Year 9 Options Evening

Thursday 5th March 2026

Courses information booklet

Guilsborough Academy

Guilsborough Multi Academy Trust

Contents

Welcome

Dear Students,

Key Stage 4 is an important stage in your education, and the subjects you choose will directly influence the opportunities available to you after Year 11. It is essential that you select courses that reflect your interests and strengths so you can achieve your best and enjoy your studies.

This booklet provides key information to support your decision-making. You will continue to study English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, and Core PE. You will then choose additional subjects to study over the next two years.

Please discuss your options with your parents/carers, teachers, and older students, and base your choices on genuine interest rather than friendships or preferred teachers. Further information is available on our academy website, and additional support can be provided through the Learning Support Department if needed.

When you have chosen your subjects, complete the online options form sent to you by email, listing your choices in priority order. Option blocks will be created based on the year group's preferences, and in some cases you may be allocated a reserve choice. The form closes at midnight on Sunday 12th April; any changes after this date must be submitted in writing or by email to Mr Harrison.

I wish you every success as you make your Key Stage 4 choices. Final confirmation of subjects will be sent to you in June 2026.

Yours faithfully,
Mr Harrison
Assistant Principal

Guidance Notes

Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum through which we offer a guided, differentiated route to support all of our students to be post-16 'ready.' After reading the core and option subject description pages in the following sections of this booklet, we hope that you will have the information you need to help you in selecting the subjects you would like to study.

The majority of students will follow our **Triple science Pathway or Combined science Pathway** which is achieved by studying the following:

A. **All Core Subjects**
B. **At least one STEAM subject**
C. **A total of 4 options**

As part of our differentiated approach to our curriculum, we are aware a limited number of our students will benefit from a more flexible learning approach that can be provided by the standard curriculum above. If we consider that it would be helpful for you to follow this pathway, your parents/carers will have received a letter/email sharing this.

Please note: Due to the ongoing national reforms of Key Stage Four qualifications it could be possible that exam boards and specifications may change before September.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Block 1 (Humanities) Pick between one and three of the following	History	Geography	Belief and ethics
Block 2 (STEAM) Pick at least one from the following	Art*	Photography	Music
	German	Spanish	Art textiles *
	Drama	Computer Science	DT Timbers **
	Triple science	DT Systems **	
Any additional choices can be chosen	Psychology	PE	Health & Social Care BTEC
	Food Preparation and Nutrition	Business Studies	Media Studies Btec
Core subjects	**English**	2 GCSEs – all students will complete English language and English literature	
	Maths	1 GCSE	
	Science	2 or 3 GCSEs (either combined or triple science).	
	CORE PE	Non examined course	

Students are asked to identify a reserve choice to account for possible clashes in timetabling or subjects that are not viable.

Why do we offer two science pathways?

We want every student to have a curriculum that suits their interests, ambitions, and strengths. The recent national review recommends giving pupils choice and flexibility while ensuring access to a broad education.

- Triple Science Pathway: Ideal for students who enjoy science and may want to study science at A-level or pursue STEM careers.
- Combined Science Pathway: Provides a strong science foundation while allowing more room for arts, languages, or vocational subjects.

Both pathways:

- Meet national curriculum requirements.
- Keep future options open for university, apprenticeships, and employment.
- Are equally valued—there is no “higher” or “lower” route.

This is a recommended structure based on the latest national review, but we will continue to review and adapt our curriculum to meet students’ needs and any future guidance.

We will support all students to make informed choices and ensure that Triple Science is available to anyone who wants it, not just a select group.

Completing the online options form

A link to the Microsoft Options Form can be accessed using the QR code on the back of the insert in this booklet. If more than one form is submitted, **the most recent submission will be used** when confirming a student's options.

If you need a paper copy of the options form, please contact Reception.

There will be **three different forms**, one for each pathway

Triple Science or Combined Science Pathway

- Choose **at least one subject from the Humanities block**.
- Choose **at least one subject from the STEAM block**.
- Then choose **two additional subjects** from any block.

Flexible Pathway

- Choose **three subjects in total**:
    - One from the Humanities block
    - One from the STEAM block
    - One more from any block

Subject Restrictions (all pathways)

- Students may choose **either Art *or* Textiles**, but not both.
- Students may choose **either C DT Timbers *or* DT Systems**, but not both.

Reserve Choice

- All pathways require students to select a **reserve option**.

Guidance for Parents/Carers

Choosing Year 9 Options

What help can I give to my child as a parent/carer?

- Encourage your child to discuss the subjects they like and the ones they find challenging.

- Ask them to talk through any career ideas they have and then use the websites below to look at what is involved and any specific entry requirements.

- If they already have a strong career in mind, help them to research any relevant GCSE subjects they might need to pursue for this career (see below). Some careers do require specific GCSEs in order to study at a higher level (at Further Education College for instance). For example, GCSE Art is usually required to study Art or an Art and Design course at A Level or at a Further Education College.

- It is important to choose subjects that students will like and enjoy rather than those they should do. The latter could result in the student becoming de-motivated and not achieving their best.

- Encourage your child not to choose subjects because they like the teacher or because their best friend is doing the course.

- Individual help will be offered by staff at the Year 9 Option Guidance Evening on Thursday 6 March and both students and parents/carers can find additional information by contacting subject teachers.

Useful websites for careers information:

https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/

Success at school.org

FOUR PATHWAYS TO YOUR FUTURE

What This Means for 16-19 Learners (2025-2028)

- The government is simplifying qualifications so that young people choose between **Academic**, **Technical**, and **Work-Based routes**.
- **By 2028, A Levels, T Levels, Technical Occupational Qualifications (TOQs)**, and **Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs)** will be the main Level 3 options.
- Many older **BTEC** and **Vocational Technical Qualifications (VTQ) courses** will be replaced or restructured to align with these new pathways.
- Schools and colleges will help learners identify the most suitable route based on strengths, career goals, and learning style.

PATHWAY	WHAT OPTIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE?	LEVEL	ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	IDEAL IF YOU...	LEADS TO...	KEY MESSAGE
ACADEMIC PATHWAY (A Levels & AAQ)	1 3 x A Levels 2 2 x A Levels + 1 small AAQ 3 1 x large AAQ	Level 3	Usually **5 x GCSEs at grade 4–9**, including **English and maths.** Some subjects need higher grades in specific areas.	Enjoy academic learning, exams, and independent study.	University, Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, and professional careers.	**The traditional route for learners aiming for higher education.**
TECHNICAL PATHWAY (T Levels, TOQs & Occupational Diplomas)	1 T-Levels 2 Technical Occupational Qualifications (TOQs) 3 Occupational Entry Diplomas	Level 2 to Level 3	Usually **4–5 GCSEs at grade 4–9**, including **English and maths.**	Want to combine classroom learning with industry experience and develop specialist technical skills.	Skilled employment, Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, or technical degrees.	**The new specialist route for learners focused on technical careers.**
VOCATIONAL PATHWAY (VTQs & BTECs – during the transition)	1 VTQs still available in some areas 2 BTECs and Cambridge Technicals (until phased out)	Level 1 to Level 3	**Level 1–2** courses: open to learners with fewer GCSEs grades 1-4 **Level 3** courses: usually **4–5 GCSEs at grade 4–9**	Prefer practical, hands-on projects and continuous assessment.	Further study, Apprenticeships, or direct employment in skilled trades, health, business, and creative industries.	**A practical skills-based route being streamlined as new technical qualifications replace some courses.**
WORK-BASED PATHWAY (Apprenticeships & Supported Internships)	1 Apprenticeships (Intermediate to Advanced) 2 Supported Internships (for learners with SEND) 3 Work Experience or Industry Placements as part of a Study Programme	Entry Level to Level 3	Vary by employer; typically **GCSE English and maths (grade 4+) for Level 3+.**	Ready to earn while you learn and gain real work experience.	Employment, Higher or Degree Apprenticeships.	**Learn on the job, develop skills, and get paid while you train.**

Speak to a Careers Adviser to help you explore the options in more detail.

RESOURCEFUL CAREERS
insightful | innovative | inspirational

ENGLISH

GCSE English Language and English Literature

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

The new GCSE curriculum offers students fantastic learning opportunities, built around extensive study of classic and modern literature, creative writing and reading and exploring all genres and forms of texts. Developing secure reading and writing is just a part of our focus and intent with the delivery of the two English courses. Through the study of great literature, fiction and non-fiction texts, media and the written word, students will develop their vocabularies, communication skills and a greater sense of who we are as individuals, and a community. We nurture their analytical insight, debating prowess, and tighter and more controlled technical accuracy in their own work. We also place increasing emphasis on making links to life outside of school to enrich their cultural capital.

Course Content

Please note, all students will complete the two independent courses in their timetabled English lessons. The courses are delivered alongside one another, and both are examined at the end of Year 11. They will achieve two distinct qualifications.

Students will also complete the stand-alone **Spoken Language Endorsement**: a prepared speech delivered to class, followed by Q&A. This is marked as Pass, Merit or Distinction and awarded on their Examinations Certificate.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning from Years 7-9 can be found on our English page on the school website.

GCSE English Language	**GCSE English Literature**
100% examination – two papers	**100% examination – two papers**
Paper 1 – Creative Texts Section A – Reading: Comprehension and analysis of a short fiction extract Section B – Writing: Narrative or descriptive original writing 80 marks total 1hr 45 minutes	**Paper 1 – Shakespeare & 19C Novel** Section A – Macbeth extract response Section B – A Christmas Carol extract response 64 marks total 1hr 45 minutes

Paper 2 – Viewpoints and Perspectives Section A – Reading: Comprehension and analysis of two non-fiction extracts Section B – Writing: Personal viewpoint non-fiction writing 80 marks total 1hr 45 minutes	**Paper 2 – Modern Texts and Poetry** Section A – An Inspector Calls response Section B – Anthology poetry comparative response Section C – Unseen Poetry analysis: 2 questions 96 marks total 2 hrs 15 minutes

The set texts we use in school for Literature are:
Students will begin their Literature course with the Anthology Poetry. The exam board provides the students with a copy of the Anthology of poetry. We study the Power and Conflict collection.

Shakespeare	**Modern**	**19th Century**
Macbeth	An Inspector Calls	A Christmas Carol
Preferred version: CGP Text - black cover	Preferred version: Heinemann hardcover	Preferred version: CGP Text - black cover

Assessment

Termly or end of unit assessments which are timed exam style questions based on unit of study.
Across the two years, students will complete PPEs on each of the components for each qualification.

Resources to Support Learning

Our English page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Careers

Strong communication skills are at the heart of almost every industry and therefore GCSEs in English lead into a wide range of pathways. However, jobs like journalism, teaching, marketing, law, publishing, media and customer service represent a small selection of professions where English provides a strong foundation.

GCSE Mathematics

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

Building on the Mathematics studied in Years 7, 8 and 9, the GCSE course is designed to deepen students' understanding of basic concepts, provide intellectual challenge with new topics, and provide an insight into mathematical modelling and problem solving.

A major focus on the GCSE course is the ability to apply students' knowledge to unfamiliar problems that require multiple steps to achieve a solution. As such, the course uses much of the knowledge learnt in Key Stage 3 but seeks to combine topics to deepen their understanding as well as strengthen their problem solving skills.

Course Content

Students in Year 10 and 11 continue to study topics that build on their prior knowledge as well as introducing new topics, and exploring new ways of applying current knowledge. All topics are taken from the GCSE assessment objectives and cover topics from Number, Algebra, Geometry, Statistics, Measure, Ratio and Proportion. Our learning journey for GCSE and how this connects with students prior learning can be found on our Mathematics page on the school website here.

Assessment

Students in Mathematics are continually assessed in lessons. At the end of each topic, each student completes an end of topic assessment, for which they subsequently receive feedback. Students are expected to complete targeted work from this feedback to ensure they progress with their targets. Additionally, students will complete assessments and PPEs throughout Key Stage 4 to build their knowledge and experience of answering exam style questions.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Mathematics page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

All students will benefit from having their own scientific calculator. Within the GCSE curriculum there is a greater emphasis on being able to perform calculations with a calculator with 2 out of the 3 GCSE papers requiring the use of a calculator. Students would also benefit from having a basic geometry set available for every lesson.

Each of the 3 papers are 1 hour and 30 minutes, with the non-calculator paper being first, followed by the 2 calculator papers. Students will either sit the Higher or Foundation tier. In the Higher tier students can achieve grades 3 to 9 whereas the Foundation tier grades are from 1 to 5.

Careers

GCSE Mathematics is essential for most Post 16 courses. Maths is an integral part of many science and engineering careers as well as being useful for careers in accountancy, business and banking.

We have several Maths courses available at Sixth Form, these are: A Level Maths, A Level Further Maths and Core Maths. Students will need to get a grade 6 at GCSE for A Level Maths, a grade 8 at GCSE for A Level Further Maths and a grade 5 at GCSE for Core Maths. More information about these courses can be found here.

GCSE Combined Science
Exam board: AQA

Course Description

Students will follow the AQA GCSE Combined Science Trilogy route which is equivalent to two GCSEs. The course covers Biology, Chemistry and Physics building on the topics studied during Year 9. The course provides a solid grounding in all the important aspects of science, looking at how scientific ideas have developed over time, how they might influence the future including problems that scientific community are working hard to solve such as global warming and climate change. As well as knowing and understanding important scientific ideas so that students appreciate the importance of science in everyday life, the course will also develop skills in practical work, investigation design and analysis, data handling and mathematical skills. Students will also be taught how to construct reasoned scientific arguments and appreciate the current limitations in science and the importance of making informed decisions about the future of science and technology.

Course Content
The topics you will study are shown below.

BIOLOGY
Paper 1: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; Bioenergetics.
Paper 2: Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution; Ecology.

CHEMISTRY
Paper 1: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical Changes; Energy Changes.
Paper 2: The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis; Chemistry of the Atmosphere; Using Resources.

PHYSICS
Paper 1: Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; Atomic Structure.
Paper 2: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Science page on the school website here.

Assessments

Students will be assessed on their understanding of the content and their working scientifically skills throughout the course, either through assessments such as PPE's or summative tests, in lesson tasks such as required practical work, and through continuous setting and monitoring of homework and exam question practice.

Students are assessed formally at several stages throughout KS4 to allow them and the teacher to be aware of progress and diagnose student's strengths and weaknesses. From this, students will be given support to improve any misconceptions or specific content areas before the next formal assessment. Feedback from their formal assessment will be provided to students in the format of the areas they have done well in and the skills which they should continue to improve.

External assessment is carried out at the end of the course, in Year 11.

For students following the Combined Science (2 GCSEs):
External exams are 1 hour 15 mins and there will be 2 for each subject.
Each exam carries a weighting of 16.7% of their final grade.

All the marks from all six papers are added together and a double grade (2 GCSE grades either the same or consecutive) will be awarded. For example, a grade of 66 (six; six) refers to two GCSE passes at grade 6, whereas a grade of 65 (six; five) refers to two GCSE passes, one at grade 6 and one at grade 5.

Combined Science trilogy is accepted as two GCSE grades for entry into further studies.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Science page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Careers

The Combined Science course will allow you to continue your study at sixth form and beyond and will not limit any scientific careers you have in the future as long as grade 6/6 GCSEs are achieved. You can still study in competitive STEM areas such as Engineering or Medicine etc with 2 GCSEs in Combined Science. However, it is worth noting that the Separate Science course will give you a broader understanding of the Sciences in preparation for your level 3 course age 16.

GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics Separate Science (Option)

Exam board: AQA

Course Description

The Separate Sciences are an opportunity to study each subject in more detail and will give students a wider understanding of key scientific ideas. As an option subject, students will still study the three areas of science Biology, Chemistry and Physics which will lead to 3 separate GCSE grades in each subject. The separate science optional involves studying all three subjects, there is no option to select only one or two science subjects.

The triple science course is often considered a more thorough way of preparing students for further studies in science, whether that be in the sixth form or further education. It is particularly beneficial for those planning on doing STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). This is because the content covers a broader and more detailed content which students meet again in level 3 qualifications. It also allows students to develop greater scientific skills and understanding of scientific methods which are useful in both further studies and employment.

BIOLOGY GCSE

The Biology GCSE links well to the A level Biology course offered in the Sixth Form as well as other Level 3 qualifications such as Health and Social Care, Psychology and Sociology. Biology is the science of living things and students will study components in common with combined science and additional topics such as the structure and function of the brain and the eye, culturing microbes, cloning techniques and plant diseases.

Separate science Biology is looked on favourably by the top Universities and employers. You can choose to pursue a wide range of degrees and careers within the areas of Biological Science; Medicine; Pharmacology; Dentistry; Environmental Science; Natural Sciences; Biochemistry; Ocean Science; Zoology; Veterinary Science or Forensics.

CHEMISTRY GCSE

The Chemistry GCSE links well to the A level Chemistry course offered in the Sixth Form and is a vital stepping stone to studying medicine, veterinary science and other related careers. Chemistry is often referred to as the central science and there are many overlaps with topics examined in Biology and Physics. Chemistry is the study of material things and students will study additional topics such as Carboxylic acids, esters and polymers, titrations, analytic tests, nanoscience and fuel cells as well as those in common with combined science.

Separate science Chemistry also teaches many transferable skills such as investigative practical work and quantitative analysis. Separate science Chemistry is looked on favourably by the top Universities and employers. You can choose to pursue a wide range of degrees and careers within the areas of analytical Chemistry; Medicine; Pharmacology; Dentistry; Environmental Science; Natural Sciences; Biochemistry; Ocean Science; Zoology; Veterinary Science or Forensics.

PHYSICS GCSE

The Physics GCSE links well to the A level Physics course offered in the sixth form as well as other level 3 qualifications such as Engineering and Maths. Physics is the study of the nature and properties of matter and energy and this course will give students a better understanding of the fundamental principles and ideas of Physics and will explore phenomena such as waves, electricity, magnetism, space and the atom.
Students will also apply your knowledge, creativity and problem-solving skills whilst carrying out fascinating practical activities such as building electric motors, measuring acceleration and examining the behaviour of waves.

Separate science Physics is looked on favourably by the top Universities and employers. You can choose to pursue a wide range of degrees and careers in a wide range of fields such as science, engineering and technology such as astrophysics, mechanical engineering, physics, medical physics and associated subjects such as maths and computer science that value the logical thinking skills that physics develops.

Course Content

The topics you will study are shown below.

All students will sit two 1 hour 45 minute papers in each subject

BIOLOGY

Paper 1: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; Bioenergetics.
Paper 2: Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution; Ecology.

Additional biology GCSE only topics to include:
Paper 1: culturing micro-organisms, monoclonal antibodies and plant diseases
Paper 2: the brain, the eye, control of body temperature, maintaining water and nitrogen balance, plant hormones, cloning, structure of DNA, theory of evolution, speciation, decomposition, impact of environmental change, trophic levels in ecosystems and food production

CHEMISTRY

Paper 1: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical Changes; Energy Changes.
Paper 2: The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis; Chemistry of the Atmosphere; Using Resources.

Additional chemistry GCSE only topics to include:
Paper 1: Properties of transition metals, nanoparticles, percentage yield and atom economy, additional quantitative methods including titrations, chemical cells and fuel cells.
Paper 2: Alkenes and alcohols, synthetic and naturally occurring polymers, identification of ions by chemical and spectroscopic means, using materials, the Haber process and NPK fertilisers.

PHYSICS

Paper 1: Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; Atomic Structure.
Paper 2: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

Additional physics GCSE only topics to include:

Paper 1: Thermal insulation, static electricity, pressure in gases, hazards and uses of radioactive emissions and of background radiation.
Paper 2: Moments, levers and gears, changes in momentum, reflection of waves, sound waves, waves for detection and exploration, lenses, visible light, blackbody radiation, induced potential, transformers and the National Grid, Space (whole topic)

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Science page on the school website here.

Assessments

Students will be assessed on their understanding of the content and their working scientifically skills throughout the course, either through assessments such as PPE's or summative tests, in lesson tasks such as required practical assessments, and through continuous setting and monitoring of homework and exam question practice.

Students are assessed formally at several stages throughout KS4 to allow them and the teacher to be aware of progress and diagnose student's strengths and weaknesses. From this, students will be given support to improve any misconceptions or specific content areas before the next formal assessment.. Feedback from their formal assessment will be provided to students in the format of the areas they have done well in and the skills which they should continue to improve.

External assessment is carried out at the end of the course, in Year 11.

For students following the Separate Sciences (3 GCSEs):
External exams are 1 hour 45 mins and there will be 2 for each subject.
Each exam carries a weighting of 50 % of their final grade.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Science page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

HISTORY

GCSE History

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

The GCSE course covers four main topics which contain depth study units but also thematic units which span hundreds of years. At the end of Year 11 students will sit two exam papers assessing content looked at during the GCSE.

Course Content

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our History page on the school website here.

The topics we study at GCSE are:

Topic 1	**America in the 1920s-1930s**
Topic 2	**Road to World War 2**
Topic 3	**Medicine Through Time**
Topic 4	**Elizabethan England**

Assessment

Students will be required to undertake GCSE questions throughout the year which will be marked to GCSE criteria. There will also be formal end of unit tests which require multiple questions to be completed under timed conditions.

Resources to Support Learning

Our History page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

The GCSE course requires students to appreciate causes and consequences of turning points in History. There is a wealth of videos and information about these fascinating topics in school and on the internet.

Careers

Studying GCSE History develops a highly valuable and diverse set of transferable skills that are essential for a wide range of careers. The course trains you to research effectively, analyse information, evaluate the reliability of sources, and construct well-evidenced arguments. These critical thinking and analytical abilities are fundamental in areas like Law, Journalism, Media and Policing. Furthermore, the need to structure essays and debates strongly improves communication and literacy skills, which are sought after in business, management, civil service, and education!

GCSE Geography

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

Students in Year 9 have been working on contemporary geography and a rivers topic. This has allowed them to start making decisions for the skills required for Paper 3 at GCSE. Throughout the year they will be using geographical skills to develop exam techniques in preparation for GCSE content in Year 10 and Year 11.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our geography page on the school website here.

Course Content

	Year 10	Year 11
Autumn term	**Urban Issues and Challenges** – case studies Rio de Janeiro and Bristol Sustainable cities - Freiburg	**Natural Hazards** including: Tectonic hazards Weather Hazards Impacts of climate change
Spring term	**Glaciation** **Coasts**	**Economic World** - Case studies - Nigeria & UK Pre-release Paper 3 (Issue evaluation preparation).
Summer term	Fieldwork/skills **Economic world**- Measures of Wealth	**Living world** & **resources** revision

Assessment

Students will be required to undertake GCSE questions throughout the course which will be marked to GCSE criteria. There will also be formal end of unit tests which require multiple questions to be completed under timed conditions. Students will complete PPEs at the end of Year 10 and 2 sessions in Year 11.

The final exams will consist of 3 exam papers: Paper 1 (Physical) 1h30min, Paper 2 (Human) 1hr30min, Paper 3 (Issue Evaluation and Geographical Skills) 1hr30min.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Geography page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional information

The GCSE course requires students to appreciate how different aspects of the world around them interlink, as well as the role human and physical features have on a variety of scales. A geography student must show, and will be supported to develop, the relevant skills to carry out fieldwork and analyse data effectively.

Careers

GCSE Geography provides the foundation for a remarkably diverse range of careers, leveraging skills in critical thinking, spatial analysis, and understanding complex global issues like sustainability and economic development. The career pathways generally divide into those focused on the physical environment, such as environmental consultancy, meteorology, and conservation, and those focused on the human landscape, including urban and town planning, logistics, and GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapping. Furthermore, the highly transferable skills gained in data handling, research, and communication are valuable for roles in sectors like business, finance (as data analysts), and the Civil Service, making it an excellent qualification for virtually any future profession. To progress to studying A Level Geography you need to achieve a grade 5 at GCSE.

GCSE Beliefs and Ethics

Exam Board: AQA (Syllabus A)

Course Description

This course examines the beliefs of the world's two largest faiths (Christianity and Islam). It then goes on to explore ethical themes linked to these in Year 11. In Year 10, students examine beliefs about God and the practices of Christianity as the main religion of the UK. Beliefs about, the nature of God, Jesus' birth, death and resurrection and the afterlife are studied, together with Christian practices. Islamic beliefs and practices are also studied in Year 10, developing knowledge of the 5 pillars of Islam gained in Year 8. The key themes of relationships and families, religion, peace and conflict, religion crime and punishment and religion, human rights and social justice are studied from the end of Year 10 and through to Year 11. The course raises challenging questions and there is lot of discussion.

Course Content

Year 10 Christian Beliefs and Practices; Islamic Beliefs and Practices; (Paper 1 content)

Year 11 Themes (Ethics): Relationships and Families; Religion, Peace and Conflict; Religion Crime and Punishment; Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice (Paper 2 content); Revision.

Assessment

Assessment for learning is fully integrated into the course and in all lessons students have the opportunity to think about and respond to aspects of whole or part exam questions.

Final assessment is by examination: Paper 1 Beliefs and Practices (1hr 45 mins) Paper 2 Themes (1hr 45 mins). (AQA A Religious Studies)

Additional information

The GCSE course examines beliefs about God and how people live as a result of their beliefs. During the course, students will develop an understanding of beliefs, practices and ethics in two different religions.

Careers

Beliefs and Ethics (Religious Studies) GCSE supports careers in education, law, healthcare, media, charity work, business, and cultural roles by developing critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and cultural awareness. These skills are valuable for professions such as teaching, law, counselling, journalism, social work, diplomacy, human resources, and roles in religious or heritage organizations, where understanding diverse beliefs and values is essential.

ART *

GCSE Fine Art

Exam Board: OCR

Course Description

The Art course beginning in Year 10 is a two year course. The course enables students to record from observation and secondary sources, experiment with a range of materials and techniques as well as explore artists through related contextual studies. Students will also have the option to work with lens-based media and image manipulation software.

Course Content

From Year 10 the students undertake a major project, which runs until the January of Year 11. From January of Year 11 students complete an exam board project. Students are presented with a number of starting points and have to choose one to study (very much like the coursework piece). This culminates in the final piece completed in 10 hours in exam conditions.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Art page on the school website here.

Assessment

Students are assessed regularly to provide feedback, which gives them the opportunity to improve and move forwards. Students are assessed against the four main objectives – **Record** (from primary and secondary sources), **Develop** (using contextual studies and developing ideas), **Refine** (using materials and techniques and refining ideas), and **Present** (working towards and presenting a final piece or pieces). In the course of study these assessment objectives blend and merge.

Resources to Support Learning

Many of our resources are in-house including exemplar materials and a wealth of other support material.

Our Art page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

A basic art kit would be useful for students to buy for use at home. Details and options will be given at the beginning of the course.

Careers

Art GCSE supports careers in fine art, art direction and marketing, illustration in both books, games and publishing as well as any career in design. Being able to communicate through drawing is a foundational skill for engineering, interior design, fashion design and architecture.

ART AND DESIGN TEXTILES*

GCSE Art & Design Textiles

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

The new Art and Design course is more creative than the old DT Textiles course. Students will be drawing and using art materials as well as learning how to create and embellish surfaces, draw, paint and create in textiles pictures. They will work in a wide range of materials from a variety of inspiration. This course feeds well into our A Level Textiles course.

Course Content

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our DT page on the school website here.

For the first year students will use a wide variety of art and textiles techniques to look at line, form, tone, texture, shape, pattern, colour, composition, decoration, repetition, scale, structure and surface. During this time, they will use this work to produce three textile outcomes:

Project 1 – Textile techniques & Fashion Illustration

Students will explore art elements such as line, shape, pattern, and colour, before translating their artistic styles into textile techniques, allowing them to explore and expand their textile competence. They will look at existing illustrators and fashion designers' work to generate a selection of fashion designs in their own style.

Students will look at decoration, scale, surface, and composition within this theme. They will then select their best illustration(s) to have sublimated onto textile fabric – this will lead to them making a sketchbook & kit case/bag for them to be able to transport their work as well as show off their textiles skills.

Project 2 - Botanical

Students explore botanical inspiration and artists with botanical references to generate a variety of artwork referring to form, tone, texture, shape and colour. They will move onto creating a 3D textile outcome of a botanical feature with their own artistic style and with personal meaning to them.

Project 3 – Animals & Insects (Sustained project up to Christmas)

GCSE course content

Component 1: Portfolio (60% of their final grade). The best of the students work from Year 10 can be included in the first exam component. It must also include a sustained project **(Animals & Insects)** which we take from an inspiration, the study of textile and non-textile artists, trialling and developing samples to a final textile piece. Students will continue to be exposed to different art and textile techniques whilst supporting them to develop their own style.

Component 2: Externally set assignment (40% of their final grade). Set in January of Year 11 students will be supported to complete a journey from inspiration to final outcome. The practical exam will be at the end of April and is 10 hours (2 days).

Assessment

As the year progresses, students will be increasingly assessed against GCSE criteria. For each project students will be given success criteria and learn how to self and peer assess their work to encourage independence and an understanding of the GCSE assessment criteria. Exemplar materials and existing work will be used to support students understanding of what they are working towards.

Resources to Support Learning

Our DT page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

Homework tasks include researching artists, practicing techniques and finishing off pieces.

Soft Skills are critical for career success. All of the Design Technology subjects are more than the subject content; students learn to manage their time, work to deadlines, and work in groups. They are taught to understand the design process and how to critically evaluate products so that they can make informed choices.

Careers

Art & Design Textiles opens doors to fashion, interiors, and creative tech, with paths like Fashion/Textile Designer, Costume Designer, Interior Designer, Stylist, Visual Merchandiser, Illustrator, Product Designer, and roles in surface design (wallpaper, home textiles) or technical textiles (aerospace, healthcare). It also leads to roles in education, art therapy, curation, and trend forecasting**.**

GCSE Computer Science

Exam Board: OCR

This is a full GCSE which is graded from 9 to 1. On this course pupils will study how computers work, how to write programs and how data are represented and handled by applications. Pupils will have to design and write programs in the Python programming language. Students follow our in-house scheme of work designed to give them the skills necessary to be successful in the qualification they will complete in Years 10 and 11. They will be following the OCR's Computer Science GCSE syllabus.

Course Content:

Year 10 Term 1: Introduction to Python – students learn the basic skills of programming using Python.
Term 2: Systems Architecture – exploring the theory behind how computer hardware works.
Term 3: Data Representation – students learn about how data is manipulated by computers.
Term 4: Networks – students learn about networking theory and how the internet works.
Term 5: Systems Software – a unit where students learn about how computers use different types of software and some of the vulnerabilities that can affect a computer system.
Python Programming Challenges – Students work on a series of programming challenges that help to reinforce the skills they learnt in term 1 and allows them to get more of an experience with structuring a large programming project at the end of term 5.
Term 6: Impacts of Technology – a unit where students learn about how computers can have an impact in the world around them.

Year 11 Term 1: Algorithms – a unit where students will learn about how to plan their instructions to the computer.
Term 2: Programming – this is where pupils can refresh their skills and knowledge of Python.
Term 3: Logic and Languages – students learn about how computers think and what languages they use.
Term 4 and 5: Course Recap – lessons will revisit topics to prepare pupils for their exams that start in May.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our computer science page on the school website here.

Assessment:
Students in computer science are continually assessed in lessons. The digital nature of the on-screen work means that teachers are able to easily see what a student is doing and give them on-going feedback as they progress through the tasks in a unit of work. Additionally, students are assessed on the work they have done at the end of each unit and given feedback on their successes and how they can further improve.
Final assessment is by two written exams that last 90 minutes each.

Resources to Support Learning
Our computer science page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE. Students have access to the lesson PowerPoints on Microsoft Teams.

Additional Information
As a guideline we usually recommend computer science to students who are predicted a grade 6 or higher at GCSE maths due to the level of maths required for programming solutions. However, we understand that computer science is an appealing subject to many students so we recommend students speak to the IT department if they would like to study this, but at the moment would not meet the maths criteria.

The subject is taught 5 lessons a fortnight in one of our dedicated IT suites. All lesson materials are digital and hosted on Microsoft Teams. Students have exercise books for note taking purposes; work is produced digitally and saved to the Guilsborough network accounts.

Careers
Computer Science is one of the most valuable subjects for future careers in our digital world. It teaches problem-solving, logical thinking, and creativity—skills that employers across all industries highly value. From designing apps and websites to developing artificial intelligence, computer science opens doors to exciting opportunities. Careers include software developer, cybersecurity analyst, data scientist, game designer, network engineer, and AI specialist. With technology shaping every aspect of life, studying computer science gives you the tools to innovate and succeed in almost any field.

GCSE Drama

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

Throughout the GCSE course, students will learn how to approach physical theatre, how to interact with others to create devised drama, and how to create theatre in education. The course will give them an opportunity to build their confidence and to learn how to work sensitively and cooperatively with others. The skills learned in drama work are transferable across all curriculum areas and will build the necessary structures for further studies or in the work place. Generally, our students are pursuing their acting skills but we are able to offer options within the course which take students into the world of stage management, lighting, design, costume and make up.

The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components:

1. Understanding drama
2. Devising drama
3. Texts in practice

Course Content

Unit 1: Understanding Drama

What is assessed

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play from a choice of six
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

How it is assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes
- Open book
- 80 marks
- 40% of GCSE

Unit 2: Devising Drama

What is assessed

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)

Analysis and evaluation of own work

How it is assessed

- Devising log (60 marks)
- Devised performance (20 marks)
- 80 marks in total
- 40% of GCSE

Unit 3: Texts In Practice

What is Assessed

- Performance of two extracts from one play
  Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1

How it is assessed

- Performance of Extract 1 (20 marks) **and** Extract 2 (20 marks)
- 40 marks in total
- 20% of GCSE

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Drama page on the school website here.

Assessment

The focus of this course remains with the practical exploration. 60% of marks will be awarded for practical work with a terminal written examination at the end of Year 11 worth 40%.

Assessment Objectives

AO1: Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance.
AO2: Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.
AO3: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.
AO4: Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Drama page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

There will be visits throughout the school year to see live theatre. Students must be prepared to rehearse after school in groups to prepare for their practical examinations. Rehearsals usually run from 3.15pm to 4.30pm during some parts of the year.

Careers

Through studying GCSE Drama, students develop creativity, performance, and analytical skills while exploring how theatre and storytelling shape society. Students learn to interpret texts, devise original work, and understand the role of drama within the wider creative industries. The course encourages collaboration, communication, and problem-solving—skills that are essential in media, marketing, public relations, and other sectors where clear and persuasive communication is key.

Students also gain insight into the theatre industry and related fields such as film, television, and digital media, considering how production, design, and performance connect to cultural and commercial contexts. These experiences build confidence and transferable skills as teamwork, critical thinking, and presentation—valuable in any career, even beyond the arts.

Progression to 6th Form – To study Drama at A Level, you typically need to achieve a grade 5 or above at GCSE.

GCSE German
Exam Board: AQA

This is a new exam which will be examined for the first time in Summer 2026.

The new GCSE has been built on a foundation of inclusivity, accessibility and transparency, the qualification is designed to take a student-centred approach and cater to the needs of all learners, regardless of their background, ability or reason for studying a language. The GCSE German qualification is fit for the future, equipping students for life and careers in a global setting.

Language is more than words. Language is culture. Language is connection.

Course Description:

The aims of this qualification are to:

- provide a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.
- develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, German and to recognise the importance of languages.
- provide a strong linguistic and cultural foundation for students who go on to study languages at a higher level post-16.
- develop students' ability and ambition to communicate independently in speech and writing with speakers of the language for authentic purposes.
- develop students' ability to communicate independently about subjects that are meaningful and interesting to them
- build students' confidence and broaden their horizons, enabling them to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries, develop new ways of seeing the world, and better understand relationships between the foreign language and the English language.
- enable students to become familiar with aspects of the contexts and cultures of the countries and communities where the language is spoken.

Course Content:

- Theme 1 People and Lifestyles
- Theme 2 Popular Culture
- Theme 3 Communication and the World Around Us

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our German page on the school website here.

Assessment

Vocabulary testing: The vocabulary list comprises 1200 words to be used at both Foundation and Higher Tier and an additional 500 words to be used at Higher Tier only (many of which will have already been covered in KS3). The exam questions must be 85% based upon these words, with the remaining 15% being cognates and glossed vocabulary, therefore it is essential that students regularly learn their vocabulary.

End-of-unit assessments GCSE style reading and listening assessments at the end of a term alternating with GCSE style speaking and writing assessments.

End of year tests PPE – secure past papers.

Resources to Support Learning

The students' class Teams will have links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE. They also have access to digital resources which they are given log in details for at the start of the course.

Additional information

This qualification is linear which means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course in Year 11.

GCSE German has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken at the end of Year 11.

All four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are tested in separate papers and carry equal weight of 25%.

The study of a GCSE in German supports the application to certain universities.

Careers

There are a number of German companies and the motor sport business in the local area and having German sets your application apart from others that do not have the language. German is also extremely helpful if you go into the medical or engineering world**.** German can open doors to a wide range of careers because language skills are highly valued in global business, diplomacy, and cultural sectors. Some industry areas where German would be useful include roles in international business and trade, translation and interpretation, education (teaching and academic research), tourism and hospitality, engineering and media and publishing.

Progression to 6th Form - to study German at A Level you need to achieve a 6 or above at GCSE.

GCSE Music

Exam Board: EDUQAS

Course Description

The Eduqas GCSE Music course has three components: Performing, Composing and Appraising (Listening.) These are taught in an integrated approach. Students will perform music as a soloist and in an ensemble of their choice. This could be in any style, on any instrument or voice. Students will also explore how famous pieces of music were composed, and when they have learnt some of the techniques, compose their own music. This could involve using computer software, writing for a specific purpose, writing songs etc. Students will also listen to a variety of different music genres and styles and learn how to identify the facts about what they hear. They will already have heard about the elements of music in their Key Stage 3 lessons. At GCSE students focus on how these are used for different purposes.

Course Content

The course encourages an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of performing, composing, and appraising through four interrelated areas of study. The four areas of study are designed to develop knowledge and understanding of music through the study of a variety of genres and styles in a wider context. The Western Classical Tradition forms the basis of Musical Forms and Devices (area of study 1), and learners should take the opportunity to explore these forms and devices further in the other three areas of study. Music for Ensemble (area of study 2) allows learners to look more closely at texture and sonority. Film Music (area of study 3) and Popular Music (area of study 4) provide an opportunity to look at contrasting styles and genres of music.

Performance

At the end of each term in Year 10 students will produce at least one performance, a mixture of solos and ensembles over the course of the year. In Year 11, they will work towards a portfolio of performances lasting a minimum of four minutes in length (maximum six minutes).

Music Theory

Theory activities/online theory tasks form part of listening and practical lessons to ensure all students extend their understanding of music theory, for example learning about rhythm, melody/scales/key, chords, Italian terms, expression.

Listening and Appraising

Listening will become increasingly prominent throughout Year 10 and 11 and link to the composition tasks. Students will learn to write extensively and with a widening musical vocabulary about the music that they hear.

Composition
Term 1 and 2: Pupils learn about the musical elements in greater depth and learn to develop musical material through the study of film music. They explore further rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, and textural devices through the activities of performing and composing.

Term 3 and 4: Having studied Area of Study 4: Pop Music and the first of the set works, students explore song writing, working through the conventions of popular music.

Term 5-6: Free choice composition coursework is begun using all the skills that they have learnt throughout the year.
We also use Dorico (music notation software) and Cubase (music DAW), education standard software for composing and notating their music and Teams and Showbie to record composition and performance work and provide feedback to students.

Assessment
Termly performance assessment and regular short composition tasks are assessed for feedback and assessment. Theory short tasks are completed throughout the school year. Listening and appraising is assessed throughout the school year during different projects.

Resources to Support Learning
Our Music page here has links here to all previous learning to help students consolidate their learning.

Additional Information
Students should already have instrumental or vocal lessons to enrol on this course. Students are strongly recommended to take part in instrumental lessons for the entire duration of the GCSE examination as well. Ongoing instrumental or vocal practice is a **statutory expectation** of the GCSE and students are expected to practice their instrument and their solo/ensemble pieces at home for at least 20 minutes 4-5 times a week.

Careers
Studying GCSE Music helps students develop creativity, technical skills, and analytical thinking. It encourages teamwork, problem-solving, and confidence—abilities valued in many fields, not just the arts. Students gain insight into the music industry and related sectors like film, TV, gaming, and digital media. Typical career paths include music producer, therapist, teacher, sound designer, special effects technician, community arts worker, event manager, radio assistant, talent agent, and theatre stage manager. To progress to A Level Music, students usually need at least a grade 5 at GCSE and proficiency on an instrument

Progression to 6th Form – To study Music at A Level, you typically need to achieve a grade 5 or above at GCSE and demonstrate proficiency on an instrument or voice.

PHOTOGRAPHY

GCSE Photography

Exam Board: OCR

Course Description

The Photography course beginning in Year 10 is a 2 year course. The course enables students to learn about the technical and creative elements of photography. They will experiment with a range of materials and techniques as well as explore artists and photographers through related contextual studies. Students will also have the option to work with mixed media and image manipulation software.

Course Content

From Year 10 the students undertake a major project which runs until the January of Year 11. From January of Year 11 students complete an exam board project. Students are presented with a number of starting points and have to choose one to study (very much like the coursework piece). This culminates in the final piece completed in 10 hours in exam conditions.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Art page on the school website here.

Assessment

Students are assessed regularly to provide feedback which gives them the opportunity to improve and move forwards. Students are assessed against the four main objectives – **Record** (from primary and secondary sources), **Develop** (using contextual studies and developing ideas), **Refine** (using materials and techniques and refining ideas), and **Present** (working towards and presenting a final piece or pieces). In the course of study these assessment objectives blend and merge.

Resources to Support Learning

Many of our resources are in house including exemplar materials and a wealth of other support material.

Our Art page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Careers

GCSE **Photography** can lead to a wide range of creative and technical careers because it develops visual communication, creativity, and digital editing skills.

Photographer, photo journalist/press photographer, studio photographer, medical photographer, director of photography, photographic stylist.

GCSE Design Technology - Systems

Exam Board: Edexcel

This course shares a core materials element the same as Timbers. It is a Design Technology GCSE with a specialism in Systems. During Year 10, students will work on short projects to teach them a wide variety of making skills. Each project will introduce them to components soldering and construction skills, building a resource booklet that students can use when designing and developing their GCSE product. This will also include some theory content. With each new project, students will learn about the most suitable materials and the potential environmental impact of design.

Course Content

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our DT page on the school website here.

Project 1: Board Game

This project involves designing and making a board game for a family or group of people. The game will include a timed element (either an original idea or a unique take on a classic). The timer is housed in a custom designed laser cut casing. Students will learn advanced soldering skills and learn how to use a 555 timer microchip. Students will use CAD skills to design the board element of the game.

Project 2: Promotional Displays

Students will create an attractive and visual display to help advertise a product, film or item of their choice. This project will introduce students to programming and computer control; using software to program a real-life project. The product is customisable and can use a wide range of different types of lights and sounds. Students can use a range of different materials to make the house for the circuitry.

Project 3: Alarm Systems

Students will design and make a security system to help protect a valuable item or to help keep a room secure. Students will be introduced to a range of different inputs, sensors and switches that could be used to trigger the alarm. Students will also get to design their own casing using wood or plastic to house the alarm. This project also gives students the opportunity to design and make their own custom-made PCB (printed circuit board). This project follows a similar structure to the non-examined assessment (NEA) project.

NEA Project

The NEA project is an extended project that counts towards 50% of the GCSE grade. Students pick from a list of themes set by the exam board each year. The project includes research, design, development and practical work. The NEA project runs from June in Year 10 through to February in Year 11.

Assessment

At the beginning of each project students are given assessment criteria. Their books will be assessed every four lessons with what went well (WWW) and even better if (EBI). The practical work will receive ongoing verbal feedback. Students will make decisions to enable them to achieve at least their target grade for the project, using self and peer assessment to ensure the quality of outcome required. Final assessment of the project is led by the teacher.

Resources to Support Learning

Our DT page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Careers

This subject provides a strong foundation for careers in technology, engineering, and related fields because it develops problem-solving, circuit design, and practical skills.

Electronics Technician, **Electronics Engineer, Systems Engineer** and any Higher Education course in Engineering or Product Design.

GCSE Design Technology- Timbers

Exam Board: Edexcel

Course Description

This subject has been called Resistant Materials and also Product Design, now it is Design Technology with a specialism in Timbers. In Year 10 students complete projects to help them develop a range of skills, work with a variety of materials and processes and gain an understanding of how they work to develop their own style and pathway. Linked to each of the projects will be the theory necessary to support their understanding of the materials and processes as well as prepare them for examination in Year 11. All materials are made available including card, fabrics, metal, wood and plastic.

Course Content

Core: Each of the Design Technology subjects taught at GCSE now contain a core materials element. All students will develop a basic understanding of a wide range of materials so that they have the option to combine materials in their final GCSE coursework product. These core areas will be integrated within the projects in Year 10. Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our DT page on the school website here.

Year 10 Term 1 and 2: Joints project

During the project, students will Learn about and make wood joints. They will learn about the categories, origin and properties of different types of wood. They are shown how to develop a high quality finish and are taught a range of methods for finishing the wood surface. 3D CAD modelling is introduced using OnShape programme.

Year 10 Term 3 and 4: Storage Box Desk Light

Students work on a practice NEA lighting project which includes electrical circuits, and the use of a range of possible other materials. Progressing from Term 1 and 2 where they choose the appropriate joint and material to make light. Theory is on the selection and reinforcement of timbers. CAD moves onto 2D design this term.

Year 10 Term 6 into Year 11.

Students are introduced to the structure of their NEA project – they are taught how to research – including profiling a client and interviewing them, existing product analysis and their own specific research.

Assessment

At the beginning of each project students are given assessment criteria. Their books will be assessed every four lessons with what went well (WWW) and even better if (EBI). The practical work will receive ongoing verbal feedback. Students will make decisions to enable them to achieve at least their target grade for the project, using self and peer assessment to ensure the quality of outcome required. Final assessment of the project is led by the teacher.

Resources to Support Learning

Our DT page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information:

Homework tasks include research and theory work to support class work and build resources that will be used in controlled assessment and the final exam as revision.

Soft Skills are critical for career success. All of the Design Technology subjects are more than the subject content; students learn to manage their time, work to deadlines and work in groups. They are taught to understand the design process and how to critically evaluate products so that they can make informed choices.

Careers

A Design Technology GCSE would support a wide range of career pathways – engineering, architecture, industrial design, furniture/interior design, automotive or product design as well as technician type roles in automotive, CAD, 3D printing, materials and design engineering. It can also be a foundation for graphic design, production management and Logistics.

GCSE Spanish

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

This is a new course which will be examined for the first time in Summer 2026. It is a linear course comprised of exams in each of the four skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking. All four skills are tested in separate papers and carry equal weight of 25%.

Course Content

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Spanish page on the school website here.

The GCSE is set in the context of the following three themes

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

Course Description:

The aims of this qualification are to:

- provide a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.
- develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, Spanish and to recognise the importance of languages.
- provide a strong linguistic and cultural foundation for students who go on to study languages at a higher level post-16.
- develop students' ability and ambition to communicate independently in speech and writing with speakers of the language for authentic purposes.
- develop students' ability to communicate independently about subjects that are meaningful and interesting to them
- build students' confidence and broaden their horizons, enabling them to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries, develop new ways of seeing the world, and better understand relationships between the foreign language and the English language.
- enable students to become familiar with aspects of the contexts and cultures of the countries and communities where the language is spoken

Assessment

Vocabulary testing: The vocabulary list comprises 1200 words to be used at both Foundation and Higher Tier and an additional 500 words to be used at Higher Tier only (many of which will have already been covered in KS3).

End-of-unit assessments GCSE style reading and listening assessments at the end of a term alternating with GCSE style speaking and writing assessments.

End of year tests

Paper 1: Speaking in Spanish
Paper 2: Listening and Understanding in Spanish
Paper 3: Reading and Understanding in Spanish
Paper 4: Writing in Spanish

Resources to Support Learning

The students' class Teams will have links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE. They also have access to digital resources which they are given log in details for at the start of the course.

Additional information

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken at the end of Year 11.

The study of a GCSE in MFL supports the application to certain universities.

Careers

Studying GCSE Spanish gives you a valuable advantage in today's global job market. Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, and learning it opens doors to exciting careers in international business, travel and tourism, education, translation, media, and even diplomacy. Employers increasingly value language skills for effective communication and cultural understanding, making bilingual candidates stand out. Beyond career benefits, learning Spanish also strengthens memory, problem-solving, and adaptability—skills that help in any profession. Choosing GCSE Spanish is an excellent way to open up your future opportunities and widen your choice of potential careers.

GCSE Business Studies

Exam Board: Edexcel

Course Description

This course involves the study of businesses – big and small. The course starts by investigating small businesses and then goes onto the building of a business. Students will develop a thorough understanding of the basics of business in Year 10 and begin to appreciate the internal and external factors which affect businesses and a range of stakeholders.

Course Content

Students will study five modules in each theme 1 and 2

Theme 1

Topic 1.1: Enterprise and entrepreneurship.
Topic 1.2: Spotting a business opportunity.
Topic 1.3: Putting a business idea into practice.
Topic 1.4: Making the business effective.
Topic 1.5: Understanding external influences on a business.

Theme 2

Topic 2.1: Growing the business.
Topic 2.2: Making marketing decisions.
Topic 2.3: Making operational decisions.
Topic 2.4: Making financial decisions.
Topic 2.5: Making human resource decisions.

Our learning journey through GCSE can be found on our Business page on the school website here.

Assessment

The final assessment will be two written examinations. Each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes and worth 50% each both exams will be at the end of the course.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Business page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

The content that will be covered during Year 10 and 11 will form the basis of understanding the topics for both units. Students will be expected to complete one piece of homework per week. Formal assessed homework will be set fortnightly.

Careers

Through studying GCSE Business, students gain business knowledge, understanding and skills. Students begin to understand current events in local, national and global contexts. Students also consider business ethics and the impact of business on the environment. This could help students consider future careers in finance, marketing, logistics, operations and develops critical transferable skills such as analysis, decision making, problem solving and communication. These are useful in a range of careers even if you do not pursue a business-related career.

Progression to 6th Form - to study GCSE Business at A Level you need to achieve a 5 at GCSE.

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

In Year 10 students will work on short projects to teach them a wide variety of making skills. In each project there will be a central focus, increasing their knowledge and experience, combining ingredients and learning new methods of making whilst considering the function and nutritional value of each ingredient.

Course Content

We look at the science of food ingredients and nutrition as well as developing practical skills. Each term will have a different focus and students learn the function of ingredients and science behind how a recipe works as well as making a wide variety of dishes.

In Year 10 the main focus is to have as wide an experience as possible working with different ingredients and using different techniques to build the confidence of students.

Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our DT page on the school website here.

Our topics for Year 10 are:

Term 1: Theory: Macronutrients.
Practical: an introduction to knife and cooking skills

Term 2: Theory: Bread.
Practical: breads using different raising agents and an enriched holiday bread

Term 3: Theory: Food Safety.
Practical: curries from different parts of Asia

Term 4: Theory: Food Provenance.
Practical: pastry, including shortcrust, rough puff, and choux

Term 5: Theory: Diet Nutrition & Health.
Practical: high level practical skills – fresh pasta, shaped pastry, accurate knife skills

Term 6: Theory: Micronutrients, fortification & new technology in food development.
Practical: carrying on with the theme of high-level practical skills – Breading, creating emulsions, setting mixtures.

Assessment

As the year progresses, students will be assessed increasingly against GCSE criteria. For each project, students will be given success criteria and learn how to self and peer assess their work to encourage independence and an understanding of the GCSE assessment criteria. Students take end of topic tests at the end of every term.

Resources to Support Learning

Our DT page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

Students will be asked to cook at home once a week, from a selection of recipes on the VLE. Following this, students will be asked to evaluate their cook and take a picture. This will encourage students to gain a wider experience of reading and following recipes.

Soft Skills are critical for career success. All of the Design Technology subjects are more than the subject content; students learn to manage their time, work to deadlines, and work in groups. They are taught to understand the design process and how to critically evaluate products so that they can make informed choices.

Careers

Chef, ctering manager, restaurant manager, street food trader.
food scientist/food technologist, nutritionist/dietician/sports coach

BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care

Exam Board: Pearson (Edexcel)

Course Description

The BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care is an exciting and challenging course, introducing students to the health and social care sector. By studying for this award students will gain the important knowledge, understanding and skills that are the foundations for working in this area. This will include many of the skills that are used by health care professionals on a day-to-day basis, such as assessing people's health and wellbeing. Students will also learn about health care services; students take the first steps towards a career caring for people and communities. Through internal and external assessment, students are encouraged to develop their skills of independent learning early on.

Course Content

Year 1: Component 1 - Human Lifespan and Development

In this internally assessed unit students will gain an understanding of how we grow and develop. We learn why people develop at different rates and look at some of the key milestones in different life stages. We study the impact of different life events on a persons growth and development and learn about the variety of sources of support that are available to a person dealing with these events.

Year 2: Component 2 - Health and Social Care Services and Values

In this internally assessed unit students will gain an understanding of the services offered to all individuals and specifically those who require extra support. We understand how hospitals function and overcome barriers to help people.

Year 3: Component 3 - Health and Wellbeing

This unit is externally assessed in an examination. Students investigate what makes us healthy and what can lead to us being unhealthy. We look at diet and lifestyle choices such as smoking and the impact this can have on the body. We use case studies to bring work to life.

Our learning journey through BTEC and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our Health & Social Care page on the school website here.

Assessment

60% of this course is marked via internal coursework. This will be internally verified, and a sample is selected to be externally verified by an assessor. Components 1 and 2 are internally assessed this way and the coursework is completed during lesson time. The rest of the course is assessed by one exam in Year 11 which is a total of 60 marks and covers the content in component 3 above.

Resources to Support Learning

Our Health & Social Care page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at BTEC Level 2.

Additional Information

The Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award is a Level 2 qualification; however, it is graded at Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction, Level 2 Distinction*, Level 1 and Unclassified and it gives learners the opportunity to develop and apply skills in English and mathematics in naturally occurring, work-related contexts.

Careers

Studying Health and Social Care allows students to develop foundational knowledge of health and care practices. As a vocational course, it prepares students for a range of different careers, these include nursing, midwifery, occupational therapy, social work, youth work, and education.

BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award Creative Media Production

Exam Board: Edexcel

Course description

The creative media sector is a dynamic, growing and rewarding sector to work in, with new opportunities continually arising. The UK's creative industries as a whole are now worth over £126 billion per year to the UK economy. Working in the creative media industry involves a wide range of practical processes, skills and techniques – from broadcast media to increasingly interactive products and platforms. As digital technology continues to evolve, media techniques have become more sophisticated and media products are becoming more advanced. However, what has not changed is that media products still have the power to enthral, intrigue and affect audiences. Students will explore all elements of media in the twenty-first century and have the opportunity to work on independent project tasks as well as part of a group to really understand the media in the world around them

Course Content

Component 1: Exploring Media Products (internally assessed, externally moderated)

In this component, students will develop an understanding of how media products are created for specific audiences and purposes in each of these sectors: audio/moving image, print and interactive media. They will explore the relationship between genre, narrative and representation in media products, and develop an understanding of how they are interpreted by audiences. Students will learn how media production techniques are used to create different effects to communicate meaning to audiences.

Component 2: Developing Digital Media Production Skills (internally assessed, externally moderated)

In this component, students will develop practical media production skills and techniques. They will have the opportunity to specialise in audio/moving image media, taking part in workshops and classes where practical skills and techniques will be developed. These skills and techniques will be applied to relevant pre-production, production and post-production processes when developing a media product. Throughout development, students will review their progress and consider how they can make improvements to their techniques and practical outcomes.

Component 3: Create a Media Product in Response to a Brief (externally assessed)

In this component, students will respond to a client brief and create a product in the audio/moving image sector. They will interpret the client's needs and engage in the process of ideas generation, selecting and refining their ideas until they are satisfied that they have an idea that meets the requirements of the brief. Pre-production planning will be undertaken to demonstrate to the client how ideas will be implemented within a planned media product. Throughout the pre-production process, students will need to monitor and review the effectiveness of their planning and intended outcome to ensure that their planned media product is fit for audience and purpose. This should enable

them to make the necessary amendments and improvements to their proposed product as they enter the production stage of the process and create a suitable digital media product in response to the brief.

Assessment

Component number	Component title
1	Exploring Media Products
2	Developing Digital Media Production Skills
3	Create a Media Product in Response to a Brief

Resources to Support Learning

Our Media page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at BTEC.

Additional Information

We encourage Media students to explore a range of media products under the following headings:

Interactive – (websites, mobile apps, e-magazines, mobile games, video games, online games, advertisements)

Audiovisual - (TV programmes, films, music videos, animations, TV and radio advertisements, radio broadcasts, podcasts)

Publishing - (newspapers, magazines, comics, brochures, advertisements)

Careers

Level 2 BTEC in Creative Media Production gives practical production skills and industry practice aimed at entry-level roles and progression to higher study.

Progression to 6th Form - to study Media at A Level you need to achieve a 5 at GCSE in English.

Transferable skills (these are central to employability in media and related sectors):

- Technical production and editing skills
- Project planning, teamwork and meeting briefs
- Portfolio/showreel evidence of practical work

GCSE PE

Exam Board: OCR

Course Description

The OCR GCSE Physical Education course gives students the opportunity to combine practical sporting performance with an understanding of the theory behind physical activity and sport. Students learn how the body and mind work during exercise, how performance can be improved through training, and how psychological and social factors influence participation. Alongside classroom learning, students are assessed in three practical activities and complete an analysis of their own performance. The course encourages a healthy, active lifestyle and develops valuable skills such as teamwork, communication and self-reflection.

Course Content

GCSE Physical Education helps students to understand how physical, psychological and social factors affect performance in sport. Students will study the body and mind in action, learning how fitness, skill, motivation and teamwork all contribute to success. Alongside this, students will develop their practical ability in a range of physical activities and learn how to analyse their performance and suggest ways to improve. The course also promotes the importance of leading a healthy, active lifestyle that can be continued beyond school. Our learning journey through GCSE and how this connects with the learning in Years 7-9 can be found on our PE page on the school website here.

Year 10

- **Effects of exercise upon the body** – understanding the structure, function, long and short-term effects of exercise on the skeletal, muscular systems, cardiovascular and respiratory system.
- **Movement analysis** – the planes of movements and levers which impact upon participation in physical activity.
- **Components of fitness and fitness testing –** definition, testing and monitoring and impact on a healthy balanced lifestyle as well as practical performance.
- **Training methods and training principles** – types and effects and their application in order to improve sporting performance.
- **Goal setting, feedback and guidance –** types and effects and their application in order to improve sporting performance.
- **Skill –** classification and skilful movement.

Controlled assessment will be completed in Year 10.

Year 11

- **Continue injury prevention goal setting, feedback and guidance –** types and effects and their application in order to improve sporting performance.

- **Health, fitness and factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport** – what this means and what can have a positive and negative influence on participation.
- **Commercialism of sport –** types and positive/negative influence it can have on sport and participation.
- **Diet and nutrition –** the components and the importance of a balanced diet on performance.
- **Deviance in sport –** types and impact on the sport and participation.

Assessment

Termly or end of unit assessments (written exam paper).
Ongoing practical assessment (3 activities required by February Year 11).
Two one-hour external papers sat at the end of the course (60%), 1 controlled assessment over 14 hours (10%), 3 practical sports assessed (30%)

Resources to Support Learning

Our PE page on the school website (here) has links to resources to help consolidate and secure students' knowledge of all key concepts at GCSE.

Additional Information

Students will be expected to complete both practical and theoretical lessons for this course. The unit order over the 2 years may be subject to change.
Students have to demonstrate practical prowess in at least 3 different sports (1 individual sport, 1 team sport and 1 other from a prescribed list).
It is strongly encouraged that students actively participate in at least 2 sports regularly for the practical component of the course.

Careers

Through studying GCSE PE, students develop a strong understanding of sport, physical activity and healthy lifestyles, alongside practical performance and analytical skills. This course can support progression into future careers such as sports science, physiotherapy, coaching, teaching, the fitness industry and sports media. Students also develop valuable transferable skills including teamwork, communication, leadership, problem solving and self-reflection, which are beneficial in a wide range of careers, even if they do not choose to follow a sport-related pathway.
Progression to 6th Form - to study A Level PE you need to achieve a grade 6 at GCSE and regularly participate in sport outside of school. To study BTEC L3 Sport you will need to meet the 6th form entry requirements.

GCSE Psychology

Exam Board: AQA

Course Description

The AQA GCSE Psychology course is engaging and effective in introducing students to the fundamentals of psychology, developing critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills. We begin in Year 10 by focusing on cognition and behaviour, moving onto social influence in Year 11. The course focuses on developing students' knowledge of human behaviour and the different psychological approaches to explain this. Students will develop knowledge of how to research human behaviour and different features of science that influence psychology.

Course content

Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes, procedures and theories in a range of contexts (outlined in the table below). This will also encourage students to analyse and evaluate psychological ideas, information, processes and procedures and make judgements and draw conclusions.

Students will also evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness and show how psychological knowledge and ideas change over time and how these inform our understanding of behaviour. We will also consider the wider applications of psychology and how it influences the wider world: socially, culturally and economically.

Over the course of two years students will develop knowledge across two exam papers:

Paper title	Topics included
Cognition and Behaviour	• Memory • Perception • Human Development • Research Methods
Social Context and Behaviour	• Social Influence • Language, thought and communication • Brain and neuropsychology • Psychological problems

Assessment

The final assessment will be two written examinations. Each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes and worth 50% each both exams will be at the end of the course. These exams will have a range of question types from multiple choice to long written answers.

Additional Information

The content that will be covered during Year 10 and 11 will form the basis of understanding the topics for both units. Students will be expected to complete one piece of homework per week. Formal assessed homework will be set fortnightly.

Careers

Studying GCSE Psychology allows students to develop fundamental psychological knowledge. The course focuses on skills such as understanding the research process, analysis, evaluation and comparison. It prepares students for further study in psychology as well as careers in forensic psychology, the criminal justice system, counselling, psychopathology, health care, sports psychology and even sectors like media and law.

Key Dates for Students

Year 9 Options Programme for 2026

Wednesday 25 February 2026

Year 9 assembly to introduce the options process.

Thursday 5 March 2026

Our Options Guidance Evening takes place between 4.30pm and 6.30pm. You will have the opportunity to book to attend one of the presentations at 4.30pm, 5.10pm or 5.50pm and to speak to subject teachers in more detail about their subject options.

Thursday 5 March 2026

Online choice form will be available for completion online.

It is important your child completes it in priority order with the subject they want to study most as their first choice. They must also define a reserve choice. Students and parents will be able to access this form by scanning the QR code on the back of the insert given on the options evening to your child indicating their suggested pathway.

Sunday 12 April 2026

The online options form will need to be completed by midnight. All choices completed before this date will be given equal consideration. There is no "first come, first served" protocol. The information is then collated and the option blocks will be created from these preferences.

Any late admissions or changes will need to be put in writing or emailed directly to Mr Harrison. mharrison@guilsborough.northants.sch.uk