



PARKSIDE
SCHOOL

Key Stage 4 Curriculum & Choices 2026-2028



WELLSPRING

We Make A Difference



Your Future Made at Parkside

Moving into Year 10 is a major milestone. For the first time, you'll have the power to shape your own curriculum. The choices you make now will define your next two years at Parkside and help build the foundation of your future career and education.

You are not alone. Making these decisions can feel big, but you have support and a team ready to help you navigate them:

- **At Home:** Discuss your thoughts with family and friends.
- **In School:** Talk to your Coach, Subject Teachers, Head of Year, and our Careers Team (Mrs Stewart & Mr Grant).

The Process

- **Take your time.** There is no advantage to submitting your form early. This is not a race. We prioritise thoughtful decisions over fast ones.
- **Watch the deadline.** While you shouldn't rush, late submissions significantly risk you missing out on your chosen subject combination. Please stick to the dates below.
- **Keep in mind** that some subjects may not run because of the number of students who pick them as a first choice or because of our timetable and available specialist teachers.

Key Dates

- **Coaching Support & Guidance:** Wednesday 11 February to Friday 06 March.
- **Options Evening:** Thursday 26 February 2026.
- **Deadline:** Monday 09 March 2026.

How to Submit Your Choices

We will email a Google Form link to you and your parents/guardians on Options Evening. **Please make sure this is completed by Monday 09 March 2026.**



How To Use This Guide

Choosing your GCSEs is a landmark moment in your education. This booklet is designed to guide you through the process step-by-step.

Section 1: Understanding your Curriculum & Choices Pages 5 to 10

Understand the **core subjects** that every student takes and the **subject selection** process. Follow the three-step guide to choosing your **Academic Foundation** subject, your **Option subjects** and your **Reserve** choices. This section also explains how to check if you have been invited to the **Core Plus Programme** as this may determine your option choices.

Section 2: Curriculum Families & Student Snapshots Pages 11 to 22

To help you make sense of the wide variety of subjects available at Parkside, we have organised them into Curriculum Families. These groupings allow you to see how subjects share similar ways of thinking.

Our Curriculum Families also include Student Snapshots. Use them to see how different subjects, like an academic or technical subject, fit into a bigger plan for your future.

Section 3: Subject Summaries Pages 23 to 50

This section is broken down into your Core Curriculum, your Academic Foundation and your Option choices. For each, you will find subject summaries so you can look at what you will study, how much of the course is exam-based and which skills you will develop alongside where the subject might lead you in the future.

Final Checklist Backpage





Making Your Decision

Understanding your

Curriculum & Choices



Making Your Decision Your Curriculum & Choices

Your curriculum at Parkside is made up of **Core Subjects** (which everyone takes), **one Academic Foundation** subject (a ‘facilitating’ subject that you choose which is highly valued by future employers, colleges & universities) and **Option Subjects** (which you choose).

Some of you will be invited to follow our **Core Plus Programme**. This isn’t a different ‘tier’; it’s a deeper academic dive through a select number of subjects including the option to study Separate Sciences (where you get individual GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics) plus an additional GCSE in Religious Studies.

How will I know if I am on the Core Plus Programme?

You will receive a formal invitation letter if you have been selected for the Core Plus Programme **before** Options Evening.

Your Curriculum & Choices will differ if you are on the Core Plus Programme. Turn to [Pages 8 to 10](#) to find out more about your Curriculum and Choices.

If you are not on the Core Plus Programme, you can turn to [Pages 6 to 7](#) to find out more about your Curriculum and Choices.



Making Your Decision Your Curriculum & Choices

English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	PE (non-exam)	Personal Development (non-exam)	E&A Elective / Expert Learners
Step 1 Option 1 Academic Foundation	Step 2 Option 2	Step 2 Option 3	Step 2 Option 4			

Your Core Curriculum

- The subjects in pink are your **core** curriculum. These are subjects that ensure you leave Parkside with the literacy, numeracy and personal resilience required for the modern world.
- All of you will continue with PE and Personal Development (RS/PSHCE/Careers) but these will be non-examined. Through Personal Development, you will explore global ethics and responsibility, while Core PE ensures you develop the physical health and resilience needed for a balanced life.
- You will be guided through your KS4 E&A Electives process later in the year.

Your Option Choices

- The **4** subjects blue and yellow are your option subjects.
- To ensure each one of you has a strong academic foundation while still pursuing your interests, we use a **three-step** process:

Step 1: Your Academic Foundation Subject

You pick **one** from the Academic Foundation Subjects list on Step 1 of your Curriculum & Options Form. These are ‘facilitating’ subjects that are highly valued by colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers).

Step 2: Your Option Choices

Once you’ve picked your Academic Foundation subject, you have **three** further choices from our option subjects. You can choose from any of the subjects we offer in the lists on the next page. *If you want to study two or more subjects from the Academic Foundation list (for example Geography, Computer Science & French), simply pick one in Step 1 and the others in Step 2!*



Making Your Decision Your Curriculum & Choices

Academic Foundation Subjects	Option Subjects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science • French • Geography • History • Spanish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art & Design • Business Studies • Citizenship • Dance • Design Technology • Drama • Engineering • Health & Social Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality & Catering • iMedia • Music • Physical Education • Photography • Religious Studies • Textiles

Step 3: Your Reserve Choices

To maintain a high quality of education, some subjects have capacity limits due to staffing or safety. Others may not run if too few students select them, or if a specific combination doesn't fit the timetable. You will need to select **two** reserve subjects - one back up for your Academic Foundation and one back up for your Option Choices.

Remember to use the Curriculum Families and Student Snapshots in Section 2 and the Subject Summaries in Section 3 to help you make your choices.

Summary:



Making Your Decision Your Curriculum & Choices

The Core Plus Programme

At Parkside, we identify students whose progress in the classroom throughout Key Stage 3 demonstrates the academic potential to join our Core Plus Programme for their Key Stage 4 studies. If you have received an invite letter, you will have the opportunity to study a specialist combination of subjects designed to expose you to the challenge of big ideas, complex data and high-level communication.



The Core Plus Curriculum


All students at Parkside study the subjects in pink. The 'Plus' in your curriculum is an additional GCSE in Religious Studies (in green). While most students take this as an option, you will study it as part of your core curriculum. This provides you with not only an additional GCSE, but a vital ethical and cultural lens, teaching you to navigate the complex moral landscapes of modern technology and global citizenship. It bridges the gap between technical expertise and human understanding, ensuring you can apply your specialist knowledge with empathy and intelligence.


Tailoring your Options: Separate Sciences & Languages

To be invited to the Core Plus Programme, your teachers will have identified you as someone with the academic potential to excel in one or both of these high-status specialisms:



Making Your Decision Your Curriculum & Choices

 **Separate Sciences:** You have the opportunity to move from Combined Science to becoming a specialist, studying Biology, Chemistry and Physics as individual disciplines to earn three GCSEs. This depth of study automatically becomes one of your option choices, providing the invaluable lab time and theory needed for careers in Medicine, Veterinary Science, Engineering or Architecture.

 **Languages:** Learning a language rewires your brain. Wherever your career takes you, English is only the beginning. Being a linguist proves you have the memory, the cultural awareness and the resilience to master a second language—traits highly valued by universities and future employers.

Understanding Your Choices

The Core Plus Programme is a traditional academic challenge. Because we optimise your timetable by integrating RS into your core enrichment time, it does not use an option slot.

- The **4** subjects blue and yellow are your option subjects.
- To ensure each one of you has a strong academic foundation while still pursuing your interests, we use a **three-step** process:

Step 1: Your Academic Foundation Subject

You pick **one** from the Academic Foundation Subjects list on Step 1 of your Curriculum & Options Form. These are ‘facilitating’ subjects that are highly valued by colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers). We strongly recommend a Language.

Step 2: Your Option Choices

Once you’ve picked your Academic Foundation subject:

- If you are taking Separate Science, you have **two** further choices.
- If you are **not** taking Separate Science, you have **three** further choices.

Note for Step 2: We strongly recommend that Core Plus students prioritise **Academic Foundation** subjects - such as pairing a Language with a Humanity. This ‘Double Foundation’ approach creates the most competitive academic profile for future applications to top-tier universities and competitive apprenticeships.



Making Your Decision Your Curriculum & Choices

Academic Foundation Subjects	Option Subjects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science • French • Geography • History • Spanish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art & Design • Business Studies • Citizenship • Dance • Design Technology • Drama • Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Social Care • Hospitality & Catering • iMedia • Music • Physical Education • Photography • Textiles

Step 3: Your Reserve Choices

To maintain a high quality of education, some subjects have capacity limits due to staffing or safety. Others may not run if too few students select them, or if a specific combination doesn't fit the timetable. You will need to select **two** reserve subjects - one back up for your Academic Foundation and one back up for your Option Choices.

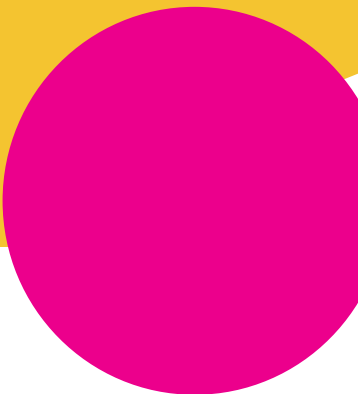


Remember to use the Curriculum Families and Student Snapshots in Section 2 and the Subject Summaries in Section 3 to help you make your choices.

Summary:



***Note for Step 2:** We strongly recommend that Core Plus students prioritise **Academic Foundation** subjects - such as pairing a Language with a Humanity. This 'Double Foundation' approach creates the most competitive academic profile for future applications to top-tier universities and competitive apprenticeships.

However, we also value your personal interests; you may still choose from our wider **Options** list if a specific subject aligns with your passions or future career goals.



Making Your Decision
Our Curriculum Families,
Student Snapshots
and FAQs

Making Your Decision Additional Guidance

Curriculum Families

At Parkside, we want you to choose subjects that suit **what you enjoy, what you're good at, and where you want to go in the future.** To help you navigate your choices, we have organised our curriculum into three **Curriculum Families.** These are designed to help you identify subjects that work well together and help you succeed in different ways.

Each Curriculum Family:

- Is supported by **Student Snapshots.** These are examples of students who have chosen subjects from the Curriculum Family to reach a specific goal.
- Is ambitious and lead to **real qualifications** and **strong post-16 opportunities.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I mix subjects from different Curriculum Families? Yes. While the Curriculum Families are designed to show you how subjects complement each other, you are free to build your own curriculum. Most students find they naturally lean toward one Curriculum Family, but you can choose any combination and we'll work hard to give you a timetable that reflects your interests.

Will I be with my friends? Choose for yourself. Select subjects that interest *you*, not your friends. Because timetabling a whole year group is complex, picking the same subject as your friend does not guarantee you will be in the same class. By following your own passions, you will naturally meet new people who share your interests.

Can I change my mind later? Once the options process is complete, we build the entire school timetable around your choices. This means that after the deadline, changes are very difficult. This is why we provide the Curriculum Families, Student Snapshots and support in Coaching - to help you make an informed, confident decision now.

Making Your Decision Additional Guidance

Do I have to do a Language? We strongly encourage a Language for students within the Social & Analytical Inquiry and Communication & Culture Curriculum Families. A language is more than subject; it is a ‘cultural key’ that opens the door to a broad range of careers and higher education opportunities.

What’s the difference between GCSEs and vocational subjects? Both qualifications are equal in value but suit different learning styles:

- a. **GCSEs:** (e.g., History, Geography, Business) are assessed via final exams and graded **9–1**.
- b. **Vocational:** (e.g., Engineering, iMedia) use ongoing coursework mixed with smaller exams. They are graded **Pass, Merit, or Distinction**.

What do I do if i’m really stuck and don’t know what to choose?

You can speak to your friends and family. There’s also lots of people in school that can help you:

Your Coach & your Year 10 and Year 11 peers .	Your Head of Year and SSL . You can also talk to our Learning Coaches who might support you in a lesson or a member of our SEND team.
Our Careers Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Mrs Stewart (Careers Leader)● Mr Grant (Careers Advisor) You can find them in the Library.	Our Senior Leaders who are responsible for your Quality of Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ms Rosbrook● Mrs Gibbs● Ms Drew-Brown● Mrs Woodstock
Your Subject Teachers .	The Teachers listed as ‘ Subject Leader ’ on the Subject Pages.



Designing Your Future

The Social & Analytical

Curriculum Family



Designing Your Future Curriculum Family



Social and Analytical Inquiry

Focus	<p>This family explores the <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> of human existence. You will learn to analyse evidence and performance, debate ethics and understand the systems - social and physical - that shape our lives. These subjects build the critical thinking necessary for high-level decision-making.</p>	
The subjects in this Curriculum Family are:	<p>Academic Foundation Subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Computer Science ● French ● Geography ● History ● Spanish 	<p>Option Subjects</p> <p><i>Social & Ethical Inquiry</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Religious Studies ● Citizenship <p><i>Commercial Insight</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business Studies <p><i>Human Performance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PE
The Key Themes:	<p>Evidence & Logic: Questioning sources, recognising bias and building factual cases.</p> <p>Systemic Thinking: Analysing how laws, environments and societies interact.</p> <p>Global Awareness: Evaluating diverse worldviews and complex global challenges.</p>	
Future Choices:	<p>Law & Public Policy: Traditional routes into Legal practice, Journalism and Civil Service.</p> <p>Environment & Planning: Careers in Consultancy, International Relations and Urban Design.</p> <p>Social Impact: Foundations for Sociology, Criminal Justice, Education and Advocacy.</p> <p>Strategy & Business: High-level roles in Management, Market Research and Intelligence.</p>	
Selection Guidance:	<p>Step 1 (Academic Foundation): Pick one from this list of subjects.</p> <p>Step 2 (Options): Pick three further subjects from either column. If you are on the Core Plus Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● And taking Separate Science, you pick two further subjects. ● Your additional GCSE in Religious Studies is part of your Core Curriculum. It does not use an option slot. 	

Designing Your Future Student Snapshots

Meet Zara, the sustainable designer	
Aspiration	To get a degree in Architecture or Civil Engineering. I want to design sustainable buildings.
Subject Choices	Separate Science, Geography and Computer Science.
Why?	Architecture depends on the laws of the physical world. I'm taking Separate Science to go deeper into research, using Geography for global context of how humans impact the planet and Computer Science for the logical tools I'll need for the future.

Meet Leo, the international analyst	
Aspiration	To work abroad. I'm interested in international finance or working for a large global company.
Subject Choices	French, Business Studies, History and Citizenship.
Why?	To understand the world's economy, you have to understand its past and its laws. I picked Business Studies to analyse how markets work, Citizenship and History to see how power has developed and is managed. I also picked French to improve my global communication skills.

Meet Maya: the human scientist	
Aspiration	I know that I want to work in Sports Medicine or Physiotherapy because it will combine my two passions, sport and helping people.
Subject Choices	Separate Science, Spanish and PE.
Why?	I want to understand how the human body works under pressure. I'm taking Separate Science to get the biology and chemistry background I need for medicine. I chose PE because I'll get to study the science of biomechanics and data. Spanish is my cultural key - it means I can work with athletes and doctors anywhere in the world. It's the 4th most spoken language in the world!





Designing Your Future

The Communication & Culture

Curriculum Family



Designing Your Future Curriculum Family

Communication & Culture

Focus	<p>This family explores human identity and global interaction. Through languages, humanities and the arts, you will learn to interpret different perspectives, express your identity and use your voice to influence society.</p>	
The subjects in this Curriculum Family are:	<p>Academic Foundation Subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● French ● Geography ● History ● Spanish 	<p>Option Subjects</p> <p>Social & Ethical Inquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Religious Studies ● Citizenship <p>Creative Practice & Artistic Expression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Art & Design ● Photography ● Textiles ● Music ● Dance ● Drama ● iMedia
The Key Themes:	<p>Identity: How we use art, faith and language to shape personal and national character.</p> <p>Expression: Developing precision and confidence across written, spoken and visual media.</p> <p>Connection: Understanding global stories and traditions to bridge cultural divides.</p>	
Future Choices:	<p>Law & Politics: Legal careers, international relations and civil service.</p> <p>Creative Industries: Careers in Journalism, Film, Design, Performing Arts and Public Relations.</p> <p>Education & Heritage: Leading to roles in Teaching, Curation and Research.</p>	
Selection Guidance:	<p>Step 1 (Academic Foundation): Pick one from this list of subjects.</p> <p>Step 2 (Options): Pick three further subjects from either column. If you are on the Core Plus Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● And taking Separate Science, you pick two further subjects. ● Your additional GCSE in Religious Studies is part of your Core Curriculum. It does not use an option slot. <p>Rule of One: You may only choose one from Art or Textiles.</p>	



Designing Your Future Student Snapshots

Meet Jamal, the media expert	
Aspiration	I'm really interested in what goes on in the world. I think I'd like to go into journalism or public relations in the future and I want to make sure I have the option of going to University or getting an apprenticeship.
Subject Choices	Spanish, Religious Studies, Photography and Drama.
Why?	Modern journalism is all about visual storytelling. I'm taking Photography to learn how to capture the world, Spanish and RS to understand and connect with the diverse cultures and beliefs I'll be reporting on, and Drama to build my confidence in public speaking and presenting.

Meet Amara, the creative thinker	
Aspiration	I'd love to work as a Graphic Designer or a UI/UX designer. It would give me a lot of flexibility - I could work for a global brand or go freelance.
Subject Choices	Art & Design, Computer Science, French and Music.
Why?	I want to bridge the gap between art and technology. I'm taking Art & Design for visuals, Music to build on my production skills, and Computer Science so I can understand the code behind the media. French gives me the chance to work for major international studios in the future.

Meet Chloe, the change maker	
Aspiration	I'm going to either be barrister or work for a social justice charity. I know I want to advocate for others.
Subject Choices	French, History, Citizenship and Geography.
Why?	I chose History and Geography to help me understand global issues while Citizenship gives me a vital introduction to law and the people in power. I'm taking French because being bilingual is essential for international advocacy, and many universities offer 'Law with French' degrees.





Designing Your Future

The Technical Mastery

Curriculum Family



Designing Your Future Curriculum Family

Technical Mastery

Focus	<p>This family is for the makers and the doers. Master your craft by bridging the gap between theory and reality. Build, design and influence the world around you through technical precision and creative problem-solving.</p>	
The subjects in this Curriculum Family are:	<p>Academic Foundation Subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Computer Science ● French ● Geography ● History ● Spanish 	<p>Option Subjects</p> <p>Digital & Innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● iMedia ● Engineering ● Design Technology <p>Professional & Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health & Social Care ● Hospitality & Catering ● PE <p>Artistic Mastery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Photography ● Textiles ● Art & Design ● Dance ● Drama
The Key Themes:	<p>Applied Excellence: Technical precision and project mastery. Creative Problem Solving: Designing solutions for real-world needs. Professional Habits: Developing specialist industry discipline.</p>	
Future Choices:	<p>Engineering & Built Environment: Civil engineering and high-level apprenticeships. Health & Public Service: Careers in healthcare, social work, and hospitality. Creative & Digital: Game design, professional photography, media production and technical design.</p>	
Selection Guidance:	<p>Step 1 (Academic Foundation): Pick one from this list of subjects.</p> <p>Step 2 (Options): Pick three further subjects from either column. If you are on the Core Plus Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● And taking Separate Science, you pick two further subjects. ● Your additional GCSE in Religious Studies is part of your Core Curriculum. It does not use an option slot. <p>Rule of One: You may only choose one from Art or Textiles.</p>	

Designing Your Future Student Snapshots

Meet Aisha, the future engineer	
Aspiration	I want to be a Civil Engineer or work in Renewable Energy. I love seeing how a project goes from a drawing to a physical structure. I might apply to the RAF.
Subject Choices	Separate Science, Engineering and Geography.
Why?	I'm on the Core Plus Programme so I'm studying Separate Sciences . This gives me the high-level physics and maths foundation I need for University. Engineering lets me apply that theory to real-world design while Geography helps me understand the environmental impact of what we build.

Meet Finn, the healthcare professional	
Aspiration	I'm aiming for a career in Nursing or Physiotherapy. I want a job where I'm active and making a direct difference to people's lives every day.
Subject Choices	Spanish, Health & Social Care, Hospitality & Catering and PE.
Why?	Health & Social Care and PE give me a head start on understanding human biology and professional care. I'm taking Spanish because being bilingual is a huge advantage in the public sector, and Hospitality helps me understand the nutrition side of recovery.

Meet Kash, the specialist designer (and aspiring tour dancer!)	
Aspiration	To work in the professional dance industry, specifically focusing on choreography and costume design.
Subject Choices	Dance, Textiles, iMedia and French.
Why?	I knew I really wanted to study Dance to master my stagecraft. I added Textiles because I wanted to develop technical material skills whilst iMedia will help with digital design. I'm taking French to give me an edge in the international fashion world.



Your Core Curriculum

Subject Summaries

Page 24: English Language

Page 25: English Literature

Page 26: Maths

Page 27: Combined Science/ **Page 28:** Separate Science (*Core Plus Programme only*)

English Language GCSE (Core)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Ms. Napier

What will I study?

You will analyse a wide range of texts and develop your own writing voice:

- **Fiction & Literature:** Analysing narrative techniques in extracts from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.
- **Non-Fiction:** Understanding viewpoints in journalism, articles, and speeches.
- **Creative Writing:** Learning to write persuasively and imaginatively for different audiences.

Key Skills

- **Critical Reading:** Identifying viewpoints and analysing a writer's choice of vocabulary.
- **Communication:** Speaking effectively and listening to others.
- **Analysis:** Interpreting texts and justifying your point of view.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination

- **Paper 1 (50%):** Creative Reading & Writing (1 hr 45 mins).
- **Paper 2 (50%):** Writers' Viewpoints & Perspectives (1 hr 45 mins).

Non-Exam Assessment:

- **Spoken Language:** A separate endorsement (Pass/Merit/Distinction) for presenting to an audience.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Levels in English Language or Literature.

English Language is essential for almost every career path, but specifically leads to:

- **Media:** Journalism, Advertising, Publishing, Television.
- **Professional Services:** Law, Management, Administration, Civil Service.

English Literature GCSE (Core)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Ms. Napier

What will I study?

You will read, understand, and respond to a wide range of classic literature, including:

- **Shakespeare:** Analysing the tragedy of *Macbeth*.
- **19th Century Novel:** Exploring Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.
- **Modern Drama:** Studying J.B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*.
- **Poetry:** Comparing poems from the 'Power and Conflict' cluster and analysing unseen poetry.

Key Skills

- **Critical Analysis:** Analysing language, form, and structure to create meanings and effects.
- **Contextual Understanding:** Exploring relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
- **Communication:** Developing an informed personal response and arguing a point of view convincingly.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination

- **Paper 1 (40%):** Shakespeare & the 19th Century Novel (1 hr 45 mins).
- **Paper 2 (60%):** Modern Texts and Poetry (2 hrs 15 mins).

Note: Unlike Language, there is no separate Spoken Language endorsement for Literature.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Levels in English Literature or Language. Law, Sociology, History.

Literature develops analytical and creative skills useful for many careers, including:

- **Media & Arts:** Journalism, Publishing, TV, Radio and Film.
- **Professional Services:** Law, Marketing, Management and the Civil Service.



Exam Board: Edexcel

Subject Leader: Mrs. Firth

What will I study?

You will develop knowledge and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts, covering:

- **Number & Ratio:** Working effectively with fractions, decimals, percentages, and structures.
- **Algebra:** Using symbols to solve problems involving unknowns and formulas.
- **Geometry & Measures:** Exploring properties of shapes, space, and angles.
- **Statistics & Probability:** collecting, presenting, and analysing data to solve problems.

Key Skills

- **Problem Solving:** Applying mathematical concepts to both abstract and real-world contexts.
- **Financial Literacy:** Understanding personal finance and managing data effectively.
- **Logical Thinking:** Developing structured arguments and analytical reasoning skills.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (Three papers at the end of Year 11)

- **Paper 1:** Non-Calculator (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Paper 2:** Calculator allowed (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Paper 3:** Calculator allowed (1 hr 30 mins).

Note: This is a tiered subject. You will sit either **Foundation** (Grades 1-5) or **Higher** (Grades 4-9).

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Levels in Mathematics and Further Mathematics. Chemistry, Physics, Economics.

A good mathematical foundation is essential for many career paths, specifically:

- **STEM Careers:** Engineering, Medicine, Science and Technology.
- **Finance & Business:** Accountancy, Banking, Economics and Management.



Science (Combined) GCSE (Core)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mr. Kelly

What will I study?

You will gain two GCSEs by studying a wide range of topics across all three sciences:

- **Biology:** Cell biology, infection & response, bioenergetics, homeostasis, and ecology.
- **Chemistry:** Atomic structure, bonding, energy changes, rates of reaction, organic chemistry, and the atmosphere.
- **Physics:** Energy, electricity, waves, forces, magnetism, and particle models.

Key Skills

- **Scientific Literacy:** Understanding real-world issues like vaccines, utility bills, and environmental impacts.
- **Analysis & Evaluation:** Interpreting data to draw conclusions and improve experimental procedures.
- **Application:** Using scientific knowledge to solve problems in unknown situations.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (6 Exams Total)

- **Structure:** You will sit 2 exams for Biology, 2 for Chemistry, and 2 for Physics.
- **Grading:** These scores are combined to give you a double grade (e.g., 5-5 or 5-4).

Practical Assessment:

- There is no practical exam. Instead, you will complete required experiments in class, and these are assessed through written questions in the exams.

Where can this take me?

This qualification opens doors to both A-Levels and vocational courses:

- **A-Levels:** Grades 6-6 or better allow access to A-Level Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.
- **Vocational:** Grades 5-4 or better allow access to the Level 3 BTEC in Applied Science.
- **Careers:** Nursing, Engineering, Agriculture, Food Science and Social Sciences.



Science (Separate) GCSE (Option for Core Plus)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mr. Kelly

What will I study?

You will study three separate GCSEs, exploring advanced themes like monoclonal antibodies and space physics:

- **Biology:** Cell biology, infection & response, homeostasis, inheritance, and ecology.
- **Chemistry:** Atomic structure, bonding, energy changes, organic chemistry, and the atmosphere.
- **Physics:** Energy, electricity, radiation, forces, magnetism, and particle models.

Entry Process: Entry is by **interview** with a member of the Science team to ensure this specialist route aligns with your academic goals and future aspirations.

Key Skills

- **Scientific Literacy:** Understanding health, medicines, vaccines, and environmental impacts.
- **Analysis:** Interpreting data, evaluating evidence, and drawing valid conclusions.
- **Practical Enquiry:** Designing experiments and applying knowledge to unknown situations.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (6 Exams Total)

- **Biology:** 2 Papers.
- **Chemistry:** 2 Papers.
- **Physics:** 2 Papers.
- **Practicals:** Completion of required practical activities is assessed through exam questions.

Important Note: To master these advanced topics, this specialism uses your **Core Science** time plus **one of your four option blocks**. You will earn **three separate GCSEs** (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics)—ideal preparation for Medicine, Engineering, or A-Level Science.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Levels in Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.

This pathway provides the best preparation for A-Level Sciences and careers in:

- **Scientific Industries:** Medicine, Veterinary Science and Pharmacy.
- **Innovation & Research:** Chemical Engineering, Astrophysics and Genetics.





Step 1

Your Academic Foundation

Subject Summaries



Page 30: Computer Science

Page 31: French

Page 32: Geography

Page 33: History

Page 34: Spanish

Computer Science GCSE (Option)

Exam Board: OCR

Subject Leader: Mr. Towler

What will I study?

You will understand how computers work and learn the basics of real-world programming through three components:

- **Computer Systems:** Studying physical elements including systems architecture, memory, networks, and network security as well as Systems Software to maintain and add functionality to the computer system.
- **Computational Thinking:** Learning algorithms, programming fundamentals, boolean logic, and how to produce robust programs to solve complex problems.
- **Programming Experience:** You will develop vital programming skills to allow you to progress in the field of Software Development.

Key Skills

- **Problem Solving:** Applying computational thinking to break down complex problems into solvable steps.
- **Technical Skills:** Gaining practical experience in writing, testing, and debugging Python code.
- **Critical Analysis:** Understanding the ethical, legal, cultural, and environmental impacts of digital technology.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination

- **Component 1 (50%):** Computer Systems (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Component 2 (50%):** Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming (1 hr 30 mins).

Important Note: Computer Science includes the use of computing-related mathematics. It is **strongly recommended** that you discuss your suitability for this mathematical component with Mr Towler before selecting this subject.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Computer Science, Cambridge Technicals (IT), or a dedicated Computing Course.

Computer Science opens doors to high-demand technical fields and modern corporate roles:

- **Growth Industries:** Cyber Security, Network Management, AI Development and Software Engineering.
- **Professional Services:** Systems Analysis, Technical Consultancy and Data Management.

Exam Board: Edexcel

Subject Leader: Ms. Naylor

What will I study?

You will develop your ability to communicate in French in both speech and writing across a variety of thematic contexts:

- **Thematic Topics:** My personal world, Lifestyle & Wellbeing, My neighbourhood, Media & Technology, Studying & my future, and Travel & Tourism.
- **Authentic Usage:** Using French in real-life situations and understanding authentic sources like radio announcements, signs, and newspaper articles.
- **Skill Development:** Developing competency across four distinct areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Key Skills

- **Communication:** Developing confidence in speaking and understanding a modern foreign language.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Gaining a greater awareness of the culture and identity of French-speaking communities.
- **Analysis:** Interpreting authentic materials and translating meaning between languages.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (Across 4 Papers)

- **Paper 1: Speaking (25%):** Read aloud, role play, photo description and conversation.
- **Paper 2: Listening (25%):** Understanding spoken French in various contexts.
- **Paper 3: Reading (25%):** Understanding written texts and translation into English.
- **Paper 4: Writing (25%):** Writing for different purposes and translation into French.

Important Note: French is a **tiered subject**. You will sit either **Foundation** (Grades 1–5) or **Higher** (Grades 3–9). Your teacher will decide which tier gives you the best chance of success.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level French at college or sixth form and then at University.

A second language is highly valued by employers and opens doors to international opportunities:

- **Professional Services:** International Business, Law, Finance, Marketing and Teaching.
- **Global Careers:** Travel & Tourism, Journalism and Sport Management.

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mr. Nock

What will I study?

You will travel the world from your classroom, exploring physical landscapes and human challenges across three main themes:

- **The Physical Environment:** Natural hazards (volcanoes, storms), ecosystems, and UK landscapes like coasts and rivers.
- **The Human Environment:** Urban growth, economic development, and resource management (water, energy, food).
- **Geographical Applications:** Undertaking two pieces of fieldwork and learning to evaluate contemporary issues using map and statistical skills.

Key Skills

- **Analytical Thinking:** Interpreting complex data to make judgements on global issues.
- **Fieldwork & Research:** Collecting primary data outside the classroom and analysing your findings.
- **Communication:** Constructing arguments and presenting findings clearly using geographical terminology.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (Across 3 Papers)

- **Paper 1 (35%):** Living with the Physical Environment (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Paper 2 (35%):** Challenges in the Human Environment (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Paper 3 (30%):** Geographical Applications (1 hr 15 mins). This includes questions on your fieldwork and a decision-making exercise based on a pre-release booklet.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Geography, Environmental Science or Geology.

Geography is a facilitating subject highly respected by employers for its mix of arts and science skills:

- **Green Economy & Growth Industries:** Environmental Consulting, Conservation and Renewable Energy.
- **Professional Services:** Town Planning, Surveying and Law.
- **Global Careers:** International Aid, Development and Travel.

Exam Board: Edexcel

Subject Leader: Mrs. Rushworth

What will I study?

You will explore the people and events that shaped our society through four distinct time periods:

- **Crime & Punishment:** A thematic study of British justice (c1000–present), including a specific case study on Whitechapel (c1870–c1900).
- **The Cold War:** Analysing Superpower relations and tension between East and West (1941–1991).
- **Elizabethan England:** A British depth study focused on the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1588).
- **Nazi Germany:** A modern depth study of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the Nazis (1918–1939).

Key Skills

- **Building Arguments:** Learning to explain your ideas effectively and support your thoughts with solid evidence.
- **Interpretation:** Understanding how and why events of the past have been viewed differently by different people.
- **Critical Analysis:** Critiquing sources to understand where historians get their information from.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (Across 3 Papers)

- **Paper 1 (30%):** Thematic study and Historic environment (Crime & Punishment). **1 hr 15 mins.**
- **Paper 2 (40%):** Period study and British depth study (Cold War & Elizabethan England). **1 hr 45 mins.**
- **Paper 3 (30%):** Modern Depth study (Weimar and Nazi Germany). **1 hr 20 mins.**

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level History, Politics or Law.

History is a highly academic subject that prepares students for careers involving analysis, law, and communication:

- **Professional Services:** Law, Journalism, Civil Service, Diplomatic Service and National Government.
- **Public Sector:** Police, Armed Forces, and Teaching.
- **Heritage & Media:** English Heritage, Conservation, Film and Television.

Exam Board: Edexcel

Subject Leader: Ms. Naylor

What will I study?

You will develop your ability to communicate in Spanish in both speech and writing across a variety of thematic contexts:

- **Thematic Topics:** My personal world, Lifestyle & Wellbeing, My neighbourhood, Media & Technology, Studying & my future, and Travel & Tourism.
- **Authentic Usage:** Using Spanish in real-life situations and understanding authentic sources like radio announcements, signs, and newspaper articles.
- **Skill Development:** Developing competency across four distinct areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Key Skills

- **Communication:** Developing confidence in speaking and understanding a modern foreign language.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Gaining a greater awareness of the culture and identity of Spanish-speaking communities.
- **Analysis:** Interpreting authentic materials and translating meaning between languages.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (Across 4 Papers)

- **Paper 1: Speaking (25%):** Read aloud, role play, photo description and conversation.
- **Paper 2: Listening (25%):** Understanding spoken Spanish in various contexts.
- **Paper 3: Reading (25%):** Understanding written texts and translation into English.
- **Paper 4: Writing (25%):** Writing for different purposes and translation into Spanish.

Important Note: Spanish is a **tiered subject**. You will sit either **Foundation** (Grades 1–5) or **Higher** (Grades 3–9). Your teacher will decide which tier gives you the best chance of success.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Spanish at college or sixth form and then at University.

A second language is highly valued by employers and opens doors to international opportunities:

- **Professional Services:** International Business, Law, Finance, Marketing and Teaching.
- **Global Careers:** Travel & Tourism, Journalism and Sport Management.



Step 2

Your Option Choices

Subject Summaries



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Art & Design GCSE (Option)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mrs. Stone

What will I study?

You will learn to record observations and present a visual personal response by:

- **Developing Ideas:** Analysing the work of other artists and using it to inspire your own.
- **Experimenting:** Working with different media such as pencil, paint, pastel, and clay.
- **Recording:** Learning how to record your ideas, observations, and insights effectively

Key Skills

- **Technical Skills:** Improving techniques in a wide range of media including 3D, printmaking, painting, and drawing.
- **Independence:** Developing confidence in experimenting with materials and refining work as it progresses.
- **Problem Solving:** Learning lateral thinking and how to set your own learning objectives.

How am I assessed?

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

- A series of projects and workshops completed throughout Years 10 & 11.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)

- A unit of work produced in response to an exam paper released in January of Year 11.
- **The Exam:** Ends with a **10-hour practical exam** (split over several days) where you work independently in silence to produce a final piece.

Where can this take me?

This course prepares you for A-Level Art or BTEC and careers including:

- **Design:** Graphic Design, Fashion Marketing, Interior Design and Surface Pattern.
- **Architecture:** Essential for building the creative portfolio often required for Architecture degrees.
- **Creative Arts:** Fine Art, Contour Fashion Design and Teaching.

Important Note: If you choose Art & Design, you can not choose Textiles. This is because both subjects are part of the same AQA Qualification.



Business Studies GCSE (Option)

Exam Board: OCR

Subject Leader: Mrs. Atkinson

What will I study?

You will explore how different business situations affect decision-making through two main themes:

- **Business Activity, Marketing & People:** Learning about business planning, ownership, growth, market research, and Human Resources (recruitment).
- **Operations, Finance & Influences:** Studying production processes, consumer law, finance (profit/loss), ethical considerations, and the economic climate.

Key Skills

- **Quantitative Analysis:** Using mathematical techniques to perform finance-related operations (e.g., break-even analysis).
- **Data Interpretation:** Interpreting graphs, charts, and financial data to justify business decisions.
- **Decision Making:** Understanding how objectives and terminology impact business operations.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination

- **Paper 1 (50%):** Business activity, marketing and people (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Paper 2 (50%):** Operations, finance and influences (1 hr 30 mins).
- **Format:** Both papers use a mixture of multiple-choice questions and case studies.

Important Note: A significant portion of the marks are awarded for your **quantitative (number) skills**. You will analyse financial data, calculate margins, and interpret data sets to evaluate performance and make informed decisions.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Business and Economics courses at Key Stage 5 or Apprenticeships.
- **Professional Services:** Law, Management, Accountancy, Banking and the Civil Service.
- **Marketing & Growth Industries:** Advertising, Public Relations, and emerging roles in Social Media and AI.



Citizenship GCSE (Option)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mr. Pickles / Miss. Beresford

What will I study?

Citizenship explores how you can make a difference in society. You will investigate how power is used and how you can influence the world around you. You will study:

- **Life in the UK:** Identity, diversity, and shared values in modern Britain.
- **Rights & Law:** The UK legal system, policing, and international human rights.
- **Politics:** How government works, voting systems, and the UK's global role.
- **Active Action:** Designing and leading a real-world campaign for social change.

Key Skills

- **Critical Evaluation:** Learning to analyse complex arguments, spot bias in the media, and form your own evidence-based opinions.
- **Advocacy & Campaigning:** Developing the soft skills of negotiation, public speaking, and influencing people in power.
- **Research & Collaboration:** Working as a team to investigate community issues and find practical solutions.

How am I assessed?

Citizenship is **100% exam-based**. There is no coursework, though your "active action" project is assessed within the exam.

- **Paper 1 (50%):** Focuses on Identity, Democracy, and Justice.
- **Paper 2 (50%):** Focuses on International Relations and your Active Citizenship project.
- **Format:** Each paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes long. They include a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer questions, and 8-mark or 12-mark source-based questions where you evaluate different perspectives.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Politics, Law, Sociology, History or Philosophy.

Citizenship is a social science that builds the legal and political literacy needed for leadership in the 21st century.

- **Future Careers:** Law, Politics, Civil Service, Human Rights Advocacy, Journalism, Police Force or International Relations.

Dance (Performing Arts) Vocational (Option)

Exam Board: BTEC

Subject Leader: Miss. Thackray

What will I study?

You will develop sector-specific knowledge and skills in a practical environment through three main components:

- **Exploring the Arts:** Examining live and recorded dance performances to understand the work of professionals.
- **Developing Skills:** Improving your technical dance abilities by learning and reproducing existing choreography.
- **Performing to a Brief:** Working as a group to create a workshop performance in response to a specific stimulus.

Key Skills

- **Performance:** Reproducing repertoire, communicating with an audience, and responding to stimuli.
- **Personal Management:** Developing discipline in rehearsals, teamwork, and effective communication.
- **Sector Knowledge:** Understanding professional roles, responsibilities, and different performance styles.

How am I assessed?

Practical & Theoretical Assessment

- **Components 1 & 2:** Internally assessed through coursework and practical workshops.
- **Component 3:** Externally assessed project where you build on previous knowledge to perform to a set brief.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Level 3 Performing Arts or A-Level Dance.

Dance develops confidence and discipline valuable in both the arts and wider business sectors:

- **Creative Industries:** Professional Performer, Choreographer, Theatre Production and Costume Design.
- **Professional Services:** Teaching, Event Management, Arts Administration and Youth Work.

Design Technology GCSE (Option)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mrs. Dunn

What will I study?

You will gain technical expertise and awareness of historical, social, and environmental influences on design:

- **Core Principles:** Studying broad design processes, material techniques, and equipment.
- **Practical Skills:** Working creatively with a wide range of materials to design and make products.
- **Project Structure:** Year 10 is spent developing core knowledge and skills; Year 11 is dedicated to the major assignment brief.

Key Skills

- **Problem Solving:** Planning, evaluating, and demonstrating resilience when tackling complex design briefs.
- **Risk Taking:** Developing a positive mental attitude and the confidence to try new ideas.
- **Communication:** Informing designs through clear sketches, modelling, and teamwork.

How am I assessed?

50% Examination / 50% Coursework

- **Exam (50%):** A 2-hour paper covering core and specialist technical principles (mixture of multiple-choice, short answer, and extended response).
- **Coursework (50%):** A substantial design and make task where you identify a design possibility, produce a specification, and manufacture a solution.

Important Note: Due to the technical nature of this course, you **must be confident with your maths and scientific principles**. Speak to Mrs Dunn if you are unsure about this key element.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Product Design or design-based college courses.

This course is excellent preparation for technical, scientific and creative sectors:

- **Growth Industries:** Engineering (Civil, Mechanical, Automotive), Manufacturing and Technology.
- **Creative Careers:** Product Design, Architecture and Industrial Design.

Drama (Performing Arts) Vocational (Option)

Exam Board: BTEC

Subject Leader: Miss. Thackray

What will I study?

You will explore the performing arts industry as either a **performer or designer** through three components:

- **Exploring the Arts:** Examining the work of professionals and understanding the processes used to create performance work.
- **Developing Skills:** Applying technical skills and practices to communicate intentions to an audience (e.g., acting or musical theatre).
- **Responding to a Brief:** Working as a group to create a workshop performance in response to a specific stimulus.

Key Skills

- **Performance Discipline:** Reproducing repertoire, responding to stimuli, and managing personal rehearsals.
- **Communication:** Developing confidence in public speaking and conveying ideas clearly to an audience.
- **Teamwork:** Collaborating effectively with others to produce a polished group performance.

How am I assessed?

Internal & External Assessment

- **Components 1 & 2:** Internally assessed through coursework and practical workshops.
- **Component 3:** Externally assessed project where you build on previous knowledge to perform to a set brief.

Important Note:

Due to the practical nature of this qualification, you **must commit to attending after-school rehearsals** at certain points during the year.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Drama & Theatre Studies, Level 3 Performing Arts.

Drama builds confidence and communication skills that are highly desirable in many sectors:

- **Creative Industries:** Acting, Theatre Production, Media and Marketing.
- **Professional Services:** Law, Teaching and Public Relations.

Engineering Vocational (Option)

Exam Board: WJEC

Subject Leader: Mrs. Nichols

What will I study?

You will learn about the manufacturing sector through vocational experience, focusing on electronic, mechanical, material, and structural sectors:

- **Engineering Sectors:** Understanding how design and manufacture take shape in common sectors of engineering.
- **The Design Process:** Learning how engineers interpret information and follow specific processes to manufacture products.
- **Wider Impact:** Studying the importance of safety, manufacturing techniques, and the impact engineering has on the environment and society.

Key Skills

- **Vocational Application:** The ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical, real-world context.
- **Independence:** Developing the discipline to be an independent learner and problem solver.
- **Collaboration:** Learning to work effectively as part of a team, a vital skill in the manufacturing industry.

How am I assessed?

60% Coursework / 40% Examination

- **Unit 1 (Coursework):** Using developed skills to produce an engineered product.
- **Unit 2 (Coursework):** Analysing engineered products in order to propose design solutions.
- **Unit 3 (Written Exam - 40%):** A theory exam taken in Year 11 testing your ability to solve problems using knowledge of processes and materials.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Engineering or related subjects at post-16 providers and universities.

This course provides a strong foundation for both university study and direct entry into the workforce:

- **Growth Industries:** Mechanical, Electronic, Structural, and Civil Engineering, as well as Manufacturing.
- **Apprenticeships:** A proven starting point for apprenticeships at all levels in the engineering sector.

Health & Social Care Vocational (Option)

Exam Board: Cambridge National

Subject Leader: Ms. Edmondson

What will I study?

You will explore the fundamental principles of care and how to support individuals through various life stages:

- **Rights & Values:** Understanding person-centred values, effective communication, and how to protect individuals in care settings.
- **Life Stages:** Examining how humans grow and develop, the impact of life events, and sources of support.
- **Public Health:** Investigating current public health issues, factors influencing health, and the impact of health promotion campaigns.

Key Skills

- **Empathy & Care:** Developing the core values required to work with vulnerable individuals.
- **Communication:** Learning how to interact effectively with service users and professionals.
- **Project Management:** Planning and designing your own health promotion campaign.

How am I assessed?

60% Coursework / 40% Examination

- **Exam (40%):** Principles of care in health and social care settings.
- **Coursework 1 (30%):** Supporting individuals through life events.
- **Coursework 2 (30%):** Health promotion campaigns.

Important Note: This is a vocational course, meaning the coursework you start in **Year 10** counts directly towards your final grade. Consistent effort from the very start is essential.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Level 3 Cambridge Technicals or BTEC Applied Science at college.

This qualification provides a strong foundation for careers in the healthcare sector:

- **Healthcare Professions:** Nursing, Midwifery, Radiography, Physiotherapy and Dietetics.
- **Social & Early Years:** Social Work, Youth Work, Nursery Management and Teaching.

Hospitality & Catering Vocational (Option)

Exam Board: WJEC

Subject Leader: Mrs. Trowers

What will I study?

This course blends practical cooking skills with the theoretical knowledge needed to run a successful kitchen:

- **Core Topics:** Food nutrition and health, food safety and hygiene, and menu planning.
- **Practical Skills:** Developing advanced food preparation techniques in a fully developed kitchen.
- **Industry Knowledge:** Understanding how the hospitality and catering industry operates, including front-of-house and kitchen management.

Key Skills

- **Culinary Technique:** Mastering food preparation, cooking methods, and presentation.
- **Organisation:** Planning menus and managing time effectively during high-pressure practical exams.
- **Safety & Hygiene:** Learning the strict health and safety standards required in a professional kitchen.

How am I assessed?

60% Coursework / 40% Examination

- **Unit 1 (40%):** A written exam answering short and long questions on the industry (e.g., hygiene laws, job roles).
- **Unit 2 (60%):** A plan and cook assessment in Year 11. You will receive a brief, create a portfolio of evidence, and complete a final **practical exam**.

Important Note: Due to Health & Safety regulations and equipment limits, there are a **limited number of spaces** on this course. Students who have shown they are organised (e.g., remembering ingredients every week in KS3) are more likely to be successful in securing a place.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Apprenticeships or full-time college courses in Professional Cookery or Hospitality Management.

The food industry is one of the largest employers in the UK, offering creative and fast-paced careers:

- **Culinary Careers:** Chef, Sous Chef, Baker and Confectioner.
- **Industry Roles:** Food Product Development, Nutrition, Food Styling and Marketing.

Exam Board: Cambridge National

Subject Leader: Ms. McQuaid

What will I study?

You will study the media industry and how to plan and create original digital products through three main topics:

- **The Media Industry:** Understanding how media products are planned, how they convey meaning, and how they engage audiences.
- **Visual Identity & Graphics:** Learning graphic design concepts to create original digital graphics and visual identities for clients.
- **Characters & Comics:** Planning, creating, and reviewing original comics featuring your own character designs.

Key Skills

- **Digital Creativity:** Developing practical skills in digital design, layout, and character creation.
- **Project Management:** Learning pre-production planning and distribution considerations for media products.
- **Employability:** Gaining transferable tools and essential knowledge relevant to the creative sector.

How am I assessed?

60% Coursework / 40% Examination

- **Exam (40%):** Creative iMedia in the media industry (Written Paper).
- **Coursework 1 (25%):** Visual identity and digital graphics.
- **Coursework 2 (35%):** Characters and comics.

Important Note: This is a vocational course, which means the coursework you start in **Year 10** counts directly towards your final grade. You cannot leave the work until the end of Year 11.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT or Media.

This qualification leads naturally into apprenticeships and employment in the digital sector:

- **Media & Design:** Graphic Design, Animation, Film-making and Game Design.
- **Growth Industries:** Content Creation, Digital Marketing and Web Development.

Exam Board: BTEC

Subject Leader: Mrs. Skipsey

What will I study?

You will explore the music industry practically, using professional music technology software to develop your own unique style:

- **Musical Disciplines:** You will choose **two** disciplines to focus on from: **Performance** (playing instruments/singing), **Composition** (songwriting), or **Production** (using studio software).
- **Exploring Styles:** Investigating the key features of five different musical styles and how professional music products are created.
- **Real-World Briefs:** responding to a commercial music brief exactly as you would in the industry (e.g., create a track for a video game or perform a set for a festival).

Key Skills

- **Music Technology:** Mastering industry-standard software for recording and producing audio.
- **Self-Management:** Planning your practice time effectively to meet deadlines.
- **Creativity:** Developing original ideas for songs, covers, or remixes.

How am I assessed?

60% Internal Assessment / 40% External Assessment

- **Component 1 (30%):** Exploring Music Products and Styles. (Coursework: 12 hours of supervised sessions).
- **Component 2 (30%):** Music Skills Development. (Coursework: 15 hours of supervised sessions documenting your progress).
- **Component 3 (40%):** Responding to a Music Brief. (External Task: 23 hours of supervised sessions).

Important Note: ‘Supervised sessions’ means you complete the work in class under exam conditions, rather than sitting one short exam paper at the end.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Level 3 Music or Music Technology courses at college.

The UK music industry is a global leader, offering diverse careers beyond just being a pop star:

- **Creative Careers:** Performer, Session Musician, Composer and Songwriter.
- **Technical Careers:** Sound Engineer, Music Producer, Live Event Technician and Stage Manager.

Exam Board: OCR

Subject Leader: Mr. Miller

What will I study?

You will study the human body and mind in depth, combining physical performance with the science of sport:

- **The Theory (Science of Sport):** Anatomy and physiology, physical training systems, sports psychology, and socio-cultural issues in sport.
- **The Practical:** You will be assessed on your practical ability in **three different sports**.
 - One **Team** Sport
 - One **Individual** Sport
 - One from **either** group.

Key Skills

- **Physical Performance:** Refining your technique and tactics in high-pressure competitive situations.
- **Analysis:** Understanding data (fitness testing) and biomechanics (how the body moves).
- **Dedication:** Committing to regular extra-curricular training to keep your performance grades high.

How am I assessed?

60% Examination / 40% Practical Performance

- **Paper 1 (30%):** Physical factors affecting performance (Anatomy & Physiology). **1 hour.**
- **Paper 2 (30%):** Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology. **1 hour.**
- **Practical Assessment (40%):** Assessed performance in your three chosen sports.

Important Note: It would be beneficial for you to be participating in sport outside of school or in extra-curricular clubs to succeed in this course. You must speak to a member of PE to ensure your sports are on the **approved exam board list**.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** Level 3 BTEC Sport or A-Level PE at college.

This course is the first step toward the huge sports and leisure industry, as well as medical and scientific careers:

- **Sports Science:** Physiotherapy, Sports Nutrition and Personal Training.
- **Education & Coaching:** PE Teaching, Sports Coaching and Youth Management.

Photography GCSE (Option)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mrs. Stone

What will I study?

You will leave the traditional classroom to explore lens-based media, learning how to capture, edit, and manipulate images to convey meaning:

- **Technical Skills:** How to use a DSLR camera, studio lighting, and industry-standard Adobe Photoshop software.
- **Creative Expression:** How to convey ideas, feelings, and meanings through images, rather than just taking 'nice pictures'.
- **Portfolio Building:** Creating digital portfolios that demonstrate your ability to research photographers, experiment with techniques, and respond to artistic briefs.

Key Skills

- **Digital Literacy:** Mastering complex editing software (Photoshop) to manipulate visual data.
- **Creative Problem Solving:** Finding unique visual solutions to abstract titles or briefs.
- **Visual Communication:** Learning how to speak to an audience through imagery and composition.

How am I assessed?

60% Coursework Portfolio / 40% Practical Exam

- **Component 1 (60%):** A digital portfolio which includes a series of projects, workshops, and photo shoots that cover four specific assessment objectives.
- **Component 2 (40%):** An externally set assignment. This culminates in a **10-hour practical exam** which is split over several days where you work independently in silence to produce your final piece.

Where can this take me?

Photography teaches you to look at the world differently and provides specific technical skills for the creative media industry:

- **Media & Journalism:** Press Photographer, Magazine Features Editor and Photojournalist.
- **Design & Advertising:** Advertising Art Director, Graphic Designer and Web Designer.
- **Specialist Roles:** Medical Illustrator, Wildlife Photographer, Film/Video Editor and TV Camera Operator.

Religious Studies GCSE (Option) / (Core Plus)

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mrs. Gibbs

What will I study?

You will develop an understanding of diverse beliefs and the ethical challenges facing the modern world:

- **Beliefs & Practices:** The key teachings, festivals, and practices of **Christianity** and **Islam**.
- **Ethical Themes:** Investigating religious and non-religious perspectives on four critical areas:
 - **Life & Death:** Abortion, euthanasia, and the afterlife.
 - **Crime & Justice:** Punishment, the death penalty, and forgiveness.
 - **Rights & Reality:** Social justice, prejudice, and arguments for the existence of God.

Key Skills

- **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing difficult questions (e.g., Is the death penalty ever right?) and evaluating different viewpoints logically.
- **Social Cohesion:** Developing the cultural intelligence needed to understand and respect diverse beliefs in our multi-faith society.
- **Building Arguments:** Learning how to construct a balanced argument with evidence, a skill crucial for law and leadership.

How am I assessed?

100% Examination (Across 2 Papers)

- **Paper 1 (50%):** The Study of Religions (Christianity & Islam). **Written Exam.**
- **Paper 2 (50%):** Thematic Studies (Ethical Themes). **Written Exam.**

Core Plus Programme: Do **not** select Religious Studies as an option choice. This is already included in your Core Curriculum..

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Philosophy, Law, Sociology.

Religious Studies is highly valued by universities and employers because it proves you can think critically about complex human issues:

- **Law & Justice:** Solicitor, Barrister, Police Officer and Youth Worker.
- **Care & Medicine:** Doctor, Nurse and Social Worker
- **Media & Education:** Journalism, Teaching and Civil Service.

Exam Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mrs. Warnes

What will I study?

You will explore Art & Design through the medium of fabric, learning a wide range of techniques from European and non-European cultures:

- **Diverse Techniques:** You can work in areas such as fashion design and illustration, costume design, printed and dyed textiles, and digital textiles.
- **Creative Processes:** Learning how to explore ideas, experiment with media, and refine your work into a final piece.
- **Textile Construction:** Exploring surface patterns, stitched/embellished textiles, and soft furnishings.

Key Skills

- **Investigation:** Developing ideas by researching historical and contemporary sources.
- **Refinement:** Experimenting with different materials and techniques to improve your work.
- **Visual Language:** Presenting a personal and meaningful response that demonstrates you understand how to communicate visually.

How am I assessed?

60% Coursework Portfolio / 40% Practical Exam

- **Component 1 (60%):** A portfolio of work developed throughout the course demonstrating your ability to investigate, refine, and record ideas.
- **Component 2 (40%):** An externally set assignment. **The Final Exam:** This culminates in a **10-hour practical exam**. This is split over several days where you work independently in silence to produce your final piece.

Important Note: If you choose Art & Design, you can not choose Textiles. This is because both subjects are part of the same AQA Qualification.

Where can this take me?

- **Future Study:** A-Level Art or BTEC Level 3 Art & Design.

Textiles is a strong foundation for the huge fashion and interior design industries:

- **Fashion Industry:** Fashion Design, Contour Fashion Design and Fashion Marketing.
- **Interiors & Art:** Interior Design, Surface Pattern Design and Architecture.





Your Future Made at Parkside

Final Checklist

- Have I selected **one** subject from the **Academic Foundation** list (History, Geography, French, Spanish or Computer Science)?

- If I am following **the Core Plus Programme** have I picked Religious Studies as an Option? If so, I need to go back and pick another as the GCSE is part of my Core Curriculum.

- Do I have the correct number of **Option Subjects**?
 - I have picked **3** additional options.
 - **Core Plus (Separate Sciences only):** I have picked **2** additional options.

- If choosing a Creative or Performing Art, have I checked the **Rule of One?** (I have only picked **one** from Art or Textiles).

- Are my choices primarily from my preferred **Curriculum Family** to support my future goals?

- Have I selected **two Reserve Options** in case my first choices are unavailable?

