



LOUGHBOROUGH
High School



GCSE

Option Choices 2024-2026



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Dear Year 9

I am delighted to welcome you to the next phase of your journey at Loughborough High School. You now have the flexibility to choose a range of subjects that play to your strengths, while maintaining a broad, balanced programme of study. There are opportunities for enrichment and independent study within the curriculum and our standard pattern of nine GCSEs reflects our genuine commitment to balancing academic study with student wellbeing.

We hope that you will enjoy choosing subjects that reflect your interests, aptitudes and any potential career pathways, and we understand that you will want to spend time discussing your options with family and friends. There are lots of staff at school, too, who can help and guide you including your form tutor, your subject teachers and heads of department, your head of year and our Head of Futures, Mrs Grainger.

Over the two years of the GCSE course, all subjects will make demands on your time and energy. Teachers will expect you to work more independently and to meet deadlines so it is important when making your choices to consider the content of the courses and the nature of any practical or coursework elements. Think about the variety within your curriculum as you select your subjects and try to arrive at a balance which matches your talents. Try to be realistic in your choices: commitments out of school are also important and should complement your academic choices and studies.

We are looking forward to seeing you progress into Year 10 and Year 11 and enjoying a range of opportunities, including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and the Voluntary Service Unit (VSU), alongside your existing interests. I wish you all the very best for the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

F. R. Miles

Dr Miles
Head



Our Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Loughborough High School is committed to offering a Key Stage 4 curriculum where pupils can choose to work with their strengths yet follow a broad and balanced scheme of study. Our pupils will study towards nine GCSEs in a curriculum that offers academic rigour and opportunities within subjects and enrichment to practise skills such as leadership, communication, teamwork, negotiating, problem-solving and organising. It is a curriculum that includes something for everyone to excel in.

In our KS4 curriculum offer some subjects are compulsory. Pupils have a core curriculum of Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, two separate sciences and PE, all which feature as subjects on the timetable. In addition, pupils follow an age appropriate PSHCE course and an enrichment programme that focuses on wellbeing and independent learning.

We ask pupils to choose 4 subjects and a reserve from a wide range of options, covering Modern Languages, Humanities, Sciences, Expressive and Performing Arts, Sport and Technology.

To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, most pupils will choose a language, a humanity and a creative subject.

Core Curriculum - all pupils will study:

English Language	Science 1 – choose from Biology, Chemistry or Physics	PE (non-exam)
English Literature	Science 2 – choose from Biology, Chemistry or Physics	PSHCE (non-exam)
Mathematics		

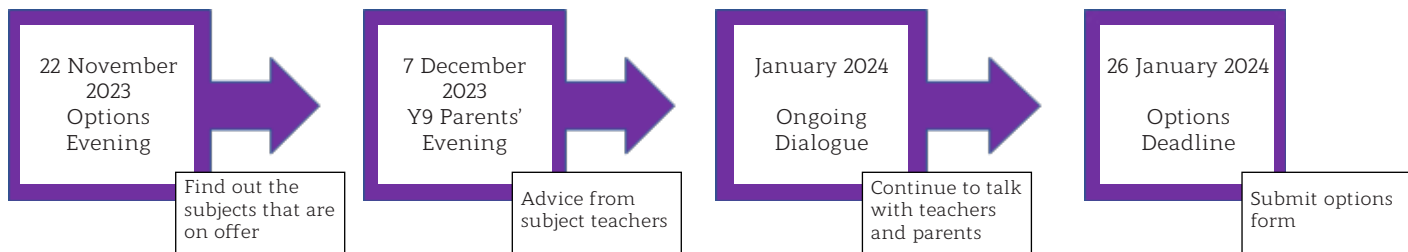
Options - In addition pupils will study 4 from:

Geography	French	Biology	Art
History	Spanish	Chemistry	Drama
Classical Civilisation	German	Physics	Music
RS with Hinduism	Greek	Computer Science	PE
RS with Islam	Latin	Food	

- Please speak to Mrs Lee if you are considering changing your first MFL
- For medical applications, it is desirable if pupils study three science subjects at GCSE

Pupils will also have the opportunity to work on independent skills for three lessons a week; in doing so, they would be studying towards a Higher Project Qualification.

The Options Process



What happens next?

Your subject choices are processed and lists of pupils wishing to take each subject are produced.

We will produce a curriculum plan which allows as many pupils as possible to study their preferred subjects.

However:

Some subjects may not be very popular and may not run. There needs to be a minimum of seven pupils for a subject to run.

Some subjects might be too popular and we may need to limit numbers.

Some combinations of subjects may not be possible.

If all of your choices cannot be satisfied then you will be asked to discuss this with Mrs Beardsley and your form tutor who will help you make new choices.

We wish you all the best in this exciting time of your educational career.



GCSEs and IGCSEs

GCSEs and IGCSEs are essentially the same thing, and certainly enjoy the same intellectual and currency value. Domestic GCSEs – referred to as GCSEs – were reformed in the last decade. For some subjects, this made little to no difference. For some subjects, the changes were both significant and detrimental, and many leading schools took the decision to move to international GCSEs, which were free from the government changes applied to domestic GCSEs. International GCSEs are run and administered by exam boards in the same way as domestic GCSEs, with the sole difference being that they are not regulated by Ofqual, the government regulator for assessments in England.

Our teachers choose the most appropriate qualification for their subjects to prepare the students for A Level study, but also make the choice to provide the best, most enjoyable and most stimulating experience in the GCSE years for Loughborough High pupils.

Grading

All GCSEs and IGCSEs are now graded on the 9 – 1 tariff. For ease, please see a comparison to alphabetical grades as below.

Number	Alphabetical equivalent
9	A** (even if A** does not exist as a grade)
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	High C
4	Low C
3	D
2	E
1	F

The government considers a 4 a 'standard pass' and a 5 a 'strong pass.' These are the key metrics often used by employers as the base minimum for employment.

Non-exam assessment / coursework / irregular exam times

Some subjects offer non-exam assessment / coursework / irregular exam times as assessment routes in addition to the more traditional route of terminal exams in exam halls in May and June of Year 11. Please consult those subjects for further information and take this into account when making your choices: some pupils might like the idea of these types of assessments, and others less so.

The below shows these major assessment points that sit outside of the traditional summer exam windows where most exams are taken.

Assessments marked * are externally assessed, all others are assessed internally.

Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
10			Drama
11	Food	Art Drama* Food HPQ Music PE	Art*



Core Subjects

English Language and English Literature

English is a vital subject which helps you to develop core, transferable skills while also enabling you to develop your independence and creativity. You will be able to enjoy the experience of reading and explore wider, universal issues, promoting better understanding of yourself and the world around you. English is a diverse, creative subject which can ultimately lead to a wide range of careers in various sectors and industries. In English lessons, you will study for two separate qualifications in English and English Literature.

What do the courses involve?

Lessons will be varied, enabling you to develop both your analytical skills and your ability to communicate.

As preparation for the English – First Language IGCSE, you'll study a range of texts, enjoying and appreciating a variety of language. You'll be encouraged to read these critically, using the knowledge gained to inform and improve your own writing. You'll be encouraged to develop your skills of evaluation and analysis in preparation for Paper 1: Reading, and to write accurately, articulately and creatively in preparation for Paper 2: Directed Writing and Composition.

Assessment in IGCSE Literature in English comprises two examinations, Paper 1: Poetry and Prose, and Paper 2, Drama. You'll develop your ability to understand and respond to literary texts in different forms and from different periods and cultures. Text choices are regularly rotated by the examination board, but you will study a range of poems, a novel and two plays. You'll be encouraged to appreciate literature and to develop and communicate an informed personal response. In lessons, you'll balance close analysis of the set texts with discussion of broader themes and ideas and refinement of essay skills.

Exam board

CIE IGCSE English – First Language (0990)

CIE IGCSE Literature in English (0992)

How is the course assessed?

Both courses are assessed entirely by examination.

CIE IGCSE Literature in English (0992): assessment comprises two examinations, Paper 1: Poetry and Prose, and Paper 2: Drama. Both examinations require candidates to respond to two questions on two texts.

CIE IGCSE English – First Language (0990): assessment comprises two examinations, Paper 1: Reading and Paper 2: Writing.

What can GCSEs in English Language and Literature lead to?

The subject is vital and the qualifications are an important springboard to further study and careers. English Literature can be studied at A Level and will complement other arts subjects such as History, Religious Studies and Classical Civilisation, but is extremely popular with linguists and scientists who enjoy a different method of study. Indeed, pupils have gone on to study an extremely diverse range of subjects, from English Literature itself to Medicine. With respect to higher education, the subject is highly popular in its own right and well respected for its academic rigour, but it is also useful for many arts-related courses such as journalism, law, philosophy and Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE). English is a very flexible subject; English graduates are employed in a wide range of sectors, not simply those more traditionally linked to the subject, such as publishing or advertising.

What skills do the English courses develop?

In both IGCSEs, you will develop your ability to think critically about texts, identifying the writer's purposes and how these are achieved. You will be encouraged to infer, to look for underlying ideas and attitudes. The analytical skills which enhance your study of English will also be developed in English Literature, where you will develop an understanding of literal meaning, relevant contexts and of the deeper themes or attitudes that are expressed. Through your studies, you will learn to recognise the ways in which the writers use English to achieve a range of effects, and will be able to present an informed, personal response to the material you have studied. Indeed, central to English is communication and expression; you will develop your ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively when speaking and writing, tailoring your content to purpose and audience.



Maths

What does the course involve?

Maths IGCSE extends all the topics that you have studied in Years 7, 8 and 9. The majority of the course covers Number and Algebra (approximately 60%), Geometry is approximately 25% and Statistics approximately 15%.

Exam board

We do the Edexcel IGCSE Specification A (2016). Grades 9 to 1 are awarded across two tiers but for many years we have only submitted entries for the Higher paper – grades 9 to 4.

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed by two, two-hour exams at the end of Year 11. Any of the content can appear in either of the exams. Both papers allow the use of a calculator.

What can a GCSE in Maths lead to?

Maths appears in everyday life and even if you do not wish to continue your study of Maths, an employer will want you to be able to be numerate – work out percentages, understand the size of numbers and make sensible estimations.

Many A Levels and university degrees will involve maths of some description, for example statistical analysis in Geography, Biology, Psychology and PE.

What skills does the Maths course develop?

The course will develop your numeracy and also enhance your logical reasoning, problem-solving skills and resilience. It is extremely good exercise for the brain.



Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

PSHCE continues through the senior school years with timetabled weekly lessons as well as individualised careers support in Year 11. The spiral curriculum is based on the aims and ethos of the school and in addition to statutory topics, also includes issues raised via the annual pupil survey. Pupils are encouraged to explore issues that affect them now or may affect them in the future. It is largely taught by members of the pastoral team which include the Head, Senior Deputy Head, Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Heads of Year.

The topics covered within PSHCE divide into three core themes:

- Health and Wellbeing: encompassing drugs education as well as mental health and wellbeing.
- Relationships: including Sex and Relationships education including consent, choices and decision, personal safety as well as developing listening skills.
- Living in the wider world: covering gambling and managing risk and impulses and also careers, as well as life in Sixth Form in Year 11.

The scheme of work offers many opportunities for group discussions and the exploration of ideas and opinions within a safe, supportive and fun environment.



Physical Education

Every pupil is entitled to a rich, broad and balanced curriculum and we believe that Physical Education is a critical element of that, particularly as you move into the senior school. We believe that a high quality PE curriculum is important as it:

- Supports achievement and attainment.
- Develops personal qualities such as confidence, resilience and self esteem.
- Develops social skills.
- Improves health and wellbeing – physical, social and emotional.
- Develops leadership skills.

Throughout Key Stage 4 you will take part in one triple lesson of PE per week. These lessons will involve a range of games-based activities such as hockey, netball, football, cricket, rugby, badminton, tennis and athletics, as well as an opportunity to engage in non-competitive activities such as fitness, dance and trampolining.

You will also have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sports and physical activities as part of our extensive co-curricular programme, and there will be numerous opportunities for you to represent school teams in local, county, regional and national competitions. Our approach to sport is very inclusive – whether you want to socialise with your friends, improve your fitness and skill levels, improve your health and wellbeing, be competitive in an environment with like-minded individuals or perform at the very highest level, we strive to meet the needs and aims of every individual pupil.

From Year 10 through to Sixth Form, you will have the opportunity to engage with nationally recognised Sports Leaders awards. These qualifications are recognised by universities and employers and promote and develop essential life skills such as organisation, motivation, communication and teamwork.

Options Subjects

Art

Why study Art?

The GCSE Art course teaches you how the creative process works. The leading people in any professional field are those who can think creatively and innovatively. Making and participating in the arts aids the development of these skills. Studying art at GCSE will help to you develop not only excellent practical knowledge, but critical thinking skills and cultural awareness, as well as the ability to express your ideas. The course is popular and enjoyable and contributes to a well-rounded education at GCSE. In Year 10 you have the opportunity to visit Yorkshire Sculpture Park and take part in practical workshops. Our art studios are open for you to work in after school 4 days a week until 17:00. There is a small materials pack charge at the start of Year 10.

What does the course involve?

Art is hands-on and largely practical and comprises almost entirely of extended portfolio project work. The emphasis is on developing skills involved in making art, but integral to this is art criticism and theory. The course involves art history and research and development skills from early on. There is a strong emphasis on drawing as well as a wide range of techniques in both 2D and 3D media including digital. Written annotation to accompany practical work is a requirement. The course encourages you to think for yourself, to be openminded and have the ability to express opinions with confidence. It is important that you apply yourself from the outset and manage your time carefully.

Exam board

EDEXCEL (Fine Art)

How is the course assessed?

The course comprises of two main parts. Most of what you produce contributes towards your final grade.

60% coursework - Component 1 personal portfolio consists of two projects spanning Year 10 and 11. Year 10 focuses on historical vs modern art. In Year 11 pupils negotiate their own subject matter with their teacher. This allows for a more personal area of study.

40% Externally set assignment (ESA) - Component 2 portfolio

The practical exam is carried out at the end of Year 11. The ESA theme is set by the examining board and pupils develop a 10 week project in response. The final stage of this project is a 10 hour practical which takes place under controlled conditions, unaided.

What can a GCSE in Art lead to?

The creative industries are among the fastest growing in the UK. GCSE Art is useful to consider if you wish to pursue a career in architecture, media, engineering, business and all areas of design. It is by no means only for those who wish to work in creative industries. Many employers are seeking the skills you will develop on the course and a wide range of firms see the qualification as a way to foster innovation in employees. Art complements a very wide range of career paths.

What skills does the Art course develop?

The course provides you with a wide range of transferable skills including:

Theoretical - Understanding of aesthetics and Art History.

Practical knowledge - Traditional Fine Art processes like drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and lens based.

Non-routine problem-solving - Expert thinking, metacognition, creativity.

Systems thinking - decision making and reasoning.

Critical thinking - General cognitive skills such as analysing, synthesising and reasoning skills.

Communication - Active listening, oral communication, written communication, assertive communication and non-verbal communication.

Adaptability and resilience - Ability and willingness to cope with the uncertain.

Self-management, self-development and self-discipline - Ability to be self-motivating and self-monitoring.





Biology

Why study Biology?

There has never been a more important time to gain a fundamental understanding of Biology. Studying Biology at GCSE will help you make more informed decisions about your health, the spread and treatment of diseases and the issues around genetic modification and the effects of pollution. You will be able to learn in a very practical way that will give you plenty of opportunity to experience, question and research these issues.

What does the course involve?

There are five main subject areas:

1. The nature and variety of living organisms.
2. Structures and functions in living organisms.
3. Reproduction and inheritance.
4. Ecology and the environment.
5. The use of biological resources.

For teaching and assessment purposes these are divided into shorter topics e.g. cell structure, respiration and genetics.

Practical investigations are embedded throughout the course and the experimental skills that develop are assessed in the written examinations. There is no coursework or assessment of practical work.

Exam board

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Biology

How is the course assessed?

The Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Biology is a linear qualification. Two written examinations are taken at the end of the course of study. Both papers comprise a mixture of different question styles, including multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, calculations and extended open-response questions. The first (2 hour) paper is worth approximately 60% of the overall marks and the second (1 hour 15 minutes) is worth approximately 40% of the total marks.

What can a GCSE in Biology lead to?

A GCSE qualification in Biology can lead onto careers in science, medicine and healthcare, agriculture, sport and fitness and engineering. The IGCSE provides an excellent foundation for further study of Biology at A Level.

What skills does the Biology course develop?

The course is written to help develop well rounded pupils who are able to think for themselves, so communication, problem-solving and taking the initiative are all incorporated as well as maths, using IT and practical laboratory skills.

Chemistry

Why study Chemistry?

The Chemistry course is engaging, innovative and relevant to everyday life. Learning about Chemistry will help you to understand how our world is in a delicate balance of chemical reactions and how we can work together to use science to improve lives. The course will allow you to develop your interest in, and enthusiasm for Chemistry and to help you to recognise its increasingly essential role in society. It will give you a glimpse into the extraordinary opportunities and variety of work available to those wishing to continue with Chemistry beyond GCSE.

Your specialist teachers have a variety of industrial work experience and will be able to give relevance to the topics covered from their own personal careers.

What does the course involve?

The course began in Year 9. You will study four areas in Chemistry for the IGCSE course:

Principles of Chemistry.

Inorganic Chemistry.

Physical Chemistry.

Organic Chemistry.

Exam board

Edexcel IGCSE

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed by sitting 2 exams at the end of Year 11:

Chemistry Paper 1: A 2 hour written examination paper (total marks 110)

Chemistry Paper 2 : A 1 hour and 15-minute written examination paper (total marks 70)

The lessons involve both theory and practical work and you will use different study skills including making notes in groups and individually, preparing information for presentations, revising for tests at the end of each topic, executing and writing up experiments. Once we have taught you the basic theory it is necessary to practise applying it in many different situations and each topic will culminate with an end of topic test.

What can a GCSE in Chemistry lead to?

The GCSE Chemistry course is academic, interesting and well-respected. It will arm you with analytical skills to support your future studies. Chemistry GCSE is essential for studying an A Level in Chemistry.

GCSE Chemistry is essential for studying many science-based courses at university. It is well thought of as a subject which requires logic, analytical skills and problem-solving. For further information about science based careers requiring Chemistry follow the RSC link: <https://edu.rsc.org/future-in-Chemistry/career-options/job-profiles>

What skills does the Chemistry course develop?

You will have the latest chemical apparatus and enthusiastic teachers to lead you through the experiments. You will acquire and apply skills, knowledge and understanding of how Science works and develop a critical approach to scientific evidence and methods which will help you to decide whether claims made in the name of Chemistry are reasonable.

You will develop problem-solving skills, logic, the ability to analyse using your maths skills and understand the process of evaluation of scientific evidence.



Classical Civilisation

Why study Classical Civilisation?

Classical Civilisation GCSE offers you the chance to pursue an interesting range of topics from the ancient world, looking at their relevance to the modern world and their influence on later culture. It will appeal to anyone who enjoys myths and legends and learning about other societies. It is a broad GCSE in that it incorporates elements of history, religion, literature and archaeology and it thus helps to develop a good range of skills. By the end of the course you will have improved your powers of source analysis, literary appreciation, and essay writing. Students studying Classical Civilisation are encouraged to participate in the Year 10 Classics trip to London as well as the many extra-curricular trips and visits run by the LSF Classics Department. They also have priority over non-classicists on the regular overseas trips, previous destinations for which have included Rome and Pompeii, Sicily, Tunisia and Greece.

What does the course involve?

The GCSE course requires study of two components:

Thematic study - Women in the Ancient World OR Myth and Religion

Women in the Ancient World looks at famous women from both Greek and Roman history and mythology, including Helen of Troy, Pandora, Cleopatra, Lucretia and the sorceress Medea, as well as learning about how women were expected to behave in each society and studying some examples of women with power and women to be feared. The Myth and Religion component comprises study of the ancient Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, the foundation myths of Athens and Rome, temples, festivals and the use of mythology as a symbol of power.

Literature and culture - the Homeric World OR Roman City Life

Topics encountered in the Homeric World include the cities, daily lives and burial rituals of the people living in the Mycenaean world, alongside five key books of Homer's *Odyssey* (in English translation), charting the trials and tribulations of Odysseus as he struggles to return home to Ithaca after the Trojan War, and his battle to regain his kingdom when he gets there. Roman City Life includes the study of Roman housing in Pompeii and Rome, Roman home and family life, the structure of Roman society, and Roman leisure and entertainment, including Roman theatre, chariot racing, gladiatorial games and, of course, the iconic Colosseum.

Exam Board

OCR J199 (9-1) Classical Civilisation

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11 students take two examinations, one on each topic. Each examination lasts one hour 30 minutes and comprises a series of shorter answer questions based on stimulus material, either literary or visual, and extended response questions. There is no controlled assessment for this qualification.

What can a GCSE in Classical Civilisation lead to?

Although a GCSE in Classical Civilisation is not essential for the study of any subject at A Level (not even Classical Civilisation!), the range of skills the course helps you to develop and exercise are intrinsic to the study of a wide range of A Level, and degree level, courses, such as English Literature, History, Law, Politics, History of Art, Religious Studies and Sociology.

What skills does the Classical Civilisation course develop?

You will develop a range of key transferable skills in studying the subject, in particular the evaluation of complex facts, research, analysis and communication. All these skills are very useful for future education and professional life. The course encourages you to make informed comparisons between Greek and Roman ideas, including the characteristics of their societies, and the impact of the different cultural contexts on the themes studied. Key elements of this course include:

Understanding of the civilisation and its culture in its historical and social context, including their art, architecture and artefacts;

Reading, understanding and producing a personal response to literature in translation;

Thinking about and discussing important concepts involving issues such as family, religion, morality and identity;

Studying and developing awareness of the similarities and differences between ancient and modern civilisation.



Classical Greek

Why study Classical Greek?

The cultures of Greece and Rome are the basis of our own civilisation and their achievements still influence the modern world. The Classical Greek GCSE course introduces pupils to many aspects of Greek civilisation and, although the emphasis is primarily linguistic at GCSE, there is plenty of opportunity to explore cultural and historical topics. Latin and Classical Greek are the only GCSEs which require study of literature in a foreign language, a discipline which enables pupils to develop a greater understanding of the culture within which these texts were produced and which inculcates sound literary criticism skills which are transferable to the study of literature in any language. Pupils who study Greek at GCSE level invariably express an enormous sense of achievement in their mastery of this language, made all the more challenging by its different alphabet, and are often fascinated and enthused by the sheer beauty and flexibility of the language, especially when they begin to appreciate the literary skill of authors such as Homer and Herodotus.

Pupils studying Classical Greek are encouraged to take advantage of some of the many and varied opportunities to contextualise their classroom studies and to extend their appreciation of the ancient world through site visits, theatre trips, reading competitions and classically themed lectures. The LSF Classics Department runs an annual Year 10 Classics trip to London and students of Classical Greek have priority over non-classicists on the biennial overseas LSF Classics trip, previous destinations for which have included Rome and Pompeii, Sicily, Tunisia and Greece.

What does the course involve?

In Year 10 you will continue to follow Taylor's Greek to GCSE course. The language side of the course is similar to what you have encountered in Year 9: more grammatical constructions are introduced and there is regular learning of vocabulary. The mastery of both grammar and vocabulary continues to be developed via grammar exercises, passages of Greek for translation and comprehension, and simple English sentences for translation into Greek. The literature side of the course is new and you will finally get to apply your knowledge of the language and engage with great works of Classical Greek literature, such as Herodotus' *Histories*, Homer's *Iliad*, Euripides' *Medea* and Xenophon's account of the battle of Cunaxa.

Exam Board

OCR J292 (9-1) Classical Greek

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11 pupils take three examination papers:

The compulsory component, Greek language, counts for 50% of the GCSE. It is 1 hour 30 minutes in length.

Two further papers, each 1 hour in length and each counting for 25% of the total

qualification, are chosen from prose literature A, prose literature B, verse literature A, verse literature B, or literature and culture.

What can a GCSE in Classical Greek lead to?

Classical Greek is regarded as a rigorous and challenging subject and as such it is highly regarded by the top universities and employers. Students of Classical Greek are considered to be academic and able to think in a logical and systematic way. The study of literature also develops extended writing, evaluative and analytical skills, which are vital for many subjects at A Level and beyond. Taking Classical Greek at GCSE would be a requirement for study of the subject at A Level.

What skills does Classical Greek course develop?

You will develop a range of key transferable skills in studying the subject, in particular:

Linguistic skills: developed through translation of Classical Greek and comprehension of unseen Classical Greek passages;

Analytical skills: developed through applying critical analysis and logical reasoning to complex passages of Classical Greek and through the close study of the literary merits of the set texts;

Evaluation and communication skills: developed through studying the set texts and articulating your personal response to and evaluating, within its socio-historical context, the literary merits of the literature – its style, form, background and meaning.



Computer Science

Why study Computer Science?

We live in a world where technology is evolving at an unprecedented rate, influencing developments in everything from medicine and engineering to fashion and media. This makes computer science one of the most exciting and relevant subject areas that you can study. Whichever route you choose to go down with your career, computer science will undoubtedly shape your world and a good grasp of the most important concepts and ideas will help you to make the most of these fast-moving trends.

What does the course involve?

In Year 10 we concentrate on programming using python. Our theory syllabus runs parallel to the practical programming element and consolidates the programming skills by underpinning with computer science theory. In Year 11 we do a non-assessed project to demonstrate that we have the necessary programming skills in order to tackle a pre-set programming task. We then study the remaining theory topics of computing networks, and network security, the internet and the world wide web, computing ethics, computers and the law, hardware, and emerging trends and issues and their impact on society.

Exam board

We follow the AQA 2020 Computer Science Syllabus.

How is the course assessed?

The syllabus teaching from 2020, and first examination in 2022 will progress to a practical onscreen exam of 2 hours, worth 50% of the total mark, and a 1:30 hour theory paper worth the second 50%.

What can a GCSE in Computer Science lead to?

Students with qualifications in Computer Science are in high demand and career options are extensive. In addition to IT, marketing, finance, research and business roles, industries such as fashion, engineering, health, and architecture all rely heavily on IT. Cyber security, game design or cutting-edge research into the medical use of AI are all roles which could turn your passion into a career. Many jobs that will exist in 2030 haven't been invented yet, computer science skills will keep you ahead of the curve.

What skills does the Computer Science course develop?

Computer science explores the principles of digital technology using 'computational thinking' methodology and using coding and programming as a core skill throughout the course. This GCSE will challenge you to solve problems in a logical manner and to demonstrate perseverance when the subject becomes more complex. However, it may surprise you to learn that computer science is also an outlet for the more creative among you and you will undoubtedly get a real buzz out of the creative process using your programming skills. If you have enjoyed using programmes like Scratch or Game Design, then you might find that computer science GCSE suits you very well.

Drama

Why study Drama?

What is GCSE Drama all about? GCSE Drama provides the opportunity to explore the range of skills involved in creating and performing Drama which includes the creation of original work as well as looking at plays written by other people. You may wish to take a GCSE in Drama for its own sake, perhaps to form the basis of a future interest. Or you might wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of Drama, or where some of the skills developed during this course are needed. We visit the theatre on several trips. This will incur an extra cost but is invaluable to help inform your understanding and appreciation of the theatre making process.

What does the course involve?

GCSE Drama follows on from Drama work in Years 7-9. You will develop your improvisation and acting skills to a higher level. You will also look at plays in more detail and look at different ways of bringing a script alive on stage.

This course is for those who want to study a subject that is both practical and creative. To enjoy this course, pupils should feel comfortable working as part of a team because Drama involves a lot of group work.

Exam board

Edexcel

How is the course assessed?

The course is in three parts:

Component 1: Devising 40% (written coursework and practical)

Devising allows for personal development and exploration. It allows you as a performer and/or designer the opportunity to stretch the limits of your creativity and imagination, while exploring a theme or topic of interest. You will consider the impact that you can make on an audience, as you develop the ideas that you want to communicate.

Component 2: Text in Performance 20% (Practical)

Performance texts have been at the core of Drama since the inception of theatre. The need to hand down stories has been fundamental to human development and for thousands of years, people have written, performed, watched and enjoyed innumerable plays. Understanding a performance text is fundamental to the subject, as this provides you with opportunities to explore plot, structure, narrative and stories from around the world and from different time periods. It encourages you to develop empathy skills, as you consider different characters and develop methods of communicating ideas and themes.



Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice 40% (written examination)

You will explore practically how a complete performance text might be interpreted and realised from page to stage. This exploration will give you an insight into how texts may be brought to life for an audience and the creative roles within this process. You will also analyse and evaluate your experience of a live theatre performance as informed members of the audience. You will develop skills to recognise the meaning created in the theatre space in order to communicate ideas to an audience. This will give you a more critical and varied approach to your own work as a theatre maker.

What can a GCSE in Drama lead to?

Many employers are seeking the skills that you will develop in Drama. If you study Drama you will develop skills in group work, research and negotiation.

What skills does the GCSE Drama course develop?

Drama is an important tool for preparing you to live and work in a world that is increasingly team-orientated. Drama also helps you to develop tolerance and empathy. In addition to these invaluable skills.

Drama can reinforce the rest of your school curriculum, helping you with transferable skills such as increasing your ability to think creatively, imaginatively and divergently. You will learn how to think outside the box.

Drama teaches you how to become critical consumers, rather than just passive viewers. You are expected to question and critique your own and others' processes and products. You will learn how to rethink, reconsider, replace, refine, redo, reaffirm, reprocess, rewrite and reconceptualize.





Food Preparation and Nutrition

Why study Food Preparation and Nutrition?

Food Preparation and Nutrition is an engaging course with elements that will allow all learners to reach their full potential and the combination of both practical and theoretical lessons appeals to many. Pupils have their lessons in a dedicated theory classroom and state-of-the-art kitchen, both of which are excellently equipped, and allow teachers to bring the subject to life.

The diverse range of lessons can range from debating the use of additives in food products, to designing nutritional plans for different people, to conducting sensory tests on a variety of food products.

The non-examined assessment (NEA) usually appeals to pupils who enjoy producing work over a period of time and like to show off their creative flair. The examined components provide the opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their theoretical knowledge. Organisational skills are important for success, as pupils must bring their ingredients to each required practical lesson.

What does the course involve?

The subject content, which is mostly studied in Year 10, focuses on 5 key topic areas:

- Human nutrition.
- Food science.
- Food provenance and food choice.
- Cooking and food preparation.
- Food safety and hygiene.

Regular practical lessons ensure that pupils have excellent cookery skills, which they require for their NEA. Year 11 focuses mainly on NEA (outlined below) and revision of key topics for the final exam.

Exam board

OCR

How is the course assessed?

Food Preparation and Nutrition exam

1 hour 30 minutes written examination paper, covering theoretical topics relating to food, with a focus on nutrition. 50% of total GCSE.



NEA1: Food Investigation Task

This is a food science investigation that examines the function of ingredients. Through practical experimentation, you will investigate and evaluate an understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. 15% of total GCSE.

NEA2: Food Preparation Task

You will be required to research, design, plan, make and evaluate food products based upon a chosen theme. You will produce evidence which includes photographs which demonstrate your technical skills and the final outcomes, and produce a report on how you have designed, executed and evaluated the preparation, cooking and presentation of the dishes. 35% of total GCSE.

What can a GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition lead to?

This subject can lead on to both artistic and scientific careers, as it has both creative and analytical aspects, and therefore can lead on to a broad range of A Level subjects. It would be very beneficial for anyone wanting to study the Level 3 Food Science and Nutrition Diploma, a food-based degree, or a career in the food science or hospitality industries.

What skills does the Food Preparation and Nutrition course develop?

Food Preparation and Nutrition encompasses aspects from many other subjects, including writing skills when answering exam questions, mathematical and analytic skills when conducting nutritional analyses, ICT skills to produce controlled assessment, and scientific skills when designing and conducting food science experiments. Pupils will also get to showcase their artistic and creative flair when presenting their dishes.

Pupils will leave the course as creative problem-solvers and confident learners that have acquired the skills that will allow them to cook well and maintain good health throughout life.

French

Why study French?

French is a beautiful language that is spoken by more than 300 million people on the five continents, in places as far away as Canada and Africa, and it is therefore one of the most widely studied languages in the world. It is the international language of culture, and a knowledge of French will offer access to the worlds of cooking, fashion, theatre, art and dance, among many others. It is also a language that is widely used in business and international relations. Having a GCSE in a language is a huge advantage in our increasingly international world and it will make you a lot more employable. You will also develop amazing transferrable skills that are applicable to almost everything you do. You will improve your memory, your creativity, your listening and communication skills and your self-confidence.

If you chose French as your language in Year 7, you will find that you have already covered a lot of the language you need for GCSE. The learning doesn't get more difficult in Years 10 and 11, and you will simply continue to build on that language, so that by the end of the course you will have developed a level of fluency that allows you to communicate with native speakers both in speech and in writing. Most of the grammar has been covered in Years 7-9, so you will just be consolidating what you already know.

If you chose French as your language in Year 9 and you are genuinely interested in languages, you could consider taking it as a second language at GCSE. Having two languages at GCSE (as well as English!) will put you in an extremely select élite who are very much in demand. Although you will initially feel less confident in French, you will quickly get up to speed and will soon find yourself able to cope with the demands of the GCSE course. If this is something you are considering, please speak to Mrs Lee first. Please note that it is generally not advised for pupils taking only one GCSE language to choose a second language, as they will have a lot more work to do to get up to speed.

You will enjoy interactive lessons with games and activities designed to help you learn the vocabulary and improve your fluency. You will get time each week with a native speaker to concentrate on conversation in addition to your timetabled lessons. On top of this, there are plenty of exciting trips and activities on offer to help you to develop your skills even further, ranging from the ever-popular visits from the Onatti theatre company, to the annual residential trip to France.

What does the course involve?

As part of the GCSE course, you will study a range of topics, and you will also learn about the culture of French-speaking countries, including food they eat, festivals they celebrate etc. You will follow a GCSE textbook (and will also have online support materials) to cover the following topics:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others.
- Healthy living and lifestyle.
- Education and work.

Theme 2: Popular culture

- Free-time activities.
- Customs, festivals and celebrations.
- Celebrity culture.

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Travel and tourism, including places of interest.
- Media and technology.
- The environment and where people live.

Exam board

We follow the AQA course (specification 8652).

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11, you will take four exams, each worth 25% of the overall grade:

- Paper 1: Listening (45 minutes, including 5 minutes reading time)
- Paper 2: Speaking (15 minutes preparation time, then 10-12 minutes of exam)
- Paper 3: Reading (1 hour)
- Paper 4: Writing (1 hour 15 minutes)



What can a GCSE in French lead to?

A GCSE in French can open many doors to you. It is considered a facilitating subject, which means it is a subject that will be looked on favourably by universities no matter what course you wish to study, due to the transferable “soft” skills that you learn during the course. Having a language GCSE will also make you more employable and you could earn more money, whatever job you go on to do.

You will, of course, have the option to continue your study of French to A Level, and if you enjoy languages, you may wish to study them at university and perhaps even make them your career. There are a huge number of industries that use language skills, such as translation and interpreting, journalism and broadcasting, diplomatic services, international business and finance, tourism and hospitality, marketing and sales etc.

What skills does the French course develop?

First and foremost, you will develop your **communication skills**, as learning a language involves the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will also develop a number of other skills:

Learning new vocabulary will help you to improve your **memory**.

Analysing grammatical structures will help you to develop your **problem-solving skills**.

You will develop your **creativity**, as you will need to be able to think of different and creative ways to express yourself.

You will develop your **multitasking skills** as you are required to switch between more than one language.

You will even improve your **knowledge of English**, as you learn about the grammar of a new language

Physical Education

Why study Physical Education?

This practical and engaging course has been developed to ensure an inclusive specification that will allow all pupils to achieve their full potential. The content has been designed to allow pupils to study Physical Education (PE) in an academic setting, allowing them to critically analyse and evaluate physical performance and apply their experience of practical activities in developing their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

The combined practical and theoretical element to this course allows us to bring theoretical concepts to life and consolidate learning in a fun and engaging way. Pupils will have the opportunity to 'walk through a life size cardiovascular system', respond to first aid scenarios, create nutrition plans for real life athletes and much more.

The examined components will provide the knowledge and understanding which underpin the non-exam assessment (NEA). The NEA within this specification allows pupils to explore a range of activities in the role of performer, including both team and individual activities.

The development of our Parkin Sports Facility offers a wonderful environment for our pupils to work in. Pupils will have their theory lessons in our purpose-built classroom, as well as having the opportunity to use our strength and conditioning gym and sports hall for their practical lessons.

What does the course involve?

The course is divided into three sections and over the course of two years, students will have the opportunity to study and learn about a broad range of topics, including:

- Applied anatomy and physiology.
- Physical training.
- Socio-cultural influences.
- Sports psychology.
- Health, fitness and wellbeing.

As part of the NEA component pupils will be assessed on their practical performance across three sports and develop their understanding of how to analyse and evaluate performance as part of their assessed coursework.

Exam board

OCR (J587)

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11 pupils take two examination papers:

Component one – physical factors affecting performance. This paper is 1 hour long and is worth 30% of the overall grade.

Component two – socio-cultural issues and sports psychology. This paper is also 1 hour long and worth 30% of the overall grade.

During the two-year course, pupils will also be assessed in three practical activities (at least one must be individual or team) and complete their Analysing and Evaluating Performance (AEP) coursework under controlled assessment conditions. These combined make up the final 40% of the overall grade.

What can a GCSE in PE lead to?

This course will prepare pupils for the further study of PE or sports science courses as well as other related subject areas such as psychology, sociology and biology. Pupils will also develop the transferable skills that are in demand by further education, Higher Education and employers in all sectors of industry.

What skills does the PE course develop?

This specification will create confident, independent thinkers and effective decision makers who can operate effectively as individuals or as part of a team – all skills that will enable them to stand out and effectively promote themselves as they progress through life.

Through the course pupils will be required to master skills such as the demonstration of knowledge and understanding, application of this knowledge and understanding within a practical setting and analysis and evaluation techniques.



Geography

Why study Geography?

Geography IGCSE is for those who take an interest in what is happening in the world and who enjoy working things out for themselves, for instance by watching documentaries and reading newspapers.

The course will appeal to those pupils who are interested in:

- The issues which affect people and the places they live in.
- How villages, towns and cities are changing and why.
- How people are affecting the environment we all live in.
- What causes different landscapes.

And

- Who enjoy travel and finding out about new people, places and landscapes.
- Enjoy a subject that is relevant to their lives and experiences.
- Want the opportunity to do fieldwork as well as classwork.

Over the two years of the course pupils will have the opportunity to participate in a two-day field course. This involves a day spent in the suburbs of Nottingham and a rivers investigation in the Peak District where pupils are taught how to observe, collect data and analyse it in preparation for their alternative to coursework examination paper.

What does the course involve?

Over the course of the 2 years, we study topics in 3 broad areas - Human, Physical and Economic Geography.

Theme 1: Population and settlement.

- Reasons for population growth and decline.
- Change in settlement patterns.

Theme 2: The natural environment.

- Plate tectonics.
- Landforms and landscape processes.
- Weather, climate and natural vegetation.
- Inter-relationships between the natural environment and human activities.

Theme 3: Economic development and the use of resources.

- Agricultural and industrial systems.
- Leisure activities and tourism.
- Environmental issues, conservation.

Exam Board

Cambridge International IGCSE

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed with three exam papers at the end of Year 11. Paper 1 is worth 50% and requires longer answers based around the topics we have studied. Paper 2 is a skills paper - roughly half on map skills and the other half on skills questions. The third paper (oddly called paper 4) is 'Alternative to Fieldwork' - instead of submitting coursework, we take a paper based on fieldwork skills that we develop on our field course.

What can a GCSE in Geography lead to?

Geography is a broad based academic subject which will open up options for you in your future. Employers and universities see Geography as a robust academic subject rich in skills, knowledge and understanding. As a subject linking the arts and the sciences it is highly flexible in terms of what you can combine it with, both at GCSE and A Level.

What skills does the Geography course develop?

There are so many ways of learning in Geography. It is very practical, with opportunities to learn new skills such as modern computer-based mapping (called GIS), map skills, interpreting photographs, fieldwork skills, presenting, role play and debating techniques. You will improve your literacy through your report writing and written work and make practical use of your numeracy skills when you interpret data and construct graphs. Fieldwork, or working outside the classroom, is also a really important part of Geography.

German

Why study German?

German is the most widely spoken language in Europe, and Germany is the world's fourth largest economy, making this one of the most useful languages to learn for a number of careers, including business and engineering. As an English speaker, German is also relatively easy to learn, as it comes from the same language family as English. It is also famous for being the language of poets, musicians and thinkers - think of Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, Einstein, Goethe, Brecht, Marx and Nietzsche, to name but a few. Having a GCSE in a language is a huge advantage in our increasingly international world and it will make you a lot more employable. You will also develop amazing transferrable skills that are applicable to almost everything you do. You will improve your memory, your creativity, your listening and communication skills and your self-confidence.

If you chose German as your language in Year 7, you will find that you have already covered a lot of the language you need for GCSE. The learning doesn't get more difficult in Years 10 and 11, and you will simply continue to build on that language, so that by the end of the course you will have developed a level of fluency that allows you to communicate with native speakers both in speech and in writing. Most of the grammar has been covered in Years 7-9, so you will just be consolidating what you already know.

If you chose German as your language in Year 9 and you are genuinely interested in languages, you could consider taking it as a second language at GCSE. Having two languages at GCSE (as well as English!) will put you in an extremely select élite who are very much in demand. Although you will initially feel less confident in German, you will quickly get up to speed and will soon find yourself able to cope with the demands of the GCSE course. If this is something you are considering, please speak to Mrs Lee first. Please note that it is generally not advised for pupils taking only one GCSE language to choose a second language, as they will have a lot more work to do to get up to speed.

You will enjoy interactive lessons with games and activities designed to help you learn the vocabulary and improve your fluency. You will get time each week with a native speaker to concentrate on conversation in addition to your timetabled lessons. On top of this, there are plenty of exciting trips and activities on offer to help you to develop your skills even further, ranging from the ever-popular visits from the Onatti theatre company, to the annual residential trip to Germany.

What does the course involve?

As part of the GCSE course, you will study a range of topics, and you will also learn about the culture of German-speaking countries, including food they eat, festivals they celebrate etc. You will follow a GCSE textbook (and will also have online support materials) to cover the following topics:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others.
- Healthy living and lifestyle.
- Education and work.

Theme 2: Popular culture

- Free-time activities.
- Customs, festivals and celebrations.
- Celebrity culture.

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Travel and tourism, including places of interest.
- Media and technology.
- The environment and where people live.

Exam board

We follow the AQA course (specification 8662).

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11, you will take four exams, each worth 25% of the overall grade:

- Paper 1: Listening (45 minutes, including 5 minutes reading time)
- Paper 2: Speaking (15 minutes preparation time, then 10-12 minutes of exam)
- Paper 3: Reading (1 hour)
- Paper 4: Writing (1 hour 15 minutes)

What can a GCSE in German lead to?

A GCSE in German can open many doors to you. It is considered a facilitating subject, which means it is a subject that will be looked on favourably by universities no matter what course you wish to study, due to the transferable “soft” skills that you learn during the course. Having a language GCSE will also make you more employable and you could earn more money, whatever job you go on to do.



You will of course have the option to continue your study of German to A Level, and if you enjoy languages, you may wish to study them at university and perhaps even make them your career. There are a huge number of industries that use language skills, such as translation and interpreting, journalism and broadcasting, diplomatic services, international business and finance, tourism and hospitality, marketing and sales etc.

What skills does the German course develop?

First and foremost, you will develop your **communication skills**, as learning a language involves the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will also develop a number of other skills:

Learning new vocabulary will help you to improve your **memory**.

Analysing grammatical structures will help you to develop your **problem-solving skills**.

You will develop your **creativity**, as you will need to be able to think of different and creative ways to express yourself.

You will develop your **multitasking skills** as you are required to switch between more than one language.

You will even improve your **knowledge of English**, as you learn about the grammar of a new language.

History

Why study History?

The study of GCSE History aims to provide pupils with the opportunity to examine international history from 1905 to 2012, gaining an understanding, as well as a knowledge, of the ideologies and diplomatic shenanigans that helped shape the modern world. We spend some time looking at the Weimar Republic and the Rise of Nazi Dictatorship as well as the Cold War and therefore offer a trip to Berlin in October 2025, where we can study in more depth the impact of such a conflict on one city.

What does the course involve?

Year 10: WW1 1905 - 1918 and Germany: Development of Dictatorship 1918-1945

Here we study the causes for the outbreak of war in 1914 and the developments of trench warfare. This is followed by an analysis of the impact of WW1 on Germany, the birth of the Weimar Republic and the development of Hitler's dictatorship.

Year 11: Middle Eastern Conflict 1917 - 2012 and Superpower Relations 1943-1972

Here we analyse the impact of the birth of Israel and the nature of the conflict within the Middle East alongside of international involvement in the conflict. Furthermore, we examine the causes of the Cold War, key events and the development of Détente in the 1970s.

Exam board

Edexcel iGCSE

How is the course assessed?

There will be two exam papers, all taken at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 (1.5 hours): focuses on Superpower Relations and the Rise of Nazi Dictatorship
Germany: Development of Dictatorship 1918-1945

Paper 2 (1.5 hours): focuses on WW1 and the Middle Eastern Conflict

What can iGCSE in History lead to? What skills does the course develop?

iGCSE History is a highly regarded qualification. Not only will you develop the ability to learn a lot of information, you will also be able to refine your skills of analysis and communication. Perhaps most importantly, the emphasis on source work in the WW1 topic enables you to develop those skills of critical reading and analysis which will be so important across the academic board at A Level and beyond.

Latin

Why study Latin?

Latin has played a definitive role in shaping the languages, literature and thinking of the western world. Learning Latin affords pupils an excellent basis for the acquisition of other European languages as well as helping you to understand structures and conventions in English, leading to greater clarity and sophistication in your writing. The study of Latin also encourages an ordered and analytical approach, logical thinking and a level of intellectual rigour that is widely valued.

The Latin GCSE comprises elements of both language and literature. Students of Latin are encouraged to take advantage of some of the many and varied opportunities to contextualise their classroom studies and to extend their appreciation of the ancient world through site visits, theatre trips, reading competitions and classically themed lectures. The LSF Classics Department runs an annual Year 10 Latin trip (previous destinations have included York, Bath and Chester) and pupils taking Latin have priority over non-classicists on the biennial overseas LSF Classics trip.

What does the course involve?

If you choose Latin GCSE you will, in Year 10, continue to study the Cambridge Latin Course. In reading more about our hero, Quintus, and the plots and schemes of our anti-hero, Salvius as he aims to fulfil his ambitions of a senatorial career, you will develop your language skills, broadening your Latin vocabulary and gaining a thorough grounding in grammar and syntax.

We commence our study of Latin literature by reading extracts from some of the most famous works by seminal Roman authors. Although lightly adapted at times for GCSE purposes, these texts remain largely the same texts that the Romans would have read - our pupils often find mastering these enormously satisfying, stimulating and rewarding. There is also the option to study two Roman civilisation and culture topics in preparation for the optional literature and culture paper, answering questions in English on aspects of content, culture, social practices and values. The topics for examination are selected from myths and beliefs, entertainment and the Romans in Britain.

Exam Board

OCR J282 (9-1) Latin

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11 pupils take three examination papers:

The compulsory component, Latin language, counts for 50% of the GCSE. It is 1 hour 30 minutes in length.

Two further papers, each 1 hour in length and each counting for 25% of the total qualification, are chosen from prose literature A, prose literature B, verse literature A, verse literature B, or literature and culture.



What can a GCSE in Latin lead to?

This course caters for a wide variety of interests, linguistic, literary and historical, which makes it an excellent complement to a range of other subjects. Students of Latin are considered to be academic and able to think in a logical and systematic way. The study of literature also develops extended writing, evaluative and analytical skills, which are vital for many subjects at A Level and beyond. Taking Latin at GCSE would be a requirement for study of this subject at A Level.

What skills does the Latin course develop?

You will develop a range of key transferable skills in studying the subject, in particular:

Linguistic skills: developed through translation of Latin and comprehension of unseen Latin passages;

Analytical skills: developed through applying critical analysis and logical reasoning to complex passages of Latin and through the close study of the literary merits of the set texts;

Evaluation and communication skills: developed through studying the set texts and articulating your personal response to and evaluating, within its socio-historical context, the literary merits of the literature – its style, form, background and meaning.



Music

Why study Music?

Music GCSE is an interesting, challenging and inspiring course. You will improve your understanding of all types of music, and how it is created, developing a lifelong love of music. There are also many benefits of studying music at this level, for example encouraging emotional development, aural appreciation, self-discipline, and creativity.

What does the course involve?

The course is split into three units: performing, composing and understanding music.

Pupils will study four areas of study: Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910, Popular Music, Traditional Music, Western Classical Music since 1910. This creates a huge amount of variety, with everything from Mozart to Music Theatre, and Bach to Blues!

Exam board

The exam board is AQA

How is the course assessed?

Performance is worth 30% of the marks and is assessed via the performance of one solo and one ensemble piece. These are recorded in March of Year 11 and should last for around 4 minutes.

Composition is also worth 30% of the marks and is assessed through two compositions. Whilst one composition is completely free, the other is in response to a brief, a choice of which is set by AQA.

Understanding Music is assessed through a listening exam paper (40%), with listening exercises and written questions using excerpts of music.

What can a GCSE in Music lead to?

Of course, the immediate benefit is that you can go on to study Music even further, at A Level. Music is a highly respected course, both at GCSE and A Level. Universities think very highly of musicians based on the variety and depth of the skills that they will usually have, including working at a very high level academically.

What skills does the Music course develop?

In addition to the musical skills, you will also develop skills in areas such as independent learning, self-management, teamwork, problem-solving, communication and creativity.

Physics

Why study Physics?

Have you ever wondered what exciting objects are out there in the universe or how it evolved, or how the sun produces all that heat and light?

Maybe you want to understand how we can produce electricity from renewable sources, or you may be interested in how objects move in the way that they do, or how lightening is formed.

Perhaps you have had an X-ray or know someone who has had radiotherapy or a CT scan. Maybe you wonder how spacecraft stay in orbit around the Earth. Do you know how all our communication or transport systems work? If you play a musical instrument, how does it produce the notes that you play?

Physics helps us to understand and explain all these things, and many, many more. Physics is all around us all the time, whether in the natural world or in the technology that we use every day, including all the stuff that we often take for granted.

Physics is the subject that explains why things happen and how things work. Anyone interested in any science, medicine, engineering or technology should study as much physics as they can, and GCSE is the first step on a journey of enlightenment and discovery.

What does the course involve?

You will have already started the study of GCSE physics in Year 9 with the introductory topics of atomic structure, static electricity, conduction, the life cycle of stars, the big bang, nuclear physics, radioactivity and the electromagnetic spectrum.

In Years 10 and 11 you will go on to study those topics in more detail plus kinematics (motion), momentum and Newton's laws, waves, current and mains electricity, electromagnetism and more space physics.

Exam board

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Physics

How is the course assessed?

The Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Physics is a linear qualification. Two written examinations are taken at the end of the course of study. Both papers comprise a mixture of different question styles, including multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, calculations and extended open-response questions. The first (2 hour) paper is worth approximately 60% of the overall marks and the second (1 hour 15 minutes) is worth approximately 40% of the total marks.

What can a GCSE in Physics lead to?

If you want to study A Level Physics, then GCSE Physics is an essential option. However, studying GCSE Physics will also help you with aspects of A Level Chemistry, Biology, Geography and Maths.

Being able to move on to take A Level Physics will open-up a huge range of possible careers in areas of science or applied sciences.

These would include space technologies, medicine and veterinary sciences, environmental sciences, renewable energy, Earth science, astronomy, a huge range of engineering courses, forensics, communication technology, space technology, plus of course the many specialisms within physics itself such as lasers, medical physics, particle physics, astrophysics, geophysics, planetary physics, nuclear physics and quantum computing to name just a few.

What skills does the Physics course develop?

Studying physics is particularly helpful in developing transferrable skills in problem solving, analysis, organisation and planning, numeracy, communication and interpretation.



Religious Studies

Why study Religious Studies?

GCSE Religious Studies (RS) offers you the chance to explore some of the important religious and ethical questions which life throws at you. The Pew Research Center (US) claims that 84% of the world's population hold some sort of religious or spiritual belief. This impacts on how we think, what we value and the decisions we make about our individual and collective future.

GCSE Religious Studies gives you an insight into two contrasting religions and provides a variety of ethical issues to debate and assess the relevance of in the 21st Century. Previously, pupils have visited local places of worship relevant to their course and attended a GCSE conference specifically aimed at the AQA syllabus.

What does the course involve?

Component 1:

All pupils will study Christianity focusing on the basic beliefs and practices of the religion.

Pupils are given a choice of the second religion they will examine (again focusing on belief and practice).

Component 2:

The second component of study will include a religious, philosophical and ethical consideration of four themes chosen from:

- Relationships and families.
- Religion and life.
- The existence of God and revelation.
- Religion, peace and conflict.
- Religion, crime and punishment.
- Religion, human rights and social justice.

Exam board

AQA Religious Studies A (8062)

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed entirely through two examinations both 1 hour 45 minutes long. These examinations will be on separate dates.

Questions will cover both religions chosen and the four ethical topics selected from above. Your teacher will choose the ethical options and all pupils will cover these specific units.

What can a GCSE in Religious Studies lead to?

Religious Studies is a vibrant, relevant and interesting subject and is open to everyone, whether of a religious persuasion or not. Pupils need an open mind and a willingness to engage in discussion and debate. GCSE RS is a valued subject which is helpful for any pupil considering a career dealing with people in any capacity. It is an excellent platform for those wishing to develop critical evaluation skills and intending to move onto university courses which require essay writing skills. Past pupils undertaking GCSE and A Level Religious Studies have gone on to study a multitude of subjects including Law, PPE, English, Psychology, Philosophy, Medicine, Teaching and Theology.

What skills does the Religious Studies course develop?

There is a strong emphasis on the development of essay writing and critical evaluation skills. Pupils will be encouraged to engage in debate and discussion and learn to look at ideas and beliefs from a variety of perspectives. Formulating one's own ideas is important. However, listening to and appreciating the views of others is also vital too.



Spanish

Why study Spanish?

Spanish is a beautiful language and is also one of the most widely spoken languages in the world; it is spoken not just in Spain, but across much of Central and South America, and it is also the most popular language to learn in the United States, making it a truly international language. It is also an easy language to pronounce once you have learned the rules. Having a GCSE in a language is a huge advantage in our increasingly international world and it will make you a lot more employable. You will also develop amazing transferrable skills that are applicable to almost everything you do. You will improve your memory, your creativity, your listening and communication skills and your self-confidence.

If you chose Spanish as your language in Year 7, you will find that you have already covered a lot of the language you need for GCSE. The learning doesn't get more difficult in Years 10 and 11, and you will simply continue to build on that language, so that by the end of the course you will have developed a level of fluency that allows you to communicate with native speakers both in speech and in writing. Most of the grammar has been covered in Years 7-9, so you will just be consolidating what you already know.

If you chose Spanish as your language in Year 9 and you are genuinely interested in languages, you could consider taking it as a second language at GCSE. Having two languages at GCSE (as well as English!) will put you in an extremely select élite who are very much in demand. Although you will initially feel less confident in Spanish, you will quickly get up to speed and will soon find yourself able to cope with the demands of the GCSE course. If this is something you are considering, please speak to Mrs Lee first. Please note that it is generally not advised for pupils taking only one GCSE language to choose a second language, as they will have a lot more work to do to get up to speed.

You will enjoy interactive lessons with games and activities designed to help you learn the vocabulary and improve your fluency. You will get time each week with a native speaker to concentrate on conversation in addition to your timetabled lessons. On top of this, there are plenty of exciting trips and activities on offer to help you to develop your skills even further, ranging from the ever-popular visits from the Onatti theatre company, to the annual residential trip to Spain.

What does the course involve?

As part of the GCSE course, you will study a range of topics, and you will also learn about the culture of Spanish-speaking countries, including food they eat, festivals they celebrate etc. You will follow a GCSE textbook (and will also have online support materials) to cover the following topics:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others.
- Healthy living and lifestyle.
- Education and work.

Theme 2: Popular culture

- Free-time activities.
- Customs, festivals and celebrations.
- Celebrity culture.

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Travel and tourism, including places of interest.
- Media and technology.
- The environment and where people live.

Exam board

We follow the AQA course (specification 8692).

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11, you will take four exams, each worth 25% of the overall grade:

- Paper 1: Listening (45 minutes, including 5 minutes reading time)
- Paper 2: Speaking (15 minutes preparation time, then 10-12 minutes of exam)
- Paper 3: Reading (1 hour)
- Paper 4: Writing (1 hour 15 minutes)

What can a GCSE in Spanish lead to?

A GCSE in Spanish can open many doors to you. It is considered a facilitating subject, which means it is a subject that will be looked on favourably by universities no matter what course you wish to study, due to the transferable “soft” skills that you learn during the course. Having a language GCSE will also make you more employable and you could earn more money, whatever job you go on to do.

You will of course have the option to continue your study of Spanish to A Level, and if you enjoy languages, you may wish to study them at university and perhaps even



make them your career. There are a huge number of industries that use language skills, such as translation and interpreting, journalism and broadcasting, diplomatic services, international business and finance, tourism and hospitality, marketing and sales etc.

What skills does the Spanish course develop?

First and foremost, you will develop your **communication skills**, as learning a language involves the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will also develop a number of other skills:

Learning new vocabulary will help you to improve your **memory**.

Analysing grammatical structures will help you to develop your **problem-solving skills**.

You will develop your **creativity**, as you will need to be able to think of different and creative ways to express yourself.

You will develop your **multitasking skills** as you are required to switch between more than one language.

You will even improve your **knowledge of English**, as you learn about the grammar of a new language.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

In a rapidly evolving world of work, it has never been more important to have access to quality information and resources to ensure your choices meet the demands of your preferred career path or study interests. I see the role of the Futures department as being integral to your school life; inspiring you to become more self-aware and motivating you to proactively seek opportunities to identify gaps in skills and experience and seek out ways to move forward.

Having been introduced to the Xello platform in Year 7, pupils complete and update the Matchmaker quiz each year in PSHCE lessons, as well as following a programme of careers related activity aimed at guiding and encouraging them to explore their career options in a variety of ways. In addition, 1:1 impartial careers guidance is available to all, helping to ensure a positive match between abilities, aspirations, and longer-term career plans.

The Futures department hosts several events where pupils and their parents/carers can obtain information on a wide range of careers and pathways. The focus, going forward, will be on themed activity to enable pupils to appreciate and widen their knowledge of roles within specific sectors, such as healthcare and the creative industries. We continue to call on the experience and skill of people working in these areas, including alumni, to help inform and advise pupils.

I look forward to working with you towards a successful and confident transition in the next stage of your journey.





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