



NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL
COURAGE COMMITMENT COMPASSION

YEAR 9 GCSE SUBJECT OPTIONS



NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL
COURAGE COMMITMENT COMPASSION

Key Stage 4 provides students with the opportunity to focus their studies in disciplines they are passionate about, while continuing to strengthen their knowledge in core academic areas. This stage marks a pivotal time for students to develop their academic focus and prepare for future success.

In Years 10 and 11, our core curriculum comprises English Language, English Literature, and Mathematics, all of which are fundamental for progression in education and career pathways. Additionally, all students study Science, choosing either the Combined Science route or the Separate Sciences, both of which encompass Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

Beyond the core subjects, students select four additional options from a diverse range of 17 GCSE subjects: Business, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Drama, Fine Art, French, Geography, German, History, Music, Photography, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Spanish, Textile Design, GCSE Food, Nutrition and Preparation and BTEC Level 1/2 Home Cooking Skills. New for 2026, students will also have the opportunity to choose BTEC Sport and Coaching Principles as an additional optional pathway.

To ensure we maintain a broad and balanced curriculum, most students are encouraged to select both a Modern Foreign Language and a Humanity subject.

Alongside their academic curriculum, students engage in enriching lessons in Core Physical Education and Religious Studies. These provide valuable opportunities for personal growth and a holistic educational experience.

To complement classroom learning, students participate in an array of extracurricular activities and educational trips, fostering new skills, broadening perspectives, and enhancing their wider personal development.

CORE SUBJECTS

1

All students study these core subjects and will gain qualifications in these subjects:

English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Science (Combined or Separate)

All students will also study these core subjects as part of their personal development, although they do not lead to formal qualifications:

Core PE
Religious Studies



GUIDED CHOICES

2

These subjects remain optional, though students are encouraged to include one Modern Foreign Language and one Humanity to support a well-rounded curriculum.

Select one Modern Foreign Language:

French
German
Spanish

Select one Humanity:

Geography
History



FREE CHOICES

3

Students should make their remaining free choices from the full list of optional subjects below. We recommend selecting two additional subjects to study alongside their chosen language and humanity.

Business, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Textile Design, Drama, Fine Art, Photography, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Geography, History, German, French, Spanish, Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Study Plus (English and Maths) and Skills Builder, BTEC Level 1/2 Home Cooking Skills, BTEC Sport and Coaching Principles (New for 2026!).

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GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Head of Department: Mr Aaron Kerrigan

All students will study English Language and English Literature.



Aims of the course

How many things are you asked to read or write in a single day? Your reading and writing skills affect how well you do in almost every area of your school life and they continue to be important as you progress through higher education and onto your chosen career.



Nature of the course

English Language at GCSE helps you practice, improve and develop your reading and writing skills, as well as improving your ability to converse within a variety of different contexts. The course has been designed to teach skills that you can apply in wider studies and real life situations.



Homework

To succeed in this course, homework is essential as it provides a key element of preparation for examinations. You will be asked to undertake a wide variety of tasks including research, reading, writing and preparing for spoken assessments.



Assessment

GCSE English Language is assessed by examination with two equally balanced papers, each assessing reading and writing. There will be a focus on non-fiction texts and pre-19th Century prose.



Deadlines

It is important that students complete all tasks set. Students who are absent will have to complete work at the first opportunity on their return to school. Catch-up sessions will take place in the late afternoon, immediately after school.



The future

Students who are successful at GCSE will be accepted on to the A-Level course in English Language or English Literature. If you are interested in English A-Level, you may also want to consider A-Level Media Studies.

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

Head of Department: Mr Aaron Kerrigan

All students will study English Language and English Literature.



Aims of the course

The aim of the course is to develop flexible, competent users of English, who are capable of understanding and creating texts from a variety of media. You will learn how to make a reasoned and informed response to works from the English literary heritage as well as texts from other cultures.



Nature of the course

It will provide you with the ability to think for yourself and show that you have the skills to understand a wide range of writing. Many employers and higher education establishments see English Literature as an important subject.



Homework

Homework is essential to succeed in this course as it provides excellent preparation for examinations. It will include research, reading and writing.



Assessment

There will be two exams, which test students' ability to analyse literary texts. There will also be an examination on a Shakespeare play, an unseen poetry assessment and the study of a whole prose text.



Deadlines

If you are absent then you will have to complete tasks at the first opportunity on your return to school. Catch-up sessions will take place in the late afternoon, immediately after school.



The future

Students who are successful at GCSE will be accepted on to the A-Level course in English Literature or English Language. If you are interested in English A-Level, you may also want to consider A-Level Media Studies.

GCSE MATHEMATICS

Head of Department: Mr David Willmott

All students will study Mathematics.



Aims of the course

We use mathematics all the time in everyday life and this course aims to make you more able to apply your knowledge in real-life contexts. GCSE Mathematics is essential for many careers.



Nature of the course

Students will work through a range of topics, building on the foundations of Number & Algebra, Geometry & Measure and Statistics & Probability studied at Key Stage 3. You will follow either the Foundation Course (Grades 1-5) or the Higher Course (grades 4-9).



Homework

You will be required to complete compulsory homework weekly on Sparx. This homework will intentionally cover previous topics and should take approximately one hour. Support is available from staff every lunchtime, but there is a designated Tuesday lunchtime session in A1. You will also be given homework to complete which will be on the topics you are doing in class. Memorising facts and techniques is important throughout the course.



Assessment

The course is assessed 100% through final examinations at the end of Year 11. There are three papers: two 'calculator' and one 'non-calculator'.



Deadlines

Pupils will be expected to complete and hand in all homework tasks on time. Before the final examination, the department will provide further support through revision lessons and booklets of past papers. Additional support will be arranged on an individual basis.



The future

GCSE Mathematics is essential for most careers and for progression to A-Level courses and higher education. If you are interested in Mathematics, Sciences or Engineering you may want to consider Mathematics and Further Mathematics at A-Level.

GCSE SCIENCE: SEPARATE SCIENCES

Head of Department: Mr Ross Clark

Aims of the Course



This course offers separate qualifications in GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It will give you an excellent grounding in all aspects of Science. During the teaching of the course we frequently emphasise the relevance of science to our daily lives.

Nature of the Course



This course is AQA GCSE Separate Sciences, with examinations at the end of Year 11 which will make up 100% of your final grade. The topics, in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, will build upon the scientific foundations you developed in Key Stage 3. We'll delve deeper into these areas, exploring new concepts and developing your skills to help you think like a scientist – analysing information, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments, and drawing your own conclusions.

Homework



You will have regular homework assignments designed to reinforce your learning and improve your long-term retention of key concepts. These assignments will often involve retrieval practice, where you'll be asked to recall information from memory. This might include quizzes, short answer questions, or creating diagrams and summaries. Retrieval practice has been proven to be highly effective in strengthening memory and improving understanding.

Assessment



Examinations will be taken at the end of Year 11. Scientific method and skills are taught through practical work. The examinations will contain questions which draw specifically on the experience you have gained from doing this practical work in class.

Deadlines



Homework deadlines are set by your teachers and must be met.

The future



Science qualifications lead to a wide range of future careers. Science is a requirement for further study in medicine, veterinary science and engineering, but the skills you will learn, and the problem-solving aspects of the subject will also help you later on in life. At the moment there is a shortage of people with Science qualifications, so it is a great prospect for future employment. In the immediate future, good GCSE grades can lead to A-Levels in each of the Separate Sciences. We also currently offer BTEC Level 3 courses in Applied Science and Health and Social Care in the Sixth Form.

GCSE SCIENCE: COMBINED SCIENCES TRILOGY

Head of Department: Mr Ross Clark

Aims of the Course



The Combined Science: Trilogy course is a combination of Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics, which will give you an excellent grounding in all aspects of science. During the teaching of the course, we frequently emphasise the relevance of science to our daily lives.

Nature of the Course



This course is AQA GCSE in Trilogy Sciences, with examinations at the end of Year 11 which will make up 100% of your final grade. The topics, in Biology, Chemistry and Physics will build upon the scientific foundations you developed in Key Stage 3. We'll delve deeper into these areas, exploring new concepts and developing your skills to help you think like a scientist – analysing information, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments, and drawing your own conclusions.

Homework



You will have regular homework assignments designed to reinforce your learning and improve your long-term retention of key concepts. These assignments will often involve retrieval practice, where you'll be asked to recall information from memory. This might include quizzes, short answer questions, or creating diagrams and summaries. Retrieval practice has been proven to be highly effective in strengthening memory and improving understanding.

Assessment



All the examinations will be taken at the end of Year 11. Scientific method and skills are taught through practical work. The examinations will contain questions which draw specifically on the experience you have gained from doing this practical work in class.

Deadlines



Homework deadlines are set by your teachers and must be met.

The future



Science qualifications lead to a wide range of future careers. Science is a requirement for further study in medicine, veterinary science and engineering, but the skills you will learn, and the problem-solving aspects of the subject will also help you later on in life. At the moment there is a shortage of people with Science qualifications, so it is a great prospect for future employment. In the immediate future, good GCSE grades can lead to A-Levels in each of the Separate Sciences. We also currently offer BTEC Level 3 courses in Applied Science and Health and Social Care in the Sixth Form.

**“THE CHOICES YOU MAKE NOW
ARE THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD THE
LIFE YOU WANT — CHOOSE
BOLDLY.”**



GCSE

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES: FRENCH, GERMAN, SPANISH

Head of Department: Miss Marion Neveu



Aims of the course

In a multi-cultural, fast-moving world, knowledge of a foreign language will enable you to become a confident global citizen. Within the context of practical language learning, you will learn to communicate confidently in a variety of contexts. You will also learn how to improve your performance so that you are able to hold your own in the modern workplace.



Nature of the course

This is an exciting and brand new specification based on three themes:

- People and lifestyle
- Popular culture
- Communication and the world around us

Subject content will focus on vocabulary, grammar and phonics. Students will be assessed on between 1200 and 1700 word families, according to tier of study (Foundation or Higher). Having defined lists in this way means that students who work hard to learn the specification vocabulary have every chance of being successful. The new speaking assessment will involve a reading aloud task and a dictation exercise, as well as discussion of a photograph.

You will develop and improve your skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing and will have access both at school and at home to dedicated MFL websites. As native speakers, our Foreign Language Assistants will help you to improve your oral skills. You may also wish to participate in the competitions and other extra-curricular activities run by the MFL department.



Homework

Homework is an essential part of the course. It will play a vital role in securing grammar points taught in lessons as well as reinforcing new vocabulary. Homework not only enables you to become a confident independent learner but feedback received from written assignments will be crucial in preparing you for examinations.



Assessment

This course is linear. Students will be assessed at the end of the course with examination papers in the four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing with each skill being worth 25% of the GCSE. There will be regular assessments based on sample questions from the new specification to assess your progress.



Deadlines

You will need to be flexible, adaptable and willing to learn on a regular basis. You must be prepared to work to deadlines, using your independent learning skills.



The future

Students who are successful will be accepted onto an A-Level language course. A qualification in MFL is always viewed favourably by universities and prospective employers. At Higher Education level, it combines extremely well with a variety of subjects to form a degree course and can open the way to a remarkably wide range of careers.

STUDENT VOICE

Modern Foreign Languages

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Learning a language means memorising plenty of vocabulary and practising speaking out loud, especially for the oral exam.

There's also a lot of grammar to understand, so it helps to learn as much as you can early on, particularly verb endings. You'll get vocabulary sheets to support you, but using apps like Duolingo can make practising at home much easier. When revising vocabulary, it's useful to ask a family member, friend, or even a teacher to test you. Speaking Spanish can even boost your confidence when speaking English. Most importantly, choose the language you genuinely enjoy, because you're far more likely to succeed in it.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I find it useful and easier than before as I only take one language (French) so I can concentrate on this.
- What we learn builds on the knowledge we gained in Years 7-9.
- I love practising conversation with the FLAs and learning about the culture of Germany, e.g. how they celebrate Christmas.
- I took two languages and I love them. The structure of the lessons is similar in both, there's not that much writing and it's similar to Year 9.
- There is no setting so I feel that the language lessons are inclusive and there is no judgement of you if you get something wrong.
- Languages are beneficial if you want to travel or take a gap year.



FRANC



GCSE GEOGRAPHY

Head of Department: Mrs Emma Coombs

Aims of the course



Geography focuses on PLACES and PEOPLE so it is directly relevant to all students. You will learn about local, national and global issues and become aware of events around you, understand the relationships between people and the environment and appreciate that different individuals have different views. You will have opportunities through fieldwork for first-hand investigation of places, environments and human behaviour. You will develop a range of life skills including ICT, problem solving, team working and communication skills.

Nature of the course



The world in which we live is likely to change more in the next fifty years than it has ever done before. Geography explains why, and helps to prepare you for those changes. You also have the chance to take part in fieldwork looking at both human and physical geographical issues. This will be examined in Unit 2 when you will study the UK's geographical issues.

Homework



Homework will be used to support your learning both within school and outside on fieldwork. You will be asked to do research, complete decision-making exercises, practise geographical skills such as interpreting maps, photographs and data and prepare for exams.

Assessment



The final assessment consists of three exams on the Units below:

Unit 1: Global geographical issues

- The Hazardous earth looking at both atmospheric and tectonic hazards.
- Development dynamics looking at global inequality, with a focus on an emerging nation.
- Challenges of an urbanising world looking at problems in megacities with a specific case study.

Unit 2: The UK's geographical issues

- The UK's evolving and varied physical landscape.
- The UK's evolving human landscape looking at change over time.
- Geographical investigations to include fieldwork on one physical and one human geographical issue.

Unit 3: Making geographical decisions. This is a written exam assessing your ability to make decisions about geographical issues. This will be based on an issue from People and the biosphere, Forests under threat and Consuming resources, drawing on key concepts from Units 1 and 2.

All three examinations are 1 hour and 30 minutes. Paper 1 and 2 are worth 37.5% each and Paper 3 is worth 25%.

There will be regular assessments based on past examination questions to assess your progress.

The future



The transferable skills that Geography fosters are an asset in the complex world of employment today. Geography is about the future and encourages flexible thinking and problem-solving skills. If you are successful you will be accepted on to the A-Level course in Geography, which can in turn lead to a degree course and employment. Geographers are very welcome in many fields of employment.

STUDENT VOICE

Geography

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Geography involves learning a wide range of statistics and definitions, which can complement other subjects that use similar skills and coursework. You'll revisit topics covered in KS3, so paying attention now will help later. The subject includes a lot of writing and is ideal for students interested in the environment. Because there's a large amount of content, it's important to start making flashcards and revision notes early in the course to stay organised and confident.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- It's really interesting. Recently we've been learning about industrialisation and I can see how it relates to the world around us.
- I have enjoyed the case study of India where we learned how different countries in the world are either emerging, developing or developed.
- I love the fieldwork, including trips to rivers and to the coast.
- I love how much new information I have learned about the world, both politically and economically.
- The fieldwork helps you understand what you learn in class.
- I've enjoyed learning about landscapes and urbanisation.



GCSE HISTORY

Head of Department: Mr Ben Evans

Aims of the course



Through the GCSE History course, you will gain an understanding of the modern world and its problems. The historical skills that you develop will help you analyse events, interpret them, and provide evidence to construct reasoned arguments. These skills are transferrable and History is a useful qualification for many careers, especially those in business and management, law, medicine, journalism and the leisure industry.

Nature of the course



The History course is broad and provides students with the opportunity to study a range of different topics throughout Years 10 and 11. These include: Medicine in Britain c1250-present day, Medicine in the trenches of WWI, The American West c1835-1895, Anglo-Saxon & Norman England c1060-88 and Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39.

Homework



Homework is an important part of the History course and, as with other subjects, will be set frequently. Homework tasks are varied and are very useful in consolidating your learning and extending your knowledge of the topics studied. It will be important that all tasks are completed and handed in on time.

Assessment

All assessment is completed through external examinations, which will take place at the end of Year 11.



Paper 1 - Thematic study & historical environment - 1 hour 20 minutes - 30% of the total qualification. Topics examined:

- Medicine in Britain, c.1250–present.
- The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches.

Paper 2 – Period study & British depth study - 1 hour 50 minutes - 40% of the total qualification. Topics examined:

- The American West, c1835- c1895
- Anglo-Saxon & Norman England, c1060-88

Paper 3 – Modern depth study - 1 hour 30 minutes - 30% of the total qualification. Topics examined:

- Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39
-

Deadlines



Your History teacher will inform you about the deadlines for homework. In addition, you will be advised on revision strategies for internal examinations in Years 10 and 11, as well as for the final GCSE examinations. Revision sessions will be arranged where necessary and you will be encouraged to revise topics yourself.

The future



If you are successful at GCSE you will be able to study A-Level History. This can in turn lead to study of History in Higher Education. The Department has a well-established tradition of students continuing their History studies at university.

STUDENT VOICE

History

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Studying history means being confident in learning key dates and constructing clear PEEL paragraphs, especially because 16-mark questions demand detailed, extended writing. There's a lot of content to take in, but its interesting nature makes it easier to remember. Although the subject requires plenty of revision and a strong grasp of knowledge, it's incredibly informative and offers valuable insight into the past, even if the number of dates and details can feel overwhelming at times.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- The topics like Medicine over time and American West are really interesting.
- You gain a deeper understanding of the past and how different cultures did things.
- Lots of transferable skills!
- There are really interesting topics to study, especially Nazi Germany.
- I love learning about the history of my own country.



GCSE BUSINESS

Head of Department: Ms Helen Judson



Aims of the course

Business is relevant and topical in today's world as it shapes our daily life. The aim of the GCSE course is to develop your knowledge and understanding of how businesses operate, the decisions they make and how these can affect us.



Nature of the course

Throughout the course you will learn about different contexts ranging from small business enterprises to large companies and those operating in local, national and global contexts. The course will develop your problem-solving and decision-making skills as you investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues. You will study six units: Business in the real world; Influences on business; Company operations; Human resources; Marketing; and Finance.



Homework

Homework will be set to support, consolidate, and enhance your learning from lessons. Tasks will vary including carrying out research, learning key terms, online quizzes and planning and practising exam questions.



Assessment

There are two written exams at the end of Year 11. Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes, worth 90 marks and accounts for 50% of your GCSE grade.

Paper 1: Influences of operations and Human Resources Management on business activity

Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity

Both papers follow the same question format:

- Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions (20 marks)
- Section B has one case study/ data response stimuli with a mixture of short and longer questions (34 marks)
- Section C has one case study/ data response stimuli with a mixture of short and longer questions (36 marks)



Deadlines

Homework deadlines are set by your teachers and must be met.



The future

GCSE Business Studies provides a stepping-stone onto A-Level Business, A-level Economics, BTEC Level 3 Business and complements all other A-Level and Sixth Form options. It provides progression to further study, apprenticeships and careers in Business, Economics, Accounting & Finance, Marketing, Human Resources and Business Management.

STUDENT VOICE

Business

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Business is a really useful subject because it can lead to loads of different opportunities in the future, especially if you're not totally sure what career you want yet. It has some equations in it, so it suits people who like Maths, but there's also quite a bit of writing involved. To do well, you need to revise the key business terms and make sure you know the definitions properly, because they come up a lot in the exams. It also helps to practise exam-style questions regularly, especially the longer ones, as this builds confidence and improves your overall performance.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I have enjoyed how it's different from other subjects. It's very interesting and useful and it's nice to learn a new subject we haven't done before.
- I have enjoyed learning about marketing and the different types of strategies that businesses use to increase sales.
- The lessons are straightforward and the topics are interesting.
- Finance is fun!



GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

Head of Department: Ms Andrea Alleyne

Aims of the course



The GCSE course in Computer Science is designed to develop your knowledge and understanding of current and emerging technology functions. You will learn skills in computer programming (both graphical and text based), mobile app development, project management, collaborative development and how to operate in a web-enabled environment.

Nature of the course



During this course, students will develop skills and understanding of computer software through the theoretical and practical development of computer programs. As the course progresses, students will learn to create and write mobile apps, games and computer programs to solve problems. As they develop these practical skills, they will also explore the developments of technology in society, examining its impact on research concepts relating to software development.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to develop your coding, planning and problem-solving skills. The tasks set will be varied and will help to expand your subject knowledge. The majority of the homework tasks will be set on “Teams” which means they will have a submission date. Past exam questions develop exam skills and the ability to communicate complex concepts with clarity.

Assessment



Computer Systems: 50% of total marks.

A written examination of 1 hour 30 minutes. A variety of question styles are used: multiple-choice, short answer, extended writing and open response. The paper starts with a brief scenario so that students can engage with the questions.

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming: 50% of total marks.

A written examination of 1 hour 30 minutes. A variety of question styles are used: multiple-choice, short answer, extended writing and open response. The paper starts with a brief scenario so that students can engage with the questions.

Deadlines



Students will be advised on deadlines for each element in advance, with a timetable for the course activities so that they can prepare and organise their time effectively.

The future



The skills developed in Computer Science will provide you with a solid basis for progression to A-Level Computer Science and beyond. Students may progress to a career in the Engineering and Science industries such as software programming, cyber security, app developing, web design, systems analyst or game programmer.

STUDENT VOICE

Computer Science

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Students should be aware that the subject involves a significant amount of theory alongside practical coding, so it's important to consider this when making their choice. It suits those who already enjoy coding and are willing to build their skills further by practising in their own time. Success comes from staying organised, breaking tasks down, and applying knowledge to different scenarios and contexts. Starting revision early and reviewing content regularly will also make a big difference to confidence and progress

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I enjoy learning about how a computer works and doing the coding behind it.
- We constantly recap on knowledge and this really helps. We also do in-depth analyses.
- I like the mix of theory and coding.
- The topic of computational thinking allows you to think deeper and to problem solve.
- I like the laws and learning the Computing rights we have.
- I find there are many cross-curricular links to other subjects like Maths and Business Studies.



GCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Head of Department: Ms Tina Dudley

Aims of the course



GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

Nature of the course



The course will involve practical work and problem solving using a range of materials, components, processes and systems. Students will develop skills in designing and making as well as investigating the core technical principles required in the selection and use of materials. In Year 10 you will learn new skills and techniques and manufacture a range of products. In Year 11, in order to complete the non-examined assessment, you will have the opportunity to work in a material of your choice for the “design and make” task.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to develop your research, design and investigative skills. It will also give you opportunities to work with focus groups and your peers. It will be important always to complete it to a high standard and hand it in on time as some lessons will start with a homework critique. Tasks will include past exam questions. Through homework you will develop exam skills and the ability to critically analyse products and processes in a clear and concise way.

Assessment



Final Examination: 50% of total marks.

You will be entered for one 2 hour written paper. The examination will test students' knowledge and understanding, using design-based questions as well as multiple choice, short and long answer style questions.

Non-Examined Assessment: 50% of total marks.

The non-examined assessment will consist of one single “design and make” task that you will be able to select from a range of given contexts set by the exam board. The task will enable the students to identify, investigate and outline design possibilities to address client needs and wants. They then generate and develop a range of ideas which will be manufactured, tested and evaluated by the client as well as third parties.

Deadlines



The non-examined assessment will be undertaken at the beginning of the summer term in Year 10.

The future



The skills acquired on the Design and Technology GCSE course will provide students with a firm foundation for A-Level Product Design. It will also prepare students for work in the fields of product development, product design, architecture, furniture design, construction, engineering, graphic design, web design, theatre & film, interior design, design management, retail or marketing.

STUDENT VOICE

Design & Technology

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

In Year 11, students complete a major project alongside a substantial amount of coursework, so staying organised and keeping up with deadlines is essential. The subject also requires learning about a range of different materials, which can be challenging if the content doesn't naturally interest you. Because the coursework is demanding, strong prioritisation and consistent effort are key to staying on track and managing the workload effectively.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I really enjoy the subject of Design and Technology as it is a hands-on subject where you make different products with different types of material. I enjoy working with wood and I also enjoy designing and creating original products. I like that the subject is practical which makes a change from some of my other subjects.
- I love the practical aspect of it. I want to pursue a career in set design and so this subject appealed to me. I have learnt many technical skills and worked with different types of materials which are all relevant to my future career plans.



GCSE TEXTILE DESIGN

Head of Department: Ms Tina Dudley

Aims of the course



This course aims to inspire students to develop their creativity and technical skills by exploring the world of textile design. Through hands-on learning, students will engage with a wide range of techniques and processes, gaining confidence in designing and making decorative, functional, and experimental textiles. They will investigate themes such as fashion, interior design, and costume, preparing for further study or careers in the creative industries.

Nature of the course



Students will explore a variety of textile disciplines, including fashion design, printed and dyed textiles, and digital textile techniques. The course is delivered through practical, experimental projects that encourage creativity and innovation. Students will learn to create surface patterns, experiment with texture and embellishment, and construct textile products, from garments to decorative items. This engaging and dynamic course is ideal for those interested in pursuing a future in fashion, costume, or interior design.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to develop your research, design and investigative skills. It will also give you opportunities to work with focus groups and your peers. It will be important always to complete it to a high standard and hand it in on time as some lessons will start with a homework critique. Tasks will include past exam questions. Through homework you will develop exam skills and the ability to critically analyse products and processes in a clear and concise way.

Assessment

The course is divided into two components:

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

Students will create a sketchbook portfolio showcasing a range of sketchbooks and practical experiments. This will include textile samples, design developments, and finished pieces. Students will document their processes, explain their techniques, and include photographs of their three-dimensional outcomes. This component allows students to demonstrate their creativity and technical skills across various projects.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)

The exam board sets a design brief for this component. Students will research, develop, and refine their ideas before completing a final piece during a 10-hour practical exam, conducted over several days. This component highlights students' ability to independently plan and execute a textile project.

There is no written examination for this course; assessment focuses on practical and creative work.

Deadlines



The teacher will advise students of deadlines for each coursework component in Years 10 and 11 and for formal examinations. The teacher will punctuate the year with mini deadlines in order to assess students' progress.

The Future



This course equips students with valuable skills for further education and careers in the creative industries. It provides an excellent foundation for A-Level Fashion and Textiles, which can be studied at Newlands Sixth Form! Potential career paths include fashion design, costume design, textile engineering, interior design, and other roles within the fashion and creative sectors. Students will gain transferable skills in problem-solving, critical thinking, and innovation, which are highly valued across a wide range of industries, including marketing, product development, and project management.

STUDENT VOICE

Textile Design

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

You don't need to be exceptional at drawing to succeed in this subject; while drawing is included, there are many other ways to express your ideas through different materials. Most of the assessment is based on sketchbook work and project development, so the course suits students who work steadily, stay organised, and are willing to spend extra time refining their pieces rather than leaving tasks to the last minute.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I enjoy Art Textiles because I get to improve my own personal skills and I enjoy sewing and designing to express my creativity.
- GCSE Textiles is the best Subject and it's so fun and a nice break from other Subjects because you get to be creative.
- I really enjoy GCSE Textile design and recommend it to anyone thinking of taking it!
- Textiles is creative and fun. I always look forward to, it it's my favourite GCSE subject.
- Textiles is really fun and you get a lot of creative freedom.



GCSE DRAMA

Head of Department: Mrs Vanessa Hine

Aims of the course



The course aims to develop your ability to perform scripted and non-scripted Drama to an audience. You will support your non-scripted performance with a substantial notebook, analysing and evaluating both the performance and the rehearsal process. This will be shown through a Devising Log and Live Performance Evaluation.

Nature of the course



You should enjoy acting and working collaboratively with others in practical work. You will need to work in groups for devising pieces, but may choose to complete a series of monologues, duologues or group extracts for scripted work. In Year 10, you will learn how to use a variety of performance and rehearsal techniques in order to inform your devised and scripted drama. You will then be able to recall, select and communicate your knowledge and understanding of Drama to generate, explore and develop ideas. You will learn to apply practical skills to communicate through performance and you will learn to analyse and evaluate your own work, the work of others and that of a live theatre performance you will have seen. You will study the script of a set play in depth and answer questions on a text in an examination. Throughout the course, you will continue to build on your skills, producing a final devised piece, and a scripted piece. These will be examined by an AQA examiner from outside the school. A number of theatre visits will also be arranged. Attendance at these will be compulsory. For students with a keen interest in the technical aspects of theatre, you may have the option to study areas such as set development, sound production, puppet creation, or costume design as an alternative to the devised script in Component 2. You will, however, still need to perform in Component 3.

Homework



Homework time is used to learn lines, rehearse, develop ideas and practise answering questions on the set play, as well as recording the process to produce your devising logbook. The department encourages all students taking GCSE Drama to make use of the Drama department during lunchtimes and after school for extra rehearsals. In Year 11, there will be some compulsory after school rehearsals to ensure work is performed to the highest standard.

Assessment



The course is made up of two practical units and one written examination.

Component 1 is the written paper of 1 hour 45 minutes and students are expected to:

- Answer questions on the play studied.
- Analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance.

Component 2 is devised work with a supporting logbook. The marks for this unit are for practical and written work.

Component 3 is a performance of a play script. The final assessment for this usually takes place in the March of Year 11 in front of an examiner.

Practical work – 60%, Examination – 40%

Deadlines



Each teacher will advise pupils of precise deadlines for both practical assessments and examination practice.

The future



Students who are successful will be accepted on to the Drama and Theatre Studies A-Level course. The A-Level is accepted by all universities and does not limit anyone to a Drama degree. Past students have gone on to study a range of degree courses such as Psychology, Business, Law, English and Sociology, as well as Drama.

STUDENT VOICE

Drama

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Drama requires commitment both in and out of the classroom, so you need to be prepared to learn your lines and make time for rehearsals outside of lessons. Although performance is a key element, the subject also involves written work such as character summaries and scene synopses, so being ready to write as well as act is important for success.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I can be myself in Drama.
- I love performing in a group and being creative.
- I enjoy learning how to perform different roles and being able to express myself.
- We get the time to practise performing in class and doing this in front of your peers helps you grow in confidence.
- I like making my own performance but as an individual in a group.
- GCSE Drama is so much fun! You do a lot of acting and an added bonus is that you get to have complete control of the scene and do whatever you want with it.



GCSE FINE ART

Head of Department: Miss Kellie Raftery

Aims of the course



This course aims to develop your understanding of the skills and analysis needed in the visual arts. You will investigate the work of a variety of artists and cultures, which will extend your knowledge and understanding of the history of Art and its impact on contemporary practitioners. You will be expected to explore and develop your practical skills using a variety of different media in both 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional forms. It is essential that you are able to evaluate your work as it progresses, in order to achieve a successful final outcome.

Nature of the course



Over the two-year course, you will produce a portfolio, which will contain a body of work addressing the four assessment criteria. You will be given starting points, briefs or scenarios to inspire your creative explorations. Visits to galleries and museums are an essential part of your learning and will enable you to further develop your skills in recording from direct observation. Working independently is important, as it will enable you to extend your ideas and research. Each unit will produce a variety of final pieces showing how your ideas come together in inventive ways.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to support your work in class and to help you to plan your time in lessons effectively. The homework you produce is vital as part of your formally assessable work. As your work develops, homework tasks will be personalised in order to reflect your own creative journey. Targets will be set during one-to-one discussions with your teacher. A minimum of 1 hour 20 minutes per week should be spent on homework. The Department will be available after school for you to work on homework and independent tasks.

Assessment



The coursework portfolio is made up of at least two projects, which may include sketchbook entries, mounted pieces and three-dimensional works. All the work submitted will be personal, informed and meaningful. Component 1 'Portfolio' forms 60% of the overall GCSE mark. A third project, Component 2, is an externally set assignment in Year 11 and forms the remaining 40% of the overall GCSE grade. A period of preparation will be given during which you will address the assessment criteria. You will produce the examination piece over 10 hours of supervised time. All work is assessed and marked out of 96 maximum marks. Selected candidate work is externally moderated by AQA.

Deadlines



The department will advise students of deadlines for each coursework component in Years 10 and 11 and for formal examinations. Each teacher will punctuate the year with 'mini' deadlines to assess students' progress.

The future



Students who are successful will be accepted on to the A-Level Fine Art and/or Photography courses. This can in turn lead to application for Art Foundation courses and specified degree courses at colleges and universities locally or nationally. The department has a long history of successful applications at all levels and provides valuable advice about current courses and the required content of an interview portfolio.

STUDENT VOICE

Fine Art

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

There's a lot of coursework and homework, and you have to be good at managing your time. You need to stick to deadlines, otherwise you'll fall behind.

Sometimes you copy from an image, and other times you learn how to use Photoshop and mount your pictures onto pages. It's the subject I spend the most time on at home, but it's really satisfying once a piece is finished.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I really enjoy the focus on practical work and I like how the tasks we do and the mediums we use are very varied.
- Art has really developed my skills. It is creative and involves a lot of choice.
- I like the freedom I get to be creative.



GCSE PHOTOGRAPHY

Head of Department: Miss Kellie Raftery

Aims of the course



This course aims to encourage students to discover their own talents and interests using a variety of different materials in their work. There are opportunities to develop critical thinking whilst learning the skills required for photography. Students will relate their work to that of other photographers, artists, designers, cultures and periods of historical interest relevant to each project.

Nature of the course



Over the two-year course you will produce a portfolio (digitally) which will contain a body of work addressing the four assessment criteria. During your study you will be given starting points, briefs or scenarios to inspire your creative explorations. Visits to galleries and museums are an essential part of your learning and enable you to further develop your skills in recording from direct observation, using a variety of media and processes. Working independently is important as it will enable you to extend your ideas and research. Each unit will produce a variety of final pieces showing how your ideas come together in inventive ways.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to support your work in class and to help you to plan your time in lessons effectively. The homework you produce contributes to your formally assessable work. As your work develops, homework tasks will be personalised in order to reflect your own creative journey. Targets will be set during one-to-one discussions with your teacher. A minimum of 1 hour 20 minutes per week should be spent on homework. The Department will be open and available after school for you to work on homework and independent tasks.

Assessment



The coursework portfolio is made up of at least two projects, which may include sketchbook entries, mounted pieces and photographs. All the work submitted will be personal, informed and meaningful. Component 1 'Portfolio' forms 60% of the overall GCSE mark. A second project, Component 2, is an externally set assignment in Year 11 and forms the remaining 40% of the overall GCSE grade. A period of preparation will be given during which you will address the assessment criteria. You will produce the examination piece over 10 hours of supervised time. All work is assessed and marked out of 96 maximum marks. Selected candidate work is externally moderated by AQA.

Deadlines



The department will advise students of deadlines for each coursework component in Years 10 and 11 and for formal examinations. Each teacher will punctuate the year with mini deadlines to assess students' progress.

The future



Students who are successful can be accepted on to the A-Level Photography course. This can in turn lead to Art Foundation courses and specified degree courses at colleges and universities locally or nationally. Related careers include film/video editor, graphic designer, medical illustrator, press photographer or art therapist.

STUDENT VOICE

Photography

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Staying on top of coursework and deadlines is essential, as editing and planning often take longer than expected. It helps to take plenty of photos so you have a wide range to choose from, even if some aren't perfect.

Experimenting with different angles, techniques and ideas will also strengthen your creativity and lead to more interesting final pieces.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I've loved being able to express my ideas visually and tell stories through images. It's a completely different way of communicating.
- Exploring editing tools like using Photoshop and seeing how small changes can transform a photo; this has been one of my favourite parts.
- I've enjoyed working on projects that allow me to be creative and develop my own style.



GCSE FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION

Head of Department: Ms Tina Dudley

Aims of the course



The course aims to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in food preparation and nutrition. It will also provide the opportunity to focus on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of diet, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. It will nurture students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Nature of the course

The course will develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. The majority of the course will be delivered through preparation and making activities, enabling students to make the connections between theory and practice.



In Year 10 you will learn food preparation skills, which are integrated into five core topics: Food, nutrition and health; Food science; Food safety; Food choice; and Food provenance. The range of food and ingredients studied should reflect the recommended guidelines for a healthy diet based on the main food commodity groups. This theory knowledge will be tested in the summer examination. You will also carry out practical investigations throughout the year.

In Year 11, in order to complete the non-examined assessment, you will investigate an area of food preparation from a choice of tasks set by the examination board and then complete a practical research assessment on a topic set by them.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to develop your time planning and

organisational skills, as well as to support your practical cooking lessons. Many homework tasks will include time planning, choosing and purchasing ingredients for you to cook the following lesson. You will develop exam skills and the ability to communicate detailed responses on a variety of topics.

Assessment

Final examination: 50% of total marks.

Students will be entered for one 1 hour 45 minute written paper. The examination will test students' knowledge and understanding using multiple choice, short and long answer style questions.



Non-examined assessment: 50% of total marks.

The non-examined assessment will consist of two tasks. Task 1, equating to 15%, is a written or electronic report (1,500-2,000 words) of a practical investigation and is completed over 10 hours. Task 2, equating to 35%, is a practical, preparation assessment completed over 20 hours, during which time the student will be expected to prepare and cook three final dishes.



Deadlines

The non-examined assessment tasks will be undertaken in Year 11.



The future

Upon completion of this course, students will be qualified to go on to further study, or embark on an apprenticeship or full-time career in the catering industries, hospitality, food product development or a career in nutrition.

STUDENT VOICE

Food Preparation & Nutrition

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Coursework in this subject can be time-consuming, so dedication and strong time-management skills are essential, especially as some tasks are timed. It's important to understand that the course involves a significant amount of writing and experimentation – it's not just cooking. There is also a substantial amount of theory to learn, and you will be tested on this regularly, so consistent revision and organisation are key to keeping up.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- This is my most enjoyable subject. It's interesting to learn how what we eat shapes who we are and how we operate.
- Cooking is fun and light-hearted; I find this a break from the writing I do in my traditional academic subjects.
- This is my favourite subject because I get to express myself through my cooking and use my imagination. However there can be a lot of coursework that builds up if you do not stay on top of it.
- Food Preparation & Nutrition is a great subject as it teaches you skills that I will use in the future. It is fun and I really enjoy cooking all the different dishes that we get to make. It is coursework heavy, but you also get to be off timetable for a whole day to cook.
- I love how I can cook a variety of different foods and it's a great change from my other lessons, where more writing is required. Some people think it is just cooking, but we learn about health and nutrition too.
- I have really enjoyed the Food Preparation & Nutrition course; it is very different from my other subjects. Some work is practical, some work is writing, which I really like. I love developing my cooking skills and now can cook really well. Studying this course has made me consider a career in the food industry because I have developed a passion for cooking, and I would like to continue to develop both my skills and my knowledge.



GCSE MUSIC

Head of Department: Mr Chris Beach

Aims of the course



This highly practical course integrates listening, composing and performing, giving you valuable insight and skills for accessing the second largest visible industry in the country. An enjoyment of music and willingness to perform are essential on this course as the emphasis is on learning through music-making. You will develop your performing skills through regular practice and performances. You will analyse and understand how composers write music in different genres and then apply this knowledge in a practical way by composing two pieces of your own.

You must be able to either play an instrument or sing to a reasonable standard, but there is no specific grade standard you must have reached to complete the course. An ability to read music notation would put you at a distinct advantage.

Nature of the course



The range of music studied on this course is wide and there are four Areas of Study: Musical Forms & Devices, Music for Ensembles, Film Music and Popular Music. As part of your learning, you will study closely two set-pieces: Badinerie by J.S.Bach for Flute and String Orchestra and Africa by Toto. Along with your study of the four topics, you will build on your knowledge of composing using practical composition tasks during the course. You will also work on your performance skills in a variety of situations including regular involvement in the department's extensive extra-curricular programme.

Homework



You will be expected to rehearse performance pieces and to work on composition coursework in your own time, in addition to regular homework to reinforce learning from lessons. You will have priority over the equipment in the Music block, including Mu2 and the recording studio, and you will be encouraged to take advantage of this. You will also be expected to immerse yourself in the department's extra-curricular programme.

Assessment

Component 1 – Performing (30%)

Perform and record 2 performances – 1 solo and 1 ensemble

Component 2 – Composing (30%)

Compose two pieces of music (1 set to a given brief; 1 is a free composition)

Component 3 – Appraising Music (40%)

1 hour 15 min exam at the end of Year 11 focusing on the four Areas of Study



Deadlines

These are in place to help you, as this is a coursework led subject. You will be given a list of deadlines at the start of each year. We are here to help you succeed, so if you know you are struggling to meet a deadline you will be expected to come to us for help.



The future

A high proportion of students who are successful at GCSE go on to study Music at A-Level, and every year we also have students who go on to do a Music degree at University. Universities and employers have a high regard for Music as a rigorous academic subject. Traditional future careers involving music include teaching, performing, composing, music management, music production, music therapy and stage and theatre management.



STUDENT VOICE

Music

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Music involves learning a lot of terminology, so regular revision is important. Composition tasks should not be left to the last minute, as they require thoughtful planning and creativity. Practising your instrument or singing regularly at home is essential to keep improving. While reading notation is helpful, extra theory lessons are available if you find this challenging.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- Composing is a lot of fun as we are given more creative freedom and choice than at Key Stage 3.
- The theory is not as hard as I thought it might be, and we are given lots of help where we struggle.
- There are lots of trips and extra-curricular opportunities.
- I have developed both my performance and teamwork skills, and I enjoy working together in groups or as a class.
- As a creative subject, it provides an important contrast to the rest of my subjects.
- If you are good at your chosen instrument/voice and are having lessons, you have a massive head start.
- As part of the course, you get to learn about the history of music as well as other genres and cultures of music.



GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Head of Department: Miss Michelle Claxton



Aims of the course

Students who wish to study PE at GCSE need to have a strong interest in sporting activities. The course covers a variety of practical activities and whilst a high level of performance is not essential, it will help your practical and coursework marks if you participate regularly in at least one sport. The overall aim of the course is to increase your understanding of both the practical and theoretical elements of Physical Education. You will be introduced to the physiology and anatomy of the human body, topics surrounding physical training and fitness as well as to the psychological and social aspects of sport.



Nature of the course

Throughout the course, you will have three theory and two practical lessons each fortnight. There is a significant amount of scientific content in the theory side of the course and an interest in Biology is useful. Theory lessons will consider a variety of issues in sport and in how the body works. These will be examined in the written papers. In practical lessons, you will cover a range of sports including both team sports and individual activities. These will include, but not be limited to, netball, badminton and tennis, as well as swimming, trampolining, gym, dance and athletics.



Homework

Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to develop understanding of topics covered in class. Both theory and practical homework will be set throughout the course. The department also encourages all students to get involved in extracurricular clubs as this improves your skills and understanding of sport in general. Attending a sporting or physical activity club outside of school is essential to help you to enhance your grades.



Assessment

The assessment is made up of 60% theory, 30% practical and 10% coursework. The theory side of the course is assessed in two examinations at the end of Year 11. Within the practical assessment, students will need to select three performance areas, which could include activities within school or outside such as Skiing or Rowing. (Each student will need to choose one individual activity, one team and one other). For the NEA or coursework component, students will be assessed on their ability to analyse their fitness levels and skills in one of their chosen sports and to plan, carry out, and evaluate a “Personal Exercise Programme” (PEP), which is a fitness training programme, over 6 weeks.



Deadlines

Students will have deadlines throughout the course. The final deadline for their PEP coursework will be in Year 11. Additionally, those students who wish to use sports that we cannot assess in school (e.g. skiing, rowing, horse riding etc) will have additional deadlines for submission of video footage of their performances.



The future

Students who are successful will be accepted onto the A-Level course in PE, which can then provide a stepping-stone to university courses and/or a career in sport.

STUDENT VOICE

Physical Education

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

It's important to know that not every sport is included in the list of GCSE PE activities, so check carefully. If you play additional sports outside of school, this can give you an advantage by broadening your skills and experience.

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- PE is my favourite subject! The practical is fun and the theory is interesting because it helps me understand how the body works in sport.
- There is a good balance between practical and theory lessons.
- Very interesting and lots of crossover with Biology, so they help each other.
- We do a quick quiz every lesson to recap on what we learned before.



BTEC SPORT & COACHING PRINCIPLES NEW FOR 2026!

Head of Department: Miss Michelle Claxton

Aims of the course



Students who wish to study the Vocational Award in Sport and Coaching Principles need to have a strong interest in sport, particularly in leading/coaching within a sporting activity. The course covers a variety of practical activities and whilst a high level of performance is not essential, it will help your practical knowledge of the sport in order to lead/coach a session and improve performance. In both theory and practical lessons, you will be introduced to the physiology and anatomy of the human body, and to topics related to physical training and fitness as well as coaching principles.

Nature of the course



For this course you will have five lessons per fortnight and complete three units over the two years. Unit 1 (Fitness for Sport) includes learning about the adaptations that take place in the body following exercise, how training can lead to improvements in fitness, and the planning of training programmes. The aim of this unit is to develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to plan training programmes to improve an individual's fitness. For this unit, there is a significant amount of scientific content, so an interest in Biology is useful. Unit 2 (Improving Sporting Performance) examines how different areas of sporting performance can be improved, analysing key strengths and weaknesses. Unit 3 (Coaching Principles) will focus on the factors involved in sports coaching. Within this unit you will have to plan and lead a coaching session within a sporting activity, and then evaluate it through a written piece of work.

Homework



Homework is an essential part of the course and will be used to develop understanding of topics taught in class. The department also encourages all students to get involved in extracurricular clubs as this improves your skills and understanding of sport in general. This can also be in a leadership role rather than as a participant as it will help and assist you with the leadership aspect of this course.

Assessment



There is an assessment within each of the units:

Unit 1: A written examination at the end of Year 11, which is worth 40% of the overall qualification.

Unit 2: A written controlled assessment worth 25% of the overall grade, which will be completed in year 10.

Unit 3: A controlled assessment worth 35% of the overall qualification. Within this unit students will have to plan, lead and evaluate their own coaching session within a sporting activity. This is completed in Year 10.

The Award gained at the end of the course is either a Level 2 or Level 1, at Distinction*, Distinction, Merit or Pass.

Deadlines



Students will have deadlines throughout the course for homework and coursework. It is vital that they meet these deadlines to be successful in the course.

The future



Students who are successful at Level 2 of the Award will be accepted onto the A-Level course in PE, providing they fulfil the requirements of the course. This can then provide a stepping-stone to university courses and/or a career in sport. Alternatively, the Award will provide a broad sporting knowledge base from which students may decide to pursue further sports-based courses at either Level 2 or 3 at college.

**"CHOOSE
SUBJECTS THAT
CHALLENGE
YOU, EXCITE
YOU, AND HELP
YOU GROW
INTO WHO YOU
WANT TO
BECOME."**



GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Head of Department: Mr Emmanuel Karley

Aims of the course



You will consider questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling you to develop your own attitudes towards religious issues. You will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics have influenced our culture. You will develop analytical and critical thinking skills and the ability to work with abstract ideas, which will help prepare you for further study and adult life.

Nature of the course



There are two compulsory components. Component 1 is the study of religious beliefs, teachings and practices with reference to Christianity and Islam. Component 2 consists of religious, philosophical and ethical studies.

In component 1 both Christianity and Islam will be studied and will include investigation into the following topics: The nature of God, Creation, Life after Death, Worship and Festivals.

In Component 2 you will study four of the following six themes: Relationships and Families, Religion and Life, The Existence of God, Peace and Conflict, Crime and Punishment, Human Rights and Social Justice.

Homework



Homework is set in order to enhance and complement the teaching and learning which takes place during lessons. Researching relevant topics develops knowledge and understanding of philosophical and moral issues. Completing exam style questions demonstrates the ability to communicate reasoned opinions on a variety of issues. This in turn contributes to both academic and personal development.

Assessment



There are two written exams at the end of Year 11. Each exam lasts 1 hour 45 minutes. Students are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of topics and their ability to construct well-informed and balanced arguments, which include their own considered opinion.

The future



The skills students develop through the study of religion are beneficial to a variety of careers. Communication, analysis, evaluation and the ability to write persuasively are skills which are highly valued by employers. Students gaining the required grade at GCSE have the option to study Religious Studies at A-Level and some students choose to study Philosophy at university. This course also helps students prepare for adult life in a diverse society that is part of a global community.

STUDY PLUS (ENGLISH AND MATHS)

English - Mr Aaron Kerrigan, Maths - Mr David Willmott



Study Plus

We will be inviting some of our students to take advantage of the Study Plus option.

Why Study Plus?

This course will accelerate your progress in English and Mathematics so that you have a better chance of achieving a higher grade. Study Plus will also have a positive impact on attainment in your other GCSE subjects through the application of literacy, numeracy and general learning skills.



Course delivery

- Two lessons per fortnight will be delivered by a Maths teacher.
- Two lessons per fortnight will be delivered by an English teacher.
- One lesson per fortnight will be delivered by either a Maths or an English teacher, with the aim of applying general learning skills to other subjects.



Who is this aimed at?

Students who would benefit are those for whom extra contact time could enhance their GCSE grades and long-term prospects.



Please note: you will receive a personal invitation to join this course in advance of the options process.

SKILLS BUILDER

Head of Department: Ms Leigh Exworth



Skills Builder

We will be inviting some of our students to take advantage of the Distinctive Curriculum Option.

Why Skills Builder?

This course will focus on enhancing students' core learning skills through a variety of means to enable success across their wider curriculum. Learners will use an exciting platform called the "Skills Builder Framework" to consider the core learning skills appropriate to future careers, such as speaking, listening, problem solving, creativity, teamwork, leadership, "Aiming High" and positive thinking. Our aim is to develop students' confidence in their own ability to achieve well. This option will also give students the opportunity to work collaboratively as a smaller group to understand and develop their own talents.



Course delivery

This option will be delivered over five lessons each fortnight and will also cover aspects of careers and future planning.



Who is this aimed at?

Students who would benefit are those for whom focus on learning skills as a whole is appropriate. This is a recognised qualification, but not a GCSE qualification.



The Future

Skills Builder should help selected students to achieve with greater confidence across their other subjects. Many employers and colleges recognise the "Skills Builder Partnership" and students can continue their development of these skills in our sixth form, at college or within an apprenticeship setting.



Please note: you will receive a personal invitation to join this course in advance of the options process.

STUDENT VOICE

Skills Builder & Study Plus

STUDY PLUS

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- I have found that Study Plus has enabled me to improve in English Language – I have gone up a whole grade since last year and I am now on track to pass!

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Because this is a smaller class you can always approach the teacher individually for help.

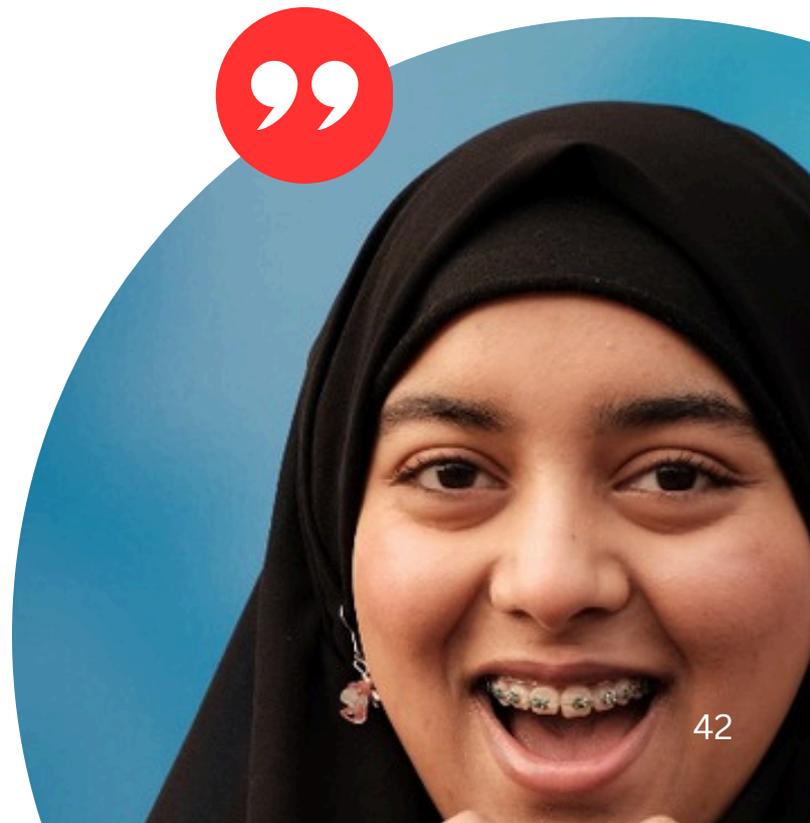
SKILLS BUILDER

WHAT HAVE CURRENT STUDENTS ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT:

- My teacher helps me on a 1:2:1 basis to understand which skills I need to improve upon.
- In this subject I have learned how to write a CV and how to apply for Sixth Form and College courses and this has been very helpful for me.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- This option helps you with things you need to know about how the world works.



BTEC

LEVEL 1/2 HOME COOKING SKILLS

Head of Department: Ms Tina Dudley



Aims of the Course

We will be inviting some of our students to take advantage of the BTEC Home Cooking option. The BTEC Level 1 and Level 2 Awards in Home Cooking Skills are suitable for learners to develop:

- knowledge, understanding and confidence to cook meals at home
- an understanding of how to economise when planning a meal
- an ability to transfer skills learned to different recipes
- an ability to inspire others by transferring that knowledge.



Course Delivery

Some of the five lessons each fortnight will involve planning and preparation but as many as possible will teach kitchen-based practical skills. Ingredients will need to be purchased and brought to school.



Assessment

There will be on-going internal assessments which will be marked on a 'pass' basis according to the set criteria. There are no examinations for this course. Instead, you need to pass all of the ongoing assessments in order to achieve the BTEC Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications.



Who is this aimed at?

Learners will be introduced to basic cooking skills by following recipes for simple dishes and learning how to use kitchen equipment safely. Each recipe is underpinned with knowledge about sourcing food, nutrition, hygiene and food safety where relevant.



The Future

Learners who have achieved the BTEC Level 1 Award in Home Cooking Skills could progress on to the further BTEC Level 2 Awards. Additionally, students may also progress onto:

- GCSEs
- Apprenticeships

BTEC specialist qualifications will also enhance learners' self-development by providing them with valuable life skills.

Please note: you will receive a personal invitation to join this course in advance of the options process.

**"THE SUBJECTS YOU CHOOSE NOW
OPEN THE DOORS YOU'LL WALK
THROUGH LATER — CHOOSE THE
ONES THAT MAKE YOU CURIOUS."**

