

2026 – 2028

Girls with Goals

GCSE Subject Options

Driven by Aspiration. Powered by Ambition. One Decision, One Step, One Goal at a Time



EDGBASTON
HIGH SCHOOL

Girls with Goals at EHS

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And just like that, your daughter stands at an important crossroads in Year 9 — ready to embark on choosing her GCSE options. These are the choices that will begin to enable her to fulfil her goals, her dreams, and her future without limits. She is curious, as you are, about what comes next: curious about new subjects, about the different pathways they open, and about the story she is beginning to write — one filled with promise, purpose, and a bright academic future.

Every journey will look a little different, but a strong starting point for discussion is by reflecting together on these key questions:

- Looking at my strengths, how can I strive for excellence in every subject and every GCSE option I choose?
- Thinking about my aspirations, which lessons do I most enjoy and feel proud of myself in?
- Looking ahead with courage, where do I see myself in a future career?
- Considering my current timetable, which lessons allow me to think creatively, differently, and lead boldly?
- Thinking about personal responsibility, how can I make the best decisions to reach my goals?
- Looking ahead to Year 10, which subjects will I persevere in — because they will help me reach my goals and future dreams?

The purpose of this booklet is to help you and your daughter explore the full range of academic options available next year. Alongside detailed information about each subject and syllabus, you'll find an explanation of how the GCSE Options process works, the timelines we are following, and the many ways we'll support you through the coming term as these important decisions take shape.

The next chapter is beginning — and it's the most important one yet. Let's start the conversations, encourage the questions, empower her with the knowledge she needs to create her own story. One that she will then, in Year 10, continue to write, driven by aspiration, powered by ambition, one decision, one step, one goal at a time...

Together, we will give her the pen — and the confidence — to write her own future. A future built on ambition, passion, and determination. And, of course, a future that shines with that spark of the fearlessly female.

Your GCSE Pathway at EHS

The first three years in the Senior School give every girl a broad, balanced education, grounded in the National Curriculum. By Year 9, however, it's time for an exciting step forward — choosing GCSE subjects for Key Stage 4. This is an important milestone. At EHS, we strongly believe in stretching both intellect and imagination and our goal is to help you and your daughter build a personalised and well-balanced curriculum that both challenges and excites her — preparing to study a combination of subjects she loves, excels in, but that will also help and support her to reach her future goals and ambitions.

Alongside these academic studies at Key Stage 4, girls are always encouraged to explore, and embrace the Girls with Goals initiative, the Co-Curricular Programme, the Careers talks, House events and the extensive opportunities available to them to undertake different positions of responsibility across the school. The ultimate goal being that girls will thrive with a rich and rigorous academic curriculum, and embracing challenge whilst balancing creativity and fun whilst taking personal responsibility for their futures.

Throughout Year 9, we offer a full programme of guidance and support to make these decisions rewarding and informed:

- **Careers Module** within PSHEE lessons
- **Girls with Goals** assemblies and form time activities
- **Online and library resources** via Unifrog and the Learning Hub
- **Careers Expertise and Advice** available from Senior staff
- **Girls with Goals: Your Journey Begins Options Evening:** Tuesday 13 January 2026
- **Year 9 Parents' Evening:** Thursday 22 January 2026
- **Individual guidance meetings and Options Interviews** with Senior Staff
- **Joint discussions** with girls, parents and relevant teachers where required

Consider thoughtfully — find out as much information as you can about the courses you are considering. These decisions shape the next stage of the learning journey and choosing the right subjects can open doors to exciting opportunities ahead. Once the timetable has been created, it is difficult to change subject choices.

Take your time — embrace the opportunities on offer to talk to teachers and ask all of the questions that you have. These choices will set the stage for success over the next two years. Employers value subject choices in helping them understand your strengths and passions, but they also care about how well you do in these subjects.

Choose boldly and wisely — listen to and reflect upon the constructive advice from the teachers who know you well. The path you create and the decisions you make now are the first step towards your next big goal.

The EHS Curriculum: Core Subjects and Option Subjects

Core Subjects are compulsory subjects and form the **Core Curriculum**. These include:

- **English Language, English Literature, and Mathematics**
- **Science** – There are two routes for Science: Either Trilogy Science or Three Separate Sciences. Students considering a science-based career or Medicine are strongly advised to take all three sciences.
- **Modern Foreign Language – French, German, or Spanish**: Most students are expected to study at least one modern foreign language.
- **Physical Education**: This includes health-related fitness and opportunities to participate in team sports. It is distinct from the GCSE Physical Education course.
- **Tutorial Programme**: This includes PSHEE and General Religious Studies, which are not examined courses. The programme is designed to support academic progress, enhance study, organisation and revision skills, and encourage reflection on future aspirations. It provides opportunities to explore topics such as work experience, health, citizenship, and preparation for life beyond school.

Throughout your GCSE studies, the Girls with Goals programme will involve a structured programme of Pupil Progress Reviews, including interviews and discussions with the Pastoral and Careers Teams. These meetings provide invaluable opportunities to discuss any academic concerns you may have regarding your GCSE studies.

Option Subjects offer a range of optional subjects available to personalise. Most girls will take ten examination subjects in total at GCSE. If you choose to take Biology, Chemistry and Physics you will need to choose **three** subjects from the Options Subjects box; if you choose to study Trilogy Science you will need to choose **four** subjects from the Options Subjects box. Most students are expected to take a Modern Foreign Language; some may choose to take two.

- Art & Design / Graphic Communication
- Business
- Classical Civilisation
- Computer Science
- Design & Technology: Textiles
- Drama
- Food Preparation & Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- German
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Studies
- Spanish

All GCSE subjects receive four periods a week, except English Language and Literature (six) and Mathematics (five), ensuring depth, rigour and balance across every timetable

EHS GCSE Options: Allocation

We will make every endeavour to accommodate all girls' subject choices; however, it may not be possible to offer every preferred combination. The availability of options depends on many factors such as subject demand and timetabling constraints.

Once the timetable has been finalised, limited flexibility may be available to adjust subject choices. This is depending on class sizes, group structures and the number of sets per subject.

Girls are strongly advised to consider thoughtfully, take their time in deciding and choose boldly and wisely before they finalise their subject decisions before the start of Year 10. No changes to subjects will be permitted after the end of September in Year 10.

EHS GCSE Options: Key Dates

January 2025	Girls with Goals GCSE Options booklets will be sent home for you to read ahead of Parents' Evening. Girls will have opportunities to talk to subject teachers and current GCSE students about the journey.
Tuesday 13 th January 2026	Girls with Goals Your Journey Begins Options Evening
Thursday 22 nd January 2026	Year 9 Parents' Evening to discuss progress and possible option choices with individual subject staff.
Friday 23 rd January 2026	Year 9 Options Choices Form will be sent out to girls via email.
January – February 2026	Individual guidance meetings and Options Interviews with Senior Staff
Friday 13th February 2026	Final date for the return of the GCSE Option Choices Form which will be completed electronically. A copy of these choices will be emailed to all girls in Year 9.
	Following this, the timetable and Option Blocks will be drawn up, and the girls' choices will be confirmed. Most We make every effort to ensure girls will be able to take all of the subjects which they choose. We will discuss, as a priority, any difficulties we have in accommodating choices directly with the girls involved.

Art and Design / Graphic Communication

Syllabus AQA Art, Craft and Design (8201)
 AQA Graphic Communication (8203)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Express creativity in a practical way, to work in a stimulating environment and to gain a wide range of universally useful skills.
- Develop thinking, planning and analysing skills alongside the traditional skills associated with Art and Design.
- Learn working processes and disciplines adopted in this subject and to lay firm foundations for work in other curriculum areas.

Course Content and Assessment

The Art and Design course involves a range of work, comprising Fine Art and Graphic Design work, and offers opportunities for photography, film-making and animation, as well as the traditional areas of drawing, painting and work in mixed-media. There is a strong emphasis on the use of digital media and even if you may not be the most confident in terms of observation drawing you will be able to find other ways in which to demonstrate your skills. You will be encouraged to use both physical and digital sketchbooks in a creative, inventive way and these will form the backbone of your activity in the subject. This manner of working is also a preparation for the way students will eventually be taught at A Level. Some pupils who have demonstrated particular aptitude for Graphic Design may choose to specialise in this area and will be entered for Graphic Communication.

In Year 10 those who have opted for the general Art and Design course will study Fine Art and Graphic Design, with a double lesson devoted to each, producing one major project outcome from each area. If you have opted for Graphic Communication you will work in this area for both double lessons. Projects in Year 10 usually begin with a core skills module to develop technique before project work is developed.

The first project you do in Year 11 will be treated as your Mock Examination and eventually, together with the work done in Year 10, form part of your coursework (awarded 60% of the overall mark). The second will be the actual examination project (awarded the remaining 40%).

Business

Syllabus AQA Business (8132)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Explore real business issues and how businesses work;
- Consider the practical application of business concepts;
- Explore theories and concepts in the most relevant way, through the context of events in the business and economic world.

Course Content and Assessment

The course is designed for students to demonstrate their ability to:

- Use business terminology to identify and explain business activity;
- Apply business concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts;
- Develop problem solving and decision-making skills relevant to business;
- Investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues;
- Make justified decisions using both qualitative and quantitative data including its selection, interpretation, analysis and evaluation, and the application of appropriate quantitative skills.

Paper 1: Influences of operations and HRM on business activity.

This paper assesses application of knowledge and understanding of business in the real world, influences on business, business operations and human resources. This is a 1 hour and 45 minute written examination worth 50% of the overall GCSE.

Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity

This paper assesses application of knowledge and understanding of business in the real world, influences on business, marketing and finance. This is a 1 hour and 45 minute written examination worth 50% of the overall GCSE.

Classical Civilisation

Syllabus OCR Classical Civilisation (J199)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Study the literature, visual and material culture of the Classical World and acquire an understanding of their social, historical and cultural contexts;
- Experience elements of the culture and social and political life of the Classical Greek and Roman civilisations which reflect issues relevant to the world today, such as questions of gender, belief and citizenship;
- Make comparisons between the ideas of the Classical World and those of today and to understand the great legacy of Classical Greece and Rome to western democracy and culture;
- Improve your critical and analytical skills essential for most A Level courses, including A Level Classical Civilisation.

Please note that there is no Latin or Classical Greek language studied or required for this GCSE qualification.

Course Content and Assessment

Thematic Study: Myth and Religion – 1 hour 30 minutes (50%)

This unit involves a comparative study of Classical Greece and Rome, combining an engaging variety of literary, visual and material sources. All written sources are studied in translation.

Candidates are required to make informed comparisons between Greek and Roman ideas, including the characteristics of the different societies and the impact of the different cultural contexts. This unit explores religion and mythology in the Classical Greek and Roman worlds.

Literature and Culture: Roman City Life – 1 hour 30 minutes (50%)

Students undertake the cultural study of Roman city life and then couple this with the study of a related body of literature in translation. The Roman social system was notorious for its intrigues and politics and this, coupled with the study of the spectacle provided by Roman entertainment, provides an exciting and enjoyable course for students.

Computer Science

Syllabus OCR Computer Science (J277)

This subject offers you the opportunity 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.

Course Content and Assessment

Computer systems:

- 1.1 Systems architecture
- 1.2 Memory and storage
- 1.3 Computer networks, connections and protocols
- 1.4 Network security
- 1.5 Systems software
- 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming:

- 2.1 Algorithms
- 2.2 Programming fundamentals
- 2.3 Producing robust programs
- 2.4 Boolean logic
- 2.5 Programming languages and integrated development environments

Each unit will be assessed in a 1 hour 30 minute paper, each worth 50% of the GCSE. All students will also be given the opportunity to complete a practical programming topic to a given specification or to solve a given problem.

Design and Technology: Textiles

Syllabus Edexcel Design and Technology (1DT0)

Textiles is a very creative but also academic subject which allows students who study it to access higher level thinking skills during creative activities, for example researching, problem solving, analysing and time management. Students at GCSE have the opportunity to study different areas including new technologies, metals, timbers and papers. They have the opportunity to learn a variety of decorative techniques, such as printing, weaving, surface design and embroidery. Along with learning about a variety of construction techniques

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop independent and critical thinking leading towards invention and design innovation.
- Be creative and experiment, designing and making prototypes that solve real and relevant problems.
- Learn a wide range of skills and techniques relevant to the making of fashion garments, accessories and textiles products.
- Study a range of materials which may include papers and boards, timber, metal, polymers and electronics that will support any potential design solutions you may develop at a later stage.
- Develop organisational and time management skills.
- Develop ICT skills with the use of specific CAD/CAM programs, for example Sketchbook and Procreate along with using the laser cutter and 3D printers, all of which are used in the Textile Industry.
- Study a course which could lead to a career in Design or Textiles e.g. Fashion Design, product design, Interior Design, Styling, Architecture, Journalism, Marketing, Buying, Project Management.

Course Content and Assessment

Written Paper – 1 hour 45 minutes (50%)

Section A: Core

This section is 40 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 10 marks of calculation questions in Section A.

Section B: Material categories

This section is 60 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 5 marks of calculation questions in Section B.

Non-Examined Assessment – 40 hours (50%)

Students will be required to undertake a design and make task and produce a final prototype based on a context given by the exam board

1 – Investigate worth 16 marks - This includes investigation of needs and research, and a product specification

2 – Design worth 42 marks - This includes producing different design ideas, review of initial ideas, development of design ideas into a chosen design, communication of design ideas and review of the chosen design

3 – Make worth 36 marks - This includes manufacture, and quality and accuracy

4 – Evaluate worth 6 marks - This includes testing and evaluation.

Drama

Syllabus OCR Drama (J316)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Experience the roles of deviser, designer, director and performer;
- Further develop your practical skills in both improvisation and script work;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of evaluating live theatre work;
- Work imaginatively and creatively with others;
- Reflect on and evaluate your own work and the work of others;
- Develop creative skills through team learning.

Course Content and Assessment

It would benefit students to participate in as much practical performance that they can in order to develop their performance skills beyond the classroom. Students are encouraged to visit the theatre often and begin to make critical judgments to the work they see.

Devising Drama – 20 hours (30%) Teacher Assessed

Students explore a stimulus provided by the exam board. They will work in groups to create their own devised drama based on their exploration. Students can work as either performers or designers creating a portfolio and a final performance.

Presenting and Performing Texts – 20 hours (30%) Visiting Examiner

Students explore a text and perform two scenes to a Visiting Examiner. Students can work as either performers or designers completing a pro-forma and a final performance showcase.

Performance and Response – 1½ hours (40%) Written Examination

Section A contains questions based on the study of a full text from a list set by the exam board. Section B contains an extended response analysing and evaluating live theatre.

English Language / English Literature

Syllabus Edexcel International GCSE English Language (4EA1)
Edexcel International GCSE English Literature (4ET1)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop your communication skills, both written and oral;
- Practise structuring, organising and expressing your ideas;
- Respond to a range of literary texts, including prose, poetry and drama;
- Develop a wide range of skills which will establish a firm foundation for further study and the world of work.

Course Content and Assessment

- Two separate qualifications are taught in a combined course.
- English Language focuses on developing analytical skills with the close study of non-fiction texts and a range of writing skills.
- English Literature students will read a range of modern drama, poetry, prose, as well as a literary heritage text.

English Language

- The examination, which is 60% of the total mark, includes Section A on Non-fiction texts and Section B on Transactional Writing.
- Coursework makes up 40% of the total mark, with two assignments: the first task is an analytical essay, and the second task is an imaginative writing piece.

English Literature

- The examination, which is 60% of the total mark, featuring Section A on Poetry and Section B on Modern Prose.
- Coursework accounts for 40% of the total mark, comprising two assignments: the first task is a modern drama essay, and the second task is a literary heritage essay.

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Syllabus AQA Food Preparation and Nutrition (8585)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Focus on high skill preparation of a wide variety of ingredients and to be aware of food and nutrition issues in relation to diet and health throughout life.
- Understand the chemical structure of fats, proteins and carbohydrates and how preparation and cooking affects these macro-nutrients;
- Become aware of food provenance, where our food comes from, and how it is produced and sold;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of food hygiene and safety in the cooking and storing of foods. Consideration is made of how to buy food wisely, for a variety of budgets and situations in our society today;
- Be experimental with and understand the food science and properties of the food you are preparing and cooking, which will enable you to develop new recipes with confidence;
- To understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international), to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes;
- Study a course which could lead to a wide range of food based university degrees and graduate careers, e.g. in Human Nutrition and Dietetics, buying and marketing for food companies, Hotel and Catering management, food journalism, food styling for TV, films and magazines, as well as dietetics and nursing, or just because you are interested in the subject.

Course Content and Assessment

Unit 1 consists of a written examination that lasts 1 hour and 45 minutes and accounts for 50% of the total mark.

Unit 2 is a non-exam assessment with two tasks: Task 1 is the Food Investigation, which requires a written report with evidence of practical investigation and is worth 15% of the total mark. Task 2 is the Food Preparation assessment, where students must prepare, cook, and serve a menu of 3 dishes within a single session of no more than 3 hours. This task is worth 35% of the total mark.

Geography

Syllabus OCR Geography B Geography for Enquiring Minds (J384)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Study a subject that is accepted by all universities and employers; many see Geography as a key subject for developing the skills required for employment.
- Build an excellent foundation for a wide range of careers. EHS geographers have gone on to study medicine, law, psychology, as well as a wide range of traditional geographically oriented courses.
- Study a subject that bridges the Arts and Sciences, giving you greater flexibility if you choose to progress to further or higher education.
- Develop a wide range of skills useful both now and in the future, including practical map-reading skills, information and communication skills, and the ability to use technology such as GIS.
- Enhance your communication skills, including report writing, decision-making, presenting arguments, analysing data, and working in teams on projects.

Course Content and Assessment

The course themes include:

- **Global hazards** – how natural hazards form and their impacts.
- **Changing climate** – causes and effects of past and present climate change.
- **Distinctive landscapes** – formation and features of different landscapes.
- **Sustaining ecosystems** – ecosystems, their characteristics and sustainable management.
- **Urban futures** – urban growth, challenges and opportunities.
- **Dynamic development** – global development patterns and strategies.
- **UK in the 21st century** – demographic, economic and cultural change in the UK.
- **Resource reliance** – pressures on resources like food, water and energy and strategies to manage them.

The Geography course is structured around three main assessments:

- The Our Natural World examination, which covers physical geography, is 1 hour and 30 minutes long and contributes 35% of the total mark.
- The People and Society examination, which focuses on human geography, also lasts 1 hour and 30 minutes and contributes 35% of the total mark.
- The Geographical Exploration (DME) examination lasts 1 hour and 30 minutes and contributes the final 30% of the total mark.

Fieldwork is an important focus of the course. You will participate in practical fieldwork in both human and physical geography and your experiences of this will be examined in both the Our Natural World and People and Society papers.

History

Syllabus Cambridge iGCSE History (0470)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Study the past to help you to understand the present;
- Develop skills necessary for a variety of careers in fields such as law, journalism, the media, politics, administration and many others;
- Learn how to analyse the significance of events, evaluate evidence and make balanced judgements based upon a variety of sources;
- Learn how to construct a logical argument supported by accurate factual detail;
- Study the significant events of the last century which have shaped the world today.

Course Content and Assessment

The course comprises 3 components:

- Paper 1 is a 2 hour written paper and constitutes 40% of the total mark focussing on Core Content: The 20th Century. This paper includes International Relations since 1919 and a Depth Study of Germany between 1918-45. This includes studying some of the following topics:
 - The Peace Treaties of 1919-1923
 - The League of Nations
 - Germany 1918-1945 including The Weimar Republic and Hitler's Germany
 - International Collapse of Peace (up to 1939)
 - Who was to blame for the Cold War?
- Paper 2 is a 1 hour and 45 minute written paper that constitutes 30% of the total mark. Students answer six questions on one prescribed topic taken from the Core Content. There is a range of source material relating to each prescribed topic.
- Paper 4 is a one 1 hour written paper and constitutes 30% of the total mark where students answer one question on a Depth Study.

Latin

Syllabus Eduqas GCSE Latin (C990PA)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Gain insight into aspects of the classical world;
- Study the language and literature of ancient Rome, reading the works of famous authors;
- Make comparisons between ideas of that time and those of today;
- Enrich your vocabulary and improved spelling, particularly in the cultural and scientific areas as Latin has given English a great part of its vocabulary;
- Develop your knowledge of a language which is a foundation for English, French, Spanish and Italian and therefore supports linguistic understanding in all these areas;
- Improve your critical and analytical skills and intellectual flexibility which will be useful in a wide range of jobs or in further study.

Latin remains a highly respected subject and the presence of Latin within the GCSE portfolio frequently confirms to university admissions tutors the candidate's high level of intellectual ability whatever degree courses are sought. Although not compulsory, Latin has proved a highly desirable qualification for those interested in both Law and Medicine.

Course Content and Assessment

Component 1: Latin Language – 1 hour 30 minutes (50%)

This involves the ability to translate from the Latin, to comprehend a Latin passage and answer questions on this in English and to translate short sentences from English to Latin. Students build their knowledge of the required accidence and syntax over the 2 year course and learn the vocabulary in the Defined Vocabulary List.

Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources – 1 hour 15 minutes (30%)

Candidates are required to answer comprehension and analysis questions on a set theme using knowledge of literature and sources studied during the course. Students study a mixture of verse and prose texts as well as a selection of prescribed ancient source materials. Students are provided with a clean copy of the resource booklet in the examination. The prescribed material will change every two years.

Component 3A: Latin Literature (Narratives) – 1 hour (20%)

This module comprises of a prescription of Latin literature forming a narrative, accompanied by adjacent passage(s) in English. Candidates are required to answer comprehension and analysis questions on the text using their knowledge of the literature studied during the course. The prescribed material will change every two years.

Mathematics

Syllabus Edexcel International GCSE in Mathematics (4MA1)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop thinking skills to solve problems logically and efficiently;
- Consolidate mathematical skills and apply these to more complex problems;
- Communicate mathematically - precisely, logically and creatively;
- Build resilience in your approach to challenging situations;
- Appreciate the place and use of Mathematics in society;
- Understand the interdependence of different branches of Mathematics;
- Acquire the skills needed to use technology, such as calculators and computers, effectively;
- Acquire a firm foundation for further study in A level Maths.

Course Content and Assessment

This specification offers a linear route to International GCSE Mathematics and is assessed by two terminal examination papers:

- Paper 1 – Calculator – 2 hours (50%)
- Paper 2 – Calculator – 2 hours (50%)

The assessment objectives for the course are distributed as follows:

AO1 focuses on demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and skills in number and algebra, which includes topics like numbers and the numbering system, calculations, solving numerical problems, equations, formulae, identities, sequences, functions, and graphs. This area has an approximate weighting of 60%.

AO2 requires demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and skills in shape, space, and measures, covering geometry and trigonometry, vectors, and transformation geometry. This area has an approximate weighting of 25%.

AO3 is about demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and skills in handling data, specifically statistics and probability. This area has an approximate weighting of 15%.

Modern Foreign Languages

Syllabus: EDEXCEL GCSE French, German and Spanish (9-1)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop insight into the culture and civilisation of another country;
- Develop a positive attitude towards language learning, towards the speakers of other languages and towards other cultures and civilisations;
- Develop the ability to use a foreign language as a means of practical communication: 94% of the world's population do not have English as their native language and 75% of the world's population speaks no English at all;
- Develop techniques which can be applied to other areas of learning such as analysis and memory skills.

Course Content and Assessment

The subject content for French, German and Spanish is organised around six broad themes which provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. Through the study of these themes, students will gain an insight into target language countries and communities. The themes are:

- My personal World
- Lifestyle and Wellbeing
- My Neighbourhood
- Media and Technology
- Studying and My Future
- Travel and Tourism

Examinations in all four skills, each with a 25% weighting, will be taken at the end of the GCSE course:

- Paper 1 – Speaking
- Paper 2 – Listening
- Paper 3 – Reading
- Paper 4 – Writing

There is the possibility to sit the examination at either Foundation or Higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers. The speaking assessments are conducted and recorded in school. The recordings are then submitted to the examination board for marking.

Music

Syllabus Edexcel Music (1MU0)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Engage actively in an exciting, creative, challenging and versatile subject: one that universities and employers regard highly;
- Support your cognitive development and improve your overall academic achievement;
- Develop your musical skills, interests and awareness of a range of different styles;
- Enjoy making music individually and in groups;
- Explore the use of music technology in performance and composition.

Course Content and Assessment

Performing Music – 30%. Two performances are required: one solo – at least one minute in length; one ensemble – at least one minute in length. You must perform for at least four minutes in total and you can perform in any style – from classical to thrash metal!

Composing Music – 30%. Two compositions: one where you are given a brief based on the Areas of Study; one is a free composition in a style you chose. You must compose for at least three minutes in total. You will use software such as Sibelius, GarageBand or Logic.

Listening and Appraising Music – 40%. The listening examination will develop your aural skills and understanding of music history. It is based on four Areas of Study, each with two set works. You will learn how to identify features of music from a variety of genres which will also develop your own composition skills:

- For 'Music for Stage and Screen,' students will study "Defying Gravity" from the musical "Wicked" and John Williams' "Main Title" from "Star Wars Episode IV," exploring the vibrant interplay between music and visual storytelling.
- In 'Instrumental Music 1700 - 1820,' the focus will be on classical masterpieces such as Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 5" and Beethoven's "Pathetique," offering a deep dive into the music of the Baroque and Classical periods.
- 'Fusions' will introduce students to contemporary blends of traditional and modern music, featuring the Afro Celt Sound System's "Release" and Esperanza Spalding's "Samba Em Preludio."
- 'Vocal Music' will cover Purcell's "Music for a While" and Queen's "Killer Queen," showcasing the range and power of the human voice across genres and eras.

To take GCSE Music, you should also have regular weekly instrumental or vocal lessons. Students opting for GCSE Music need to be at least Grade 3 standard on their main instrument or voice before the start of the course. Knowledge of music theory is not essential but it is an advantage.

Physical Education

Syllabus Pearson Edexcel Physical Education

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of human performance through participation in a range of physical activities;
- Develop an appreciation of the relationship between physical activity and general health;
- Develop acceptable social and sporting attitudes;
- Acquire a suitable basis for further study or experience in Physical Education;
- Build a foundation for careers in areas involving Sport Science (Human Biology), Recreation Planning, Leisure Management and Teaching – GCSE PE is a requirement if you are thinking of taking A Level PE.

Course Content and Assessment

The examination is a combination of both practical and theoretical work. The practical element of the course accounts for 40% of the final mark, whilst the written examination is worth 60% - split between two written examinations.

Paper 1, 'Fitness and Body Systems,' includes topics such as the musculoskeletal system, cardiovascular and respiratory systems, lever systems along with planes and axes of movement, physical training, performance enhancing drugs and injury prevention.

Paper 2, 'Health and Performance,' covers health, fitness and wellbeing, sports psychology, and socio-cultural influences on sport.

Practical work makes up 40% of the course. It includes teacher assessment of three activities – requiring one individual and one team activity – and the assessment of planning and completing a six-week training program. These components are developed in lessons and assessed at the end of Year 10 or the start of Year 11.

If you are considering this course, you should have a keen interest in all areas of Physical Education. It is expected that students enrolled in GCSE PE will actively participate in sports, including school teams and cocurricular activities, as well as pursue sporting endeavours in their personal time to enhance the skills learned during the course.

Religious Studies

Syllabus AQA GCSE Religious Studies A (8062MA)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop an enquiring, critical and sympathetic approach to religion, ethics and philosophy;
- Understand the variety to be found in religion and relate this to experience, belief and practice;
- Examine and discuss questions concerning the everyday problems in contemporary society and reflect on both the religious and social responses to them;
- Explore your own views about issues and write about them in a clear and logical way;
- Study for a qualification that will be recognised by all universities for courses including Medicine, Dentistry and Law.

Course Content and Assessment

There are two Areas of Study, which are assessed through two externally set examination papers.

Paper 1, 'The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices', is a written exam lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. This paper constitutes 50% of the GCSE. In this part of the course, students engage in an in-depth study of two major world religions, Islam and Christianity, focusing on their key beliefs and practices.

Paper 2, 'Thematic Studies', is a written exam lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. This paper also makes up 50% of the GCSE. It covers religious, philosophical, and ethical studies themes, including:

- Theme A: Relationships and families
- Theme B: Religion and life
- Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict
- Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment

Science

Syllabus Trilogy 8464

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop scientific knowledge and a conceptual understanding across Physics, Chemistry and Biology.
- Develop skills that enable you to answer scientific questions about the world around you.
- Learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills.
- Develop scientific knowledge and understand scientific concepts.
- Develop your ability to evaluate scientific claims through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions.
- Gain an insight into developments at the cutting edge of Science and technology.
- See how ideas covered in subjects including Mathematics, Design Technology and Food Technology and Physical Education link together.

Course Content and Assessment

In Combined Science, we will study all three Sciences.

Biology is the study of living organisms and how these interact with each other and their environments. Students will gain an insight into the natural world, how science works, and appreciation of its relevance to their everyday lives.

Chemistry is the study of the world around us. In Chemistry, students will begin to understand why things happen, learn how to keep themselves safe, develop useful skills, and maybe even become a better cook.

Physics is the study of the Universe and how it behaves. This includes everything from the smallest particles to the life cycle of stars. In Physics you will look at matter (stuff), energy, space and time and how they relate to one another.

Studying Combined Science allows pupils to maintain a breadth of their Science studies and facilitates continuation into Science A-levels and careers including medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, forensic science and veterinary science. The reduced content means that this course only takes up two option blocks. If you are considering a career outside of the sciences, Combined Science would be an excellent course as it allows you to develop many transferable skills that you will find invaluable whilst keeping doorways open for the future.

Biology

Syllabus AQA Biology (8461)

Related Syllabuses AQA Chemistry (8462); AQA Physics (8463)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding of Biology;
- Develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of Biology that help you to answer scientific questions about the world around you;
- Develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills, both in the laboratory and in the field;
- Develop their ability to evaluate scientific claims through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions.

Course Content and Assessment

Biology is the study of living organisms and how these interact with each other and their environments. By studying Biology, students will gain an insight into the natural world, how science works, and appreciation of its relevance to their everyday lives.

Each separate science qualification comprises two written examinations (worth 50% each) lasting 1 hour 45 minutes in duration. This qualification is linear, meaning that students will sit all their examinations at the end of the course. Practical work is central to Biology, and the students' scientific skills are developed by undertaking required practical investigations throughout the course, which are also incorporated within examination questions.

Students will be offered the three separate GCSE science courses: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The majority of students will study all three. All of these courses will enable students to develop their enthusiasm and interest in science. The GCSE sciences provide an integrated opportunity to acquire and apply skills, knowledge and understanding of how science works and its essential role in society. The sciences have been identified as 'facilitating subjects' by top Universities, opening doors to a wide range of career pathways. They offer skills that can be applied in any course or career students choose to pursue in the future.

Chemistry

Syllabus AQA Chemistry (8462)

Related Syllabuses AQA Biology (8461); AQA Physics (8463)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop scientific knowledge and a conceptual understanding of Chemistry;
- Learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills;
- Improve your ability to evaluate scientific claims through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions.

Studying Chemistry at GCSE level and beyond is essential in order to pursue many careers including medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, forensic science and veterinary science. Even if you decide to choose a career outside of the sciences, Chemistry will help you develop many transferable skills that you will find invaluable.

Course Content and Assessment

Chemistry is the study of the world around us. By studying Chemistry, students will begin to understand why things happen, learn how to keep themselves safe, develop useful skills, and maybe even become a better cook. Chemistry is often referred to as the 'central science' as it bridges the gap between Physics, Biology, Geology and Environmental Science.

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Physics

Syllabus AQA Physics (8463)

Related Syllabuses AQA Biology (8461); AQA Chemistry (8462)

This subject offers you the opportunity to:

- Develop scientific knowledge and understand physical concepts;
- Apply the laws of Physics in order to answer scientific questions about the Universe;
- Experience how the laws of Physics apply through practical investigations;
- Gain an insight into developments at the cutting edge of Science and technology;
- Develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills;
- Develop their ability to criticise scientific claims by analysing the methods used, evidence available and conclusions made;
- See how ideas covered in the other Sciences, Mathematics and Design Technology link together.

Course Content and Assessment

Physics is the study of the Universe and how it behaves. This includes everything from the smallest particles to the life cycle of stars. In Physics you will look at matter (stuff), energy, space and time and how they relate to one another. Each separate science qualification comprises two written examinations (worth 50% each) lasting 1 hour 45 minutes in duration. This qualification is linear, meaning that students will sit all their examinations at the end of the course. Practical work is central to Physics, and the students' scientific skills are developed by undertaking required practical investigations throughout the course and these will be incorporated within examination questions.

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