



RUSKIN
A PRIORY ACADEMY

YEAR 9
OPTIONS BOOKLET
2026

Timeline, Support and Applications for Year 9

Timeline:

- **Progress Evening; Thursday 26 February 2026**

You will be able to talk to teachers about the suitability of the course as a Key Stage 4 option. An options booklet will be given out and allow you to see what subjects are offered and understand how the process works.

- **Options Evening; Thursday 5 March 2026**

This will be an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the process and to then speak to different subject teachers in more detail about the courses offered. You will be sent the application form which you will complete online.

- **Final Submission of Option Forms; Friday 13 March 2026**

Process

You will choose 1 subject out of a list of 4 compulsory subjects, you will then need to number your preferred options 1-5 from the remaining list.

You will be timetabled for **four** of these options, with the last 2 choices acting as reserves, if needed.

Once you are satisfied with your choices, please complete the form by **Friday 13 March 2026**.

Your choices will be confirmed during the summer term.

If you would like to discuss the process further please get in contact with Mr Finch (Deputy Headteacher) who is responsible for curriculum matters.

sfinch@prioryacademies.co.uk



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GCSE Art and Design

Course Description

Art education is not only about becoming an artist, it is about thinking flexibly and finding the new and the next. Art teaches people to question, it wakes up imaginations, it builds confidence, it encourages people to see the world differently and to make their mark.

This is an intense two year course which will give you the opportunity to work with a wide range of artistic elements across a variety of disciplines, including Drawing and Painting, Graphic Design, Photography, Textiles, Mixed-media, Ceramics and Three-Dimensional Design.

Throughout the course we focus on developing practical skills as well as an understanding of effective project structure and assessment requirements whilst building an extensive coursework portfolio. Portfolios provide evidence of students' ability to independent research and analyse the work of artists/designers/styles, develop their ideas and designs with thought and purpose and their refinement towards the production of a final outcome.

In January of Year 11, students are given a controlled assessment question, they have at least 8 weeks to complete research, experiments and refine design work for their chosen question and have 10 hours under exam conditions to complete a final outcome.

Throughout the course students are encouraged to develop individual skills and personal interests. The approaches to study will vary between projects, but will cover the following:

- Observational study; work which is based on direct observation and analysis.
- Materials-based study; skills development and exploration of the qualities and characteristics of materials.
- Thematic study; producing artwork in response to a chosen theme or topic.
- Critical and Historical study; researching and analysing the work of other artists and then applying that knowledge to enrich your own work.
- Problem-solving study; producing and presenting a range of creative solutions to a design brief.

Assessment structure

Unit 1: Coursework Portfolio selected from work produced in Years 10 and 11 will be worth 60% of total mark.

Unit 2: Final examination in Year 11 will be worth 40% of total mark.

Special Features

There will be opportunities to attend several organised trips to major art galleries and museums to engage with artworks and conduct research for the coursework portfolio, as well as a variety of practical workshops with various working artists to develop skills.

Students will be asked for a contribution towards their sketchbooks and A2 portfolio which will be used for the duration of the course. They are also encouraged to invest in basic art materials as further independent experimentation and development of work independently is an absolute necessity.

BTEC Tech Award in Performing Arts: Dance/ Musical Theatre

Why study Dance/Musical Theatre?

The course provides a solid foundation for progression into higher education courses across Performing Arts disciplines including Theatre Studies, Dance, Drama and Music. The course also introduces a wide range of personal, social and organisational skills applicable to a variety of work places and industries including hospitality, law and politics.

Course Description

The study of Dance/Musical Theatre contributes to students' creative and social development. As performers, students develop their skills and confidence. The course provides a real and engaging application of students' knowledge, skills and understanding of Dance/Musical Theatre in a work-related context through explorative research, productions and presentations.

Dance and Musical Theatre pathways are taught together on this course, but students will only be assessed on their chosen pathway of either: Dance **OR** Musical Theatre.

Assessment Structure

The qualification is taught over 120 GLH (Guided Learning Hours) with an additional expectation of students to undertake independent learning for 150 learning hours; this is a combination of hours both within the classroom and students' own time. In order to meet such expectations and develop their performance skills, students are required to attend an extra curricular activity within their chosen pathway. The course consists of components which are both internally and externally assessed. Assessments are both practical and theoretical, whereby research informs the devising of practical presentations:

- **Component 1:** 100% written assessment completed in Y10
- **Component 2:** 60% written assessment and 40% practical solo or duo assessment completed in Y11
- **Component 3:** 70% written assessment and 30% practical group performance assessment completed in Y11

There is the requirement for students to participate in educational visits in order to experience live theatre and learn the content of professional performance pieces through practical workshops with professional practitioners.

Special Features

Dance/Musical Theatre is an opportunity for students to develop artistic creativity through their enthusiasm for performing and their desire to understand how work is created. Students work on assignments that are modelled on the industry, working both individually and in groups.



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BTEC Tech Award in Performing Arts: Drama

Why study Drama?

The course provides a solid foundation for progression into higher education courses across Performing Arts disciplines including Theatre Studies, Dance, Drama and Music. The course also introduces a wide range of personal, social and organisational skills applicable to a variety of work places and industries including hospitality, law and politics.

Course Description

The study of Drama contributes to students' creative and social development. As performers, students develop their skills and confidence. The course actively engages students in the processes of developing as effective and independent learners, allowing them to develop their practical Drama techniques whilst further exploring their interests. The course provides a real and engaging application of students' knowledge, skills and understanding of Drama in a work-related context through explorative research, productions and presentations. Drama is the only pathway available on this course.

Assessment Structure

The qualification is taught over 120 GLH (Guided Learning Hours) with an additional expectation of students to undertake independent learning for 150 learning hours; this is a combination of hours both within the classroom and students' own time. In order to meet such expectations and develop their performance skills, students are required to attend an extra curricular Drama activity. The course consists of components which are both internally and externally assessed. Assessments are both practical and theoretical, whereby research informs the devising of practical presentations:

- **Component 1:** 100% written assessment completed in Y10
- **Component 2:** 60% written assessment and 40% practical solo or duo assessment completed in Y11
- **Component 3:** 70% written assessment and 30% practical group performance assessment completed in Y11

There is the requirement for students to participate in educational visits in order to experience live theatre and learn the content of professional performance pieces through practical workshops with professional practitioners.

Special Features

Drama is an opportunity for students to develop artistic creativity through their enthusiasm for performing and their desire to understand how work is created. Students work on assignments modelled on the industry, working both individually and in groups.



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GCSE Design Technology

Course Description

This course has been designed to encourage students to be able to design and make products with creativity and originality using a range of materials and techniques. A detailed design portfolio is produced by the students and will show design development from the initial idea through to the realisation of a finished product.

The course allows full credit to be given to candidates who undertake innovative work and make effective use of CAD/CAM facilities (2D Design & Google SketchUp), whilst also enabling those students with limited access to ICT to achieve.

Career Progression

Design Technology is an obvious choice for any student considering a career in Professional Engineering. The subject can be continued at A Level which is a pathway to an Engineering or Design degree. It can also be used as a route onto many technical apprenticeships.

Design Technology provides other career progression opportunities in Graphic Design, Architecture, Manufacturing, Carpentry & Joinery, Plumbing and many other practical trades.

Skills and Knowledge

Students will broaden and deepen their subject knowledge by undertaking detailed investigations into a wide range of materials and their properties, exploring the influence of design history on contemporary products, and examining the environmental implications of technological development.

A significant component of the course focuses on developing students skills in Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Computer-Aided Manufacture (CAM). This learning is grounded in practical, hands-on experience using our state-of-the-art laser cutter, 3D printers, and CNC router.

Assessment Structure

- Coursework (50%): A design and make activity. The students will have the opportunity to make a product (which could be a small item of furniture) to their own developed design.
- Exam (50%): Subject knowledge on materials, manufacturing, systems and control, design styles/history and human factors of design.



GCSE French

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Course Description

The GCSE French course is a re-designed course being examined for the first time in 2026. The course aims to open students' eyes to other cultures and allow them to learn how to communicate about subjects that interest them. The vocabulary and assessment content reflects and represents diverse student experiences, so that all students feel included and will be able to speak and write about the things that interest them most.

Assessment Structure

This course is assessed through 4 terminal examinations in speaking, listening, reading and writing, each worth 50 marks and 25% of the overall grade. Students will be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier, with all 4 papers being taken at the same level.

The course content is centered on six broad thematic contexts:

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

The re-designed specification ensures assessments are accessible and transparent, rooted in testing what students know and ensuring they can attempt the whole assessment confidently, with no surprises. Instructions in all papers are now given in English.

Why study French?

Language qualifications are highly sought after by employers and a valuable addition to any application to Higher Education courses and universities. The ability to communicate in another language demonstrates a range of transferable skills which can be applied to a career in any sector.



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GCSE Spanish

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Course Description

The GCSE Spanish course is a re-designed course being examined for the first time in 2026. The course aims to open students' eyes to other cultures and allow them to learn how to communicate about subjects that interest them. The vocabulary and assessment content reflects and represents diverse student experiences, so that all students feel included and will be able to speak and write about the things that interest them most.

Assessment Structure

This course is assessed through 4 terminal examinations in speaking, listening, reading and writing, each worth 50 marks and 25% of the overall grade. Students will be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier, with all 4 papers being taken at the same level.

The course content is centered on six broad thematic contexts:

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

The re-designed specification ensures assessments are accessible and transparent, rooted in testing what students know and ensuring they can attempt the whole assessment confidently, with no surprises. Instructions in all papers are now given in English.

Why study Spanish?

Language qualifications are highly sought after by employers and a valuable addition to any application to Higher Education courses and universities. The ability to communicate in another language demonstrates a range of transferable skills which can be applied to a career in any sector.

GCSE Geography

Course Description

The Geography course from AQA allows our students to study a wide variety of engaging and relevant topics, many of which draw upon contemporary themes. They are assessed in three different exam papers.

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment (35% of GCSE)

- The challenge of natural hazards
- Physical landscapes in the UK (rivers and coasts– fieldwork element)
- The living world (ecosystems—tropical rainforest and hot deserts)
- Geographical skills

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (35% of GCSE)

- Urban issues and challenges (fieldwork element)
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of resource management (choice of food, water or energy)
- Geographical skills

Paper 3: Geographical Applications (30% of GCSE)

- Issue evaluation
- Fieldwork
- Geographical skills

Why study Geography?

There has never been a better or more important time to study Geography. With growing interest in issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation and social cohesion, Geography is one of the most relevant courses you could chose to study. Geographers are also highly employable, whatever your passion for the world – fascination with landscapes or concerns about inequality – Geography will provide you with knowledge and transferable skills.

Special Features

All students will participate in 2 days Fieldwork away from the academy. There will be a contribution required to cover part of the cost. These trips are a compulsory part of the GCSE course, the skills students acquire on their fieldtrips will be assessed in an examination at the end of the course (Paper 3).

Where can Geography take you?

Geography is a subject that Universities and employers value highly due to the range of transferable skills that students develop, as well as an understanding of current global issues. Geography is one of the most flexible GCSE's in terms of career opportunities and links well with many other subjects. Geography can open the door to variety of careers, ranging from the Police, Armed Forces, Retail, HR, Marketing and Teaching!



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GCSE History

Why study History?

Through a study of History students will develop chronological understanding; knowledge of substantive concepts; an understanding of the historical process; the ability to construct historical arguments and an appreciation for the moral purpose of History. These will prepare students for many different aspects of their future. Those considering A Levels and University applications should strongly consider it as many Colleges, Universities and employers recognise and value the skills that you will have developed while studying History. History can be useful in many areas and not just those connected with studying the past, for example; Conservation work, environmental work, town planning, building restoration and tourism. History is also a superb qualification for lawyers, the Police or those interested in a career in politics, journalism or TV.

Course Description

Paper One- Understanding the Modern World (50% of GCSE)

Period Study: Section A - Germany (1890 - 1945), Democracy and Dictatorship

Key Topics

- Germany and the growth of democracy
- Germany and the Depression
- The experiences of Germans under the Nazis

Wider World Depth Studies

Section B - Conflict and tension in Asia, 1950-1972

Key Topics

- Conflict in Korea
- Escalation of conflict in Vietnam
- The ending of conflict in Vietnam

Paper Two- Shaping the Nation (50% of GCSE)

Thematic Study: Section A - Power and the People (1170 - present day)

Key Topics

- Challenging authority and feudalism
- Challenging Royal authority
- Reform and reformers
- Equality and rights

British Depth Study including historical environment

Section B – Norman England (1066 - 1100)

Key Topics

- Conquest and Control
- Life under the Normans
- The Norman Church and Monasticism
- The historical environment of Norman England



BTEC Health and Social Care

Course Description

The new BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care is an exciting and demanding course. The course is a vocational qualification aimed at students with a genuine interest in health or social care who may be looking to pursue a career in the health and social care industry, whether it is primary schools, secondary schools, social work, paramedic, nursing and midwifery, occupational therapy or even caring for the elderly/disabled. These are just a few of the many varied professions that this qualification supports.

Theoretical Components

The course consists of the following theoretical components, most of which are assessed through Pearson-set assignments:

- Human Lifespan Development
- Health and Social Care Services and Values
- Health and Wellbeing

Assessment Structure

All students will complete the following components; Human Lifespan Development and Health and Social Care Services and Values. Each component is broken down into specified tasks which target different learning aims. Tasks will be handed out and submitted within a specified time frame set by the exam board, marked internally, moderated and returned to students with grade banding for each task completed.

The Health and Wellbeing component is externally assessed in a written 2 hour assessment taken in Year 11. Edexcel sets and marks the assessment which is taken by the learner under examination conditions and is worth approximately 40% of the final mark.

Why study this subject?

The BTEC Tech Award is an introduction to vocational learning. This course is for students who wish to acquire knowledge, understanding and technical skills through vocational contexts as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The course gives learners the opportunity to build applied knowledge and skills that show an aptitude for further learning, both in the sector and more widely. It recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs and will broaden the learner's experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

There is no limit to progression options as the skills acquired are applicable to a range of post-16 study options.

The BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care provides the knowledge, understanding and skills for Level 2 students to progress to:

- Other Level 2 vocational qualifications
- Tlevel in Health or a Tlevel in Education and Early Years
- Level 3 vocational qualifications
- Related academic qualifications
- Apprenticeships within the health and social care sectors



BTEC Tech Award Child Development

Course Description

The 'BTEC' Tech Award in Child Development is an exciting course. The course is a vocational qualification with an aim to:

- Inspire and enthuse learners to consider a career in early years or related sectors, where knowledge of child development is relevant
- Give learners the opportunity to gain a broad knowledge and understanding of and develop skills in the early years sector, for example, child development and the importance of play to promote child development
- Give students the potential opportunity, in due course, to enter employment

The course consists of the following three components

Component 1: Children's Growth and Development

Component 2: Learning Through Play

Component 3: Supporting Children to Play, Learn and Develop

Assessment Structure

Component 1, 'Children's Growth and Development' and Component 2, 'Learning through Play' are broken down into specified tasks which target different learning aims. Tasks will be handed out and submitted within a specified time frame set by the exam board. They are then marked internally, moderated and returned to students with grade banding for each task completed.

The third component, Component 3, 'Supporting Children To Play, Learn and Develop' is externally assessed in a written 2 hour assessment taken in Year 11. Edexcel sets and marks the assessment which is taken by the learner under examination conditions and is worth approximately 40% of the final mark.

Why study this subject?

The BTEC Tech Award is an introduction to vocational learning. This course is for students who wish to acquire knowledge, understanding and technical skills through vocational contexts as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The course gives students the opportunity to build applied knowledge and skills that show an aptitude for further learning, both in the sector and more widely. It recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs and will broaden the learner's experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

The BTEC Tech Award in Child Development provides the knowledge, understanding and skills for Level 2 students to progress to:

- Other Level 2 vocational qualifications
- Tlevel in Education and Early Years or Tlevel in Health
- Level 3 vocational qualifications, such as the BTEC Nationals in Children's Play, Learning and Development or the BTEC Nationals in other sectors, such as in Health and Social Care
- Related academic qualifications
- Apprenticeships within the early years and health and social care sectors



WJEC Hospitality and Catering

Course Description

The WJEC Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering is an exciting and engaging course. The course is a vocational qualification aimed at students with an interest in the Hospitality and Catering Industry.

This qualification may be for you if you are looking to pursue a career which may range from waiting staff, receptionists, catering assistants to chefs, hotel and bar managers and food technologists in food manufacturing.

The delivery of this course includes class based theory in preparation for an exam and written course work that is submitted to the awarding body. You will apply your theory based learning in order to safely prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes as well as take into account hygiene and personal safety in your preparation.

Students should be regularly involved in the preparation and cooking of dishes at home in order to consolidate skills learnt in the practical element of the course.

Course Structure

To complete the course, students will need to complete the 2 units below. Unit 1 is a 90 minute exam which is externally assessed and Unit 2 is internal coursework and is both theory and practical based.

Course units

WJEC Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering		
Unit	Mandatory units	Assessment method
1	The Hospitality and Catering Industry	External Examination
2	Hospitality and Catering in Action	Coursework Based

Why study this subject?

If you are interested in studying this subject at KS4 you will have the opportunity to develop your hosting skills together with food preparation and cooking. The content is relevant not only to employees within food production, but also those with a responsibility for food safety in the industry, nutritionists, managers and owners. This extends the learners appreciation of the whole vocational area beyond the kitchen environment.

This qualification will also give you an overview of the hospitality industry and the type of job roles that may be available to assist you in making choices about progression.



WJEC Vocational Award in ICT

Course Description

The WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in IT is an exciting and engaging course. The course is a vocational qualification aimed at students with an interest in IT, where you will gain skills which will be applicable in most industries.

This course will assess the application of IT skills through practical use. It will provide students with essential knowledge, transferable skills and tools to improve their learning in other subjects with the aims of enhancing their employability when they leave education, contributing to their personal development and future economic well-being. This course will encourage independence, creativity and awareness of the IT sector.

Students will use a range of software throughout the course such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint and Adobe Photoshop.

Assessment Structure

1 Internal Portfolio (Externally moderated) and 1 External examination

Assessments will consist of both an external examination and an internal assessments through a teacher-assessed portfolio, that will be externally moderated by the examining body. To complete the course, students must be successful in meeting all the requirements of the assessments. Candidates who fail to achieve the standard for a grade will be awarded an Ungraded.

Special Features

IT is a key part of many areas of our everyday lives and vital to the UK economy. The specification allows:

- Students to explore a wide range of uses of hardware, application and specialist software in society. They will investigate how information technology is used in a range of contexts, including business and organisations, education and home use of information technology.
- Students to develop a working knowledge of databases, spreadsheets, automated documents and images where they will apply their knowledge and understanding to solve problems in a vocational setting.

In a relaxed but mature atmosphere, students will be taught the concepts of ICT in various ways through teacher-led activities, self-study and using their own experiences to master concepts they find difficult. The course is very practical in nature and students will have to apply the concepts they learn to produce a working solution to a given problem.

GCSE Computer Science

Course Description

This course has real relevance in our modern world. While learners will no doubt already have some knowledge of computers and related areas, the course will give them an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works and an insight into what goes on "behind the scenes". As part of this, they will investigate computer programming which many learners find interesting, however challenging.

The content of the course is demanding and learning to write programs in Python will be a significant part of the course; logical thinking and mathematical skills are important skills prerequisites in order to be successful. By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation
- Analyse problems in computational terms, through practical experience
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically

Assessment Structure

Two written external examinations which include a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, long answer and extended response questions assessing SQL programming skills, practical problem solving, computational thinking skills and theoretical knowledge.

Computational thinking and programming skills — This paper is worth 50% of the total GCSE. Students will be assessed on computational thinking, code tracing, problem-solving, programming concepts including the design of effective algorithms and the designing, writing, testing and refining of code.

Computing concepts — This paper is worth 50% of the total GCSE. Students will be assessed on fundamentals of data representation, computer systems, software classifications, systems architecture, computer networks, cyber security, relational databases and structured query language and ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology.

Special Features

The course has been designed to form a qualification that provides knowledge and understanding of Computer Science. This qualification is ideal for students who want a specific background in computing that will allow them to progress to higher education in a computer science related degree. In a relaxed but mature atmosphere, students will be taught the concepts of programming in various ways, through teacher-led activities, self-study and using their own experiences to master concepts they find difficult.

Career Opportunities

Students gaining this qualification in computing will have access to a range of career and further education opportunities. They will learn to use a variety of skills throughout the course including collecting, analysing and interpreting data, designing, testing, implementing and evaluating programming solutions. These skills are in great demand and are highly recognised and valued by employers and colleges. As a computing student you will develop the skills that employers are looking for.



BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise

Course Description

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Enterprise is for students who wish to acquire knowledge and skills through vocational contexts by studying the knowledge, behaviours and skills related to researching, planning, pitching and reviewing an enterprise idea. The qualification enables learners to develop their technical skills; such as market research skills, planning, promotional and financial skills using realistic work scenarios and personal skills, (such as monitoring own performance, time management and problem solving) through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment.

A BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise is an ideal qualification for those students who want a broad background in business and the course of study prescribed by this specification can reasonably be undertaken by candidates entering this vocational area for the first time. It is designed to enable students to make valid personal choices upon completion of the qualification and to progress to further education, training or employment. It provides a suitable basis for further study in this subject or for related courses which could include A levels, a Modern Apprenticeship or BTEC/GNVQ qualifications.

Assessment Structure

The qualification consists of three components that give students the opportunity to develop broad knowledge and understanding of the enterprise sector and relevant skills such as research, planning, problem solving and communication at Levels 1 and 2. Students will complete two internal assessment units on Exploring Enterprises and Planning for and Pitching an Enterprise Activity. They will also complete one external unit on Promotion and Finance for Enterprise.

Special Features

Enterprise is likely to be exciting and challenging. This specification aims to encourage students to:

- Develop a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of business subjects; become inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study
- Use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts from opinions, to form arguments and make informed judgements, for example; in relation to the assessment of the subject

Career Opportunities

Students gaining a qualification in Enterprise will have access to a range of careers and further education opportunities. Students will learn to use a variety of skills throughout the course that are in great demand and recognised as highly valuable by employers and colleges.

As an Enterprise student you will develop the skills that employers are looking for, you can consider a wide range of employment opportunities in areas such as commerce, accountancy and administration either within local firms or multinational organisations.

GCSE Photography

Course Description

Throughout the course students are taught how to use a variety of photographic techniques relating to different genres and influences. We follow a digitally based curriculum, using a variety of software but focussing heavily on Adobe Photoshop.

Students will be required to demonstrate skills in visual analysis, through exploring imaging techniques such as composition, framing, depth of field, shutter speed, lighting, exposure and viewpoint.

They will experiment with processes, techniques, abstracting, designing, illustrating and documenting and will learn to demonstrate an expressive and personal response in their work, appropriate for the given task or stimuli.

Assessment Structure

Using their new found photographic and digital imaging skills from Year 10 students will move on to the formal assessment structure in Year 11.

60% Coursework: Students will produce a portfolio of work showing their personal responses to a variety of starting points, briefs, scenarios and stimuli. This will include a more sustained project demonstrating their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge through the creative process. Students have approximately 45 hours (15-18 school weeks as a guide) in which to produce their portfolio.

40% Final Examination Project: Question papers are issued to candidates on or after January 1st in their final year - Students have a range of written and visual starting points, briefs, scenarios and stimuli, from which they must choose **one** to base their personal response.

Special Features

Although a practical course, students also produce a substantial portfolio of evidence including in depth written annotations, observations and research. Students will also need to have demonstrated an aptitude for Art in KS3 and have a good understanding in ICT as much of the course is computer based.

Why study this subject

The skills developed during GCSE Photography can be applied and used to support studies and learning in a wide variety of subjects and can lead into Photo Journalism, Wildlife Photography, Conservation, Media, Scientific research and many other fields.

Students MUST have access to a good quality digital camera at home as it is essential to meet the requirements of this course and complete homework. Independent photo shoots will be required from September. A camera on a phone will not be sufficient as due to safeguarding rules students cannot upload images from their phones onto academy computers, they must use SD memory cards.



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BTEC Tech Award Level 2 in Sport

Students selecting Physical Education/Sport will be placed into either GCSE Physical Education or BTEC Tech Award in Sport. The student will be placed into the area of study that is most suitable.

Course Description

The BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Sport is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through vocational contexts by exploring the different types and providers of sport and physical activity and the equipment and technology available for participation as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. They will also explore the different types of participant and their needs in order to gain an understanding of how to increase participation for others in sport and physical activity and further develop their knowledge and understanding of anatomy and physiology. Learners will undertake practical sessions to develop skills in planning and delivering sports activities to participants. The qualification enables learners to develop their sector-specific skills, such as sport analysis and sports leadership, using realistic vocational contexts and personal skills, such as communication, planning, time management and teamwork through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them in the sports sector.

Theoretical Content

Components Studied:

1. Preparing participants to take part in Sport and Physical Activity
2. Taking part and improving other participants sporting performance
3. Developing fitness to improve other participants performance in Sport and Physical Activity

Assessment Structure

Components 1 and 2 are assessed through non-exam internal assessment. The non-exam internal assessment for these components has been designed to demonstrate application of the conceptual knowledge underpinning the sector through realistic tasks and activities. There is one external assessment, Component 3, this is assessed via a 90 minute examination taken in summer term of Year 11.

Special Features

This course is suited to students who favour coursework compared to exams in that 40% of the final mark is externally assessed in examination conditions. The course does require elements of coaching and performing in sport, so having a keen interest is a key requirement.

Course is equivalent to one GCSE



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GCSE Physical Education

Students selecting Physical Education/Sport will be placed into either GCSE Physical Education or BTEC Tech Award in Sport. The student will be placed into the area of study that is most suitable.

Course Description

Physical Education will give you the chance to improve your knowledge and performance in a range of practical activities and give you the chance to learn about the principles and practices which lead to good performance. The course will help you to develop your confidence, self-esteem and a sense of team spirit. The qualification can lead to further study of Physical Education, or Leisure and Recreation, or to a career within the Sport and Leisure industry.

Assessment Structure

You will be assessed through two 1 hour 15 minute examinations (60%), one coursework task (10%) and three practical performances (30%).

Written Paper 1: The Human Body and Movement in Physical Activity and Sport: 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Included topics:

- The structure and functions of the musculoskeletal system
- The structure and functions of the cardio-respiratory system
- Anaerobic and aerobic exercise
- The short and long term effects of exercise
- Lever systems
- Planes and axes of movement
- Physical training

Written Paper 2: Socio-Cultural Influences and Wellbeing in Physical Activity and Sport: 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Included topics:

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being

Practical Performance in Physical Activity and Sport: Three Assessments; one team sport, one individual sport and one other.

Special Features

Physical Education students are expected to be the elite band of physical performers within the year group, are required to be involved in the Academy representative teams and engaged in sport outside of academy time. Students looking to enter into this qualification must also have a keen interest in Biology as this forms a large part of the paper 1 assessment.



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GCSE Psychology

Course Description

A GCSE in Psychology will require you to use skills from English, Mathematics and Science as we will be exploring themes from Language, Thought and Communication to the Brain and Neuropsychology.

Throughout the Psychology GCSE course, students will:

- Gain an understanding of how the human mind works and how this leads to our behaviour
- Learn about the fundamentals of Psychology through exploring different approaches to human behaviour
- Develop skills of critical analysis and start to become reflective thinkers
- Begin to think independently about issues raised
- Develop research skills by conducting their own studies
- Learn how Psychology is central to everyday life in everything from trying to remember words for a test to why some people follow the crowd and others don't
- Gain an understanding of psychological Problems, including mental health.
- Understand how psychology fits in to individual, social and cultural diversity

Assessment Structure

There is no coursework in the GCSE Psychology course. Students will be assessed through two 1 hour 45 minute exams at the end of Year 11 which make up 100% of the assessment for this GCSE. These include multiple choice, short answer and essay questions which require extended writing skills.

Special Features

Students on the GCSE Psychology course engage with and enjoy the topics covered as they find them very relevant to their own lives. They like finding out about the science behind topics such as perception, child development, memory, social influence, and neuropsychology. It helps them to understand what is going on around them and how they can put some of the knowledge gained into practice; such as memory techniques to improve study skills, which also helps them in other subjects. Students also enjoy doing the practical work that goes with each topic as they have ample opportunity to design, conduct, and evaluate their own experiments.



GCSE Religious Studies

Course Description

Choosing GCSE Religious Studies (RS) is a powerful, forward-thinking option that equips students with essential life skills, critical thinking capabilities, and a deeper understanding of our diverse world. Far from just studying beliefs, this rigorous, academic subject challenges students to explore the biggest philosophical, ethical, and moral questions facing humanity.

This is an informative and highly focused course in which students seek to investigate and understand the views and beliefs held by the followers of two major world religions, Christianity and Judaism. There is an in depth investigation on the content of the two faiths which looks at what their followers believe, how it influences their actions and what they do as practice to promote and celebrate their religion. It is an excellent way for students to take on board very different and sometimes apparently contentious religious viewpoints on a range of issues and understand why many Jewish and Christian people hold such devout and varied perspectives on topics that can seem very clear cut to a modern non-religious point of view.

The course also looks at ethical points of view from the theological and philosophical perspectives contained in the holy books and teachings of the two religions. We will examine their followers' opinions and actions on topics such as relationships, the sanctity of life and punishment and conflict. Such views on these topics can often seem confusing to people who have not been brought up in a religious background and as the majority of the world does follow such beliefs, it is an excellent opportunity for students to expand their world view.

Assessment Structure

Students will be assessed via two external examinations in Year 11. The course is AQA Religious Studies A (8062).

Paper 1 - Judaism - 1 hour 45 minutes - *Paper 1 includes the study of the beliefs, teachings, and practices of two major world religions - Christianity & Judaism*

Paper 2 - Thematic Studies—1 hour 45 minutes—*Paper 2 includes the following topics:*

- *Relationships & families*
- *Religion & life*
- *Religion, peace & conflict*
- *Religion, crime & punishment*

Special Features

You do not need to have any religious affiliation to make the most of this course. It is based on the skills of gaining knowledge, understanding and being able to evaluate different religious points of view on the various issues studied. You will be encouraged to empathise and research as well as develop and explain your personal points of view. The knowledge and communication skills taught in this subject will be valuable in other subjects and life in general.



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GCSE Sociology

Course Description

A GCSE in Sociology will require you to use a wide range of skills including English, Mathematics and Science. We will be reading articles, writing essays, analysing data and conducting our own research.

Throughout the Sociology GCSE course students will:

- Gain an understanding of how society works
- Learn about the fundamentals of Sociology through learning about the work of a number of key sociologists
- Develop skills of critical analysis and start to become reflective thinkers
- Begin to think independently about issues raised and to consider the impact they have on our lives
- Develop research skills by conducting their own studies
- Learn how sociology is central to everyday life in everything from education to family structures to crime and deviance
- Understand how sociology fits in to individual, social and cultural diversity

Assessment Structure

There is no coursework in the GCSE Sociology course. Students will be assessed through two 1 hour 45 minute exams at the end of Year 11 which make up 100% of the assessment for this GCSE. These include multiple choice, short answer and essay questions which require extended writing skills.

Special Features

Students on the GCSE Sociology course engage with and enjoy the topics covered as they find them very relevant to their own lives. They like finding out about the thinking behind topics such as crime and deviance, families, education and social stratification. It helps them to understand what is going on around them and encourages them to engage with current affairs in a critical way. Students will build a variety of written and verbal communication skills as well as learning how to see issues from a variety of different perspectives.



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Triple Science

Course Description

Our separate GCSE Biology, Chemistry, and Physics courses provide an in-depth exploration of the key scientific principles and phenomena that shape our understanding of the natural world. These courses are ideal for students with a strong interest in science and those considering pursuing science-related A-levels or careers.

- **Biology:** Study the building blocks of life, including cell biology, genetics, evolution, ecosystems, and human anatomy. Explore how organisms interact with their environment and the processes that sustain life.
- **Chemistry:** Delve into the structure of matter, chemical reactions, organic chemistry, and environmental chemistry. Learn about the periodic table, bonding, and the role of chemistry in solving real-world problems.
- **Physics:** Investigate the laws of motion, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism, and the universe. Develop an understanding of how physics explains everyday phenomena and advanced technologies.

These courses combine theoretical learning with practical laboratory work, helping students develop analytical, problem-solving, and investigative skills. By studying each subject in depth, students will gain a solid foundation in scientific concepts and processes, preparing them for further education and STEM-related fields.

Assessment structure

Total Qualification: One GCSE per subject.

Exams:

- 2 Papers per subject:
- Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes.
- Each paper is worth 50% of the GCSE.
- Each paper is out of 100 marks.

Practical Assessment

For all AQA Science pathways, practical skills are assessed through questions in the written exams.

Required Practical Activities:

- A set number of core practicals must be completed (21 for Combined Science, 8 per subject for separate sciences).
- Students' understanding of these practicals is assessed through exam questions that test both the procedures and the application of practical skills.

This structure ensures students develop both theoretical knowledge and practical competency, preparing them for further scientific study and real-world applications.