



Options Booklet

2024-2027





Preparing for Key Stage 4

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

As you are already aware, Year 8 will shortly be selecting the courses they wish to study in Key Stage 4. Over recent years, we have developed a curriculum which meets the needs of each individual student supporting them to reach their full potential.

Today, in experience day, we started to look at some different career options and introduced how the options process will work. Students were asked to consider the subjects that they enjoy and how important it is to have a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that they keep their options open as they progress on to college and further education.

As I already shared with you in my letter dated the 22nd January, we are looking forward to inviting you in to School for our Options Evening on Thursday 29th February. This will begin with a short presentation and will be followed by an opportunity to meet with departments, who will provide additional information on each course. We will also share an Options Sway which will provide an opportunity to revisit some of the information shared at the evening.

In addition to the support from their Mentors, Teachers and Academic and Pastoral Leaders (APLs), we would ask that you spend time looking through this options booklet with your child ahead of the Options Evening.

We will use Microsoft Forms to allow you to submit your child's options. This will be sent out to you via a link in the Sway. We would encourage you to sit down with your child and complete this together. This will be submitted by you on behalf of your child and will be taken as you having consented to their options.

If you have any questions about this process, your child can ask their Mentor or see me during the school day or you can contact the school by email on enquiries@oakmoor.hants.sch.uk or by phone (01420 472132).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Beere'.

Mr A. Beere
Assistant Headteacher





MAKING YOUR DECISION

During your first two years at secondary school you have and will continue to study a wide range of subjects. At the end of Year 11, students take level 2 public examinations and gain qualifications in order to progress on to further education, higher education and ultimately their chosen career path. Examination subjects require more time each week than you now spend, so it is necessary to reduce the number of subjects you follow. All students are asked to select 6 subjects from which we will select 4 to build your Key Stage 4 curriculum.

When you choose you should ask yourself three questions:

- Am I good at the subject?
- Do I enjoy it?
- Will it keep my options open for further education or my career?

Following on from the questions above, you are most likely to be successful in subjects which you enjoy and that you are good at. In turn,

this can help to start you on a path towards a career that you will be passionate about, so consider your preferences very carefully.

It is very important that you take advice from your subject teachers and APLs. You are more likely to do well in examinations if you choose a preference according to your strengths. Equally, if you enjoy a subject, your motivation is improved and you are more likely to achieve your potential. However, you should choose according to the subject and not the teacher as we cannot guarantee any particular teacher.

As a general rule, you will need to select **a broad and balanced curriculum**. If you narrow your curriculum with similar subjects, for example all practical subjects, then you may find that you close potential future opportunities.

Where can I seek advice?

There are many sources of help and information available but you should talk to at least some of the following:

- Your Parents
- Your Teachers
- Your Mentor
- Your Academic and Pastoral Leader
- Careers Advisor — Mr Spencer Chisham
- Local further education colleges such as Alton College, Basingstoke College of Technology, Farnham College, Farnborough College of Technology, Farnborough 6th Form College, Godalming College, Havant and South Downs College, Peter Symonds College. Also regularly attending Parents Evening.

Will my Options be guaranteed?

We will always try to give you your top 4 subjects, but this may not be possible in every case. There are several reasons why this may happen:

- There may be too few students wishing to follow a subject to make up a class
- There may be too many students in a group
- A student may make unrealistic choices in relation to a combination of subjects
- It may not be possible to timetable a particular combination of subjects



WHAT OPTIONS CAN I TAKE?

In addition to the core curriculum (more information on the next page), you will be required to choose 6 subjects from the list below. You will be allocated 4 subjects from the 6 that you select.

Art & Design

Computer Science

Construction in the Built Environment

Design and Technology

Dance

Drama

Food Preparation & Nutrition

Geography

History

Information Technology - iMedia

Music

Photography

*Modern Foreign Languages – French or Spanish

Religious Education

Sport

*Students may only select the language that they have spent the past year and a half studying.

You will find all of the information that you need on each of the option subjects on offer in our Options Sway, which will be released on our Options Evening.



THE KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

All students will follow a core programme consisting of English, Mathematics, and Science. Students will follow GCSE courses in all three subject areas with the majority of students studying for qualifications in English Literature and English Language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students will also take part in Experience Days, Core RE and Core PE as part of the statutory curriculum. These lessons provide students with the vital skills for life as an independent adult. Alongside this, students will be provided with opportunities to practise developing reasoned arguments, making decisions, and understanding why people act as they do. These are relevant skills for a wide range of subjects and will boost examination performance across the board. The details of all the core courses are outlined in the next section.

In addition to the core curriculum, students will study a further four option subjects.

COMMITMENT

Success in external examinations only comes with personal commitment. It requires regular attendance in line with our minimum school target of 98%, concentration on the task in hand, and independent completion of tasks. This means that students and parents must be prepared to set aside time outside of school to prepare for and complete set tasks. This can include after school intervention sessions to further support understanding and subsequent progress. In addition to the intervention sessions that teachers run during the school week, some departments will offer holiday boosters to ensure that all students are fully prepared to meet their full potential. These sessions are not compulsory, but supporting attendance should be a priority as it will benefit pupil outcomes.

Satchel One - SMHW

As you will already be aware, we ask all of our parents to use the resources provided by Satchel One through the Show My Homework App. This is an invaluable resource for students as it allows them to stay organised and up to date with their homework. For parents, it provides all of the necessary information to allow you to best support your child in keeping up to date, on top of their workload and giving them every opportunity to meet their full potential.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Some students will be provided with additional support to ensure that they are able to access their curriculum, make progress and gain success. This may be individually or in small groups. Mrs Forbes, who co-ordinates inclusion at Oakmoor, will personally contact specific students and their parents to arrange individual meetings to discuss how we can provide further support each individual.

THE OPTIONS PROCESS: KEY DATES



Options Information discussed and this booklet shared
(which students will bring home to share with Parents
and Carers) with Year 8 during Experience Day 3

Wednesday 7th February 2024

Year 8 Parents Evenings – On School Cloud
Classes J, K, L, M – Thursday 1st February (4:30-7:30)
Classes N, O, P, – Thursday 8th February (4:30-7:30)

Options Evening will run from 6:00pm – 8:00pm on
Thursday 29th February 2024

Options online form submission deadline (more
information to follow at Options Evening)
Thursday 14th March 2024

Written confirmation of final four Options will be sent
home via letter in the penultimate week of the
summer term in **July 2024**

OUR CORE CURRICULUM



GCSE English Language

What our
students say:

Specification: AQA 8700

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language

All texts in the examination will be unseen.

Apart from Spoken Language, there is no coursework or controlled assessment; all assessment is through examination in Year 11.



Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Both examinations assess how well students can read into texts, how the writers have used language and structure and students are asked to evaluate the meanings behind a text, needing to consider what the writer is trying to get across and how they do this. Students will then be asked to put these strategies into place themselves and complete a writing task at the end of each exam.

Students will study English Literature alongside English Language and these skills are transferable, to some extent. Our curriculum will enable students to apply the skills needed in English Language to improve their ability to analyse a wide variety of literature.

Further study and career opportunities:

English Language is a core subject. You must secure a Grade 4 or above in either English Language or English Literature to progress onto a course at college. If you do not secure a Grade 4 for either subject, the college have to ensure that you take the subject again. This is not a decision made by the college – this is a government initiative.

English Language underpins our understanding of the world around us. Not only does it enable you to read into how effects are created in fiction, it also enables you to read media texts critically. Studying this subject in depth will make you question everything in front of you so you don't just believe everything that is 'fed' to you.

Having a good command of the English language is also incredibly important. Whatever job you want to do in the future, you will not be able to achieve your ambitions if you cannot communicate effectively in the spoken form as well as the written form.

"In Year 9 English, I like the way we can develop our writing skills and read new, exciting books."



"We learn about lots of completely new things. So far, we have looked at propaganda, read some really visual poems about war and read political books. We have to think a lot more about politics."



"I like working on new writing skills. I have learnt how to write powerful speeches and I can write better stories now as well."



GCSE English Literature

What our
students say:

Specification: AQA 8702

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel (40%)

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry (60%)

All texts in the examinations will be studied in class but students are not allowed to bring in any of the texts to the examination itself.

Texts will be provided at school but we strongly advise that students buy the texts themselves, with the exception of the poetry anthology, so they can make notes in them and study them in depth. They will need to be read and re-read.

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Students will study a total of 3 texts (a Shakespeare play, a modern novel or play, and a 19th Century novel) and 15 poems from the Poetry Anthology, provided by the examination board.

For Paper 1: students will answer one question on the novel studied in class, and one question on the play studied in class. They will be required to write in detail about an extract and then to write about the text as a whole.

For Paper 2: students will have a choice of two questions for the modern text they have studied and they will have to answer one of their choice. They will have to remember key phrases and words from the novel to enable them to do this effectively. For the poetry section, students will be given one poem printed in the examination paper and they will need to compare this poem to one of their choice, which they will not have access to. They will then have to comment on a previously unseen poem and then compare that poem to another previously unseen poem.

Further study and career opportunities:

English Literature is a core subject. You must secure a Grade 4 or above in either English Language or English Literature to progress onto a course at college. If you do not secure a Grade 4 for either subject, the college have to ensure that you take the subject again. This is not a decision made by the college – this is a government initiative.

If you have ambition to go to University after College, studying English Literature at A-Level will help you get into one of the top Universities in the country. Reading a variety of literature unlocks many different skills: linking a text to the historical influences of the time it was written, analysing the effect of language and narrative voice, evaluating the meanings and ideas behind great writers of our time and in our literary heritage. It will help you become more culturally aware and it is really enjoyable!



"I have loved the books we have studied so far in English Literature. As we read more, I can see how you can link some literature to others."



"You can expand your knowledge, your vocabulary and your use of poetic techniques."



"You get to have complex conversations about the literature you are reading."



GCSE Mathematics

What our
students say:

Specification: Edexcel 1MA0

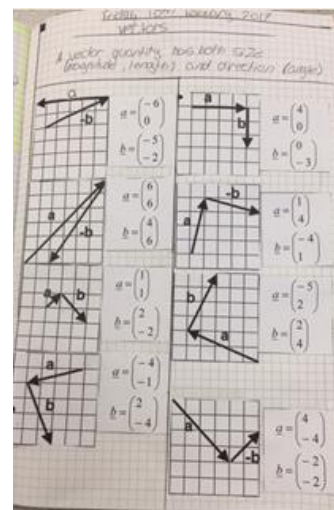
Three equally weighted written papers:

Paper 1: non-calculator 1 hour 30 mins (33.3%)

Paper 2: calculator 1 hour 30 mins (33.3%)

Paper 3: calculator 1 hour 30 mins (33.3%)

*"Maths has made me
confident to work
independently."*



Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Developing knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts in the following areas:

Number

Algebra

Ratio, proportion and rates of change

Geometry and measures

Statistics

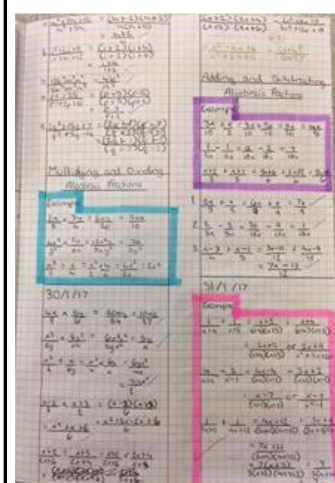
Probability

Assessment:

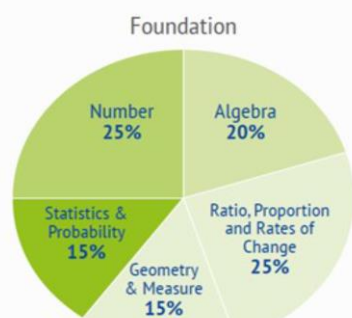
Three equally weighted written papers; 1 non-calculator and 2 calculator papers, each is 1 hour 30 minutes in length.

There are 2 tiers; Foundation with grades 1 - 5 and Higher with grades 4 – 9

*"I enjoy maths because
it has inspired me to
further my education
and opt for the career
of maths teacher."*

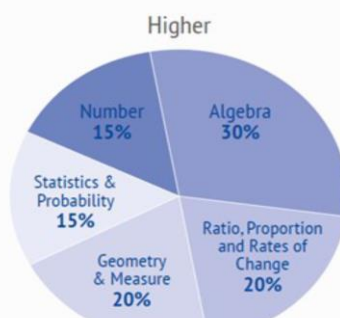


Foundation tier papers will assess the different content domains in these proportions:



There is a greater emphasis on ratio, proportion and rates of change at Foundation tier.

Higher tier papers will assess the different content domains in these proportions:



There is a greater emphasis on algebra at Higher tier, as this is the vehicle for progression to A Level Mathematics.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

Students can go on to study Mathematics at AS and A Level. GCSE Mathematics is also specifically required for some technical and engineering courses.

"Maths is fun!"



GCSE Science

What our
students say:

Specification:

Triple Science – 3 GCSEs

AQA Biology 8461

Paper 1 – written exam 1 hour 45 mins

Paper 2 – written exam 1 hour 45 mins

AQA Chemistry 8462

Paper 1 – written exam 1 hour 45 mins

Paper 2 – written exam 1 hour 45 mins

AQA Physics 8463

Paper 1 – written exam 1 hour 45 mins

Paper 2 – written exam 1 hour 45 mins

Combined Science – 2 GCSEs

AQA Trilogy 8464

Biology 1 – written exam 1 hour 15 mins

Biology 2 – written exam 1 hour 15 mins

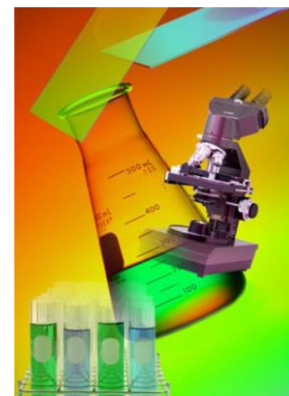
Chemistry 1 – written exam 1 hour 15 mins

Chemistry 2 – written exam 1 hour 15 mins

Physics 1 – written exam 1 hour 15 mins

Physics 2 – written exams 1 hour 15 mins

*"Science helps you in
other subjects."*



*"We work as a team to
carry out
investigations."*

*"Science helps you
make decisions when
you're older."*

Students will either study for qualifications in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics (Triple Science) or study for qualifications in Combined Science: Trilogy. Having considered the changes to the examination specifications for Science, we believe that this best caters for the needs and abilities of all students. Each course will be assessed through six examinations of either 1 hour 45 mins for Triple Science or 1 hour 15 mins for Combined Science: Trilogy. There are two tiers for each exam; foundation with grades 1-5 and higher with grades from 4-9.

Biology

Biology is the study of life and living organisms. Students will study the structure, function, growth, evolution and distribution of a range of living organisms and how they interact with each other and their environments.

Course Description:

Students will study the following areas:

1. Cell Biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and Response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and Response
6. Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
7. Ecology

Further Study and Career Opportunities: Biology is an essential stepping stone for students wishing to follow careers in veterinary science, medicine, nursing and sports science and is useful for students wishing to follow careers in animal care, agriculture and catering.



*"It's fun to learn
about new ideas."*



GCSE Science

What our
students say:

Chemistry

Chemistry is the science of materials and substances. Students will look at the properties of different substances, how and why they react with each other, and what happens when they do.

Course Description:

Students will study the following areas:

1. Atomic structure and the periodic table
2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
3. Quantitative Chemistry
4. Chemical Changes
5. Energy Changes
6. The rate and extent of chemical change
7. Organic Chemistry
8. Chemical Analysis
9. Chemistry of the Atmosphere
10. Using Resources

Further Study and Career Opportunities: Chemistry is useful for students in a wide variety of careers but is essential for veterinary science, medicine, scientific research, pharmaceuticals, forensic investigation and some engineering apprenticeships. It can be required for some careers within the environment and materials industries.

Physics

Physics is the science of physical material. It is used to describe the universe and to predict how it will behave. It explains why things around us do what they do!

Course Description:

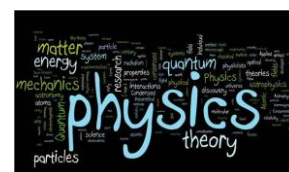
Students will study the following areas:

1. Energy
2. Electricity
3. Particle Model of Matter
4. Atomic Structure
5. Forces
6. Waves
7. Magnetism and Electromagnetism
8. Space Physics (Triple Science)

Further Study and Career Opportunities: This course is particularly relevant to students wishing to follow careers in car mechanics, all branches of engineering, and a wide range of apprenticeships.



*"Science gives you
an understanding of
how the universe
works."*



*"Science is
everywhere!"*



Core Physical Education

What our students say:

Specification: Core Physical Education

As a Physical Education Department, our aim in Core PE lessons is to provide every student with a wide range of sporting opportunities to develop a love and enjoyment for physical activity that they will continue long after their time at Oakmoor, as part of leading a healthy active lifestyle.

We aim to use sport to build upon each student's levels of resilience, perseverance and self-motivation as we believe that these are skills that will support them throughout their adult working life.

We understand that every child is different and that whilst it is important to develop resilience, not all students thrive on competition. It is very important to us that we work with students to help them find activities that they can participate in and enjoy. With this in mind our diverse curriculum aims to offer the opportunity for students to develop an understanding for the rules of sports, so that they can play socially and competitively inside and outside of school.

From Year 9, students are given the opportunity to select their curriculum route in core PE. This is done on a half termly basis and covers a wide range of sports over the years. Some of those activities include:

American Football	Aerobics	Athletics
Badminton	Basketball	Caving *
Climbing *	Cross Country	Dance
Fitness	Football	Gymnastics
Handball	Hockey	Mini Tennis
Netball	Rounders	Rugby
Shooting*	Short Tennis	Skiing *
Softball	Stoolball	Spikeball
Swimming *	Table Tennis	Taekwondo
Tennis	Trampolining *	Ultimate Frisbee
Volleyball		

* Activities run off site do require a financial contribution.

Leading a healthy, active lifestyle is very important and is something that we promote with our students during their time at Oakmoor. This viewpoint is shared by the government, hence the compulsory expectation that every child will participate in all of their Core PE lessons. Students must maintain their Core PE uniform for these lessons. For students who select BTEC Sport, an additional black kit can be purchased and either PE kit can be worn in lessons. The black PE kit is only available to BTEC Sport students. We highly recommend this due to the increase in the number of practical lessons and supporting good personal hygiene alongside the stress of repeatedly washing one set of PE uniform.



"Our Core PE lessons give us a chance to get competitive in so many different sports."



"In Core PE, we get to choose the sports we do each half term. Having a choice has made PE such great fun, as we always get a say in what we are doing."





Core Religious Education

What our students say:

Religious Education is studied in KS4 on a compulsory, non-examined basis. It is designed to promote thinking skills and aid the development of students in four main areas:

- Spirituality
- Morality
- Society
- Cultures

Developing a knowledge of different cultures and worldviews that are present in modern Britain.

Topics includes:

- Gender equality.
- Human rights and military interventions.
- Buddhism.
- Enforcing the law.
- Guiding values in life applied to current topical issues.
- Rights campaigners.
- Current and developing moral issues such as the military, animal rights and vaccines.



"We get to debate issues, which is good fun but also helps us to understand other people's points of view."



Experience Days

What our students say:

There are a number of important areas of learning that are broader than an individual qualification but help us to develop our students into happy, good people who can add value to our society.

Alongside our wider curriculum, assemblies and mentor time, we use our Experience Days to deliver important areas of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education.

This curriculum forms a crucial part of learning that provides our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to allow them to make safe and informed decisions which will support them into and throughout their adult lives.

The Experience Day curriculum is designed to cover a range of topics that are vital for life both in the short and long term, including ideas such as:

- Drugs education
- Sex and relationships education
- Careers education and interview skills
- Being prepared for college and university
- Politics, the government and voting
- Study skills in the build up to exams

As well as being important in themselves, these topics are covered in different creative ways that also develop a variety of useful skills such as teamwork, communication, problem solving and presentation skills. In this way, Experience Days also feed into the success of students in all their subjects.



"It has opened my eyes to new ways of thinking!"



"I've learnt so many important things during experience days that help me understand the wider world."

OPTION SUBJECT SELECTION



GCSE Art & Design

What our
students say:

Specification: AQA 8202

Component 1: Portfolio

No time limit, 60% of the GCSE grade.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time, 40% of the GCSE grade.

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

The Art and Design course is an exciting and practical course ideal for students who wish to pursue higher qualifications or a career in Art and Design. Students will develop their skills in observational drawing, painting, 3D design and printmaking. Students will use a wide variety of wet and dry materials, specialist techniques and processes. Students are expected to complete homework and independent study to extend their learning.

Throughout the course there will be opportunities to visit galleries and museums, as well as using artefacts in school.

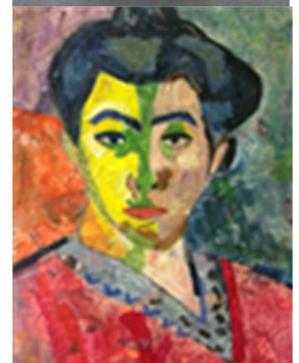
Assessment:

The Art & Design GCSE is made up of two units. The first unit is developing a portfolio of individual projects worth 60% of your final grade. The second unit is the externally set assignment worth 40% of your final grade. The externally set assignment is the exam element of this GCSE and requires students to complete a timed ten hour task. Throughout the course, your work will be continually assessed and marked with feedback given to you to inform you of your progress. The overall grade for the qualification will be a GCSE grade 9 to 1 and will depend on how well you perform in the portfolio unit and the externally set assignment.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

Further Study – A Level Art & Design or BTEC National Diploma in Art & Design. You can then continue further to degree level if you wish.

Employment – artist, designer, architect, photographer, working within the fashion and textiles industry, product design, graphic design, teacher or lecturer, media industry, theatre/film stage and set design, illustration.



"Choosing Art & Design gave me a good balance between the academic and creative subjects. It allowed me to be imaginative, think creatively and express myself."



GCSE Computer Science

What our
students say:

Specification: OCR J277

Paper 1: Computing Science Theory - 50%

Paper 2: Computational Thinking - 50%

Programming project – Compulsory project to support Paper 2.



"Computer Science has enabled me to solve complex problems using code and despite being challenging, it always excites me when I solve a difficult algorithm. One of my favourite GCSE choices!"



"Taking computing provides a unique outlook on the world of technology, where we learn about the inner workings of gadgets that make the world a better place."

Course overview – summary of course content (skills and knowledge):

Computer Science is the study of how computers and computer systems work and how they are constructed and programmed. Rather than learning ICT skills, you will learn how to make computer programmes. Students will learn how computers actually work; something a lot of people take for granted.

The course will help students develop critical thinking, analysis and problem solving skills. It will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life.

A key skill for the course is problem solving. If you really enjoy puzzles and solving tricky problems this may well be a great choice for you!

Further study and career opportunities:

Many big companies want young people to leave school with experience of Computer Science. These companies include Google, Microsoft and IBM.

The demand for professionals who are qualified in this area will continue to grow. If students want to go on to higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science, they will find that this course provides a superb stepping stone.

Many students go on to study the subject at University. The courses available are varied including; Computer Science, Computer Forensics, Computer Gaming, Entertainment Technology and Software Engineering.



BTEC Tech Award Construction and the Built Environment

What our
students say:

Specification: BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Construction and the Built Environment: 603/7051/8

This course is a mixture of theory coursework units and one theory examination unit.

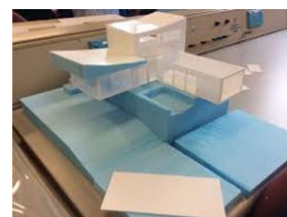
Unit 1 Examination Unit

Unit 2 Coursework Unit

Unit 3 Coursework Unit



"You get to design a house and learn how to be an architect; I really enjoyed the design side of the course."



"The bits about the Construction Industry, where we learnt about the different jobs and did some practical construction practice and skills was my favourite bit of Yr9"



"I wanted to do something different to the normal subjects."

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

This course is an excellent introduction to the UK construction industry and gives an insight into much of the work, both design and practical, involved in construction roles available today.

Assessment:

This course is a mixture of practical and theory coursework units and one theory examination unit.

- Component 1: **Construction Technology**; an **examination unit** based on the techniques, materials and stages of building a modern low rise house in the UK, including the different options of super and substructure and new techniques in sustainable building.
- Component 2: **Carpentry & Joinery Principles in Construction**; a **coursework unit** that requires the students to complete a given carpentry project that tests their competency and skill in carpentry joints such as dovetail, finger, half lap and mitres. This Component uses a mixture of hand and power tools.
- Component 3: **Construction Design**; a **coursework unit** based on the design process followed by architects when designing a low rise building; requires students to complete a building design, either commercial or residential, for a given set of clients and a given building plot. This Component uses a mixture of Computer Aided Design (CAD) and traditional pencil/pen drawn designs, including floor plans, site plans and point perspectives.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

Relevant jobs: Architect, Civil or Structural Engineer, Town Planner, Bricklayer, Carpenter, Stonemason, Plumber, Electrician, Site Manager and Construction Technician.



Supported by the Worshipful Company of Constructors, a London Livery Guild



BTEC Tech Award Performing Arts - Dance Pathway

What our
students say:

Specification: Edexcel BTEC Level 1/2: 603/7054/3

The course is split into three components -

Component 1- Exploring the performing arts (30%)

Component 2- Developing skills and techniques in the performing arts (30%)

Component 3- Responding to a brief (40%)

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Component 1- Exploring the performing arts (30%)

Students will study three pieces of professional Dance repertoire in three different styles, participating in a variety of workshops to gain a full understanding of the style and technique through practical and theory-based research tasks.

Component 2- Developing skills and techniques in the performing arts (30%)

Students will train in one dance style developing and exploring skills in workshops and lessons leading up to the rehearsal and performance of a chosen piece of professional repertoire.

To aid their development each student will evaluate their progress, setting and review targets whilst developing rehearsal and performance skills in dance. They will also produce a final evaluation, which can help prepare them for Activity 4 of Component 3.

Component 3- Responding to a brief (40%)

The purpose of this component is to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired within the dance experiences covered in Component 1 and 2. In year 11 a brief is released giving students a supervised period of 12 weeks to complete the 4 activities.

Assessment:

The first two components are assessed internally, and evidence is created throughout the workshop lessons and the associated written work. Students will produce a variety of evidence such as video recordings of practical work and performances, reflection sheets, milestone logs, presentations, logbooks and evaluations.

The final component is assessed by an external examiner by video. Students will have 12 weeks to create and perform the piece. There are 3 written logs to complete alongside this which are written in supervised conditions.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

Students can embark on various pathways toward a multitude of prospective careers. These options could include pursuing 'A' Levels in Dance or Performing Arts, venturing into the Leisure and Sports Industry, taking up roles as a Dance Teacher, Professional Dancer, or exploring positions such as choreographer, lighting designer, company stage manager, and many other opportunities within the performing arts sector.

"Dance allows me to express myself"



"Dance at KS3 has boosted my confidence and made me think more about my future"



"Dance has developed my teamwork and communication skills"



"I love learning new routines and challenging myself"





GCSE Design and Technology

Examples of
student work:

Specification: AQA 8552

Paper 1: Principles of Design Technology (50%)

Non-examination Assessment: Iterative Design Challenge (50%)

The Iterative Design Challenge is released on 1st September for Year 11 students. There will be a choice of three challenges to choose from. These challenges are changed each year.

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

GCSE Design and Technology enables students to design and make products with creativity and originality using a wide range skills, techniques, and materials. Packaging, labelling, and instruction building are encouraged as part of the complete design proposal.

Students will learn to be critical about both their own work, and other existing products and, will understand what adaptations are required to make products commercially viable.

The course will not only help develop students' practical skills but will also help students develop critical thinking, analysis and problem solving skills. It will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life.

Key Subject Content

- The life cycle of products
- Social, Moral, Cultural, Environmental and Economic impacts of a product
- Energy Sources
- Design Skills: 2D, 3D and Computer Aided Design
- Materials: Paper, Timber, Polymers, Metals and Textiles
- Smart and Modern Materials
- Electronic and Mechanical influences
- Practical Skills and Design

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

You will develop a wide range of employability skills, including problem solving, taking initiative, team working, communication and presentation. It is a practical subject that will show your versatility and dexterity. It is a useful addition to any GCSE programme but is particularly relevant if you are hoping to progress to further studies and eventually a career in product design, carpentry, product development, engineering, architecture, set and theatre design, furniture or jewellery making, and many more.





GCSE Drama

What our
students say:

Specification: OCR J316

Unit 1 – Devising Drama (Practical) (30%)

Unit 2 – Presenting and Performing Texts (Practical) (30%)

Unit 3 – Drama – Performance and Response (40%)

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

GCSE Drama is an exciting and innovative approach to creating and developing theatre. Students will have the opportunity to explore ideas, issues, themes and texts through practical drama and will utilise their knowledge and experience when creating their written work. Students will have the opportunity to perform in front of live audiences and will gain experience of some of the most prolific drama practitioners which will deepen their knowledge and understanding of the subject. There is also the opportunity for students to study a technical strand in drama which can include lighting/sound/set design/costume and make up. Students can be examined in their ability to support a performance and enhance the theatre making this subject accessible for all.

Students will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of theatre and drama through a written examination at the end of year 11.

Assessment:

Unit 1 - Understanding Drama (Written exam) (40%)

Unit 2 - Devising Drama (Practical) (30%)

Unit 3 - Texts in Practice (30%)

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

A Level Drama and Theatre Studies

A Level Performing Arts

BTEC Level 3 Performing Arts

BTEC Level 3 Creative Media

Media and production

Events management

Arts Administration

Theatre Production

Teaching

Drama is an excellent choice for those students wanting to develop their confidence, communication and leadership skills. Communication and confidence are key skills in every vocation, which makes drama an excellent choice for all students.



*"Great fun, yet
challenging."*

*"Drama has given me
the self- confidence to
communicate with and
lead people. The skills I
have learnt in this
subject will help me in so
many ways in the
future."*

*"Drama allows me to be
creative and expressive. I
love it!"*





GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

What our
students say:

Specification: AQA 8585

Single examination paper 50%

Section A (20 marks) multiple choice questions – structured to reflect the sections of the specification.

Section B (80 marks) 5 questions varying in styles of approach and content.

Non examination assessment 50%

Task 1: The food investigation (15%)
10 hours

Task 2: The food preparation assessment (35%)
20 hours (including 3 hour period)



*"De-boning a chicken
was gross but the
best lesson ever."*



Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

This GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Assessment:

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

Non exam assessment

Task 1: The food investigation (30 marks)

Students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients.

Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this NEA task.

Task 2: The food preparation assessment (70 marks)

Students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task.

Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved.

How it is assessed:

Task 1: Written or electronic report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.

Task 2: Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.

**Further study and
career choices: -**

- A Level Food
- Food Scientist
- Nutritionist
- Product development
- Catering and Hospitality



GCSE Geography

What our students
and others say:

Specification: Edexcel 1GAO

The course is assessed in three units:

- The Physical Environment (37.5%) 1hour 30 mins
- The Human Environment (37.5%) 1hour 30 mins
- Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges (25%) 1hour 30 mins

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Students will explore case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), developing and developed countries alongside the newly emerging economies (NEEs). Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

There is a significant focus on the UK and fieldwork in this course, allowing us to understand issues closer to home as well as those on a global scale. There will be two field trips included in the course which are a compulsory part of geography. This may involve working outdoors in any type of weather.

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. If you choose to continue to study geography into higher education, there are literally hundreds of courses to choose from and the range of career areas accessed by graduates of geography will probably surprise you.

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 choose 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 that will reward you personally and advance you professionally.

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.

Do not just take our word for it. The importance of the subject to your education is evident.

"Everything we study is current and relevant; in October 2016 when Hurricane Matthew was happening in Haiti, we were following it before it hit land, predicting what would happen and then looking at the effects and responses."

"Geography is a great way to learn about people and places around the world."

"...everything is to do with Geography"

"The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exist across continents and in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together".

Barack Obama



GCSE History

What our
students say:

Specification: Edexcel 1H10/BR

The course is assessed in three units:

- British Thematic Study with Historic Environment (30%) – Crime and Punishment through time **1 hour 30 minutes**
- British Depth Study and Period Study (40%) – Early Elizabethan England and Superpower relations and the Cold War **1 hour 45 minutes**

Modern Depth Study (30%) – Weimar and Nazi Germany **1 hour 20 minutes**



Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

History is well respected by colleges, universities and employers due to the rigorous Academic training it gives to young people. The GCSE History course has been designed to ensure a varied programme of study while retaining a high level of challenge. History is a fascinating and stimulating course to follow and aims to strengthen a variety of analytical and comprehensive skills. Pupils who choose study GCSE History will cover a wider range of content to expand their knowledge in addition to practicing historical skills such as primary source analysis, debating historical interpretations and learning to form and support their own arguments.

Assessment:

There are 3 examination papers at the end of Year 11. These are:

Paper 1: British Thematic Study with Historic Environment (30%)

Our Thematic Study is **Crime and Punishment in Britain c1000 to the present day**

Our Historic Environment unit is **Whitechapel 1870 to 1900: Crime and Policing**

Paper 2: British Depth Study and Period Study (40%)

Our British Depth Study is **Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88**

Our Period Study is the **Cold War and Superpower Relations, 1941-1991**

Paper 3: Modern Depth Study (30%)

Our Modern Depth Study is **Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39**

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

History GCSE provides an excellent grounding for most A - Levels, particularly History, Law, Politics, Sociology and Art History.

History supports most career choices but notably Archival work, Heritage and Museums, Law, Teaching, Policing and Journalism.

"History is an amazing subject that will challenge you to look further than the first layer of everything you learn."



"History has taught me how to persevere and to be confident when I am answering a question."



OCR Information Technology iMedia

What our
students say:

Specification: Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Creative iMedia J807,J817

The course is made up of three elements:

1. A written exam covering the fundamental design skills required for multimedia production.
2. A practical unit where you will develop the key skills required to produce computer graphics.
3. An optional unit which will be selected towards the end of Year 10.



Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Students will develop a deep understanding of a range of ICT skills.

Office Applications: Word Processing, Spreadsheets Databases.

Web Technology: Web Design, Hyper Text Mark-up Language (HTML) and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) Coding.

Multimedia Technology: Animation, Audio and Video Editing Software.

Open source software is explored and how we can work efficiently without the need for paying large license fees using proprietary software.

Pupils undertake their studies using a cloud based system called Google Classroom. This means they can work on the ICT projects inside and outside of school using a range of internet devices.

We stress the importance of e-safety throughout the course ensuring pupils develop empathy for other technology users and are fully aware of how to keep themselves safe.

Further study and career opportunities:

This course offers progression to Level 3 ICT Vocational Qualifications at college. Many past students have then continued with their interest in ICT at university.

With ICT there are many career opportunities, including Web Designer, Animator, Project Management, IT Support & Training.

This is a popular choice as pupils learn how to use IT in a professional manner regardless of their career path. Even if you do not want to work specifically within the IT Industry, most employers will want employees who can use IT at a competent level.

Please note: The course selected for ICT is subject to change and is dependent on the Department for Education releasing a list of approved courses for this year group. If this course is no longer approved, a course which best supports the creative use of IT will be selected.

"Taking this subject provides a unique outlook on the world of technology, where we learn about the inner workings of gadgets that make the world a better place."



"I chose to do both ICT and Computer Science as I enjoy challenges and enjoy learning new things. Choosing Computing enabled me to understand how computers work. ICT has many benefits later in life as most jobs will require you to be able to use a computer."



GCSE Modern Foreign Languages French

What our
students say:

Course Specification:

AQA French 8652

Specification:

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



*"Learning a language
has taught me such a
variety of skills and
also improved my
English!"*



*"Everyone should
learn a language –
it's essential on
your CV and the
career possibilities
are endless."*

We are very pleased to be able to offer French at GCSE.

Summary of Core Course Content :

The following themes will be covered throughout the course

Theme 1 – People and Lifestyle

Theme 2 — Popular culture

Theme 3 — Communication and the World Around Us

The course covers 4 skill areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

Assessment:

Paper 1: Listening

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

25% of total mark

Paper 2: Speaking

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes

25% of total mark

Paper 3: Reading

Understanding and responding to different types of written language

25% of total mark

Paper 4: Writing

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes

25% of total mark

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

There are over 700 reasons to study languages – far too many to list here! A language GCSE offers a number of further study and travel opportunities and is highly regarded by all colleges and universities no matter what subject you want to study. A language GCSE greatly enhances employability and considerably widens career and job options and with the world becoming such a global society, a French GCSE could be considered vital for your future. Language students possess a wide range of skills which help develop confidence, fluency, general knowledge and appreciation of other cultures to name just a few.



GCSE Modern Foreign Languages Spanish

What our
students say:

Course Specification:

AQA Spanish 8698

Specification:

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



We are very pleased to be able to offer Spanish at GCSE.

Summary of Core Course Content :

The following themes will be covered throughout the course

Theme 1 — People and Lifestyle

Theme 2 — Popular Culture

Theme 3 — Communication and the World Around Us

The course covers 4 skill areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

Assessment:

Paper 1: Listening

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

25% of total mark

Paper 2: Speaking

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes

25% of total mark

Paper 3: Reading

Understanding and responding to different types of written language

25% of total mark

Paper 4: Writing

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes

25% of total mark

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

There are over 700 reasons to study languages – far too many to list here! A language GCSE offers a number of further study and travel opportunities and is highly regarded by all colleges and universities no matter what subject you want to study. A language GCSE greatly enhances employability and considerably widens career and job options and with the world becoming such a global society, a Spanish GCSE could be considered vital for your future. Language students possess a wide range of skills which help develop confidence, fluency, general knowledge and appreciation of other cultures to name just a few.

*“Learning a language
has taught me such a
variety of skills and
also improved my
English!”*



*“Everyone should
learn a language –
it’s essential on
your CV and the
career possibilities
are endless.”*



GCSE Photography

What our
students say:

Specification: AQA 8206 Art and Design (Photography)

Component 1: Portfolio

No time limit, 60% of GCSE grade.

Component 2: Externally set assignment

Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time, 40% of GCSE grade.

"Choosing Photography gave me the opportunity to engage with a brand new and exciting subject and also added a creative and imaginative element to my GCSE timetable."



Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

The GCSE Photography course is an exciting practical and theory based course ideal for students who wish to pursue a new skill and higher qualifications or a career in photography. Students will develop a wide range of photographic skills including taking and developing their own photographs using both traditional and digital methods. Students will be expected to regularly complete homework and independent study to extend their learning and the content of their portfolio. During the course there will be opportunities to visit galleries and museums to study the work of other photographers.

Assessment:

The GCSE is made up of two units. The first unit is developing a portfolio of individual projects worth 60% of your final grade. The second unit is the externally set assignment worth 40% of your final grade. Due to the exam element of this unit students will have ten hours to produce their final response. Your work will be continually assessed, marked with feedback given to you to inform you of your progress throughout the course. The overall grade for the qualification will be a GCSE grade 9 to 1 and will depend on how well you perform in the coursework and exam.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

Further Study – A Level Photography, BTEC National Diploma in Photography. You could then continue further to degree level if you wish.

Employment – Film and Television production, media, freelance photographer, teacher or lecturer, forensics, photojournalism and fashion.



GCSE Religious Education

What our
students say:

Specification: AQA Religious Studies 8062 MA (DD1)

Two examinations which are both completed at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 focuses on the beliefs and teachings of Christianity and Islam.
Paper 2 explores a range of four ethical and philosophical issues.

**LIFE ISN'T ABOUT
FINDING YOURSELF.
LIFE IS ABOUT
CREATING
YOURSELF.**

George Bernard Shaw

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

Throughout history, people have thought deeply about how a person should live their life and what communities should strive for. The answers that people decide on are a big part of who we are.

In this course, you will study a range of beliefs and ideas about many of the big questions that life asks. We explore different answers that are religious and non-religious, modern and ancient, each other's and our own.

Assessment:

- Relationships and Families, including love, LGBT rights and gender discrimination
- Religion and Life, including animal rights and the moral decisions doctors make
- Peace and Conflict, including the rules of war, nuclear war and terrorism
- Human Rights and Social Justice, including attitudes to wealth, racism and fighting for justice
- Focus on Christianity
- Focus on Islam

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

This subject is popular with colleges and universities as it demonstrates important skills such as the ability to understand other points of view and also to justify your own views persuasively. It complements the study of many other subjects, including History, Geography, Psychology, Sociology, English and Law.

It is useful for people who are interested in a career that involves making decisions, forming arguments or having an understanding of why people act as they do. Examples include being a lawyer, in the military, police officer, writer, journalist, doctor, nurse, social worker or teacher.



"Religious Education is great! We learn lots and lots of interesting units. We have so many revision games and sources that really help and help us to get the grades we want!"

"Debates are my favourite part of Religious Education since you have to think about your own opinion on a subject and then you have your views questioned. Your eyes are opened to alternative views and once you hear all the opinions, they might change your own. I really enjoy the intellectual conversations we have in our lessons."



Wjec Vocational Award Performing Arts - Music

What our
students say:

Specification: Level ½ Vocational Award in Performing Arts (Technical Award)

Unit 1: Performing

- You will learn the skills and techniques needed to produce a successful performance of an existing piece of music.

Unit 2: Creating

- You will learn how to create and refine your own original work through Music Composition, using Music Technology (cloud software).

Unit 3: Performing Arts in Practice

- You will learn about areas of the performing arts industry that need to be considered when responding to a commission and will consider these when coming up with and pitching your own idea.



"Music has helped me with my confidence and developed my team and leadership skills. It is a one of a kind experience!"

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge)

Music, Performing Arts BTEC Qualifications are vocational, unit based which offer students the chance to learn a diverse range of music industry skills. The qualifications are available at Levels 1-3 with the opportunity to cover subjects such as performing, composing, music, technology and music business.

Assessment:

For Unit 1 and 2 you will be assessed through Coursework/ Project work (not external exams) in response to briefs. The final project for each Unit will take 10 hours to complete in 'controlled' conditions and each Unit will be worth 30% of your qualification. For each Unit you be set a scenario by the exam board and will need to undertake a number of tasks. In Unit 3 you will undertake another project in response to a brief, which will take 20 hours and be worth 40% of your qualification. You will be given a scenario and will need to undertake a number of tasks.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

Throughout the duration of the course students will be having instrumental tuition on their chosen instrument. It is hoped that they will continue to develop these skills alongside future courses.

Wjec Vocational Award in Performing Arts – Music can help you become a more Skilled and knowledgeable musician, a more astute entrepreneur or a highly capable producer. They allow learners to progress to Higher Education, into the Industry or on to further specialised qualifications such as RSL's Level 4 Creative Practitioners programme.



"Music is a great subject to experience new things."





BTEC Tech Award Sport

What our
students say:

Specification: Edexcel BTEC Level 2: 603/7068/3

All students will study the first 3 compulsory components. Each component makes up around 33% of the final qualification. Please see an outline of the different components below.

Component 1: Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity

Learners will explore the different types and provision of sport and physical activity available for different types of participants, barriers to participation and ways to overcome these barriers to increase participation in sport and physical activity. They will also research equipment and technological advances in a chosen sport or physical activity and how to prepare our bodies for participation in sport and physical activity.

Component 2: Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance

Learners will investigate the components of fitness and their effect on performance, take part in practical sport, explore the role of officials in sport and learn to apply methods and sporting drills to improve other participants' sporting performance.

Component 3: Developing Fitness to Improve Participants Performance in Physical Activity

Learners will be introduced to and develop an understanding of the importance of fitness and the different types of fitness for performance in sport and physical activity. They will also develop an understanding of the body and fitness testing. This unit is the external assessment and students will be required to sit a 1.30 minutes exam. This Exam will happen in March of Year 11 with a resit possible in the following May.

Summary of Course Content (Skills and Knowledge):

During Year 9, students will study the theory around the benefits of exercise on the mind and body, as well as an introduction to fitness and performance. Alongside theory lessons, students will also participate in a range of different practical lessons that help them to build upon their own levels of knowledge, fitness and performance in both individual and team sports. Students will also be given opportunities to lead sporting competitions with our local Partnership Schools.

In Year 10, students will focus on consolidating the knowledge of the previous year before completing component 1 and 2. These components are assessed using both theoretical and practical means. In Year 11, students will complete the final component of the course, component 3. This unit is externally assessed in the form of a 1.30 minute paper exam. Students will sit this exam in the February of Year 11 with a resit optional in the following May.

By selecting this course, students will receive a well-rounded and full introduction to the world of PE, practical sports performance and the Sports Science behind training to improve sports performance. The selected unit gives us a wide range of further opportunities. So far, students have enjoyed the practical element involved in component 1, as this has given them the opportunity to gain recognition when leading events for our local partnership schools.

This course will build on the understanding developed at Key Stage 3, supporting a smooth transition to the next level of study. Students will become more competent, confident and expert in their practical techniques and apply them across different sports and physical activities. It will also develop students' important transferable skills for progression to the next level, including numeracy, communication and an understanding of practical performance. The blend of physical, scientific and social knowledge will enable students to access a wide range of qualifications when considering further education.

Further Study and Career Opportunities:

The BTEC Tech Award in Sport course has been designed to provide students with a smooth progression to BTEC Nationals in Sport or Sport and Exercise Science. In addition, it will also lend itself to those wishing to study A Level Physical Education. These qualifications will lead on to further opportunities in Higher Education and Employment.

"I really enjoyed leading the sports tournament with our local primary schools. It gave me a lot of confidence and is something that I'd like to do again."



"BTEC Sport has enabled me to increase my fitness, understanding of anatomy and ability to perform in a variety of sports. I have enjoyed my studies and it has inspired me to apply myself further."



"I want to go into a sporting career. This subject is giving me some excellent knowledge for the course that I'm interested in taking at college."



Year 8 Options

Subject selection form 2024-2027

This form is designed as a starting point for discussion, and provides a list for you to use as a prompt for your discussion. Please do not submit your options selection with this form. **To select your options, you must access the online 'Form' which can be found in the Options Sway.** You will be able to access this after options evening. The deadline for completion is Thursday 14th March 2024.

Any problems, please contact the school office.

Name:
Mentor Group:
APL:

Subjects:	Tick 6 subjects that you would <i>prefer</i> to study in KS4 and indicate an order of preference (1 to 6).
Art & Design	
Construction and the Built Environment (BTEC Tech Award)	
Computer Science	
Design and Technology	
Drama	
Food Preparation and Nutrition	
French	
Geography	
History	
Information Technology – iMedia (Cambridge National Certificate)	
Performing Arts – Dance (BTEC Tech Award)	
Performing Arts – Music (Wjec Vocational Award)	
Photography	
Religious Education	
Spanish	
Sport (BTEC Tech Award)	

Signatures	
	Signature and date
Student	
Parent/carers	