

COURSE GUIDE

CRANMORE

GCSE

2026–27

GCSE ACADEMIC STUDY: YEARS 10 & 11

Welcome to Cranmore's GCSE Information and Course Guide

You may have already thought about which GCSE subjects you would like to study, or perhaps you are finding it difficult to make decisions. This booklet provides information about how our Year 10 and 11 curriculum is organised, including a short overview of what each subject at GCSE level offers, and what will be expected of students.

All of the staff at Cranmore, including your Head of Year and Form Tutor, are committed to supporting you through your GCSE years, ensuring that every student in our care reaches his potential. Our aim at Cranmore is for all students to continue to follow a broad and balanced curriculum, with a study of each of the following areas of learning:

- aesthetic, creative, literary
- human, social
- linguistic
- mathematical
- moral, spiritual
- physical
- scientific
- technological

The two-year GCSE programme culminates in a series of external examinations. It is necessary to limit the number of subjects a student may take to give the optimum amount of time to each one.

The most important aspects about GCSEs are:

- That the quality of the results is what matters, not the number of passes,
- That students should follow an enjoyable and diverse course that reflects their strengths and interests,
- Certain GCSE examinations (but not all) are offered at various levels of difficulty, which determines the range of the grades available.

SUBJECT CHOICES

All students follow a compulsory curriculum of core GCSE examination subjects and non-examination subjects, together with four options. The total number of GCSEs that students will usually take, therefore, will typically be nine. Particular learning needs or other commitments may also be considered and individual circumstances can be discussed.

CORE GCSE EXAMINATION SUBJECTS

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Dual Award Science
- Religious Studies

NON-EXAMINATION SUBJECTS

- Physical Education
- PSHE

In choosing your subjects you should give careful consideration to:

- The subjects you most enjoy,
- The skills needed in each subject,
- The advice of your subject teachers,
- Any plans you may have for A-Level studies in the Sixth Form,
- Keeping a balance in your timetable.

Each student is asked to select 3 choices from the list below.

Subjects

- Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics as discrete subjects)
- French
- Spanish
- Art & Design – Fine Art
- Computer Science
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Geography
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Physical Education

9–1 GRADING SYSTEM

Since 2017, GCSEs in England are awarded with a new scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade.

This scale has been aligned to key grades on the previous A* to G scale. Therefore, broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as would have achieved a grade A and above. Similarly, broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as would have achieved a grade C and above. How the 9 to 1 grades compare with the A* to G scale can be seen here:

GRADING NEW GCSEs FROM 2017	
New Grading Structure	Current Grading Structure
9	A*
8	
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

The reformed GCSEs have been designed for a two-year period of study and are predominantly linear, so students will take all of their exams at the end of the course. The new grades are being brought in to signal that GCSEs have been reformed and to allow finer distinctions between students of different abilities.

It is worth noting that the equivalent to a C grade is a 4. The 9 could be considered an A** and will be awarded to between the top 2-4% of the national cohort.

VALUE-ADDED

Cranmore has a rigorous assessment and tracking system in place, which draws on standardised baseline data and ongoing professional judgement and assessment. This structure allows us to monitor student progress closely and ensure that all boys achieve the very best outcomes possible.

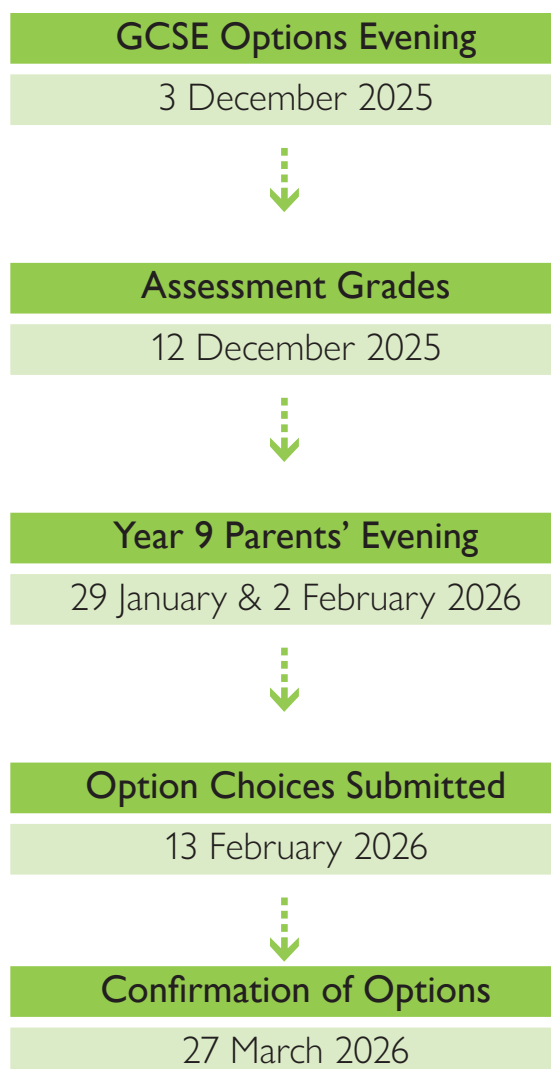
Value-Added scores are determined by calculating the residual between GCSE predictions generated by baseline tests, taken in school, and the final GCSE grade that is achieved. Our aim is to add value in all departments; the experience and quality of staff and the commitment students will help achieve this.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR SUBJECT SELECTION

Students are asked to select their preferred options in February. At this stage, students select their preferred subjects, with a reserve subject. We will do our best to accommodate as many choices as we can, but this may not always be possible.

The Year 9 parents' evenings on **Thursday 29 January and Monday 2 February** provides further discussion time with subject teachers. The final choices need to be submitted by **Friday 13 February**. Notification of the subjects that can be provided for each student will be confirmed during the week ending **Friday 27 March**.

At each stage in the process, students are encouraged to discuss their choices with their form tutor, subject teachers, Heads of Departments and parents. Further advice is readily available from the Deputy Head (Academic) Mr. Pulford, Head of Year 9, Mr Afana and the Year 9 tutors, Mr Quar, Mr West and Mrs Mauvis. It is important that choices are discussed as widely as possible.



CURRICULUM AIMS AND ETHOS

At Cranmore the GCSE curriculum aims to:

- prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life and promote a lifelong love of learning,
- be inclusive by providing opportunities for all students to develop their skills and knowledge and to realise their potential,
- provide a framework that serves the needs of teaching and learning,
- promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students,
- encourage the personal, mental and physical development of students,
- identify and develop transferrable skills for the 21st Century,
- cater for the individual needs, interests and aspirations of each student.

To achieve these aims the curriculum will:

- be **broad** to ensure that each student is able to develop a wide range of skills and understanding,
- be **balanced** to ensure that each element of the curriculum is given appropriate emphasis to achieve the above aims and promote a lifelong love of learning,
- ensure that students are able to **access** the full range of higher education courses, institutions and career pathways,
- be **personalised** to ensure that the individual needs of each student are met through the provision of appropriate choice, pace, challenge and support at all levels,
- be **stimulating** to promote independent study,
- be **progressive** to build upon prior knowledge and experience through the introduction of appropriate challenge at all levels,
- allow the development of **transferrable skills** and cross-curricular understanding,
- be designed to meet the specific learning needs of **boys**, but to be free of gender stereotypes,
- be designed to promote **individual pathways** and flexibility within a structure informed, but not constrained, by the requirements of external examination syllabuses

PROMOTING CHALLENGE AND ENRICHMENT

It is our policy to stretch and challenge students in three ways:

WITHIN THE CLASSROOM

- To encourage departments to run workshops, master classes or bring visiting speakers or outside agencies into the school.
- To introduce target-setting at all levels to establish appropriate and challenging expectations that evolve during a programme of study.
- To promote a departmental focus on assessment for learning.
- To include the provision of stretch and challenge as a focus for departmental planning.
- To stretch and challenge through the provision of open-ended tasks and extension activities or through the independent learning opportunity afforded by individual coursework assignments.
- To focus upon the development of independent students.

A PERSONALISED CURRICULUM

- Where possible, to make provision within the curriculum for a range of extension courses and qualifications.
- To make reasonable adjustments to a student's programme, if appropriate, to promote the development of gifts and talents.
- The ability for students to undertake additional qualifications.
- To provide a lesson allocation that allows the opportunity for exploration beyond the confines of examination syllabuses and the opportunity to gain additional qualifications.
- To support the development of individual students who exhibit particular flair, gifts or talents in any area of the curriculum or extra-curricular activity through formal and informal mentoring schemes.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- To support students' attendance at lectures or visits, or to enrich their classroom experience through membership of external organisations.
- To support the formation and maintenance of subject- based clubs and societies.
- To promote student involvement in the promotion and running of subject based activities through initiatives such as the Subject Mentors Scheme.
- To support the development of a broad range of extra-curricular activity.
- To support the opportunity to gain formal recognition or external accreditation of performance through extra-curricular activity in Maths, Science, Music, Drama, Physical Education, Technology, Art, Duke of Edinburgh and Debating.
- To promote fieldwork, trips and visits as an integral part of the experience of all students.

TUTORIAL TIME & OUR PSHE PROGRAMME

At Cranmore, we aim for continuity of pastoral care in Years 10 and 11, thereby providing stability at this crucial stage in students' educational and social development.

PSHE is planned as a spiral curriculum, which ensures that topics are developed in age-appropriate ways.

Over this two-year period, the PSHE programme focuses on:

- Identity and self-awareness
- Careers Education
- Study skills
- Health and wellbeing topics, including Drugs Education
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), according to the government's statutory framework

As a Catholic school, we follow the Ten:Ten "Life to the Full" programme, which ensures that Relationships and Sex Education is aligned with our Catholic ethos.

The overall aim of our PSHE programme is to empower students to make informed and well-considered independent life choices.

In all sessions, students are invited to sensitively discuss pertinent issues in a safe, positive and supportive environment. Where appropriate, specialist external speakers are invited into school to ensure that students receive the most up-to-date information from subject specialists.

Student feedback is collated each term in order to tailor lesson content to changing student needs.

PSHE topics covered in Year 10 and Year 11 include:

Year 10:

- Safeguarding
- Identity and Values, including British Values
- Law and Governance
- Careers Education (Morrisby)
- Study skills

Relationships and Sex Education:

- Body image and self-esteem
- Independence, risk-taking and personal safety
- Drug Education
- Healthy relationships
- Making decisions about sex
- Unhealthy relationships, including different types of abuse
- Reproductive cycles, including pregnancy and abortion
- Parenting

Year 11:

- Role-modelling
- Careers Education (Morrisby)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Study skills

Relationships and Sex Education:

- Self-esteem
- Positive and negative coping strategies
- Mental health, including addiction
- Unhealthy relationships, including different types of abuse
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Pornography

CORE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Core Physical Education is a non-examination, compulsory component to Years 10 and 11.

At Key Stage 4, there is still an emphasis on the core sports – rugby, football, cricket, hockey, tennis, and athletics. Plus, a choice of multi-sport and rowing. The aim of the physical education curriculum during these two years is to prepare the students for participating in sporting activities on leaving school. Students will modify and refine their existing skills and learn more advanced techniques. They will be encouraged to develop their technical awareness and learn to interpret the laws of different games and officiate in matches.

Students will be encouraged to participate in competitive sports outside school through the use of local clubs and community links with external coaches.



SUBJECT SYLLABUSES

A more detailed account of each subject is presented on the following pages.

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Examination Board: AQA 8700

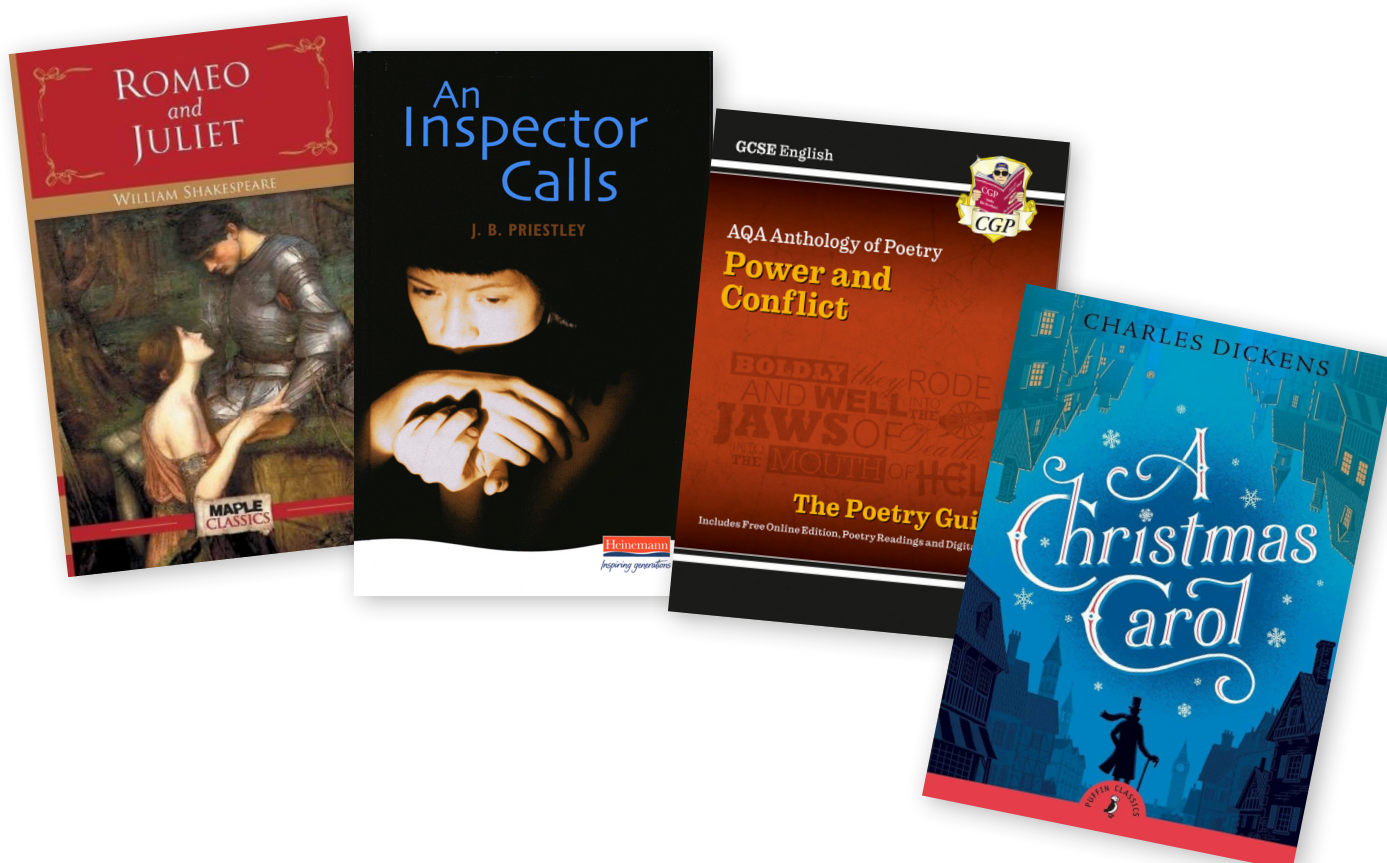
Topics studied:	This course addresses the Attainment Targets as laid down by the National Curriculum: Speaking and Listening; Reading; Writing; Spelling; Presentation. Fiction and non-fiction texts from 19th – 21st Century will be explored.
Assessment:	At the end of the course there will be two written examinations that assess reading and writing. All texts in the examination will be unseen.
	Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing 1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of GCSE (25% Reading and 25% Writing)
	Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives 1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of GCSE (25% Reading and 25% Writing)
	Spoken Language: Teacher set through the course, marked by class teacher. Separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)



ENGLISH LITERATURE

Examination board: AQA 8702

Topics studied:	Students have to show their ability to: respond critically, sensitively and in an informed way to what they have read, heard and seen, referring to the text as appropriate; explore how language, structure and form contribute to the meaning of a text, considering alternative approaches and forms; choose appropriate ways of responding to different texts and tasks. Students will study a range of texts including: prose, poetry and drama.
Assessment:	Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-Century novel 1 Hour and 45 minutes 40% of GCSE
	Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry 2 Hours and 15 minutes 60% of GCSE
	The examinations are closed book; however, some questions will include extracts from the relevant section of the novel or play.
Course requirements:	There will be theatre trips organised by school to see some of the texts studied.



MATHEMATICS

Examination board: Edexcel GCSE Mathematics (IMA1)

Topics studied:	<p>The course covers topics in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number• Algebra• Ratio, proportion and rates of change• Geometry and measures• Probability• Statistics <p>Students will show their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use and apply standard techniques• Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically• Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts
Assessment:	<p>The qualification consists of three equally weighted written examination papers</p> <p>Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment, and a calculator is allowed for Paper 2 and Paper 3.</p> <p>Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long.</p> <p>The content outlined above will be assessed across all three papers</p>

There is no controlled assessment component. Foundation tier offers grades up to grade 5. Higher tier offers grades 4 to 9.

Top set students will have the opportunity to extend their Mathematics beyond GCSE, by following the Edexcel Level 2 qualification, 'Extended Mathematics', alongside their GCSE. The UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge will also form part of the extension offering in Years 10 & 11.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Examination board: AQA Religious Studies B Catholic Christianity & Judaism 8063

Topics studied:	<p>The study of religion is both a rigorous academic discipline, as well as a journey of faith and self-discovery. The course allows students to be equipped with a sound knowledge, appreciation, and a critical awareness of religion in general and of the Catholic Christian faith in particular.</p> <hr/> <p>Component 1:</p> <p>Catholic Christianity: This component explores Catholicism in detail through studying six themes covering topics from creation to final judgment. Students will gain an understanding of the faith, the practices of the Catholic Church, and a wider appreciation of Christianity and its impact on society.</p> <hr/> <p>Component 2</p> <p>Section A: Judaism</p> <p>Students will explore the enriching philosophy, beliefs, teachings and practices of Judaism.</p> <p>Section B: Themes</p> <p>Students will study Christian, philosophical and ethical arguments and their impact and influence on the modern world. Two themes are chosen from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme A: Religion, relationships and families• Theme B: Religion, Peace and conflict• Theme C: Religion, human rights and social justice.
Assessment:	<p>Two written examination papers at the end of Year 11:</p> <p>Paper 1 – Component 1 – 1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 2 – Component 2 – 1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of GCSE</p>

COMBINED SCIENCE TRILOGY – DUAL AWARD

Examination board: AQA 8464

Topics studied:	<p>The topics studied are drawn from the three sciences as follows:</p> <p>Biology: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; Bioenergetics; Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution; Ecology.</p> <p>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; Using Resources.</p> <p>Physics: Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; Atomic Structure; Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism.</p> <p>Practical skills: There are 21 required practical investigations that will be taught throughout the course.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Students take six examination papers, two for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, at the end of Year 11. Each paper is 1 hour 15 minutes in duration. The marks from all papers are combined to award two GCSEs</p>



TRIPLE SCIENCE – BIOLOGY

Examination board: AQA 8461

Topics studied:	<p>The topics studied are Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; Bioenergetics; Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution, Ecology. The topic headings are the same as for the Dual Award however, additional content is included for the separate science.</p> <p>Practical skills: There are ten required practical investigations that will be taught throughout the course.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Students take two examination papers, each 1 hour 45 minutes in duration, at the end of year 11. The marks from these papers are combined to award one GCSE in Biology.</p>

TRIPLE SCIENCE – CHEMISTRY

Examination board: AQA 8462

Topics studied:	<p>The topics studied are: 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; Using Resources. The topic headings are the same as for the Dual Award however, additional content is included for the separate science.</p> <p>Practical skills: There are 8 required practicals that will be taught throughout the course.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Students take two examination papers, each 1 hour 45 minutes in duration, at the end of year 11. The marks from these papers are combined to award one GCSE in Chemistry.</p>

TRIPLE SCIENCE – PHYSICS

Examination board: AQA 8463

Topics studied:	<p>The topics studied are Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; Atomic Structure; Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism; Space Physics. Other than the extra topic of Space Physics, the other topic headings are the same as for the Dual Award, however, additional content is included for the separate science.</p> <p>Practical skills: There are ten required practicals that will be taught throughout the course.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Students take two examination papers, each 1 hour 45 minutes in duration, at the end of year 11. The marks from these papers are combined to award one GCSE in Physics.</p>

FRENCH

Examination board: AQA French 8652

Topics studied:	<p>Students study the following themes on which the assessments are based:</p> <p>Theme 1: People and lifestyle</p> <p>Theme 2: Popular culture</p> <p>Theme 3: Communication and the world around us</p> <p>Students will also learn how to understand and respond to different types of spoken language, to communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes, to understand and respond to a variety of written language and to communicate effectively in writing.</p>
Assessment:	<p>GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. This qualification is linear, which means that students take all examinations at the end of Year 11.</p> <p>Paper 1 – Listening (including dictation) 25% – Written exam: 35 mins (F); 45mins (H) 40 marks (Foundation Tier); 50 marks (Higher Tier)</p> <p>Paper 2 – Speaking 25%</p> <p>The format is the same at Foundation Tier and Higher Tier, but with different stimulus questions for role-play and reading aloud task. For the photo card discussion task, the same photos are used at both tiers.</p> <p>Role-play – 10 marks – 1-1.5 mins (both at F and H)</p> <p>Reading aloud & short conversation – 15 marks - 2-2.5 mins (F); 3-3.5 mins (H)</p> <p>Photo card discussion – 25 marks – 4-5 mins (F); 6-7 mins (H)</p> <p>Paper 3 – Reading & translation from French into English 25%</p> <p>Written exam: 45 mins (F); 1 hour (H) 50 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)</p> <p>Paper 4 – Writing & Translation from English into French 25% -</p> <p>Written exam: 1 hour 10 min (F); 1 hour 15 (H) 50 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)</p>
Deadlines:	<p>The speaking must be completed by mid-May of Year 11.</p> <p>Internal deadlines for homework assignments.</p>
Course requirements:	<p>French – English dictionary would be useful. Optional purchase of AQA GCSE Textbook and CGP Complete Revision Guide.</p>

SPANISH

Examination board: AQA Spanish 8692

Topics studied:	<p>Students study the following themes on which the assessments are based:</p> <p>Theme 1: People and lifestyle</p> <p>Theme 2: Popular culture</p> <p>Theme 3: Communication and the world around us</p> <p>Students will also learn how to understand and respond to different types of spoken language, to communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes, to understand and respond to a variety of written language and to communicate effectively in writing.</p>
Assessment:	<p>GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. This qualification is linear, which means that students take all examinations at the end of Year 11.</p> <p>Paper 1 – Listening 25% - Written exam: 35 mins (F) 45 min (H) 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 50 marks (Higher Tier)</p> <p>Paper 2 – Speaking 25%</p> <p>The format is the same at Foundation Tier and Higher Tier, but with different stimulus questions for the Photo card and different stimulus materials for the Role-play.</p> <p>Role-play - 10 marks – 1 – 1.5 mins for both tiers</p> <p>Reading aloud task and short conversation -15 marks – 2-2.5 mins (F); 3 – 3.5 mins (H)</p> <p>Photo card discussion – 25 marks – 4–5 mins (F); 6–7 mins (H)</p> <p>Unprepared conversation (recommended to last between 3 and 4 minutes at Foundation tier and between 4.5 and 5.5 minutes at Higher tier)</p> <p>Paper 3 – Reading 25% - Written exam: 45 mins (F) 1 hour (H) 50 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)</p> <p>Paper 4 – Writing 25% - Written exam: 1 hour (F), 1 hour 15(H) 50 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)</p>
Deadlines:	<p>The speaking must be completed by mid-May of Year 11.</p> <p>Internal deadlines for homework assignments.</p>
Course requirements:	<p>Spanish – English dictionary would be useful. Optional purchase of AQA GCSE Textbook and CGP Complete Revision Guide.</p>

ART & DESIGN

Examination board: Edexcel – Course Code: IFA0/IAD0

Topics studied:	<p>Themes vary from year to year for example, 'Reflection' and ideas may be explored initially with observational work and then via mixed media experimentation and analytical research. Subsequent concepts are developed into representational or abstracted outcomes through research, experimentation and refining ideas leading to individual, creative outcomes. Students can expect to work with processes such as the discipline of painting, print-making and sculpture relevant to their investigations.</p> <p>Depending on individual students' engagement with the breadth of materials and disciplines offered, an endorsed title of either Art, Craft and Design or Fine Art will be applied.</p>
Assessment:	<p>This is a 100% NEA Course - Thematic sketchbooks for both components are informally marked at regular intervals as a means of tracking progress using a structured assessment matrix provided by the exam board. The core skills of critical research, drawing/recording, experimentation with techniques and processes and generating a final outcome are assessed holistically and are subject to external moderation by the exam board to generate a grade between 1-9.</p>
Deadlines:	<p>COMPONENT 1 'Personal Portfolio' – COURSEWORK (60%)</p> <p>Thematic sketchbooks and larger supportive work should be completed by the end of the Winter term in Year 11. Weekly tasks are set and expected to be completed in the time frame in order to maintain a good work pace.</p> <p>COMPONENT 2 Externally Set Assignment (40%)</p> <p>This paper is released every year on the 2nd January and is set by the exam board. Preparatory work is carried out during the Spring term in lesson time within a sketchbook prior to the 10-hour timed examination. Support and guidance towards an outcome takes place during lesson time and independent homework tasks. The final outcome/s is submitted at the end of the 10-hour period, along with the preparatory work.</p>
Course requirements:	<p>A student needs to show passion for Art and, most importantly, a committed attitude. Students should possess a creative mindset and be willing to further their technical discipline independently. Attendance at Coursework Clinics and/or Art Clubs is strongly advised.</p> <p>All students are expected to purchase a new art pack containing a wider range of materials in order to complete class and homework. A Studio fee is payable at the start of the course to cover materials used throughout the two years. Extended work such as the use of ceramics and textiles may incur additional costs.</p>
Compulsory Visits:	<p>A visit takes place each year relevant to the thematic unit whereby students carry out the critical and contextual element of their coursework e.g. Kew Gardens, The Tate Gallery.</p>
Suggested Visits:	<p>There is a wealth of local and national galleries that are worth visiting to support students' knowledge of contemporary and established artworks for example; The V&A, White Cube, the Lightbox and the Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden.</p>

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Examination board: OCR – Course Code: J277

Topics studied:	OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Computer Science aims to equip pupils with a thorough understanding of the fundamental principles and concepts of the field, encompassing areas such as Von Neumann Architecture, Networks, Cyber Security, and the ethical considerations surrounding the digital world. The curriculum also explores topics such as abstraction, decomposition, logic, searching and sorting algorithms, creating algorithmic solutions, programming fundamentals and constructs, and creating defensive programs. Through practical experience, students will learn to analyse problems in computational terms and gain skills in designing, writing, and debugging programs. This course cultivates creative, innovative, analytical, logical, and critical thinking skills. Pupils will explore the components that constitute digital systems and their interactions with one another and with other systems. Beyond technical competence, the subject fosters resilience, independence, and critical thinking, equipping pupils to become confident creators and informed users of technology in an increasingly digital society.
Assessment:	Paper 1 (Computer Systems) 1 hour 30 minutes This written paper contains short-answer and structured questions. 80 marks. Externally assessed 50%.
	Paper 2 (Computational thinking, algorithms, and programming) 1 hour 30 minutes This is a non-calculator paper. This paper has two sections: Section A and Section B. Externally assessed 50%.
Course requirements:	Those with an interest in computer programming, problem-solving and a high level of expertise in ICT, Maths and Science. Recommended to be working towards grade 6 or above in Mathematics in year 9.
Progression:	Pupils can progress to A-Level Computing or a related apprenticeship such as software engineering, website and app design, cybersecurity analyst or network management.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Examination board: AQA (8552)

Topics studied:	3.1 Core technical principles New and emerging technologies, Energy generation and storage, Developments in new materials, Systems approach to designing, Materials and their working properties, Material properties.
	3.2 Specialist technical principles Selection of materials or components, Forces and stresses, Ecological and social footprint, Sources and origins, Using and working with materials, Stock forms, types and sizes, Scales of production, Specialist techniques and processes, Surface treatments and finishes.
	3.3 Designing and making principles Investigation, primary and secondary data, The work of others, Design strategies including communication of design ideas, Prototype development, Material management, Specialist tools and equipment, Specialist techniques and processes.
	In addition to the above, students can expect at least 15% of the exam to assess maths and 10% to assess science with a Design and Technology context.
Assessment:	Written: Paper 1 (2 hours) – 50% of GCSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core technical principles (20 marks) • Specialist technical principles (30 marks) • Designing and making principles (50 marks)
	Practical: Non-exam assessment (NEA) – 50% of GCSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial design and make task (Coursework)
	Assessment criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and investigating design possibilities • Producing a design brief and specification • Generating design ideas • Developing design ideas • Realising design ideas • Analysing & evaluating
Deadlines:	Contextual challenges for the NEA to be released annually by AQA on 1st June in the year prior to the submission of the NEA. (Summer term of Year 10). Final NEA submission is just before the Easter holidays of Year 11.

Compulsory visits:	Design Museum, V&A Museum
Suggested visits:	New Designers Exhibition
Course requirements:	<p>There is an expectation that GCSE Design and Technology students attend at least one club a week to maintain progress with the NEA coursework. This will typically only be once the NEA contexts are released at the end of Year 10.</p> <p>The GCSE examination in Design and Technology include questions that allow students to demonstrate their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall information • Draw together information from different areas of the specification • Apply their knowledge and understanding in practical and theoretical contexts.
Extra costs:	A nominal fee to cover some of the material cost is required in both Year 10 and Year 11.



DRAMA

Examination board: AQA 8261

Topics studied:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting and performance styles of a range of Practitioners • Studying plays from a literary and practical viewpoint • Performing scripted pieces • Developing devised performance • Evaluating and analysing the effectiveness of professional theatre productions • Developing technical and design skills
Assessment:	<p>Written: 40% of total mark – written exam paper</p> <p>Practical: 60% of total mark – performance of a Devised piece (accompanied by a Devising Log) and two Scripted performances.</p> <p>Component 1: Understanding Drama – Written exam – Theatre terminology and roles – Set Text, Blood Brothers – a Live Theatre Analysis of a professional production. 1hr 45min written paper.</p> <p>Component 2: Devising Drama – the creation of an original piece of Drama accompanied by a piece of written coursework</p> <p>Component 3: Texts in Practice – The performance of two extracts of a play in duologue groups (pairs) or Monologues (solo)</p>
Deadlines:	<p>Year 10: Component 2 – Performance and coursework</p> <p>Year 11: Components 1 & 3</p>
Course requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm and willingness to participate in Drama • Ability to work well in groups • Analytical and reflective • Effective collaboration and communication skills • Good time management • Self-motivated and confident • Independent learning • Good ability in English <p>Theatre trips and workshops are arranged throughout the course. These are organised and supervised by staff and costs are added to the end of term bill. Students will also be advised to attend local theatre to broaden their experience of live performance.</p>
Course aim:	<p>To equip students with skills that transcend the parameters of Drama and performance. Making students better collaborators, becoming more analytical, nurturing creativity, becoming more adaptable, raising awareness of social, historical and cultural context and building on the social skills of communication and confidence.</p>

GEOGRAPHY

Examination board: AQA 8035

Topics studied:	<p>Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment</p> <p>Section A: The challenge of Natural Hazards (Tectonic hazards, Atmospheric Hazards, UK Extreme Weather & Climate Change)</p> <p>Section B: The Living World (Local and Global ecosystems, Hot Deserts & Tropical Rainforests)</p> <p>Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK (Coasts, River and Glaciers)</p>
	<p>Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment</p> <p>Section A: Urban Issues and Challenges (London and Rio de Janeiro)</p> <p>Section B: The Changing Economic World (The UK and Nigeria)</p> <p>Section C: The Challenge of Resource management (Water, Energy and Food)</p>
	<p>Paper 3: Geographical Applications</p> <p>Paper 3 assesses geographical skills, issue evaluation and fieldwork skills.</p> <p>Section A: Geographical applications – students receive an information booklet 6 weeks prior to the exam that they can study in advance. This will focus on an area of study from paper 1 or paper 2. They will answer decision making questions based on this in the exam and will have a copy of this booklet in the exam hall.</p> <p>Section B: Students answer generic questions about their own fieldwork experience and secondary data through shorter responses, data manipulations and extended writing.</p>
Assessment:	<p>There are three exam papers for Geography:</p> <p>Paper 1 (35%) 1h 30</p> <p>Paper 2 (35%) 1h 30</p> <p>Paper 3 (30%) 1h 30</p>
Course requirements:	<p>Students will have 2 compulsory days of fieldwork for their GCSE course. In the Summer term of Y10 students will participate in their rivers fieldwork. In the Autumn of Y11 students will also travel to East London to complete their urban fieldwork. This provides the opportunity for the fieldwork data collection which is mandatory and to practise methods and skills for use in Paper 3.</p>

HISTORY

Examination board: Edexcel IHI0

Topics studied:	<p>The teaching of the course material will be divided over Year 10 and 11, with the intention of finishing before the Easter Break. This will leave ample time for revision in the classroom. The topics have been chosen to give the student the greatest opportunity to study a broad range of historical periods and events. Crucially, they will also provide the students with some foundational knowledge for their A Level course.</p>
	<p>Paper 1 – British Thematic Study with Historic Environment 52 marks – 30% weighting – 1 hour 15 minutes Medicine in Britain, C1250-Present (20%) The British Sector of the Western Front (10%)</p>
	<p>Paper 2 – Period Study and British Depth Study 64 marks – 40% weighting – 1 hour 45 minutes Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 (20%) Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88 (20%)</p>
	<p>Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study 52 marks – 30% weighting – 1 hour 20 minutes Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939</p>
Assessment:	<p>There are three papers for the History GCSE, with Papers 1 and 3 weighing 30% and Paper 2 40% respectively.</p> <p>There are a variety of essay, source and interpretation questions which students have to answer across the three papers. Specifically, each paper has an essay style question worth 16 marks.</p> <p>The skills developed are as follows: analysis of interpretations, explanation of cause and consequence, knowledge retention and extended writing.</p>

LATIN

Examination board: WJEC Eduqas

Topics studied:	<p>This specification builds on subject content which is taught at key stage 3. It provides a suitable foundation for the study of Latin at AS, A level, IB or Pre-U. In addition, the specification provides a stimulating and engaging course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject. Students build up their cultural competence, enabling students to gain knowledge and understanding of the Roman world through reading and responding to its language and literature. A set vocabulary, accidence and syntax must be memorised. Topics studied for Components 2 and 3 include The city of Rome, Roman villa, Hunting, Life in the countryside and other.</p>
Assessment:	<p>The examination consists of three components: Latin Language, Latin Literature and Sources, and Roman Civilisation.</p>
	<p>Paper 1 – Latin Language 1 hour 30 minutes. 50% of the qualification</p> <p>Section A – Latin Language examination includes a range of short comprehension questions testing understanding of the storyline.</p> <p>Section B – translation from English to Latin or alternative.</p>
	<p>Paper 2 – Latin Literature and Sources (Themes) 1 hour 15 minutes. 30% of the qualification</p> <p>An open book assessment which requires comprehension and literary criticism skills of the prescribed ancient source materials.</p>
	<p>Paper 3 – Latin Literature (Narratives) 1 hour. 20% of the qualification</p> <p>Explores the topic of the City of Rome.</p>

MUSIC

Examination board: Edexcel IMU0

Topics studied:	<p>Performing:</p> <p>Candidates are encouraged to perform in assembly and concerts throughout the year for the purposes of performance practice. Recordings of their chosen performances (one solo, one ensemble) can be made at any time during Year 11.</p>
	<p>Composing:</p> <p>Composition tasks will be the main focus during the Autumn Term of Year 10. This will enable each candidate to build up a bank of compositional skills. This will be useful preparation for the two compositions which will need to be submitted by each candidate in Year 11. An understanding of traditional notation is essential and a theory standard of Grade 3 and above a definite advantage.</p>
	<p>Appraising:</p> <p>There are 4 areas of study (AOS's), each with two set pieces: Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Screen, Fusions.</p> <p>Set works currently include 'Music for a While' by Purcell, 'Defying Gravity' from Wicked, 'Star Wars' by John Williams, and 'Killer Queen' by Queen, amongst others.</p> <p>Each set work will be studied in detail.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Performing (30%) (60 marks)</p> <p>One solo and one ensemble piece of at least one minute in length each must be submitted. The combined duration of these two performances must be at least four minutes in length. Both recordings are to be completed by end of Year 11 Spring Term.</p> <p>Composing (30%) (60 marks)</p> <p>Free composition in any style, and one composition to a set brief. End of the Spring term in Year 11 is the coursework deadline. Each composition must be over a minute in length. The combined length of both compositions must be at least 3 minutes.</p> <p>Appraising (40%): Written paper in Summer Term Year 11 (1 hour 45 minutes) (80 marks)</p> <p>Section A: Short answer questions on set works, including musical dictation and unfamiliar listening, responding to audio.</p> <p>Section B: A longer style written answer based on a set work and unfamiliar work.</p>
Course requirements:	<p>A minimum performance standard of Grade 4 instrumental or vocal in Year 10 is required for this course. Pupils of a lower level should approach Mr Harris for advice regarding their suitability for this course. Well executed, higher grade work is awarded extra marks in the performance component. Certificates of grades are not required. An understanding of musical notation to Grade 3 level would be a distinct advantage to candidates for the composing component of this qualification. Student's GCSE Music book and set works anthology supplied. Musescore 4 Studio (or latest version) will be used for the composition work and is currently a free download for Windows devices. Revision guides for all set works will be issued as and when required.</p>

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Examination board: OCR (J587)

Topics studied:	<p>Component 01: Physical Factors Affecting Performance</p> <p>1.1 Applied anatomy and physiology Structure and function of skeletal system Structure and function of muscular system Cardiovascular and respiratory systems Effects of exercise on body systems Movement analysis</p> <p>1.2 Physical training Components of fitness Principles of training Optimising training Preventing injury</p>
	<p>Component 02: Socio-cultural Issues and Sports Psychology</p> <p>2.1 Socio-cultural Issues 2.2 Sports psychology 2.3 Health, fitness and well being</p>
	<p>Component 04: Performance in Physical Education</p> <p>Students are internally and externally assessed through the NEA in three practical activities. 'Off Site' practical activities require video evidence to be started in Year 10 and completed by February in Year 11.</p>
	<p>Component 05: Analysing and Evaluating Performance</p> <p>Students are required to demonstrate their ability to analyse and evaluate their own or a peer's practical performance to produce an action plan for improvement. This is internally assessed and externally moderated.</p>
Assessment:	<p>Written – 60% of total marks – 2 x 1 hour exam papers</p> <p>Practical – 30% of total marks – 3 x Practical Activities (1 team, 1 individual and 1 choice from the OCR specification)</p> <p>Analysing and Evaluating Performance – 10% of total marks 1 x performance analysis task (14 hours in school under exam conditions)</p>
Deadlines:	<p>The practical activities are ongoing, started in Year 10 and completed in spring term of Year 11.</p> <p>External moderation day in the summer term of Year 11.</p> <p>AEP completed by February of Year 11.</p>
Course requirements:	<p>All 3 practical activities need to be of a good to high standard and competing regularly. Logbooks of practical activities need to be maintained across the 2 years.</p>

EXAMINATION BOARDS CHART

Below is a comprehensive chart outlining all of our current subjects alongside the exam boards we follow. This overview is designed to help you gain a clearer understanding of the structure of our curriculum and the qualifications we offer across different departments.

If you would like to explore any subject in greater depth—whether that's the assessment requirements, course content, or available progression routes—please use this chart as a starting point to guide your enquiries. Should you require further clarification or more personalised support, we warmly encourage you to get in touch with the relevant subject teachers or department heads

Exam Boards		
English Language	AQA	8700
English Literature	AQA	8702
Mathematics	Edexcel	1MA1
Religious Studies	AQA	8063
Combined Science Trilogy	AQA	8464
Biology	AQA	8461
Chemistry	AQA	8462
Physics	AQA	8463
French	AQA	8652
Spanish	AQA	8692
Art & Design - Fine Art	Edexcel	1FA0/1AD0
Computer Science	OCR	J277
Design and Technology	AQA	8552
Drama	AQA	8261
Geography	AQA	8035
History	Edexcel	1HI0
Latin	Eduqas	27WJEC
Music	Edexcel	1MU0
Physical Education	OCR	J587

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