translation, understanding and responding to different types of written language, listening to and understanding native speakers and also communicating, interacting and effectively manipulating language to suit a variety of situations.

Knowledge of another language is also an awareness and understanding of another culture, another country's history and the way that other people live and think. In addition, students will look deeper into their own language and reflect on the differences between their culture and that of others. Students can impress friends and family with a breadth of knowledge on traditions, German history, French architecture and Spanish festivals. More in-depth knowledge of language and culture will aid in other subjects such as science, where you can work out the meaning of words, and history, where analysis of other countries' cultures allows you to understand their intentions, giving a whole new perspective of world history.

Being a social subject, students and their peers can enjoy watching foreign films and TV shows, listening to their favourite types of music in another language and making new friends on the exchange programmes that the College offers.

All of the above is evidenced through the enthusiasm and passion shown by our Modern Foreign Languages teachers who will support and guide students to achieve their best.

Students will be able to share with future employers their experiences of learning a foreign language: the resilience, hard work and determination required to achieve their full potential; the interpersonal skills, cultural knowledge and confidence needed to speak a foreign language while abroad; the empathy and teamwork shown when working with peers – all making students highly employable.

ASSESSMENT

For all levels of attainment, an ability to read, write and listen to the foreign language is essential and it is vital for all students to speak the language as fluently as possible.

The assessment is broken down into the four skill areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing and is assessed equally over four externally assessed exams at the end of Year 11. Each exam is worth 25% of the total mark. There are two tiers of entry, Foundation (grades 1 - 5) and Higher (grades 4 - 9). The teaching covers three distinct themes which apply to all four question papers:

THEME 1: IDENTITY AND CULTURE

- Me, My Family and Friends
- Technology in Everyday Life
- Free-time Activities
- Customs and Festivals

THEME 2: LOCAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL AREAS OF INTEREST

- Home, Town, Neighbourhood and Region
- Social Issues
- Global Issues
- Poverty/Homelessness
- Travel and Tourism

THEME 3: CURRENT AND FUTURE STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT.

- My Studies
- Life at School/College
- Education post-16
- Jobs, Career Choices and Ambitions



GCSE ART & DESIGN GRAPHICS & PHOTOGRAPHY

CURRICULUM INTENT

Within GCSE Art and Design, Graphics & Photography there are three different specialist areas to choose from: Art & Design (includes textiles, 3D, painting and drawing), Graphics and Photography. GCSE Art & Design, Graphics and Photography develops skills in observational drawing and critical analysis. Students will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of materials and techniques within their specialist subject area. Following the EDUQAS specification, the course offers both breadth and depth, allowing for such skills as independent research, analysing artists, craftspersons and designers. Historical and contemporary fields are covered, with students giving critical evaluations of their own work and others alongside the practical application of a diverse range of art, craft and design processes. www.eduqas.co.uk/media/ozvli0g/eduqas-gcse-art-and-design-spec-from-2016-27-01-2020.pdf

CONTENT COVERED

In all courses, the first seven weeks incorporate a wide variety of different media and techniques. This allows students to refresh existing knowledge gained at KS3 and to start building practical skills for their coursework project. The annual College artwork competition brief wraps up the final topic prior to starting the coursework. During term 2, students will make independent decisions about their theme based on a prior range of broad experiences and begin the process of building a substantial portfolio. Students will be encouraged to experiment and take risks using new materials and techniques, often taking them out of their comfort zone. This can inspire mature and highly independent responses. There are four assessment objective areas, each of which carries 30 marks. The portfolio of evidence is completed in December of Year 11 with a maximum of 120 marks.

In January of Year 11, students begin their externally set examination portfolio period from early January to mid-May. Students have autonomous choice from 12 different EDUQAS themes, and are able to make the seamless transition based upon the freedom given during the coursework element. This leads to a supervised 10-hour practical examination during term 4. Once again it is divided up into four assessment objective areas, each of which carries 20 marks, so a maximum of 80 marks in total. The 40% examination work is internally marked by specialist art staff and externally moderated by an examiner. The coursework and examination marks combine to form an overall mark out of 200.

WHY TAKE AN ARTS COURSE?

Art, Graphics and Photography are all forms of communication and a means of expression of ideas and feelings. It is a language which complements those of the literary, mathematical, scientific and factually based subjects. Students will develop their practical skills, have a hands-on experience and become more confident in the critical analysis of their own work as well as the work of designers and artists. This will develop students as independent learners confident in making their own choices and decisions. From this qualification students can progress on to A level and BTEC qualifications and will be well-equipped to follow a pathway into any of the vast range of Visual Arts careers or simply develop an appreciation of the rich wealth of arts we have in our society.

ASSESSMENT

60% Coursework portfolio
40% Examination portfolio and 10 hour examination

BTEC LEVEL 2 ART & DESIGN PRACTICE

CURRICULUM INTENT

The BTEC Tech Award in Art & Design Practice (Level 2) is a vocational course which is great if students have a real interest in the practical application of art and design. This course consists of three components, two of which are internally assessed via assignments which are set, marked and verified in College, and one which is externally assessed. The units delve into different areas of art and design which students may not have experienced before.

The key areas of study within this course are:
Generating Ideas in Art and Design
Developing Practical Skills in Art and Design
Responding to a Client Brief

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

This is an excellent subject to study for students who enjoy art and design, and are interested in developing their skills whilst finding out about future career opportunities that would enable students to utilise them. This qualification offers the opportunity to build the knowledge, understanding and practical skills students need to progress to further learning, and will also provide an engaging and stimulating introduction to the world of art and design. Students will explore some of the key areas within the creative industries whilst learning how to address the needs of clients to ensure that art and design work meets the requirements of a creative project brief.

ASSESSMENT

The BTEC Tech Award in Art & Design Practice Level 2 is both internally and externally assessed. Students will carry out tasks and mini-projects throughout the course.

Work is marked by College teaching staff allowing students to receive regular feedback on their progress.

Towards the end of the course, students knowledge of art and design practice will be assessed through a task that is set and marked by Pearson. All of the work completed throughout the course will prepare students for this final task.

By the end of the course, students receive one of the four outcomes - Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

CURRICULUM INTENT

GCSE Design & Technology helps students develop the ability to design and make products with creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques. The course requires students to develop their knowledge of technical principals, whilst encouraging students to design and make products, develop decision-making skills, critique work and become independent and critical thinkers.

Design & Technology allows students to design and make quality products and is designed to foster an awareness of the need to consider sustainability and the environmental impact of designing, whilst demonstrating a consideration of the needs of users. Credit is given to candidates who undertake innovative work and make effective use of CAD/CAM facilities, whilst there will be opportunities for students to develop skills using a wide range of materials.

CONTENT COVERED

Students first undertake a skill builder project, focussed on developing practical skills including the use of tools, processes, traditional joints and finishes. Students also use CAD/CAM with a greater focus on functionality. Students then progress to working on a design project, starting with identifying a design problem in response to a given design challenge. Students will be introduced to a range of new ideation techniques to encourage variety and originality of ideas. This will be supported by ongoing research considering the needs of users. Designs will be developed through modelling and testing. Students will also develop CAD/CAM skills before beginning the planning and research for the NEA. The projects undertaken dovetail with the theory content for Year 10 which includes timbers, polymers, sustainability, social and moral considerations, new and modern materials and mechanical systems.

Students focus on the NEA project for much of Year 11. The emphasis initially is on developing a suitable brief and specification in response to the research undertaken before concentrating on generating a range of original, creative design solutions. A range of communication techniques is encouraged including sketches, modelling and CAD. These designs are developed through modelling before being realised, tested and evaluated through the production of a working prototype. The theory content for Year 11 includes electronic systems, metals, papers and boards, energy generation, energy storage and new and emerging technologies.

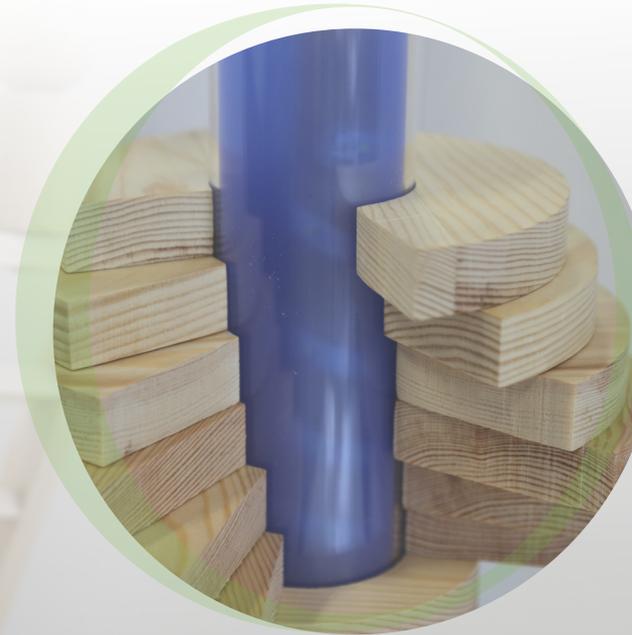
WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

This course is designed to make students think critically about the design process from the conception of a design, all the way through to the end of the product's life. Students will be asked to come up with creative and innovative solutions to problems, through varied and detailed research, testing and analysis. Students will develop problem solving skills, conduct detailed research into existing products and processes, then develop and test concepts through sketching, modelling and making. There is an element of "thinking with your hands" to develop the ability to use tools and materials to solve problems. These skills are very transferable and GCSE Design & Technology is beneficial to a range of future study and careers in design, manufacturing and engineering.

ASSESSMENT

50% of this course is based on a two hour exam.

50% of overall mark is for the NEA coursework portfolio centred around the criteria set by the exam board and assessed internally.



GCSE FOOD TECHNOLOGY & NUTRITION

CURRICULUM INTENT

The GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition course equips students with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition, and healthy eating. Students develop practical cookery skills and techniques and make informed decisions about food and nutrition. It also acts as an enabler for the development of life skills that teach students how to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritionally, now and in later life. Students will also begin to understand the huge challenges that we face globally to supply the world with nutritious and safe food.

CONTENT COVERED

In Year 10, the topics covered include food safety, diet and health, nutritional and dietary needs, and food production. In combination with practical work, students also study the functional properties of different foods including raising agents, preservation and additives. Students typically complete practical work every other week to develop those skills, helping them to prepare for the practical assessment in Year 11. During these lessons, students will deepen their knowledge of and increase their confidence in the science of food, exploring why certain ingredients are used and linking with the food science units studied. Students also conduct a series of food science investigations and complete planning and preparation tasks, costing ingredients and analysing the nutritional content of dishes.

In Year 11, students complete their scientific investigation, which is set by the exam board. This must be completed within 10 hours during lesson time and include at least two practical investigations to test the scientific principals linked to their hypotheses. Students must complete research based on the set brief and decide how to tackle the task in order to write their aims, hypotheses and methods before completing practical investigations. Results must be written up and a detailed evaluation of findings completed. Students then begin work on their practical assessment where they are asked to make three dishes in three hours that meet a set brief. Students have approximately 20 hours to undertake research, plan the dishes, nutritional analysis, costings, analysis of provenance and a time plan. Students then make their three chosen dishes in a controlled practical examination. Students are encouraged to use the skills learnt from Year 10 to make highly skilled dishes which meet the higher grading criteria.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition provides an opportunity to learn important concepts about food, healthy eating, food preparation skills, and nutrition. In addition, students will learn about modern food production and processing methods. Students will develop an understanding of food preparation through a combination of theory and practice and will also undertake food science investigations. Related careers include those in catering, food marketing, food technology and product development. They also include sports sciences, dietetics and other diet-related industries.

ASSESSMENT

Written Paper (50%)

This covers nutrition, food provenance and food choice, cooking and food preparation and practical skills.

Non-Exam Assessment (Coursework): Food Investigation (15%)

Assesses the scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food. Students produce a written report documenting research, planning investigations, results and analysis produced.

Non-Exam Assessment (Coursework): Food Preparation Task (35%)

Assesses the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food. Students produce a portfolio of work showing research, nutritional analysis, costing, planning, practical work and evaluation.



GCSE DRAMA

CURRICULUM INTENT

The GCSE Drama course gives students the opportunity to study a variety of performance options including devised thematic work; scripted performance; as well as the support options: set design, costume, puppets, lighting and sound. Students will have the opportunity to create their own work and perform to a variety of audiences. Students will look at the work of theatre practitioners and performance groups to inform their work. Students will also study scripted plays and watch and evaluate live performances.

CONTENT COVERED

In Year 10 students will develop their improvisation and devising skills. They will be involved in a mini devising project alongside the study of different theatre practitioners. Students will look at theatre roles as well as stage configurations and stage positions. Students will study a play script—Blood Brothers—and write about how they would use their acting skills to perform the different characters in the play. Working in groups, students will perform an extract from a script or can use their design or technical skills to present their ideas for a particular scene. From Term 4 onwards, students will work on their Component 2 exam. This involves creating performance based on a stimulus, and performing to their peers. Alongside this, the students will write a project on their response, development and evaluation of their work. Students can also opt to do design or technical skills instead of performance.

In Year 11 students will rehearse and perform two extracts from a script to an external examiner (Component 3). They can also opt for using their design or technical skills on the two extracts instead. They will continue to study the play, Blood Brothers, and will watch and evaluate a live theatre production in preparation for their written paper (Component 1).

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

The GCSE drama course provides students with the opportunity to study performance to a higher level. Students will be encouraged to further develop their creative thinking, problem solving, self-confidence and performance skills. Working within group settings, as well as individually, students will examine feelings and issues, and learn how to structure performance effectively. In the written element of this course, students will be encouraged to explore their own practical work, as well as scripted plays and live performance. Students will be expected to attend arranged theatre visits and rehearse outside of lesson time.

Local colleges and schools provide a range of opportunities to study performance further with Drama, Performing Arts, Theatre Studies and Dance at AS, A level and BTEC. Many of our past students have gone on to study these or related subjects.

ASSESSMENT

Component 1: Understanding Drama
Written exam: 1 hour 45 mins (40%)
Scripted text: questions based on an extract from the studied play
Live production: one question based on the live performance you have watched

Component 2: Devising Drama
Devised performance based on a given stimuli (40%)
Devised practical (10%)
Devising log: a portfolio (around 2,500 words) based on the devised practical work (30%)

Component 3: Texts in Practice
Performance of two extracts from the same play (20%)
Monologue, duologue, group piece or design option



GCSE MUSIC

CURRICULUM INTENT

The GCSE Music course gives students the opportunity to learn about various styles of music, ranging from classical to pop music, some that they will be familiar with and some that will be completely new to them. Students will also learn to develop their skills in performance and composition.

CONTENT COVERED

Year 10

Listening and appraising:
Area of Study 2: The Concerto through Time
Area of Study 5: Convention of Pop
Area of Study 4: Film Music
Integrated portfolio:
One composition; brief set by the student

Year 11

Listening and appraising:
Area of Study 3: Rhythms of the World
Integrated portfolio:
One solo performance
Practical Component:
One ensemble performance
One composition; brief set by the exam board

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

If students enjoy learning about different styles of music and can sing or play an instrument to at least grade 3 (or equivalent) standard, then this is the course for them. It is a prerequisite for this course that students play or sing to at least grade 3 standard as performance is an important element, as well as having confidence with the theoretical aspects of music. The performance elements of this course will encourage students to develop creative thinking, critical awareness, self-confidence and self-motivation with regards to music-making within group settings, as well as individually. In the composition aspects of this course, students will be encouraged to explore a range of compositional techniques and use different ideas to create their own piece of music.

ASSESSMENT

Integrated tasks (30%) – one performance, one composition and one written evaluation.
Practical portfolio (30%) – one ensemble (group) performance, one composition and a written evaluation.
Listening exam (40%) – written exam paper where you listen to a number of musical extracts and answer questions on their musical features. 1 hour 30 minute exam.

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

CURRICULUM INTENT

The GCSE Religious Studies course is challenging and thought provoking, encouraging students to engage critically and reflectively with issues that are constantly in the news, whilst developing their own points of view. It involves studying a number of modern-day philosophical issues, such as the conflict between religion and science and the arguments for the existence of God. Both Jewish and Christian perspectives regarding these questions are studied closely and these religious viewpoints can be considered alongside the student's own opinions. As a result, the course should be of interest to students of any faith, and none.

COURSE CONTENT

Year 10

- Christianity – Beliefs and Teachings
- Christianity – Practices
- Existence of God and Ultimate Reality
- Religion, Peace and Conflict

Year 11

- Relationships and Families
- Judaism – Beliefs and Teachings
- Judaism – Practices
- Dialogue between Non-religious and Religious Beliefs and Attitudes

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Students will learn to criticise and analyse different teachings and viewpoints and understand a variety of opinions regarding key questions about life. They will learn to develop their ability to consider different points of view regarding various moral and philosophical issues and be able to justify their opinions with valid arguments and evidence. It is a worthwhile qualification for any career that involves communicating with people from all walks of life in an understanding, efficient and professional manner. Higher education providers and employers hold GCSE Religious Studies in high regard for the skills that students develop through its study.

ASSESSMENT

Unit 1 – Study of Religious Belief Systems: Christianity and Judaism (50%)
This section includes a study of the philosophical and ethical claims of these two religions, including beliefs about life after death and questions about the problem of evil and suffering.
(Two 1 hour written exams)

Unit 2 – Religion, Philosophy and Ethics in the Modern World (50%)
One of the religions studied in Unit 1 will be taken forward to consider more fully key philosophical and ethical questions, with the focus turning to the student's own development of their opinion by comparing and contrasting their ideas to both religious and non-religious perspectives. Topics include issues of war and peace, medical ethics, the existence of God and the ultimate meaning of our lives.
(2 hour written exam)

GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

CURRICULUM INTENT

Students choosing GCSE Physical Education will receive an extra five lessons of physical education a week; this will be split between theory and one practical sport. In the theory lessons, students are given the opportunity to study many aspects of sport and performance including: health and fitness, principles of training, nutrition, social influence and psychological factors affecting performance.

The practical lessons focus on developing skills and techniques in a range of individual and team sports that students are likely to use for their assessment, e.g. handball, badminton, basketball and athletics.

COURSE CONTENT

Examined content

Applied Anatomy and Physiology
Movement Analysis
Physical Training
Use of Data
Sports Psychology
Socio-cultural Influences
Health, Fitness and Well-being

Year 10 non examined assessment – Practical Sport

Football and Netball
Badminton
Basketball
Handball & Trampolining
Athletics

Year 11 non-examined assessment – Practical Sport

Performance Analysis coursework
Practical moderation

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

Have you ever wanted to know more about how the body moves and understand the impact on health fitness and performance? Maybe you have seen professional footballers crack under pressure and miss vital penalties. GCSE Physical Education is an ideal start for any student with aspirations of studying physical education in further education and beyond. The increased detail and complexity of the theoretical element of the course will provide students with an excellent stepping stone to A level Physical Education.

GCSE Physical Education opens up a wide range of sporting-related career paths which could include: physical education teacher, sports coach, physiotherapist, sports and exercise psychologist, sports scientist, personal trainer, sports massage therapist, strength and conditioning coach, performance analyst, sports development officer, disability inclusion coordinator, sports referee and leisure centre manager.

ASSESSMENT

GCSE Physical Education lessons have a heavier focus on the theoretical aspect of sport and physical education. This is to reflect that 60% of a student's overall grade will be assessed through two final examinations. The practical assessment will make up 30% of a student's overall grade in one team sport, one individual sport and a third sport which can be either team or individual. The remaining 10% will be based on a piece of coursework where students will assess, analyse and plan to improve their performance using theoretical course content.

In order to achieve success in GCSE Physical Education it is recommended that students only pick GCSE Physical Education if they have a keen desire to learn about the wide variety of theoretical topics associated with the course. In addition, due to the high standards required on the practical section of the course, we recommend that students only choose GCSE Physical Education if they play for College sport teams and compete for a sports club outside of College.



CNAT SPORTS STUDIES

CURRICULUM INTENT

OCR Cambridge National Sport Studies is a Level 2 vocational course covering a range of topics associated with sport and also allows students to be assessed on practical performance, officiating and sports leadership skills. This course consists of three components:

1. Performance and Leadership skills – assessed through the student's performance in one team sport and one individual sport, their ability to officiate and lead one sport, as well as assignments linked to specific learning outcomes.
2. Media in Sport – assessed through five assignments linked to specific learning outcomes.
3. Contemporary Issues in Sport – assessed through a formal 60 mark exam covering topics such as barriers to participation, sporting values, hosting major events and the role of national governing bodies.

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/610953-specification-cambridge-nationals-sport-studies-j829.pdf>

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

This is an excellent subject for students who feel they work best when assessed through assignments and coursework rather than formal examinations. Compared to the GCSE PE option, there is only limited reference to physiology and biology, and students are only assessed on their practical performance in two sports compared to three in the GCSE. This qualification will offer you the opportunity to build the knowledge, understanding and practical skills you need to progress to further vocational learning within the sports field.

ASSESSMENT

OCR Cambridge National Sport Studies level 2 is both internally and externally assessed. You will carry out performances, tasks and written assignments throughout the course. On these pieces of work you will receive support and guidance throughout to allow you to submit your highest standard of work. This in turn will be internally marked by your teacher and then sent for external moderation with OCR.

Assessment of Contemporary Issues in Sport will be through a formal exam which is marked externally by OCR. In this exam, there is a range of short answer 1 – 4 mark questions and two extended 6 – 8 mark questions.

By the end of the course, you will receive one of four outcomes – Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*. The comparison to GCSE grading is shown below.

OCR Cambridge National Certificate	Points	Unreformed GCSE (A*– G)	Reformed GCSE (9 – 1)
Level 2 Pass	4.00	C	4
	5.00		5
Level 2 Merit	5.50	B	
	6.00		6
Level 2 Distinction	7.00	A	7
	8.00		8
Level 2 Distinction *	8.50	A*	
	9.00		9



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