

Oulder Hill

Community School and Language College



Year 8 Options Booklet

2019

Introduction

This booklet provides information about the courses available to students at this vital point in their school career and additional information about the curriculum they will follow in Years 9, 10 and 11. It should be read very carefully by students and parents/carers and it is advisable that students discuss available choices with parents/carers before making final decisions. Courses which **must** be studied are described as the “core” and these courses build on work they have already completed in Years 7 and 8.

In addition to the core subjects, students are invited to choose from a wide range of Option subjects. All courses available lead to nationally recognised qualifications, mostly GCSE and BTEC.

Making option choices in Year 8 has been a successful venture for the school in our relentless pursuit of outstanding engagement and outcomes for all our students. This avoids Year 9 students studying subjects for a year that they already know they do not want to follow to GCSE and allows more time on subjects they do wish to pursue and studying these more widely. It must be noted that this does not mean entering them early for examinations but it does mean that they will have more skills and a greater understanding of their chosen subjects before starting examined work. Feedback from our previous Year 9 has been very positive, with students reporting how pleased they are with starting their options a year earlier.

We expect students to work hard in school and at home. It is therefore advisable for students to choose subjects which they will enjoy and at which they will be successful, and not just because of a particular teacher or because their friends are choosing it. We encourage students throughout their whole school career to take responsibility for their own learning and improving their performance. Success at any stage in a student’s life is a combination of quality teaching and a positive attitude to learning. We are fortunate at Oulder Hill to have excellent teachers and supportive parents so students with high attendance who meet deadlines for home based learning usually do really well.

At the Options Evening students and parents/carers will hear short addresses in the theatre from myself and other staff which will focus on the Options available, Careers advice and the process by which option choices are made. Students and parents/carers will also have the opportunity to discuss potential option choices with subject staff. In addition, they will be able to seek advice from colleagues from post-16 providers and Positive Steps, who will have information about the implications of choices and wider careers issues.

Students will be asked to indicate their preferred choices on an options form which will be given to them in due course. All forms need to be returned **by Friday 15th March at the latest**. They will then be analysed carefully with students attending an interview on Review Day with a member of staff to discuss their choices, taking into account their ability, future aspirations and the level to which they are currently working in those subjects. Please also note that unfortunately we cannot guarantee all the subjects listed will be offered in September 2019, as it depends on a variety of factors such as numbers of students wishing to take them and other as yet unknown factors such as staff changes or Government initiatives.

I wish all students well in the next stage of their school career and I am sure you will all be successful! I would also like to thank all parents and carers for their continued support. If you have any questions at all about anything you read in this booklet or information you receive, please do speak to a member of staff.

Mr. J. Watson
Headteacher

Curriculum Overview

In Years 9, 10 and 11 students study a range of compulsory subjects (known as “Core”) in addition to optional subjects which they can choose.

Core Subjects

These are English Language and Literature; Mathematics; Science; Physical Education (PE); Personal, Social Health, Citizenship Education (PSHCE) and Religious Studies. Most students also follow a foreign language at GCSE in Years 9, 10 and 11, as this is a key aspect of our status as a Specialist Language College. In most cases, this will be one of the languages they are currently studying or are making best progress with. Students will also study IT and an element of Computer Science during Year 9 and 10 to equip them with skills and knowledge to support their digital literacy, helping to facilitate their other subjects and future careers. IT and Computer Science are not examined as part of the core and must be selected as an option to gain a formal qualification.

Science

As part of the Core curriculum, all students will study Science. The vast majority will study Combined Science, which leads to 2 GCSE passes; this pathway provides a good route into studying A Levels in Science subjects. Nevertheless, our most able students if they wish can opt to study Separate Sciences. This leads to 3 individual GCSE grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students wishing to study Separate Sciences should note two factors: first, the Separate route takes up one of their 3 option choices, therefore limiting their other choices. In addition, students must be on a minimum of a Flight Path 6 and be making good progress in relation to this. If students are considering Separate Sciences as an option they must speak to their Science teacher about their suitability for this subject before they complete the options form.

PSHCE

In addition to providing an academic education we firmly believe in developing the ‘whole child’ in order to equip each individual student with the wider knowledge, understanding and skills needed to prepare them for a happy, healthy and successful life beyond Oulder Hill. Therefore throughout Years 9, 10 and 11 students will follow a programme of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (or PSHCE). This subject deals with real-life social, moral and economic issues that will help enable students to manage their lives, both now and in the future and will also equip them with the necessary skills to become reflective, independent and successful learners supporting the character and culture of the school. This will be delivered by form tutors and specialist speakers.

Option Subjects

We have a wide range of courses for students to choose from. Whilst most of these are GCSE subjects, we also have some vocational options in the form of BTECs. Students will choose 3 options in total. On the options form we ask that they choose their first 3 choices in rank order together with 2 reserve choices. This information, which is to be handed in by **Friday 15th March**, will enable us to group the subjects together in accordance with what combinations the students want.

Students wishing to study either BTEC Sport or GCSE PE must first check with their PE teacher to discuss which of these 2 courses would be more appropriate before completing the option form.

Computer Science GCSE is a subject that relies very heavily on an aptitude for Maths. Students who are not on a Flight Path 6 or higher and making good progress in Maths and Computer Science are discouraged from selecting this option.

In addition to the information in this booklet, subject teachers are available at options evening for you to speak to if you have any further questions about any of the options. Some subjects, such as Business Studies and Health and Social Care, are on offer for study in Years 9, 10 and 11 however students have

not studied them in Years 7 and 8 therefore it is vital that you make use of all the information on offer in order to make an informed decision.

Personalised Pathways

For some students, the above curriculum of core subjects plus 3 options is not appropriate. We therefore offer another pathway that consists of most of the core subjects and some options, but also includes other courses that provide support to help students achieve the best they can in the subjects they are taking, and also provide an appropriate route into education, employment or training after they have left Oulder Hill.

Parents and carers of students for whom we feel this is the right pathway will receive a letter from Ms. Nedderman in due course, inviting them to discuss this exciting personalised opportunity for their child.

The English Baccalaureate

The government introduced the “English Baccalaureate”. Students are eligible for the “EBacc” if they achieve GCSE passes with grades 5 or above in the following subjects:

- English Language;
- Maths;
- Two Sciences (including Computer Science);
- A foreign language;
- Either Geography or History.

Students at Oulder Hill will study most of these subjects as part of their core curriculum anyway, therefore the only decision they will need to make is whether to study Geography or History as one of their two options. The English Baccalaureate is valued but still not compulsory at Oulder Hill because we believe that students should have a choice. However, due consideration should be given to studying this suite of subjects as the Government target is for at least 90% of students being entered for GCSE's in EBacc subjects. Hence in future years it may gain further status. The “EBacc” is not a qualification in its own right, but a measure of whether students have successfully achieved a broad academic education.

Completing the Options Form

The options forms onto which students indicate their preferred choices will not be issued to students until shortly before the deadline for its return. This is so that they have the opportunity to think carefully about the subjects they wish to follow before making their final choices. The deadline for students to hand in their completed options form is **Friday 15th March**.

Students will be able to study up to 3 option subjects. On the options form we ask that that they choose 5 subjects in order of preference by putting a ‘1’ next to their first choice, a ‘2’ next to their second choice and so on up to ‘5’. We will always do our best to provide students with their preferred choices, but this is not always possible for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it may be because particular subjects are very popular, or in some circumstances teachers might feel that certain choices are not appropriate for particular students. In addition, once the subjects are grouped together into option blocks, in a small number of cases we may find that the combination chosen by your child does not work. Consequently it may not be possible for your child to study all of their first 3 choices, which is why we ask them to choose 5 in total; in other words their first 3 preferences plus 2 reserves. In some cases parents/carers will be contacted and invited to discuss the various other options with their child and a member of staff.

Please ensure that the form is returned to form teachers by Friday 15th March, ensuring it is signed by parents/carers.

Forms returned after this date may result in allocation to options which are not any of their preferred choices. Students will be given written notification of their options in due course.

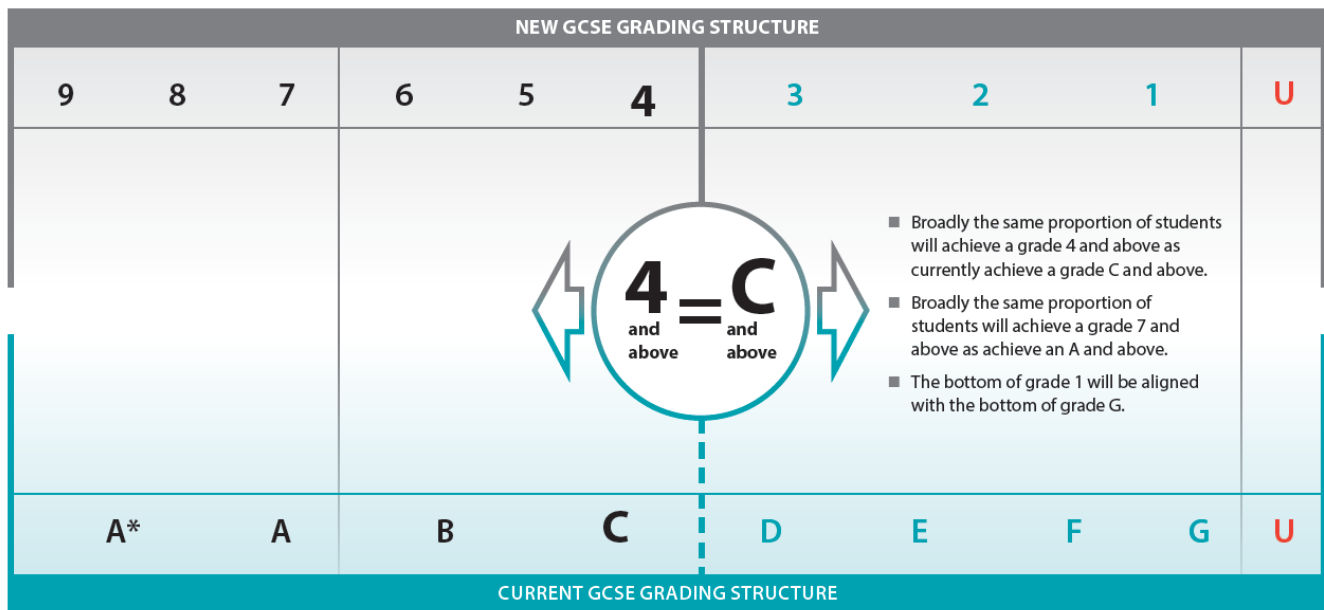
Mrs. Ottley-O'Connor

Assistant Headteacher

Future GCSE Reform

All GCSE courses have been undergoing major reform over the last few years. The new GCSEs have new content which is structured, assessed and graded differently from current GCSEs. Current Year 8 pupils will be affected by these changes, which involves new reformed GCSEs in all GCSE subjects. In the new GCSEs, assessments in most subjects will be mainly by exam with other types of assessment used only where they are needed to test essential skills. Exams will be taken in one period at the end of the course. A new grading system has been introduced. Students will be awarded a grade from 1 to 9, with 9 being the highest. The diagram below indicates how the new grades link with the 'old' GCSE grades.

Grading the New GCSEs in 2017



The information on
the following pages
relates to core
subjects which all
students follow

English Language and Literature

Core or Optional?

Core – all students study English in Years 9, 10 and 11

What qualifications will I get?

2 separate GCSEs 9 – 1
One in English Language and one in English Literature

General Information about this subject:

Students will study:

- How to write clearly and accurately in good Standard English.
- How to use diverse and challenging writing skills for different purposes and audiences.
- Read a range of high-quality, challenging literature and non-fiction texts.

Method of Assessment:

English Language: Untiered and fully assessed by external exams, with a speaking assessment that will be reported separately. 20% of the final marks will be allocated to accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

English Literature: Untiered and assessed by external exam only.
5% of final marks will be allocated to accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Independent Study

Students are set two homeworks per week. This might be reading preparation for the next lesson or written composition, providing students with opportunities to consolidate the skills being learned in the classroom.

How will I use this course in the future?

GCSE English Language at grade 5 is a typical minimum entry requirement for most AS and A Level courses. An ability to read independently with good comprehension, and to communicate concisely and fluently, are skills which are demanded by all post 16 courses. Similarly, if you intend to enter the workplace, prospective employers find these skills and qualities very desirable.

Languages

Core or Optional?

Core – students study a language in Years 9,10 and 11

What qualification will I get?

French, German, Italian or Spanish GCSE 9-1.

General Information about this subject

Students will study a foreign language in Years 9, 10 and 11 – in most cases this is one of the languages they currently study in Year 8 (French, German, Italian or Spanish). Students will build upon the language skills they have developed in Years 7 and 8 and develop their abilities in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They will also focus on intercultural awareness. Students will choose which language to study towards the end of Year 8.

How this subject is assessed

The four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing will be equally weighted at 25%. All four skills are assessed by external examinations towards the end of Year 11.

Independent Study

Homework is an essential part of study. It is set on a weekly basis and is a mixture of learning, reading and writing. All homework is equally important and there is always help available to any students who need this or wish to improve further. Work will also be set on Doodle to give more opportunities for independent study.

How will I use this course in the future?

The ability to communicate in another language is a highly sought-after skill in the current economic climate. A good GCSE pass in your chosen language can lead to further study such as A-level and beyond, as well as forming part of many vocational courses. Many universities now state that a qualification in a language is an essential entry requirement. Language skills are highly valued by business and industry and can sometimes attract higher salaries.

Other Important Information

A bilingual dictionary is particularly useful and at GCSE level a revision guide is important for vocabulary revision.

Mathematics

Core or Optional?

Core for Mathematics.

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

The course is broken down into four content areas as follows: Number (covering areas such as ratio, fractions, percentages, decimals), Algebra (including substitution, equations and graphs), Geometry (understanding of 2D and 3D shapes, nets, angles, area, perimeter and volume, as well as Pythagoras, trigonometry and measures) and Statistics (probability and collecting, representing and interpreting data).

There are three assessment objectives: AO1 covers the recall of knowledge and content. AO2 assesses the ability to select and apply mathematical methods in a range of contexts. AO3 tests the ability to interpret and analyse problems and generate strategies to solve them.

How this subject is assessed

This is a linear course comprised of three terminal papers each worth 33% of the final mark. There is no coursework. There are two levels - higher and foundation. The higher paper will cover grades 9 – 4 and the foundation paper will cover the grades 5 – 1.

Independent Study

Homework is set twice a week and students are expected to supplement notes independently to ensure they are clear on any topic taught. Students will be required to do a variety of homework tasks including research, written work, ICT based activities and investigations.

How will I use this course in the future?

Mathematics leads on to a wide range of possible careers including defence analyst, meteorologist, computer games developer and aeronautical engineer. However even if students do not pursue one of these careers this subject is one of the key GCSEs that many other courses look for. Whether it is a BTEC, A-level, a vocational course or the world of work, all of these areas are looking for numerate people, and the best way to become numerate is to pursue Mathematics.

Other important information

Essential equipment for maths lessons includes a pen, pencil, ruler, a pair of compasses, protractor, scientific calculator, rubber and pencil sharpener.

Combined Science

Core or optional?

Core – all students study Combined Science in Years 9, 10 and 11. Some students may also wish to study Separate Sciences as one of their options (see page on this later in booklet).

What qualifications will I get?

2 GCSE passes in Science 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

Science covers aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students will learn about a variety of aspects of each of these subjects from electricity to plants to chemical industrial processes.

How this course is assessed

All the exams for GCSE Combined Science will be completed in May/June of Year 11. There will be no coursework component as practical skills will be assessed as part of the exams.

Independent study

In addition to homework assignments we strongly advise that students revisit all in-class learning at home and start compiling revision notes and resources from the beginning of the course. Due to the varied nature of Science they will cover a range of ideas and concepts and this reinforcement will help ensure understanding and will allow students to recognise potential difficulties early on which they can ask their class teacher to help address. It should also be noted that it is a requirement that students memorise and be able to apply all Physics equations for their exams.

How will I use this course in the future?

Science is in all we do and the applications and jobs that involve scientific ideas are numerous. A course in Combined Sciences provides a comprehensive grounding in the subject and will give students the opportunity to study Science or scientifically-related courses at A-level and beyond.

Information Technology & Computer Science

Core or optional?

Core – students will follow this course in Years 9 and 10.

What qualifications will I get?

Core IT and CS does not lead to a formal qualification. A school certificate will be awarded to students to recognise their skills and knowledge.

General Information about this subject

To cover IT skills needed in business and support their educational studies student will learn how to use Microsoft Office and Adobe Suite of programs. A fictitious business is used to build up a range of documents, developing skills and knowledge.

In Computer Science students will learn about the differences in computer systems, the differences between input and output devices, the risks to a computer system and how we can try to protect against them. Some students will also be taught about IT and the law.

How this course is assessed

IT will be internally assessed through coursework. Students will be given practice tasks which will then lead to an assessment where students will be expected to use their skills to solve business related problems using Microsoft Office and/or the Adobe Suite.

Computer Science skills will be assessed through classwork tasks.

Independent study

Materials to support lessons and revision can be found by accessing the core IT and CS skills course on the VLE.

How will I use this course in the future?

Information and Communication Technology skills are essential for life. Initially, the skills learned will help students to effectively use these skills to support their studies in all subjects. It also provides progression on to further study of IT.

The information on
the following pages
relates to option
subjects which
students can
choose from

Art and Design

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

Art and Design GCSE is a combination of practical work, research and art history.

Students will study a comprehensive range of art techniques which will allow them to demonstrate creative and imaginative talents.

Students will improve skills in sculpture, ceramics, digital imaging, etching, animation, painting, drawing and screen-printing.

How this subject is assessed

40% practical exam at the end of Year 11.

60% coursework during Years 10 and 11 consisting of three projects presented as a portfolio of practical work.

Independent Study

- Practical homework ranging from observational drawing to animation;
- Research and digital imaging homework using ICT;
- Lunchtime and after school sessions in Art Club to complete practical tasks or produce more ambitious personal work.

How will I use this course in the future?

- Jobs in art and design, architecture, game and fashion design, advertising, education, web-design and many more;
- A-levels and other college courses in Fine Art, Architecture, Textiles, Photography, 3 Dimensional Design and Graphic Communication.
- Jobs in the creative industry are increasing at more than twice the rate of the wider UK economy.

Other important information

Students will be required to attend visits to places such as the Liverpool Tate and Yorkshire Sculpture Park, for which they may be asked to make a contribution of approximately £10 per visit. There is an expectation that students will attend Art Club at lunchtime or after school. It is recommended that students have access to art materials, a camera and computer at home. Students will be required to purchase their own sketchbooks, which are available from school. Workshops, for example with visiting artists, will also take place during school time.

Business Studies

Core or Optional?

Optional - You can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE at Grades 9 - 1

General Information about this subject

This course combines theory and application to real businesses.

You will learn about how businesses are organised, run and financed, and also about the people who are important to a business as well as the communication systems that businesses use.

How this course is assessed

There is a final examination at the end of the course.

Independent study

- Homework tasks include research and investigation work as well as written tasks
- After school sessions are available to provide students with access to ICT equipment, resources and extra tutorial support

How will I use this course in the future?

- Advanced courses in Business Studies such as A-levels and BTECs
- Jobs or apprenticeships in a business environment

Computer Science

Core or optional?

Optional – students will have one year in Year 9 as a foundation year. This will better prepare students in Year 10 and 11 when they complete their qualification.

Students must be making good progress on a **minimum of a Flight Path 6 for both Maths and Computer Science** to take this option.

What qualifications will I get?

Computer Science will give your child a GCSE qualification ranging from 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

Computer Science will enable students to:

- Develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work
- Look at the use of algorithms in computer programs
- Become independent and discerning users of IT
- Acquire and apply creative and technical skills, knowledge and understanding of IT in a range of contexts
- Develop computer programs to solve problems
- Evaluate the effectiveness of computer programs/solutions

How this course is assessed

There will be two elements to this which are:

- A non examined assessment which will test a student's application of skills and knowledge based on a set scenario
- An examination which will test pupils technical skill in the following areas:
 - Fundamentals of computer systems
 - Computing hardware
 - Software
 - Representation of data in computer systems
 - Computer communications and networking
 - Programming

Independent study

Students will be given lots of practice tasks to help prepare them for the controlled assessment task. In conjunction with this, we will put revision and practice material on our VLE to enable students to study outside of school.

How will I use this course in the future?

Computer Science skills are in extreme demand all over the world. Students will be well prepared, after this course, to take up Computer Science at college and university which can lead to a job in industry in areas such as Web Development, Software or Hardware Engineering. Students who take on Computer Science as a career generally start off with higher wages than average.

Creative iMedia

Core or Optional?

Optional – students will have one year in Year 9 as a foundation year. This will better prepare students in Year 10 and 11 when they complete their qualification.

What qualification will I get?

Cambridge National Certificate in Creative iMedia
(equivalent to a GCSE)

General Information about this subject

The Cambridge National Certificate in Creative iMedia will equip students with sound ICT skills for everyday use and provide opportunities to develop in context those desirable, transferable skills such as planning, research and analysis, working with others and communicating technical concepts effectively. Creative iMedia teaches the use of digital technologies to create graphics, animation, sound, video and websites. Students also learn how pre-production skills are used to create high quality products.

How this course is assessed –

Unit R081: Pre-production Skills (External Assessment).

Unit R082: Creating Digital Graphics: Students will cover the basics of pre-production skills and graphic design for the creative and media sector. Students will understand a client brief, time frames, deadlines and preparation techniques that form part of the planning and creation process. They will then evidence their understanding by creating graphic artwork for different purposes.

Unit R085: Creating a multipage website. Students will explore the basics of creating multipage websites. It will enable them to demonstrate their creativity by combining components to create a functional, intuitive and aesthetically pleasing website. It will allow them to interpret a client brief and to use planning and preparation techniques when developing a multipage website.

Unit R089 – Creating a digital video sequence: Gaming technologies, mobile phones and multimedia websites, film and television productions all use digital video sequences to enhance and inform their content. Students will explore these technologies and develop their own sequence to reach an identified target.

Independent Study

Students will be given lots of practice tasks to help prepare them for the controlled assessment task. In conjunction with this, we will put revision and practice material on our VLE to enable students to study outside of school.

How will I use this course in the future?

Students can progress to vocational qualifications: IT User Skills, IT Professional and IT Practitioner suite of qualifications and Creative iMedia level 3 suite of qualifications. It will be suitable for those in full-time education who wish to gain access to the iMedia industry.

GCSE Dance

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

Students taking this subject will need to study the art of choreography, performance skills, dance technique and analysis of professional dance works. The dance genre is contemporary although the course may make reference to other dance styles such as folk, ballet and street dance.

How this subject is assessed

- 40% written exam;
- 60% practical work – taken in school and moderated by an external examiner; Students are expected to produce and perform 2 compositions and to perform a set dance and a group dance.

Independent Study

Dance gives students the opportunity to explore dance choreography and to use their imagination to create original works, therefore an independent and adventurous nature would be ideal for anyone wanting to take this subject.

How will I use this course in the future?

Students may go on to study A Level Dance or BTEC in Dance or Performing Arts in a Sixth Form College. There are many Dance courses now available at Universities, where you can study for a Bachelors Degree.

Other important information

In addition to lessons taught during school time students will be required to attend lessons after school one day a week. Students will be required to attend trips and after school rehearsals on a regular basis, take part in school productions and attendance at extra-curricular clubs will also be expected.

BTEC Performing Arts (Dance)

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

BTEC Level 1/2 equivalent to 1 GCSE pass

General Information about this subject

Students taking this subject will need to study the art of choreography, performance skills, dance technique and analysis of professional dance works. The dance genre is contemporary although the course may make reference to other dance styles such as folk, ballet and street dance.

How this subject is assessed

- 20% coursework;
- 80% practical work – taken in school and moderated by an external examiner; Students are expected to produce and perform 2 compositions and to perform a group dance.

Independent Study

Dance gives students the opportunity to explore dance choreography and to use their imagination to create original works, therefore an independent and adventurous nature would be ideal for anyone wanting to take this subject. This qualification also opens up the performing arts industry as what is needed to succeed in a range of jobs.

How will I use this course in the future?

Students may go on to study A Level Dance or BTEC in Dance or Performing Arts in a Sixth Form College. There are many Dance courses now available at Universities, where you can study for a Degree.

Other important information

In addition to lessons taught during school time students will be required to attend lessons after school one day a week. Students will be required to attend trips and after school rehearsals on a regular basis, take part in school productions and attendance at extra-curricular clubs will also be expected.

Drama

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

Candidates taking this subject will study the requirements of acting and theatre and develop a full understanding of the expectations of working in various styles and genres of Drama.

How this subject is assessed

The practical element of the work accounts for 60% of the final grade with the other 40% allocated for the written paper.

Coursework is made up of a practical exploration which takes into account the student's involvement and contribution to the process and performance. Students are required to continually analyse their involvement and skills through keeping a personal journal. This will result in a moderation visit from the exam board of which the students' two highest scoring coursework projects will be submitted for the final grade.

The written exam is 1 hour 30 minutes - students must complete 3 sections within this time. Section A is compulsory multiple choice questions. Section B focuses on working with a script and Section C focuses on 'Live Theatre' which students must experience throughout the course.

Independent Study.

Drama gives students the opportunity to explore theatre and to use their imagination to create original works as well as study literature for performance. Therefore an independent and self-motivated nature would be ideal for anyone wanting to take this subject.

How will I use this course in the future?

Students may go on to study A-level Drama and Theatre Studies, or a BTEC in Acting or Technical Theatre. There are many Drama courses now available at universities and drama schools where you can study for a degree in Drama and Theatre or degree in Acting, both of which allow candidates to work within the industry.

Drama also allows students to develop their self-belief, confidence, presentation skills and ability to work as part of a team whilst working to deadlines and within teams. All of these skills are transferable into any future area of study or career.

Other important information

Students will be required to attend educational visits in evenings and participate in after school rehearsals on a regular basis. Taking part in school productions and extra-curricular clubs will also be expected.

Geography

Core or Optional?

Optional, you can choose this subject. It is also part of the English Baccalaureate.

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1.

General Information about this subject

This is a course based around contemporary issues. It is split into three units:

- Theme 1: Changing Places – Changing Economies
- Theme 2: Changing Environments
- Theme 3: Environmental Challenges

How this subject is assessed

There is a final examination at the end of the course assessing the three units.

Independent Study

- Written homework and research about lesson content you have studied;
- Keeping up to date with the news for related stories;
- Lunchtime and after school classes to develop examination techniques and for revision for those who would like to improve further.
- A fully resourced VLE to access for pupils with Podcasts, Powerpoints and Activities to support pupils' learning.

How will I use this course in the future?

- Geography develops the ability to combine scientific principles with economic awareness, environmental concern and an appreciation and tolerance of peoples' attitudes and values;
- Geographers progress on to a wide range of careers, such as town planning, engineering, environmental management, retail planning, journalism, industrial logistics, tourism and coordinating aid relief to communities in need.

History

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject. It is also part of the English Baccalaureate.

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1

General Information about this subject

In GCSE History, students will learn a variety of skills from source analysis to extended writing and expressing personal opinions as well as those of others. They will be encouraged to look at the work of historians and compare to life today.

These units will cover a range of topics from both World and British History over the last one thousand years. Students will learn about Crime and Punishment in Britain c.1066 to today; Elizabethan England; The Cold War and Germany 1918-39.

How this subject is assessed –

There are three examination papers at the end of the course.

Independent Study

- Research;
- Written homework;
- Attending revision and catch up sessions where appropriate.

How will I use this course in the future?

History is a subject that has a wide variety of course choices and career paths. It builds skills such as evaluation and communication which are valued in a wider range of careers, for example people management, politics, teaching, research, journalism, law and accounting.

A Second Language Choice as an Option

Core or Optional?

Optional students have the opportunity to study their **second** language choice to GCSE. Their **first** language choice is part of the core curriculum.

What qualification will I get?

French, German, Italian or Spanish GCSE 9-1.

General Information about this subject

Students will study one of the foreign languages they currently study in Year 8 (French, German, Italian or Spanish) for GCSE. Students may choose to continue with **both** languages, in which case the second language would be one of their option choices. Students will build upon the language skills they have developed in Years 7 and 8 and develop their abilities in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They will also focus on intercultural awareness. Students will then study both languages to GCSE.

How this subject is assessed

The four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing will be equally weighted at 25%. All four skills are assessed by external examinations towards the end of Year 11.

Independent Study

Homework is an essential part of study. It is set on a weekly basis and is a mixture of learning, reading and writing. All homework is equally important and there is always help available to any students who need this or wish to improve further. Work will also be set on Doodle to give more opportunities for independent study.

How will I use this course in the future?

The ability to communicate in another language is a highly sought-after skill in the current economic climate. A good GCSE pass in your chosen language can lead to further study such as A-level and beyond, as well as forming part of many vocational courses. Many universities now state that a qualification in a language is an essential entry requirement. Language skills are highly valued by business and industry and can sometimes attract higher salaries.

Other Important Information

A bilingual dictionary is particularly useful and at GCSE level a revision guide is important for vocabulary revision.

Music

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1

General Information about this subject

Students will need to either play an instrument or be able to sing. Don't worry - we will teach them. An interest in lots of different kinds of music would be useful, as is being enthusiastic about making, creating, performing and listening to music using live sound sources as well as music software.

How this subject is assessed

- Understanding music – listening and written paper- 40%
- Practical coursework based on performance and composition- 60%

Independent Study

Students must **want** to learn an instrument – self motivation to daily practice is a key attribute in this.

How will I use this course in the future?

Employers like to see this subject when interviewing as they tend to know that you will be a self-motivated person, capable of working and thinking independently.

This could lead on to any discrete and combined Music and Music and the Arts course at A-level or BTEC.

Other important information

In Years 9 and 10 students will receive a free weekly lesson on their chosen instrument or voice. Attendance is monitored on a daily basis and the time will alter each week. It is the responsibility of the students to check their allotted time.

GCSE Physical Education

Optional

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1

General Information about this subject

Students need a good fitness level and need to be involved in a number of teams and clubs. It is important to emphasise that there is a high theory content in this subject, many of the practical elements of the course are met within core PE.

Theory 70%

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data
- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being

Practical Performance 30%

Students will be assessed in three different activities in the role of player/performer. One of these assessments must be in a team sport/activity, another in an individual sport/activity, with the third from either a team or individual sport/activity. Students can only be assessed once in any sport or activity.

Team activity list

Association Football, Badminton, Basketball, Dance, Netball, Table Tennis.

Individual activity list

Badminton, Dance, Swimming, Table Tennis, Trampolining.

How this subject is assessed

The theory of the GCSE is assessed with 2 written exams **(60%)**.

The non-examination assessment of three different physical activities (one in a team, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or individual activity). Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity **(30%)**.

A personal exercise programme (PEP) designed by the student **(10%)**

Independent Study

- Written homework about theory studied;
- Taking part in student's own Personal Exercise Programme (PEP);

Take part in lunchtime and after school sessions to improve practical skills.

How will I use this course in the future?

- Jobs and coaching awards in Physical Education;
- A-levels and other college courses in Sports, such as BTEC;
- University degree courses;
- Good preparation for the armed forces, leisure industry, sport science/studies degrees, teaching, working in the emergency services, physiotherapy and sports development.

Other important information

Students must be organised, have a keen interest in sport and always look forward to PE lessons. Students will need to participate in extra-curricular clubs at lunch times and after school. Students should be playing sport or keeping fit outside of the school environment. We have high expectations of all students and will not accept students who do not strive to improve their own ability.

BTEC Level 1 / 2 First Award in Sport

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A BTEC qualification equivalent to one GCSE pass at grades 9-1.

General Information about this subject

The Edexcel BTEC Level 2 First Award in Sport offers a specialist qualification that focuses on particular aspects of employment within the appropriate vocational sector. Students study the following units: Fitness for Sport and Exercise; Practical Sports Performance; Applying the Principles of Personal Training; Leading Sports Activities.

In the Fitness for Sport and Exercise unit students will learn about the components of physical fitness, components of skill-related fitness, the principles of training and fitness training methods. This will be assessed using an onscreen test.

In the Practical Sports Performance unit students will learn about the rules, regulations and scoring systems for selected sports; pupils will be required to practically demonstrate skills, techniques and tactics in selected sports and review sports performances.

In the unit 'Applying the Principles of Personal Training' you will be required to plan and then implement a training programme for a sport of your choice. You will need to assess your own strengths and weaknesses to do this. You will learn about the musculoskeletal system and the cardio respiratory system to help you achieve this.

Leading Sports Activities introduce learners to different sports sessions that are led by different types of sports leaders. The sessions will give learners a range of ideas on how to deliver sport and physical activity sessions to particular target groups.

How this subject is assessed

All the units are internally assessed by the teacher, and externally moderated, with exception of the Fitness for Sport and Exercise unit which is assessed using an onscreen assessment. This test will be taken under exam conditions and will take one hour fifteen minutes. This subject is assessed throughout the course, which allows learners to receive feedback on their progress as they provide evidence towards meeting the unit assessment and grading criteria.

Students take on the role of being employed within the sport and active leisure industry when completing assignments/activities. This is achieved through the completion of assignments/activities that have a scenario reflecting tasks/projects that sports employees would be undertaking in the workplace.

Evidence for assessment is achieved through a range of activities including workplace assessment, leaflets and presentations.

Independent Study

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and achievement. In particular this will involve:

- Attending BTEC catch up club to complete any work missed;
- Attending lunch-time clubs and after-school clubs to help with the completion of the practical based assignments.

How will I use this course in the future?

This course leads to employment within the sport sector in a range of roles. The qualification provides opportunities to develop personal, learning and thinking skills, functional skills, and wider skills in a sport. This course also leads on to the BTEC National in Sport (A-level equivalent) and provides a route to access sport-related degree courses at university.

Religious Studies

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1

General Information about this subject

In GCSE Religious Studies, students will study the religions of Christianity and Islam in depth.

Students will enquire about beliefs, teachings and practices in the religions of Christianity and Islam. This includes the study about beliefs about God, theories of creation, daily worship, festivals and belief about life after death.

Students will also have the opportunity to study four themes from a religious and non-religious point of view. The themes are crime and punishment, peace and conflict, human rights and social justice. The fourth theme of Religion and life covers Philosophical and ethical issues such as abortion, euthanasia and animal rights.

How this subject is assessed

This course does not have any coursework. There are two written examinations which are both sat at the end of Year 11.

Independent Study

- Written homework;
- Attending revision and catch up sessions where appropriate;
- Using the VLE to practice examination technique;
- Keeping up to date with stories from the media that relate to the topics being studied;
- Keeping up to date on laws that relate to ethical issues such as abortion and euthanasia.

How will I use this course in the future?

This course lends itself to careers which are part of and focus on the community, for example the police, social work, nursing, law and teaching. Religious Studies develops understanding, respect and appreciation of people and the reasons for their beliefs and practices. You also have the opportunity to reflect and develop your own views, opinions and attitudes about life and the “bigger questions”.

Separate Sciences

Core or optional?

Optional – you can choose to study Separate Sciences but must check with your Science teacher first.

What qualifications will I get?

3 separate GCSE passes in Biology, Chemistry and Physics 9 – 1

General Information about this subject

Separate Sciences provide a more in-depth knowledge of aspects of each of the three sciences, covering a greater range of topics. **Students need to be on a minimum of a Flight path 6 in Science and making good progress** in relation to this if they are going to choose this option. Flight Path 5 students will be considered in rare circumstances where the student is making consistently exceptional progress. It is paramount that students be demonstrating a positive attitude to learning and have good attendance if they are to be considered for this option. For those students wanting to go into medicine and other competitive scientific areas it is an advisable route.

How this course is assessed

All Biology, Chemistry and Physics exams will be completed at the end of Year 11. There will be no coursework component as practical skills will be assessed as part of the exams.

Independent study

We strongly advise that students revisit all in class learning at home and start compiling revision notes and resources from the beginning of the course. Due to the varied nature of Science they will cover a range of ideas and concepts and this reinforcement will help ensure understanding and will allow the students to recognise potential difficulties early on which they can ask their class teacher to address. It should also be noted that it is a requirement that students memorise and be able to apply all Physics equations for their exams.

How will I use this course in the future?

Science is in all we do and the applications and jobs that involve its ideas are numerous. A course in Separate Sciences provides an in-depth understanding of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Whilst it is not essential to study Separate Sciences to continue studying Science to A Level, it will provide students with a better starting point if choosing to do so. If a student is considering a future career in a competitive area of Science, GCSE Science qualifications will be looked at by University course providers, in addition to their A Levels.

Faculty of Design and Technology

The Design and Technology curriculum and options are undertaking considerable changes to meet Government guidelines. Consider carefully the information below before committing to any choices.

In recent years, pupils could opt for a combination of GCSEs including Resistant Materials, Graphic Products, Electronic Products and Textiles. This is now offered as a combined single award named GCSE Design and Technology. Pupils will need to have a strong interest and ability in the separate disciplines in order to successfully complete this GCSE.

Within the faculty we offer a range of Level 1 & 2 Technical Awards. The Technical Awards have been developed in partnership with teachers, employers and stakeholders to ensure that they prepare students for further study, apprenticeships and the workplace. Students with a Technical Award will be able to go on to study A-Levels or vocational qualifications. Grading for these qualifications is awarded using a Pass, Merit, Distinction system which is equivalent to the 9-1 reformed GCSEs.

The Faculty of Design and Technology will be offering the following subject options:

- GCSE Design Technology (Timber focus)
- GCSE Design Technology (Graphics focus)
- GCSE Design Technology (Textiles focus)
- BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 Engineering
- Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering (WJEC board)
- Cambridge National Certificate Level 1/2 in Child Development
- BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 in Health and Social Care

All subjects within this Faculty are optional.

For further information please read through the subject option information and please contact Mr. Hart, Teaching and Learning Director for the Faculty of Design and Technology to obtain further information and to answer any questions.

Design and Technology (Timber/Graphics/Textiles)

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualifications will I get?

A single GCSE 9 – 1

General Information about this subject

This is an exciting new GCSE and opportunity for pupils who have a keen interest in all Technology subject areas including Graphic Products, Resistant Materials and Textiles.

Pupils will need to study all subject areas in order to complete the controlled assessment and the final summer examination. Pupils will focus on one area of interest (Timber, Graphics or Textiles) when selecting their controlled assessment task although a second area to include will be encouraged.

Pupils will be taught to select and use tools, equipment and processes to produce quality products.

Skills and knowledge pupils will gain include:

- Using tools and equipment safely
- Learning about materials, processes and manufacturing techniques
- Investigating methods to mark-out, cut and assemble materials
- Awareness of how products are manufactured
- Knowledge of Computer Aided Manufacture (CAM) processes.

How this subject is assessed

50% exam at the end of Year 11.

50% controlled assessment during Years 10 and 11 consisting of practical work and a design folio.

Independent Study

There will be written and design-related homework to support practical workshop sessions in addition to the completion of design and research tasks relating to the completion of coursework.

How will I use this course in the future?

Engineering leads to a wide variety of careers and post-16 pathways. This course prepares students for continued studies in Engineering and other Design and Technology subjects at A Level. It also prepares students for work in design and manufacturing-based careers.

Other important information

This GCSE includes a high level of demand in relation to design, English and mathematical skills. These skills will need to be demonstrated in the controlled assessment tasks and the final external examination.

BTEC Tech Award in Engineering

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

BTEC Tech Award Level 2 Distinction*-Pass
(GCSE 9-4 equivalent)

BTEC Tech Award Level 1 Distinction –Pass
(GCSE 1-3 equivalent)

General Information about this subject

The BTEC is made up of several units each looking at different aspects of engineering. Each unit has a different focus from written research tasks, design tasks and practical tasks.

This subject provides students with the opportunities to work individually and as a member of the team to develop practical abilities and confidence to design and make high quality products as well as developing ICT skills using the latest CAD/CAM equipment and resources. They must have the ability to carry out activities in accordance with instructions and by the safe and correct use of equipment.

- Using tools and equipment safely
- Learning about materials, processes and manufacturing techniques
- Investigating methods to mark-out, cut and assemble materials
- Awareness of how products are manufactured
- Knowledge of Computer Aided Manufacture (CAM) processes

How this subject is assessed

40% exam in February of Year 11

60% controlled assessment during Years 10 and 11 consisting of practical work, written assignments and a design element.

Independent Study

There will be written and design related homework to support practical workshop sessions in addition to the completion of design and research tasks relating to the completion of coursework.

How will I use this course in the future?

Engineering leads to a wide variety of careers and post 16 pathways. This course prepares students for continued studies in Engineering and other Design and Technology subjects at A-level. It also prepares students for work in design and manufacturing-based careers.

Other important information

This BTEC includes a high level of demand in relation to design, English and mathematical skills. These skills will need to be demonstrated in the controlled assessment tasks and the final external examination.

Hospitality and Catering

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualifications will I get?

1. Level 1-2 Hospitality and Catering (WJEC board) equivalent to 1 GCSE pass.

General Information about this subject

This is a practical 'hands on' approach to cookery and involves studying many skills in food.

Students will study:

- Health and Safety, hygiene and environmental considerations;
- Food cooking and preparation;
- Nutrition and menu planning, costing and portion control;
- The use of specialist equipment;

How this subject is assessed

All food subjects have internal assessments for practical work and also incorporate an external exam. The exam unit 2 is a computer based assessment.

Independent Study :

- This consists of a variety of different written and practical tasks and activities. Students will also have to complete controlled assessments. There will be opportunities to participate in catering competitions and whole-school initiatives.
- After school support classes will be available.

How will I use this course in the future?

A food course provides the basis for a career in the catering industry and is also good preparation for modern apprenticeships or higher education at college or university. It is also invaluable in everyday life and students will also have the opportunity to gain a qualification to handle food hygienically.

Other important information

Due to the practical nature this subject will require students to commit to extra twilight classes to catch up on written work when needed. Students in Year 9 are requested to provide their own ingredients for the subject on a weekly basis. To ensure consistency and the production of high quality food, students will not be expected to provide ingredients in Years 10 and 11, however a contribution of £10 per student each half-term is requested.

Children's Learning and Development

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

Cambridge National Certificate in Child Development.

Level 2	Level 1
Distinction *	
Distinction	Distinction
Merit	Merit
Pass	Pass

Level 2 – Equivalent to GCSE 4-9

Level 1 – Equivalent to GCSE 1-3

General Information about this subject

This qualification is for learners who wish to develop applied knowledge and practical skills in Child Development. It is designed with both practical and theoretical elements in mind to prepare students for the preparation of two coursework tasks and one written examination.

Understanding the equipment and nutritional needs of children from birth to five years (Coursework)-Students will gain knowledge of the equipment needs of babies and young children and an understanding of the factors to be considered when choosing appropriate equipment to meet all these needs. They will also gain knowledge of nutrition and hygiene practices and will be given the opportunity to evaluate dietary choices.

Understanding the development of a child from birth to five years (Coursework)-Students will gain knowledge of, and skills in, developing activities to observe development milestones in children up to the age of five. Students will research, plan and carry out activities with children and make observations on their development.

Health and wellbeing for the child (examined unit)-All students will learn the essential knowledge and understanding for Child Development, covering; Reproduction, Parental Responsibility, Pre-Conceptual Care, Antenatal Care, Birth, Postnatal Checks, Care of the Child, Childhood Illnesses and Child Safety.

How this subject is assessed

40% will be an external examination at the end of Year 11.

60% controlled assessment during Years 10 and 11.

Independent Study

Written homework involving investigations and case studies.

How will I use this course in the future?

This qualification is practical in nature and aims to provide students with knowledge and highly sought-after skills to prepare them for further study, apprenticeships and the workplace.

Other important information

This qualification is equivalent to a single GCSE at grade 9-1 depending on the overall mark achieved.

Health and Social Care

Core or Optional?

Optional – you can choose this subject

What qualification will I get?

BTEC Tech Award Level 2 Distinction*-Pass
(GCSE 9-4 equivalent)

BTEC Tech Award Level 1 Distinction –Pass
(GCSE 1-3 equivalent)

General Information about this subject

Work experience completed in Year 10 forms a vital part of this course. Students will gain a deeper understanding of their own personal development in the workplace and gain skills in practical care application.

How this subject is assessed

40% will be a 2 hour external examination at the end of Year 11, in which students will create a health and wellbeing improvement plan for an individual case study.

60% will be determined by two centre assessed units;

- Component 1: Human Lifespan Development
Learning aims of this unit include understanding how individuals develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually over time. Pupils will investigate how various factors, events and choices impact individuals' growth and development and discover how people adapt to life events and cope with making changes.
- Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values
Learning aims of this unit include knowledge of health and social care services available. Pupils will identify why people might need to use services and discover who's involved in providing these services. Pupils will explore what might stop people from accessing the services they need and look at the care values the sector has, to make sure people get the care and protection they need.

Independent Study

Written homework involving investigations and case studies.

How will I use this course in the future?

BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care will assess the application of Health and Social Care through a range of practical uses. This qualification will provide learners with essential knowledge, transferable skills and tools to improve their learning in other subjects with the aim of enhancing their employability when they leave education, contributing to both their personal development and future economic well-being.

Other important information

BTEC Tec Award in Health and Social Care is equivalent to a GCSE.