



Sheldon School

BE KIND | BE BRAVE | BE THE BEST YOU

KS4 Course Booklet 2026-2028

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The Course Choice Process

Over the next few weeks you will need to make some important decisions. It is crucial that you take this seriously and get the best advice that you can. In Key Stage 4 you will follow the core curriculum which includes **English language, English literature, maths, science, PSRE and Core PE**. For science, students will follow one of two routes; trilogy, in which all three sciences are covered and students achieve 2 GCSE grades, or separate science, where students achieve 3 GCSE grades, one in each of biology, chemistry and physics. Both routes allow progress into A level. The science faculty determine which route students will follow based on their progress.

In addition to the core curriculum, you can choose from a wide range of subjects. When making your choices, we strongly advise that you select a broad range of subjects. Half way through Year 9, the vast majority of students do not have a fixed plan regarding their future aspirations so, continuing with a broad and balanced curriculum into Years 10 and 11 will keep your future career pathways as open as possible.

We strongly advise you to take a humanity, a language and a creative/technical subject to showcase a range of skills and knowledge.

All students will have the same options form and opportunities. While this removes the compulsion for many students to study a language, it is important that you understand that taking a language shows you have valuable skills that are not gained by studying other subjects. Language courses are most suitable for students who have studied that language in Year 9. If you wish to study a language you have not studied in Year 9, you should speak to subject teachers before completing the options form. **It is highly recommended, if you have a strong academic profile, that you choose both a language and a humanity.**

Options Information Evening

Thursday 22 January from 5.30pm – 7.30pm

This is a hugely important evening that you and your parents/carers should attend. There will be further information about selecting subjects to study at Key Stage 4, a presentation from Dr Simpson with advice and guidance on choosing your options and details on how to complete the online options form. There will also be the opportunity for you and your parents/carers to meet with subject staff who will be available in rooms across the school, supported by some of our current Year 10 students. There you will be able to discuss the content of each subject so that you can make informed choices about the subjects you want to study next year.

Year 9 Parents' Evening

Tuesday 27 January from 3:45pm – 6:30pm

An opportunity to discuss your progress with subject teachers

Deadline for submitting option form Friday 6 February 2026

Following the Parents' Evening, a link to the options form will be sent to all parents/carers with a form to select KS4 options. This form will go live on **Wednesday 28 January 2026**.

You can access the link on our website www.sheldonschool.co.uk/home/curriculum/ks4-options

Information (continued)

Purpose of this booklet

This booklet gives you an overview of the core curriculum that we offer and the option subjects for Key Stage 4. Its purpose is to help you make informed choices of the subjects you wish to study next year.

What next?

Please take time to read this booklet and together with your family in order to make the decision about which subjects you wish to study next year. Both you and your parents/carers will have plenty of opportunities to discuss your options with subject teachers, Heads of Faculty and your tutor over the coming weeks. Please contact us by email if you have any questions or just come and talk to us at the course choice evening or at the Year 9 Parents' Evening.

If you or your parents/carers have any further questions about your suitability for a particular subject then do email or speak to your subject teachers and/or Head of Faculty.



Alison Simpson
Deputy Headteacher



Chloe Dundas
Head of Year



Liam Burcombe
Deputy Head of Year

Some questions you may have

Who can help me?

Your Head of Year, Deputy Head of Year, PSRE teacher, subject teachers, tutor, our careers advisor, your parents/carers and relatives. If you feel you would like further support or guidance from anyone at school please talk to your tutor or Miss Witchell, our careers advisor, in the first instance.

Will I be able to do my first choice courses?

Most of you will be able to take all of your choices however, sometimes we are not able to give you a particular subject because:

- not enough people request it to make up a class
- more people ask for it than the available teachers or facilities can cope with
- it is not possible to timetable the mix of courses you have chosen
- you may opt for a course which, in the judgement of staff, is not well suited to you

We will make sure that if there are any issues, we speak to you and your parents/carers and discuss other options. In the event that a course is oversubscribed, we will assign priority to students in the following way:

1. Option forms that are returned by the deadline will be given priority over those that miss the deadline.
2. Attendance – those students with the highest attendance rate will be given priority over those with lower attendance rates (absence for medical reasons will not be counted).
3. Behaviour – those students with the fewest demerits will be given priority over those with more demerits.
4. Effort – those students who show greater effort in all subjects will be given priority over those that show less effort.

What subjects will I take in Year 10?

Everybody will take English literature, English language, maths, science, PSRE and Core PE. You must also choose one of Computer Science, French, German, Geography, History or Spanish. You will then be able to choose three additional courses from a broad range of subjects. The exception to this is if you have been spoken to about following a more vocational route.

What exams will I take?

Most Key Stage 4 courses have external examinations that are taken at the end of the course. Please see each of the course entries in this booklet for more detailed information about course structure and assessment. If you have any questions please speak to subject teachers.

Will I have to study a language?

No, however it is important that you understand that taking a language shows that you have valuable skills that are not gained by studying other subjects. For any language you opt for at GCSE, you should have already studied it at KS3. In extenuating circumstances, you may be able to pick a language without studying at KS3, (for example if you have a parent or other close family member with whom you regularly communicate in the foreign language). In this case, you need to clearly understand what will be required of you by speaking to the Head of Faculty who will help to determine if this is an appropriate pathway for you.

Some questions you may have (continued)

What is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?

In addition to the core subjects above, if you also study a language and either history or geography, you will achieve the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is not a qualification in itself but it is a nationally recognised performance measure. You do not need to do extra work or exams to get the 'award'.

By following the EBacc, you can be confident that you are taking a broad and balanced range of subjects that will be well regarded by employers and universities and enable you to access a wide variety of options post 16. There is, however, no evidence that universities, now or in the future, will give the EBacc any consideration in their decisions as to whether to award you a place.

What is important, is that you choose subjects that you enjoy, that show a broad range of skills and knowledge, and in which you will achieve the best possible grades; this will give you the best chance of doing what you wish in the future.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

The skills that you develop whilst studying GCSE English Language are ones that you will need every day of your life, at school and beyond. It is no surprise therefore, that it is a compulsory subject. The ability to communicate well will help you in other examined subjects as well as being a vital life skill. The English Language course aims to enable you to think for yourself and express your ideas confidently and accurately as a reader and writer. You will experience reading a variety of novels, poetry, drama, and non-fiction texts, as well as producing pieces of writing in a variety of styles. Class discussion, presentations and role play also play an important role in learning to express yourself clearly, and listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.

Course Content

- Unit 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing
- Unit 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives
- Non examination assessment: spoken language

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

There are two external GCSE examinations that assess your ability to explore literary texts and respond appropriately to them, whilst producing your own creative writing and engaging with different writers' perspectives. Spoken language is also a feature of the GCSE curriculum. This may take the form of an individual or group presentation to the class, but is accredited through a separate spoken language certificate.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

A good grade in English Language is essential if you wish to continue the study of English to A level, and the skills you acquire will help you in all other subjects studied at a higher level. You will find that doing well in English will open doors for you into a wide variety of career opportunities and is a requirement of most college courses.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

You will find the transition from Key Stage 3 English to GCSE English Language fairly straightforward. Many of the aspects of English that you already enjoy and the skills you have been developing as readers and writers will be familiar. If you are prepared to continue to work hard both in class and at home you should continue to enjoy English and be successful.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

The English Literature course focuses on the study of fiction, drama and poetry. The aims are to foster an appreciation of literature and the ability to write convincingly and personally about it through close study of texts. Access to filmed versions of the texts will enrich the work we do in class and provide an extra stimulus for discussion and understanding. Through the study of literature - both 'old' and 'new' – we can learn a great deal about ourselves, human nature and the world we live in.

Assessment

Assessment is completed entirely through external examinations. The unit 1 exam comprises 40% of your GCSE mark and requires you to answer two questions. The unit 2 exam is worth 60% of your grade and requires you to answer three questions in total. You will be provided with school copies of the texts for class study and revision, but you are not permitted to take copies into the examinations.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

A good grade in English Literature is essential if you wish to continue the study of English to A level, and the skills you acquire will help you in all other subjects studied at a higher level. You will find that doing well in English will open doors for you into a wide variety of career opportunities as the critical and evaluative skills you develop are highly adaptable and are prized by employers.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

You will find the transition from Key Stage 3 English to GCSE English Literature fairly straightforward. Many of the aspects of English that you already enjoy and the skills you have been developing as readers and writers will be familiar. If you are prepared to continue to work hard both in class and at home you should continue to enjoy English and be successful.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

Mathematics is a vital skill in many areas of life and is a compulsory subject. There are uses for maths in virtually every career choice. Many pupils find maths to be very interesting in its own right and a good knowledge of maths will help you in many different subjects. You will learn how to complete problems with and without a calculator and also how to use ICT to help solve mathematical problems. Nowadays, there is an increasing reliance on the role of technology in our lives: computers, mobile phones, etc. All of these modern developments would not have been possible without the mathematical knowledge needed to help their invention.

Course Content

During the course you will be taught mathematics from five broad topic areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio and proportion
- Geometry and measures
- Probability and statistics

The GCSE course builds on the mathematics you have already learnt up to the end of Year 9. There is an emphasis placed on functional elements of mathematics which will provide you with the skills and abilities needed to use mathematics in everyday life.

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Many of you will already know that you enjoy mathematics. You can all succeed provided you maintain your efforts throughout the course. With certain parts of the course, the maths studied is a building block to further mathematical study; however, in most parts of the course the maths will be of immediate benefit in other areas of life.

Assessment

There are two tiers of entry available. The higher tier covers grades 4-9 and the foundation tier covers 1-5. The overlap means that pupils on either tier can achieve a “strong pass”.

For both tiers, the course is assessed with three equally sized examinations taken at the end of the course.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

A good grade in GCSE Mathematics is essential if you intend to take A Level Mathematics. In addition, many other subjects at A Level will require the use of mathematics. Equally, a good grade in GCSE Mathematics is also a requirement for most university courses and for entry into a wide variety of careers. A sound background in mathematics is essential for many careers and maths is used in all aspects of life.

Physical Education is a Foundation subject and a compulsory part of the National Curriculum for all pupils. During Key Stage 3 you will have received a thorough introduction to the main aspects of PE. During Key Stage 4 you will get the opportunity to make choices so that you can cover activities that are already familiar to you in greater depth as well as experiencing new activities.

Course Content

You will follow directed activities for the first term of Y10 and then make personal choices regarding the activity routes you will follow for the rest of Key Stage 4. Modules are four weeks and include the opportunity to experience outdoor and adventure activities such as, mountain biking, climbing and map and compass.

Activities may be single or mixed sex where appropriate.

Pupils will have the opportunity to participate in the following activities during Key Stage 4:

- Rugby
- Football
- Netball
- Hockey
- Basketball
- Yoga / Pilates
- Badminton
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Cricket
- Softball
- American Football
- Athletics
- Trampolining
- Fitness
- Mountain Biking
- Lacrosse
- Climbing
- Map and Compass
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Netball Leaders
- Handball

There will also be the opportunity for pupils to access Leadership courses and opportunities.

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Qualification: N/A

Equivalent to: N/A

Things in the world are becoming more and more diverse. There are issues facing you today that were not around a few years ago. As society develops, it is becoming more complex, and there is a very great need for you to have developed the necessary skills to help you cope and succeed in the world. PSRE at Sheldon is about you going through a process which will help you to increasingly take greater charge of yourself and your own life – helping to prepare you to become your own individual, who can confidently live and work within society. It is our aim in these lessons to help you develop the ability to clarify your values, feelings and attitudes relating to moral, social, cultural and religious issues. The emphasis of these lessons is to help you to make informed decisions based on sound knowledge so that you can enjoy a good quality of life.

Course Content

You will cover the following areas:

- Careers Education
- Sex and Relationships Education and Family Life
- Moral and Social Education
- Religious Education
- Health Education

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

Religious Education modules are assessed.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

PSRE will help you in all walks of life. The skills you learn and develop may be applied to numerous areas, including sixth form, college, apprenticeships, your working and personal lives. If you are considering a career where working with others is involved, then this will be invaluable.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

You will enjoy the course if you have an interest in life. We cover lots of interesting and topical issues and those pupils who really get involved in questioning and debating, and consider the views of both themselves and others will thrive. You will also get the opportunity to learn some valuable life skills which will help you throughout your life. Therefore, if you are interested in yourself and others, you should find this interesting.

Qualification: Double Award GCSE

Equivalent to: 2 GCSEs (9 – 1)

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy is a suitable course for pupils of all abilities whether you intend to study science beyond GCSE or not. This course provides a firm foundation for progression to A Level Science.

Course Content

- **Biology:** cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution and ecology.
- **Chemistry:** atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere and using resources.
- **Physics:** energy, electricity, particle model of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves and magnetism and electromagnetism.

Indicative course cost: nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

Students will sit six terminal exams in May/June of Year 11. All exams are externally examined and include multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions. Students will sit six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each paper will be 1 hour 15 minutes long and will assess different topics. Each paper is worth 16.7% of the grade and has 70 marks.

There are no controlled assessments. There is a strong emphasis on practical skills and during the course students will complete 16 required practicals covering the three disciplines, biology, chemistry and physics.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Taking GCSE Science will enable you to further your studies in Science at A Level and at university. There are a large number of careers that are science based but any employer will be impressed with the skills you have developed on this course.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course will be suitable for the vast majority of our pupils. To succeed you will need a natural curiosity and desire to understand how things around you work, you will also need to be organised, ensuring that all deadlines are met. We expect you to be an active learner who will participate fully in all the opportunities the course will offer. The more you put into the study of the wide area of science on offer the more you will enjoy the course and succeed.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 3 GCSEs (Grades 9 – 1)

GCSE Separate science includes the content of Combined Science: Trilogy with additional topics in biology, chemistry and physics. It will further develop your science skills, knowledge and understanding. It is a firm foundation for progression to A Level Sciences.

Course Content

To complete the course, you will cover all the content in the **Combined Science: Trilogy** plus the following:

- **Biology:** plant hormones, energy transfer through trophic levels, maximising food yields, reproduction, monoclonal antibodies, plant disease, the brain, negative feedback and maintaining biodiversity.
- **Chemistry:** life cycle assessment and recycling, chemical cells and fuel cells, properties of transition metals, homologous series, simple reactions of alkanes, alkenes and alcohols, synthetic and naturally occurring polymers, spectroscopy, using materials and maximising agricultural productivity and greenhouse gases.
- **Physics:** space physics, pressure, emissions and nuclear fission and fusion, moments, lenses, colour, black body radiation, static electricity, sound, particle model and pressure and atomic structure.

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

Students will sit six terminal exams in May/June of Year 11. All exams are externally examined and include multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions. Students will sit six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each paper will be 1 hour 45 minutes long and will assess different topics. Each paper is worth 50% of the grade and has 100 marks.

There are no controlled assessments. There is a strong emphasis on practical skills and during the course students will complete 8 required practicals for each subject.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Taking Separate Science will enable you to further your studies in Science at A Level and at University. There are a large number of careers that are science based but any employer will be impressed with the skills you have developed on this course.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

You must have a keen interest in science and would ideally be thinking of a career in one of the many scientific fields. Ideally you should be working at or towards a Grade 6.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

You may only opt for one Art GCSE course.

The GCSE Art (Craft and Design) course is designed to develop and broaden your creative and imaginative abilities, practical and analytical skills and cultural knowledge.

Course Content

- Develop your ideas and practical skills as an individual artist / designer / craftsman.
- Learn skills and techniques associated with a broad range of creative processes and media, for example drawing, painting, printmaking, textiles, ceramics and photography.
- Research, explore and analyse relevant examples of art / craft / design work made by historical and contemporary artists / designers / craftspeople. Emphasis is placed on creative examples that link to students' project themes and practical investigations.
- Develop knowledge, understanding and skills in practical, critical and theoretical study that encourages direct engagement with original art / craft / design works and practice.
- Explore techniques and personal ideas relating to given topics.
- Document all practical, research and developmental work, reflecting on own progress towards sustained project outcomes.

Indicative course costs: There will be a one-day trip each year costing in the region of £20-£25 each. Students will also need to purchase a sketchbook and some basic art materials for the completion of homework at an approximate cost of £10. Students may also choose to provide specialist materials for their final project.

Assessment

Component 1 – The Coursework Portfolio will be developed from personal and/or given starting points and represent the use of a range of creative media. The student will need to select and present a body of their best work for formal assessment. This should represent at least 45 hours of work and will be worth 60% of the final grade.

Component 2 – The Externally Set Assignment is a project set by the examination board and is worth 40% of the final grade. You will have time to create a body of preparatory work over a period of eight weeks, before spending 10 hours under exam conditions on a final piece.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

An interest in Art is essential and you should be keen to learn and use a wide variety of art and craft techniques and skills. Drawing forms an important part of the course and there will be ample opportunities to experiment widely and explore a range of traditional techniques and new media. If you are able to work independently and have ideas of your own you will enjoy this course. You will need to be able to reflect on your progress and the work of other artists, to meet deadlines and explore and investigate imaginative ideas.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Opting for GCSE Art (Craft and Design) will enable you to further your studies in A Level courses in Fine Art, Art Textiles, Photography and subsequently at University or Art Foundation. There are many careers leading on from an A Level or Degree in Art and Design, for example architecture, fashion and textile design, graphic design, illustration, interior design, photography, film, new media design, model-making, printing, engraving, stage and set design.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (Grades 9 – 1)

You may only opt for one Art GCSE course

The purpose of the GCSE Art (Fine Art) course is to improve and broaden your creative, practical and imaginative ability, analytical skills and cultural knowledge.

Course Content

- Developing your ideas and skills as an individual artist.
- Exploring practical and critical/contextual work through a range of 2D and 3D processes and new media and technologies. Drawing in different forms will be studied, along with painting, printmaking and other two and three dimensional media. These could include sculpture and ceramics, photography and mixed media.
- Developing knowledge, understanding and skills in practical, critical and theoretical study that encourages direct engagement with original art works and practice. Students visit a major art gallery as part of their course both in Year 10 and in Year 11.
- Exploring techniques and ideas relating to students' personal responses to given themes and topics.

Indicative course costs: There will be a one-day trip each year costing in the region of £20-£25 each. Students will also need to purchase a sketchbook and some basic art materials for the completion of homework at an approximate cost of £10. Students may also choose to provide specialist materials for their final project.

Assessment

Your coursework portfolio will be developed from personal and/or given starting points. You will need to select and present a body of your best work for formal assessment. This should represent roughly 45 hours of work and will be worth 60% of your final grade

The externally set assignment is a project set by the examination board and is worth 40% of the final grade. You will have time to create a body of preparatory work over a period of eight weeks, before spending 10 hours under exam conditions on a final piece

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Taking Art (Fine Art) will enable you to further your studies in A Level courses in Fine Art, Art Textiles, Photography and subsequently at university or on an Art Foundation course. There are many careers leading on from an A Level or a Degree in Art and Design, such as: architecture, fashion design, graphic design, illustration, interior design, photography, film, new media design, model-making, printing, engraving, stage and set design.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

An interest in creating and studying art is essential. Drawing forms an important part of the course and there will also be ample opportunities to experiment widely and explore a range traditional techniques and new media. If you are able to work independently and have ideas of your own you will enjoy this course. You will need to be able to analyse your work and the work of other artists, to meet deadlines and explore and investigate imaginative ideas.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

You may only opt for one Art GCSE course

The GCSE Art (Photography) course is designed to develop and broaden your creative and imaginative abilities, practical and analytical skills and cultural knowledge.

Course Content

- Develop your ideas and practical skills as an individual photographer.
- Learn the basic skills and techniques used within photography, understand how to use a DSLR camera and learn how to adjust settings including shutter speed, aperture and ISO.
- Develop observational skills required within photography.
- Study the work of other artists and photographers, linking this to the development of personal ideas. Emphasis is placed on creative examples that link to students' project themes and practical investigations.
- Experiment with both hand-made and digital techniques, exploring ways to develop photography.
- Document all practical, research and developmental work, reflecting on own progress towards sustained project outcomes.
- Areas of possible study include documentary photography, photo-journalism, location photography, experimental imagery and studio photography.

Indicative course costs: There will be a one-day trip each year costing in the region of £20-£25 each.

Students will also need to purchase a sketchbook and some basic art materials for the completion of homework at an approximate cost of £10. Students may use their own camera, should they wish, but are not expected to have their own.

Assessment

Component 1 – The Coursework Portfolio will be developed from personal and/or given starting points and represent the use of a range of photography skills and techniques. The student will need to select and present a body of their best work for formal assessment. This should represent at least 45 hours of work and will be worth 60% of the final grade.

Component 2 – The Externally Set Assignment is a project set by the examination board and is worth 40% of the final grade. You will have time to create a body of preparatory work over a period of eight weeks, before spending 10 hours under exam conditions on a final piece.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Opting for GCSE Art (Photography) will enable you to further your studies in A Level courses in Fine Art, Photography and subsequently at University or Art Foundation. There are many careers leading on from an A Level or Degree in Art and Design Photography, for example commercial photographer, photojournalist, animator, fine art photography, fashion photographer, forensic photographer and visual merchandiser.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

An interest in Photography is essential and you should be keen to learn and use a wide variety of photography skills as well as photographic manipulation techniques. If you are able to work independently and have ideas of your own you will enjoy this course. You will need to be able to reflect on your progress and the work of other photographers, to meet deadlines and explore and investigate imaginative ideas.

Qualification: Asdan CoPe (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness)
NVQ (or similar)

Equivalent to: The Asdan CoPe qualification will be at either Entry, Level 1, which is the equivalent to GCSE (3) or Level 2 GCSE (5)

This course will lead you to recognised qualifications by helping you to plan, organise and complete a series of activities or challenges. These challenges are taught in various modules and are often “hands on”, involving many practical activities. All work completed in or out of school may be credited towards the final qualifications.

You will be taught in small groups which helps you develop your functional skills, i.e. working with others, communication, problem solving and working independently. The local community is used regularly as an integral part of your learning.

Course Content

Sheldon Asdan CoPe – Modules studied include:

- Communication
- Citizenship and Community
- Sport and Leisure
- Independent Learning
- Work Related Learning and Enterprise

Indicative course costs: There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

- Asdan CoPe – portfolio based assessment
- Vocational qualifications – ASDAN Cope LEVEL 1-2

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

After following this course you could continue on to a similar course at College, or perhaps Sixth Form. You would also be able to commence an apprenticeship or other recognised training. You could pursue a career in your chosen vocational area, or move on to something new.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

If you like more practical, hands-on learning, in a variety of settings, you will find this rewarding, accessible and enjoyable. If you are considering a vocational career path such as mechanics or catering for example, this course will provide you with a good foundation.

Qualification: GCSE Business

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (Grades 9 – 1)

People choose business studies for many reasons. You might have an interest in business, and want to start your own business one day. You may have an enquiring mind and be interested in learning about the world around you, how businesses are set up, and what it is that makes someone a great entrepreneur. Alternatively, you may just want a good GCSE that prepares you well for A Levels and University, as well as apprenticeships. Business attracts a wide range of students and is a well-established and successful subject at Sheldon.

Course Content

The course is made up from two key themes.

Theme 1 – Investigating small business. Topics include;

- spotting a business opportunity
- putting a business idea into practice
- enterprise and entrepreneurship
- making the business effective
- external influences on business

Theme 2 – Building a Business. Topics include;

- growing the business
- making marketing decisions
- making financial decisions
- making operational decisions
- making human resource decisions

Indicative additional course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

- Theme 1 and 2 have equal weighting
- Both assessed with written exams

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

You will become skilled in making decisions, being creative, solving problems, understanding finance, dealing with data, communicating and working as part of team. These skills are very attractive to future employers. A GCSE Business course could lead to work in a business-related profession such as accountancy, law, marketing or the leisure and tourism industry. It also prepares you for A Level and University – business related degree courses are amongst the most popular in the UK. With a business GCSE, you will also be a stronger candidate when applying for any form of apprenticeship whether it is at 16 or 18 years old.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Business studies is a good option for you if you enjoy;

- communicating and explaining your ideas
- thinking creatively and making decisions
- learning about the world of business through research and investigation, as well as through practical tasks

Qualification: OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate

The Cambridge National in Child Development introduces students to aspects of child development and parental responsibility, from conception to five years. Students develop the essential theoretical knowledge and practical skills needed to create the best conditions for a child's development and well-being.

Course Content

External Exam

- **Health and well-being for child development**

In this unit, students will learn about the importance of both pre-conception health and creating conditions in which a child can thrive, including the prevention and management of childhood illnesses and creating a safe environment.

2 x Centre assessed coursework

- **Creating a safe environment and understand the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years**

In this unit, students will learn how to create a safe environment for children from birth to five years in childcare settings. They will investigate and choose equipment that is both suitable and safe for use and will learn about their nutrition and dietary needs.

- **Understand the development of a child from one to five years**

In this unit, students will learn the expected developmental norms for children from one to five years. They will use observation, research techniques and skills to investigate these development norms and explore their findings. Students will also learn the importance of creating plans and providing different play activities to support children in their development.

Assessment

Students will sit a 1hour 15minute exam. All exams are externally examined. The paper is worth 70 marks, the remaining two units are worth 60 marks each which comes from two externally moderated Centre-assessed task.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Knowledge gained would be of use for further studies in PHSE, Biology and other child development qualifications.

The Cambridge National provides a strong base for progression to Further Education, whether it is on to Level 3 Cambridge Technicals or A Levels, or to an apprenticeship or work. It lays a good grounding but is not a requirement to study the level 3 course in sixth form.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course will be suitable for students who are interested in working with children as a career, particularly in a childcare setting.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (Grades 9 – 1)

Edexcel GCSE Computer Science (9-1) 1CP2

The course is engaging and practical, promoting creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to develop their understanding and application of the core concepts in Computer Science. Students also analyse problems in computational terms and devise creative solutions by designing, writing, testing and evaluating programs.

Course Content

- **Component 1 – Principles of Computer Science**
Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science. It introduces students to computational thinking and algorithms
- **Component 2 – Application of Computational Thinking**
Students develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs and computational logic. They learn how to apply those techniques through coding in Python.

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

The course is made up of 2 components which are each assessed as follows:

- **Component 1:** written paper worth 50% of the final mark
- **Component 2:** onscreen coding exam worth 50% of the final mark

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

The course provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science. The increasing importance of information technology means there is a growing demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. Students who have taken a GCSE in Computer Science and who then progress to study the subject at A Level or university will have an advantage over their peers who are picking up the subject at these levels.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course is aimed at students that want to be more than just IT users. It is aimed at those that want to understand how computers work. The course will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming. Students who love using computers, enjoy challenges, are problem solvers and like learning will all thrive.

Qualification: BTEC Award

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (A*– G)

Course Overview

This media qualification allows learners to develop knowledge and understanding through using their learning and skills in a work-related context. Students will work across the creative digital media sectors choosing from moving image, audio production, online media and publishing. There will be real emphasis on digital production such as photo editing and film production as well as universally important skills such as idea generation and presentation.

Course Content

The course comprises 3 components – 2 internally assessed coursework units which explore a range of media products and the techniques required to make them. In addition to these core units there will be a final externally assessed unit in which students will produce a media product and accompanying analysis under controlled conditions.

Internal Assessment/Coursework:

- **Component 1:** Exploring Media Sectors. This unit explores the digital media industry and 3 sectors: moving image and audio, publishing and interactive media. They will explore the different types of audiences and how audiences can engage with each sector.
- **Component 2:** Media Production. In this unit learners have the chance to work with a range of software and hardware to produce media products; they will use audio production, image manipulation and video editing tools.

External Assessment:

- **Component 3:** Students choose from a range of briefs set by the exam board and will have a set amount of time in class to research, produce and evaluate a series of media products such as a video, audio and print advertising campaign.

Assessment

- Component 3 is an externally assessed examination unit worth 40% of your final grade
- The remaining units are internally assessed controlled assessment unit worth 60% of your grade.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Taking this qualification gives you an introduction to a fast-moving and competitive industry. Whilst you don't necessarily need to study the subject at this level to become a media professional, it will equip you with the skills to start interrogating relevant areas. There are strong links with Media Studies at A Level, and this course places strong emphasis on planning, time-management and evaluation – skills that any employer would value.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

It is important that you take a keen interest in various media and are keen to learn more about how to produce a range of media products. Creative Digital Media Prod because of its diversity; some pupils will enjoy research, analysis and pitching, whereas others prefer creating practical production pieces.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (1-9)

“Dance is vital, an activity both exhilarating and liberating to watch or do. The instinct to dance is fundamentally joyous and no matter how hard you try you can’t get away from that for long. It can also be a huge force for good, effectively drawing people together and levelling everyone through sheer hard work. It can speed up your heart rate, it can enliven your being, it can change your life” Richard Alston CBE.

Dance is an exciting GCSE giving you the opportunity to learn about professional dances, companies and choreographers. You will be able to learn set dances for performance and choreograph your own work. You will have many opportunities to participate in workshops, attend many theatre trips and perform both in school and with the local community.

Course Content

Component One: Performance and Choreography

- Solo performance of set phrases and a performance in a duet/trio (30%)
- Choreography of solo or group piece (30%)

Component Two: Dance Appreciation

- Written exam (40%) – study of six professional works; A Linha Curva, Artificial Things, Emancipation of Expressionism, Infra, Shadows and Within Her Eyes.

Indicative course costs: students will need to purchase, through school, a t-shirt for lessons costing approximately £6.50.

Assessment

- All practical work is marked by the teacher during Year 11 (60%)
- Written exam at the end of Year 11 is externally marked (40%)

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education

Students who complete GCSE Dance can go on to study A-Level Dance or vocational qualifications in the performing arts. Students can then follow dance to degree level or audition to join dance schools.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Students who have a real interest or passion for dance do very well. It helps if you attend dance outside of school but is not vital. Students who are keen to attend trips, workshops and clubs will also do very well at GCSE Dance. The course is a balance of practical and theory work. A double lesson each week is dedicated to looking at the professional works, working both theoretically and practically. The single focuses mainly on practical work. Written tasks will be set for homework on a weekly basis and near to assessments, additional rehearsals at lunch time or after school may be required.

It is important that you read all the information on this page, since it applies to each of the following subjects taught in the Design and Technology faculty:

DT – Graphic Products

DT – Textiles

DT – Resistant Materials

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Aims for our D&T courses:

- To enable you to appreciate good design and understand the need for man made products for the world in which we live.
- To provide you with the following range of life skills:
 - To give you basic practical skills so that you can cook, build and mend.
 - To help you become a good consumer and appreciate value for money.
 - To enable you to make good decisions by looking at alternative solutions.

Assessment

Graphic Products, Resistant Materials and Textiles are internal endorsements leading to a Design and Technology GCSE with the following assessment pattern: Major Project (coursework) - 50%, Written Exam- 50%. The GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition course also has the following assessment pattern: Coursework 50%, Written Exam 50%.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

You can progress to an A Level in Design and Technology or a Post 16 Level 3 in Food Science and Nutrition which could support your career choice. You may be interested in the following careers:

- Engineering, architecture, product design, graphic design etc
- Food nutrition, chef, developing food products etc
- Fashion designer, textiles development, interior designer etc

Advice about taking two D&T subjects:

A good idea:

- If you really like D&T and Food and you may want a career in these areas of study.
- If you are thinking of doing a D&T or Food course in the 6th Form.
- If you like coursework which is worth 50% of your GCSE.
- If you don't want to rely on a written exam to do well at GCSE.

A bad idea:

- If you are not very organised, particularly with homework.
- If you do not want to come to D&T or Food club to use the specialist equipment and resources needed to complete practical work to a high standard.

IMPORTANT: You can take Food and Nutrition separately or together with a DT subject. However, you can only take **ONE** DT subject – **EITHER** Graphic Products **OR** Resistant Materials **OR** Textiles.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

You will learn why food works as it does in our bodies and make products which demonstrate the science behind ingredients. You will become more confident and competent with a wide range of skills, techniques and processes, enabling you to design and create your own products and enjoy eating the results of your hard work.

Course Content

The Year 9 pre-GCSE project will build upon the skills and techniques that you have learned in the Year 9 module.

Year 10 course covers five specific areas of study:

- **Food and Nutrition** – you will learn about the effects of both macro and micro nutrients on the body including the functions, excess and deficiencies of nutrients. You will look at the nutrients needed for the key life stages together with government guidelines including the Eatwell Guide and Five a Day.
- **Food and Science** – you will learn how and why food is cooked including the effect of cooking on proteins, sugars, carbohydrates and fats. You will undertake experiments that will support your understanding.
- **Food Safety** – you will learn about all the key aspects of food safety and hygiene and how to ensure that all the food that you prepare is safe to eat.
- **Food Choice** – you will learn about why we eat certain foods including special diets, culture, regional, national and international cuisine. You will learn how senses are used to assess food products.
- **Food Provenance** – you will learn how the food you eat is produced and sourced.

Practical work in Year 10 – You will learn all the skills that will be required in Year 11 and will do at least 17 practical lessons during Year 10.

The Year 11 course comprises of two projects (15% & 35%) and a final exam (50%)

- **Project 1 (15%)** – Food Investigation (Focussing on the working properties of ingredients)
- **Project 2 (35%)** – Food Preparation Task (Focussing on the practical skills learned in Year 10)
- **Exam (50%)** – Based upon the five key areas of study in Year 10.

Indicative additional course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course will appeal to you if you have really enjoyed doing Design and Technology so far, you have a particular interest in working with food and ingredients and you enjoy creating new and interesting dishes.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

Graphic Products is being offered as an internal D&T endorsement. You will learn how to design and make a variety of graphics-focused products such as architectural models, advertisements, board games and product models working with a variety of papers, boards and plastics.

You will develop your graphic communication skills by hand and using computers. You will learn drawing methods and graphic techniques used by designers around the world as well as exploring CAD software to develop logos, branding and produce eye-catching graphics. You will continue to learn about all material areas and focus in detail on scale, ergonomics, processes and structures.

Course Content

The Year 9 pre-GCSE project engages pupils in the design and manufacture of a graphical point of sale display.

Year 10 will include a variety of design and make activities such as:

- **Designing your own logo:** an exciting project that introduces you to the world of Graphics. You will have the opportunity to design a logo that represents yourself and then use this throughout the course.
- **Trainer packaging:** You will design and create a new box for your favourite pair of trainers, shoes of football boots. You need to create a new and innovative way to package them and look at ways to add in additional functions to the box.
- **Architectural Toy:** this project gives you the opportunity to research and be inspired by a range of iconic architects. You will then design a stylish, flat-pack version of a building designed by one of the architects. This project combines Graphics and RM and allows you the chance to work with CAD / CAM to develop and make your product.
- **Mock NEA (Non-exam assessment):** In preparation for your final NEA project you will go through a mock version. You will be given a context or 'Educational toys and games' and work through the key elements of the NEA, from research to the design and make of a new exciting product.

During Term 6 you will be introduced to your major Controlled Assessment project. You will consider a range of projects that suit your interests and skills based around the Contexts provided by the exam board AQA.

Indicative additional course cost: Nil. There is one compulsory trip and optional purchases.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course will appeal to you if you have really enjoyed doing Design and Technology so far, you have a particular interest in presenting two-dimensional design visuals and you wish to make creative prototypes using a variety of industrial modelling techniques. It would be particularly suited to those who might like to follow a career in Graphic Design, Marketing, Architecture or other design disciplines.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

Resistant Materials is being offered as an internal D&T endorsement. You will learn how to design, develop and manufacture working products using a range of resistant materials and manufacturing techniques. This will involve using hand tools, machinery and CAD/CAM in addition to learning about systems and control.

Course Content

The Year 9 pre-GCSE project provides an opportunity for you to see how past designers influence the products of today.

Year 10 course:

- **The MP3 speaker Project:** this is a problem-solving project that will allow you to develop electronic knowledge and skills while also designing and making the case for your electronic circuit board and speakers.
- **The Storage Solutions Project:** this is a real need project allowing you to identify a storage problem before using the design process to create a solution using timber. Your final solution will not only be a useful, high-quality product for you to use, but will act as revision about joining techniques for future exams.
- **The Metal-Work Project:** gives you the opportunity to work with metal and a range of traditional blacksmithing processes to produce a high-quality product. Use your creative skills to design and make a one off original.
- **The Design Era Clock:** you will learn about different design eras and how they inspire designers today. Using your understanding of one of these design styles, you will create a clock that reflects the era chosen.

You will be introduced to your major project at the end of year 10. You will consider a range of projects set by the exam board and identify a potential client who you will design your product for.

The Year 11 course comprises the major project which, by focusing on one of the situations set by the exam board, will enable you to engage in a design and make project of your own choice.

Indicative additional course cost: Approximately £25 for an optional trip to the Design Museum in London.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course will appeal to you if you have really enjoyed doing Design and Technology so far, you have a particular interest in three-dimensional design and you wish to make products from wood, metal and plastic.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

Textiles is being offered as an internal D&T endorsement. The course will provide you with continuity between GCSE and the A Level Fashion and Textiles course. You will explore a range of practical skills which allow you to use fashion and textiles in a creative and imaginative way. This will involve experimenting with different decorative and constructional techniques to design and make your own quality products. You will also gain an understanding about fashion trends, fabric construction, industrial design processes, recycling textiles and how designers gain inspiration.

Course Content

The Year 9 pre-GCSE project provides you with the opportunity to design and make your own textiles product and become more confident with decorative skills. You will be able to enhance your appliqué and embroidery skills as part of this short and creative introductory project.

Year 10 course:

- **The Creative Textiles Project:** engages you in exploring and experimenting with a variety of decorative techniques including tie-dye, batik, hand embroidery, appliqué, block printing, stencilling, entrapment and embellishment. You will use these new skills to design and make a decorative home furnishing product.
- **Fibres and Fabrics:** this forms part of your creative textiles project where you will explore the difference between natural and man-made fibres and create a sound foundation in textiles theory. You will experiment with fabric construction to make your very own material through felting or weaving.
- **Designer Childrenswear:** involves garment construction and understanding how fabric is used to fit the contours of the human body. You will experiment with a range of technical dressmaking skills such as seams, pleats, darts, pockets and understanding how to use and work with a commercial pattern. You will make a garment for a young child such as a dress or dungarees.
- **Designer Inspiration:** this is a short design project in which you explore the work of fashion and textiles designers and understand their working styles. From your initial research you will have the opportunity to design your own catwalk fashion range taking inspiration from a personal theme.

The Year 11 course comprises the major project which will involve you in a design and make project of your own choice.

Indicative course cost: Approximately £25 for an optional textiles trip.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

This course will appeal to you if you are interested in designing and making in textiles and have a keen interest in the fashion and textiles industry. You will use the design process to solve real life problems, which makes it a great course if you are thinking of going into a design career.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9-1)

Drama is an interesting and exciting subject. The course gives you the opportunity to express yourself in a practical and active way whilst preparing for a written exam at the end of Year 11. You will work in various sized groups, contribute your own ideas and respect those of others, explore plays written by other people, create your own drama, go on theatre trips and participate in workshops run by professional actors and directors. You will develop a range of skills which you can use in other subjects and in the world of work. If you enjoy working actively and imaginatively with others and if you are interested in learning more about acting and performing plays, and writing about this, this is a course which will inspire creativity and confidence.

Course Content

The course is split into three components of which you do one in Year 10 and two in Year 11.

Year 10

- **Component 1: Devising** (40% of GCSE. Practical 10%, Portfolio 30%)
Students will work in a group to create and develop ideas to devise a piece of drama and perform this work in a group of 3-6. They will also produce a portfolio of written work during and after the devising process.

Year 11

- **Component 2: Performance from Text** (20% of GCSE)
This component is a practical exam which is externally marked by a visiting examiner. Students will interpret and explore a performance text and perform two extracts from it. Externally marked acting exam.
- **Component 3: Written Exam, Theatre Makers in Practice** (40% of GCSE)

Indicative course cost: Students will be expected to join in 2 theatre trips over the two year course, each costing £10- £20.

Assessment

Work is assessed practically, through coursework and through a final written exam in which Section A will be based on a set text while Section B will ask questions based on a live theatre review.

There is an externally examined performance exam which takes place in Term 3 in Year 11.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

You can study A Level Drama and Theatre Studies in Sixth Form or do a BTEC in Performing Arts at College. The skills you learn in drama will help you in other subjects and in the world of work as you will have developed lots of interpersonal skills and essay writing techniques. The study of drama or performance is a popular option at university.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

You need to enjoy drama and like working with other pupils. You need to want to study the subject at a higher level. If you like working practically, doing coursework and exploring plays from the perspective of an actor, director and designer, this course is for you.

Qualification: GCSE (Edexcel)

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

Knowledge of a foreign language is not just another GCSE grade, it is a concrete and demonstrable life skill like being able to drive a car or use a computer and it is a skill highly valued by employers. Today there is a global market for jobs and there are many opportunities for you to travel or work abroad. Having a language qualification will give you the edge in the job market. You don't have to be completely fluent to be an asset to any potential employer and have proven communication skills. A little knowledge can take you a long way and can help you learn a different language in future! Learning how to interact with speakers of other languages means you are less likely to be stuck in one mode of thinking. It can help you to see things from a range of perspectives, develop your problem-solving skills and make you more adaptable, creative and resourceful.

Course Content

During the course you will cover the following themes and topic areas:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

Indicative course costs: Dictionary that includes verb tables and an Edexcel revision guide. A folder for your course notes may be requested by your teacher. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases. If finances are an issue, please speak to the class teacher.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Most pupils entering Key Stage 4 will follow a GCSE course in a Modern Language. Learning a language is challenging and rewarding. To be successful, you need to get the most out of every lesson by participating fully and contributing as much as you can. Being willing to speak to your peers and teacher is key to your progress. You will need to be organised as you will be expected to learn vocabulary on a regular basis in addition to other homework. Independently learning new vocabulary via apps like Duolingo is highly recommended. We would encourage you to also make your own contacts in the foreign country and participate in any visits or exchanges offered by the school.

Assessment

The French GCSE is assessed on the basis of final examinations at the end of year 11. The four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed separately and carry equal weighting. Exams are tiered so a conversation about foundation or higher will be had with your class teacher prior to entry.

Who can you speak to if you need help making the choice?

Your first port of call should be your current class teacher who can talk you through the expectations of the course. The course content and assessment for all three languages are the same. Please speak to your class teacher if you are considering doing two languages at GCSE.

Progression – Sixth Form/Further Education/Careers

Taking a GCSE in a Modern Language will enable you to continue your studies at A Level and later at university. Languages combine really well with virtually any subject for further study. The range of combined degrees and further education courses involving a language is almost limitless – from Law to Theatre Studies with French, Spanish or German.

Qualification: GCSE (Edexcel)

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

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Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9-1)

If you are interested in the world around you and fascinated by the similarities and differences between people and the places they live, then this is the choice for you. Geography is the subject that is up to date and relevant to everyday life and combines science with a focus on people. You will need to keep an eye on current events and feel comfortable with using ICT to research and present your findings. You must enjoy getting out and about whilst doing fieldwork.

Course Content

The course is split into three units over the two years.

- **Living with the Physical Environment:** this includes natural hazards, climate change, coasts, rivers and ecosystems.
- **Challenges in the Human Environment:** this includes urban issues, economic change and resource management.
- **Geographical Skills and Fieldwork:** this will develop the use of maps, charts, viewpoints and other data to build an effective understanding of issues and locations.

Indicative course cost: £75 to cover two compulsory fieldwork visits.

Assessment

- There are three written examinations. These all take place in the summer at the end of the two years of the course.
- There is one level of assessment. There will no longer be a Higher and Foundation tier.
- Two fieldwork visits will be undertaken to provide experience in an outdoor environment and provide evidence for the fieldwork examination.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Geography is a subject that is widely respected and will help you to get a job that involves travel or working for an international company. The teamwork skills and global awareness you gain whilst studying the course give geographers a big advantage in the employment market. Many go on to study the subject at A Level and then for a degree. Geography is also a useful subject for people who want to study geology, oceanography, environmental science, meteorology, earth sciences, anthropology and a whole range of other subjects.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

People with an enquiring mind who like to understand why places are like they are. People who enjoy working outdoors and who are interested in travel and might like to live or work in another country. Also those who like to use their creativity and are not sure whether they are more scientific or artistic.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9-1)

If you are interested in the past and why we are where we are today, then history is the subject for you. History helps us to explore why people behave as they do, why certain events have taken place as they have, and why the world is structured in the way it is today. It is a subject which can help you develop skills in presenting arguments, discussion, writing, and looking beyond the face value of evidence. History teaches us to be enquiring, to analyse evidence and to ask questions about what has taken place in our world and why.

Course Content

We follow the Edexcel specification. You will study these five topics:

- **Medicine in Britain, 1250-present:** a thematic study including the legacy of ancient medicine, the Black Death, medical ideas of the Renaissance, the germ theory, the development of nursing, nineteenth-century developments in surgery and twentieth-century advances in medical treatment (Paper 1)
- **The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18:** injuries, treatment and the trenches – an environment study focused on historical evidence about the medical treatment and care of soldiers fighting in the trenches (Paper 1)
- **Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88:** a depth study including Elizabeth's religious settlement, the problem of Mary, Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada (Paper 2)
- **Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91:** a period study of relations between East and West, including the beginnings of the Cold War, the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Paper 2)
- **Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39:** a depth study including Germany's position after World War One, the rise of the Nazi Party and Germany under Nazi control (Paper 3)

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

- **Paper 1** is 1 hour and 15 minutes and is worth 30%; **Paper 2** is 1 hour and 45 minutes and is worth 40%; and **Paper 3** is 1 hour and 20 minutes and is worth 30%

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Many of our pupils continue with an A Level in history and some continue with a history degree at university. History is a very useful subject for a wide variety of careers, including, for example, those in law, the media, business and teaching. Historians are well-regarded and respected as people who are eloquent, literate, able to handle lots of information and able to put forward firm ideas and arguments.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Anyone with an interest in the past and why things happen will enjoy the course. If you are someone who likes analysing past events, weighing up evidence, debating arguments, and coming to firm decisions about why things have happened as they have, this is the course for you. History is assessed through written work, so it is important that you are someone who is a confident writer and who is keen to work on your writing skills.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9-1)

Music is a course for anyone who enjoys making, listening to and writing music. The skills that it requires are those that you will have developed during Key Stage 3 music: performing, composing and listening. It will be ideal for you if you play an instrument confidently, enjoy the challenge of composing your own music, and are interested in discovering, listening to and analysing a variety of musical styles. There is a mixture of written and practical work in the course, but the emphasis is on practical music-making, through performance and composition. While you will learn important musical skills, you will also develop life skills such as working independently, taking responsibility for meeting deadlines and effective communication.

Course Content

The course comprises 3 components:

- **Component 1: Understanding Music:** a 90-minute exam paper
- **Component 2: Performing Music:** solo and ensemble performance
- **Component 3: Composing Music:** 2 compositions, up to 4½ minutes in total

Within these components we focus on 4 Areas of Study:

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

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

- **Component 1** is externally assessed and makes up 40% of the course.
- **Components 2 and 3** are internally assessed and externally moderated and each make up 30% of the course.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

Taking Music will enable you to further your studies in Music – possibly at A Level and at University, and definitely at college. The skills you acquire will also help you in your study of many other subjects at A Level. There are some careers that directly involve Music, but the discipline that the subject requires and the general skills that it teaches you will stand you in good stead in any further studies.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Anyone who enjoys music in general will enjoy the course. It is a lovely balance of listening to and discussing different styles of music (as indicated above), writing your own music, and performing music on your instrument. You will learn new things about music, and should be someone who can rise to the challenge of learning lots of new musical words and concepts and beginning to analyse music in some detail. You need to be a confident performer on your instrument, willing to practise hard and happy to perform in front of others. In order to achieve the highest grades, you need to be able to read standard notation or tab and perform to at least a Grade 2 standard.

The Physical Education Faculty run two examination courses in PE in addition to the core PE programme – a GCSE course and a Cambridge National Certificate in Sports Studies.

Pupils who have a great interest in PE and Sport and wish to follow an examination course in PE, will be matched to the most appropriate of the two courses on an individual basis. The following information will be of use to pupils considering an examination course in Physical Education.

The main difference between the two courses is that the GCSE course has two terminal exams worth 60% of the overall mark, a written coursework worth 10% and then 30% is based on practical assessment in three sporting activities. The Cambridge National course has an exam on Contemporary Issues worth 40%, which is a terminal exam, and then two units including one on practical sports performance and leadership and the other on outdoor pursuits which are both internally assessed then externally moderated.

Please read on for information on our two examination PE courses.

GCSE PE

Qualification: GCSE (Exam board: AQA)

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE

If you are passionate about PE and sport and perform well practically across a range of activities, you would be suited to this course. You will develop knowledge and understanding in a number of activities and improve your understanding of the key elements of performance and training. You will be challenged both physically and mentally.

Course Content

Practical activities are chosen from a wide range of sports.

The following theoretical areas are covered:

- Anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Sports psychology
- Social-cultural influences
- Acquisition of skill
- Health and Fitness
- Use of Data

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

Two examinations which are worth a total of 60% and practical controlled coursework worth 40% in total. Students will choose either one individual sport and two team sports or two team sports and one individual sport to be assessed in.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

After successfully studying this course, you could continue onto Sixth Form to study the A Level in PE, Cambridge Technical in PE or a sports course at college. This would provide a good basis for a Higher Education sports degree. Furthermore, it provides a good knowledge base for employment in a wide range of sport and leisure industries.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

If you love PE and sport and are interested in the theoretical aspects, in addition to being a strong practical performer across a good range of sports or activities.

Qualification: OCR Certificate Level 2

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (Exam board: OCR)

The Cambridge National in Sport Studies enables students to develop and apply knowledge of sports-related activities. You will explore contemporary issues in sport, different ways of being involved in the sports industry, and the impact of sport on wider society. If you are passionate about sport both in terms of taking part in practical activities and how sport is organised and part of our modern world including major sporting events such as the Olympics, sport and the media and sports leadership, then this course will be of interest to you.

Course Content

The course is split into 3 units.

- Unit 1: Contemporary Issues – External exam
- Unit 2: Performance and leadership in sports activities
- Unit 3: Outdoor and adventurous activities.

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases.

Assessment

You will be assessed through coursework assignments, presentations and written end of topic tests with practical performance assessment over the 2 years of the course. In addition, you will sit a formal exam for Unit 1. Each unit will be graded at Level 2 Pass (5 at GCSE), Merit (6 at GCSE), Distinction (7 at GCSE) and Distinction* (8 at GCSE).

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

After successfully studying this course you could continue to Sixth Form to study the A Level Physical Education course or the Level 3 Cambridge Course, college courses and potentially Higher Education. Alternatively, employment in sports related industries would be a good pathway.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

If you prefer coursework in addition to exams and enjoy learning about sport and exercise in a variety of different formats then this is the course for you. An ability to meet deadlines and work in an organised way are essential. You will have the opportunity to present work in a variety of formats.

Qualification: GCSE

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9-1)

Religious Studies provides skills for your present learning, your future career and life in general and you do not need to be religious to study this subject! The current and relevant RS course we follow relates directly to up-to-the-minute issues in today's world. By following this subject, you will develop your knowledge and understanding of life issues, learn to formulate your own ideas and express your own responses and opinions. This course will build on the knowledge, skills and experiences gained in PSRE during Years 7-9. You will explore the beliefs and lifestyles of people in the local and wider community through visits, visitors, research and active, engaging lessons. It will help you to think; a lot of the course is about stating your opinions and supporting these with well justified explanations, in addition to learning about the views of Christians and Sikhs in relation to key issues. These are vital skills which will help you in the future.

Course Content

The course comprises of two main components:

- **Component 1:** The Study of Religion: beliefs, teachings and practices
- **Component 2:** Thematic Studies: Religious, philosophical and ethical studies of relationships/families, peace and conflict, crime and punishment

Indicative course cost: Nil. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases

Assessment

Both components are externally examined and each is worth 50% of the final exam.

Progression – Sixth Form / Further Education / Careers

This is a full GCSE in a subject that will be beneficial for sixth form and college applications, future employment and in helping you to become well-informed citizens. Religious Studies is an extremely useful and highly regarded qualification due to the skills involved (discussion, evaluation, rational presentation of an argument). It is highly valued in a wide range of employment areas, including medicine, engineering, social work, education, police, politics, finance etc.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

If you have enjoyed your PSRE lessons and think you would find the issues listed above interesting then this is the course for you. You will also enjoy the subject if you like debating and finding out what other people believe and where these beliefs come from. An interest in people, their beliefs and the world in which you live is essential.

Qualification: GCSE (Edexcel)

Equivalent to: 1 GCSE (9 – 1)

Knowledge of a foreign language is not just another GCSE grade, it is a concrete and demonstrable life skill like being able to drive a car or use a computer and it is a skill highly valued by employers. Today there is a global market for jobs and there are many opportunities for you to travel or work abroad. Having a language qualification will give you the edge in the job market. You don't have to be completely fluent to be an asset to any potential employer and have proven communication skills. A little knowledge can take you a long way and can help you learn a different language in future! Learning how to interact with speakers of other languages means you are less likely to be stuck in one mode of thinking. It can help you to see things from a range of perspectives, develop your problem-solving skills and make you more adaptable, creative and resourceful.

Course Content

During the course you will cover the following themes and topic areas:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

Indicative course costs: Dictionary that includes verb tables and an Edexcel revision guide. A folder for your course notes may be requested by your teacher. There are no compulsory trips, visits or other purchases. If finances are an issue, please speak to the class teacher.

Who would enjoy and be successful on the course?

Most pupils entering Key Stage 4 will follow a GCSE course in a Modern Language. Learning a language is challenging and rewarding. To be successful, you need to get the most out of every lesson by participating fully and contributing as much as you can. Being willing to speak to your peers and teacher is key to your progress. You will need to be organised as you will be expected to learn vocabulary on a regular basis in addition to other homework. Independently learning new vocabulary via apps like Duolingo is highly recommended. We would encourage you to also make your own contacts in the foreign country and participate in any visits or exchanges offered by the school.

Assessment

The French GCSE is assessed on the basis of final examinations at the end of year 11. The four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed separately and carry equal weighting. Exams are tiered so a conversation about foundation or higher will be had with your class teacher prior to entry.

Who can you speak to if you need help making the choice?

Your first port of call should be your current class teacher who can talk you through the expectations of the course. The course content and assessment for all three languages are the same. Please speak to your class teacher if you are considering doing two languages at GCSE.

Progression – Sixth Form/Further Education/Careers

Taking a GCSE in a Modern Language will enable you to continue your studies at A Level and later at university. Languages combine really well with virtually any subject for further study. The range of combined degrees and further education courses involving a language is almost limitless – from Law to Theatre Studies with French, Spanish or German.