# NEWPORT GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL
## *ACADEMY TRUST*


# GCSE OPTIONS BOOKLET

# 2018 - 2021

**GCSE**

**NATIONAL CURRICULUM**
**KEY STAGE 4**

This booklet gives details of the curriculum on offer at NGHS at Key Stage 4.

This is a broad and extensive Curriculum, which we are very pleased to be able to offer.

The information published is correct at the time of going to print but may be subject to change for September in line with ongoing curriculum development.

## KEY DATES FOR OPTION PLANNING

| **Date** | **Activity** |
|---|---|
| 11th January 2018 | Launch Assembly for students – a detailed look at the Year 9 Options Booklet and choices at NGHS. Explanation of procedures for choosing options.<br>Year 8 Parents' Evening. |
| w/c 22nd January 2018 | During Form Time – complete a detailed subject review sheet in preparation for your final subject preferences. |
| 26th February 2018 | Full Report issued. |
| 2nd March 2018 (final deadline) | **Subject preferences** to be handed in to Reception. These will be used to compile blocks to fit with student choices. |
| 16th April 2018 | Final options blocks issued. |
| **11th May 2018** | **Final options choices sheet to be handed in.** |

## KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

It is important for your personal development and your ultimate career prospects that you have a sound all-round education, which shows your ability in many aspects of the curriculum. To ensure this a number of subjects are compulsory.

The table below indicates these compulsory subjects at Key Stage 4:

| **In Years 9, 10 and 11 you must study:** | **These compulsory components are examined as follows:** |
|---|---|
| English | English and English Literature (two GCSEs) |
| Mathematics | Mathematics (GCSE)<br>An additional GCSE equivalent Further Mathematics qualification may be available for some students. |
| Science | Physics, Chemistry and Biology (three GCSEs) |
| Religious Education | Religious Education (GCSE short course) |
| Physical Education | Non-examined |
| PSHE/Citizenship | Non-examined |
| Sex Education and Careers Guidance | Included as part of the Personal Social and Health Education programme and the week's work experience in Year 10 (non-examined) |

In addition to the core curriculum, girls will be examined in three more GCSEs from the options we offer. However, in Year 9 we have decided that the girls should continue with an additional option subject to ensure they experience a broad and balanced curriculum. We want your daughter to be able to study the English Baccalaureate subjects which are made up of English, mathematics, the sciences, a language and history or geography. However, we also recognise the importance of creative subjects and that some students may wish to pursue two languages for instance, or both history and geography. At the end of Year 9 your daughter would then drop one of her option subjects.

### What is the PSHE course about?

The PSHE part of the course will build on the issues discussed in KS3. The programme continues to focus on a range of skills that will enable you to become well prepared for life beyond school and for adulthood as participating members of society. It will also help you to cope with change and to be responsive to challenges and

opportunities, and therefore help you develop in a flexible way which is integral to society's changing character.

The course is designed to provoke personal insights and reflections on your personal developments and learning as well as help you plan how you can use this in the future.

**Physical Education (Compulsory)**

Physical Education is important within the curriculum as you will develop an understanding of the benefits of exercise and physical activity and how this can contribute towards leading a healthy lifestyle. Within the KS4 PE curriculum we strive to offer a diverse range of activities in the hope that all students will find an activity they would like to participate in outside of school life. It is important that all students regularly participate in physical activity and this is an expectation of all students throughout the three years.

## WHAT CHOICES DO I NEED TO MAKE?

English, Maths, Science, RE, PE and PSHE are compulsory subjects for all students. You must choose **four** subjects from the list below:

1. history *or* geography
2. French *or* German
3. art *or* computing *or* design technology *or* music
4. one other subject from the eight above not already chosen

**Please complete the Year 9 GCSE Subject Preferences form by 2nd March 2018.**

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

We will look in detail at your choices, and the reasons for your choices. Every effort will be made to draw up a scheme of options which will satisfy your wishes, but it is impossible for any school to offer a completely free choice; subjects offered have to fit into a timetable pattern and are also limited by group size. We also have to coordinate the options choices of Year 9 with Years 10 to 13.

**You and your parents will be informed of the option choices as soon as we possibly can do so, but this will not be until April 2018.**

## ADVICE ON HOW TO MAKE YOUR CHOICES

1. Do not choose a subject only because your friend is opting for it, or because of your liking for a particular member of staff.
2. Do not avoid choosing a subject because it has meant more homework in the past. All GCSE subjects involve more homework than in Year 8.
3. Discuss your choice with your form tutor and subject teachers who can give you valuable help.
4. Think about:

   Where do my strengths and weaknesses lie?

   Which subjects do my teachers recommend me to take?

   What subject skills may I need for some subjects?

   Which subjects particularly interest me?
5. Ask yourself - what ideas about my future career do I have at the moment?
6. Discuss your choice carefully with your parents.
7. Remember that some subjects can be taken at A level, which have not been studied at GCSE, for example, Art/DT. Discuss this with your subject teachers.

   For languages it is necessary to follow the appropriate GCSE course if you intend to take the language at A level.

8. After you have made your initial choice you will have an opportunity to arrange a discussion with a senior member of staff if you wish.

9. Every effort will be made to allocate you to the subjects you have chosen. However, it may be necessary to modify the choice and you must be prepared for this to happen.

## COURSEWORK AND EXAMINATION WEIGHTINGS

GCSE differs considerably from the Key Stage 3 courses, in its emphasis on controlled assessments. A proportion of class work and homework from an early stage in Year 9 will now be assessed by your teacher and will form an important part of your final grade. You will need to organise your homework time carefully in order to meet controlled assessments deadlines. A list of the relative weightings for examination and controlled assessments is given below.

| Subject | Examination | Controlled Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| English Language | 100% | 0% |
| English Literature | 100% | 0% |
| Mathematics | 100% | 0% |
| Sciences | 100% | 0% |
| Art | 40% | 60% (coursework) |
| French | 100% | 0% |
| Geography | 100% | 0% |
| German | 100% | 0% |
| History | 100% | 0% |
| Computer Science | 80% | 20% (NEA) |
| Music | 40% | 60% |
| Religious Studies | 100% | 0% |
| Technology | 50% | 50% |

**ART - OCR OPTION FINE ART (Optional)**

**What will I study?**

You will be given a project brief which changes every year, on the brief there will be a range of suggested artists that you can research and by doing this discover which artists you like the most. Once you have researched artists you will then be asked to take your own photographs inspired by the work that you have seen. You will learn how to use a range of media and will be encouraged to experiment with mixed media as well as working in 2D, 3D and digital forms. You will develop your own ideas and final piece based on your recording. You are given a lot of creative freedom in Art, projects are designed so that you can come up with your own ideas in order for your work to be unique.

You will work from direct observation and imagination, develop ideas and explore different ways of responding to a topic. You will be encouraged to build upon and strengthen your current skills through detailed feedback. You must use a range of media but often you can choose those you prefer for a final piece. Coursework can include any of the following:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| painting | drawing | textiles | photography |
| mixed media | mono printing | lino printing | digital artwork |
| etching | sculpture | collage | clay/wire work |

Visits to art galleries are an essential component of the course, locally, in this country and possibly elsewhere. All GCSE and A Level students may be given an extra option of going on an Art trip abroad. Places we have visited are Florence, Paris, Barcelona, Madrid, New York and Amsterdam as well as London, Birmingham and Liverpool.

**How is Art GCSE assessed?**

Art is assessed on:

- the way you respond to a stimulus and how you can investigate to develop your ideas;
- your ability to experiment with and use a range of media;
- your ability to work from direct observation;
- your ability to change and develop work as it progresses to a final outcome or outcomes;
- the way you respond to the work of other artists.

**Examination and Coursework**

| Component | Description | Duration | Weighting |
|---|---|---|---|
| Coursework | You will submit a project for assessment (January Year 11) | ongoing | 60% |
| Examination | Exam paper is given out at least eight weeks in advance (after Christmas in Year 11). You then develop ideas and experiment with media to prepare the final piece which will be completed in the exam. | 10 hours<br>(2 days) | 40% |

**Marking**

The work is marked by your Art teacher and will be moderated by a visiting moderator.

Display of coursework and exam pieces concludes the course work will be exhibited in the library when you are in Year 11.

**What skills will I have developed?**

- Working in a range of media successfully to a high level of skill
- Expressing ideas imaginatively in a visual and personal way
- Appreciation of work of other artists at first hand
- An understanding of the wide range of forms Art can take

If you are considering Art at A level, then this course is essential, as it gives a good foundation for further work (though if you are keen and well-motivated it is not always essential if you really want to study Art).

**Homework**

Specific tasks will be set, e.g. drawing from direct observation, researching techniques, also further development of ideas, completion of work in progress and research on the work of other artists will be expected.

Your understanding of Art will be greatly enhanced by visits to galleries, locally or further afield.

**COMPUTER SCIENCE (Optional)**

**Learn the language of the future**

Grow your knowledge of how technology is created and the appreciation you have for solving problems and build your career path.

GCSE Computer Science helps you think about how technology is created. It allows you to understand how people work together with computers to develop world changing programs. You'll also develop the skills that colleges, universities and employers are looking for – and they'll prove valuable for the rest of your life. GCSE Computer Science goes really well with lots of other subjects.

**Why study Computer Science?**

You have grown up in a world where technology is evolving rapidly, creating new subject areas to explore and changing the way people work in every area from medicine and fashion to engineering and economics. So whatever your career plans, you know it's vital to develop your grasp of these ideas and concepts that will shape your world. Learning to program will improve your resilience, your problem solving skills and your analytical skills. Many university courses have programming units and being able to program will help you on these.

GCSE Computer Science explores the principles of digital technology and way of working that's called 'computational thinking', with coding as a core of the course. You've got to be able to think logically, solve puzzles and be tenacious when the going gets tough. But it is also really creative and you'll get a real buzz out of getting something to work yourself, especially when programming. So if you enjoyed programming in Years 7 or 8 then you might find computing is for you. Before you can do the complicated stuff you need to master the basics. Making a computer solve complex algorithms is a really creative process - but let's not pretend it's easy. Computer Science will make you think. It will stretch you and test your powers of logic and patience. It might even drive you a bit crazy at times. In short, Computer Science is serious fun!

**What will you study?**

Over the course you will cover the following:

Computational thinking: this is the process of thinking through a complex problem, taking the time to understand what the problem is and then develop potential solutions for evaluation.

Theoretical content: here you will understand the fundamentals of data representation and computer networks. You will learn about the computer systems that you will create and use and also delve in to the world cyber security and ethical legal and environmental impacts of digital technology.

**What are lessons like?**

Busy but fun! You'll learn loads of new stuff, combining the 'theory' with lots of practical tasks and challenges. So there'll be lots of practical work on the computers, skills building, learning to program, doing the projects and conducting tests and experiments for your

research. But there'll also be quite a bit of extra reading and exercises to get your thinking skills sharp.

**How will you be assessed?**

You will have two written exams which are 1 hour 30 minutes each. Together they contribute to 80 % of your overall grade. Your non-exam assessment assesses your ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve a practical programming problem. You will follow a systematic approach to problem solving and will be assessed over 20 hours of work, which makes up the final 20 % of the assessment.

**What can it lead to?**

It's no exaggeration to say the world runs on computers. They are everywhere: in homes, schools and offices but not just in the way you think. They are also embedded in all sorts of machines. Computers control airplanes, chemical plants, send rockets to space, control the central heating and make sure your Mum's car runs efficiently. As new things are developed, the world needs more and more people to research new ways of using computers to do the things they want.

GCSE Computer Science (Computing) is a great foundation for going on to do Computing at A level. And Computing at A level is a great foundation for going on to study Computer Science at University. And that can open up a lot of possibilities!

But you don't have to want to go on to be a computer scientist to do this course – you might just be curious about learning a bit more. That's why we are offering it. The skills you learn will be of enormous benefit in lots of your other subjects. In the booklet Informed Choices published by the Russell Group, Computer Science is classed as a useful subject for: Aeronautical Engineering; Biochemistry; Biology; Chemical Engineering; Chemistry; Civil Engineering; Economics; Electronic Engineering; Engineering (General); Geology; Mathematics; Mechanical Engineering; Optometry; Physics; Psychology.

Computer Science is a useful subject at A level in four of the top seven highest earning careers.

**Want to know more?**

If you have any questions come and have a chat with Mr Hennessey.

**DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (Optional), AQA, Code 8552**

**Aims of GCSE Design and Technology?**

Design and Technology aims to provide opportunities for pupils to exercise their initiative and independence in enhancing self-confidence. Pupils combine practical and technological skills with creative thinking to design and make products and that meet human needs.

This qualification is modern and relevant, so students can learn about contemporary technologies, materials and processes, as well as established practices.

Students will use their creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values.

**Content**

| | |
|---|---|
| • New and emerging technologies<br>• Energy storage and generation<br>• Modern and smart materials<br>• Systems approach to designing<br>• Mechanical devices<br>• Materials and their working properties<br>• Forces and stresses<br>• Ecological and social footprint<br>• Scales of production<br>• Sources and origins<br>• Using and working with materials<br>• Stock forms, types and sizes<br>• Specialist techniques<br>• Surface treatments and finishes | • Investigation, primary and secondary data<br>• Environmental, social and economic challenge<br>• The work of others<br>• Design strategies<br>• Communication of design ideas<br>• Prototype development<br>• Selection of materials and components<br>• Tolerances<br>• Material management<br>• Tools and equipment<br>• Techniques and processes |

**How is Design and Technology assessed?**

In Years 9, 10 and 11 the assessment focuses on the specification criteria, client requirements and showing evidence of manufacturing high quality products.

There is one independent project directed by the examination board. This will consist of a portfolio and 3D outcome. There is also an examination at the end of the course.

**Examination Paper**

What's assessed

- Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks)
  A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.
- Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks)
  Several short answer questions (2 – 5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in-depth knowledge of technical principles.

- Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks)
  A mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a 12 mark design question.

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 100 marks
- 50% of GCSE

**Non-exam assessment** (portfolio and 3d outcome)

What's assessed

Practical application of:

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

How it's assessed

- Non-exam assessment (NEA): 30 – 35 hours approximately
- 100 marks
- 50% of GCSE

**How much homework will be set?**

There will be one 30 - 35 minutes homework session per week which will be used to reinforce themes and where possible will be of a practical nature. It is therefore advisable for students to have access to an A3 portfolio to carry work.

**How does GCSE Design and Technology lead on to A Level?**

GCSE Design and Technology provides a sound basis for A Level study since it develops the key skills of communication, application of number, ICT, working with others, improving own learning and performance and problem solving. Design and Technology is uniquely placed to provide opportunities in transferable skills required at A Level and it is advisable, although not compulsory, to study this first as an option at GCSE.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE AQA (Compulsory)**

Students will prepare for the two subjects combined at GCSE as many of the skills crossover. The students will be assessed by closed book examinations at the end of Year 11. Students will also need to deliver a formal presentation as part of the English Language course. This will be endorsed on their certificate, but carries a 0% weighting.

**About the subjects**

English Language teaches skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. English Literature explores the effects writers can achieve through structure, imagery, diction and narrative style. The reformed English courses offer a challenging and rewarding range of texts and topics and build on the skills that the students have been developing at Key Stage Three.

**Why are they important?**

Learning to analyse text and media is an important skill for everyone, as is the ability to recognise the line of an argument and to be able to produce a clear one yourself. You will often be expected in life to present information orally, and this too is a skill that you will develop during discussion work in English lessons.

**Assessment**

**GCSE English Language (100% examination)**

Paper 1 – Explorations in creative reading and writing (50%)
Paper 2 – Writer's viewpoints and perspectives (50%)

Non-examined Assessment – individual presentation to the class (0%)

**GCSE English Literature (100% examination – closed book)**

Paper 1 – Shakespeare and the 19$^{th}$ Century novel (40%)
Paper 2 – Modern texts and poetry (60%)

Information on set texts will be shared with students at the end of Year 8. More information can be found on the AQA website.

**Homework**

There are two homework tasks of 30 - 35 minutes each week. However, preparation for practice exams may spread over a week or more, and may not fit neatly into the homework layout. A fair amount of time for completion of the task will always be negotiated with the students.

**How do GCSE English Language and English Literature lead on to A level?**

At the High School, the GCSE course leads to A level English Literature. Students who have enjoyed the literary elements of the GCSE course, who enjoy reading and are fascinated by language use, will want to hone their critical skills at this level.

**GEOGRAPHY – AQA Specification A (Optional)**

**Why choose Geography?**

Geography is a bridge between the arts and sciences and is therefore a relevant and flexible subject. It gives an awareness of issues at all scales from local to global.

These include:

- Environmental relationships between people and their surroundings;
- Sustainable development;
- Our global interdependence;
- An understanding of cultural differences.

It offers *transferable skills* such as data collection, analysis and evaluation which are used in other subjects as well as Geography. As students of Geography you will become equipped in a wide range of skills sought by Higher Education Institutions and employers. Geography is a well-respected and sought after academic qualification.

**What will I study at GCSE?**

There are 3 units all of which emphasise inter-relationships between people's activities and the environment.

These units are:

Unit 1: Living with the physical environment:

- The challenge of natural hazards
- Physical landscapes in the UK
- The living world

Unit 2: Challenges in the human environment:

- Changing economic world
- Urban issues
- Resource management

Unit 3: Geographical applications:

- Issue evaluation
- Fieldwork
- Geographical skills

**How GCSE Geography is assessed**

- The controlled assessment (coursework) element of GCSE geography **has been removed.**
- The course is assessed at the end of year 11 in three examinations of the units described above.
- Units 1 and 2 are 1.5 hours long and worth 35% of the GCSE each.
- Unit 3 is 1 hour 15 minutes long and worth 30% of the GCSE

**Homework**

There is one homework of 30 – 35 minutes each week. These will usually be related to topics studied in class or to reinforce skills and previous knowledge.

**What will Geography GCSE lead to?**

Geographers work in almost every field of employment, and the qualification would support applications for science based degrees like psychology and environmental sciences as well as humanities degrees like law and business.

## HISTORY (Optional)

### What is GCSE History all about?

History at GCSE links to some of the 20th century topics you have studied in Years 7 and 8, as well as some of the Medieval and Early Modern topics too. Your course will involve a study of World and European History starting in the early twentieth century, as well as a study of Medieval England. The course will help you to understand some of the most important issues in the medieval and modern world, and how events over time have shaped the world we live in today. Through depth studies you will gain insight into particular problems of the past. You will have the opportunity to develop the skills to look beyond the headlines, to ask questions critically and to express your own opinions.

### Will I enjoy this course?

You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that involves learning about and discussing the events that have shaped today's world. You will study world issues such as why the 1920s in America are often described as 'roaring', why a Cold War broke out after World War Two and how Britain has been shaped by its interaction with the wider world, including controversial issues such as migration. If you are interested in learning about different aspects of history, the old and the new and like to put forward a well-developed point of view, then you will enjoy History.

The pursuit of historical knowledge of people and events is profoundly interesting and fun – a form of time travel that illuminates characters, chains of events and how they came to be!

### How is GCSE History assessed?

**Examinations**

| Component | Content | Duration | Weighting |
|---|---|---|---|
| Paper 1 | '**Understanding the Modern World'**, <u>including</u>:<br>- The USA, 1920 – 1973;<br>- Tensions between East and West, 1945-72 | 1 hour 45mins | 50% |
| Paper 2 | **'Shaping the Nation'**: a focus on British history, <u>including</u>:<br>- Migration, empires and the people<br>- Norman England, 1066-c1100 | 1 hour 45 mins | 50% |

### Homework

There is one homework session of 30 - 35 minutes per week. The homework set will generally be related to topics studied in class and will help to develop historical skills, homework may also be used for revision purposes and to review and consolidate skills and knowledge.

**What skills will I develop?**

As well as learning about History, the course will enable you to improve your skills in communication, IT, working with others, improving your own learning and performance, critical thinking and problem solving. Studying History encourages you to produce well-reasoned conclusions based on the evaluation of evidence, which is a highly transferable skill.

**How does GCSE History lead on to A level?**

GCSE History will provide you with the necessary skills to study this subject at an advanced level – it links particularly well with the subjects we study at A level here and the skills developed at GCSE are transferable to the advanced course. It can also be used to support many other advanced courses including English Literature, Art and MFL, for example. The opportunities are endless!

## MATHEMATICS (OCR J560)

### Why Mathematics is important

The principal aim of Mathematics teachers is to encourage students to view lessons as developing their abilities to think logically and communicate clearly. This involves an appreciation of the rigour and relationships within Mathematics. Students are taught how to select and apply techniques in a variety of situations, acquiring and using problem-solving strategies as well as being able to interpret and present information in a range of graphical representations. Amongst the variety of contexts involved in these studies there are important applications in many other subject disciplines. A good grasp of GCSE maths is known to have a positive impact on career options. It is a subject that employers demand, above all others. We aim to project and encourage a view that studying mathematics is a positive and enjoyable experience as well as the undoubted value of a good GCSE qualification in maths, a requirement for a majority of University courses.

### KS4 course

All students study the *OCR Mathematics (J560)* course at higher level (grades 9 - 4 available). Students sit the three 1 hour 30 minute GCSE papers, two with a calculator and one without, at the end of Year 11. Sets are formed in Year 9 based on their attainment in the previous year. Top set students further enrich their mathematical skills by following the *AQA Further Mathematics (8360)* level 2 course. This additional GCSE qualification, also taken at the end of Year 11, intends to broaden algebra skills and introduce aspects of the advanced level maths and further maths courses. Both courses are taught with knowledge and understanding given the same importance as communication and reasoning mathematically.

### Work and support

We strive for all students to achieve at the highest levels. There are three one hour lessons per week. Homework tasks are set each week and marked closely to point out any errors that students make. A lunchtime support session every week is available for students wishing to improve their understanding of a particular piece of content. There is a particular emphasis on practice of past paper questions and students are provided with a resource disk so that they can recap ideas at their own pace. All students sit the national UKMT Intermediate Challenge to broaden their ability to tackle demanding questions. There are opportunities to attend maths enrichment events run at local universities.

### Further study

Many students at the school choose to study advanced mathematics to A - level. The advanced level course introduces specific applications of maths in statistics and mechanics modules as well as developing an understanding of calculus and other techniques in pure maths modules. Those who wish to pursue a mathematical or closely related career can also opt to study Further Mathematics.

**MODERN LANGUAGES (AQA) - FRENCH AND GERMAN (Optional)**

One Modern Language is compulsory and you may opt to take both languages.

**Aims**

In the modern world, languages are an increasingly valuable skill as communications expand. Knowledge of one or more languages will enable you to speak and write to people of different nationalities, as well as to develop an appreciation of other cultures.

**Content**

You will study the four language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing to a higher level than in Key Stage 3, and you will cover topics within the following themes:

1. Identity and culture
2. Local, national, international and global areas of interest
3. Current and future study and employment

**Assessment**

You will work towards the Higher Tier examinations, which are all taken at the end of Year 11 and are all externally assessed. Each skill paper is worth 25% of the final mark.

<u>Listening</u>

- 45 minutes + 5 minutes reading time
- Questions in English or French or multiple choice

<u>Reading</u>

- 1 hour
- Questions in English, French or multiple-choice
- Translation from French to English

<u>Speaking</u>

- Teacher-examiner then recording is sent away
- 10 – 12 minutes (+ 12 minutes preparation time)
- Role-play; photo card; general conversation

<u>Writing</u>

- 1 hour 15 minutes
- 90 words structured task
- 150 words open-ended task
- Translation into French

**Will I enjoy the course?**

If you enjoy learning about different cultures and you already find your languages lessons enjoyable, then yes! There will plenty of activities to keep your lessons interesting; we use games, interactive activities, on-line tasks, role-plays, authentic materials such as songs and videos in the language, as well as the usual vocabulary and grammar explanations and learning. There may be an opportunity to put your language speaking into practice if you take part in our French exchange to the Ardèche in the South of France or a school trip to Berlin.

**Which skills will I develop?**

The new GCSE examination aims to make you a better linguist because we will train you to use your vocabulary and grammar in various ways. You will learn how to read and understand French and/or German in a variety of different source texts, including extracts of literature, and you will learn how to write for a variety of audiences.

You will develop good translating skills both into and out of English, and we will help prepare you to speak in numerous role-play situations as well as converse generally on topics with in the above themes.

The fact that the GCSE courses are much concerned with practical communication is a good basis for further development of these skills to a higher level: anyone coping well with a GCSE course should cope well at A level.

**MUSIC – Edexcel Syllabus (Optional)**

**Why choose Music?**

Music GCSE is an opportunity to explore creatively the most pervasive of all human art forms. If you wish to take the performing arts further, perhaps at A' level or beyond, then Music is an obvious choice. If you are thinking of pursuing science or the humanities then Music GCSE is still a subject employers and universities like to see on an application form.

Please do not feel that you have not got sufficient music theory knowledge to take this subject. The first term is completely focused on getting everyone up to a sufficient level on music theory and knowledge so that the rest of the course is much easier to study.

**Will I enjoy the course?**

Music is a very enjoyable course as there is a lot of freedom when it comes to composing and performing and the set works are very pleasing to the ear! It is also a very satisfying course as there are many opportunities to perform in the local area for others to listen to your talents!

**What skills will I develop?**

As well as specific music performing, composing and appraising skills, Music is also a fantastic subject for developing transferable skills such as; communicating, working with others, organising, problem solving, developing ICT skills, developing confidence speaking/performing in front of others, research, analytical skills and critical thinking skills. Employers and universities see music as an excellent subject for developing these skills.

**Should I study Music?**

You should consider study Music at GCSE level if you are:

- A keen performer or composer/songwriter ready to develop your skills in both areas.
- Interested in learning more about different styles and genres of music, both past and present.
- Wanting to learn more about music theory and knowledge
- Thinking about going into the arts industry either as a performer, composer, administrator, conductor, editor, arranger, orchestrator, recording engineer, manager, music therapist, merchandising, promoter or publisher. The range of roles are endless! Many other careers like to see music as it is a facilitating subject and many employers like to see the variety that you have to offer.

**What must I do to pass GCSE Music?**

There are three components of work in music;

| **Component 1: Performing (*30%* of the qualification)** |
|---|
| *Non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated* |
| **Content overview**<br>• Solo performing, Ensemble performing, Approaches to performing |
| **Assessment overview**<br>• Student perform for at least four minutes' combined duration<br>• Solo performance: this music be of at least one minute in duration, and may comprise one or more pieces<br>• Ensemble performance: this must be of at least on minute in duration, and may comprise of one or more pieces |

| **Component 2: Composing (*30%* of the qualification)** |
|---|
| *Non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated* |
| **Content overview**<br>• Developing musical ideas, Compositional techniques and strategies, Ensuring technical control and coherence, Methods of notating composition scores, Using specialist music software to compose |
| **Assessment overview**<br>• Students compose two compositions, of at least three minutes' combined duration<br>• One composition to a brief set by Pearson, of at least one minute in duration<br>• One free composition set by the student, of at least one minute in duration |

| **Component 3: Appraising (*40%* of the qualification)** |
|---|
| *Written examination: 1hour and 45 minutes* |
| **Content overview**<br>• Musical elements, musical contexts, music theory, musical language<br>• Must study two set works from each area of study:<br>1. Instrumental Music 1700-1820 – J.S Bach "*Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D – 3rd movement"* and Beethoven's *"Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor – 1st Movement"*<br>2. Vocal Music – Purcell's *"Music for a while"* and Freddie Mercury's *"Killer Queen"*<br>3. Music for Stage and Screen – Stephen Schwartz's *"Defying Gravity (from Wicked)"* and John Williams' *"Main Title Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope"*<br>4. Fusions – Afro Celt Sound System's *"Release"* and Esperanza Spalding's *"Samba Em Preludio"* |
| **Assessment overview**<br>The paper is made up of two sections and is out of a total of 80 marks.<br>**Section A – Areas of Study, dictation and unfamiliar pieces**<br>**Section B – Extended response comparison between ad set work and one unfamiliar piece** |

**Will I have much homework?**

Student will be expected to practice their chosen instrument for their performance assessment as homework. Additional homework, such as theory exercises, will only be set if necessary. This is because the performance assessment is worth 30% of the overall qualification. Which leaves school time to primarily focus on the other two components.

**RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS**

**GCSE Religious Studies Short Course - Eduqas**

In Year 9 students will begin a GCSE short course which will be externally assessed by examination at the end of Year 10.

Through the short course pupils will develop an understanding of religious and non-religious world views and will explore questions about existence and morality. During the course pupils will develop their independent thinking, analytical and evaluation skills and will have the opportunity to form and discuss their own responses to philosophical and moral issues.

**Aims**

The content and delivery of the course encourages pupils to

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism.
- Develop their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying.
- Develop their ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject.
- Provide opportunities to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life.
- Challenge them to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contribute to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of two religions.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including scripture and/or sacred texts, where appropriate, which support contemporary religious faith.
- Understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities and societies.
- Understand significant common and divergent views between and/or within religions and beliefs.
- Apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values.
- Construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values.
- Develop transferable skills and those relevant to the study of religion.

**Content**

**Component 1: Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies**

Theme 1 – Issues of Relationships

- The characteristics of relationships, marriage and family.
- Sexual relationships.
- Issues of equality; gender prejudice and discrimination.

Theme 2 – Issues of Life and Death

- Beliefs (religious and scientific) about the origins of the universe.
- Beliefs (religious, scientific and secular) about the origins and value of human life.
- Attitudes towards euthanasia and abortion.
- Beliefs about death and the afterlife.

Examination = 1 hour written examination (50% of the qualification)

**Component 2: Study of Christianity**

Pupils will explore the beliefs and teachings of Christianity:

- Beliefs about the nature of God.
- Beliefs about the nature and purpose of Jesus.
- Beliefs about the creation of the universe and humanity.
- Beliefs about salvation.
- Beliefs about life after death.

Examination = 35 minute written examination (25% of the qualification)

**Component 3: Study of Buddhism**

Pupils will explore the beliefs and teachings of Buddhism:

- The Buddha.
- The Dhamma.
- The Four Noble truths.
- Human personality.
- Human destiny and ethical teaching.

Examination = 35 minute written examination (25% of the qualification)

**SCIENCE (AQA)**

**Key Stage 4 Science**

We will be offering students GCSE Biology (8461), Chemistry (8462) and Physics (8463) as separate sciences.

**Why is Science important?**

Science is about understanding the world around us from the smallest particles up to the entire Universe and everything in between.

Science is behind many exciting developments which enrich our lives in so many ways and we want to prepare our students to both gain an understanding and to be part of making the world a better place for tomorrow by using the Science they have learned here.

**How will Science be assessed?**

Each science will have two papers each weighing 50% of a GCSE. All the examinations will be written papers 1 hour and 45 minutes long consisting of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response. Both papers need to be sat to gain a GCSE in a given science subject. For example, to gain a GCSE in Biology, Biology Paper 1 and Paper 2 need to be sat. The same applies to Chemistry and Physics. Students will sit all their exams at the end of Year 11.

There is no coursework or controlled assessment. However, candidates are expected to complete a series of compulsory experiments, 10 in both Physics and Biology and 8 in Chemistry as part of their course. These compulsory practical requirements will be carried out within lessons at some stage during the course and will provide 10 compulsory skills specific to each of the sciences which will be tested in the exams. The exam papers will include questions that test the students on their practical skills.

**At the end of Year 11 the following exams will be sat:**

| Component | What is assessed |
|---|---|
| Biology Paper 1 | Topics 1 - 4:<br>Cell biology; Organisation; Infection and response; Bioenergetics. |
| Biology Paper 2 | Topics 5 - 7:<br>Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; Ecology. |
| Chemistry Paper 1 | Topics 1 – 5:<br>Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; Energy changes. |
| Chemistry Paper 2 | Topics 6 – 10:<br>The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; Using resources. |
| Physics Paper 1 | Topics 1 – 4:<br>Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; Atomic structure. |
| Physics Paper 2 | Topics 5 – 8:<br>Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism; Space physics. |

**How much homework will be set?**

There are three homework sessions of 30 – 35 minutes each per week.

**How does Separate Sciences lead on to A level?**

The three separate sciences provide through preparation to commence A-levels. Separate Sciences allow more time to study topics in depth and ideal to those students aspiring to a science related course at university.

Pupils who have taken separate sciences statistically are more likely to secure the top grades at A level.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

### A LEVELS CURRENTLY ON OFFER

The school offers the following A levels - although this situation may be subject to change on a year-to-year basis. Please note that this comprehensive list will support any choices at degree level.

AS/A2 in:

English Literature, History, Geography, Economics & Business, French, German, Art, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Music, Psychology, Design and Technology, Government & Politics, Computing, RE (Ethics & Philosophy).

### UNIVERSITY

Most girls who attend this school stay on into the Sixth Form to study their chosen subjects at Advanced or Advanced Supplementary level and of these the majority go on to university so that they can gain a degree. They do this for several reasons:

1. The choice of careers is far wider if you have a degree; the chance of getting a job is greater.

2. The experience of being at university brings maturity and independence. The opportunities available for intellectual and personal development are manifold and the range of sporting, musical and leisure activities available are wide and readily accessible.

Some careers demand specific degree qualifications but this is not so for the majority. Employers look for people who are adaptable, flexible, capable of working both independently and as part of a team and who have the intellectual capacity to study for a degree. The actual subject matter studied is often not as important as the skills acquired in its study.