

Key Stage 4

Pathways 2026





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Message from the Principal



As you move towards the next two years of your educational journey, you will soon begin making important decisions about which subjects you wish to study at GCSE. These choices represent a significant milestone during your time with us at South Axholme Academy, as the pathways you select now will help shape your future in further education, training, and eventual employment.

It is essential that you take the time to reflect carefully on your options. Talk them through with your parents/carers and your teachers, and consider which subjects truly spark your interest and enthusiasm. These are often the areas in which you will thrive the most. We are here to support you throughout this process, and I hope you find this booklet both informative and reassuring as you begin to explore your next steps.

If you require any further guidance, please speak to myself, members of the Senior Leadership Team, or your subject teachers. Ms Drew, our Careers Adviser, is also available to provide you with personalised advice and support as you consider your future pathways.

I am incredibly proud of everything you have already achieved at South Axholme Academy, and confident that you will continue to excel as you enter this important stage of your studies, and we will be here to support you every step of the way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Hamilton'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Stephanie Hamilton,
Principal

Welcome

Deciding which subjects to study is an important and exciting part of being in Year 9, as it gives you the first real opportunity to choose those subjects that interest you and that will help you on your career pathway. We have structured the options to give you a wide range of subjects to choose from to ensure that you will have a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum experience in preparation for your future.

You now have the opportunity to make a decision on some of the subjects that you will study at the Academy for the next two years. The process of choosing your options is designed to be as simple as possible to enable you to select the subjects that you enjoy, giving you the best chance of being successful during Years 10 and 11. This booklet is designed to help you to make these choices, it contains details of the courses we offer in Key Stage 4.

Students will not be able to change subjects once they have started their studies in Year 10 unless there are exceptional circumstances to support this change. This is why it is essential that you make the right decisions from the very beginning.

Talking through your subject choices with any of the following people is also an essential part of the process:

- Your parents, who know you best
- Other family members or people you see regularly
- Your teachers who can tell you how well you are progressing in the subjects you are studying at present
- Your form tutor
- Any member of the Senior Leadership Team

By selecting courses in this booklet you are choosing subjects that will build upon your strengths over the next two years. The Key Stage 4 courses will be examined in different ways and using a range of examination boards. The decision about which examination board and which type of course you will study will be made by the Academy based on a variety of factors including:

- The makeup of the final class group
- Specification details
- Government approval of courses (this can change mid-course)

All decisions made will support all students to achieve the very best outcomes possible, and to allow the broadest selection of routes to the next stage of their education, whatever that might be.



Timeline

To support the decision, when selecting options we planned a series of events.

- Tuesday 13 January – Assembly to launch the straw poll and share options timeline
- Week commencing 19 January – Students complete the straw poll in Computing lessons with Miss Jacklin and Mr Catherine
- Tuesday 10 February – Assembly to launch the options process and provide feedback on the straw poll
- **Thursday 12 March – Year 9 Parents and Carers Evening**
- Tuesday 17 March – Assembly with a speaker to cover Making Informed Decisions linked to option choices
- **Wednesday 18 March – Year 9 Options Evening**
- Monday 16 March – Friday 20 March – Scheduled meeting with individual students conducted by SLT, Mrs Haigh, Ms Drew, Mrs Sheppard, Mr Chancellor
- Week commencing 16 March – Link to be shared for option choices to be made after options evening
- **Monday 23 March – Deadline for Options choices**
- Students to be informed of the options they have been given late June

Option choices will be selected using a Microsoft Form by students through a link shared via Satchel. You will be notified through Arbor this facility becomes available (Thursday 19th March).

Information about options will also be available online via the academy website, <https://www.southaxholmeacademy.co.uk/>.

The SENDCo is available for individual meetings for parents of students with additional needs. If you would like to arrange a meeting, please contact the academy via the SEND email at SEND@southaxholme-iet.co.uk

We aim to confirm individual student choices, for their provisional Key Stage 4 study programme as soon as we have processed all the option forms which is normally at the start of the summer term.

Whilst we try to ensure that every student gets their first choice, this will depend on levels of demand, availability of staffing and facilities, therefore, some students may have to study their reserve subject choices.

For this reason, we ask you to make your reserve choices carefully. **Students will select a 'reserve' Option in each block.**

Please note should a subject be undersubscribed it means it is highly unlikely that this subject will be able to run.

Pathways

The structure of the Key Stage 4 pathways shows the ambition that we have for all of our students, as well as meeting their individual learning needs. We recognise that our students have different strengths; some students may excel on traditional academic courses whilst others will embrace the opportunity for a more applied or vocational approach to a subject.

We want every student to finish Year 11 with a broad set of qualifications that will take them on to their next stage, whether that is employment, training or Post 16 study. All Level 2 qualifications offered (GCSE and equivalent) can lead to Level 3 study (Further Education / A levels).

All students will follow the core curriculum of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Combined Science, Core Physical Education and Core PSHE including Religious Education. The remaining periods on the timetable will comprise of the option subjects. Students should select a **first choice** and a **reserve choice** for each block.

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Construction Dance Geography Health and Social History Photography Spanish	Art Drama Engineering Food Preparation and Nutrition Geography History Statistics	Art Computing Engineering Food Preparation and Nutrition Music Photography Physical Education Religious Education Sports Science	Child Development Construction iMedia Photography Physical Education Triple Science

All students must pick Geography or History in Block 1 or Block 2. This is a Department for Education requirement.

- **Forbidden combination** - you cannot select both Geography and History unless you are consistently achieving exceeding or exceptional across your scans. This can then be discussed with our Vice Principal, Miss Jacklin.
- **Forbidden combination** – you cannot select GCSE Physical Education and Sports Science as they do not give you enough breadth for post-16 study.
- **Forbidden combination** – you cannot select Construction and Engineering as they do not give you enough breadth for post-16 study.
- **Forbidden combination** – you cannot select Dance and Drama.
- Spanish - if you select Spanish, you must select either Geography or History or Triple Science.
- If a subject is oversubscribed, disadvantaged and vulnerable students will be prioritised first.



How do you choose?

1. Read all the subject information in this booklet.
2. Talk to your teachers at Options Evening.
3. Speak to other SAX students who you know are studying the subjects you are interested in.
4. Research which subjects you need to study for the post 16 courses and career area you are interested in (Unifrog, college website, university websites).
5. Discuss your choices at home.
6. Complete the Microsoft form.
7. Follow the instructions on the form for making your choice(s).

Some things to think about:

- Don't choose a subject or course just because your friends do.
- What are your strong subjects?
- What are your weak subjects?
- Do you enjoy practical tasks? Or research and reading? Or writing essays?
- Are you well organised and able to meet deadlines?
- Be careful not to close any doors at this stage because you may well change your mind about your future career later.

The answers to these questions should help with your choices, but you can also talk to your teachers and your parents or carers. If you have any questions about careers, please contact Miss Jacklin ,Vice Principal or Ms Drew. For general questions regarding the options process please contact the Academy.

Enrichment activities

Alongside their academic studies we actively encourage all Key Stage 4 students to continue their involvement in activities beyond the curriculum, as we strongly believe that these will develop students' confidence, drive and initiative, preparing them to enter, succeed and progress in the world of work. For example: Duke of Edinburgh, extra-curricular drama, music and sport

What is the English Baccalaureate?

The English Baccalaureate provides students with a Key Stage 4 curriculum that has a core of academic subjects that are regarded as a desirable foundation for future studies at Post 16. The EBacc suite of subjects link closely with the facilitating subjects at A level which are sought by some universities which is worth bearing in mind when deciding which subjects to study.

You do not need to have studied all of these subjects to go to university, but having your GCSE choices steered towards EBacc subjects will help to keep your options open.

EBacc subject requirements:

- English (and/or English Literature)
- Mathematics
- GCSE Sciences; Combined Science or Triple Science / Computer Science
- History or Geography
- A foreign language

The Department for Education have produced the information on pages 13 about the EBacc for parents and students.

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Department
for Education

HELP YOUR CHILD MAKE THE BEST GCSE CHOICES

You and your child may currently be considering, with advice from their school, what GCSE subjects they should take next year.

The Department for Education recommends these core subjects, which make up the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), and help keep options for young people open:

- English language and English literature
- Maths
- Science
Combined science or 3 single sciences from Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Computer science
- History or Geography
- A language
Ancient or modern

WHAT IS THE EBACC?

The EBacc is not a qualification in its own right – it's a combination of GCSE subjects, including a language, that offer an important range of knowledge and skills to young people.

EBACC FUTURE PROOFS YOUR CHILD'S PROSPECTS

While your child may not have decided on their future path, getting the EBacc at GCSE gives them access to a full range of employment options when they leave secondary school and the broad knowledge that employers are looking for.

If they are thinking of going to university, the EBacc is also recommended by Britain's most prestigious universities.



The research found that students studying EBacc subjects for GCSE, were more likely to stay in education after 16.

The Centre for Longitudinal Studies,
August 2017

LANGUAGES GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Languages are an important part of EBacc. Studying a foreign language can be extremely rewarding and exciting. They provide an insight into other cultures and can open the door to travel and employment opportunities. They can also broaden pupils' horizons, helping them flourish in new environments.

If your child finds languages difficult, don't forget that they will have been studying them for much less time than their other subjects and, while it can be a challenge, learning a language will greatly enhance their future opportunities.

What's more, we know that employers value languages, as they are increasingly important to make sure you can compete in the global market. Because of this, languages are increasingly becoming a requirement for many graduate schemes, such as those offered by Lidl.

"Having language skills under your belt will help make you stand out from the crowd, whether you're applying for an entry level position, a management role or an internal transfer."

Steve Cassidy, Senior Vice President & Managing Director, UK & Ireland, Hilton

The Russell Group has named languages as subjects that open doors to more degrees at universities. (The Russell Group is a group of 24 universities with a shared focus on research and a reputation for academic achievement)

"Young people skilled in the languages of Europe, China and other key markets around the world, can look forward to exciting and rewarding careers."

Dr Adam Marschall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce

WHAT ABOUT ARTS AND MUSIC?

While arts and music are not included in the EBacc, every child should still experience a high-quality arts and cultural education throughout their time at school as part of a balanced curriculum. If your child can take 9 GCSEs, they will have either 1 or 2 further options and can choose subjects based on their wider interests like art or music as well as others such as physical education or technology.

Schools where more pupils select the EBacc at GCSE maintain the number of pupils that select arts.

Trends in arts subjects in schools with increased EBacc entry July 2017



You should also get in touch with your child's school directly – they will be able to tell you about their specific GCSE and EBacc offer and explain all of your child's options.

Further information
Search EBacc on GOV.UK for more information.

Learning Support

Throughout Years 10 and 11 support continues to be based on individual needs.

The majority of learning support in Years 10 and 11 takes place within the classroom; either by working with Assistant Teachers, in small groups using resources to support learning such as laptops, or by special examination arrangements. The focus is always on developing independent work habits and self-reliance.

Examination Concessions

Throughout a student's time at South Axholme Academy, evidence will continue to be gathered to ascertain whether any student requires reasonable adjustments/access arrangements for their GCSEs.

Once sufficient evidence is received from their teachers, and we are satisfied this is the student's normal way of working, they will be submitted for testing during Years 10 and 11. The timing of these assessments is delayed until then as the results are only valid for 26 months.

The decision to award concessions for individuals does not rest with the Academy but is decided by the relevant Awarding Body (Examination Board).

Key Stage 4 Qualifications Definition

All qualifications are referred to by a level. These levels are from The National Qualifications Framework, which is outlined below:

- Entry level - Qualifications that are a stepping stone towards a GCSE qualification.
- Level 1 - Qualifications equivalent to GCSE grades 1 to 3.
- Level 2 - Qualifications equivalent to GCSE grades 4 to 9.
- Level 3 - Qualifications equivalent to A Levels.
- Level 4-8 - Qualifications equivalent to degree level and beyond.

The Key Stage 4 courses offered at South Axholme Academy are at levels 1 and 2; these are mostly GCSEs but there are Vocational route which are available too.

GCSEs

The grading system introduced at GCSE to replace the A* to U system has a 9 to 1 scale.

Under the grading system a low C grade equates to a grade 4 and a high C grade equates to a grade 5.

Although the government has stated that a 'good pass' will be considered a grade 5 or above, they have currently set the benchmark as a grade 4 and entry requirements for Post 16 colleges have also usually been set at grade 4.

It is, however, very important to check the qualification requirements for individual Post 16 colleges carefully as they may vary the grades they require for different subjects.

Students in Year 9 will be awarded GCSEs using the 9 to 1 grading scale in all their subjects.

All GCSEs are assessed through examinations taken at the end of Year 11.

Vocational Pathways

These are high quality qualifications, taught across Level 1 and 2, that provide applied knowledge and practical skills. The assessment is comprised of a combination of assignments and practical tasks carried out across Key Stage 4 and some external exams taken at the end of Year 11.

Grade Conversion

Old A* - U GCSE Grades	9 – 1 GCSE Grades	Equivalent Level 2 / Level 1 (Vocational Courses)
A* A	9 8 7	L2 – Distinction* (8.5) L2 – Distinction (7)
B C	6 5 4	L2 – Merit (5.5) Level 2 – Pass (4)
D E F G	3 2 1	L1 – Distinction (3) L1 – Merit (2) L1 Pass 1
U	U	U

Core Curriculum

The following pages give an overview of the core subjects that you will study:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Combined Science
- Physical Education
- Core PSHE including Religious Education

English Language

English Language focuses on how writers use language and structure across both fiction and non-fiction texts. You will explore how meaning is created in stories, articles, speeches and letters, while also developing your own creative and transactional writing skills. The course helps you understand how language changes depending on purpose, audience and context, including comparing texts from different time periods. You will also complete a spoken language presentation, allowing you to demonstrate confident speaking and listening.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11. There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Read a wide range of texts with fluency and good understanding
- Analyse and evaluate how writers use language and structure
- Develop effective, coherent writing using Standard English
- Use grammar, punctuation and spelling accurately
- Build a wide and confident vocabulary
- Understand and apply key linguistic terminology
- Communicate clearly in both spoken and written forms

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

journalism, publishing, writing, editing, teaching, law, marketing, advertising, public relations, media, business, human resources, civil service, communications

English Literature

English Literature encourages you to become an enthusiastic, thoughtful and confident reader. You will study a range of novels, plays and poetry, exploring themes, characters and writers' ideas. The course helps you understand how authors use language, structure and literary techniques to create meaning, while also considering the historical and social contexts in which texts were written. You will study a Shakespeare play, a 19th-century novel, modern texts and a poetry anthology, as well as unseen poetry.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11. There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Close reading skills when analysing how writers use language, structure and techniques
- The ability to explore and interpret writers' ideas and viewpoints
- Strong essay-writing skills, including forming arguments and using quotations effectively
- Critical thinking when considering themes, contexts and different interpretations
- A wider vocabulary and improved comprehension
- The ability to express ideas clearly and confidently in written and spoken work

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

journalism, publishing, writing, editing, teaching, law, marketing, advertising, public relations, media, business, human resources, civil service, communications

Mathematics

Mathematics builds on the topics you have studied so far, extending your understanding and introducing new concepts that help you think logically and solve problems with confidence.

You will explore key areas such as Number, Algebra, Ratio and Proportion, Geometry, Probability and Statistics.

Lessons focus on developing fluency, accuracy and the ability to apply mathematical methods to real-life and abstract situations.

Throughout the course, your teacher will adapt learning to suit your needs and help you make strong progress. A variety of approaches including problem-solving, group work, independent tasks and the use of resources such as Mathswatch will support your understanding. Regular assessments help track your progress and guide your next steps.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11.

There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Fluency with a wide range of mathematical methods and techniques
- Confidence applying maths to real-life and abstract problems
- Logical reasoning, deduction and drawing conclusions from evidence
- Understanding and interpreting mathematical information in different forms
- Accuracy and independence when working with numbers, diagrams and data

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

accountant, analyst, software developer, data scientist, AI engineer, engineer, scientist, teacher, game designer, actuary, economist

Combined Science

Science will encourage you to be inspired, motivated and challenged. It will encourage you to develop your curiosity about the biological, material and physical worlds and provide insight into and experience of how science works. You will be able to engage with science in your everyday life and to make informed choices about further study in science and related disciplines and career choices.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11.

There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Problem-solving, analytical and practical skills
- A strong understanding of scientific concepts and processes
- Awareness of how science affects society and the importance of scale
- The ability to assess risk and evaluate evidence
- Practical, enquiry, modelling and laboratory skills
- Skills in interpreting, analysing and communicating scientific information
- Confidence in using mathematics and technology in scientific contexts

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

Science & STEM careers:

medicine (doctor, nurse, midwife), engineering (various fields), environmental science, technology and IT, healthcare roles, laboratory technician or research roles, animal-related careers, sports-related careers

Careers supported by scientific understanding:

teaching, architecture, policing, construction, fitness and personal training

Core Physical Education

Core Physical Education focuses on developing students' physical competence, confidence and enjoyment of sport. You will take part in two practical lessons each week and experience a range of roles including participant, coach and official. The course aims to help you excel in a variety of physical activities, stay active for sustained periods, engage in competitive sport and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle. Through challenging and varied activities, you will build personal fitness and develop habits that support lifelong wellbeing.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Competence in a broad range of physical activities
- Tactical and strategic awareness in both team and individual sports
- Improved technique and performance in competitive activities
- The ability to evaluate and refine your own performance
- Teamwork, communication and leadership skills
- Confidence, resilience and a positive approach to physical challenge
- Commitment to maintaining an active lifestyle beyond the classroom

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

Although Core PE is not a formal qualification, the skills and habits developed support progression into a wide range of sport and activity related careers, including sports coach or instructor, fitness or personal trainer, PE teacher, sports development officer, leisure centre or sports facility roles, outdoor activity leader, physiotherapy, sports therapy or other health and wellbeing professions

Core PSHE including Religious Education

Students study Core PSHE including Religious Education through the general studies and tutor time programme. The course extends and deepens their understanding of a wide range of religions and worldviews, exploring them within local, national and global contexts. Building on prior learning, students learn to interpret, analyse and evaluate religious and non-religious perspectives, using key concepts confidently and flexibly to understand how different beliefs are expressed in society.

Alongside this, students also cover key elements of the statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum, which forms part of PSHE. This includes learning about mental health and wellbeing, respectful relationships, families, online safety, physical health, and financial decision-making, as outlined in the government's statutory PSHE/RSE guidance. Students also explore broader KS4 PSHE themes such as digital literacy, managing risk, consent, personal safety, and life in the wider world, drawing on evidence-based resources recommended by the PSHE Association for Key Stage 4 provision. These areas help students develop the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to navigate modern society safely, responsibly and with respect for others.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Critical thinking and the ability to analyse different viewpoints
- Understanding of religious, ethical and philosophical issues
- Skills in interpreting beliefs, texts and worldviews
- Respect, tolerance and cultural awareness
- Communication skills through discussion and debate
- The ability to form balanced, informed opinions

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

Although Core Religious Education is not a formal qualification, the knowledge and skills gained support a wide range of future pathways, including teaching and education, social work and youth work, nursing, healthcare and counselling, policing and public services, journalism, publishing and media, law, civil service and community roles, charity, humanitarian or intercultural work

Option Choices

Depending on the most appropriate pathway for you, you will be able to select subjects from the list below. Subjects will be examined at GCSE level or equivalent or Level 1 as appropriate to you and your pathway.

- Art
- Child Development
- Computer Science
- Construction
- Dance
- Drama
- Engineering
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Geography
- History
- iMedia
- Music
- Photography
- GCSE Physical Education
- Religious Studies
- Spanish
- Sports Science
- Statistics
- Triple Science

All students must pick Geography or History in Block 1 or Block 2.

Art

Art enables students to express ideas in a personal and creative way while building confidence through experimentation with a range of materials and techniques. Projects are informed by students' own experiences and environments, encouraging the development of original and meaningful work.

The course provides structured opportunities to build knowledge and technical skill through diverse learning approaches, including engagement with artistic sources. Students will produce a portfolio that demonstrates the development, refinement, recording, and realisation of their ideas, alongside an externally set assignment completed under exam conditions. Students may work in one or more areas, including drawing, painting and sculpture, with flexibility to explore combinations of these disciplines.

How is it assessed?

Assessment comprises coursework and an externally set assignment, culminating in a 10-hour supervised practical exam.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Technical art skills, including colour theory and effective use of materials
- Creativity and imagination when developing ideas
- Critical thinking when evaluating your own work and others'
- Independence and resilience through experimentation
- Communication skills when explaining artistic intentions
- Ability to develop, refine and realise ideas through a structured process

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

teaching, graphic designer, illustrator, tattooist, photographer, make-up artist, interior designer, set designer, animator, packaging designer, storyboard artist, product designer, architect, fashion designer, web designer, app designer, art therapist, landscape architect

Child Development

The Child Development course is designed for students interested in working with children or pursuing future pathways in childcare, education, health or social care.

The course focuses on how children grow, learn and develop from birth to five years, exploring their physical, intellectual and social development. Students also learn about the factors that influence children's well-being and how to create safe, supportive environments. The course combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills, providing a strong foundation for further study and a wide range of careers working with children and families.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written examination and coursework assignments.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Communication skills when working with children and adults
- Organisation and time-management when completing practical and written tasks
- Research skills when exploring child development theories and practices
- Empathy and understanding of children's needs and behaviours
- Problem-solving when planning safe and supportive environments
- Observation skills when assessing stages of child development
- Ability to link theory to real-world childcare situations

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

nursery practitioner, primary school teacher, teaching assistant, paediatric nurse, midwife, social worker, youth worker, other roles within education, healthcare and social care

Computer Science

Computer Science helps students understand how modern technology works and how it shapes the world around us. The course explores how computers are built, how networks operate, and how software is designed and used. Students learn how to think logically, break down problems and create solutions using computational thinking and programming. As technology continues to evolve rapidly, the subject opens pathways to a wide range of future careers in emerging digital industries.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11. There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Problem-solving using computational thinking
- Programming skills using Python
- Logical reasoning and analysing problems step-by-step
- Understanding computer hardware, software and networks
- Awareness of cybersecurity and safe digital practice
- Independent learning, resilience and debugging skills
- The ability to interpret, design and use algorithms, flow charts and pseudocode

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

software developer, cybersecurity specialist, data analyst, AI engineer, network technician, games developer, app designer, systems architect, digital marketer, IT consultant, robotics technician, computer engineer, software tester, cloud computing specialist, and many other roles in the rapidly expanding digital and tech industries.

Construction

Construction is one of the largest industries in the UK and offers a wide range of career opportunities. This course provides an introduction to the knowledge and practical skills needed to work in the construction and built-environment sector.

Students learn how buildings are designed, planned and constructed, gaining an understanding of construction methods, building materials, health and safety requirements, and the roles of key industry professionals such as architects, surveyors and site managers.

The course blends theory with hands-on experience. Students take part in practical workshop activities such as brickwork, carpentry and accurate marking-out and learn how buildings are constructed from foundations to roof level. They also develop the ability to interpret construction drawings, complete coursework based on real-life scenarios, and apply mathematical skills within practical construction tasks.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessment** (covering the three specific trade areas).

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Practical construction skills
- Accuracy in measuring and marking out
- Teamwork and communication
- Technical understanding of buildings
- Planning and organisation

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

carpentry, bricklaying or site management, careers in architecture, surveying, project management or civil engineering.

Dance

Dance is a practical and creative subject that allows students to explore movement, choreography and performance. Students will develop their technical skills while learning how to create and perform dance in a range of styles. Lessons are highly practical and encourage creativity, discipline and collaboration. Students will also explore how dance is developed for different purposes and audiences, helping them understand dance as both an art form and a performance skill.

How is it assessed?

Dance is assessed through a combination of practical performance and written reflection. Assessment includes ongoing practical tasks throughout the course as well as final performance assessments.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Physical fitness, coordination, flexibility and strength
- Confidence, creativity and self-discipline
- Teamwork, communication and leadership skills
- Ability to reflect on work, set targets and respond positively to feedback

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

performing arts, dance, choreography, fitness, teaching, the creative industries, sport and leisure, events, health and wellbeing, any role that values confidence, commitment and teamwork

Drama

Drama is a practical and creative subject that enables students to explore ideas, stories and issues through performance. The course develops an understanding of how drama is created, rehearsed and presented, both individually and as part of an ensemble. Students take part in practical workshops, performance activities, discussion and reflection, allowing them to experiment with a range of dramatic techniques and styles. Drama also supports confidence, creativity and self-expression while helping students appreciate theatre as both an art form and a powerful means of communication.

How is it assessed?

Drama is assessed through a combination of practical performance and written reflection. Assessment includes ongoing practical tasks throughout the course as well as final performance assessments.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Communication and presentation skills
- Confidence in performing and sharing ideas
- Teamwork and leadership
- Creative problem-solving
- Time-management and organisation
- Ability to respond constructively to feedback
- Empathy and understanding of different perspectives
- Resilience and perseverance
- Critical thinking when exploring characters and situations

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

performing arts, theatre, film, television, creative industries, teaching, law, media, marketing, hospitality, events management, human resources, and any career requiring communication, teamwork or confidence

Engineering

Engineering Design introduces students to the processes involved in developing new engineered products and solving real-world problems. The course explores how ideas are generated, refined and turned into workable solutions through analysing design requirements and producing detailed design specifications.

Students study key areas such as the engineering design process, technical drawings, materials and their properties, manufacturing methods, quality control, testing procedures, health and safety, sustainability, and the use of computer-aided design (CAD) and 3D printing technologies.

The course blends theoretical understanding with practical application, giving students the opportunity to design their own product, model ideas using CAD software, work with tools and machinery, create prototypes and complete coursework tasks based on industry-informed scenarios.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessment** (projects involving design and practical manufacture).

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Problem-solving and creative thinking
- Practical workshop skills
- Precision and accuracy
- Technical drawing and CAD skills
- Innovation in designing and developing ideas
- Independent project management

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

mechanical engineering, automotive engineering, product design, architecture, robotics, civil engineering and a wide range of other technical industries.

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Food Preparation and Nutrition is a practical and academic course that develops a strong understanding of food, nutrition and healthy living.

Students learn where food comes from, how it is produced and processed, and how dietary choices affect health and wellbeing.

Practical lessons focus on building a wide range of food preparation, cooking and evaluation skills, taught progressively so that students can work with increasing independence. Alongside this, students develop secure theoretical knowledge in nutrition, food science and food safety, applying this understanding in both written tasks and practical investigations. This balanced approach prepares students effectively for coursework and the final examination.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessment** (includes practical investigations and cooking tasks).

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- A wide range of food preparation and cooking skills
- Strong knowledge of nutrition and food science
- Organisation, planning and time-management
- Problem-solving and evaluation skills
- Independence and resilience
- The ability to work accurately, safely and hygienically
- Written and analytical skills

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

catering and hospitality, food science and food technology, nutrition and health-related professions, product development and quality control, teaching and education, food marketing and food media

Geography

"Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future" - Michael Palin

Studying geography will give you the opportunity to travel the world via the classroom, learning about both natural and social sciences along the way. If you are interested in the nature of the physical world and our dynamic relationships with it, then geography is the subject for you.

Learn about your place in the world and the factors that have led, and are leading to the changing world around us. Major and urgent current issues such as globalisation, climate change and environmental damage will be discussed, giving you insight into the Earth, it's people and the inter-relationships that bind them together.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11.
There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

Literacy, Mathematical, interpretation, analysis, oracy, group work, working in the field, critical thinking, problem solving, map skills

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

architect, earth scientist, coastal engineer, social worker, teacher, banker, lawyer, surveyor, estate agent, town planner, travel agent, tv researcher and holiday representative.

Health and Social Care

Health and Social Care gives students an understanding of how health, care and early years services support people throughout their lives. You will explore human development from birth to later adulthood and learn how physical, intellectual, emotional and social factors influence individual needs. The course also examines how lifestyle, environment and social factors affect health and wellbeing. You will learn how care services operate across different sectors and why policies, legislation and safeguarding are essential for ensuring high-quality provision. Through practical tasks and case studies, you will develop empathy, communication skills and the ability to make informed decisions when supporting people in real-life situations.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Communication skills – clear verbal and written communication, active listening and empathy.
- Practical care skills – supporting wellbeing, observing behaviour and understanding safeguarding.
- Analytical skills – evaluating case studies and making informed decisions.
- Teamwork and leadership – working collaboratively and leading small tasks with confidence.
- Research and ICT skills – gathering information accurately and presenting it clearly.

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

nurse, midwife, paramedic, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, dietitian, nutritionist, social worker, support worker, youth worker, counsellor, nursery nurse, teaching assistant, early years educator, health promotion officer, fitness instructor

History

History explores how the world has been shaped by power, conflict, crime and significant change. The course introduces students to major periods and events that continue to influence life today.

Students study Crime and Punishment over time, examining how laws, policing and punishments have developed, including a local study of Whitechapel and the Jack the Ripper case. They also explore the reality of the American West, looking at westward expansion, Indigenous experiences and changing frontiers. The study of Anglo-Saxon and Norman England focuses on the events surrounding 1066, the Battle of Hastings and how William the Conqueror secured control. Finally, students investigate Weimar and Nazi Germany, analysing the challenges faced after the First World War and how dictatorship, propaganda and persecution shaped German society.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11.
There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Critical thinking and analysis
- Research and evidence evaluation
- Clear written and verbal communication
- Problem-solving and understanding cause and consequence
- Cultural understanding and empathy
- Awareness of historical context and modern relevance
- Organisation and time-management
- Ability to consider multiple perspectives

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

law, journalism, media, marketing, human resources, teaching, research, heritage, public services and management. It provides strong analytical, organisational and communication skills valued across many industries.



iMedia

iMedia develops the creative and technical skills used across the modern media industry. Students explore both traditional media such as TV, film, radio, magazines and newspapers and digital media, including computer games, interactive apps, websites and online publishing.

The course helps students understand how media products are planned, designed and created while building strong practical skills in digital graphic production, image editing, page layout, and visual identity development. Students work through realistic, industry-informed scenarios that mirror the expectations of media professionals.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Digital graphics and image-editing skills
- Visual communication and brand identity design
- Creative thinking and problem-solving when responding to client briefs
- Research and planning skills using professional documentation
- Understanding of media codes, conventions and audience needs
- Independent working, resilience and confidence using new software and tools
- Organisation and time-management when producing extended creative projects

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

graphic design, digital illustration, web and app design, animation, game design, advertising and marketing, social media content creation, photography and digital imaging, film and media production, UX/UI design

Music

Music is a rich and multi-faceted subject that combines academic study, creativity and the development of practical performance skills. The course enables students to grow as confident, well-rounded musicians through three key areas: **performing, composing, and appraising.**

Students explore a wide range of musical styles, develop their theoretical understanding, and gain experience creating and analysing music using both traditional and contemporary approaches.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessment.**

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Confidence in performing on your main instrument or voice
- Improved music-reading skills and understanding of music theory
- Solo and ensemble performance skills
- Ability to compose music in different styles and for different purposes
- Understanding of musical genres and how music has developed over time
- Use of technology and compositional techniques to create original music
- Listening skills to identify features, techniques and stylistic characteristics
- Ability to analyse and critique music from a range of traditions
- Knowledge of influential composers, musicians and their impact on music history

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

performer, composer, music producer, sound technician, music teacher or tutor, conductor, music journalist, events and festival management, sound engineer, studio technician, DJ, music therapist, arts administration, film and game music composer

Photography

Photography encourages students to explore ideas through visual creativity, developing skills in observation, selection and interpretation. The course enables students to produce personal and meaningful work linked to their interests and surroundings. Students learn both practical and digital techniques, taking part in photoshoots and using editing software to refine and transform their images.

The course is designed to develop knowledge and understanding through a range of learning experiences, allowing students to explore and communicate ideas using different photographic approaches. Their work will demonstrate development, refinement, recording and realisation through a portfolio and an externally set assignment.

How is it assessed?

Assessment comprises **coursework** and an **externally set assignment**, culminating in a 10-hour supervised **practical examination**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Photography skills, including camera techniques and digital editing
- Creative thinking and experimentation
- Critical analysis and visual evaluation
- Communication and presentation of ideas
- Organisation and independence when managing projects
- Resilience and problem-solving
- Ability to develop, refine and realise ideas through structured processes

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

teaching, graphic design, illustration, wedding or fashion photography, make-up artistry, interior design, set design, animation, packaging design, storyboarding, product design, architecture, fashion design, web and app design, art therapy and landscape architecture

GCSE Physical Education

GCSE Physical Education offers a balance of practical performance and theoretical understanding. The course helps students develop confidence, physical competence and a strong awareness of how the body works during exercise. Through a mixture of practical activities and classroom learning, students explore key areas such as body systems, training methods, components of fitness and sports psychology. Students learn how to apply theoretical knowledge to real sporting situations and how to reflect on and improve their own performance.

How is it assessed?

Assessment is completed through a mixture of written **examinations**, **practical performance** in three sports and a **controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Develop practical physical skills such as coordination, balance, agility, reaction time and overall fitness.
- Improve sport-specific techniques including passing, serving and performing set routines.
- Build strong theoretical understanding of body systems, training methods, components of fitness and sports psychology.
- Strengthen analytical skills by learning to explain, apply and evaluate performance in different sporting situations.
- Develop communication and teamwork skills through leading warm-ups, giving feedback and working cooperatively.
- Build discipline and resilience by managing training, coping with competition and learning from mistakes.
- Improve time-management and organisation through balancing practical activity with theory and written tasks.
- Enhance structured writing skills needed for extended answers in PE and other subjects such as science and English.

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

personal trainer, fitness instructor, sports coach, strength and conditioning coach, physiotherapist, sports therapist, occupational therapist, dietitian, nutritionist, exercise scientist, kinesiologist, biomechanist, sports psychologist, PE teacher, lecturer, outdoor activity leader, adventure instructor, youth sports coordinator, gym manager, leisure centre staff, professional athlete, rehabilitation specialist, event management, health promotion officer, wellness officer, adventure tourism, outdoor education



Religious Studies

GCSE Religious Studies encourages students to explore a wide range of ethical, moral and philosophical questions from both religious and non-religious viewpoints. The course provides a deeper understanding of two major world faiths, alongside contemporary issues such as human rights, relationships, good and evil, and life and death. Students learn how beliefs influence individuals, communities and society, developing the ability to think critically about different perspectives.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11. There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- A deeper awareness of cultural diversity within a multi-faith, multi-cultural society
- Respect, empathy and tolerance for different beliefs, values and customs
- The ability to analyse arguments, evaluate evidence and form balanced, informed opinions
- Critical thinking and logical reasoning when exploring complex moral and ethical issues
- Strong communication skills through discussion, debate and extended written responses
- An enquiring mindset and appreciation of differing viewpoints—highly valued by employers

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

care work, teaching, social work, journalism, publishing, policing, nursery work, healthcare roles, catering, leisure and tourism, and any career that benefits from strong interpersonal skills and an understanding of diverse cultures and beliefs

Spanish

Studying Spanish gives students the opportunity to explore the language and cultures of over 500 million people across the Spanish-speaking world. The course develops confidence in real communication, moving far beyond basic classroom phrases toward becoming expressive, fluent and independent language users. Through engaging with authentic materials, such as articles, conversations, films and cultural texts students gain insight into life in Spain and Latin America while strengthening their ability to share ideas, express opinions and understand different perspectives.

Lessons focus on the four key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, all taught through meaningful, real-world contexts. Central to the course is the development of *intercultural understanding*: the ability to appreciate and navigate diverse social situations, traditions and viewpoints. As students learn how language works, they build memory techniques, problem-solving abilities and resilience, skills that are highly valued in further education and future employment. Studying Spanish ultimately helps students become open-minded, adaptable and confident global citizens.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11 (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The speaking exam is carried out in a one-to-one setting.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Clear and confident communication in both spoken and written forms
- Accurate listening skills and the ability to understand a range of authentic materials
- Problem-solving skills through recognising patterns and applying grammar logically
- Improved memory, resilience and independent learning strategies
- Cultural awareness and the ability to interpret different viewpoints and social contexts
- Critical thinking when analysing texts, conversations and real-world scenarios

- Confidence when expressing ideas, opinions and justifying arguments in another language

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

international business, marketing, law, finance, tourism, journalism, media, teaching, interpreting, the Civil Service, the Diplomatic Service, healthcare communication roles, customer-facing industries, NGOs and international organisations



Sports Science

Sport Science provides students with a strong understanding of how physical performance can be improved through effective training, nutrition and scientific principles. The course explores key areas such as anatomy and physiology, exercise physiology and health and fitness. Alongside this theoretical knowledge, students take part in practical activities where they measure fitness levels, analyse performance and apply scientific ideas to real-life scenarios. Overall, the course equips students with the skills and understanding needed to enhance athletic performance and prepares them for further study or careers in fields such as physiotherapy, coaching, sports therapy and fitness training.

How is it assessed?

Assessment includes a combination of written **examination** and **controlled assessments**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Practical fitness skills, including training safely and effectively
- Improved strength, endurance, flexibility and coordination
- Ability to collect, record and interpret fitness data
- Understanding of how to apply scientific principles to physical activity
- Goal-setting and motivation through planning and monitoring training programmes
- Increased independence, resilience and confidence in practical and theoretical tasks

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

personal trainer, fitness instructor, sports coach, strength and conditioning coach, professional sports person, physiotherapist, sports therapist, occupational therapist, nutritionist, dietitian, rehabilitation specialist, exercise scientist, biomechanist, sports psychologist, PE teacher, lecturer, outdoor adventure leader, youth sports coordinator, gym manager, leisure centre staff, health promotion officer, event manager in sport

Statistics

Statistics helps students understand how data is collected, analysed and interpreted in real-world contexts. The course develops strong numerical, analytical and problem-solving skills by exploring how data can be used to make informed decisions. Students learn how to design investigations, represent data clearly, identify trends and patterns, and draw meaningful conclusions. GCSE Statistics builds on skills from mathematics but focuses more deeply on probability, data handling and real-life applications, making it useful for a wide range of future pathways.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11. There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Collecting, organising and interpreting data effectively
- Understanding probability and applying it to real situations
- Using statistical diagrams, charts and models
- Analysing trends, patterns and correlations
- Drawing clear, evidence-based conclusions
- Critical thinking when evaluating information and sources
- Problem-solving using numerical and logical reasoning
- Confidence working with real-world data, surveys and experiments

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

data analysis, finance, economics, business management, psychology, market research, engineering, computer science, healthcare research, teaching, environmental sciences and roles in government or public services

Triple Science

GCSE Triple Science offers a rich and challenging curriculum that encourages students to think deeply about how the world works. The course enables you to explore Biology, Chemistry and Physics in greater depth, developing a strong understanding of scientific ideas and how they apply to everyday life.

Through a balance of theory and hands-on practical work, you will build the ability to question, investigate and solve problems with confidence. Lessons focus on developing your curiosity, independence and resilience, helping you apply scientific and mathematical skills to real-world situations. Triple Science provides a solid foundation for further study and opens doors to a wide range of future opportunities.

How is it assessed?

This subject is assessed through **100% terminal examination**, which means all marks come from exams taken at the end of Year 11. There is **no coursework or controlled assessment**.

Successful completion of the course results in students being awarded three separate GCSEs—one each in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

What skills will I develop if I study this subject?

- Develop practical skills by planning and carrying out scientific experiments
- Strengthen analytical thinking through interpreting data and identifying patterns
- Improve problem-solving skills by applying scientific principles to new situations
- Build strong mathematical skills used throughout Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- Enhance communication skills, including explaining ideas clearly in written and verbal work
- Learn to evaluate evidence and draw reasoned conclusions
- Gain confidence in applying scientific knowledge to real-world contexts

What are the possible careers this course can lead to?

doctor, nurse, midwife, dentist, pharmacist, biomedical scientist, laboratory technician, paramedic, physiotherapist, radiographer, occupational therapist, dietitian, research scientist, chemical engineer, mechanical engineer, civil engineer, electrical engineer, environmental scientist, forensic scientist, biochemist, ecologist, marine biologist, veterinary scientist, robotics specialist, teacher, lecturer, healthcare technician, pharmaceutical researcher, food scientist



Frequently Asked Questions

How many GCSEs will I study?

- Most students will study and achieve nine GCSEs. They will be awarded five GCSEs in the core subjects - English Language, English Literature, mathematics, science (two GCSEs) - and they will then supplement that with history **or** geography and three option subjects of their choice.

Does one of my option choices have to be either geography, history or Spanish?

- Yes - the Government states that all students must choose to study either history, geography or Spanish.

Can I choose Spanish as one of my other options if I choose history or geography?

- Yes.

Can I choose to study both history and geography?

- Given the amount of extended writing in these two subjects, we do not recommend anyone picks both history and geography. However, if a student is performing well in English, and would like to take both history and geography, this is something that can be discussed further with Miss Jacklin, Vice Principal.

Are there any other option combinations I am not allowed to pick?

- Yes – there are forbidden combinations.
 - **Forbidden combination** - you cannot select both Geography and History unless you are consistently achieving exceeding or exceptional across your scans. This can then be discussed with our Miss Jacklin, Vice Principal.
 - **Forbidden combination** – you cannot select GCSE Physical Education and Sports Science as they do not give you enough breadth for post-16 study.

- **Forbidden combination** – you cannot select *Construction and Engineering* as they do not give you enough breadth for post-16 study.
- **Forbidden combination** – you cannot select *Dance and Drama*.

Once I have submitted my options form, am I guaranteed to study those subjects?

- No - sometimes subjects may be undersubscribed, and it will not be viable to run as many teaching groups as we would like. In such cases, we will make use of reserve choices. Where this isn't possible, we will have discussions with you regarding other options that are available.

What is the deadline for completing the options form?

- Options Forms must be completed no later than **Monday 23rd March 2026**.

When will I find out what subjects I've been allocated?

We will inform students of their confirmed choices in June. Whilst this may seem like a long time, it takes time to put together the whole school timetable and sort the option blocks.



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