



FEARNHILL
SCHOOL

Your Choice



Your Future

**OPTIONS BOOKLET
2024**

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INTRODUCTION

Year 9 is a crossroads for you in your time at Fearnhill. It is a time for you to take stock of what you have achieved in your first three years in the school, as well as a time for looking forward. You are looking ahead to the two years which will lead to GCSEs and other examinations, as well as to your life and career post-16.

During Key Stage 3 you have been introduced to a wide range of subjects. In Key Stage 4, the number of subjects you will study will be reduced to give you the extra time on each subject that you need. Some subjects are, of course, compulsory but you do have important choices to make. You will need to take the advice of teaching staff in considering which choices will give you the greatest opportunities to progress on from your post-16 exams.

This booklet has been carefully put together to give you the information you need to make those decisions. Read it thoroughly and think carefully before you make up your mind. Your teachers and your form tutor will give you help. Discuss your ideas with your family. You will have an interview with a senior member of staff, who will give you guidance on the best choices to leave your options as wide as possible post-16. If we feel you have made an inappropriate choice we will be advising you accordingly, particularly if we feel you are closing down your options for the future.

Remember also that your courses will be hard work. You are expected to take more responsibility for your learning and to work independently outside lessons, going the extra mile to achieve your very best. It is important to start Year 10 in a positive frame of mind, ready to commit yourself to hard work. All of the staff here at Fearnhill are completely committed to supporting you to achieve. Make sure you choose wisely to give yourself the best chance to succeed.

Mr T Spencer
Headteacher



CAREERS GUIDANCE

A good career education is a mixture of finding out about the opportunities available to you and developing the skills necessary for sound decision-making, career well-being and employability.

It is important that you use this time wisely so that you choose the options that will maximise your success both now and in the future.

At the end of this booklet there is an Action Plan for you to complete. The purpose of this Action Plan is to encourage you to consider your future courses very carefully and to plan these choices taking account of the work you have been doing in PSHE.

The action plan will be used during your interview with a senior member of staff, as part of your options process. Your action plan will help formulate discussions regarding your future plans and ensure that the choices you have made are the most suitable for you.

During Year 10 you will follow a careers guidance programme that builds on the development of both your personal and employability skills.

In Year 11 you will explore and identify the post-16 opportunities open to you in work, education and training post 16 as you prepare to embark on your final stage in compulsory education. You will take part in an Enterprise Day and learn how to prepare a CV and learn vital interview skills whilst having an interview with an employer. You will also have an individual interview with a Personal Advisor from SfYP (Services for Young People).

Key Contacts

Miss Cordon – Head of Year 9
Ms L Balchin – Head of Careers, Work Related Learning & PSHE
Mrs Martin- Head of Key Stage 4
Mr M Macguire – Deputy Headteacher
Form Tutor
Subject teacher



QUALIFICATIONS

Your Choice 2023 is a full guide to all of the subjects we offer in Key Stage 4. It is very important to read it carefully so that you understand what is expected of you in each subject. All of our courses will lead to a formal qualification at the end.

GCSEs

These are the most common qualifications for 16-year-olds. They are academic courses, which cover Level 1 and 2 of the Qualifications Credit Framework. Grades 1-3 are at Level 1 / Foundation Level and Grades 4-9 are at Level 2. Success at Level 1 can lead to a Level 2 course post-16 and success at Level 2 can lead to Level 3 courses such as A Levels and BTEC National qualifications. For the purpose of comparison, a Grade 4 is equivalent to a grade C on the old GCSEs and a Grade 9 is equivalent to an A.

Vocational Qualifications

Alongside GCSE courses, we offer a number of alternative qualifications that are considered equivalent to GCSEs. These courses are OCR Cambridge Nationals (Child Development), WJEC level 1/2 Award (Sport & Coaching Principles and Hospitality & Catering) and BTECs (Travel & Tourism). The qualifications rely much more heavily on coursework than examination performance. The grades awarded are Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*. A Pass is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 4.

English Baccalaureate

The 'English Baccalaureate' or 'EBacc' is one of the measures the government uses for schools, to cover the number of students who gain 9-4 GCSE grades in a particular range of academic subjects – these are:

1. English
2. Maths
3. Combined Science/Separate Sciences
4. History or Geography
5. French or Spanish

The government advises schools that studying the English Baccalaureate is the best option for the majority of students, especially those who intend to study A levels and attend university. It will therefore be our recommendation to most students that their options include either history or geography, and a modern foreign language.



Which subjects must I study?

Everyone will study the following subjects: -

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education
- Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education (PSHE) (including Careers Education and Work-Related Learning)

What you can choose:

There will be **four option blocks** and you will be asked to pick **one** subject from each block. In January you will receive a letter informing you which subjects you must include in your choices. For approximately 90% of students this will be history or geography and for 50% of students this will also include a modern foreign language. For your remaining choices you can choose any of the subjects listed in the booklet. Even if you are not directed to choose a modern foreign language and/or a humanities subject it is still likely to be beneficial to you to study these subjects.

Details of each of the courses are contained within this booklet and you should read them all carefully before you make any decisions.

- It is very important that you think about the way in which you learn best before making any decisions.
- Some people prefer to read about the subject, to make notes and take examinations to show their knowledge and understanding.
- Others prefer to show their knowledge through coursework.
- Others enjoy practical activities or project work.
- By reading carefully through the course information and thinking carefully during all PSHE lessons you should be able to make sensible decisions that will lead to success.

Making a choice

Think carefully. Choose subjects...

- o which give you the qualifications you need
- o which you do well in
- o that give you satisfaction
- o that are suitable for you
- o that make a good combination
- o with methods of teaching and assessment you like

Most importantly, choose subjects that keep your options open for the future



Think carefully. Do not choose subjects...

- just because your friends are doing it
- because you think some subjects are 'cool'
- you think are easy
- without researching them first
- because you like your current teacher

What happens next?

Initial options evening on Tuesday 5th December 2023



Read the course information on the following pages



Discuss your choices carefully with your parents



Ask you teachers questions about their subject at GCSE



Initial subject survey issued w/c Monday 11th December 2023



End of KS3 Assessments - February 2024



Options blocks released - w/c Monday 26th February 2024



Year 9 Options Afternoon - Wednesday 20th March 2024



You will have an individual interview with a senior member of staff in the Spring Term 2024



Hand in your Options form by Thursday 28th March
Your options will be confirmed in the summer term



SUBJECT INDEX

CORE SUBJECTS

Core P.E. (No description)
English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
PSHE
Science – Combined science

OPTIONS

Art
Business Studies
Child Development
Computer Science
Dance
3D Design
Drama
Geography
Hospitality & Catering
History
Modern Foreign Languages – French & Spanish
Media Studies
Music
PRE (philosophy, religion and ethics)
Physical Education

Core Subjects

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Course Description

English is the foundation of all other subjects. Successful communication is powerful and allows us to have influence in the world around us.

The English Language GCSE course focuses on key reading and writing skills and explores how we use language to communicate effectively. Writing is essential as a means of recording and understanding ideas both as a tool for learning in school and as a means of communicating in the adult world and employment. Reading provides personal imaginative enjoyment and insights into the world, as well as being a means of locating and organising knowledge of everyday use and for learning. Speaking and listening are everyday tools for getting on with other people and making the most of situations and communicating your ideas effectively.

What will you study?

You will explore literary and non-literary texts developing your own skills in writing and speaking for a variety of purposes and audiences. You will broaden your experience of reading and comprehension of texts of varying types, including a variety of prose texts.

How is the course assessed?

100% examination

What special skills do I need?

- Creativity
- Ability to cope with written sources of information

What can it lead to?

Everything! Most jobs and further courses include English as an essential requirement.

For further information

Miss Christie (Interim Head of English)



ENGLISH LITERATURE

Course Description

Literature holds up a mirror to the world around us; through Literature we can explore new adventures, different cultures and important elements of social history. It has huge social, political and moral implications with Literature enabling students to become better thinkers and generally more empathetic human beings.

This English Literature GCSE course enables students to read very widely and to experience a range of fiction, drama and poetry from many ages and in some depth. The aim is to experience good literature in detail and in an active manner, which enables students to deepen their understanding of human nature and the means by which writers have imaginatively explored it.

What will you study?

You will study a variety of texts, prose, poetry, twentieth century drama and of course Shakespeare. The current set texts are: Macbeth, A Christmas Carol, An Inspector Calls and Poems from the AQA Anthology. You will meet other texts, which, although not forming part of the examination, will widen your literary experience and enhance your understanding of those texts being studied for the exam.

How is the course assessed?

100% examination.

What special skills do I need?

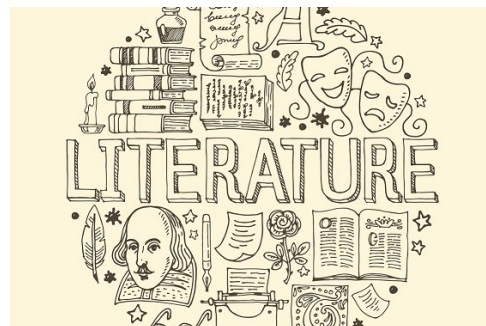
- Understanding ideas and arguments.
- Ability to cope with written sources of information.

What can it lead to?

A level Literature is often taken in combination with other arts subjects but can be successfully matched with almost anything. Students particularly interested in careers in the arts, media, Law, civil service, administration and the professions have found this a useful route. At GCSE level, however, it is a valuable contribution to any portfolio of GCSE courses.

For further information

Miss Christie (Interim Head of English)



MATHEMATICS

Course Description

This is a core subject that is compulsory for all candidates to complete in order for them to progress to further education. Through completion of the course, students will further develop their numeracy skills and become more competent in problem solving and applied questions.

What will you study?

The new GCSE Mathematics content has been divided into six main domains:

1. Number
2. Algebra
3. Ratio, Proportion and rates of change
4. Geometry and measures
5. Probability
6. Statistics

How is the course assessed?

All six areas are assessed via three external examinations at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework element to the course therefore these exams make up 100% of the assessment. Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment whereas a calculator is required for Papers 2 and 3. All papers are 90 minutes in duration and contribute equally to the overall grade. There are two tiers available: Foundation tier, with grades 1-5 available; and Higher tier, with grades 4-9 available. Students sit all three exams at the same tier.

What special skills do I need?

The course is accessible to everyone at his or her own level. You do, however, need to be willing to persevere and ask for help when you need it. You will need to bring a calculator to all lessons. We recommend a Casio (fx83-type) scientific calculator as this provides all the functionality required and class demonstrations use calculators of this type.

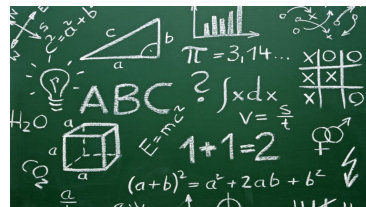
What can it lead to?

GCSE Mathematics is an incredibly valuable qualification for many courses and careers and is essential for anyone moving on to higher education or entering the world of work. A good mathematics GCSE is useful for 'A' level courses, university and careers in many professions. The skills and problem-solving methods taught in GCSE Maths are applicable to real-world situations and an indicator of these skills to future employers.

Note: You will need to have achieved a grade 6 or above in the Higher Maths GCSE exam if you wish to study the subject at AS / A2 level. For Core Maths in Sixth Form, a grade 4 or better is required.

For further information

Contact Mr Hipperson (Head of Maths) or any maths teacher



COMBINED SCIENCE

Course description

Combined science is comprised of equal weightings of biology, chemistry and physics. Students who study combined science will achieve two GCSEs at the end of year 11.

What will you study?

Over the course there are a variety of topics covered. Some of these build on the work you have covered in year 9 science. The units you will cover in year 10 include: respiration and reproduction, elements, compounds and mixtures, chemical reactions, forces, electricity and waves.

How is the course assessed?

The course is examined externally in year 11 but starts in year 9. The written examination contributes 100% for each GCSE. There are 6 exams in total worth 70 marks each. Each exam is 1 hour and 15 minutes in duration.

What special skills do I need?

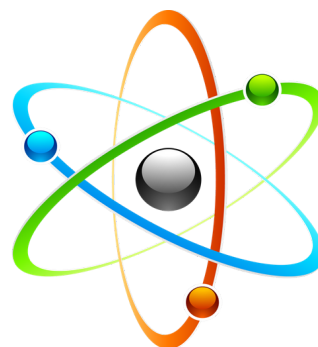
- Planning
- Observation
- Ability to assemble apparatus
- Analysing data and identifying patterns
- Evaluation
- Communication in written & oral form

What can it lead to?

Once you have taken the combined science exams in year 11 you will be prepared to study A-level biology, chemistry and physics provided your grades are good enough (6-6 in combined science and a 6 in mathematics).

For further information

Contact Miss Cotter (Head of Science) or any other science teachers



SEPARATE SCIENCES

Course description:

Separate sciences is a combination of biology, chemistry and physics. It provides the most in-depth coverage of the sciences at key stage 4. Successful completion by the end of year 11 will provide you with three GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics.

Please note that only those students whom staff feel able to cope with the demands of the course will be able to opt for separate sciences.

What will you study?

Each separate science comprises a variety of topics which are assessed through two exams. Biology topics include cells, organisms, plant biology, genes and the environment. Chemistry topics include elements, compounds and mixtures, reactions and products, chemical reactions and hydrocarbons. Physics topics include matter, forces, electricity, magnetism, waves, radioactivity and energy.

How is the course assessed?

The course is examined externally in year 11 but starts in year 9. The written examination contributes 100% for each GCSE. There are 6 exams in total worth 100 marks each. Each exam is 1 hour and 45 minutes in duration.

What skills do I need?

- Planning
- Observation
- Ability to assemble apparatus
- Analysing data and identifying patterns
- Evaluation
- Communication in written & oral form

What can it lead to?

Once you have taken the separate sciences exams in year 11 you will be well prepared to study A-level biology, chemistry & physics, provided students meet the course entry requirements of a 6 in the required science and a 6 in mathematics.

For further information

Contact Miss Cotter (Head of Science)



Option Subjects

ART AND DESIGN: Fine Art and 3D design

Course Description

This course offers the opportunity to develop technical and creative skills. You will produce an art and design portfolio that shows your personal response to a theme and an external set task.

What you will study

- drawing, painting, collage, mixed media
- printmaking
- ceramics
- other 3D processes
- illustration
- ICT Photo manipulation
- ICT tablet drawing
- digital photography and many others
- You will also gain skills in research and investigation which include cultural trips to art galleries and museums

Sketchbooks

Sketchbooks and independent research are an important part of the course, as is the study of the work of other artists.

Skills

You will acquire numerous art skills, as well as skills useful in all walks of life including: visual awareness, observation skills, artistic appreciation and the ability to develop an idea and design an outcome.

How is the course assessed?

Component 1: Portfolio 60%

Component 2 A ten hour practical external set task (with preparatory time) 40%

At the end of the course you will present your work as an exhibition for marking by the art staff and an external moderator.

What special skills do I need?

- A willingness to experiment and try out new ideas.
- An enjoyment of practical activities and an imaginative, lively mind.
- Enjoy approaching ideas in unusual and personal ways to express yourself.
- An ability to work independently both in class and at home.

What can it lead to?

There are many careers for which Art GCSE is useful. Here are just some careers as a starting point that you could consider: Game design, Architecture, Advertising, Media, Film, Product Design, Theatre production/design, Engineering, Graphics, Illustration, Fashion, Textiles and Fine Art.

Ethos

Above all else, we would like you to **enjoy any route taken in GCSE Art** and gain inspiration from it. We aim to make the Art and Design courses as **exciting and interesting** as possible. We would like you to acquire useful, creative, constructional and artistic skills that will be of use beyond the Art and Design suites and helpful to you in the future.

We want you to gain high grade qualifications for use in your educational journey. Art and Design courses are now seen by Universities and Colleges as equally valid as all other option subjects.

Fine Art:

Fine Art (J171)	Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing• Installation• Lens/Light-based media• Mixed-media• Land art• Printing• Painting• Sculpture
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3D Design:

<p>Three-Dimensional Design (J175)</p>	<p>Learners are required to choose one or more area(s) of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural design • Interior design • Product design • Exhibition design • Environmental/landscape design • Sculpture • Design for theatre, film and television • Jewellery and body adornment • Ceramics • Design and communication
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In 3d design in Yr10, we focus on architecture, creating buildings and work spaces based on a title of the exam boards choosing.

In Yr11 the outcomes are more product design/ sculpture based, leading to a wide range of skills being developed and seen across your portfolio

We hope you enjoy Art and Design GCSE options.

For further information

Contact Mr Rayner (Lead Teacher of Art and Design) or Miss R Bossley (Teacher of Art)



MUSIC

Course Description

The Edexcel GCSE Music course is approached through the 3 components of Performing, Composing and Appraising and is a natural extension of the first three years of music at Fearnhill. Students will complete two compositions (using Garageband) and two performances as part of their coursework. A practical approach is taken to much of the teaching and learning experience in Music and attending extra-curricular activities is actively encouraged, as is practising in the department during lunch times and after school.

What will you study?

Students study 8 set works for the Component 3: Appraising paper. The set works are split into 4 areas of study; Instrumental Music 1700-1820, Vocal Music, Music for Stage & Screen and Fusions. As well as this, students will listen to and appraise unfamiliar music from these areas and this will also feature on the paper.

You will learn how:

- to improve your performing skills
- music is constructed from initial ideas through to the finished product
- to analyse music in a variety of styles and discover the social and historical context in which it has been composed

Pieces studied include Wicked, Star Wars, Queen, Beethoven and many more!

GCSE Music students are entitled to free individual instrumental lessons to support their work on the Performing component and attendance to these and the progress made is closely monitored.

How is the course assessed?

Performing (30%)	Composing (30%)	Appraising (40%)
You will need to play one solo piece and one ensemble piece , with a combined duration of at least four minutes	You will need to create two compositions of at least four minutes duration (combined)	You will sit a 1 hour 45-minute written paper based around the Areas of Study. The paper is broken into two sections: Section A – Areas of study, dictation and unfamiliar pieces (68 marks) – Six questions related to six of the eight set works – One short melody/rhythm completion exercise (12 marks) – One question on an unfamiliar piece (skeleton score provided) Section B – Extended response comparison between a set work and one unfamiliar piece – One question that asks students to compare/evaluate the elements, context and language of one set work with one unfamiliar piece of music

What special skills do I need?

- The ability to play a musical instrument or sing to a grade 2/3 standard
- The dedication to attend all instrumental lessons and practising your instrument regularly
- A willingness to work hard at developing a wide range of musical skills including listening and performing and using your own time to enhance your musicality

What can it lead to?

Many employers view music qualifications highly. It shows that the student is capable of individual discipline and also of having a creative and analytical mind. During the course, your listening skills will enhance the aural perception needed in language examinations, whilst the essay writing skills practised will help with all examination subjects. Your performing skills will give you confidence in playing or speaking to an audience – useful if you intend to pursue, for example, drama or law. It is an essential qualification for anyone considering A-levels in Music, Music Technology or Performing Arts.

For further information

Contact Mrs Landsman (Lead Teacher of Music) or Mr Marlow (Music Teacher)



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Course Description

The course will provide students with an opportunity to study both the practical and theoretical aspects of Physical Education.

What you will study:

The course is split into two units; theory and practical which provide students with the opportunity to:

- Develop and apply the knowledge, skills and understanding of physical education through selected practical games activities
- Develop their knowledge and understanding of the different factors that affect participation and performance and demonstrate their relationship
- Understand the role of the rules and conventions in selected games activities
- Promote their understanding of the health benefits and risks associated with taking part in physical activity
- Develop the skills necessary to analyse and improve performance
- Support their personal and social development through adopting different roles in selected games activities when working with others.
- In Units one and two, pupils will study the theory of PE i.e. Participation, Exercise & Training, Anatomy, Physiology, Performance, and the newly introduced Data Handling
- In the Non Exam Assessment, pupils will be assessed on their performance in three separate sports (at least one individual and one team sport) and analyse performance in one of those three.

How will the course be assessed?

Method of Assessment	Details of Assessment	Course Weighting
Unit 1: Written Examination: <i>The Human body and movement in physical activity and sport</i>	1 hour 15 minutes 78 Marks A combination of multiple choice, short answer, and extended answer questions	30%
Unit 2: Written Examination: <i>Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport</i>	1 hour 15 minutes 78 Marks A combination of multiple choice, short answer, and extended answer questions	30%
Non-Exam Assessment	Practical Assessment in 3 sports Analysis of Performance Final Assessment	40%

What skills do I need?

It is essential to be of a **competent level** across multiple sports with a **proven track record of participation both in lessons and extra-curricular activities**. With high grade boundaries in place across a newly condensed list of practical activities, a minimum of club level representation is vital in order to obtain higher band marks in the practical element. Enthusiasm about sport, commitment and dedication to improving individual performance and gaining knowledge of both the theoretical and practical aspects of the course are also must have attributes.

What can it lead to?

Physical Education is one of the most popular areas to study in both further and higher education. GCSE P.E. can lead to many industries including sport, leisure and recreation, teaching and coaching, outdoor pursuits, sports medicine, sports science, sports journalism, physiotherapy and sport psychology. It provides a good stepping-stone for students who wish to study AS/A2 level PE or similar courses. As qualifications held in high regard nationally, all universities recognise and accept them.

For further information

Contact Miss Straughn (Head of Physical Education)



Dance

Course Description

Dance is a powerful and expressive subject which encourages students to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity, whatever their previous experiences in the subject.

This course recognises the role of dance in young people's lives and students will study a range of dance styles and style fusions. Apart from the solo performance, they can choose any style in which to perform and choreograph, providing it meets the assessment criteria.

What will you study?

You will study the anthology of professional works and develop your ability to critically appraise professional dance works through practical tasks.

How is the course assessed?

You will be mainly assessed on practical tasks, both performance and choreography. There is a written examination in the final year, this is marked externally.

What special skills do I need?

High level of confidence, a passion for Dance, team work skills, creativity and determination.

What can it lead to?

Students who study GCSE Dance move onto higher education studying Dance at A-Level. Amongst a wide range of careers accessible with a Performing Arts degree, students could consider: Actor, Director, Singer, Dancer, Lighting designer/technician, Sound Designer/ Technician, Costume Designer, Community Arts Worker, Drama Therapist, Lawyer, Politician, Arts Administrator, Youth Worker, Teaching, Theatre Education Officer, Public Relations, Sales positions. Whether you consider yourself a performer or not, good qualifications in Performing Arts from Fearnhill will prepare you well for your life ahead.

For further information

Contact Mrs Martin (Head of Key Stage 4, Teacher of Dance)



BUSINESS STUDIES

Course Description

Business Studies is an engaging and interesting subject that is up-to-date and relevant to the Business World around you. You will cover a range of topics in relation to both small businesses and large businesses including how to start a small business or the different types of business organisations, as well as how Business functions such as finance, marketing, people and operational management work day to day. These topics will be covered in lessons in preparation for the two examinations. You will also develop a range of skills including presentation, communication, problem solving and leadership.

What will you study?

Learners take components, 01 and 02, to be awarded the OCR GCSE (9-1) in Business.

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business activity • Marketing • People 	<p>Business 1: Business activity, marketing and People (01)</p> <p>80 marks 1 Hour 30 Minutes paper</p>	50% of total GCSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations • Finance • Influences on business • The interdependent nature of business 	<p>Business 2: operations, finance and influences on business (02) *</p> <p>80 marks 1 Hour 30 Minutes paper</p>	50% of total GCSE

What skills do I need?

To study business studies, you need to be committed to your learning and your revision of key topics. You need to be able to work well in a team, as well as be willing to share your ideas and opinions. Having good communication skills and presentation skills (including taking notes) will help to succeed. As we often have to explain our opinions and look at Business Finance, good numeracy and communication skills are required.

What can it lead to?

Business Studies GCSE can be useful for absolutely every job. You will learn more about how the world of business and the economy works, which can give you the general life skills needed to succeed after school. Business Studies is particularly relevant if you want to work in the Human Resources, Marketing and Finance department of either a small or large business. It is also relevant if you want to work as an accountant, stock broker, recruitment consultant or be an entrepreneur and set up your own business.

Business Studies is useful if you want to study:

- Business Studies (A-Level, University)
- Do an apprenticeship (A-Level, University)
- Law (A-Level, University)
- Travel and Tourism (A-Level, University)

For further information

Contact Miss Cordon (Subject Lead for Business Studies)



COMPUTER SCIENCE

Course description

Studying computer science for GCSE is very different from the type of computer science lessons you have had during Key Stage 3. You will develop actual programs using Python and at least one other programming language, for example C# or Java. These are among the most in-demand languages in the world today. You will get the opportunity to develop applications that run on the web or on smartphones as well as apps for desktop computers.

In addition to learning how to use programming tools and languages, you will learn details of how to get the best performance from a computer and how to set up a network for speed and security.

We teach the very latest specification from OCR, which was updated to be engaging and practical and to encourage the key skill of problem solving and how to apply the core concepts of computer science to real-world situations.

This course is most suitable for students aiming for a grade of 5 or higher in maths because you will learn how computers do arithmetic and you will get to use other types of operation such as modulus and bit-shifting. We normally use base 10 (denary) in our everyday lives but you will become experts in base 2 (binary) and base 16 (hexadecimal) as well.

What will you study?

The content for OCR-GCSE (9-1) Computer Science has been improved and reformed to meet the demands of the ever-evolving computer science industry and the dramatic influence that computers have on our lives. This section provides more detail on the topics covered.

Component 01: Computer systems

Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

Practical programming

Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s) during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02 (section B).

How is the course assessed?

GCSE (9-1) Computer Science

The assessment consists of two written examinations.

		Marks	Duration	Weighting
Component 01	Computer Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems architecture • Memory • Storage • Wired and wireless networks • Network topologies, protocols and layers • Network security • System software • Moral, social, legal, cultural and environmental concerns 	80	1 hour 30 minutes	50% of the total GCSE
Component 02	Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translators and facilities of languages • Algorithms • High-and-low level programming • Computational logic • Data representation 	80	1 hour 30 minutes	50% of the total GCSE

What skills do I need?

There are no prior learning requirements for this qualification. Joining the course with some experience of programming will be helpful but is not essential providing there is a willingness to learn.

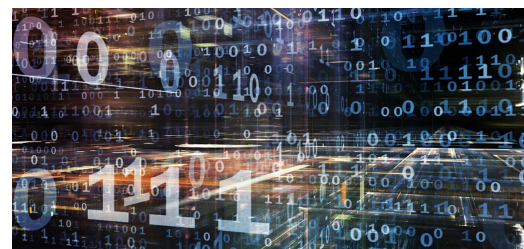
What can it lead to?

The knowledge and experience about computers, networks, software will be useful in everyday life such as how to compare PCs and improve computer performance, how to set up a home network, and how to create code to solve problems in your future studies of other subjects or in business.

Skills acquired during this course can be taken forward to further study at GCE A-Level and beyond which can lead to a huge variety of in-demand and well-paid careers in, for example, app programming, IT, game development, robotics, and e-commerce.

For further information

Contact Mr Hipperson, Head of Maths



MEDIA STUDIES

Course Description

The media play a central role in contemporary society and culture. They shape the way we view the world through the representations, viewpoints and messages they offer. The media have real relevance and importance in our lives today, providing us with ways to communicate and the ability to participate in key aspects of society.

The Media Studies GCSE course offers students an exciting opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of key media issues and the ability to debate important questions about the media. The course introduces media theories alongside the prospect of creating their own media texts.

What will you study?

- Explore the language and different ways groups are represented in a variety of print media, such as; magazines, newspapers, film posters and advertising.
- How the different media industries work and how they target their audiences in media such as; the video game industry, radio and film.
- Set texts in television and music. These will include a set TV series and music videos.
- You are also required to complete a non-exam assessment where you create your own media text. These options are released by the exam board each year but often include assignments such as writing, producing and filming your own music video.

How is the course assessed?

60% examination

30% coursework

What special skills do I need?

- Creativity
- An ability to demonstrate critical thinking and decision making
- A willingness to learn about a range of important media issues

What can it lead to?

Media Studies is a relevant qualification that can lead to many different pathways, such as: publishing, broadcasting, journalism, advertising, marketing, copywriter, video game industry, design and IT.

For further information

Ms Brown (Media Teacher)



HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

Course Description

The Eduqas Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering is a brilliant look into an industry that at some point will employ many of our young people. The course has 2 units. Unit 2 is Catering based looking at nutrition, cooking methods and practical skills and makes the basis of the controlled assessment element. Unit 1 looks at the structure, job roles and working responsibilities of people in the hospitality industry and is tested through the end of Yr11 summer exam

What will you study?

- All elements of food hygiene and safety
- The factors affecting food choice
- Environmental issues surrounding the catering industry
- Balancing food consumption and a healthy lifestyle for individual groups of people
- Planning and preparing a 2 course meal in response to a given brief
- The types of accommodation and facilities within hospitality providers
- Rating systems and types of contracts
- Job roles in both front and back of house hospitality teams

Summary of Assessment

Unit 1: The Catering and Hospitality industry (external exam) 40%

In Unit 1 we look more at the hospitality industry as a whole: job roles, types of establishments and working contracts. Within this we will explore what makes a 5* hotel superior to others, what responsibilities fall under what job description and how customers select different accommodations and locations to suit their exact needs. We will continue some practical elements looking more at suitability for different types of service styles and customer dynamic.

Unit 2: Catering and Hospitality in Action (Controlled assessment) 60%

In Unit 2 we look at how we respond to a brief and entwine excellent hygiene and practical skills into this. We learn how to construct and execute a 2-course menu from scratch in a given time slot and how to adapt recipes to make the outcomes more supportive of a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Topics such as environmental issues, client food choice and the effects of cooking on nutrients is all tested in this section

Please be aware that we cook at least once a fortnight and all students are expected to take part fully. We continue to operate an opt in payment system on a half termly basis. If you do not wish to opt in then ingredients will need to be supplied by home for each recipe. PP students will have ingredients cost covered by school funding.

For further information
Contact Mrs Fullard (Head of ADT)



CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Course Description

The understanding of how children developed from embryo through to 5-year-old is the core business of this course. It is aimed to give students a theoretical, factual and practical experience of caring for a child and their family pre and post birth, up to the age of 5 years old.

What will you study?

Our areas of study, like our methods, vary dramatically and will include discussions about:

- pre-conceptual health
- male and female reproductive systems and health
- methods of contraception
- stages of labour
- caring for a child - factors posing external risk, health and diet, accident and injury
- equipment needed to care for a baby and child
- milestones and stages of play

Whilst a large percentage of the syllabus requires factual knowledge, research and application, **it is helpful if students following this course have regular contact with a child who is under five years of age in order to complete the child study task.** This makes the course relevant and applicable on a daily basis.

For the Child Study, students will be required to plan two activities to carry out with the child and observe that young child in the child's home environment.

How is the course assessed?

This is an OCR Cambridge National Certificate Level 1-2 course:

Theory paper - 40%

Coursework - 60% total - 30% Child Study and 30 % Research Task

All students must produce and complete both pieces of coursework.

What skills do I need?

An interest in the care, support and health of young children in addition to good research skills.

An enjoyment in developing practical tasks and being able to analyse the outcomes

A love for working in a practical way, applying factual knowledge to real life situations

What can it lead to?

As this course is vocationally oriented, it is useful for students wishing to work with small children in a variety of careers. It has brilliant links to midwifery, sociology, early years education, social working, branches of police work, human biology and child minding.

Various courses are available locally for students who wish to specialise in this area.

For further information

Contact Mrs Fullard or Mrs Martin (Teachers of Child Development)



DRAMA

Course Description

The drama course is centred on practical work. You will need to be prepared to participate actively, every lesson. The course is planned around:

- Learning about different strategies for making theatre, understanding the medium of drama, acting and technical skills.
- The elements that make up drama and theatre, e.g. characterisation, action, plot and content.

Students will need to go to the theatre during the two-year course, as it is part of the examination.

What will you study?

You will explore the basic drama techniques connected to improvisation and performance such as mime, use of sound effects, coordinated movement, and many others. You will work together in groups to create improvisations and performances. You will also study drama texts and learn how to interpret plays.

How is the course assessed?

You will be mainly assessed on practical work. There is a written examination at the end of the course. You will be marked on your work in examined lessons and on your final performances.

What special skills do I need?

High level of confidence, a good imagination and the ability to work in a team.

What can it lead to?

Drama is a valuable addition to a range of GCSEs, stressing communication skills, understanding people and working closely with them. It demonstrates confidence, an ability to present yourself, and an ability to work with others: skills which are valuable and applicable to almost any area of work or further education. It is possible to follow BTEC Advanced and A level courses and follow these into degree courses. The theatre is a very competitive field of work and there are no specific routes of entry.

For further information

Contact Mr Sheridan (Teacher of Drama & English)



GEOGRAPHY

Exam Board - Edexcel B

Course Description

Geography is not only up-to-date and relevant, it is one of the most exciting and valuable subjects to study today. So many of the world's current problems boil down to geography, and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them.

Climate Change, Global Food Production, Natural Disasters such as Earthquakes and Tsunamis, the Spread of Disease - Covid, the reasons for Migration and the Future of Energy Resources are just some of the great challenges facing the next generation of geographers.

There are so many ways of learning geography. It is very practical, with opportunities to learn new skills such as computer-based mapping (called GIS), map skills, interpreting photographs, fieldwork skills, presenting and debating techniques. You will improve your literacy through your report writing and written work and make practical use of your numeracy skills when you interpret data and construct graphs. Fieldwork, or working outside the classroom, is a really important part of geography.

Students undertake **two field trips**. One to **Walton on the Naze** to study the impacts of human management on the coastal process along the Essex coastline. We also travel to **Letchworth Jackmans Estate and Broadway** to investigate the impact of deprivation on quality of life.

The examination is broken into three one and half hour examinations made up of:

Paper One: Global Geographical Issues. This investigates Hazardous Environments (plate tectonics and climatical), Development Dynamics and Challenges of an Urbanised World

Paper Two: UK Geographical Issues. This investigates the UK's evolving Physical Landscape (Geology, Coasts and Rivers) and the UK's evolving Human Landscape – which studies London as a case study.

Paper Three: Making Geographical Decisions. This investigates the Impact of People on the Biosphere, The Global Forests under Threat and The Impact of our Current Energy Resource Consumption.

For further information
Contact Mr Fowler (Lead Teacher of Humanities)



HISTORY

Exam Board - AQA

Course Description

History tells us who we are. No one is born in a vacuum. We are all products of those who came before us and the events that shaped their lives. History is the shared story of everyone who lives, has lived and will live on Earth. By studying history, we learn the story of our communities, our ancestors and better understand the story of ourselves.

History teaches us to think for ourselves. The world is full of people who want to persuade us to think like they do. History is no different. The study of history teaches us the skills to think critically about sources of information, looking for bias, understanding motivation, discerning the truth. The skills of a historian enable us to seek the truth, and see through the lies.

History teaches us to see the bigger picture. Historians have to understand a vast array of knowledge, and think critically about it. The skill of a historian is to look at events over hundreds of years and be able to pick out the key moment or event and say that this was the moment that changed it all.

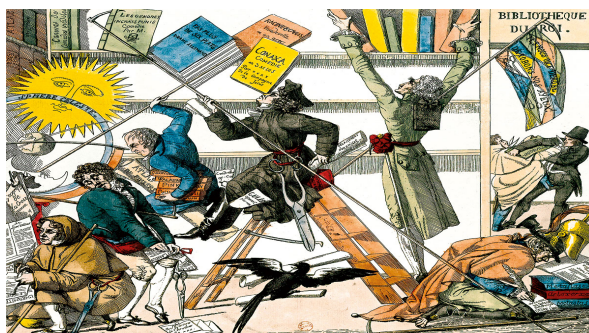
With GCSE History you'll study four elements, split over two exams:

- One period study - Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship
- One thematic study - Britain: health and the people, c1000–present
- One wider world depth study - Conflict and tension, 1918–1939
- One British depth study including the historic environment - Norman England c.1066-c.1100

Assessment

There are two exams – Paper 1: Period Study and Wider World Depth Study and paper 2: Thematic Study and British Depth Study. Both papers are each worth 50% and last for 2 hours each. These exams consist of short answer questions and longer, essay type questions.

For further information
Contact Mr Cordwell (Head of History)



PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND ETHICS (PRE)

Exam Board - AQA A

Course Description

Why study Religion, Philosophy and Ethics?

Simply put, if one fails to understand the world's religious beliefs and practices, then one fails to understand the world.

If you think that statement is provocative, then look at the alternatives:

- Science can tell us what's happening in the world and why, but it can't explain people's motives.
- Economics can tell us about the costs and benefits of our actions, but it won't tell us why we still do these things.
- History, literature, social theory can all open up a world of ideas, but they can't tell us, today, what people are actually believing and doing.

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics explores the world as people find it exciting, provocative and vital. Only these disciplines show us a world people live and die for, and the God and gods people worship in their lives and deaths.

PRE AQA A Specification:

Students should consider different beliefs and attitudes and non-religious issues in contemporary British society.

PRE GCSE at Fearnhill studies two components:

Component One: The beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam

Component Two: Thematic Studies: Christian and Islamic approaches to: Relationships & Family, Religion & Life, Crime & Punishment, Human rights & Social justice.

Assessment

There are two exams –

Paper 1: The Beliefs and Practices of Christianity and Islam

Paper 2: Thematic Studies

Both papers are worth 50% and last for 1 hour 45 minutes each



What special skills do I need?

Objective thinking, empathy, evaluative skills, tolerance, progressive thinking.

What can it lead to?

Further study at A Level

- Barrister • Civil Service Fast Streamer • Health Service Manager
- Local Government Officer • Marketing Executive • Newspaper Journalist
- Psychotherapist • Recruitment Consultant • Solicitor • Teacher

For further information

Contact Mrs Chilton (Lead Teacher of PRE)

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Course Description

The courses in **French** and **Spanish** build on the work covered in earlier years and continue to develop the skills of (a) speaking (b) listening (c) reading and (d) writing. Strong emphasis is placed on developing the ability to understand and use language effectively for practical communication.

Students are also expected to increase their insight into Spanish or French cultures.

You must have studied the language in Key Stage 3 in order to study it in Key Stage 4.

What will you study?

The courses cover the following themes:

1. **People and lifestyle** e.g. identity and relationships, healthy living, education and work
2. **Popular culture** e.g. free-time, customs and festivals, celebrity culture
3. **Communication and the world around us** e.g. travel and tourism, media and technology, the environment

Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experience and those of other people.

How is the course assessed?

This is a linear qualification and all 4 skills are assessed in exams at the end of the two years course. Each skill is worth 25% and students will receive one overall mark. Students will be encouraged to develop their ability and ambition to communicate with native speakers in speech and writing. Students will be given regular feedback on both homework and assessment, so that they can focus on individual improvement.

What special skills do I need?

- willingness to follow advice, learn from mistakes and work continuously to improve
- thirst for knowledge and an open mind to other cultures
- being keen to understand how the language works
- the bravery to communicate in a different language

What can it lead to?

People with foreign language skills are highly thought of in the modern world. They stand out as talented and successful people who have a broad understanding of the wider world and are demonstrably determined.

A GCSE in French or Spanish can help put you in a better position to get a job in a company with international links or to work abroad. If you are considering a career in tourism, the hotel and catering industry, business, banking or international law, a language would help. A GCSE in the language is essential for progression to AS/A2 level.

Having a language GCSE will enable students to develop their knowledge either at work or in further education.

For further information

Contact Mrs Cross (Subject Leader MFL)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I change my mind?

Your form must be handed in to Mrs Martin by Thursday 28th March. After that it is possible to change your mind, but you need to realise that we do all of our planning based on what you tell us on your form. The later you leave it, the more likely it is that changes will not be possible. If you ask to change after the courses have started, this may be impossible.

What if some courses are full?

Students do need to know that we do have restrictions on numbers in some courses, particularly in technology. It is rare for students to be disappointed in this way, but if it happens we will talk to you in detail as well as contacting your parents to explain the situation. Decisions will be made on the basis of your future career aspirations and factors such as your Key Stage 3 results.

I want to do one thing but my parents want me to do something else?

You must talk to your parents/carers about your choice and listen to their advice. You must also listen very carefully to the advice given to you by staff. In the end though, it is your choice.

Which are the easier subjects at GCSE?

No subjects are easier than any others, and you should not choose subjects on the basis of whether you think they might be easier.

Thinking ahead, how do I find out more about the curriculum on offer in Years 12 and 13?

If you want to find out about a particular subject at AS or 'A' level, talk to your subject teacher. If you want general information talk to Mr Marlow - Head of Key Stage 5 or Ms Balchin - Careers Lead.

I've already made up my mind. Why do I have to spend time reading the booklet and coming to an interview?

You do need to go through the process carefully so that we can be sure that you have made the right decisions for the right reasons.

What happens if only a few people choose a particular option?

It does occasionally happen that so few students opt for a particular subject that we are unable to run it. In this case we will inform you and your parents/carers and advise you carefully about the next step.

Will I get my first-choice options?

We try our best to ensure that everyone can study the courses that they have selected. However, there are occasions where you may need to study your 'reserve' option. Although we do our best, we cannot guarantee that you will be allocated all your choices.



THE QUALIFICATIONS STRUCTURE

Level 1 qualifications

- Foundation Level Tier
- GCSE grades 1-3
- WJEC Award Level 1 pass, merit, distinction
- OCR Cam Nat Level 1 Pass, merit, distinction

Level 2 qualifications

- Foundation & Higher Tier
- GCSE grades 4-9
- WJEC Award Level 2 pass, merit, distinction
- OCR Cam Nat Level 2 pass, merit, distinction, distinction*

Advanced level qualifications (Level 3)

- A-levels (available at school or at college)
- BTEC National Diploma
- NVQ level 3 (work or college-based training)

Degree level qualifications

- HND at University or College (equals NVQ level 4)
- Degree (University) (equals NVQ level 5)

Postgraduate qualification

- Advanced degree
- Professional training



ACTION PLAN

It is important that the decisions you take at this stage of your school career are taken after proper thought and consultation with others who can help you. This action plan is to help you achieve this aim. Keep it carefully and make sure that you go through the steps outlined below.

I have read this booklet thoroughly and carefully	
I have discussed my progress in all my subjects	
I have used the Services for Young People resources in the Careers library and software to research my choices e.g. Higher Ideas/JED	
I have matched my strengths and weaknesses to the courses on offer	
I have discussed my choices with my parents	
I have selected a pathway that suits my needs	
I have thought carefully about the reasons for my choices	
I have had my interview and thought about the advice I was given	
I have completed the draft Options Form	
I have completed my Options Form and my parents/carers have signed it	
I have handed my Options Form in to Mrs Martin	



NOTES

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