

# **Ss John Fisher & Thomas More RC High School**



## **Key Stage 4 Options Subject Information 2026 – 2028**

# Key Stage 4 Compulsory Core Subjects



Our core curriculum comprises **six GCSE qualifications that are compulsory for every pupil:**

- **Religious Education** – 1 GCSE Award, Grade 9-1
- **English Language** – 1 GCSE Award, Grade 9-1
- **English Literature** – 1 GCSE Award, Grade 9-1
- **Mathematics** – 1 GCSE Award, Grade 9-1
- **Combined Science** – 2 GCSE Awards, Grade 9-1

**Plus**

- **Core PE** – Core PE is a non-examined course.
- **PSHE** – non-examined course.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**Examination Board:** English Language – Eduqas and English Literature - AQA

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature

**Brief details of the course:**

During Years 10 and 11, it is expected that all pupils will follow a course leading to qualifications in English Language and English Literature. Both qualifications have been designed to inspire and motivate pupils. They will be accessible to the full range of pupils as there are no different tiers of entry.



**English Language**

This subject will enable pupils of all abilities to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods. It will encourage them to write clearly, coherently and accurately in a range of different forms e.g. short story, formal letter, speech, review, report and news article. Pupils will become adept at writing using a range of ambitious vocabulary and devices, extensive punctuation and a variety of sentence styles.

**English Literature**

Pupils will study a range of literature over the two-year course, including drama, plays, novels and poetry. Some of the texts that pupils will study include the Love & Relationships Poetry Cluster (fifteen poems), William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and J.B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*.

**Spoken Language**

This course runs alongside the English Language and English Literature courses. It will emphasise the importance of the wider benefits that speaking and listening skills have for pupils. Pupils will be given the opportunity to speak in a variety of contexts and will have to present an individual speech to their teacher and peers, answering questions when appropriate. This work will be certified by the examination board.

**Assessment: There is no controlled assessment for either qualification – 100% external exams.**

In **English Language**, pupils sit two exams which test both reading and writing skills.

**Paper 1** is 1 hour 45 minutes and worth 40% of the final grade. It focusses on a fictional extract and involves narrative writing.

**Paper 2** is 2 hours and worth 60% of the final grade. It focusses on the analysis/comparison of two non-fiction texts (one modern; one significantly older) and transactional writing.

In **English Literature** there are two examinations:

**Paper 1** examines pupils' understanding of a play by William Shakespeare (*Macbeth*) and the 19<sup>th</sup> century novel (*A Christmas Carol*). The exam is 1 hour 45 minutes long and consists of two extract style questions, one for each text. This paper accounts for 40% of the overall marks awarded.

**Paper 2** focuses on a modern drama (*An Inspector Calls*) and a poetry anthology containing fifteen poems about love/relationships. The exam is 2 hours 15 minutes and comprises of one essay question based on the set drama text, a comparison essay relating to the AQA poetry anthology, an unseen poetry analysis, and an unseen poetry comparison. The paper accounts for the remaining 60% of the overall marks awarded.

**Benefits of the course:**

The ability to communicate effectively is of paramount importance; we believe these courses will enable our pupils to develop a love for language and feel confident when writing, reading and speaking.

# MATHEMATICS

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** Mathematics GCSE

**Brief details of the course:**

This compulsory course enables pupils to develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts.

The examinations cover the following content areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics



**Assessment:**

The qualification requires pupils to study for three equally weighted written examination papers at either foundation or higher tier.

- Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment
- Papers 2 and 3 are assessments where a calculator is allowed
- All three papers are 1 hour and 30 minutes long
- Each paper has a total of 80 marks
- The content outlined for each tier will be assessed across all three papers
- All examinations are to take place at the end of the two year course

Each paper has a range of question types; some questions will be set in both mathematical and non-mathematical contexts. If pupils are finding it difficult to access the GCSE course we will support them through the Entry Level Certificate in Mathematics.

**Award: Grade 1 - 9**

**Information about the Tiers:**

Two tiers are available, foundation and higher (the content is defined for each tier). Pupils entered for the foundation tier can achieve grades 1 to 5, whilst those entered for higher tier can attain grades 4 to 9 (grade 3 is also allowed). Individual papers are not graded.

All pupils are entered for the full GCSE course.

**Benefits of the course:**

The qualification encourages pupils to develop confidence in their skills and to recognise the importance of mathematics in their own lives and to society at large. Pupils also learn to make informed decisions about the use of technology and the management of money. It leads to a key qualification required by employers, and provides an excellent basis for further study.

## Examination Board: AQA

**Qualification/s awarded:** Combined Science Award GCSE (Two GCSE Awards)

### Brief details of the course:

This is a two-year course which pupils will study through Years 10 and 11. It covers key ideas and content of biology, chemistry and physics as well as opportunities for working scientifically.



Biology is split into seven topics:

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Cell biology                  | 7. Inheritance, variation and evolution |
| 2. Organisation                  | 8. Ecology                              |
| 3. Infections and Response       |   |
| 4. Bioenergetics                 |   |
| 5. Homeostasis and response      | <i>10% mathematical skills</i>          |
| 6. Plant structure and functions |   |

Chemistry is split into ten topics:

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Atomic structure and the periodic table         | 7. Organic chemistry           |
| 2. Bonding, structure and the properties of matter | 8. Chemical analysis           |
| 3. Quantitative chemistry                          | 9. Chemistry of the atmosphere |
| 4. Chemical change                                 | 10. Using resources            |
| 5. Energy changes                                  | <i>20% mathematical skills</i> |
| 6. The rate and extent of chemical changes         |                                |

Physics is split into 7 topics:

- |                             |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Energy                   | 6. Waves                          |
| 2. Electricity              | 7. Magnetism and electromagnetism |
| 3. Particle model of matter |                                   |
| 4. Atomic structure         | <i>30% Mathematical content</i>   |
| 5. Forces                   |                                   |

Each discipline is taught by a specialist teacher and mock examinations will take place throughout Key Stage 4.

### Information about the Tiers:

Two tiers are available, foundation and higher (the content is defined for each tier). Pupils entered for the foundation tier can achieve grades 1 to 5, whilst those entered for higher tier can attain grades 4 to 9 (grade 3 is also allowed). Individual papers are not graded.

### Practical Work

There are many opportunities for practical work throughout the course but there are 21 Required Practical activities which must be completed and will be assessed within the examinations

### Assessment:

100% of marks are based on external examinations. These examinations will consist of six papers, two for each discipline, taken at the end of Year 11. Each exam will be 1hr. 15 mins in length. The exams will have at least 20% of questions assessing practical skills. 10% of exam questions will assess mathematical skills in biology, 20% in chemistry and 30% in physics.

**Award:** This course will result in two GCSEs **Grade 1 - 9** (Dual Award) in science.

### Benefits of the course:

This is a compulsory course but the benefits of studying science are profoundly important. Scientific knowledge helps you solve practical problems and gives you the tools to make informed decisions. When you study science, you get an in-depth understanding of the world you live in, allowing you to develop theory about everything in the world that you come across.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** Religious Studies GCSE

**Brief details of the course:**

RE is a core subject within our school.

Edexcel Route A in Religious Studies is a two-year course with no coursework.



All pupils will follow the Edexcel Route A GCSE specification, this takes a distinctive issues-based approach to mainly Catholic Christianity and Judaism.

- Unit 1 is entitled Catholic Christianity and explores key beliefs and teaching, practices, sources of wisdom and how the faith is expressed within the Catholic Church.
- Unit 2 is entitled Judaism and explores the key beliefs, teaching and practices of a Jew.
- Unit 3 is entitled Philosophy & Ethics and requires learners to contrast Catholic responses, other Christian responses and non-religious world views such as Humanist to philosophical and ethical questions. Such as the existence of God, problem of evil, sexual relationships, marriage, divorce and equality.

The course will enable learners to gain knowledge and understanding of two religions. Catholic Christianity and Judaism.

**Assessment:**

**Paper 1** – Study of Catholic Christianity, 1hr 45 mins exam, 50% of the final grade

Beliefs and teachings, Practices, Sources of Wisdom and Authority and Forms of Expression.

**Paper 2** – Study of Judaism, 1hr 30mins exam, 25% of the final grade

Beliefs and Teachings and Practices.

**Paper 3** – Philosophy and Ethics, 1hr exam, 25% of the final grade

Existence of God and Marriage and Family.

**Award: Grade 1 – 9**

**Benefits of the course:**

Religious Education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. Many skills which are developed in Religious Education can be taken into the world of work, such verbal communication, reasoning and logic, empathy, understanding others and critical thinking. It provides excellent preparation for the further study of Religious Education and Philosophy; and enables pupils to develop respect and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. Religious Education is useful in many jobs and careers in a variety of professions, especially where you work with others, such as public services, tourism, law, journalism & media, education and health & social care.

## CORE PE

In Year 10 and 11 all pupils follow a core Physical Education non-examination course for one period each week.

This is **compulsory for all pupils**, and will build upon work and skills developed in Years 7 to 9.



Within this core PE course, all pupils will have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of physical activities which will improve their knowledge of healthy lifestyles and develop key life skills such as resilience, teamwork, leadership, communication and problem solving.

Our extra-curricular programme is, of course, also open to all Year 10 and 11 pupils.

# Key Stage 4 Option Subjects



Pupils also select **three additional (option) qualifications**.

Pupils **MUST choose 1 subject from Group A**. Pupils may then **choose a further 2 subjects** from Group A and Group B combined. Pupils should **choose 2 reserve subjects** from Group A or Group B.

Group A	Group B
Geography	Additional Science & Astronomy
History	Art
Spanish	Computer Science
	Digital IT
	Drama
	Food Preparation and Nutrition
	Health and Social Care
	Media Studies
	Music
	Physical Education
	Statistics

# GEOGRAPHY

**Examination Board:** AQA

**Qualification/s awarded:** Geography GCSE



## **Brief Details of the course:**

In physical geography we study tectonic processes (especially earthquakes), extreme weather events (e.g. hurricanes and extreme UK weather), climate change and global ecosystems (rainforests – Malaysia and cold environments – Svalbard, Alaska, Antarctica), as well as exploring how coastal processes and glacial ice change the physical landscape of the UK. Pupils will also go on their first compulsory (at no cost to pupils) fieldtrip visit. They visit Cleveleys to investigate how effective the coastal management strategies are at reducing the coastal problems. They learn a range of practical fieldwork techniques and skills.

Pupils also explore how human environments have changed over time. Pupils study the issues in urban landscapes, through a study of megacities and how the migration of people can affect the growth of urban areas, such in Rio de Janeiro. Pupils will learn a case study of a changing UK city by studying Manchester. Pupils also study economic change in the UK and investigate why the global development gap still exists in today's world, using Nigeria as a case study of an NEE (Newly Emerging Economy). Pupils also go on a second fieldtrip to North Valley Retail and Business Park to investigate the positive social and economic impact of this on Colne.

Geography helps pupils to understand the world around them. Pupils are able to use skills of enquiry to focus on topical issues such as our ever-changing climate, issues of development, migration and geopolitics. The GCSE geography course helps pupils to engage with global issues and gives them the tools to understand and play a strategic part in our changing world.

## **Assessment:**

There are three examination papers. The examinations include a variety of questions designed to be accessible for pupils of all abilities. These range from multiple choice to longer essay based answers.

**Papers 1 and 2:** Both examinations are 1hr 30mins long and examine physical geography (p1) and human geography (p2) course content.

**Paper 3:** 1hr 15mins in length and tests pupil's decision-making skills. Pupils will receive a booklet of information to study 12 weeks prior to the exam relating to their course content. In the exam they evaluate the issues it covers. There are also questions about their findings from the field-work. Pupils are given a blank version of the issue evaluation booklet for the exam.

**Award: Grades 1-9**

## **Benefits of the course:**

This is an EBacc course that develops a range of transferable skills, such as investigation and enquiry. Pupils develop an understanding of different viewpoints and cultures, as well the ability to solve problems and make decisions. Geography provides excellent preparation for study at A-level and for other post-16 qualifications such as environmental science, business, sociology and law. Employers in retail, planning, the services, marketing, travel and tourism and many other job sectors value the transferable range of skills developed in Geography.

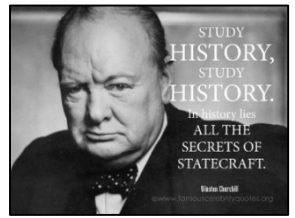
# HISTORY

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification awarded:** History GCSE

**Brief details of the course:**

- Modern Depth Study: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939
- Period Study: Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-1991
- British Depth Study: Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588
- British Thematic Study: Medicine through Time, 1250-Present and The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918: Injury, treatment and trenches.



**Assessment:** 100% written examination comprising three papers that require extensive essay style responses.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour and 20 minutes: worth 30% of the final grade. Pupils will be tested on their ability to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Medicine through Time;
- analyse change and continuity, explain cause and evaluate the utility of sources of evidence for an enquiry.

**Paper 2:** 1 hour and 50 minutes: worth 40% of the final grade. Pupils will be tested on their ability to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Early Elizabethan England and Superpower Relations;
- analyse and evaluate the causes and consequences of historical events and developments and assess the significance of individuals, events, developments and/or ideas in the history studied.

**Paper 3:** 1 hour and 30 minutes: worth 30% of the final grade. Pupils will be tested on their ability to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939.
- analyse and evaluate the causes of historical events, evaluate the utility of sources of evidence for an enquiry and explain the variations between different interpretations of the past.

**Award:** Grade 9 - 1

**Benefits of the course:**

This course is suitable for pupils who are committed to hard work, want to know how the world they live in today was shaped by the past, want to be instrumental in shaping the future, have lively, enquiring minds, who never take anything at face value and who have excellent literacy skills. Studying history will help pupils develop the skills they need to thrive in our increasingly complex world.

Obvious career choices would be journalism, a career in the police or in research and any job requiring investigative skills. A grade in history counts towards the EBacc. History provides excellent preparation for further and higher education as it is a rigorous and highly academic subject which draws upon many of the higher order skills necessary for advanced level and undergraduate study.

# SPANISH

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** Spanish GCSE



**Brief details of the course:**

The course builds on the language learning pupils have done at Key Stage 3 and seeks to develop these skills further. It aims to give pupils a full understanding of the Spanish language and of Spanish culture. Pupils explore topics such as Family and Relationships, Work and Employment, Media, Holidays, Health and Wellbeing and The Environment; as well as other topics encountered before such as School, Hobbies, Town and Personal Information.

**Overview of Assessment:**

The course assesses four key language skills. The speaking element is conducted and recorded by the class teacher internally and is externally assessed. The listening, reading and writing elements are externally assessed through separate examinations.

**Structure of Assessment:**

- Listening is worth 25% of the overall grade
- Speaking is worth 25% of the overall grade
- Reading is worth 25% of the overall grade
- Writing is worth 25% of the overall grade

**Award: Grade 1- 9**

**Benefits of the course:**

This course will appeal to pupils who enjoy languages and who wish to develop their skills. The course is open to all pupils who have studied Spanish at Key Stage 3 and who can demonstrate an enthusiasm for and commitment to language learning.

A qualification in a Modern Foreign Language is a great advantage in almost all professions. These include jobs in travel and tourism, translating, interpreting, primary and secondary teaching, jobs in the media and in industry to name but a few. In addition, it provides an excellent basis for those wishing to travel or work abroad.

**It is also useful for pupils considering entry to the UK's top universities in the future as it counts towards the EBacc qualification.**

## ADDITIONAL SCIENCE



**Examination Board:** AQA

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics

### Brief details of the course:

This is a two-year course which pupils will study through Years 10 and 11. It covers key ideas and content of Biology, Chemistry and Physics as well as opportunities for working scientifically. This course studies the same topics as the Combined Science core subject but explores themes in more depth. There is one extra topic in Physics called "Space"

Biology is split into seven topics:

1. Cell biology
  2. Organisation
  3. Infections and Response
  4. Bioenergetics
  5. Homeostasis and response
  6. Plant structures and functions
  7. Inheritance, variation and evolution
  8. Ecology
- 10 % mathematical skills*

Chemistry is split into ten topics:

1. Atomic structure and the periodic table
  2. Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
  3. Quantitative chemistry
  4. Chemical change
  5. Energy changes
  6. The rate and extent of chemical changes
  7. Organic chemistry
  8. Chemical analysis
  9. Chemistry of the atmosphere
  10. Using resources
- 20 % mathematical skills*

Physics is split into 8 topics:

1. Energy
  2. Electricity
  3. Particle model of matter
  4. Atomic structure
  5. Forces
  6. Waves
  7. Magnetism and electromagnetism  
(Triple science only)
  8. Space
- 30% Mathematical content*

Each discipline is taught by a specialist teacher and mock exams will take place throughout Key Stage 4.

**Award: Grade 1-9 in Triple Science.** Pupils that study Triple Science will be awarded with three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

### Practical Work

There are many opportunities for practical work throughout the course but there are 28 required practical activities which must be completed and will be assessed within the examinations

### Assessment:

100% of marks are based on external examinations. These examinations will consist of six papers, two for each discipline, taken at the end of Year 11. Each exam will be 1 hour 45 minutes in length. Questions will assess pupils on practical skills, knowledge, skills and understanding of working scientifically, mathematical skills and subject content.

### Benefits:

This course will benefit pupils who are able, analytical and dedicated. This course would provide excellent preparation for the study of the Sciences at an advanced level at Further Education and beyond.

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE Astronomy



## **Brief details of the course:**

This course will help you understand our place in the Universe, how planets and stars move, and why the sky changes between day and night. You will also learn how modern technology is used to observe space and explore beyond Earth.

You will follow the fascinating story of how scientists, from ancient civilisations to the present day, have used imagination and careful observations to discover more about the Universe we live in.

## **Assessment:**

This qualification is assessed through **two written exam papers**, each 1 hour 45 minutes, and each worth **50% of the overall qualification**. The two exams will look at the following topics:

### **Paper 1: Naked Eye Astronomy**

Topic 1 – Planet Earth

Topic 2 – The lunar disc

Topic 3 – The Earth-Moon-Sun system

Topic 4 – Time and the Earth-Moon-Sun cycles

Topic 5 – Solar System observation

Topic 6 – Celestial observation

Topic 7 – Early models of the Solar System

Topic 8 – Planetary motion and gravity

### **Paper 2: Telescopic Astronomy**

Topic 9 – Exploring the Moon

Topic 10 – Solar astronomy

Topic 11 – Exploring the Solar System

Topic 12 – Formation of planetary systems

Topic 13 – Exploring starlight

Topic 14 – Stellar evolution

Topic 15 – Our place in the Galaxy

Topic 16 – Cosmology

## **Practical work**

During this course, you will build your observational skills by carefully watching and studying real situations. You will complete at least one **unaided observation** (using just your eyes) and one **aided observation** (using tools to help you observe).

You will use what you learn about different observation methods in your written assessments. You will also keep a record of each observation you complete, explaining what you did and what you learned.

**This will involve some time looking at the night sky outside of school hours**

**Award: Grade 1- 9**

## **Benefits of the course:**

This course builds curiosity, analytical thinking, and scientific literacy. It strengthens maths and physics skills, encourages problem-solving, and links directly to careers in astronomy, space science, engineering, data analysis, education, research, aviation, meteorology, and the growing aerospace industry, including satellite technology, astrophysics, and innovation worldwide future opportunities.

**Examination Board:** Eduqas

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE Art And Design

**Brief details of the course:**

Studying Art and Design provides pupils with an entry to an unprecedented range of specialisms, skills – both traditional and digital – which can be used in a range of careers.



Pupils who study Art and Design will learn to:

- Seek creative solutions by using materials and techniques intelligently, imaginatively and experimentally
- Develop your knowledge and understanding of how art and design functions and is valued in diverse cultures and at different time
- Develop a sense of enquiry, an ability to take practical and intellectual risks, to make considered decisions
- Make qualitative aesthetic and cultural judgments
- Articulate your reasons for preference
- Engage with art and design in the public sphere.

**Assessment:**

- Component 1 – Pupils will need to produce a portfolio worth of **60% of the final grade**. The portfolio is based on internally set themes and subject matter from personal and/or given starting points.
- Component 2 - Pupils will undertake a controlled task (externally set assignment) **this is worth 40% of the final grade**. This component is based on a preparatory study that leads to a 10-hour period of sustained focus in which pupils will produce a response to the chosen theme, visual stimuli or written brief.

**Award: Grade 1- 9**

**Benefits of the course:**

This course would suit pupils who enjoy being creative with materials, techniques, processes and ideas. Pupils will need to be self-motivated and independent. Skill in drawing is important as this underpins all art activities, and there is also a strong emphasis on discovering new specialisms through experimentation and the development of materials, processes and techniques.

This course would provide excellent preparation for a career or further study in creative subjects and areas such as fine art, print making, sculpture, ceramics, graphics, textiles, graphic design, architecture and fashion design. The course will also help to develop skills of problem solving, creative thinking, investigation, research, communication and teamwork. Pupils will gain the ability to develop, refine and present visual ideas. Employers and universities regard all of these skills highly.

**Examination Board:** OCR

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE Computer Science



**Brief details of the course:**

Computer Science is a tough and challenging subject. The computer science qualification enables you 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 of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs.
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society.
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science.

**Assessment:** There are two units and each has its own assessment:

- **Computer Systems**  
90-minute written examination paper worth 50% of the qualification.
- **Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming**  
90-minute written examination paper worth 50% of the qualification.

**Award: Grade 1- 9**

**Benefits of the course:**

It is a fact that information technologies continue to have a growing importance. This means there will be a higher demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. If you want to go on to higher study and employment in the field of computer science, you will find that this course provides a superb stepping stone.

**Career paths and further opportunities:**

A Level Computer Science

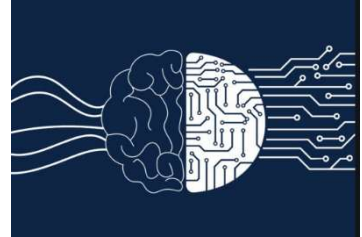
Cambridge Technicals IT Level 2 and 3

Computer Science BSc

Software Engineer, Network Architect/Engineer, Quality Analyst, Game Designer, Web Developer/Designer, Data Analyst, Information Security Analyst

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** BTEC Level 1/2 Award in Digital Information Technology



**Brief details of the course:**

The award gives pupils the opportunity to develop sector-specific knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment including the:

- Development of key skills that prove learners aptitude in digital information technology.
- Processes that underpin effective ways of working, such as cyber security, virtual teams and legal and ethical codes of conduct.
- Knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, process and attitudes in the sector such as how different user interfaces meet user needs.

**Assessment:**

The course is assessed through completion of three components:

Component 1: Exploring user interface design principles and techniques and project planning techniques – Internally assessed

Component 2: Collecting, presenting and interpreting data – Internally assessed

Component 3: Effective digital working practices – External synoptic

**BTEC Level 2 Award:** Level 1 Pass to Level 2 Distinction\* (Equivalent of GCSE grades 1 - 9)

**Benefits of the course:**

The course will help pupils to make more informed choices for further learning either generally or in the computing sector. The choices that pupils can make post-16 will depend on their overall level of attainment and their performance in the qualification.

# DRAMA

**Examination Board:** OCR

**Qualification/s awarded:** Drama GCSE



**Brief details of the course:**

This course will help pupils gather knowledge and understanding of different dramatic genres, styles and conventions; and of the historical, social and cultural influences that inform the way drama is devised and structured. On both the practical units you can choose to be examined as an actor or designer (costume/make-up, lighting, sound, set design).

**Areas of Study:**

- 1 Character
- 2 Structure, context and plot
- 3 Audience and defining performance space
- 4 Devising and Scripted plays
- 5 Genre, performance style and convention
- 6 The semiotics of drama and theatre

**Assessment:**

There are three assessed units focusing on devising a performance, scripted performance, live theatre appreciation and a study of a set text.

1. Devising drama (based on a stimulus) worth 30% of the final grade.
2. Presenting and performing text (culminating in a performance for an external examiner) worth 30% of the final grade.
3. Drama: Performance and response (written exam based on a set text and an evaluation of a live theatre performance) worth 40% of the final grade.

Pupils maintain a portfolio of notes which accompanies practical work (this is worth two-thirds of the overall mark for the different units).

The course is designed to challenge pupils and is suitable for those who want a firm foundation in drama; learning to analyse script, devise, develop, interpret and communicate ideas not only in performance but through design and direction. By understanding the processes involved in drama, pupils will improve their performance skills, develop their imagination and the ability to create drama and work closely and cooperatively with others.

**Award: Grade 1 - 9**

**Benefits of the course:**

This course would not only suit those wishing to pursue a career in the Performing Arts but will also provide a good foundation for those wishing to enter into careers such as advertising, marketing, law and education. Pupils today will also be applying for jobs that do not exist yet and creativity will be key. Drama helps pupils to develop a range of key skills such as communication, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, imagination, teamwork and creativity; all skills that are vital for the ever-competitive world of work.

# FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

**Examination Board: AQA**

**Qualification/s awarded:** Food Preparation and Nutrition



**Brief details of the course:**

The Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE 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 the qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Subject content is split into five key sections each of which have food preparation skills and practical activities integrated. The five core topics are:

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

**Assessment:**

This qualification is linear which means that pupils will sit all their exams and submit all their non-examination assessments (NEA) at the end of the course.

- The **examination** assessment consists of one paper that tests theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from the 5 core topics listed above. This written examination lasts for 1 hour 45 minutes and accounts for 50% of the final GCSE. The examination paper consists of multiple-choice questions (20 marks) and five main questions, each with a number of sub questions (80 marks).

Pupils are also required to submit two **non-examination assessments** (NEA) at the end of the course:

- **Task 1 – Food investigation** – pupils are required to write a report of between 1500 – 2000 words to demonstrate an understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. This task accounts for 15% of the overall GCSE grade.
- **Task 2 – Food preparation assessment** – pupils are required to prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of 3 hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. In addition, they are required to produce a portfolio detailing their planning, including photographic evidence of their three final dishes.

**Award: Grade 1-9**

**Benefits of the course:**

Upon completion of the course pupils will be prepared for further study and may decide to embark on an apprenticeship or full-time career in the catering or food industries.

# HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care



**Brief details of the course:**

This qualification will provide pupils with an engaging introduction to the Health and Social Care sector. It is of particular interest to those learners who want a vocationally focused introduction to careers in care and health sectors such as nursing, social work and early years.

The qualification consists of three units:

- Unit 1: Human Lifespan Development (internal assessment) worth 30% of the final award.
- Unit 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values (internal assessment) worth 30% of the final award.
- Unit 3: Health and Well-being (external exam assessment) worth 40% of the final award.

**Assessment:**

During the course pupils will take one external examination and complete four controlled assignments that will be assessed in school.

40% of the qualification is externally assessed through examination and the remaining controlled assignments are assessed internally through two separate units.

It is important to note that failure to complete or pass any unit of the course will result in an 'ungraded' outcome, therefore excellent attendance and work ethic are essential criteria for entrance to the course.

**BTEC Level 2 Award:**

- Pass (Equivalent to Grade 4 at GCSE),
- Merit (Equivalent to a Grade 5 - 6 at GCSE),
- Distinction (Equivalent to Grade 7 at GCSE),
- \*Distinction (Equivalent to Grade 8 - 9 at GCSE)

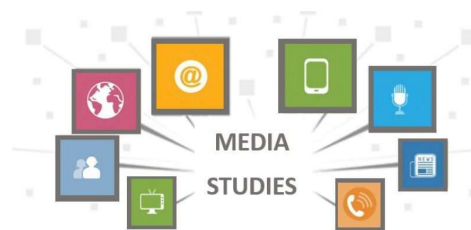
**Benefits of the course:**

This course would provide excellent preparation for pupils who have an interest in health and social care careers. Pupils who choose this option will need to be organised, self-motivated and independent. The course will also give learners the opportunity to develop a range of personal skills and techniques that are essential for successful performance in working life such as effective communication, teamwork and confidence. The course presents knowledge, skills and understanding in a meaningful work-related context, to allow learners to understand theory and application. This qualification would also support progression into more specialised Level 3 vocational or academic post-16 courses or into an apprenticeship.

# MEDIA STUDIES

**Examination Board:** WJEC

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE Media Studies



**Brief details of the course:**

The WJEC GCSE in Media Studies offers pupils an opportunity:

- To analyse how media products like TV programmes and music videos use images, sounds, language, and representations to create meaning.
- Pupils will learn about the media industry and how the industry affects how media products are made.
- Pupils will investigate media audiences, exploring who are the people who watch, read and consume the products, and considering how different people might be affected by media products differently, and why.
- Pupils will study lots of different media forms, such as: Television Online Media Advertising and Marketing Film Magazines Newspapers Social and Participatory Media Music Video Radio Video Games.
- There is also a significant amount of practical work where pupils might create music videos, magazines, television programmes, advertisements and more. In their practical work, pupils will be able to apply what they have learned about the media in the production of their own media products.

Media is about communication, particularly mass communication with lots of people. The media creates products that are designed to entertain and inform, created for lots of people to hear, watch or read, often at roughly the same time. Whenever you are watching television, streaming films, scrolling through social media or listening to a podcast, you are consuming media.

**Assessment:**

**Unit 1:** Written Examination 1 hour 30mins (30% of qualification)

**Unit 2:** Written Examination 1 hour 30mins (30% of qualification)

**Unit 3:** Non-exam Assessment: Media Production (40% of qualification)

**Award: Grade 1-9**

**Benefits of the course:**

A GCSE qualification in Media Studies provides pupils with a huge array of career opportunities in the media, and it's an industry that is growing very quickly. If you are interested in the idea of a career in TV and film production, advertising, journalism, interactive media, and digital marketing, technical production, special effects, web design and post-production, then studying Media at GCSE level is a great place to start.

# MUSIC

**Examination Board:** Eduqas

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE Music



## **Brief details of the course:**

The Eduqas GCSE in Music offers a broad and coherent course of study that encourages pupils to:

- Engage actively in the process of music study.
- Develop performing skills individually and in groups to communicate musically with fluency and control of the resources used.
- Develop composing skills to organise musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources.
- Recognise links between the integrated activities of performing, composing, and appraising, and understand how this informs the development of music.
- Broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination, and foster creativity.
- Develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians.
- Develop an awareness of a variety of instruments, styles, and approaches to performing and composing.
- Develop an understanding of music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music.
- Recognise contrasting genres, styles, and traditions of music, and develop an understanding of musical chronology.
- Become effective and independent learners with enquiring minds.
- Reflect upon and evaluate their own and others' music.
- Engage with and appreciate the diverse heritage of music to promote personal, social, intellectual, and cultural development.

The course adopts an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of performing, composing, and appraising through four interrelated areas of study. These areas are designed to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of music across a variety of genres and styles within a wider context.

**Area of Study 1:** *Musical Forms and Devices* (based on the Western Classical Tradition).

**Area of Study 2:** *Music for Ensemble* (focused on texture and sonority).

**Area of Study 3:** *Film Music*.

**Area of Study 4:** *Popular Music*.

## **Assessment:**

### **Component 1: Performing**

Internally assessed performance (solo and group) - Worth 30% of the final grade.

### **Component 2: Composing**

Two internally assessed compositions: one of free choice and another based on a provided brief - Worth 30% of the final grade.

### **Component 3: Appraising**

A 1-hour 15-minute listening and writing exam - Worth 40% of the final grade.

**Award: Grade 1-9**

## **Benefits of the course:**

A GCSE qualification in Music allows pupils to explore, challenge, and realise their potential in this discipline. Throughout the course, pupils will gain insights into potential career paths in music and develop the knowledge and skills needed to take their next steps. Upon completing the course, students may pursue further vocational or academic study of music at college, as well as apprenticeships and traineeships. Additionally, the transferable skills mastered during their studies—such as self-reflection, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving—will support their progress in any post-16 educational or career pathway.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Examination Board:** Pearson Edexcel

**Qualification/s awarded:** BTEC Tech Award in Sport Level 2



**Brief details of the course:**

This two-year vocational course is part of the options programme and is **in addition** to the compulsory Physical Education core PE lessons. This course will suit pupils who have an interest in sport and want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through a vocational context. The course has more emphasis on practical components such as coaching and officiating compared to the GCSE course.

Pupils will study the following 3 components:

1. Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity – Internally Assessed
2. Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance – Internally Assessed
3. Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants Performance in Sport and Physical Activity – Externally Set Synoptic Project

**Assessment:**

Components 1 & 2 account for 60% of the overall grade, assessed through assignment work set by the exam board. Component 3 accounts for 40% of the overall grade, and is assessed through a 60-mark, 1 hour 30 mins hour synoptic project.

**Grade:** Level 1 Pass to Level 2 Distinction\* (Equivalent of GCSE grades 1 - 9)

**Benefits of the course:**

This course would suit pupils who have already displayed the enthusiasm, commitment and willingness to participate in a variety of physical activities at key stage 3. The department offers a wide extra-curricular programme and pupils choosing this course must show commitment to attending a variety of extra-curricular activities. This course provides excellent preparation for various BTEC Level 3 or A-Level courses, entry to the sport and leisure industry, the armed forces, the police force and a whole variety of other areas.

# STATISTICS

**Examination Board:** AQA

**Qualification/s awarded:** GCSE



**Brief details of the course:**

GCSE Statistics not only encourages pupils to collect, analyse, interpret and present data but it also helps shape their future. Statistics isn't just a subject; it's a strategic advantage, a life skill, and a stepping stone to boundless opportunities.

Pupils will be involved in:

- Collecting, recording and processing data
- Data collection principles
- Representing data
- Comparing data
- Interpretation and evaluation of data.

**Assessment:**

**Paper 1** – Written exam 1 hour 45minutes (50% of final grade)

**Paper 2** – Written exam 1 hour 45minutes (50% of final grade)

Statistics has two tiers available, foundation and higher. Pupils entered for the foundation tier can achieve grades 1 to 5, whilst those entered for higher tier can attain grades 4 to 9.

**Grade:** Grade 1-9

**Benefits of the course:**

Statistics is about making decisions when there is uncertainty. Perhaps one of the most versatile areas of maths, it gives students the skills to collect, analyse, interpret and present data. It complements subjects such as GCSE Biology, Psychology, Geography, Business and Economics, and opens the door to a variety of careers – from weather forecasting to the biological sciences.