



PANGBOURNE

A Guide to Choosing GCSEs
2021 Edition

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet contains all the basic information you need to make your choice of GCSE or IGCSE (the international version of GCSE) courses you will follow for the next two years. Keep it safe to refer to; you will find it useful for a long time to come.

Your choice of GCSEs is very important for three reasons:

- i. The results you earn in two years' time will be the basis of your A Level choices, which will lead on to university and/or your career.
- ii. University selectors, who like to see a broad range of achievement, will know your results; so this affects which university will offer you a place.
- iii. This is the first time you have a choice of which subjects to study.

Start out with an open mind:

- Remember, GCSEs will teach you skills and information which you can apply in new fields.
- Look to see what mix of courses can best develop your talents.
- Please do not begin the process with your mind already made up.

We have carefully left out one thing from this booklet: the options form. This is to stop you making your mind up too early.

These are big decisions to make.

- Do take care over them.
- Do not rush into making decisions.
- Do ask for help when you need it.
- Don't worry too much; we are here to help you make the right choices.

THE CURRICULUM

It is best to think of the curriculum as having two parts: a compulsory core and then an options system.

In the compulsory core:

- Everyone will study English Language and English Literature to IGCSE.
- Everyone will study Mathematics to IGCSE.
- Everyone will choose between Combined Science (which counts for two GCSEs) and three separate Sciences. It is not possible to study two separate Sciences. The Science faculty will make recommendations in advance of the February parents' meeting as to whether you are advised to follow a combined science or separate science route.
- Everyone will follow a non-examined programme of PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education).

HELP AND ADVICE

There are many people who can help you with advice:

- Your Tutor/Housemaster/Housemistress will guide you through the choice process: they are experienced and have a thorough understanding of what are good subject combinations.
- The Head of Careers and Enterprise, Mr Andrew Sumner, will be able to give you specialist advice, and he can help you draw on the resources of experienced careers advisors as well as programmes, such as Probe, which pupils will have looked at during tutor times. There is also a Careers section in this booklet.
- The Heads of Department will help you work out if their subject is for you and will explain the details of their courses.
- Your teachers will have a good idea of your strengths and weaknesses, your talents and skills and can tell you more about your prospects in their subject.
- Your parents and guardians will be deeply involved; make a real point of discussing your choices at home
- The Head of Key Stage 3, Mr Follett, and Head of Key Stage 4, Mrs Poynter, are responsible for organising your choices and making them fit together into the timetable. They are both always available for advice.

The most important person in all this is you. In the end, it's your decision, and one you will work with for the next two years at least. Don't take it lightly.

We find there can be some unhelpful sources of advice and guidance:

- Try not to be influenced by what your friends are doing: they are making their decisions, whilst you should be making yours.
- Beware of being told that one subject is hard, or another easy, or another essential for a specific career. The first is not true – big efforts go into making sure that one GCSE is worth the same as another. The second may be true, but you need to check it carefully using the Careers resources or Mr Sumner's advice.
- Do not choose what subject to do next year based on which staff are currently teaching you; it is quite likely you will not get the same teacher next year.

There are useful sources of advice and information online: www.ucas.com is the UK university admissions website. It will allow you to find the current entry requirements for university courses, but you should ask your Tutor for help in understanding the details. The exam boards have websites at: www.ocr.org.uk, www.aqa.org.uk and <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html> and these have the course details and often other helpful information.

You are welcome to email Richard.Follett@pangbourne.com or Stephanie.Poynter@pangbourne.com for specific advice or information.

CHOICES TIME

You need to choose a total of six subjects – remember English, Maths and PSHCE have already been put into your timetable so you choose six in addition to those subjects.

You need to choose either:

- **Combined science PLUS four other subjects**
- OR
- **Separate sciences PLUS three other subjects**

The Science faculty will make recommendations in advance of the February parents' meeting as to whether you are advised to follow a combined or separate science route.

- Pupils must choose at least one humanities subject (History, Geography or Religious Studies).
- It may be advisable to choose at least one Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish).
- It is not possible to study both DT - Product Design and DT - Textiles.
- Art and DT may only be selected in combination following discussion with either Mr Follett or Mrs Poynter.

You will be asked to select your GCSE subjects from those named in this booklet in order of preference and we will endeavour to build the timetable to allow as many pupils as possible to study their chosen subjects. On very rare occasions, it is not possible to timetable all of a pupil's options, in which case we will have a discussion about selecting an appropriate replacement.

Remember to get a broad and balanced selection of options that you will be happy to study for at least two years.

A member of the Academic Management Team will interview every pupil once their provisional choices have been submitted. In this way we hope to ensure that there are sound reasons behind their choices and that they truly understand the implications of the choices they have made.

Be aware that, where there is a limit on class sizes, performance to date will be considered.

Whilst it may be possible to change your option choices at a later date, we cannot guarantee that all combinations will be possible or that there will be space in all classes.

THE OPTIONS PROCESS

Thursday 14 January 2021

Form 3 Options Assembly

Thursday 21 January 2021

Heads of Department begin class briefings on GCSE courses through Form 3 assemblies

Wednesday 10 February 2021

Form 3 Parents' and Guardians' Meetings. Launch of GCSE Options booklet

Late February 2021

Tutors finish the first round of discussions with tutees

Thursday 4 March 2021

Submit your GCSE Provisional Options Choice Form

March/April/May 2021

Mr Follett and other members of the Academic Management Team will interview each individual about their provisional choices.

March 2021

Heads of Departments receive and consider provisional choices

May 2021

Final Options Form issued

Thursday 6 May 2021

Complete your GCSE Final Options Form

June 2021

Heads of Department receive confirmed set lists

September 2021

GCSE teaching begins

All information is correct at time of printing. The College reserves the right to make any necessary changes.

CAREERS DEPARTMENT

At Pangbourne we believe that it is our responsibility to provide you with the resources and support necessary to investigate possible career paths and subject choices throughout your time here. You will have a great deal of input regarding your career path; this may come in the form of interviews, presentations, advice and web-based activities.

We encourage you to look at the careers website on the pupil hub where we provide up to date information regarding offers and incentives for work experience, apprenticeships and personal development. We arrange for advisers from a number of large companies and organisations to visit the College and talk to any interested parties. We also host an informative and instructive Careers Fair in March.

AIMS

- To help students develop the skills and confidence to make realistic and informed decisions about their futures, for themselves, and to manage the transitions from one stage of their education, training and work to the next.
- To help students develop knowledge and understanding of the work and career opportunities available to them and guide them with personal development necessary to achieve their goals.

FORM 3

During Tutor periods, you will begin to build your own career profile through the web-based programme from MyFutureChoice (formerly COA - Cambridge Occupational Analysts). Students can take the MyAptitude test, helping to identify interests both in and out of school, as well as suggesting the possible grades that students hope to achieve in GCSEs. The intention is to build awareness of the wide range of career possibilities available, at the same time signposting matching interests and abilities. Students can then research these areas online from a stronger, and potentially more focused, position and start to consider potential career avenues.

FORM 4

In Form 4, you will have opportunities to build upon your MyFutureChoice profile, during which you can undertake some individual research into courses and careers. Pupils will undertake a follow-on careers programme; they are given an opportunity to complete the MyCareerChoices in-depth questionnaire, which ascertains the key career areas which might be of interest and lists job titles within these areas, which the student can consider. Research has shown that people are more successful and happy in their career if it matches their interests in some way. The programme also takes on board any career areas in which the student is already expressing an interest.

FORM 5

During Form 5, pupils will continue to build on their MyFutureChoice suggestions. Your son or daughter will have the opportunity to practise interviews and receive feedback on their responses. They will be also given the opportunity to reflect on the experience and consider any issues arising. They should have an idea of jobs and areas to focus on in the investigative work which follows. Further interviews will offer an opportunity to discuss the findings of their earlier research and consider in greater detail the issues surrounding their subjects to be studied in the Sixth Form. They will also be encouraged to look at possible opportunities for experiencing the world of work and developing key skills for their future.

MyFutureChoice programme is an opt-in service offered by the College, the cost of which will be added to the school bill following parental consent.

Mr Andrew Sumner

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE

The College has introduced an updated Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy. This requires all pupils in Form 3 and upwards to have a productive IT device for all lessons.

Many teachers, subjects and departments make extensive use of these devices in lessons and for Prep, particularly in public exam classes.

You can find details below of the Standard Laptop Specification which is required, and an Enhanced Laptop Specification which is required for certain subjects.

Standard Laptop Specification	Enhanced Laptop Specification
<p>Hardware</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum screen size of 10 inches with a recommendation of 12 inches. • A full-sized physical keyboard, suitable for the device. • Wi-Fi connectivity. • Battery life of 7 hours or more, as stated by the manufacturer. • Audio output, via headphone jack or Bluetooth. • A suitably robust case to protect the device. • Please note: whereas a tablet paired with a keyboard may meet these requirements, a smartphone will not support the extended use for academic work. If you are thinking of making a specific purchase, there are many types of Chromebook available at around £180 that are more than adequate. <p>Software</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Suite is the productivity software; it is web-based and will work on any device with a web browser. • We also require that appropriate antivirus / antimalware software is installed. 	<p>Hardware</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum diagonal screen size of 12 inches but 14-inch is preferred. • A full-sized physical keyboard, suitable for the device. • Operating System: Windows 10 or Mac 10.10. • CPU: quad core i3/i5 minimum but i7 is preferred, especially for subjects manipulating images or videos. • Memory [RAM]: Minimum 8 GB. • Local Storage [HDD]: a 1 TB magnetic disk drive or 256 GB SSD with access to Cloud storage. • A separate graphics chip / card is preferable but not essential [these are still built into a laptop and handle the graphics processing, rather than the CPU]. • Wi-Fi – 80211ac or better. • USB 3 or higher. • Battery life of 5 hours or more, as stated by the manufacturer under normal load. • Audio output, via headphone jack or Bluetooth. • A suitably robust case to protect the device. <p>Software</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAs specified by departments. • Antivirus / antimalware software.

Subjects requiring the Enhanced Laptop Specification are currently:

- Computer Science
- Design Technology
- Film Studies (not currently offered at GCSE)
- Music
- Photography

More information on the College's BYOD policy can be found on our website at:

<https://www.pangbourne.com/prospective-families/departments/bring-your-own-device>

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

What can I do after this course?

IGCSE English Language is the gateway to any job or career and is essential for entry into further and higher education courses. The communication skills you will learn and develop on the course can be applied to all your GCSE subjects and the subjects you eventually study at A Level. By far the greatest benefit you should gain is the ability to speak, read and write more confidently, more fluently and with greater enjoyment.

Aims

The study of English Language is central to your life, involving both the development of literacy and communication skills and an ability to function effectively in an increasingly varied, media-based world.

Teaching methods

IGCSE English Language is taught alongside IGCSE English Literature in the English slots on your timetable. ICT resources are used in both teaching and learning, and activities are focused around reading, writing, discussion and presentations.

Course content

IGCSE English Language is graded from 9 to 1.

Paper 1	Paper 2
Section A: Reading Non-Fiction Section B: Transactional Writing	Section A: Poetry and Prose Section B: Imaginative Writing

AWARDING BODY	Edexcel
COURSE TITLE	IGCSE English Language A (4EAO)
WEBSITE	http://qualifications.pearson.com
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination

ENGLISH LITERATURE

What can I do after this course?

The skills of critical analysis and extended writing that you will develop on this course are useful in a range of A Level subjects, especially History, Film Studies, Classics and English Literature. The IGCSE English Literature course opens a window onto literature and culture in the English-speaking world, enabling you to appreciate and enjoy the written word in your adult life.

Aims

The English Literature course is designed to enable you to understand, appreciate and enjoy some of the greatest works ever written in English. The study of texts from Shakespeare to the present day will increase your understanding of the world around you, develop your critical and analytical skills, as well as help you to write fluently and coherently.

Teaching methods

IGCSE English Literature is taught alongside IGCSE English Language in the English slots on your timetable. ICT resources are used in both teaching and learning, and activities are focused around reading, writing and discussion. Where possible, theatre trips are used to enhance the study of set texts.

Course content

IGCSE English Literature is graded from 9 to 1.

Paper 1	Paper 2
Section A: Modern Drama Section B: Literary Heritage	Section A – Unseen Poetry Section B – Anthology Poetry Section C – Modern Prose

AWARDING BODY	Edexcel
COURSE TITLE	IGCSE English Literature (4ETO)
WEBSITE	http://qualifications.pearson.com
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination

MATHEMATICS

What can I do after this course?

IGCSE Mathematics is a required subject for entry to higher education, Sixth Form and university. It also forms the basis for many other subjects at A Level. Besides the Sciences, it is also needed in Business, Economics, Geography, ICT and Design Technology.

Aims

Mathematics is a skills-based course. It is designed to equip you with skills which are useful in all aspects of life. You will develop a positive and confident approach to Mathematics, a strong grasp of numeracy and the mental manipulation of numbers. You can expect to tackle appropriately challenging work; learn to apply mathematical knowledge and understand how to solve problems; to think and communicate mathematically; and to appreciate the place and use of mathematics in society.

Transferable skills

The course provides you with the key skills of ICT, communication, and application of number and problem-solving.

Teaching methods

Teaching is in ability-grouped sets. Selected students are entered for local and national competitions and taken to lectures appropriate to their ages and abilities.

Course content

The course is divided into four main areas:

- Using and Applying Mathematics
- Number and Algebra
- Shape, Space and Measure
- Handling Data

The IGCSE course is started in Form 3 and continues through Forms 4 and 5.

Most students will be entered for the Higher Tier papers of the syllabus, whilst some students will be entered for the Foundation Tier papers.

GCSE SCIENCES

The material studied in your Science lessons in Form 3 forms part of the new GCSE courses, and will give you an indication of the type of work you will be doing for these subjects.

- Three separate Science GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
 - The content and structure of each of these is described in the separate sections for these subjects.
 - Be advised that the content for these GCSE separate sciences is demanding, and the decision to take separate sciences will be subject to approval by the faculty
 - Each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics will make up one option choice

OR

- Combined Science GCSE
 - This course contains a combination of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, and involves approximately two-thirds of the topics covered in each of the separate sciences
 - This corresponds to two GCSEs, will occupy two teaching blocks, and will take up two of your choices

We offer the Separate Science GCSEs as a complete package; students will either take all three of the subjects, or will need to take Combined Science. There is no longer any provision by the examination boards for a single Combined Science GCSE.

Studying Combined Science does prepare you to study the Sciences at A Level, as long as your performance at GCSE is sufficient; Combined Science, therefore, leaves all of your options open. Those pupils who already know that they want to study Science subjects at A Level would be advised to choose separate sciences as you will cover a greater depth and breadth of material. Those considering careers in medicine, dentistry or veterinary sciences should study the separate sciences. Other scientific careers may also require the separate sciences to be studied at GCSE (nursing, engineering, physiotherapy and others), so please discuss this when making your choices.

None of the new Science GCSEs involve coursework or controlled assessment, instead there are a specified set of practicals during the course which you are required to cover, a selection of which will be examined in the written papers.

AWARDING BODY	Edexcel
COURSE TITLE	IGCSE Mathematics A [4 MA1]
WEBSITE	https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcse/international-gcse-mathematics-a-2016.html
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination

COMBINED SCIENCES

What can I do after this course?

This course will enable you to continue study in any of the three sciences, as well as those subjects benefiting from a general scientific grounding, for example Psychology or PE.

Aims

Combined Science will give you a sound grounding in all three Science disciplines. It aims to foster an interest in and an appreciation of Science and the scientific method. It will provide you with a broad and balanced Science education for those who may or may not be considering studying Sciences further in the Sixth Form. It contains all the material required to go on to study any of the sciences at A Level, although obviously not in quite the depth offered by separate Biology, Chemistry or Physics GCSEs.

Teaching methods

The course will blend practical and theoretical work. You will develop investigative skills as well as practical skills and data analysis.

Course structure

The Combined Science GCSE offered at Pangbourne College is AQA's 'Trilogy' specification, a course which is taught topic by topic. The amount of content in this course is equivalent to two GCSEs, and therefore contains approximately two-thirds of the content of each of the separate sciences. If you look at the list of topics below, nearly all the topics in the separate sciences are contained in the Combined Science course. However, not all of the sub-topics contained in each heading are included.

The Combined Science course is available at both Higher and Foundation Tier, with Foundation Tier having a slightly reduced content and more straightforward examination questions. Grades are awarded on a 17-point scale from 9-9 (the highest grade) down to 1-1 (the lowest grade).

Higher Tier enables access to grades 9-9 to 4-4, whilst Foundation Tier enables access to grades 5-5 to 1-1. For more information about these courses, including the practical assessment, please refer to the specifications published on the AQA website: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464>

Course content

Biology

- Cell Biology
- Organisation
- Infection and Response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and Response
- Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table
- Bonding, Structure and the Properties of Matter
- Quantitative Chemistry
- Chemical Changes
- Energy Changes
- The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change
- Organic Chemistry
- Chemical Analysis
- Chemistry of the Atmosphere
- Using Resources

Physics

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and Electromagnetism
- Particle Model of Matter
- Atomic Structure

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Combined Science, Trilogy (8464)
WEBSITE	http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	All written exams are taken at the end of Form 5 Six papers of 1hr 15min each, 16.7% weighting each Plus continuous assessment of practical skills

BIOLOGY

What can I do after this course?

Students can go on to study Biology at A Level, which combines well with other sciences, PE, Psychology or Geography leading to future career opportunities including medicine and veterinary science. A Level Biology students should have achieved a good pass grade at GCSE in both Chemistry and Biology or Combined Science and will be encouraged to study Chemistry alongside Biology in the Sixth Form.

Aims

To encourage an appreciation of the natural world and respect for the human body and how it works. As well as providing a foundation for more detailed study, Biology is essential for learning how to live a healthy life and make good choices about how we look after ourselves and our environment.

Transferable skills

We learn how to plan experiments and collect, present and analyse data. Students read and watch current news reports and scientific articles, checking for valid and reliable data or bias in the way new ideas are presented.

Teaching methods

Theory lessons are supplemented with practical work. Independent learning is encouraged with guided project work, presentations and class debate.

Course content

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

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Biology (8461)
WEBSITE	http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	Both written exams are taken at the end of Form 5 Biology 1 - 1 hr 45min, 100 marks, 50% weighting Biology 2 - 1 hr 45min, 100 marks, 50% weighting Plus continuous assessment of practical skills

CHEMISTRY

What can I do after this course?

Students can go on to study A Level Chemistry, which is considered by many as the 'central science' and as such is either a requirement or strongly recommended for a large number of science degrees, including medicine and veterinary courses. Simply enjoying the subject is, of course, a good enough reason to continue with it. The world needs good chemists as well.

Aims

To enable you to know and understand a broad range of chemical principles, theories and facts and to have an open-minded appreciation of the role of the chemist in our society. The course is designed to develop your interest in the subject as well as develop your ability to explain observations and understand scientific methods.

Teaching methods

Whilst the course uses a lot of practical work to illustrate concepts, we also place a great deal of emphasis on the theoretical side of the subject. Important ideas will be illustrated using practical or teacher demonstration, as well as a range of video and ICT resources. You will develop investigative skills as well as practical skills and data analysis.

Course content

- Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table
- Bonding, Structure and the Properties Of Matter
- Quantitative Chemistry
- Chemical Changes
- Energy Changes
- The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change
- Organic Chemistry
- Chemical Analysis
- Chemistry of the Atmosphere
- Using Resources

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Chemistry (8462)
WEBSITE	http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/chemistry-8462
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	Both written exams are taken at the end of Form 5 Chemistry 1 - 1hr 45min, 100 marks, 50% weighting CChemistry 2 - 1hr 45min, 100 marks, 50% weighting Plus continuous assessment of practical skills

PHYSICS

What can I do after this course?

Students can go on to study Physics at A Level, which then offers a wide range of career opportunities, as well as the obvious science-based ones such as engineering. A Level Physics students should have achieved a strong pass grade at GCSE in both Physics and Mathematics and will be encouraged to study Mathematics alongside Physics in the Sixth Form.

Aims

To stimulate curiosity about, interest in, and enjoyment of Physics; to develop skills which are useful in everyday life; to develop your understanding of scientific ideas and the basis of scientific claims; to develop your understanding of the technological and environmental applications of Physics and their implications.

Transferable skills

You will develop the skills of communication, applied mathematics, working with others, using ICT, problem solving and improving your own learning and performance throughout the course.

Teaching methods

Theory lessons are complemented with copious practical work.

Course content

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and Electromagnetism
- Particle Model of Matter
- Atomic Structure
- Space Physics

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Physics (8463)
WEBSITE	http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/physics-8463
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	Both written exams are taken at the end of Form 5 Physics 1 - 1hr 45min, 100 marks, 50% weighting Physics 2 - 1hr 45min, 100 marks, 50% weighting Plus continuous assessment of practical skills

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH & CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The PSHCE programme at Pangbourne College aims to encourage pupils to:

- Develop self-esteem and confidence.
- Be integrated fully into the community of Pangbourne College.
- Develop understanding and ownership of the school's ethos and values. The College's Flag Values are an essential thread running through the programme.
- Be responsible for their behaviour and learning.
- Develop mutual respect and support.
- Develop self-awareness and an opportunity to think about, assess and develop their potential. Careers education is an important element of the PSHCE programme.
- Take responsibility for their health and well-being, both physical and emotional.
- Think about issues and make informed opinions.
- Become inquiring, knowledgeable and caring citizens who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.
- Develop an understanding of the concept of leadership at Pangbourne College and prepare pupils for potential leadership.

Teaching methods

Teaching methods are varied and will include: discussion, brainstorming, problem-solving, role play, written work, video and the use of visiting speakers.

Course content

Form 4	Michaelmas Term:	Beliefs and Values, including moral dilemmas Homelessness Anxiety Identity and Diversity Rest and Sleep
	Lent Term:	Contraception Relationships and Sexual Behaviour Sexually Transmitted Infections Emotional Wellbeing - Body Positivity
	Summer Term:	Personal Relationships Marriage/Family Life Citizenship Evaluation
Form 5	Michaelmas Term:	Goals for Healthy Living: Alcohol & Drugs Digital Footprints Reverence for Life/Moral Choices (Abortion & Euthanasia)
	Lent Term:	Healthy Eating, including Vaping Personal Finance, including cost of living and budgeting Skills and Careers
	Summer Term:	No lessons - revision

The course is supplemented by sessions run by each student's individual tutor. These cover topics like: Study Skills for GCSE, Revision and Exam Techniques, Internet Safety, Plagiarism, and Study and Career Options at 16+, as well as topical PSHCE events.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

ART

Am I suited to this course?

Yes, if you have particularly enjoyed Art lessons or projects in Forms 1, 2 and 3; if you have a genuine interest in Art; if you enjoy drawing or making things.

All skills can be taught, although an ability to draw is a distinct advantage.

What can I do after this course?

This is the first step towards a career in a creative industry. You should study GCSE to go on to A Level Art and Design. Examples of possible careers include architecture, advertising, fashion, marketing, design, publishing, photography, film and media.

The study of Art can help you see the world more clearly and is an ideal balance to other subjects.

Aims

To gain a sound basis of skills, to develop confidence and independence, to develop your artistic potential and to cultivate an awareness of the cultural value and place of Art in society.

Teaching methods

The GCSE follows on from what has been taught during Forms 1-3. The emphasis is on the process of developing ideas and work, as well as building a working knowledge of the materials, practices and technology of art and design. You will acquire the ability to investigate, analyse and experiment. You will do a number of projects to develop a range of skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, photography and ICT.

Course content

Over the two-year course you will be required to complete thematic coursework projects. These will include comprehensive preparation work and larger final pieces. The unendorsed nature of the course allows work in a range of materials including 2D and 3D media.

We will always try to go on visits to galleries in London and drawing trips to the local environment.

The final exam is a complete project: preparation and supporting work to be completed in 6-8 weeks prior to the final piece in a 10 hour exam.

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Art and Design
WEBSITE	www.aqa.org.uk
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	40% examination; 60% coursework Marked internally and moderated externally
SPECIFICATION	https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/art-and-design/specifications/AQA-ART-GCSE-SP-2016.PDF

BUSINESS

Am I suited to this course?

Are you interested to know why some adverts grab your attention whilst others do not? Are you confident with numbers to work out financial calculations such as revenue, costs and profit? Have you ever wondered how your device is made?

If most of these questions interest you then Business is the subject for you. The course is accessible to pupils of a wide range of abilities: confident with maths, enjoy extended writing and aware of current affairs.

What can I do after this course?

Business is a beneficial general course which sits alongside most other subjects. It is an excellent foundation for many university courses, such as: Business Management, Economics, Law and Architecture. Elements of Business are relevant in all types of employment.

Aims

- Develop knowledge and understanding of how the main types of business are organised, financed and operated
- Make effective use of relevant terminology and concepts, recognising the strengths and limitations of the ideas used
- Apply knowledge and critical understanding to address issues in a wide range of appropriate contexts
- Appreciate the perspective of a range of stakeholders in relation to the environment, individuals, society, government and enterprise

Transferable skills

- Evaluate qualitative and quantitative data in order to help build arguments and make informed judgements
- Develop skills of numeracy, literacy, enquiry, selection and employment of relevant sources of information, presentation and interpretation

Teaching methods

Teaching is largely based on case studies of both real and fictional companies, so pupils obtain a broad understanding of a wide range of businesses.

Course content

The GCSE Business course provides a basic introduction to setting up and running a business. Main topics covered include:

- Enterprise and the business environment
- Marketing
- Management of human resources
- Controlling production operations
- Accounting and Finance

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Business
WEBSITE	www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/business/gcse
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	Two Examinations - 1hr 45mins in Duration

Depending on the level of demand, there may need to be an element of selection for places.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Am I suited to this course?

Yes, if you are...

- Interested in computers and learning how they work.
- Keen to learn how to program a computer.
- Can work independently and like solving problems.
- Curious, enthusiastic and prepared to carry out your own research.

What can I do after this course?

If you are successful in the GCSE then Computer Science can be studied to A Level and at university. The UK is seriously short of computer programmers and computer scientists, so a lucrative career is possible for those who are successful in this subject.

Aims

- To develop an understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work.
- To acquire and apply creative and technical skills, knowledge and understanding of Computer Science in a range of contexts.
- To develop and use algorithms in computer programs.
- To develop computer programs to solve problems.
- To evaluate the role that computer science has and its impact on society.
- To develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills.
- To support higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science.

Teaching methods

Theoretical lessons based around set texts and digital resources that consolidate learning. Courseware and online courses also support the theoretical and practical aspects of the qualification.

Course content

This GCSE provides an excellent opportunity to investigate how computers work and how they are used, and to develop computer programming and problem-solving skills. You will also do some fascinating in-depth research and practical work.

Component 01 - Computer Systems:

- System Architecture
- Memory and Storage
- Computer Networks, Connections and Protocols
- Network Security
- System Software
- Ethical, Legal, Cultural and Environmental Impact of Digital Technology

Component 02 - Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming:

- Algorithms
- Programming Fundamentals
- Producing Robust Programs
- Boolean Logic
- Programming Languages and Integrated Developer Environment

In addition to the knowledge content, a practical, programming project is completed. This is used to develop and practise the programming skills that are needed in section B of the written paper of component 02.

Assessment

Assessment is by written exam only. Paper 1 consists of a series of multiple choice, short and long answer questions. Paper 2 is divided into two sections: the first, Section A, deals with programming concepts. The second, Section B, uses the practical skills gained on the course to solve a range of programming problems.

AWARDING BODY	OCR
COURSE TITLE	Computer Science J277 [New from 2020]
WEBSITE	http://www.ocr.org.uk/
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	01 Written 80 marks 50% of total 1.5hr 02 Written 80 marks 50% of total 1.5hr

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

(either Product Design OR Textiles route)

Am I suited to this course?

Yes, if you...

- Have a real interest in designing and making
- Have an inquiring mind and you are self-motivated
- Care about making products to a high quality finish, with attention to detail and quality
- Are creative, imaginative and keen to learn how to communicate your ideas

What can I do after this course?

Initially, take our Art and Design BTEC course in the Sixth Form when you will learn a range of design and making disciplines, whilst working with a variety of materials. After this, courses are available at university level which can lead to careers in a huge range of areas: architecture, engineering, product, industrial and interior design, fashion, marketing, advertising, illustration and computer-aided design.

Aims

You will develop designing, making and evaluating skills, with an appropriate knowledge base to be able to successfully design and manufacture three-dimensional products.

Transferable skills

You will use a range of analytical, communication and making skills, including verbal, graphical and manufacturing techniques. You will have the opportunity to apply value judgements of an aesthetic, economic, moral, environmental and technical nature throughout your designing and making. Use of CAD/CAM (computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing) will be an integral component throughout the entire course.

Teaching methods

The teaching of Design Technology is a highly creative process that combines intellectual, creative and practical skills through relevant closed and open-ended tasks. The creative process in which students are engaged involves a series of related activities that include:

- Identifying a need or design opportunity
- Creating design specifications and suggesting solutions
- Developing design ideas or solutions using 2D and 3D techniques and including CAD
- Planning the sequential completion of the task, including time and resource management
- Creating prototypes and final solutions
- Evaluating the success of the selected design outcome

There is an expectation that GCSE DT pupils will spend two enrichment/activities a week working in the DT Department.

Course content

The two-year course will consist of a series of short tasks that bring you into close contact and experiential understanding with materials, processes and techniques in either:

- Wood, metal and plastics, looking at various joining and forming techniques - Product Design
- OR
- Fabrics, compliant materials, basic textile construction techniques - Textiles.

If you are unsure which of these routes would be most suited to you, or have any further questions about what they entail, please get in touch with your Design Technology teacher or Mrs Jewell in the first instance.

The course also incorporates elements of mathematics, systems and control, smart materials and has a large emphasis on the business and development behind successful products.

You will undertake these tasks in Form 4; in Form 5 you will do the main coursework project. For your coursework, you will complete a single design-and-make activity selected from a range of tasks set by AQA. The coursework will be informally supervised and you must be able to authenticate the coursework as your own work.

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Design Technology
WEBSITE	www.aqa.org.uk
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	50% coursework portfolio and practical; 50% un-tiered examination

Please note: A £20.00 recharge will be incurred for the Michaelmas and Lent Terms.

DRAMA

Am I suited to this course?

Yes, if you...

- Enjoy watching theatre and performing Drama.
- Are able to work on group and individual projects.
- Have an enthusiasm for writing about theatre and evaluating the effectiveness of your dramatic work and the work of others.

For this exam, you can choose between a performing role (acting) OR a non-performing role (design). If you choose the latter, you will create a design for a theatre skill such as lighting, sound, costume/hair & make-up or set.

What can I do after this course?

You may not want to become an actor, so why take GCSE Drama? Drama is a most desirable GCSE to have on your CV, as it shows universities and employers that you are an effective communicator. It is an indication of your ability to work with other people effectively, learning many skills including compromise, listening, problem-solving, the ability to remember many things (i.e. lines, where to walk to, how to say the lines, manage props at the same time as walking to the correct position and still managing to remain in the light!) and confidence.

In all professions, the ability to communicate effectively and make presentations to groups of people is vital. Relevant careers are manifold as today's employers are looking for people who can multitask, and Drama certainly gives you these tools.

Interested in Drama as a profession? After completing your GCSE, you could study the subject at A Level. After this, there are many universities and Drama Schools which offer drama and technical theatre degree courses.

Aims

You can expect to develop creative and imaginative powers, and the practical skills for communicating and expressing ideas, feelings and meanings in Drama. You will also develop investigative, analytical, experimental and interpretative capabilities, aesthetic understanding and critical skills. You will also develop an understanding of drama forms and an awareness of contexts in which they operate, as well as the knowledge and understanding of drama within a social, cultural and historical context.

Transferable skills

You can expect to develop skills in the following areas:

- Problem-solving
- Creativity
- Compromise
- Improvisation
- Communication
- Acting and design
- Multi-tasking
- Evaluation
- Confidence
- Writing
- Social and group working

Teaching methods

Students will work both in groups and individually on a variety of topics and themes. They will be expected to research, offer ideas, devise, rehearse, perform and evaluate at every lesson. As this exam has both a practical and written element to it, they will be expected to produce written documentary evidence of their class work, research and their ideas which have helped them and their group to create an original piece of drama.

COURSE CONTENT

Form 4

Genre exploration:

Theatre in Education

Commedia dell'Arte

Practitioner exploration:

Bertolt Brecht

Component 1: Devising Theatre (starts after February half term, actual exam in June worth 40% of final GCSE)

Component 3: Practical exploration and performance of the set text 'DNA'

Ongoing theatre performance analysis and evaluation

Form 5

Component 3: Set Text revision

Component 2: Scripted performance, exam in

Component 3: Written exam in May

DRAMA SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT (WJEC)

AWARDING BODY

EDUQAS

COURSE TITLE

CSE Drama consisting of three components, subject award C690QSL

WEBSITE

<http://www.wjec.co.uk/>

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

COMPONENT ONE: Devising Theatre (40%) Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated.

- Learners will be assessed on either acting or design
- Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or a genre, in response to a stimulus set by EDUQAS
- Learners must produce:
 - a performance of their piece of devised theatre
 - supporting evidence (coursework)
 - a written evaluation of the final performance or design

COMPONENT TWO: Performance from a Text (20%) Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

- Learners will be assessed on either acting or design
- Learners study two extracts from the same performance text chosen by the centre
- Learners participate in one performance using sections of text from both extracts.

COMPONENT THREE: Interpreting Theatre (40%) Written examination: 1hr 30min

Section A: Set Text

A series of questions on 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly.

Section B: Live Theatre Review

One question requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.

Candidates will be assessed on either their acting or a theatre design skill, in a scene from a published play.

GEOGRAPHY

Am I suited to this course?

Do you have a curiosity about the world around you? Have you an interest in people and the environment? Are you keen to try to understand how the world works and our impact on it? Are you willing to work at expressing yourself clearly in extended pieces of writing? Do you like to use facts and figures to make your point? If your answers are 'yes' then Geography is for you for GCSE and, later, at A Level.

What can I do after this course?

The breadth and broad scope of the subject, coupled with the skills we practise will serve you well, not least in business. Geography lays the foundation for A Level and into university for a range of degrees and beyond. Skills you develop and your understanding of global interactions will be ideal in any job and at university.

Aims

To establish a clear understanding of geographical processes and principles (to do with varying location and interconnectedness) in both human and physical Geography; to grasp the role of geopolitical and local stakeholders involved in environmental issues at global and local scales; to develop geographical skills; to nurture an appreciation of places, peoples and their cultures, and to challenge students' values. Through your hard work we will work together to create a secure base and sound platform to help your success.

Transferable skills

In a broader sense, GCSE Geography is recognised as providing the key skills of communication, working with others, application of global information systems, improving own learning and performance, problem-solving and working with statistics.

Teaching methods

Group work, research and presentations as well as local fieldwork are all aspects of our teaching. Pupils are encouraged to draw on topical events and learning principles to provide their own contemporary examples. Thus they bring poignancy and immediacy of the subject to the fore; after all, Geography is inherently a dynamic subject.

Course content

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment (35%) 90min

Topics within the following list will be studied:

- Challenge of Natural Hazards
- Physical Landscapes in UK
- Living World

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (35%) 90min

Topics within the following list will be studied:

- Urban Issues and Challenge
- Changing Economic World
- Challenge of Resource Management

Paper 3: Geographical Applications (30%) 60min

- Pre-release material covering a global theme
- Testing of skills and results of a physical and human field study

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	Geography Specification 8035
WEBSITE	https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination - three written papers as above

HISTORY

Am I suited to this course?

Everybody is suited to it - provided they are prepared to work at it.

What can I do after this course?

History A Level is, of course, ideal, but the skills gained are useful for every A Level.

Aims

The most important aim is to enjoy the study of History. We seek to foster the essential skills of analysis, interpretation, judgement and empathy. History is 'a searching enquiry into the nature of the past and present world'.

Transferable skills

All the GCSE key skills apply to History, particularly those of communication and improving personal performance. There is a particular spiritual, moral, ethical and cultural dimension to the study of the 20th century.

Teaching methods

The subject is largely class-based, but all teachers use a wide range of source material and multimedia sources.

Course content

The GCSE course is focused on:

COMPONENT 1: Understanding the Modern World

- Section A: Period Studies, Russia, 1894-1945: Tsardom and Communism
- Section B: Wider World Depth Studies, Conflict and tension, 1918-39

COMPONENT 2: Shaping the Nation

- Section A: Britain: Power and the People, c1170-Present day
- Section B: Depth Studies including the historical environment: Norman England, 1066-c1100

Form 4

Conflict and tension, 1918-39
Russia, 1894-1945: Tsardom and Communism
Norman England, 1066-c1100 (including historical site visit)

Form 5

Britain: Power and the People c1170 to the present day
Exam preparation

The exam papers are taken at the end of Form 5.

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	History
WEBSITE	https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH/GERMAN/SPANISH)

“It is arrogant to assume that we can get by in English or that everyone will speak our language. Learning a foreign language is polite, demonstrates commitment, and in today’s world is absolutely necessary.”

(Sir Trevor McDonald, Chair, Nuffield Languages Inquiry)

The ability to speak a foreign language in today’s business world is a significant advantage. 94% of the world’s population does not speak English as their first language.

Am I suited to this course?

Yes, if you are prepared to work hard and apply yourself. You should be able to communicate in both the written and spoken form at a basic level, having a secure understanding of the grammar that you have previously been taught. You should be confidently able to use at least three tenses prior to starting the GCSE course.

What can I do after this course?

There is considerable value in studying languages beyond GCSE level for today’s increasingly international employment market. Languages are a particularly useful skill and can therefore be combined with any other subject. A GCSE language qualification seriously enhances a CV profile and makes you stand out.

Learning languages also offers pupils a new perspective on their own language and the benefits are seen in vocabulary acquisition and range of expression. It leads to appreciation of other cultures which is increasingly important in the modern era. Research suggests that foreign language study enhances both cognitive development and academic achievement.

French, along with English, is the official language of the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund, the International Olympic Committee, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

French is an important international language, highly-prized by employers. It is consistently the preferred language required by a significant number of job adverts.

French is spoken as an official language in some 43 countries around the world and is the only language other than English spoken on five continents.

Spanish is spoken by around 500 million people worldwide. Spanish is the mother tongue in 21 countries and it is also widely spoken in many more where it is not an official language. Being the second most used language in international communication, and an official language of the UN and its organisations, more and more companies value employees with a knowledge of Spanish.

German is the most widely spoken language in the European Community. More Europeans speak German as their first language than either French or Spanish. After English, German is also the most widely used business language in Europe.

Germany is Britain’s most important trading partner in the European Community. Indeed, the country is the most important trading partner for almost all European and many non-European countries.

Willy Brandt quoted: “If I am selling to you, I speak your language. If I am buying from you, Dann müssen Sie in meiner Sprache sprechen.”

Transferable skills

You will be developing the skills of communication, enhancing written expression, use of information technology, working with others and improving your own learning and performance.

Teaching methods

The course employs a variety of teaching methods, including oral practice, pair-work, listening comprehension, formal grammatical skills practice, reading comprehension, translation work, vocabulary learning via technology and more traditional methods and formal written work. At GCSE level, the four skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking are all equally weighted.

AWARDING BODY	AQA
COURSE TITLE	French, German, Spanish
WEBSITE	www.aqa.org.uk
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination

MUSIC

Am I suited to this course?

A passion for music making and a real interest in music of all styles is the most essential ingredient for an aspiring GCSE musician. Whilst it is not necessarily a prerequisite to be receiving instrumental lessons in order to begin studying Music at GCSE, it is expected that students will be able to read music (conventional and/or drum or Guitar tablature) as students will be expected to perform on an instrument (or voice) as part of the course assessment.

Support will be given to further develop music reading skills should this be necessary. Students who are interested in studying GCSE Music are encouraged to discuss this with the Director of Music.

What can I do after this course?

Music is a universal art. As a communication skill it transcends language and culture. It develops practical team skills that are highly valued by universities and employers alike. After GCSE, there are many possibilities to study the subject at A level and beyond. There are many varied courses available at universities and Music Colleges which would give access to many different careers including performing, teaching, working in the music industry (recording, marketing, publishing, entertainment etc.).

Alternatively, it might just enable you to enjoy performing and listening to music in later life. The broad range of skills gained in the study of Music is widely recognised as enhancing general academic progress, and provides musicians with a wide range of transferable skills.

Aims

To further the enjoyment and appreciation of music through developing a greater artistic and academic understanding of the subject. This is achieved through performing, creating and appraising music.

Teaching methods and course content

The course is divided into three components:

Component 1 (30% internally assessed and externally moderated): Performing Music

- Minimum one solo piece and one ensemble piece. Minimum total performance time of four minutes

Component 2 (30% internally assessed and externally moderated): Composing Music

- Two compositions, one to a set brief and one free composition. Minimum total time of three minutes.

Component 3 (40% externally assessed written exam): Appraising Music

- Four areas of study, with two set works each: Instrumental Music 1700-1820, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Screen, and Fusions. Current set works include music by Bach, Beethoven, John Williams and Queen.

Students will be encouraged to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music, develop an understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts, and reflect on how music is used in the expression of personal and collective identities. There will be regular opportunities to perform music throughout the course. GCSE Music is not limited to musicians of a classical background, and those with an interest in popular music and Music Technology are also encouraged to study the subject. GCSE Music students are expected and encouraged to be involved in the relevant co-curricular music ensembles on offer at the College.

AWARDING BODY	Edexcel
COURSE TITLE	Music
WEBSITE	https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/music-2016.html
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	60% non-examined assessment; 40% examination

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Am I suited to this course?

You should have an interest in Physical Education and fitness which goes beyond the practical. You should have an interest in the health benefits of exercise and human biology. You should also have an interest in Sports Psychology and the impact of sport on society.

What can I do after this course?

The course leads on naturally to A Level Physical Education and BTEC Sport, in addition to providing access to careers in:

- Sports science or leisure management based courses in higher education
- Sports psychology/sports therapy/sports and business/strength and conditioning
- Teaching and coaching physical education and sport; personal training
- Sports medicine – physiotherapy, osteopathy
- Sports engineering and design

Aims

You will develop and apply knowledge, skills and understanding of physical education; identifying factors that affect participation and performance. You will learn how to promote the health benefits and risks associated with taking part in physical activity; to develop the skills necessary to analyse and improve performance; and to support personal and social development when working with others.

Teaching methods

The course is divided between practical sessions (explanation of strategies and tactics and analysis of personal performance) and class-based theory work, (some of the class-based work will also be done in a practical environment).

Course content

The GCSE course is assessed over two units and is broken down into 60% theory, 30% practical and 10% coursework weighting.

60% Theory and Exam

The human body and movement in physical activity and sport – What's assessed?

- Applied Anatomy and Physiology
- Movement Analysis
- Physical Training

Health and Performance – What's assessed?

- Health, Fitness and Well-Being
- Sports Psychology
- Socio-Cultural Influences

30% NEA Practical performance in physical activity and sport

- Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and one in either a team or in an individual activity)

10% NEA Coursework - Personal Exercise Programme

- Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvements in one activity.

AWARDING BODY	Edexcel
COURSE TITLE	Physical Education
WEBSITE	https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/physical-education-2016.html
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	60% theory; 30% practical; 10% NEA Coursework

PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS AND RELIGION

Am I suited to this course?

Yes, anyone willing to work hard is suited to Philosophy, Ethics and Religion. No prior knowledge or experience is required. If you are interested in the world, questions of right and wrong and ultimate meaning, Philosophy, Ethics and Religion is for you.

What can I do after this course?

The aim is to captivate learners with a coherent and engaging programme of study and to encourage them to progress to further study at A Level. This course also develops skills which are useful in many other academic subjects and in all walks of life – communication, interpretation, critical enquiry, reasoning and evaluation. It fits well with English, History, Geography etc.

Aims

You will:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and teachings of Christianity and Islam.
- Engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth and their influence on human life.
- Develop the ability to construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious and non-religious beliefs and values.
- Be given the opportunity to reflect on and develop your own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what you have learnt.

Transferable skills

Written and oral communication, ICT, working with others, reflection and critical thinking to name a few.

Teaching methods

A wide range of teaching methods are used, including discussion, group work, artefact quizzes, and audio-visual materials. Debate and discussion are vital tools. There is a trip in Form 4.

Course content

Section 1 – Beliefs, Teachings and Practices of Christianity and Islam

Learners are required to study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam (one 1 hour exam on each religion)

Section 2 – Philosophy and Ethics in the Modern World from a Christian perspective

Learners are required to study the following four themes from a Christian perspective:

- Relationships and families
- The existence of God and ultimate realities
- Peace and conflict
- Dialogue between religious and non-religious beliefs (one 2 hour exam on this section)

AWARDING BODY	OCR
COURSE TITLE	Religious Studies (J625)
WEBSITE	www.ocr.org.uk
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	100% examination. 3 exams, one of 2 hours, two each of 1 hour.

Pangbourne College Pangbourne Berkshire RG8 8LA