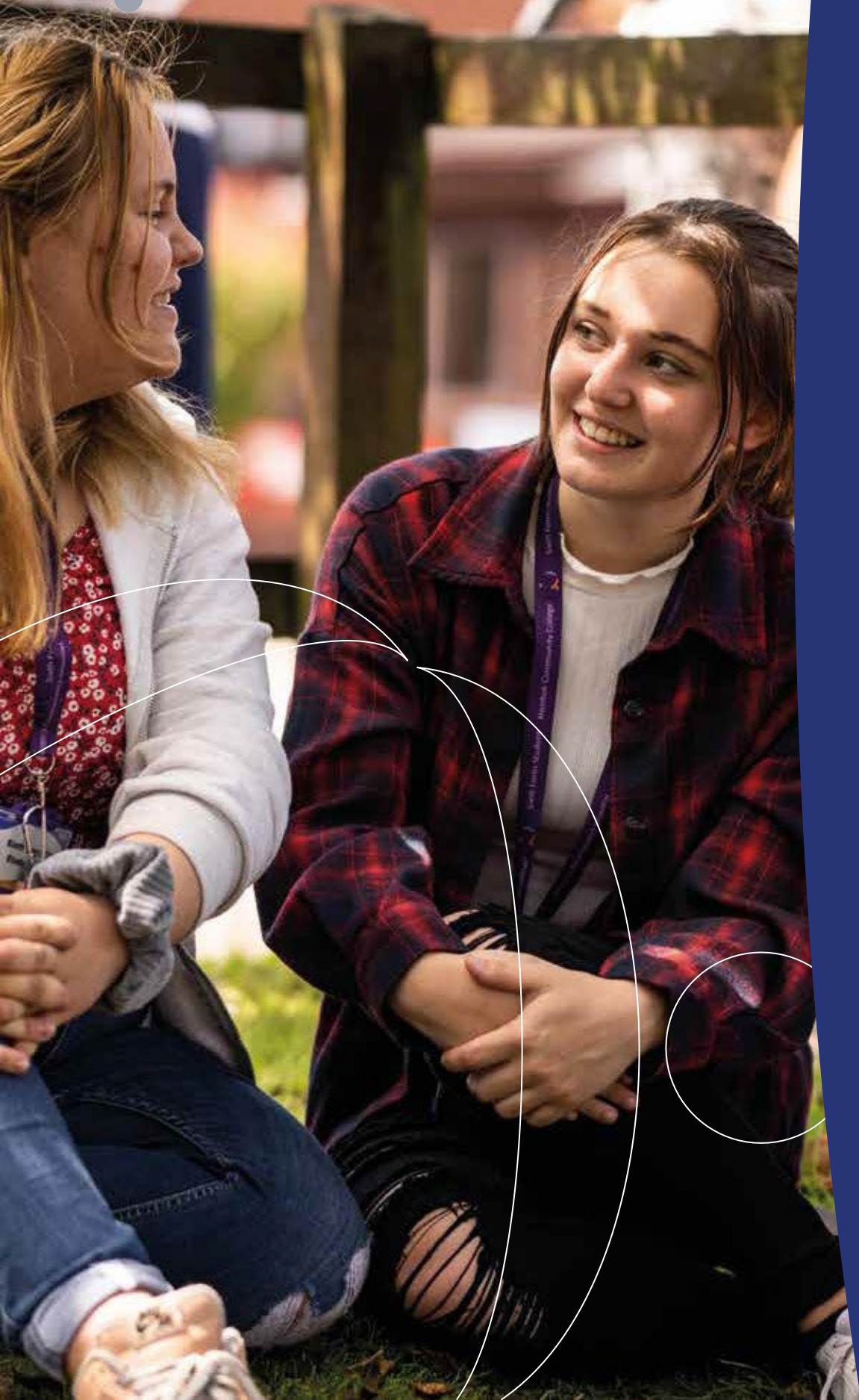




HONITON  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE



# Guide for GCSE Opportunities

2024-25

## **Welcome** to our Honiton Community College Guide for GCSE opportunities

**This guide is designed to help you and your child make the most of the ambitious range of opportunities on offer at Honiton Community College. Our curriculum is designed to offer a broad and balanced education, encourage students' curiosity, and ensure students leave with GCSE qualifications they can be proud of. Our course choices will allow students to follow their own special interests, in addition to core subjects, and support their transition into our Post-16 curriculum or other chosen pathway.**

In the introduction, you will find an overview of the options process and the curriculum structure at HCC. Much of the guide is dedicated to subject information (course aims, content, and assessment) to help your child make their option choices. Teachers will offer ongoing discussions in their lessons around the GCSE courses available.

The 'GCSE Options Evening' and 'Progress Evening' are opportunities to meet with subject teachers. For further details about any of the courses listed here, please contact [GCSEOptions@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:GCSEOptions@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk) and your query will be directed to the appropriate member of staff for a prompt reply.

We look forward to working with you and discussing the best, most exciting options for your child's future at HCC and beyond.

Mrs Marie-Claire Jefferies  
Vice Principal

# Preparing to **make the right choice**

January 11th: GCSE Options Evening (onsite)

February 1st: Progress Evening (onsite)  
After this event the online form for making choices will be available

February 21st: Deadline for submitting online choices

Interviews to discuss choices

Options confirmed towards the end of the Spring Term





# Curriculum Structure Overview

Although the National Curriculum allows schools some flexibility in the subjects that are offered to students entering Key Stage 4, there is still a compulsory 'core' of subjects taken by all students in years 10 and 11.

Core	English Language and English Literature
	Mathematics
	Science - Biology, Chemistry and Physics
Core Non-examined	Beliefs and Values
	Personal Development
	Physical Education
Honiton Baccalaureate Option Subjects (HBacc)	Geography
	History
	French
	Spanish
Option Subjects	Computer Science
	Design and Technology - 3D Art and Design
	Drama
	Fine Art
	Food and Nutrition
	Music
	Photography
	Physical Education and Sport
	Religious Education
	Separate Sciences

In the following guide we have included information about how each course is currently structured and assessed. We will keep this under review and respond to the latest information and guidance from exam boards to ensure students are getting the best possible experience. Occasionally changes are required but we will inform you of these if necessary.

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# Computing



# Computer Science

GCSE

**This exciting GCSE gives you an excellent opportunity to learn how to program computers and understand how they work. Computational thinking is the foundation of the subject and is applied to solving problems in a wide range of scenarios. In-depth research and lots of practical work allows students to explore the wide range of topics and develop their understanding of the syllabus. For example, some of the current investigations look at; PC Building, PC Fault Finding, Linux operating systems, encryption development, basic robotics, control systems and assembly language programming.**

By using the tools of computational thinking, decomposition, abstraction, pattern recognition and algorithm design you will enhance your critical thinking skills. These are the foundations of all computers systems, and we teach it in a fun and interesting way. There are two components to the course.

## 1. Computer systems

Explores the theory about a wide range of topics including microchip architecture, memory, data storage, hardware and software, the representation of data in computer systems, databases, computer communications and networking, programming and more.

## 2. Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

Learn how computers are programmed, to understand a range of standard algorithms, how to develop robust programs and how data is represented in computer systems. Importantly, you will use programming challenges to develop your skills of computational thinking.

## Assessment

The course is assessed through two written exams (1Hr 30min each). One for each of the components above.

## Progression and Careers

The increasing importance of information technologies means there will be a growing demand for professionals who are qualified in this field. The course is also excellent preparation if you want to study or work in areas that rely on the skills mentioned above, that you will develop, especially where they're applied to technical problems. These areas include engineering, financial and resource management, science and medicine.

# CreATE





## Fine Art, Photography, 3D Art & Design - Design Technology

GCSE

The visual arts subjects involve a high level of practical and technical skill development along with creative and imaginative thinking. There is the opportunity to study one of the main visual arts specialisms of Fine Art, Photography and/or Design. All three offer overlap and opportunities to explore a range of artists/makers, materials and processes.

We are not expecting students to be brilliant artists, photographers or designers when they start the course; so long as they are enthusiastic about the subject and committed to improving their skills, they will be successful.

- The course flows from skill developing workshops, to developing their projects with increasing independence.
- Responding to advice, and spending time practising skills is the best way for students to make progress.
- Independent study is an essential part of the course, with sketchbook assignments set each week to support students to develop a range of artistic skills.
- A study visit to museums and galleries supports the beginning of the year 11 coursework projects.
- Students are encouraged to play to their strengths and take a lead in the development of their project.

### Assessment:

- Coursework is due in for assessment in December and is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade.
- In January of Year 11, students begin to prepare for their final practical exam which is worth 40% of the final GCSE grade. During the preparation period students can have as much help as they ask for and the final piece is created in a ten-hour practical exam taking place over two days.
- The assessment criteria for the exam are the same as those for coursework; the students are therefore well experienced in the assessment requirements. This format encourages students to play to their strengths and develop their project management skills (there is no written exam).

### Progression and Careers:

Employers are always looking for potential recruits who are well organised, observant and creative. The GCSE Art and Design courses are a perfect fit for developing all of these key skills. Students can go on to study Art & Design subjects at A level and progress to study design related courses at university and colleges. Many careers benefit from the study of Art & Design including: Media, Architecture, Film, Fashion, Graphic Design, Advertising, Animation, Games Design, Product Design, Theatre/Set Design, Arts Education, Interior Design, Landscape Design, Illustration, Fashion Design, Costume Design, Arts Heritage, Photography, Jewellery Design, Teaching, Conservation... the list goes on. In fact, any career that you can think of that requires visual literacy in some way benefits from a GCSE in these areas.

## Design and Technology: Food and Nutrition

GCSE

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition allows students to develop and enhance an array of culinary techniques, as well as build on their knowledge of nutrition, food science, traditions and kitchen safety. The GCSE course incorporates a number of life skills and both practical and theoretical work.

- You will learn new practical skills (filleting a fish, butchering a chicken, how to make pasta) putting them into practice with regular practical work.
- You will carry out experiments to discover the science behind food and you will acquire the skills to present food like a professional.
- Theory work includes topics such as the importance of food safety when preparing, storing and buying food, nutrients and the effect on our health, eating habits and the nutritional needs of different groups of people. You will also learn about food choice and the factors affecting this, along with food provenance and how we can be more environmentally friendly when buying and preparing food.
- There are many cross-curricular links with other subjects such as PE, Sport Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Geography.

### Assessment:

All assessments are completed in Year 11.

- There are two pieces of coursework totalling 50% of the GCSE and these assessments will be based on a choice of two tasks released annually by the exam board.
  1. Task 1: Food investigation (30 marks)
    - a. You will plan and carry out a scientific food investigation to gain an understanding of the science behind recipes and function of ingredients.
  2. Task 2: Food preparation assessment (70 marks)
    - a. You will design, prepare, cook and present a three-dish menu based on a culture or dietary need. There is a focus on food presentation and high-level practical skills.
- There is a written exam that makes up the other 50% of the GCSE.

### Progression and Careers:

This GCSE works well alongside Sports and Science subjects due to the nutritional and food science focus. This course is a foundation for a wide range of careers; it can be a great start towards a vocational career in the food and hospitality, sports and childcare industries and is also desired for medical applications. Past students have followed this successful course with courses at Exeter or have gained apprenticeships with nationally acclaimed chefs.

# Drama

GCSE

GCSE Drama is an opportunity to developing your knowledge and understanding of theatre and challenge your dramatic skills. You will have the opportunity to create your own work as well as look at plays written by other people. To succeed you need to:

- Love acting to an audience and be able to work with others in a focused and disciplined way.
- Be willing to write at length about your drama.
- Be willing to rehearse at lunch or after-school when required.

## Building on your prior learning, you will

- Develop your improvisation and acting skills to a higher level.
- Look at plays in more detail and look at different ways of bringing a script alive on stage.
- Develop your ability to analyse scripts and performances and then express your thoughts clearly in writing.

As well as acquiring the skills involved in creating and performing Drama, you will also be able to acquire skills in working with others, problem solving and communication. You will find that Drama will help you feel more self- confident and prepare you to deal with a range of different situations and people.

## Assessment:

The course will be assessed by a combination of practical and written exam assessments.

### 1. Written exam - 40%

- Set text
- Knowledge
- Response to production seen

### 2. Devising Drama - 40%

- Logbook (written), 2,500 words
- Performance

### 3. Text in practice - 20%

- Performance of 20mins extract

## Progression and Careers:

Currently the UK Creative Industries bring in £76.9 billion to the UK economy; jobs in the Creative Industries are growing at three times the national average. You could go on to take an AS or A2 in Theatre Studies at Honiton Community College and then take the subject at Degree level within a University. You may wish to go into a job where it is useful to have experience of Drama, or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during the course. These might include careers in such fields as retail, travel and tourism, drama therapy, media, law, sales and marketing or any career that involves engaging with other people.

# Music

GCSE

If you enjoy performing, using music technology, composing, and listening to music of different styles, you should consider this course.

- The ability to read music is very useful to achieve a high grade, but if you don't read music well, you could still take and enjoy the course provided you continue to practise on your instrument/voice.
- Music is an academic subject that requires full commitment, in terms of the time required to practise, rehearse, and develop listening and composing skills.
- The rewards of being fully committed are priceless, while you have opportunities to perform to others and develop all-round musicianship.

## To succeed in this course, you will need to:

- Be fully committed to music-making in all its forms: performing, composing and listening and be willing to get involved in the life of the music department on your spare time.
- You need to be opened to listen to different styles of music, not just your own personal preference.
- You need to have access to an instrument or be involved in singing, in order to have a realistic chance of doing well in the GCSE course.

## Assessment

60% of the GCSE is based on coursework.

- Of this, 30% on performing two pieces of music, one an individual performance, the other a group performance. The performances must last between 4 and 7 minutes in total.
- The other 30% on composing two pieces of music which must last between 3 and 4½ minutes in total. You will need to write an evaluation for each piece explaining how you went about composing your music.

There is one Listening Exam at the end of the course that is worth 40% of the GCSE, lasting 1½ hours.

- This exam tests your ability to recognise musical features that have been met over the two years of the course.
- There is also a ten-mark essay question at the end of the exam.
- This will focus on four areas of study: Western Classical Tradition (1650-1910), Popular Music, Traditional Music and Western Classical Tradition since 1910).

## Progression and Careers

Honiton Community College offers A level in Music Technology. The skills developed in GCSE Music would ultimately help in various career possibilities in recording, sound engineering, media, entertainment, teaching, music therapy and many more.

# English



# English Language and English Literature

GCSE

All students study English Language and English Literature as part of their core curriculum. This will lead to two separate GCSE qualifications. Both English Language and English Literature will be assessed through examinations at the end of the two-year course.

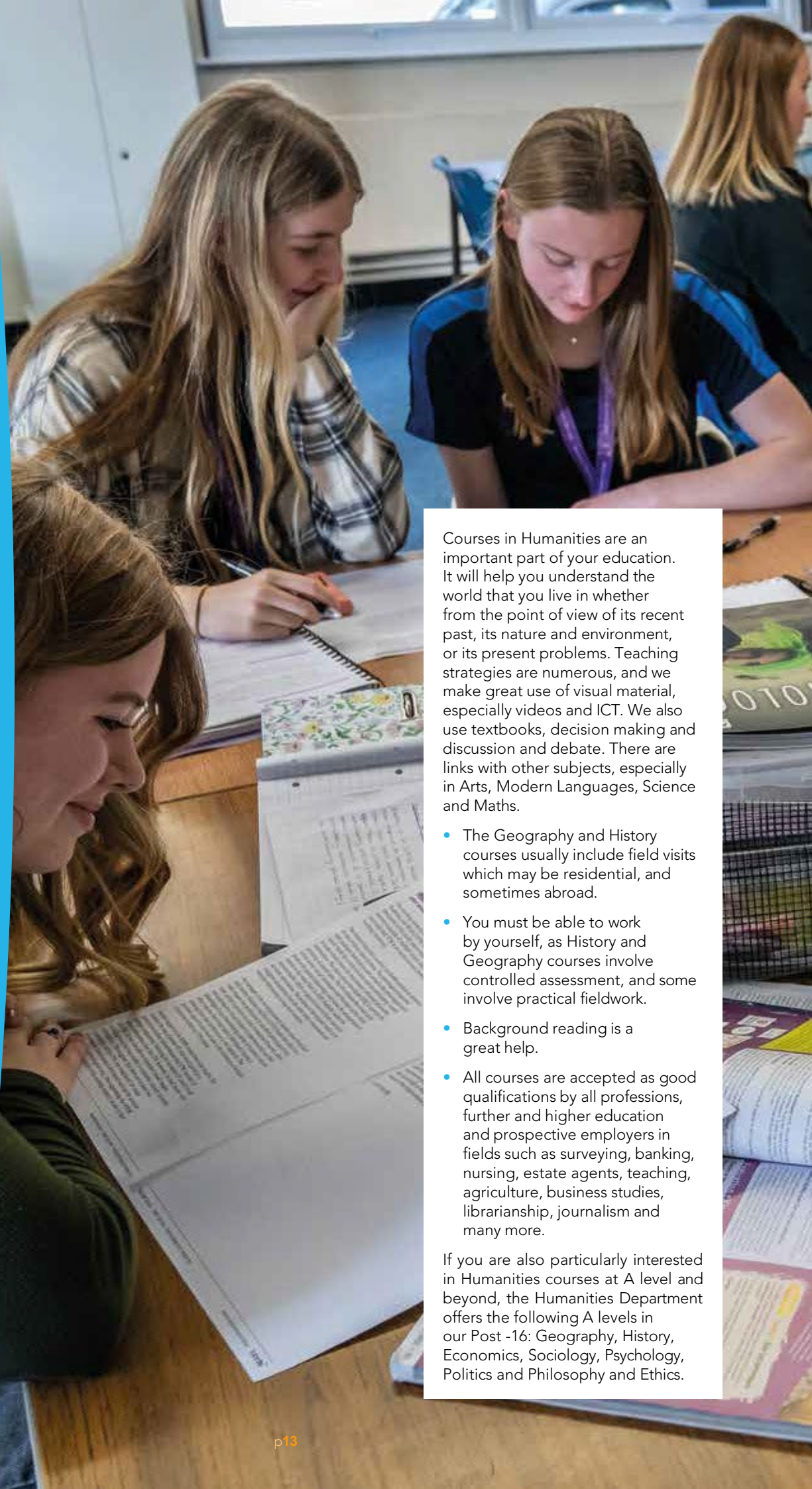
Students will study a range of poetry, prose and drama from the 19th, 20th and 21st Century including non-fiction and media texts. They will continue to develop the skills needed to show understanding, analyse and respond personally to texts.

They will also develop their creative and narrative writing skills, as well as express viewpoints and perspectives in transactional writing such as argumentative, persuasive, comment or review writing. 'Speaking and listening' also forms part of the course, but as a 'non-examination Assessment': the course is designed to emphasise the importance of the wider benefits that speaking and listening skills have for students. They will present a talk on a topic using Standard English and then respond to questions. This is an additional award from their English Language GCSE grade.

Students will benefit in all curriculum areas from their continued studies within English.



# Humanities



Courses in Humanities are an important part of your education. It will help you understand the world that you live in whether from the point of view of its recent past, its nature and environment, or its present problems. Teaching strategies are numerous, and we make great use of visual material, especially videos and ICT. We also use textbooks, decision making and discussion and debate. There are links with other subjects, especially in Arts, Modern Languages, Science and Maths.

- The Geography and History courses usually include field visits which may be residential, and sometimes abroad.
- You must be able to work by yourself, as History and Geography courses involve controlled assessment, and some involve practical fieldwork.
- Background reading is a great help.
- All courses are accepted as good qualifications by all professions, further and higher education and prospective employers in fields such as surveying, banking, nursing, estate agents, teaching, agriculture, business studies, librarianship, journalism and many more.

If you are also particularly interested in Humanities courses at A level and beyond, the Humanities Department offers the following A levels in our Post -16: Geography, History, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Politics and Philosophy and Ethics.

# Geography

GCSE

The world is always changing. Geography gives you the chance to learn about these changes.

## In this subject student will:

- Learn more about the world they live in.
- Develop skills that will help them in other areas, such as IT and research.
- Complete fieldwork outside of the classroom - visits to key locations for fieldwork.
- Work in a team with other students and learn through investigating and practical application.

## Assessment

There are three externally examined written papers for GCSE Geography:

1. The Physical Environment
  - a. Topic 1 - The changing landscapes of the UK Including: Coastal landscapes and processes. River landscapes and processes.
  - b. Topic 2 - Weather hazards and climate change.
  - c. Topic 3 - Ecosystems, biodiversity and management.
2. The Human Environment
  - a. Topic 4 - Changing cities.
  - b. Topic 5 - Global development.
  - c. Topic 6 - Resource management including: Water resource management.
3. Geographical Investigations - fieldwork and UK challenges
  - a. Topic 7 - Geographical investigations - including a day's fieldwork in an urban area.
  - b. Topic 8 - Geographical investigations - including a day's fieldwork in a coastal area.

## Progress and Careers

Geography is well known as a subject that links to all other subjects in the curriculum, so a GCSE in Geography is a steppingstone to a whole range of opportunities. A good grade will help to move you on to any AS, Applied A-Level or BTEC course. You may want to continue your study of Geography or take a course such as a BTEC National in Travel and Tourism which has a more work-related approach.

The skills you develop can lead you to employment opportunities in journalism, media, engineering, ICT, travel and tourism, environmental management, marketing, business management and teaching. Geographers are everywhere!

# History

GCSE

GCSE History is popular subject in which students do very well at HCC. You will study history through the eyes of the people who lived at the time.

## This course suits students who:

- Enjoy debating and understanding why there are sometimes different, but equally valid, points of view on the same subject.
- Like finding out about how people's lives have changed and how people in the past may have thought differently from us.

## A GCSE in History will:

- Develop many useful transferable skills as well as being interesting in its own right.
- Encourage students to be more critical of what they read and hear on the news.
- Will develop their abilities to reason and argue their point of view with supporting information.
- Be highly regarded amongst colleagues, universities, and employers.

## Assessment

There are three externally examined written papers for GCSE History:

1. Thematic study and historic environment
  - a. Medicine in Britain, c1250-present with the British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches.
2. Period study and British depth study
  - a. Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88. American West 1835-1895.
3. Modern depth study
  - a. Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39.

## Progress and Careers

Apart from enjoying the course and being a lot more aware of the world around you, GCSE History is a solid basis for many A level subjects. Students who have done well in History often study higher qualifications in subjects such as politics, law, economics, and sociology, and of course History. There are also vocational courses available as a next step linked to the travel and tourism, heritage, museum, education and media industries.

# Religious Studies

GCSE

The course develops pupils' critical thinking and evaluation skills, allowing them to debate current affairs in today's society.

- The course explores two religions in depth - Buddhism & Christianity and covers a number of contemporary themes such as Human Rights and Social Justice.
- Pupils are challenged on questions about beliefs, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards ethical and religious issues.

## Assessment

There are two externally examined written papers for GCSE Religious Studies:

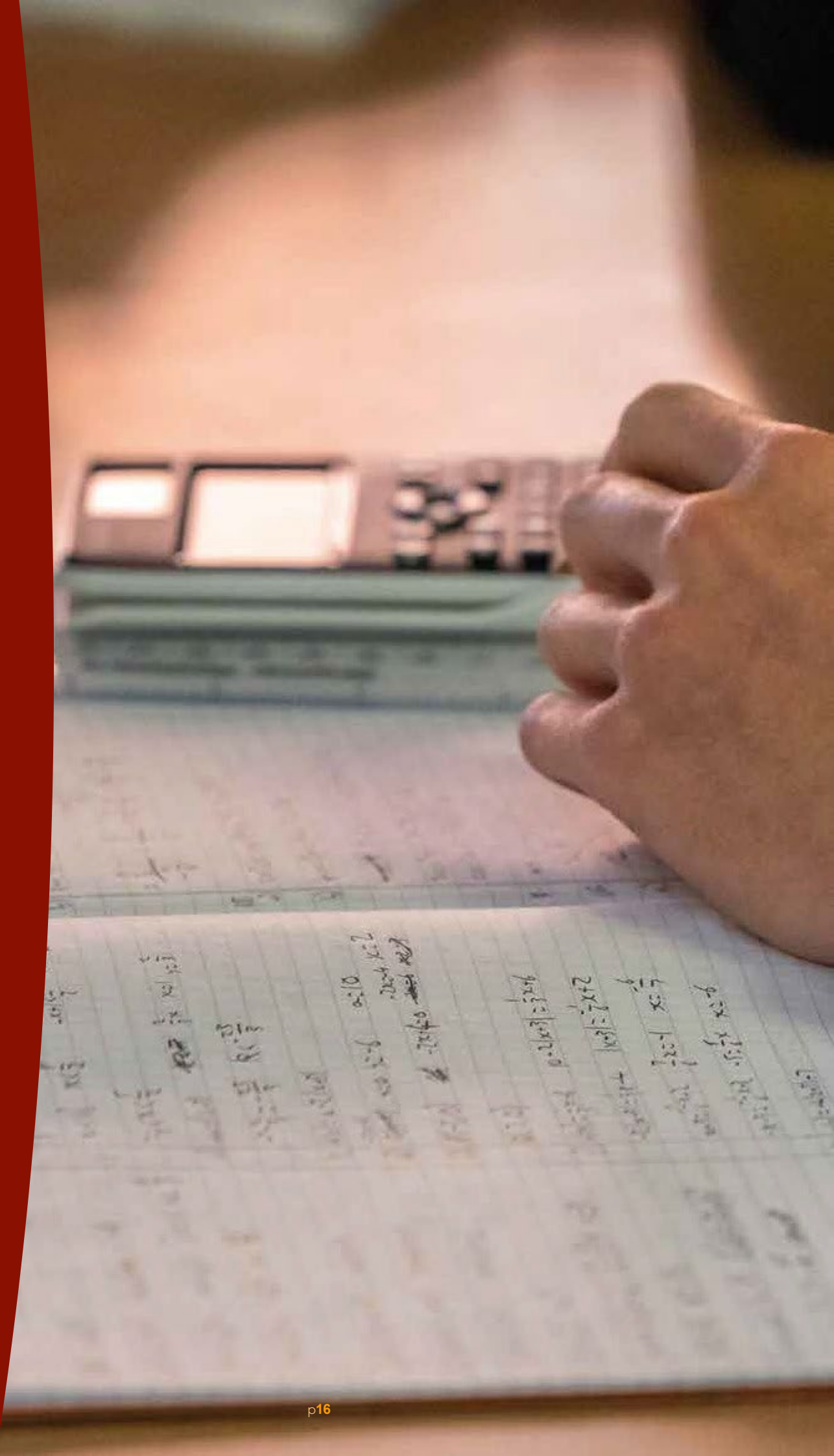
1. In depth study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices Buddhism and Christianity.
2. Thematic studies: Existence of God & Revelation, Crime & Punishment, Peace & Conflict, Human Rights & Social Justice.

## Progress and Careers

Religious Studies qualifications open a large number of career paths. For example, you can go into the Legal, Media or Voluntary sectors, pursue Politics or Medicine or explore a career in the Social Services or Journalism.



# Mathematics





# Mathematics

GCSE

As you know, mathematics is all about arithmetic, geometry, algebra and statistics. However, in recent years the Government has made some changes to GCSE Mathematics. For example, there is additional emphasis being placed on proportion and rates of change. But the most important element is the problem-solving ability we will be encouraging students to develop. This ability is one reason for mathematics being so highly valued by employers, and it features prominently in the current GCSE syllabus.

## Assessment

There are two tiers of entry, as shown below. Students sit either the foundation or higher tier exams.

1. Higher Tier - grades 4-9 available
2. Foundation Tier - grades 1-5 available

For each tier there will be three externally set written exam papers, two calculator and one non-calculator, all taken at the end of Year 11.



# Modern Foreign Languages



In addition to learning another language, throughout the GCSE course we will be helping students to develop the skills and confidence that they need to communicate effectively in their own language, as well as encouraging them to develop the study skills and self-discipline necessary to succeed in any subject.

People with good language skills and knowledge of other languages are highly sought after in the world of work. A qualification in French or Spanish will complement any other subject you choose to take. Taking a GCSE in either language means you will:

- Have more fun when travelling to any French or Spanish speaking country. (French is the official or joint official language of over thirty countries)
- Be able to study French or Spanish at AS and A level
- Add an extra dimension to your CV when applying for jobs
- Be in a stronger position to work abroad or to get a job in companies with international links

## French and Spanish

### GCSE

The themes and topics covered are designed to equip students with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence. The aim is to expand students' cultural knowledge whilst developing their language skills. The GCSE covers language from 3 themes, each divided into 3 topics:

#### Theme 1 - People and lifestyle

1. Identity and relationships with others
2. Healthy living and lifestyle
3. Education and work

#### Theme 2 - Popular culture

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

#### Theme 3 - Communication and the world around us

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

#### Assessment

There are 4 exams, as outlined below:

##### Paper 1: Listening 25%

50 marks (H), 40 marks (F) | 45 minutes (H), 35 minutes (F)

Exam includes 5 minutes' reading time before the listening stimulus and 2 minutes' checking time at the end.

Section A - questions and answers in English

Section B - a short dictation

##### Paper 2: Speaking 25%

50 marks | 7-9 minutes (F) 10-12 minutes (H) + 15 minutes' preparation time

Task 1 - Role play

Task 2 - Reading aloud task

Task 3 - Discussion of photocard

##### Paper 3: Reading 25%

50 marks | 45 minutes (F), 1 hour (H)

Section A - questions and answers in English

Section B - translation from into English

##### Paper 4: Writing 25%

###### *Foundation - 1 hour 10 minutes, 50 marks*

Question 1 - photo - 5 sentences

Question 2 - 5 bullet points - 50 words

Question 3 - grammar gap fill

Question 4 - translation from English

Question 5 - 3 bullet points - 90 words

###### *Higher - 1 hour 15 minutes, 50 marks*

Question 1 - Translation from English

Question 2 - 3 bullet points - 90 words

Question 3 - 2 bullet points - 150 words

#### Progression and Careers

There are many jobs for which a language qualification would be an advantage (and even essential). These include work as air cabin crew, a bilingual secretary, or an au pair overseas. A language can also prove to be an advantage for, amongst others, careers in: Journalism, Marketing, Sales, Law Accountancy, Interpreting, Travel and tourism, Foreign Exchange and Banking or Nursing.

# Physical Education & Sport



# Physical Education and Sport

GCSE

In addition to the core provision, we offer a GCSE in Physical Education that offers students the chance to undertake a range of practical activities and develop an in-depth understanding of sport, health, fitness and performance (Note: every student in Key Stage 4 is required to attend core Physical Education but this is non-examinable).

## The GCSE PE and Sport course suits students who:

- Have a keen interest in sport and always look forward to PE lessons.
- Take part in sports and recreation outside of class time.
- Want to follow a course that develops knowledge & understanding through practical involvement.
- Want to know more about the benefits of sport and exercise.
- Want to improve your own performance in three sports.
- Are prepared for the learning in a classroom as well as enjoying practical sessions.

## Assessment

There are four components leading to two written exams and two practical assessments

1. Fitness and body systems (36%) - Written Exam  
1 hour 30 Mins
  - Topic 1 - Applied anatomy and physiology.
  - Topic 2 - Movement analysis.
  - Topic 3 - Physical training.
  - Topic 4 - Use of data.
2. Health and performance (24%) - Written Exam  
1 hour 15 Mins
  - Topic 1 - Health, fitness and wellbeing.
  - Topic 2 - Sport psychology.
  - Topic 3 - Socio-cultural influences.
  - Topic 4 - Use of data.
3. Practical performance (30%) - non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated
  - You will need to choose 3 sports: One team activity, one individual activity and a free choice (from the list published by the DfE.)
  - Skills in isolation.
  - Skills in a competitive / formal situation.
4. Personal exercise programme (PEP) (10%) - non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated
  - Aim and planning analysis.
  - Carrying out and monitoring the PEP.
  - Evaluation of the PEP.

## Progression and Careers

You can progress to further study in sport, leisure and physical education. Our students go on to work all over the world in fields such as teaching/education, leisure management, coaching, physiotherapy and sport psychology.



# Science



All students will be required to take all science GCSE assessments at the end of the course. All courses are linear and taught over three-years. There is no coursework element. All GCSE sciences are 100% examination based.

The Science Department have in place a regular assessment format for each of the units studied. As a result, we can accurately assess, monitor and provide appropriate intervention for all students where required.

### **Progression and Careers**

The courses provide routes into Further Education or employment. Science has links to virtually every sector of the employment market and is seen as a key qualification by the majority of employers. We have an excellent track record of placing students into science-based courses at university in both the academic and vocational areas.

Students will have access to a wide range of employment areas such as nursing and medicine, agriculture, engineering, pharmaceuticals, forensic science, physics and environmental aspects such as renewable energy and pollution. The list of potential opportunities is vast, and a sound education in science provides the platform to fulfil such ambitions.

## Combined Science - Trilogy

GCSE

Double award: This double award is equivalent to two GCSEs.

- Students studying Combined Science will cover the three science disciplines (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) in the traditional fashion.
- The course is designed around engaging practicals as they are not only one of the most engaging parts of a Science education but are also essential for students' understanding of scientific theory.
- There are 18 required practicals, which will form part of the content and will be required for exams.

### Biology Paper 1

- Key concepts in biology
- Cells and control
- Genetics
- Natural selection and genetic modification
- Health, disease and the development of medicines

### Biology Paper 2

- Key concepts in biology
- Plant structures and their functions
- Animal coordination
- Exchange and transport
- Ecosystems and material cycles

### Chemistry Paper 1

- Key concepts in chemistry
- States of matter and mixtures
- Chemical changes
- Extracting metals and equilibria

### Chemistry Paper 2

- Key concepts in chemistry
- Groups in the periodic table
- Rates of reaction and energy changes
- Fuels and earth science

### Physics Paper 1

- Key concepts of physics
- Motion and forces
- Conservation of energy
- Waves
- Light and the EM spectrum
- Radioactivity

### Physics Paper 2

- Key concepts in physics
- Energy - Forces
- Forces and their effects
- Electricity and circuits
- Magnetism and the motor effect
- Electromagnetic induction
- Particle model
- Forces and matter

### Assessment

There are six written exam papers in total. Students will sit two examination papers, as outlined above, for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Foundation and Higher Tier papers are available, all papers are equally weighted.

## Separate Sciences

GCSE

Triple award: This triple award is equivalent to three GCSEs.

- Studying the separate sciences means students will cover the same topics as for combined Science, with the addition of Space Physics, with more content throughout.
- There are ten required practicals in Biology, eight in Chemistry and ten in Physics. These 28 practicals will form part of the content and will be required for the examinations.

### Assessment

There are six written exam papers in total. Students will sit two examination papers, as outlined above, for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Papers 1 and 2 for each subject are equally weighted (each is worth 50% of the GCSE grade).



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