Subject Guide

GCSE Options

2027-2029



BALLARD

BESPOKE EDUCATION

Welcome To Your GCSE Journey



Mr Stuart Turner
Headmaster
headmaster@ballardschool.co.uk

This is an extremely exciting stage in your time at Ballard, as you begin to shape a pathway that reflects your strengths, interests and ambitions. Choosing your GCSE subjects gives you the opportunity to focus on the areas you most enjoy and where you feel inspired to succeed. The School is pleased to support you through this important process and is excited about all that lies ahead.

We are enormously proud of our recent academic success. Our pupils achieve excellent examination results and have consistently secured exceptional value added outcomes. Value added measures the difference between the grades pupils are expected to achieve and the grades they ultimately receive at GCSE. In recent years, Ballard pupils have, on average, achieved almost one grade higher in every subject than predicted from nationally standardised assessments in Year 9. This is a remarkable achievement and one that very few schools nationally can match.

These outcomes are built upon the positivity, professionalism and enthusiasm of our staff, who are committed to delivering imaginative and engaging lessons that inspire pupils from start to finish. Our teachers work tirelessly to help every child meet and exceed their potential. Alongside expert teaching, pupils benefit from clear guidance on examination technique and a carefully structured revision programme as they move towards their final examinations at the end of Year 11.

I believe that success at GCSE is about much more than study alone. Maintaining a healthy balance between learning in the classroom and the rich co-curricular life of the school is essential. We strongly encourage every pupil to continue taking part fully in sport, music, drama, clubs and societies throughout years 10 and 11. Educational research consistently shows that maintaining this balance supports academic achievement, resilience and personal wellbeing.

The GCSE years at Ballard are filled with memorable opportunities. Pupils can look forward to 'the big trip!' with this year’s cohort travelling to Toronto, alongside involvement in the senior production and the opportunity to take on leadership responsibilities within the prefect team, as pupil ambassadors and pupil voice groups.

You have every reason to approach your GCSE studies with optimism and confidence. You will be challenged, supported and encouraged throughout by a caring, ambitious and vibrant community that is committed to helping you flourish. I very much look forward to seeing all that you will achieve.

Stuart Turner

Headmaster



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Introduction



Mr Oliver Rose
Director of Teaching & Learning
oliver.rose@ballardschool.co.uk

Years 10 and 11 mark an important milestone in our pupils' educational journey. During this stage, learning becomes more specialised as pupils embark on courses leading to nationally recognised GCSE qualifications. We are committed to providing a curriculum that is broad, balanced and academically challenging, while inspiring curiosity, encouraging personal growth and supporting every pupil to achieve their full potential. Our aim is to ensure that each pupil gains the qualifications, knowledge, skills and confidence needed to flourish in their chosen Post-16 pathway and beyond.

The options process gives pupils the opportunity to shape a programme of study that reflects their strengths, interests, and aspirations. By selecting subjects they enjoy and in which they are well suited to succeed, pupils can build a curriculum that both motivates and challenges them. Through this personalised approach, we seek to nurture a lifelong love of learning while providing the strong academic foundation needed for future success.

The range of subjects available offers pupils an exciting breadth of choice, and with that comes the responsibility of making informed decisions. We recognise that this can feel daunting, which is why we place great importance on the guidance and support we provide throughout the options process. This guide is designed to be the starting point for pupils and their families, working alongside tutors, teachers and senior staff to help them make confident, well-informed choices about the next stage of their education.

Choosing GCSE options is an important step, and we encourage every pupil to approach the process with curiosity, ambition, and confidence. We look forward to supporting each individual as they explore the opportunities available and make decisions that will help them achieve their goals, both during their time at Ballard and in the years that follow.

Oliver Rose

Director of Teaching & Learning

JUNE 2026 GCSE RESULTS

Analysis

100%

PASS RATE
ART, BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, DRAMA, DESIGN, FOOD TECHNOLOGY, MUSIC, PHYSICS, & TEXTILES

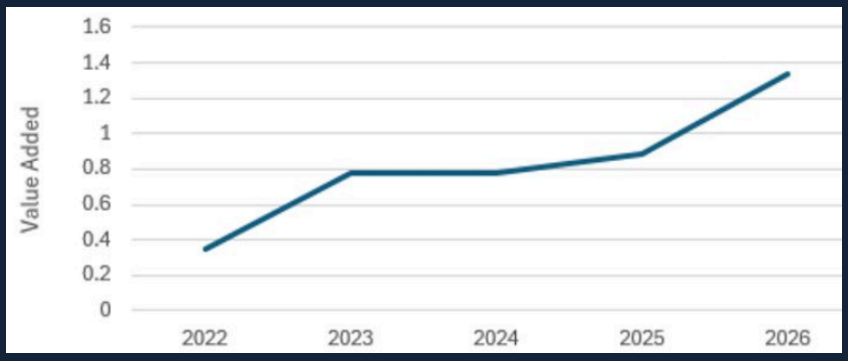
94%

GRADE 9-4 ACROSS ALL SUBJECTS
24.9% ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE*

46%

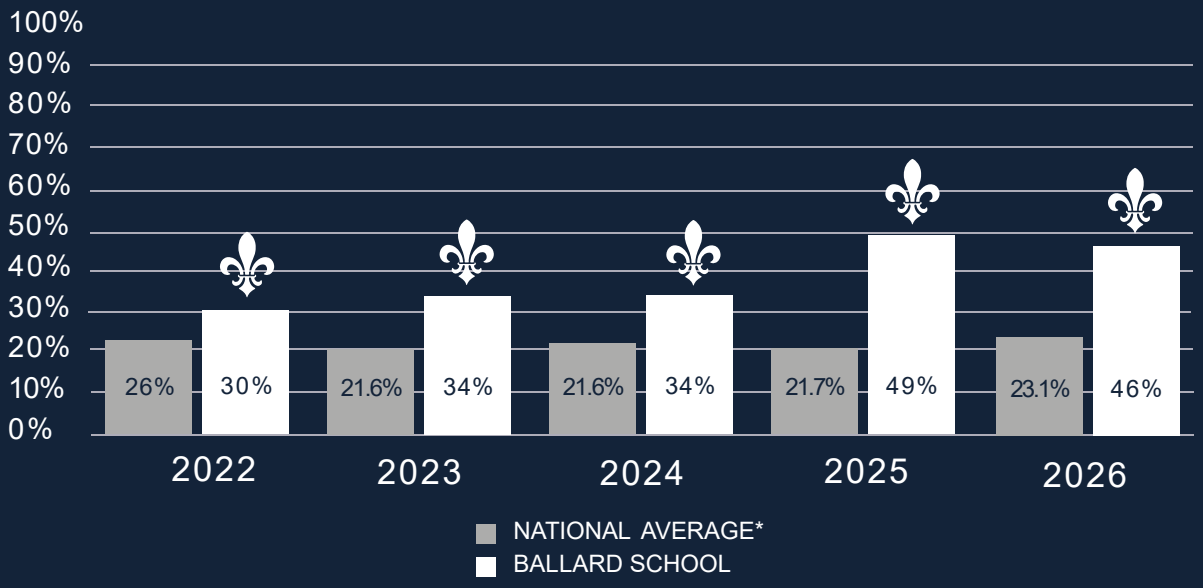
PUPILS ACHIEVED TOP GRADES (9-7)
MORE THAN DOUBLE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE*

GCSE Value Added Scores*



On average across every subject, each pupil achieved 1.34 grades higher than expected, based on their baseline assessment, surpassing last year's remarkable value-added score. Over half (55%) of pupils had an average value-added of one grade higher or more in every subject. An astonishing 17 subjects (See list below) added on average 1 or more grades above expectation with four subjects adding on average 2 or more!

Cohort Average 9 - 7 Grades Since 2022**



** Figures taken from Ofqual Analytics - GCSE (9 to 1) grade outcomes in England



CHOOSING YOUR OPTIONS

The Process

By the Spring Term, all pupils will have selected their GCSE options. Ballard has a thorough and supportive process in place to help guide pupils to reach these important final decisions. There will be opportunities throughout the process to ask questions and explore proposed option choices with a range of staff.

Pupils at Ballard can choose four out of any of the optional subjects offered at Ballard. Pupils need to select four options and one reserve using the form which will be shared with parents and pupils in the Spring Term.

Using this information, option blocks will be established to allow the largest number of pupils to study their preferred subject choices. Every year a small number of pupils will not receive all four of their first-choice GCSE options due to option block clashes or a course not running due to low levels of interest. We hope to offer the reserve option in this case. However, if the reserve option is not possible, we will contact families to discuss suitable alternatives.

Pupils will receive confirmation of their final options as early as possible in the Spring Term to give them peace of mind. Please note, once the option blocks have been established, they cannot be changed. If pupils wish to change an option after this date, they will have to choose from the newly created option blocks.

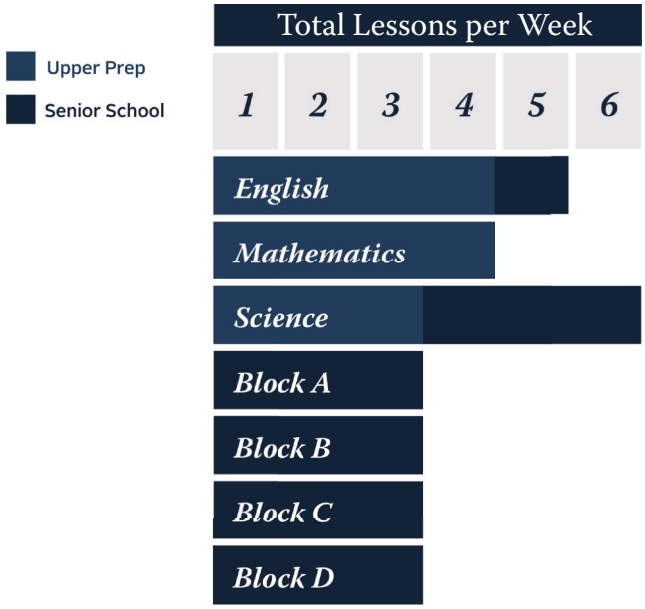
OPTION PROCESS

Timeline

September	1-1 Careers Guidance begins GCSE Options Launch Assembly Post-16 and Careers Exhibition
October	Options Support in PSHE Lessons
November	Parent and Pupil GCSE Options Evening GCSE Options Presentation in Lessons GCSE Options gauge of interest survey
January	Guided discussions with pupils and parents
February	Year 9 Parents' Evening GCSE Options final choices form published
March	Deadline for submission of final choices form Confirmation of GCSE Options Communication

CORE AND OPTIONAL CURRICULUM

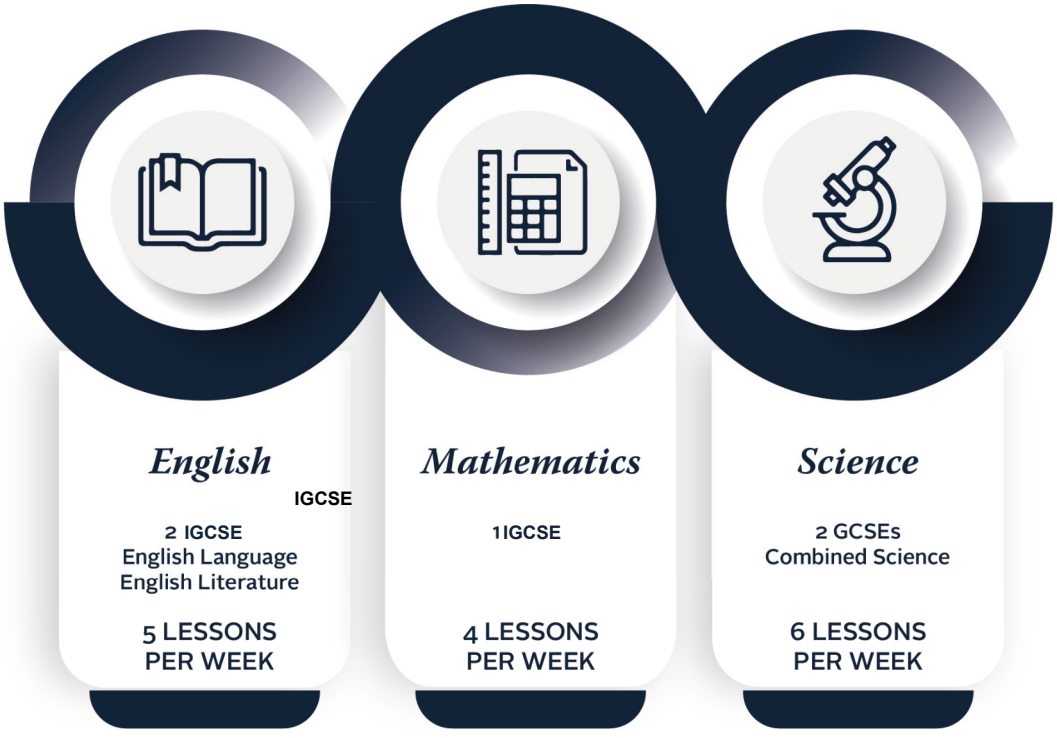
GCSEs at Ballard



Core subjects

All pupils will study a core curriculum which includes IGCSE English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and GCSE Combined Science, as well as recreational Core Physical Education and PSHE.

Where separate Science is taken as an option subject, this will add an extra three lessons a week to the six core Science lessons, reducing further option choices to three additional subjects.







Option subjects

All pupils have the choice of four option subjects from five disciplines: Humanities, Languages, STEM, Arts & Sport and Performing Arts. Each subject takes up 3 lessons per week to a total of 12 lessons for optional subjects.

*The separate science pathway is classified as an option choice, leaving three other option choices to choose from.

GCSE GRADES

Conversion

New Grading Structure	Old Grading Structure
9	A*
8	
7	A
6	B
5 ← Strong pass	
4 ← Standard pass	C
3	D
2	E
1	F/ G
U	U

USEFUL INFORMATION

Making Choices

How to choose your options

When considering your GCSE options, it is important to keep in mind that most A-Level and Post-16 courses require at least 5 strong GCSE passes (grade 5 or higher). Additionally, some A-Level sub-jects may expect you to have already studied the subject at GCSE level.

DO

- Choose subjects you enjoy: passion for a sub-ject can keep you motivated
- Play to your strengths: select subjects that match your skills and abilities
- Consider your performance: pick subjects where you tend to do well
- Look for subjects that complement each other: think about how they might work together
- Think ahead: choose subjects that will lead to future options in Post-16 courses or careers

DON'T

- Choose a subject just because your friends are doing it: your choices should be personal
- Pick a subject just because you heard it was easy: what is easy for one person may not be for you
- Choose a subject solely because you like your current teacher: teachers may change
- Pick a subject you don't fully understand: make sure you know what the subject entails

Some career paths might require specific GCSEs, so research your future ambitions and plan accordingly.

Be mindful of picking too many subjects with Non-Exam Assessments (NEAs), as managing multiple coursework-heavy subjects can be overwhelming.

Keep your options open and make sure to research your choices thoroughly.

What are non-examination assessments (NEAs)?

NEAs are the name given to traditional coursework. Some of the GCSE subjects are assessed partly or wholly by NEAs, which give pupils the opportunity to demonstrate skills and techniques that could not be demonstrated through a final examination.

NEAs are assessed under controlled conditions as required by the Examination Boards and these can be set over several hours or days.

NEAs can take the form of:

- Projects and fieldwork
- Written work and essays
- Artwork
- Performances

People to talk to:

To ensure you are making informed decisions that are right for you, talk to people including:

- Subject teachers
- Heads of Department
- Year 9 Form Tutors
- Head of Senior School – Mrs Guillen
- Careers Lead – Miss Rothwell
- Director of Teaching & Learning – Mr Rose
- Director of Curriculum & Assessment – Mr Walter
- Leadership Team – Mr Turner, Mr Jackson, Mrs Gray and Mrs Munro
- Pupils currently studying the subject in Year 10 or Year 11



BEYOND THE CURRICULUM

Careers Advice



Miss Laura Rothwell
Careers Lead
laura.rothwell@ballardschool.co.uk

Choosing GCSE options is an exciting milestone and the first step towards future career pathways. At Ballard, we aim to ensure every pupil feels informed, confident and supported when making these important decisions. Through a comprehensive careers programme, pupils explore their interests, discover different opportunities and develop an understanding of how their subject choices can influence future education and employment.

Personal Careers Guidance

During Year 9, every pupil receives a 1:1 careers guidance interview with our independent careers advisers from EBP South. These 50-minute meetings provide personalised advice, helping pupils explore their strengths, interests and aspirations while considering future education and career pathways.

Following the meeting, pupils and parents receive a personalised digital action plan, outlining the discussion and recommending practical next steps, including further research and exploration of possible career routes.

Post-16 Careers Exhibition

Each autumn, Ballard hosts a Post-16 Careers Exhibition, bringing together a wide range of sixth forms, colleges, universities, apprenticeship providers and local employers.

The event offers pupils and parents an excellent opportunity to explore the many pathways available after GCSEs, ask questions and speak directly with education providers and professionals from a variety of industries. Former Ballard pupils regularly return to share their experiences, providing valuable insight into life beyond school.



Careers Education Throughout the Curriculum

Careers education is embedded throughout school life. Pupils explore employability skills and career opportunities through PSHE lessons, tutor time, assemblies and curriculum subjects. Teachers regularly highlight how the knowledge and skills developed in their subjects connect to a wide range of careers, helping pupils understand the relevance of their learning.

Online resources

Pupils are encouraged to make use of a range of high-quality online careers platforms, including Unifrog, Careerpilot, Springpod, The Student Room and the National Careers Service.

These resources allow pupils to research careers, investigate further and higher education pathways, access virtual work experience, complete career quizzes and explore how GCSE subject choices can support their future ambitions.

Work experience - Year 10

As part of Trips Week in Year 10, every pupil completes a week of work experience, providing valuable insight into the workplace and helping them develop essential employability skills.

Using **Unifrog**, pupils take responsibility for researching and securing their own placements, supported throughout the process by school staff. This encourages independence while allowing pupils to find placements that reflect their interests and future aspirations. Work experience is often a highlight of the year, helping pupils build confidence, develop workplace skills and make informed decisions about their future.

Preparing for Post-16

In Year 11, pupils receive dedicated support as they prepare for applications to sixth forms, colleges and apprenticeships. Staff provide guidance with writing effective personal statements, ensuring pupils present their strengths, achievements and ambitions confidently.

To further prepare them for the next stage, pupils also participate in mock interviews with employers and external volunteers. These experiences develop confidence, communication skills and interview techniques, helping pupils make a successful transition to Post-16 education and beyond.





INDEPENDENCE WITH A

Supportive Network



Mrs Angela Guillen
Head of Senior
angela.guillen@ballardschool.co.uk

The GCSE years are a crucial time in our pupil's development, both personally and academically. At Ballard, we want to ensure that our pupils are supported and their needs are properly identified and met. The role of the tutor and the pastoral team are fundamental. Pupils' needs are identified and action plans are put in place to assist pupil's learning. Through assemblies, form time and PSHE, we emphasise the importance of having a trusted adult at school.

Senior school life

Our Senior School is a nurturing and vibrant environment. Pupils are taught by specialist subject teachers who are passionate about learning and the subjects they teach. In addition, our experienced tutors establish excellent relationships with their pupils during form times.

Assemblies

Regular assemblies celebrate different themes of the week and our pupils' contributions are always welcome.

Academic mentors

In Year 11, pupils who would benefit from additional guidance after their mock exams are paired with an Academic Mentor, to offer personalised guidance and build confidence and strengthen learning. By setting goals, reviewing achievements, and developing effective study habits, they help pupils feel encouraged and ready to reach their full potential.

Pastoral support

Our pastoral support and qualified Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) are always there to chat and offer a listening ear, to relieve anxiety and stress levels at a crucial time.

SEND SUPPORT AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Achieve Your Potential



Mrs Gemma Macdonald
Head of Learning Support & SENCo
gemma.mcdonald@ballardschool.co.uk

At Ballard, we pride ourselves on ensuring the correct access arrangements are in place to ensure a level playing field for all pupils. Exam Access Arrangements (EAAs) are not for pupils who are slightly inconvenienced or have minor difficulties. EAAs are for the substantially disadvantaged or disabled, within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. This means they have a physical or mental impairment which considerably affects their day-to-day activities that has lasted, or is likely to last, for a minimum of 12 months.

What are access arrangements?

Access arrangements are adjustments that enable candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), to access exams fairly. They allow pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and skills without altering the demands of the assessment.

How does the process begin?

If your child has additional needs, please inform the Head of Learning Support & SENCo as early as possible so that the right support can be considered. Parents should also note any additional needs on the enrolment declaration form.

The SENCo will then work with teachers and the pupil to identify suitable arrangements. These might include support for difficulties with reading, writing, processing speed or concentration.

Not every pupil with additional needs will require access arrangements - these are only put in place where a difficulty has a direct impact on exam access.

Who carries out the assessment?

Assessments are carried out by the Head of Learning Support or the school's appointed assessor. For example, this may determine whether 25% extra time is appropriate.

In some cases, trial strategies such as rest breaks are considered first. If an external assessor is involved, their assessment must be arranged in consultation with the school so that the correct evidence is gathered. Medical specialists (such as consultants or psychiatrists) can provide a formal diagnosis, but the decision about access arrangements rests with the school.

Teachers also provide evidence to show how an arrangement supports learning in class, internal tests, and mock exams.

What happens next?

Some access arrangements require formal applications to the exam boards. For pupils with more complex needs, the school may discuss the arrangements directly with the awarding body.

In summary

All schools must follow the national regulations for access arrangements to ensure fairness for all candidates. These processes are closely monitored and arrangements will always be made in the best interests of pupils whilst staying within the required guidelines.



ENRICHMENT WITHIN

Co-Curricular



Mrs Victoria Gray
Deputy Head
Co-Curricular & Operations
victoria.gray@ballardschool.co.uk

Co-Curricular activities remain an important part of the timetable for Senior pupils as they go through their GCSE studies at Ballard. Participation in DofE, Performing Arts, Sports and other valuable hobbies are highly regarded by further education establishments and form an important element of the pupils' personal statements as they apply for College and beyond. More than that, however, these activities provide a valuable 'brain break' from academic studies, helping pupils develop skills that will prepare them for life beyond Ballard and create unforgettable memories and experiences.

Activities

Some GCSE courses, particularly those with a practical element, will require pupils to participate in the Co-Curricular activities programme. This might include music ensembles and sporting teams. Senior pupils are actively encouraged to remain involved in sports teams, productions, plays and concerts. The programming of these events is done in conjunction with the academic team to ensure it complements lessons and examinations.

Raising attainment

Ballard pupils will always be given the opportunity to receive support with their GCSE studies to reach their potential grade, or challenge themselves to go further. This support can happen as part of the raising attainment programme, but should be balanced with other activities.


BARBADOS
WEST INDIES



WELLBEING PROVISION WITH PSHE



Mrs Zoe Thesiger-Pratt
Head of PSHE
zoe.thesiger-pratt@ballardschool.co.uk

As part of our proactive approach to pupils' pastoral care and wellbeing at Ballard, all pupils are taught Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education in a dedicated 50 minute lesson each week.

PSHE forms a fundamental part of the curriculum for all pupils at Ballard and is an integral part of our safeguarding and wellbeing provision. It aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills and understanding required to navigate life in the 21st century, both online and offline.

The PSHE curriculum actively promotes mutual trust and respect for others, including those with protected characteristics. It underpins the Fundamental British Values and supports the development of pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) understanding. In addition, it plays a vital role in fostering self-awareness, resilience and self-esteem. Through PSHE, pupils develop a clear understanding of the whole-school values that sit at the heart of character education at Ballard.

During Key Stage 4, the curriculum addresses a range of important and relevant topics. These include, but are not limited to, healthy relationships, sexual health, drugs and alcohol education, online safety and risk management and mental health and wellbeing. Pupils are also supported in understanding where and how to access help, guidance and support both within and beyond the school environment.

PSHE is taught by specialist teachers and delivered through a combination of year group sessions and smaller class-based discussions, allowing for both consistency and personalised learning. The programme is further enriched through the use of visiting speakers and external agencies, ensuring that pupils benefit from expert insight and real-world perspectives where appropriate.



PE & Games



Mr Finlay Wood
Director of Sport
finlay.wood@ballardschool.co.uk

PE & Games continue to be a key pillar of Ballard life in Year 10 and 11 with frequent opportunities for fixtures and the chance to try new sports and activities both on-site and off-site in our beautiful local environment.

Sports fixtures & leisure pathway

Pupils can continue to opt in each half-term on games afternoons to represent the school in fixtures against maintained and independent schools or join our leisure pathway to stay active and reap the benefits of physical activity through a variety of sports and positive experiences.

The Co-Curricular programme includes sports such as badminton and volleyball, giving pupils more depth to their sporting choices.

Interhouse competitions

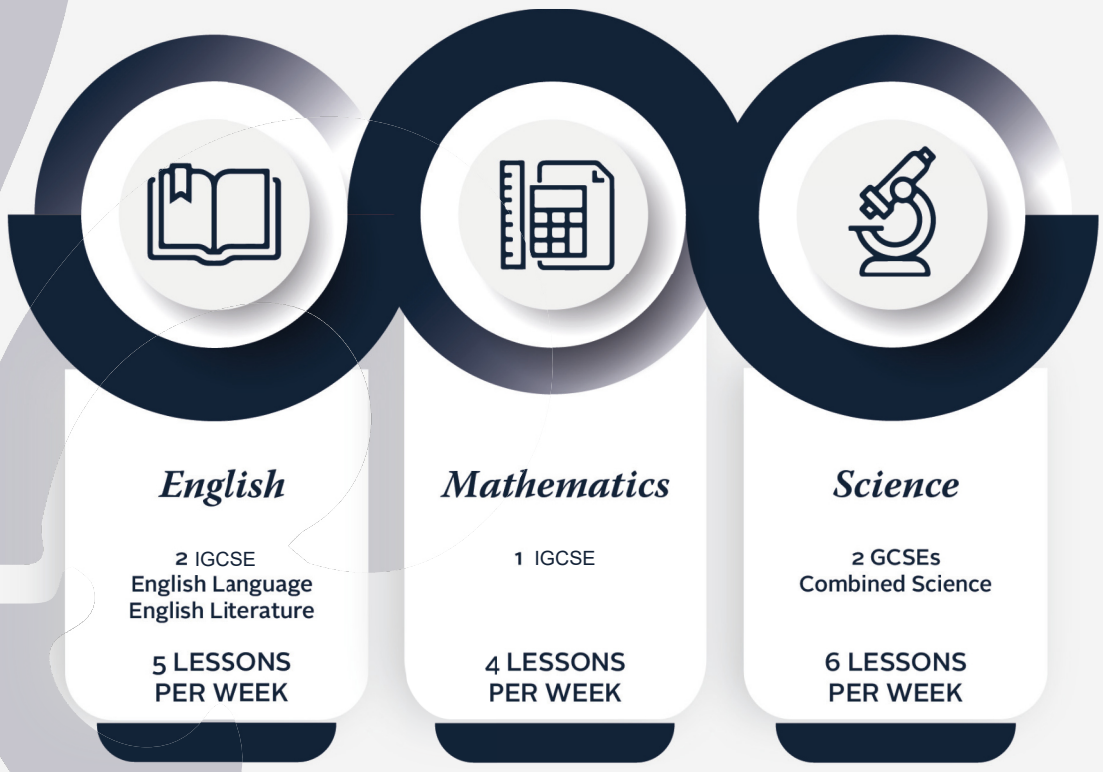
Interhouse competitions and mixed sport will continue to be a highlight of our 'sport for all' ethos, teaching key life concepts that go beyond the sports pitch as well as an opportunity to crown the House sporting champions.

Skills beyond GCSE

Engaging in Physical Education promotes physical fitness and cultivates a range of essential life skills. PE Core fosters resilience as pupils face physical challenges, promoting a positive mindset and perseverance. Decision-making skills are honed as individuals strategise and adapt during games, contributing to improved problem-solving capabilities. Additionally, PE instils discipline, time management and a sense of responsibility, all of which are transferable skills applicable beyond the sports field.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS & SCIENCES

Core Curriculum



English Language

QUALIFICATION: IGCSE9-1

CODE:0990

EXAMINATION BOARD: CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL

Assessment:

- Written Paper - Reading: (2 hours) 50% of final mark
- Component 3 - Coursework Portfolio: Internally assessed and externally moderated 50% of final mark

Key information:

This two-year course is assessed by a combination of course work and final exam.

Reading: The externally examined unit for English Language IGCSE is a Reading Paper comprising:

- Reading three non-fiction texts
- Writing in response to the texts
- Language analysis
- Summary writing
- Reading and understanding short and extended response questions

Coursework Portfolio: Candidates submit a portfolio of three assignments, each of 500–800 words, to be completed by the end of the Summer term in Year 10. The assignments may be completed in any order, and are:

- Assignment 1: writing to discuss, argue and/or persuade in response to a text or texts
- Assignment 2: writing to describe
- Assignment 3: writing to narrate

Course specification:

Cambridge International IGCSE (9–1) First Language English is designed for learners whose first language is English. Learners are also encouraged to read widely, both for their own enjoyment and to further their awareness of the ways in which English can be used. Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) First Language English also develops more general analysis and communication skills such as inference and the ability to order facts and present opinions effectively.

Skills gained:

- Enhance personal skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening
- Develop interpersonal skills
- Critical thinking
- Develop reasoning/argumentation
- Enhance creativity

Linked careers:

English is the gold standard qualification across careers. Identified as a very desirable subject for employers, English offers a wide variety of skills transferable to numerous A-Level and vocational courses available at college. More specifically, English is a requirement in the field of:

- Advertising
- Publishing
- Digital Copywriter
- Editor
- English Teacher
- Web Content Manager
- Journalist
- Scriptwriter
- Marketing and Communications
- Social Media Management



Ms Carly Maughan

Head of English

carly.maughan@ballardschool.co.uk



English Literature

QUALIFICATION: IGCSE9-1

CODE: 4ET1

EXAMINATION BOARD: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Assessment:

- Paper 1 - Poetry and Modern Prose: Reading (2 hours) 60% of final mark
- Paper 2 - Non-Examination Assessment. Modern Drama and Literary Heritage Texts: Internally assessed and externally moderated 40% of final mark

Key information:

This is a two-year course assessed by a combination of course work and a written exam.

Paper 1: Poetry and Modern Prose: Assessed components:

- Section A: Unseen Poetry: one 20-mark essay question exploring the meaning and effects created in an unseen poem.
- Section B: Anthology Poetry: one 30-mark essay question from a choice of two, comparing two poems from Part 3 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology
- Section C: Modern Prose: one 40-mark essay question from a choice of two on each of the set texts

Non Examination Assessment: Modern Drama and Literary Heritage Texts: The assessment of this component is through two course-work assignments, internally set and assessed, and externally moderated.

- Assignment A - Modern Drama: one essay response to a teacher-devised assignment on the studied text
- Assignment B - Literary Heritage Texts: one essay response to a teacher-devised assignment on the studied text

Course specification:

English Literature aims to encourage pupils to read a wide range of classic literature fluently with good understanding and make connections across their reading. They will read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that they can discuss and explain their understanding and ideas.

It is hoped that pupils learn to appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage and develop their cultural capital.

Trips:

Where possible, theatre trips or visiting theatre companies are arranged to complement studies. Pupils buy their own course books as they will need to annotate the texts with their own personal notes to aid revision; these costs are aproximately £25.

Skills gained:

- Develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response
- Independent working
- Time management and organisation
- Planning and researching written work
- Articulating knowledge and understanding of texts, concepts and theories
- Leading and participating in discussions

Linked careers:

- Digital copywriter
- Editor
- English teacher
- Web content manager
- Journalist
- Scriptwriter
- Marketing and communications
- Social media management

Ms Carly Maughan

Head of English

carly.maughan@ballardschool.co.uk



Mathematics

QUALIFICATION: IGCSE9-1

CODE: 4MA1

EXAMINATION BOARD: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Assessment:

- Paper 1 - Written Exam (2 hours) 50% of final mark
- Paper 2 - Written Exam (2 hours) 50% of final mark

Key information:

Entries for this IGCSE are at two levels; Higher Tier or Foundation Tier.

Pupils will be entered for linear IGCSE Mathematics at a level appropriate to their ability and ambitions. The qualification will be graded and certificated using the total mark across two papers. Foundation tier: grades 1 - 5, Higher tier: grades 4 to 9.

The course comprises two equally weighted 2 hour exam papers which are assessed at the end of the course. Each paper will cover all the assessment objectives within the course and there is no coursework element to the qualification. Both papers must be the same tier of entry and must be completed in the same assessment series. Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following assessment objectives:

- Assessment objective 1: Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in number and algebra
- Assessment objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in shape, space and measures
- Assessment objective 3: Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in handling data

Course specification:

Mathematics develops knowledge in oral, written and practical situations and encourages confidence, understanding and enjoyment of the subject. The syllabus focuses on mathematical skills, techniques and concepts and how to use them to solve problems.

Challenge:

High ability pupils in Year 10 are involved in the UK Maths Challenge, with the potential for qualification to advance in the competition.

Skills gained:

- Adept at solving quantitative problems
- Ability to understand both concrete and abstract mathematical concepts
- Proficient in communicating mathematical ideas
- Ability to make critical observations
- Accurately organise, analyse, and interpret data
- Extract important information and patterns
- Assess and solve complex problems
- Able to work independently and as part of a team
- Application of logical thinking

Linked careers:

- Banking
- Medicine
- Insurance / actuary
- Engineering
- Tech / AI / cybersecurity
- Software engineering
- Games designer
- Data science
- Tax / investments
- Stockbroking / trading
- Accounting / economics
- Quantitative analysis / risk analysis
- Project management

Mr Owen Thomas

Head of Mathematics

owen.thomas@ballardschool.co.uk



Science Pathways

Combined Sciences

Two GCSE grades in Science

6 x 1hr 15min Exam Papers

70 Marks Each Paper

The scores from six individual papers are totalled together to place pupils on the Combined Sciences 17-Grade Scale shown below

Separate Sciences: Biology, Chemistry & Physics

Three Separate Science GCSEs

6 x 1hr 45min Exam Papers

100 Marks Each Paper

For each discipline the scores from the two papers are totalled together to place the students on the 9-1 Grade Scale shown below

Combined Sciences 17-Grade Scale			*Separate Sciences* 9-1 Grade Scale		
Old Grade	*Higher* Tier	*Foundation* Tier	*Higher* Tier	*Foundation* Tier	*Old* Grade
A*	9-9		9		A*
	9-8 8-8		8		
A	8-7 7-7		7		A
B	7-6 6-6		6		B
	6-5				
STRONG PASS	5-5	5-5	5	5	
C	5-4 4-4	5-4 4-4	4	4	C
STANDARD PASS	4-3	4-3	3		
D	U	3-3 3-2	U	3	D
E	U		U		E
		2-2 2-1		2	
F	U		U		F
		1-1		1	
G	U		U		G
U	U	U	U	U	U

Foundation Tier papers go to a grade 5.

Higher Tier papers have a lowest grade of a 4. If the grade 4 standard is not met, it will be graded with a 'U'.

Combined Science

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8464

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Biology: 2 Papers (1 hour 15 mins each) 33.3% of final mark
- Chemistry: 2 Papers (1 hour 15 mins each) 33.3% of final mark
- Physics: 2 Papers (1 hour 15 mins each) 33.3% of final mark

Key information:

Entries are at two levels; Higher Tier or Foundation Tier, and are assessed externally.

Pupils will also complete a range of required practicals during the course. An understanding of the principles of these required practicals will be assessed in the written papers.

Biology: 2 Papers comprising of the following units:

- B1 (units 1 – 4): Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics
- B2 (units 5 – 7): Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution and Ecology

Chemistry: 2 Papers comprising of the following units:

- C1 (units 8 – 12): Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes and Energy changes
- C2 (units 13 – 17): The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere and Using resources

Physics : 2 Papers comprising of the following units:

- P1 (units 18 – 21): Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter and Atomic structure
- P2 (units 22 – 24): Forces; Waves and Magnetism and electromagnetism

Course specification:

Pupils are taught by specialist teachers in the three recognised disciplines; Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Science forms part of the compulsory 'core' curriculum. There is significant factual content in all the courses but in addition to teaching the basics of the syllabus, we endeavour to make our pupils think like scientists. The Sciences at GCSE encourage pupils to question, debate and evaluate decision making. Pupils will be expected to design experiments, to observe, record and present data. They will also be expected to understand the importance of using data to draw valid conclusions and to understand societal aspects of scientific data and the limitations of scientific data.

Trips:

Pupils also have the opportunity to visit the Winchester Science Museum to interact with the exhibition and experience the Planetarium. There are also opportunities to conduct field work at one of our local coastal sites and in the New Forest.

Skills gained:

- Understanding of the effects of Science on society
- Knowledge of the material, physical and living worlds How to use hypothesis and evidence to understand Science
- Observational, enquiry and problem-solving skills
- Skills in communication, mathematics and technology
- Develop judgement by learning how to critically evaluate the trustworthiness of information sources

Linked careers:

- Medicine
- Biomedical sciences
- Physiotherapy
- Sports science
- Ecologist/Botanist
- Pharmacist
- Engineering (mechanical, genetics, chemical)
- Veterinary care

Mr Aaron Markar

Head of Science

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Separate Sciences

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

BIOLOGY 8461

CHEMISTRY 8462

PHYSICS 8463

Assessment:

- Paper 1:Written Exam (1hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark
- Paper 2: Written Exam (1hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark

Key information:

Biology:
Paper 1:
- Cell Biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics

Paper 2 :
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance
- Variation and evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry:
Paper 1:
- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes

Paper 2 :
- Chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- The atmosphere
- Using resources

Physics:
Paper 1:
- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure

Paper 2 :
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and electro-magnetism
- Space physics

Who this course is for:

Studying separate sciences at GCSE provides a comprehensive understanding of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics individually, offering in-depth knowledge and practical skills. This specialised approach not only lays a solid foundation for future STEM studies and careers but also fosters a nuanced appreciation of each scientific discipline, enhancing the breadth and depth of each Science discipline ahead of A-Level Science study.

Skills gained:

- Investigative skills
- Critical thinking
- Research/quantitative skills
- Problem solving
- Analytical skills
- Increase decision making

Linked careers:

- Medicine
- Biomedical sciences
- Physiotherapy
- Sports science
- Ecologist/Botanist
- Pharmacist
- Pathologist
- Veterinary care

Mr Aaron Markar

Head of Science

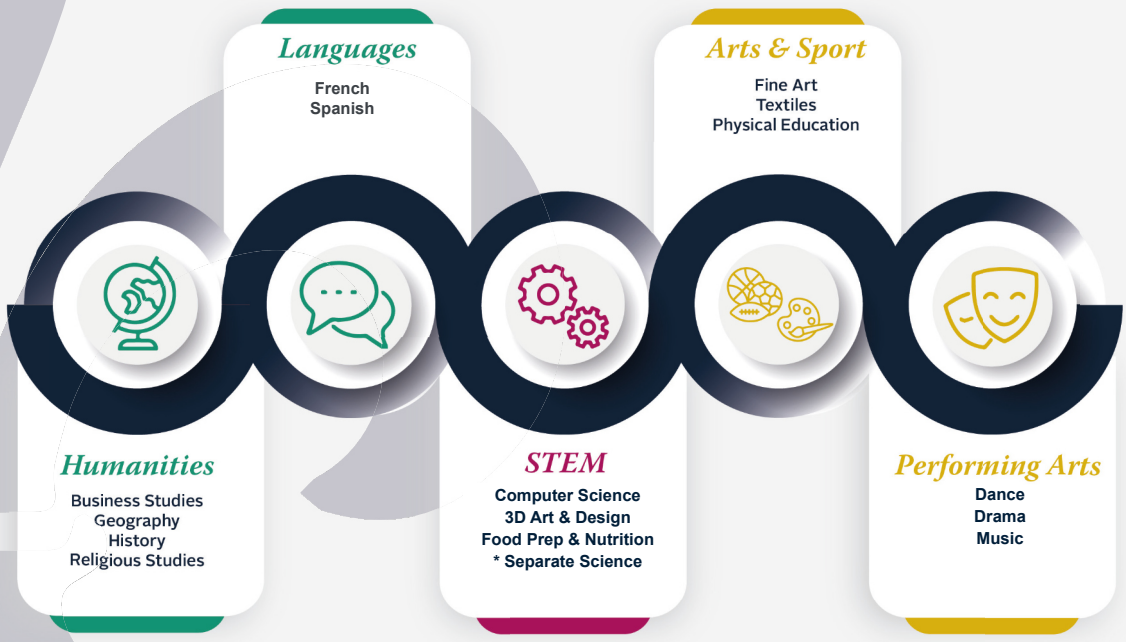
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GCSE CURRICULUM

Option Subjects



*The Separate Science pathway is classified as an option choice, leaving three other option choices to choose from.

Business Studies

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 1BS0

EXAMINATION BOARD: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Assessment:

- Theme 1: Investigating Small Business - Written examination (1 hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark
- Theme 2: Building a Business - Written examination (1 hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark

Key information:

Theme 1: In Year 10, pupils will start by exploring the world of small businesses through the lens of an entrepreneur. How and why do business ideas come about? What makes a successful business? Pupils will learn how to develop an idea, spot an opportunity and turn it into a successful business.

Theme 2: In Year 11, pupils will move onto investigating business growth. How does a business develop beyond the start-up phase? Pupils will learn about key business concepts and issues and decisions you need to make when growing a business or working in a global business. Pupils will learn about meeting customer needs, making marketing, operational, financial and human resourcing decisions, whilst exploring how the wider world impacts on the business as it grows.



Who this course is for:

The Business Studies qualification is designed to inspire and engage students, offering insights into the modern, evolving world of business. It equips students with the skills to think like entrepreneurs and develop a strong commercial awareness.

The course is designed for pupils who:

- Are hardworking and have an interest in Business
- Have an interest in pursuing an A-Level or degree in Business or Economics
- Are aspiring entrepreneurs with an interest in starting their own business

Skills gained:

- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Understanding finance
- Analysing data
- Presentation skills

Linked careers:

- Business analyst
- Business development manager
- Business project manager
- Customer services manager
- Digital marketer
- Financial adviser

Mr Tim Haynes

Head of Business Studies

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Geography

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8035

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Paper 1: Physical Geography (1 hour 30 mins) 35% of final mark
- Paper 2: Human Geography (1 hour 30 mins) 35% of final mark
- Paper 3: Geographical Applications (1 hour 30 mins) 30% of final mark

Key information:

Paper 1:Physical Geography. Written exam: 88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology (SPaG). Topics include:

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

Paper 2: Human Geography. Written exam: 88 marks (including 3 marks for SPaG). Topics include:

- Urban issues and challenges
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of resource management
- Geographical skills

Paper 3: Geographical applications. Written exam: 76 marks (including 6 marks for SPaG). A pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam. Topics include:

- Issue evaluation
- Fieldwork
- Geographical skills

Who this course is for:

This exciting and relevant course studies Geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes and investigates the link between them. Pupils will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Pupils are also encouraged to understand their role in society by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Trips:

The syllabus states two pieces of fieldwork have to be undertaken. This involves a trip to Southampton early in Year 10 to compare an area of suburb with an area of inner city. Our second piece of fieldwork is on coastal management at Milford on Sea. The pupils visit Milford on Sea in the Summer term of Year 10.

Skills gained:

- Develop numerical and statistical skills
- Gain cartographic skills
- Formulate enquiries and arguments
- Increase literacy skills

Linked careers:

Identified as a very desirable subject for employers because of the wide variety of skills it offers, numerous A-Level and vocational courses are available at college. Careers in:

- Tourism
- Research
- Media
- Armed Forces
- Education

Mr Jim Harrowven

Head of Geography

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History

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 1HIO

EXAMINATION BOARD: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Assessment:

- Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment (1 hour and 20 minutes) 30% of the final mark
- Paper 2: Period study and British depth study (1 hour and 50 minutes) 40% of the final mark
- Paper 3: Modern depth study (1 hour and 30 minutes) and is worth 30% of the final mark

Key information:

- Paper 1: Thematic and historic environment study: Crime and punishment in Britain c1000–present and Historic environment: Whitechapel c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city
- Paper 2: Period study and British depth study: British depth study - Early Elizabethan England 1558–88 and Period depth study - Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91
- Paper 3: Modern depth study: Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918–39

Who this course is for:

This exciting course is perfect for pupils with a passion for the subject. It aims to develop pupils' understanding of human activity in the past based on historical evidence. Pupils will learn about the nature of cause and consequence, continuity and change, and similarity and difference. Through studying this course, pupils will develop an understanding of the present and how it is influenced by past events.

Trips:

In Year 10, pupils experience a day trip to London to tour the sites of Whitechapel associated with the Ripper murders.

Year 10 also visit Christchurch to explore how a local town has connections to aspects of our GCSE course.

In the coming years, we hope to develop a residential trip to Berlin to compliment the studies of Nazi Germany and the Cold War.

Skills gained:

- Develop independent learning
- Teamwork
- Meaningful writing
- Critical thinking
- Inference
- Evidence analysis and evaluation
- Oral communication
- Engage in historical enquiry
- Formulate enquiries and construct arguments
- Increase literacy skills

Linked careers:

History GCSE has been identified as a very desirable subject for employers because of the wide variety of skills it develops. Careers in:

- Law
- Archaeology
- Archivist
- Museum curator
- Historian
- Politics
- Research
- Public sector
- Journalism
- Social research
- Education

Miss Elisabeth Crook

Head of History

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Religious Studies

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE:8062

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Paper 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices (1 hour and 45 minutes) 50% of the final mark.
- Paper 2: Thematic studies (1 hour and 45 minutes) 50% of the final mark.

Key information:

Paper 1: Candidates will be assessed on the beliefs teachings and practices of two religions from:

- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Catholic Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

Paper 2: Candidates will be assessed on either four religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes or two religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes and two textual studies themes.

Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies Themes:

- Theme A: Relationships and families
- Theme B: Religion and life
- Theme C: The existence of God and revelation
- Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict
- Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.
- Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice

Textual Studies Themes:

- Theme G: St Mark's Gospel – the life of Jesus
- Theme H: St Mark's Gospel as a source of religious, moral and spiritual truths

Who this course is for:

The aim of the syllabus is to enable the pupils to develop a sound knowledge and understanding of various religions, including the Christian faith and its relevance in today's world.

Religious Studies is different to other subjects. Pupils are not expected to know all the answers; instead, you are expected to ask the philosophical questions. Pupils will be invited to wrestle with questions about the meaning, value and purpose of life, calling upon them not only to justify their opinions with wisdom and clarity, but to appreciate and value the differences and perspectives of others as they grow up in multi-cultural Britain.

Skills gained:

- Research, analysis and presentation skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Formulate questions and solve problems
- Organisational and time management skills
- Descriptive writing and argumentative skills
- Cultivate skills to foster greater tolerance for diverse religious and world views

Trips:

Jewish synagogue in Bournemouth, Moorlands College, and the Foodbank in Christchurch.

Faithworks, Spear or other Bournemouth-based Christian charities that work with the homeless and unemployed.

Linked careers:

- Teaching
- Youth work
- Community and social work
- Pastoral jobs
- Priesthood
- Counselling careers
- Sociology & Psychology
- Law

Mr Jeff Whalen

Head of Religious Studies

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French

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8652

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

GCSE French has a Foundation tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher tier (grades 4–9). Pupils must take all four question papers at the same tier. The four papers each represent 25% of the final mark:

- Paper 1: Listening
- Paper 2: Speaking
- Paper 3: Reading
- Paper 4: Writing

Key information:

This course, is assessed externally and covers three themes:

- People and lifestyle
- Popular culture
- Communication and the world around us

Who this course is for:

French is widely spoken across the world, far beyond Europe. Universities and employers are increasingly looking for pupils with language skills. Being bilingual or multilingual requires and builds patience, perseverance, adaptability, and resilience.

Learning another language requires thinking outside the box and improves problem solving and creativity. The intercultural understanding developed through the study of a new language opens doors to enjoying a wealth of music, art, film, cuisine and much more.

This course is for pupils who wish to become well-rounded individuals, confident communicators, effective listeners, skilled leaders and informed and engaged global citizens.

Skills gained:

- Enriches vocabulary in first language
- Improves literacy and oracy
- Promotes communication and presentation skills
- Enhances world views
- Builds resilience
- Develops mental agility
- Enhances soft skills: listening and empathy
- Facilitates travel
- Fosters appreciation and respect for diversity

Linked careers:

- International business
- Government careers (e.g: GCHQ, Foreign affairs and diplomacy)
- Tourism
- Translation
- Education
- Journalism
- Social media management

Mrs Liz Thomas

Head of French

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Spanish

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8692

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9). Pupils must take all four question papers at the same tier. The four papers each represent 25% of the final mark:

- Paper 1: Listening
- Paper 2: Speaking
- Paper 3: Reading
- Paper 4: Writing

Key information:

This course, is assessed externally and covers three themes:

- People and lifestyle
- Popular culture
- Communication and the world around us

Who this course is for:

Spanish is widely spoken across the world, far beyond Europe. Universities and employers are increasingly looking for pupils with language skills. Being bilingual or multilingual requires and builds patience, perseverance, adaptability, and resilience.

Learning another language requires thinking outside the box and improves problem solving and creativity. The intercultural understanding developed through the study of a new language opens doors to enjoying a wealth of music, art, film, cuisine and much more.

This course is for pupils who wish to become well-rounded individuals, confident communicators, effective listeners, skilled leaders and informed and engaged global citizens.

Skills gained:

- Enriches vocabulary in first language
- Improves literacy and oracy
- Promotes communication and presentation skills
- Enhances world views
- Builds resilience
- Develops mental agility
- Enhances soft skills: listening and empathy
- Facilitates travel
- Fosters appreciation and respect for diversity

Linked careers:

- International business
- Government careers (e.g: GCHQ, Foreign Affairs and Diplomacy)
- Tourism
- Translation
- Education
- Journalism
- Social media management

Mrs Angela Guillén

Head of Spanish

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Computer Science

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: J277

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

Assessment:

- Paper 1 - Computer systems: Written examination (1 hour 30 mins) 50% of final mark

- Paper 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms & programming: Written examination (1 hour 30 mins) 50% of final mark

Key information:

Paper 1:

The question paper consists of short and medium answer questions. There will also be one 8-mark extended response question. This question will enable pupils to demonstrate the ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning.

Paper 2:

- Section A: Assesses pupils' knowledge and understanding of concepts of Computer Science. Pupils then apply these to problems in computational terms, where they may use an algorithmic approach.

- Section B: Assesses pupils' practical programming skills and their ability to design, write, test and refine programs.

Who this course is for:

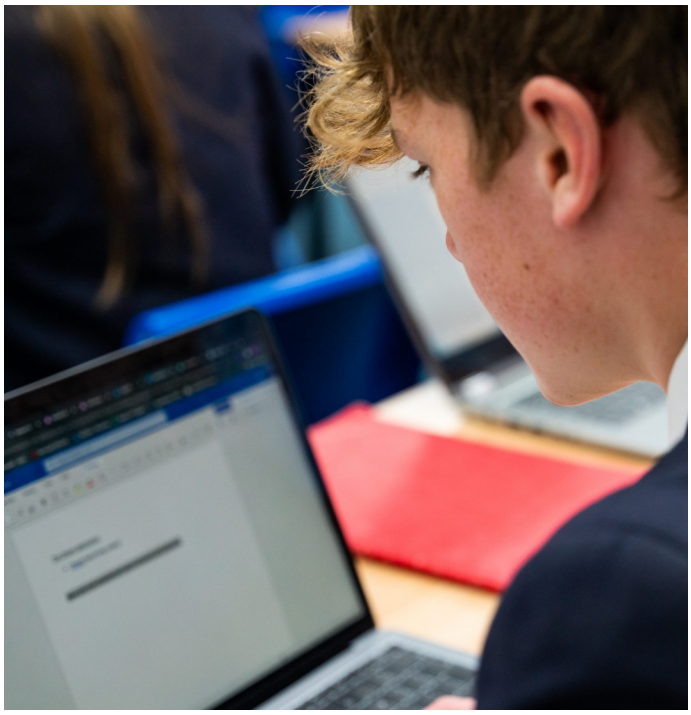
The aim of this course is to give learners a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. Pupils will acquire and apply creative and technical skills, knowledge and understanding of IT in a range of contexts to develop computer programs to solve problems. They will develop the skills to work collaboratively, evaluate the effectiveness of computer programs or solutions and the impact of, and issues related to, the use of computer technology in society. It provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in Computer Science as well as developing critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills.

Skills gained:

- Critical thinking
- High level of reasoning
- Analysis and problem solving
- Coding skills

Linked careers:

- Cyber security analyst
- Data analyst
- Software engineer
- Systems analysts
- UX designer
- Web developer



Mr David McNeice

Head of ICT & Computer Science

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3D Art & Design

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE:8205

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Summer Project (Year 9)
- Supporting Project (Year 10)
- Portfolio: No time limit 60% of final mark. Internally assessed, externally moderated
- Externally Set Assignment: 10 hours of supervised time 40% of final mark

Key information:

Component 1: Portfolio. Year 10 Summer Term + Year 11 Autumn Term – April to December. Design portfolio - product construction. This is a design and make project based on a product designer/artist theme of choice. Pupils learn practical skills, whilst developing design knowledge and understanding. The portfolio must include both:

- A sustained project – developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions
- A selection of further work – resulting from activities such as trials, experiments and skills-based workshops

Component 2: Externally set assignment. Year 11 Spring Term - 10 hour practical – March. 3D Art & Product Design has an early release paper in January from which students choose a starting point to develop a response using their skills, knowledge and understanding gained through the course of study

Who this course is for:

The course is designed to give pupils with a creative and practical flair a stimulating and enjoyable experience as designer-makers. By developing their design skills, problem solving abilities and working knowledge of materials, pupils create their own project outcomes to a range of teacher led and examination board themes. The qualification is not aimed solely at pupils following a design or technical career as abilities in research, design and problem solving are highly useful life skills.

Skills gained:

- Develop creative, technical and practical expertise
- Gain the skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes
- Build and apply a repertoire of technical knowledge
- Critique, evaluate and test ideas and products

Linked careers:

- Engineering
- Electrical
- Construction
- Product/Industrial designer
- Architect
- Naval architect
- Engineering
- Science
- Technical



Mr Andrew Cornwell

Head of DT and STEM

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Food Preparation & Nutrition

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8585

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Examination: Theoretical knowledge (1 hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark
- Non Exam Assessment (NEA): Task 1: Food Investigation; Task 2: Food Preparation assessment 50% of final mark

Key information:

Examination: Food Preparation and Nutrition is externally assessed. Questions will cover all aspects of the specification content: Food Nutrition and Health, Food Science, Food Safety, Food Choice and Food Provenance.

Non Exam Assessment (NEA): Candidates submit two tasks chosen from a list of themes provided by AQA. Candidates must be entered for both units. The Food Investigation task is setis set on September 1st of Year 11 and the Food Preparation task on November 1st.

- Task 1 – The Food Investigations x 3 (15%), 10 hours (30 marks) - The task will assess the following skills: research, selecting and justifying choices, how ingredients work and why, practical investigations and conclusions.
- Task 2 – The Food Preparation Assessment (35%), 20 hours (70 marks). The task will assess the following skills: research, selecting and justifying choices, including different technical skills, menu planning and practical work, analysis and evaluation of the nutritional information, costs and sensory properties of the seven dishes made. They should demonstrate different practical skills and present three dishes within a single period of 3 hours.

Who this course is for:

This exciting and creative course focuses on practical cooking skills. It will prepare candidates to make more informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. All pupils will develop an important life skill that will stay with them beyond Ballard.

Skills gained:

- Develop safe cooking skills
- Develop knowledge of functional properties and chemical processes as well as the nutritional content of food and drinks
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical, and socio-cultural influences on food availability
- Explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions

Linked careers:

- Food technologist
- Nutritionist
- Food marketing
- Chef
- Confectioner
- Dietician
- Consumer adviser
- Food retailing
- Health promotion
- Food journalist/stylist

Mrs Anna Clarke

Head of Food Technology

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Fine Art

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: J171

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

Assessment:

- Portfolio: No time limit 60% of final mark. Internally assessed, externally moderated
- Externally Set Assignment: 10 hours of supervised time 40% of final mark

Key information:

Component 1: Portfolio: Pupils develop, explore and record their ideas from a given starting point. They will learn skills while developing their knowledge and understanding. Later in the course, they will have the opportunity to create a personal response to a variety of starting points, and will work across a range of media and processes. Completion is by Christmas of Year 11.

Component 2: Externally Set Task: This task has an early release paper from which pupils will choose a starting point to develop a response using the skills, knowledge and understanding from their Portfolio unit. Pupils will be given a period of preparation, then a 10-hour period of sustained focused study in which to create their final re-sponse. Completion is by end of April in Year 11.

Assessment Format: Both components will be marked internally by the Art Department and moderated externally by OCR.

- AO1 Develop - Research of artist, movements: looking at and studying an artist/movement/culture. Develop their ideas through investigations demonstrating critical understanding of sources. (Portfolio: 30 marks plus Externally Set Tasks: 20 marks)
- AO2 Refine - (Development) Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate medias, materials, techniques and processes. (Portfolio: 30 marks plus Externally Set Tasks: 20 marks)
- AO3 Record - Research into chosen title. Record i deas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions as work progresses. Must incorporate observation drawings, sketches and brief notes (Portfolio: 30 marks plus externally set tasks: 20 marks). (Portfolio: 30 marks plus Externally Set Tasks: 20 marks)
- AO4 Present - (Final response, painting) Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language. (Portfolio: 30 marks plus externally set tasks: 20 marks)

Who this is course for:

This broad-based course offers the opportunity to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding using practical skills, whilst developing an understanding of the wide range of areas in art, craft and design. Pupils will have the opportunity to study from a range of options to suit their interest in Fine Art, for example: drawing, painting, installation, mixed media and digital media. This provides an excellent foundation for future creative study beyond GCSE level.

Skills gained:

- Become confident in taking risks and learn from experience. Developed creativity and application of visual language
- Develop critical understanding through investigative, technical and expressive skills.
- Acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media

Trips:

Trips to galleries and opportunities to visit places of interest that support pupils with their sketchbook projects such as The Sealife Centre.

Linked careers:

- Illustrator
- Animator
- Graphic designer/web designer
- Prop and set designer
- Arts heritage – conservation and restoration
- Spatial, interior or landscape designer
- Tattooist artist
- Architect

Mrs Davina Hitchens

Head of Visual Arts

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Textiles

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: J174

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

Assessment:

- Portfolio: No time limit 60% of final mark. Internally assessed, externally moderated
- Externally Set Assignment: 10 hours of supervised time 40% of final mark

Key information:

Component 1: Portfolio. Year 10 Summer Term + Year 11 Autumn Term – April to December. The portfolio must include:

- A sustained project – developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions.

Component 2: Externally Set Task. Year 11 Spring Term - 10 hour practical – April. Pupils are required to work in one or more area(s) of textile design, such as those listed below:

- Art textiles
- Fashion design and illustration
- Costume design
- Constructed textiles
- Printed and dyed textiles
- Surface pattern
- Stitched and/or embellished textiles
- Soft furnishings and/or textiles for interiors
- Digital textiles
- Installed textiles

They may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas.

Who this course is for:

This broad-based course offers the opportunity to develop the pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding using practical skills, whilst developing an understanding of the wide-ranging areas of art, craft and design. They will have the opportunity to study a range of techniques such as: screenprinting, heat press transfer, 3D and constructed textiles, machine and hand-stitch and digital textiles. Pupils are able to specialise in their chosen pathway to develop their final designs, based on their individual interests.

Trips:

At the start of Year 10, students participate in site visits designed to stimulate creative exploration and support the development of visual research. These excursions involve photographing and gathering materials that serve as inspiration for practical sample work. This academic year, students visited the Sea Life Centre and Mudeford Quay to inform and enrich their understanding of marine themes within the 'Ocean' project.

Towards the end of Year 10, pupils attend a range of high-profile Art and Fashion exhibitions, including those held at the Victoria & Albert Museum and Tate Modern. These experiences expose students to professional practice and contemporary creative industries. Additionally, the programme is enhanced by visiting artists who deliver specialist textile workshops, providing students with hands-on opportunities to expand their technical skills and artistic perspectives.

Skills gained:

- Learn new skills such as surface pattern printmaking, weaving, felting, stitching, heat press printing, construction methods and CAD skills
- Understand the properties of different materials
- Use visual language critically as appropriate to their own intentions and chosen area of Textiles

Linked careers:

- Textile and print designer
- Fashion designer
- Jewellery designer
- Illustrator
- Photography
- Buyer
- Interior design

Mrs Davina Hitchens

Head of Visual Arts

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Physical Education

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8582

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Paper 1 - The human body and movement: Written examination (1 hour 15 mins) 30% of final mark.
- Paper 2 - Socio-cultural influences and well-being: Written examination (1 hour 15 mins) 30% of final mark.
- Non-exam assessment (NEA) - Practical performance: Assessed internally, externally moderated. 40% of final mark.

Key information:

Written Papers: The exam paper includes multiple choice questions, short answer questions and extended questions. The following topics are assessed:

Paper 1:
- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

Paper 2:
- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

Non-exam assessment:
Practical Performance: Set in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity). Pupils will be assessed in skills in progressive drills (10 marks per activity) and in the full context (15 marks per activity) for each of their three activities. All practical evidence is internally marked and externally moderated.

Analysis and Evaluation Coursework (10% weighting): Students will be assessed on their analysis (15 marks) and evaluation (10 marks) of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

Who this course is for:

This course develops knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain pupil performance in physical activities whilst understanding the benefits to health, fitness and well-being. Pupils have the opportunity to engage in team and individual sports.

Skills gained:

- Develop skills, techniques, tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas to enhance practical performances
- Develop theoretical knowledge and understand how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport
- Understand socio-cultural influences which can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport

Linked careers:

- Teaching/coaching
- Physiotherapy
- Sports nutrition
- Sports massage
- Sports science
- Doctor
- Nurse
- Sport medicine
- Sports analyst
- Sports Journalist

Mr Dave Steadman

PE GCSE Co-Ordinator

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Dance

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8236

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Performance (internally marked, externally moderated): 30% of final mark
- Choreography (internally marked, externally moderated): 30% of final mark
- Dance Appreciation written exam (1 hour 30 minutes): 40% of final mark

Course Content:

Performance - students perform:

- Set phrases in a solo dance (approximately 1 minute)
- A duet or trio performance (3 to 5 minutes)

Choreography - students create:

- A solo dance (2 to 2.5 minutes), or
- A group dance for 2 to 5 dancers (3 to 3.5 minutes)

Dance Appreciation - written exam:

Students demonstrate knowledge of choreography and performance, drawing on their own practical work and the GCSE Dance Anthology. They critically analyse both their own work and professional productions.

The Anthology includes six professional works, providing insight into:

- Different dance styles and fusions
- Established and emerging choreographers
- Varying group sizes and dancer combinations
- A range of choreographic approaches and structures
- Different performance environments and musical settings
- Inclusive dance
- Dance influenced by diverse cultures

Who is this course for:

GCSE Dance explores the artistic and expressive qualities of movement through performance, choreography and appreciation.

As a physical and creative subject, it develops students' creative, physical, emotional and intellectual abilities, regardless of prior dance experience.

Skills gained:

- Strength, flexibility, balance and coordination
- Expressive and performance skills
- Responding to feedback and improving through practice
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Presentation and communication skills
- Creativity in choreography

Liked careers:

- Choreographer
- Dance Performer/Artist
- Participatory Dance Artist
- Dance Journalist
- Costume or Set Designer
- Dance Health Practitioner
- Primary or Secondary Teacher
- Movement Therapist

Miss Kamiji Ebun-Cole

Head of Dance

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Drama

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8261

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Paper 1 - Understanding Drama: Written examination with open book (1 hour 45 mins) 40% of final mark
- Devising Drama: Internally marked and externally moderated, 40% of final mark
- Performance - Texts in practice: Externally marked, 20% of final mark

Key information:

Understanding Drama: Written paper divided into three compulsory sections:

- Section A: Theatre roles and terminology
- Section B: Study of set text
- Section C: Live theatre production.

Autumn Term Year 11
Devising Drama: A practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to create and develop original theatre as a designer or actor in a performance. Pupils also produce a portfolio demonstrating how they applied theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance and analyse and evaluate their own work. Marked by the teacher and moderated by AQA.

Spring Term Year 11
Texts in Practice: A practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to apply theatrical skills to a script of their choice, for a live performance. Marked by an AQA visiting examiner.

Who this course is for:

This course offers pupils the opportunity to explore drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience. The course engages pupils in both devised and scripted work from a broad range of genres. Drama encourages pupils to become performers, to collaborate with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively.

Drama pupils learn to pursue their own creativity and reflect on professional live theatre studied during the course.

Skills gained:

- Performing
- Technical theatre
- Set and costume design
- Professional communication
- Self-evaluation
- Theatre analysis
- Teamwork and leadership
- Listening and responding
- Creative realisation
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Time management
- Research

Trips:

Live theatre trips include Willy Russell's Blood Brothers and Mark Haddon's The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime.

Linked careers:

- Actor
- Broadcast presenter
- Community arts worker
- Drama therapist
- Runner, broadcasting/film/video
- Theatre director
- Theatre stage manager

Mrs Nicci O'Connor White

Head of Drama

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Music

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: J536

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

Assessment:

- Composing - Integrated Portfolio: Non Exam Assessment (NEA) 30% of final mark
- Practical Component - Performance: Non Exam Assessment (NEA) 30% of final mark
- Listening & Appraising: Written Examination (1 hour 30 mins) 40% of final mark

Key information:

There are four areas of study: The Concerto Through Time, Rhythms of the World, Conventions of Pop, Film and Game Music. The practical elements include composing and performing in three forms of assessment.

Composing: Assessed through two compositions, one free choice and one to a brief set by OCR. Internally marked and externally moderated by the end of the Spring Term in Year 11.

Performance: Assessed through two performances, one solo and one ensemble. Internally marked and externally moderated by the end of the Spring Term in Year 11.

Listening & Appraising: Ongoing preparations throughout Year 10 and 11 towards the final exam. The exam compises a mixture of short answer questions and one long answer question on the four Areas of Study: The Concerto Through Time, Rhythms of the World, Conventions of Pop, Film and Game Music.

Who this course is for:

GCSE Music is about creating, performing and understanding music across a wide range of styles. Pupils' work will be largely practical, and they will be encouraged to perform on an instrument of their choice (including voice) as a soloist and member of an ensemble or band. They will develop and extend their composition skills, working to their own strengths and musical tastes whether classical, contemporary or commercial. Pupils will also listen to and appraise music from a wide range of cultural and historical genres.

Trips:

Trips to useful concerts and performances are offered e.g. Music for Youth Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, and BSO Poole Lighthouse.

Skills gained:

Music is an academic subject, but also benefits learning by activating all areas of the brain: auditory (sound processing); motor (rhythm processing); and limbic (emotions).

- Independent learning: having to be disciplined about practising an instrument/voice
- Working as a team, broadening musical interests and experiences
- Performance and presentation skills
- Listening, composing and developing analytical skills
- Problem solving skills and written skills
- Confidence and self-esteem: positively affecting all areas of life and learning
- Creativity and self-expression: helping pupils to think beyond the boundaries and harness the power of their imagination

Linked careers:

- Increasingly, employers and universities are looking for young people who have skills that are learned through creative subjects: creative thinking, emotional intelligence, adaptability, communication, and tenacity for example. Music can open doors to a range of education and employment pathways:

- Musician
- Sound technician/recording Engineer/sound designer (venue/internet based)
- Artist manager
- Music therapist
- Film, TV, theatre, radio, arts administration, or creative education.
- Songwriter/composer

Mr Barnaby Prangnell

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Further Mathematics

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 8365

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

Assessment:

- Paper 1- Non Calculator: Written Exam (1 hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark
- Paper 2 - Calculator: Written Exam (1 hour 45 mins) 50% of final mark

Key information:

The course content is offered through the Co-Curricular programme for our most able pupils in Year 11.

The specification content is set out in six distinct topic areas although questions will be asked that range across these topics:

- Number
- Algebra
- Coordinate Geometry (2 dimensions only)
- Calculus
- Matrix Transformations
- Geometry

Two exam papers, including a mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a pupil progresss through the paper. Content from any part of the specification may be assessed.

Who this course is for:

This course is offered to very high-ability mathematicians in Year 11 as an additional qualification. Studied over one year as a co-curricular activity, it provides an exciting opportunity for pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge and further develop their problem-solving skills.

It is intended as an additional qualification to GCSE Mathematics, rather than as a replacement. The content assumes prior knowledge of the Key Stage 4 Programme of study and covers the areas of algebra and geometry, which are crucial to study the subject in greater depth and breadth.

This qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem-solving skills. It also gives an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs. Learners should be encouraged to reason logically and recognise incorrect reasoning, and to appreciate the power of generalisation and mathematical proof. They should be encouraged to see algebra as a natural tool for communicating mathematically and for solving a range of problems.

Skills gained:

- Deep reasoning skills
- Resilience
- An ability to be reflective in your own practice
- An ability to communicate complex ideas
- An ability to work under pressure and on your own initiative

Linked careers:

- Tax
- Investments
- Stockbroking/trading
- Engineering
- Accounting/economics
- Quantitative analysis/risk analysis
- Financial engineering
- Project management

Miss Kiri English

Further Maths Co-ordinator

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Statistics

QUALIFICATION: GCSE9-1

CODE: 1ST0

EXAMINATION BOARD: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Assessment:

- Paper 1 - Calculator: Written Exam (1 hour 30 minutes) 50% of final mark
- Paper 2 - Calculator: Written Exam (1 hour 30 minutes) 50% of final mark

Key information:

The course content is offered through the Co-Curricular programme for our most able pupils in Year 10. The two papers will assess the following content:

- The collection of data
- Processing, representing and analysing data
- Probability

Who this course is for:

This course is offered to very high-ability mathematicians in Year 10 as an additional qualification. Studied over one year as a co-curricular activity, it provides an exciting opportunity for pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge and further develop their problem-solving skills.

Skills gained:

- Non-routine problem solving – expert thinking.
- Systems thinking
- Critical thinking
- ICT literacy
- Communication
- Relationship-building skills
- Collaborative problem solving
- Adaptability
- Self-management and self-development

Linked careers:

- Data analysis
- Finance
- Market research
- Statistics
- Accounting
- Engineering
- Consultancy
- Insurance



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USEFUL

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