



YEAR 9 OPTIONS

2025-2027



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Dear Year 9 parents, carers and students,

Congratulations on reaching this important milestone in your education - **#pride**, **#ambition**, **#respect**. As you approach the halfway point of Year 9, it's time to look ahead to the exciting opportunities that await you in Year 10 and 11 - Key Stage 4 - KS4. This is your chance to shape the next chapter of your learning journey by choosing subjects that truly inspire you, align with your goals, and open pathways to your bright future. Everyone at Kingsdown remains committed to championing you each and every day.

Why Your Choices Matter

The subjects you choose now will lay the foundation for your learning in Years 10, 11, and beyond. These choices give you the freedom to explore areas you're passionate about, discover new skills, and begin focusing on possible career paths. Whether you're excited by science experiments, drawn to creative pursuits, or eager to dive deeper into practical skills, there's something for everyone. We hope you have found your PD lessons really helpful in exploring your future.

What to Consider When Choosing

Making the right choices is about more than just picking your favourite subjects. Here are some tips to help guide your decision:

1. Reflect on Your Strengths and Interests

Think about the subjects you enjoy most and excel in. Choosing courses that play to your strengths can boost your confidence and keep you motivated throughout the next 2 years.

2. Explore Your Goals

Do you have a dream job or career in mind? Research which subjects are important for that field. For example, sciences are essential for medicine, while creative arts could be your stepping stone to design or media. Languages will help you explore the world with confidence.

3. Keep Your Options Open

If you're unsure about your future plans, select a variety of subjects to keep your pathways open. A balance between academic and practical subjects is often a good approach.

4. Seek Advice

Speak with your teachers, parents, tutors, PD teachers and Mrs Eden our careers co-ordinator. They can provide valuable insights and help you think about how your choices fit into the bigger picture. Keep asking great questions and seeking advice from.

Exciting Options Await

Here are just a few of the subjects you might consider:

- **Core Subjects:** English, Maths, Science and Religious Studies will remain part of your curriculum to ensure you build essential skills.
- **Creative Subjects:** Art, Drama, Music, Photography and Design & Technology allow you to express your creativity and develop innovative thinking.
- **Practical Pathways:** Subjects like Food Technology, Health & Social Care, Child Development and Retail Business offer hands-on learning and prepare you for the modern workforce.

- **Humanities and Languages:** History, Geography, and French deepen your understanding of the world and its cultures.
- **Physical Education:** Explore sports and fitness while learning about health and well-being.

What Happens Next?

Today you have received our Option booklet with detailed information about each subject, including what you'll learn, how you will be assessed, and where it could lead. There will also be a Year 9 Parents' Evening on 23rd January, where you and your family can meet subject teachers, ask questions, and gather all the information you need. In your lessons, your teachers will be sharing why their subject at KS4 is such a great choice and there will be some assemblies too especially for our students interested in gaining the English Baccalaureate qualification.

Your Journey, Your Choice

Remember, this is your journey. Take the time to think carefully about what excites you and what you want to achieve. Be open to exploring new opportunities and trust in your ability to make choices that suit you best. Keep asking questions and seeking advice. **#responsibility**

We are all here to support you every step of the way. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to your tutor, subject teachers or Mrs Eden.

Wishing you all the best as you take this exciting next step in your education and your exciting futures. **#stretch #challenge**.

With very best wishes

Mrs Leigh-Bennett and the Kingsdown team

Key Stage 4: The start of the GCSE Curriculum

Key Stage 4 begins at the start of Year 10 and marks the start of the GCSE curriculum. The Key Stage 4 (KS4) curriculum reflects the National Curriculum requirements and the curriculum

policy of the school. We want to offer as much individual choice as we can, so that our students can follow courses they need for interest and their future career paths. The pathways available are described below:

Pathway 1: The Kingsdown Pathway

Students on this pathway will commit to:

- **4 Core subjects**
 - English Language and English Literature (2 GCSEs)
 - Maths (1 GCSE)
 - Combined Science (2 GCSEs)
 - Religious Studies (1 GCSE)
- **One** choice of:
 - A Humanities subject (History, Geography)
 - A Modern Foreign Language (French)
 - Computer Science
 - Triple Science
- **2 further options** of their choice.

Pathway 2: The Kingsdown 'EBacc' Pathway (selected students)

The Government has a national target of 90% of students achieving the English Baccalaureate by 2025 which means that these students must study a Modern Foreign Language and a Humanities subject. Students selected for the Kingsdown 'EBacc' pathway will study.

- **4 Core subjects**
 - English Language and English Literature (2 GCSEs)
 - Maths (1 GCSE)
 - Combined Science (2 GCSEs)
 - Religious Studies (1 GCSE)
- **A Language:** this will be French
- **One** choice of a Humanities subject::
 - History
 - Geography
- **1 further option** of their choice.

If a student hasn't been selected for this pathway but wishes to pursue it, we will welcome the discussion to review this on a case by case basis.

Core Learning: What do all students study?

All students are taught a Core programme of subjects. These are the subjects and skills that are statutory for all children aged 14-16, with the addition of English Literature, which we feel is important too, and is studied by everyone.

Core Learning comprises:

- English
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science (double award)
- Religious Studies
- Personal Development (non-examination)
- Physical Education (non-examination)

Option Subjects: What can you choose?

We want our students to be committed to their subjects and so we allow them to choose three subjects from a range of areas. Whilst we do give as much choice as possible, students must take one EBacc subject from: History; Geography or a Modern Foreign Language and Computer Science. This is different from the Ebacc Qualification whereby students study both a Humanities subject *and* a Modern Foreign Language.

We urge that all students opt for a broad and balanced curriculum. Whilst all GCSEs have equal status, they do assess different skills and ways of learning. When making choices students must balance their skills and learning styles in order to keep options open for later life, such as choosing apprenticeships, vocational qualifications or 'A level' courses.

We make every effort to ensure our students study the course they opt for. We are however constrained by constructing a timetable, staffing and group sizes. This is why we ask that you also make a reserve option. Any student who does not get their top choices will have an options review meeting to ensure the reserve choice is correct and the right pathway is found.

What are GCSEs?

GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. It is highly valued by schools, colleges and employers, so will be useful whatever students are planning to do afterwards. The qualification mainly involves studying the theory of a subject, combined with some investigative work. Some subjects also involve practical work. GCSEs are at levels 1 and 2 on the National Qualifications Framework, depending on the grade you get. GCSEs are graded from 1-9 with '9' being the highest grade. A grade 4 is the equivalent to a standard pass and a grade 5 is the equivalent to a strong pass.

What are Cambridge Nationals?

Cambridge Nationals are particular types of work-related qualifications that are highly regarded by employers. Courses have been designed in collaboration with industry, so they can equip students with the skills and knowledge that employers are looking for. The qualifications offer a mix of theory and practice and are graded as: Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

What is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?

This was introduced by the Government in 2011 as a standard that some students can aim for in their KS4 studies. To achieve the English Baccalaureate, students must complete and obtain a Grade 4 or higher in the following subjects:

- Maths
- English
- Science
- a Modern Foreign Language (French) and
- either Geography or History

Students selected for the Kingsdown 'EBacc' pathway will be:

- stretched and challenged: the courses give them access to a full range of employment options when they leave secondary school and the broad knowledge that employers are looking for.
- Highly regarded by the world's most prestigious Universities.
- Equipped with the right skills employers are looking for.

Advice for Students

Who decides what I study?

Basically, **YOU** do. We want you to choose the subjects that you want to do. Everyone is happier that way. But you need to think things out very carefully and remember all these points.

First, you must consult:

- Your Parents
- Your Teachers
- Your Tutor

Secondly, you should think whether the option subjects you are choosing now fit in with what you will need for a further education or career choice in two, three or four years' time.

Thirdly, you must check any particular requirement of the course. You will not be allowed to begin any option course if your KS3 school work indicates that you will not benefit from it.

To help you to choose:

To help you with all of these different and often difficult considerations, you will have an information assembly outlining the whole process and the timeline. Your parents will also be invited to an information meeting after school

You will hear from your teachers, in your lessons, about what their subject is like at KS4 and for those option subjects that you don't currently study (eg Business Studies or Health and Social Care), you will hear about those in a special assembly.

You can also speak to our Careers Advisor, Mrs Eden, either in school or at the Parents' Evening on 23rd January. At any time, students can attend a drop in lunchtime session with Mrs Eden by going to the careers office at this time. If parents wish to contact the Careers Advisor, they can do so via email: eeden@kingsdownschool.co.uk.

All of these people will have a very good idea of your abilities and the subjects that will give you a broad set of skills that you will need for future success.

Top Tips for Choosing Subjects

You should remember these:

Dos

- DO choose subjects which you like
- DO choose subjects at which you are successful
- DO choose subjects which you may need for a career or further education
- DO find out everything that you can about the subject before you choose it. Once you have started a subject we expect you to stick with it for two years
- DO talk to the people who know you
- DO listen to the advice your subject teachers give you

Don'ts

- DON'T choose a subject just because your friend has chosen it
- DON'T choose a subject just because you like - or dislike - a particular teacher, they may or may not end up teaching you

What happens once options have been chosen?

- All options forms will be completed during a PD lesson once these have been chosen. These will take place week beginning **3rd February**, with mop ups following for absent students.
- During term 3 students who need more specific advice will have a 1-2-1 meeting where parents and carers can also be present.
- If there is a significant problem with your choices you will meet with Mrs Strett or Mr Handy to discuss the best course of action for you.
- In **term 6** you will receive a letter outlining your Options for September 2025.

Options Timeline and Key Dates 2025

- **w/b 6th January:** Kingsdown EBacc pathways student meeting.
- **9th January:** Parents' and Carers' Option Information Evening
- **w/b 13th January:** Option taster sessions in lessons
- **23rd January:** Year 9 parents' evening
- **w/b 3rd February:** Options will be made in a PD lesson via a google form.
- **Term 5:** Option choices will be confirmed and published

Option blocks

When making your choices please be advised that you will need to choose 1 subject from each block. On the Kingsdown pathway one choice must be Geography, History, French or Computer Science. On the Ebacc pathway you must choose French and History or Geography.

Option Block A	Option Block B	Option Block C
French Geography History Computer Science DT - Timbers and Boards DT - Food and Nutrition Health and Social Care Photography Retail Business Sport Studies	French Geography History Art Drama DT - Textiles DT - Food and Nutrition Health and Social Care Retail Business Sport Studies GCSE PE	French Geography History Triple Sciences Art Child Development DT - Timbers and Boards DT - Food and Nutrition Music Retail Business Sport Studies

Any questions during this process please contact Mrs Strett or Mr Handy

Core Learning

Students will study all of these subjects throughout years 10 and 11 and so they do not have to opt for these subjects. Details of these courses can be found on the following pages.

Core Learning

English Language and English Literature

Mathematics

Science

Religious Studies

Personal Development

Core PE

Personal Development

(lstrett@kingsdownschool.co.uk/eeden@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Personal development continues as it has at KS3 into years 10 and 11 with further study of sex and relations, health and wellbeing, citizenship and financial education.

Careers education is an integral part of the key stage 4 programme. It helps young people:

- become more aware of their personal qualities and abilities
- to raise their aspirations
- find out about the opportunities available to them when they leave school
- develop the skills they need to manage their change from school to further education, training and work
- understand and develop the skills and qualities that are important in working life

Key elements of the programme include:

- **Lessons** include, Investigating the main post 16 options: further education qualifications, apprenticeships, learning at work and higher education. Job application skills: how to write a letter of application and Curriculum Vitae; interview skills. Raising awareness of job opportunities, both locally and nationally, and trends in work.
- **Aspirations week** including - work shops with employers on a bespoke pathway, mock interviews in conjunction with local employers, college experience 'taster' days to help them decide which will meet their needs best. Opportunity to experience Higher Education (e.g. University).
- All KS4 students will have a **1-2-1 careers meeting** with Mrs Eden, as well as drop in sessions available to them
- Students wishing to apply for apprenticeships or employment with training will be given guidance on how to apply.
- Year 10 students will also follow a bespoke **work experience** programme throughout the year.

English Language/English Literature (bpeters@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: English Language/English Literature

Examining Board: AQA

Assessment: 100% Examination at the end of Year 11 for both Language and Literature.
English Language Exams:

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing (1 hour, 45 minutes; 50%)

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (1 hour, 45 minutes; 50%)

A separate endorsement of Speaking and Listening is also studied which is assessed throughout the course.

English Literature Exams:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel (1 hour, 45 minutes; 40%)

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (2 hours, 15 minutes; 60%)

In this subject you will learn to:

In English Language, you will develop the ability to write successfully for a variety of audiences and purposes and communicate effectively to an audience. You will develop your ability to give opinions on texts and construct an argument.

In English Literature, you will study a variety of texts including: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Macbeth, An Inspector Calls and a poetry anthology. You will study the social, historical context surrounding these texts and gain a detailed understanding of the writers' craft and impacts on readers.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Understand the social, historical context of texts.
- Explain and analyse the writers' choice of language and its impact upon the reader.
- Communicate effectively through both written and spoken language.
- Form opinions and listen effectively to others.
- Work independently and be dedicated to revision of texts.

In the future this subject will help you to:

Develop your social and emotional skills: you will be able to empathise and understand others. You will also be able to read and interpret different texts as well as communicate effectively both in writing and verbally.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

At GCSE (in Year 10), we encourage all students to buy a copy of the studied texts: Macbeth, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde, and An Inspector Calls. In year 9, we will study The Jungle; Blood Brothers and Dracula but students do not need to purchase copies of these. CGP revision guides are useful for all texts studied to support and develop the work studied in class.

Subject Mathematics

Examining Board: Edexcel

Assessment: 3 Examinations

- Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment and a calculator is allowed for Paper 2 and Paper 3.
- Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long.
- Each paper has 80 marks.
- All three papers must be at the same tier of entry (Higher or Foundation) and must be completed in the same assessment series.

In this subject you will learn to:

Explore the six key areas of Mathematics – Algebra, Ratio and proportion, Geometry, Number, Probability and Statistics. You will learn to use and apply Mathematics to both simple and complex problems.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

Understand key content from any given problem solving context and apply a variety of Mathematical concepts to solve the problem. You will need to challenge and stretch your current understanding of Mathematics and strive to achieve your full potential.

In the future this subject will help you to:

Manage everyday life for example managing your finances. If a good grade is gained in Mathematics, this will open up ample opportunities for you in your post 16 education.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

CGP revision guides relevant to the correct tier of entry. You will also need a full geometry set including protractor, compass, ruler and pencil. All students also require a scientific calculator (we recommend the Casio fx-85GT CW).

Science

(acassey@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Combined Science

Examining Board: AQA Combined

Science: Trilogy

Assessment: Examination - Combined Science. This double GCSE comprises 6 exams (2 in Biology, 2 in Chemistry, 2 in Physics), each exam is 1 hour 15 minutes long. There is increased demand in terms of the required maths skills and the amount of student recall and application of their science knowledge.

In this subject, you will learn:

Biology - how your body systems work together and how living things interact with their environment.

Chemistry - how we make use of resources and materials available, both natural and man-made, in order for us to continue to improve our standard of living.

Physics - how we have developed different ways of communicating. We look at generation of electricity and the challenges we face to find suitable energy resources

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Be able to come up with ideas to test practically.
- Be able to carry out practical work safely and accurately.
- Be able to understand what results of practical work show you and how to explain them.
- Be able to use ICT to find out more about the science ideas we cover and communicate these ideas to other people.
- Use science ideas and apply them in order to solve problems.
- Be able to use maths in order to show your understanding of the science involved.

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Be able to communicate ideas effectively.
- Work successfully with other people.
- Be able to solve problems in a logical and accurate way.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

- CGP GCSE Combined Science revision guide and workbook – price TBC
- All students also require a scientific calculator (we recommend a Casio) but any model will suit.

Subject: Religious Studies

Examining Board: AQA

Assessment: 2 x 1 hour 45 minute exam papers.

Exam 1: Religious Beliefs and Practices

- Christian Beliefs: Key Beliefs, the life and influence of Jesus Christ, beliefs on the afterlife, ideas about forgiveness.
- Christian Practices: Key practices, how to worship, pilgrimages, festivals and helping the local and worldwide communities.
- Islamic Beliefs: Ideas about the nature of God and existence, Beliefs about the nature of human life, what happens when we die, the role of Angels.
- Islamic Practices: Key practices, how to worship, pilgrimages, festivals and helping the local and worldwide communities.

Exam 2: Thematic Studies

- Theme A: Relationships and families: sex, marriage, families, gender equality
- Theme B: Religion and Life: Sanctity of life, animal rights, abortion, euthanasia.
- Theme C: Existence of God: arguments for and against, revelation, enlightenment
- Theme D: Religion peace and conflict: Religion, violence, terrorism, C21st conflict.

In the future this subject will help you:

As well as being an exciting and interesting GCSE course, Religious Studies gives you the chance to contemplate different moral issues whilst learning about different beliefs and approaches to life. RS encourages you to think about and value other peoples' points of view and it helps you develop the skills needed to broaden your understanding of the world and different cultures. There is a strong emphasis on personal reflection, where you will be helped to develop your skills to critically analyse human behaviours. The RS curriculum is accessible to all.

The skills that you develop on this course will support you to follow a variety of further study and career options. Previous students of RS have gone on to have successful careers in many areas of law, journalism, politics as well as many taking scientific pathways.

To gain a good grade in this subject:

You will develop a range of good literacy skills so that you will be able to communicate your ideas in written format. You will learn to develop listening skills and empathy towards others and you will learn to develop an interest in current affairs and the world you live in.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

AQA GCSE Religious Studies A: Christianity and Islam Complete Revision and Practice (Oxford Revise: Religious Studies) £10 Amazon

We are currently investigating the costings of an educational visit to the holy city of Rome for Easter 2026 TBC

Option Subjects

Kingsdown Pathway

Students following the Kingsdown Pathway select 3 subjects. One of these must be from the following list. Students then have 2 further choices.

Geography

History

French

Computer Science

Then 2 further option choices.

Kingsdown EBacc Pathway

Students selected to follow the Kingsdown EBacc Pathway must choose

French,

Geography or History

Then 1 further option choices.

Geography
(kphillips@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Geography

Examining Board: AQA 3

Examinations

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

Paper

Paper 3:

2: Challenges in the Human Environment (35%) 90 minutes.

Geographical Applications (30%) 90 minutes

If you choose this subject you will learn: A range of respected and highly regarded skills wanted by colleges, universities and employers. Geography will allow you to understand and interpret the physical processes in the world around you and also begin to analyse the impact human activity has on these.

Year 10 & 11

Unit 1: Living with the Physical Environment (35%):

- The challenge of natural hazards- tectonic hazards, tropical storms, extreme weather in the UK, climate change
- Physical landscapes in the UK- coastal and river landscapes
- The living world- ecosystems, tropical rainforests and hot environments

Unit 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (35%)

- Urban issues and challenges,
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of resources management

Unit 3: Geographical Applications (30%)

- **Section A- Issue Evaluation**

Students will complete a range of questions and a writing task based on pre-release material they will study in class. This will combine both physical and human Geography.

- **Section B- Fieldwork**

Students will complete questions based on their fieldwork enquiry. Students will complete fieldwork to prepare them for this section of the Geographical Applications exam. There will be an emphasis on hypothesis choice, data collection methods, presentation of data, analysis/ interpretation of data and evaluating key data collection methods.

To gain a good grade in this subject:

You need to demonstrate that you have a keen interest in the world around you, and you can analyse and interpret case studies independently. Produce well-structured answers that show you have an understanding of both the physical processes and human elements and develop the skills of analysing and interpreting figures.

In the future this subject will help you:

To demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills to employers and or colleges/universities. Through the study of geography, you will be able to show that you can analyse, interpret, explain, and produce extended answers using real life case studies.

Potential Costs: - Fieldwork enquiry days (approx £25) Bristol Harbourside and the River Cole

Subject: History

Examining Board: Eduqas

Assessment:

Examination 100% - 2 exams total of 4 hours

Exam 1: Studies in depth (2 hours)

- USA 1 hour
- Elizabeth 1 hour

Exam 2: Studies in development (2 hours)

- Germany 45 minutes
- Medicine 75 minutes

If you choose this subject you will learn: A range of respected and desired skills wanted by colleges, universities and employers. History will teach you to analyse, interpret and explain. You will learn these skills through the study of; medicine and treatment; the **economic, political** and **social** reasons for Adolf Hitler's rise to power, WW2 and during the cold war; the changes and developments of the USA in the 1920s and the problems Elizabeth I faced during her reign.

In year 10 & 11 you will study 4 of the following

- The USA: A Nation of contrasts 1920-1929
- Changes in Health and Medicine c500 to the present day
- The Elizabethan Age, 1558–88.
- Development of Germany 1919-1991

To gain a good grade in this subject:

You need to be able to demonstrate that you can analyse and interpret historical sources on your own. You will need to be able to produce well-structured and balanced work which considers different **interpretations** of the past and come up with your own judgments based on your own knowledge and the evidence available to you in **extended writing** in a short period of time. Spelling, Grammar and punctuation is worth 5% of all marks and you need to demonstrate "consistently accurate" spelling grammar and punctuation to achieve above a grade 4 equivalent in both exams.

In the future this subject will help you:

To demonstrate a wide range of skills to employers and or colleges/universities. Through the study of history you will be able to show that you can analyse, interpret, explain and produce extended answers and form balanced opinions using evidence. This is why History is a highly valued and sought after qualification by colleges, universities and businesses.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

Revision guides are made in house and there are no anticipated additional costs associated with this course.

Modern Foreign Languages
French (hdixon@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: French

Examining Board: Edexcel

Assessment: Examination 100%

Students will be examined on the four key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These exams will take place at the end of year 11. Each skill is worth 25%. Students will be expected to draw on all previous learning – this will include speaking and writing spontaneously from memory with little/no preparation.

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

Communicate with people. Some topic areas learnt in Key Stage 3 are developed in more depth and there is a greater focus on grammar and the use of tenses. During the two years, you will learn how to share your interests and opinions on a range of topics such as technology, the world around us, and your future career. You will learn how to speak spontaneously with confidence, develop your accent and pronunciation and you will develop many problem-solving techniques. You will learn more about the countries where the language is spoken and explore literature and film from the country.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to:

Demonstrate a commitment to learning vocabulary on a weekly basis as set for Home Learning. You will need to be willing to grow in confidence to speak aloud and in pairs in the language. You will need to work hard at developing your long-term memory, so that you can listen to conversations and pick out key vocabulary at speed and read texts and identify different tenses. Being able to identify patterns in language is a definite advantage as these will help you become more creative in your writing.

In the future this subject will help you to:

Have more fun travelling around the world, people respond much more positively to you if you can speak their language. Languages will help you stand out when applying for college places, jobs or university. After studying a language GCSE, your CV will include many personal skills that are highly thought of. Employers often ask for candidates with language skills, they are particularly valuable in careers in journalism and media, law, engineering, business and marketing, ICT, sport and leisure, travel and tourism, customer service, civil service (Immigration, Customs and Excise, Diplomatic Service) and teaching.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

GCSE revision guides and grammar workbooks can be bought through the school and these cost between £5-10 over the GCSE course.

Computer Science
(smays@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Computer Science

Examining Board: AQA

Essential consideration:

This is a course which draws on higher levels of mathematical ability, a desire to solve complex problems and therefore a keen interest in analytical thinking is required. This is a theory based course which does not need to involve practical work or the direct use of computers. Although, computers are used within the course for 3.2 Programming

Assessment:

100% exam based consisting of paper 1 and paper 2, both 50% each. Paper 1 is 2 hours long and Paper 2 is 1 hour and 45 minutes long. This qualification is assessed only through examination and no practical work or NEA.

"Computers are incredibly fast, accurate, and stupid. Human beings are incredibly slow, inaccurate, and brilliant. Together they are powerful beyond imagination."- Albert Einstein

Students will start their journey into a career and lifetime in computer science, preparing for jobs that do not even exist as yet. Students will learn the theory behind innovation in technology that makes everything possible in the 21st Century. The world of tomorrow will be very different from today. Autonomous vehicles, Robotics, Augmented Reality, Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, the cyber world and Virtual Reality.

If you choose this subject you will study the following units:

- **Paper 1 - 2 hours**
 - 3.1 Fundamentals of algorithms
 - 3.2 Programming
- **Paper 2 - 1 hour 45 minutes**
 - 3.3 Fundamentals of data representation
 - 3.4 Computer systems
 - 3.5 Fundamentals of computer networks
 - 3.6 Cyber security
 - 3.7 Relational databases and structured query language (SQL)
 - 3.8 Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be:

Mathematically minded, due to the higher mathematical nature of the course. In doing so you will be able to skillfully manage and succeed with the computational thinking, code tracing, problem-solving, analytical thinking and programming concepts including the design of effective algorithms and the designing, writing, testing and refining of code.

In the future this subject will help you to:

Be a part of the workplace in the 21st Century. Computer Science is a massive growth area all over the world and people who have the right skills in this area will always be in demand and have well paid, interesting jobs. Computer science is a job shortage area and is becoming increasingly integral to every part of our world.

WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Retail Business (Technical Award)

(smays@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Retail Business

Examining Board: WJEC (Eduqas)

Why study retail business?

The WJEC Level 1/2 award in Retail Business offers a learning experience that focuses learning for 14-16-year olds through applied learning, i.e. acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in the retail sector. The WJEC Level 1/2 course in Retail Business has been designed to develop learners in the skills needed for progression from Key Stage 4 and GCSE learning to further education, employment and training.

Assessment:

Unit 1 - The business of retail - 40% Exam based unit, taken at end of course (1 hour 15 mins)

Unit 2 - Customer service for retail business - 30% - NEA

Unit 3 - Merchandising and marketing retail products - 30% - NEA

"NEA" stands for "Non-Exam Assessment." This refers to practical work that students undertake as part of their qualification under controlled conditions.

If you choose this subject you will learn:

Unit 1 – The Business of Retail - The purpose of the unit is to introduce learners to the competitive and dynamic nature of the retail industry.

Students will study:

- In relation to retail business - activity, ownership, scale, aims, supply chain, functional areas, competition, dynamic environment, external factors which effect and seasonality
- Students will also learn to use retail business data in a variety of different formats, using mathematical techniques, interpreting and making judgements and offering solutions

Unit 2 – Customer service for retail businesses. The purpose of this unit is to introduce learners to the importance of customer service to retail organisations.

Students will study:

- Customer service, including online, the importance, features, principles of good customer service, meeting customer expectations and how this can be researched and investigated

Unit 3 – Merchandising and marketing a retail product - The purpose of this unit is to introduce learners to the importance of visual merchandising and marketing.

Students will study:

- Visual Merchandising - purpose, types, principles and design
- Marketing - Target customers, the marketing mix, designing promotional materials and the use of technology in promotion

To gain a good grade in this subject you need:

- Good literacy skills and the ability to read, interpret, analyse and comprehend contextual and factual information
- You seek an understanding of how retail business operates
- Perhaps you have an ambition be an entrepreneur and one day start your own business

In the future this subject will help you to:

This qualification provides learners with a broad appreciation of work in retail business related industries and

wider opportunities for progression into further education, employment or training.

Subject: Fine Art

Examining Board: AQA

Assessment: Coursework 60%

Controlled Assessment: 40%

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

Explore a range of Fine art media, techniques and processes. You will be made aware of both traditional and new technologies such as:

- Painting and drawing
- Mixed media, including collage and assemblage
- Ceramics, wire sculpture and 3D
- Printmaking: relief, mono and screen processes.
- Photography and media manipulation

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Complete a portfolio of Artwork, which comprises a major and minor project using a sketchbook.
- Work independently and collectively and be dedicated to improving your ideas and designs.
- Express ideas, feelings and meanings which can be interpreted in images and artefacts.
- Show an understanding of historical and contemporary developments.
- Learn to use the working vocabulary and specialist terminology which is relevant to Fine Art.

In the future this subject will help you to:

Aim for a number of different creative college courses or jobs both in the UK and overseas.

Artist / Designer / Media / Fashion / Theatre / Beauty / Textiles / Teaching / Graphics / Researcher / Museum Curator etc.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

Although there are no revision guides there is a one off payment of £25 for the two year course. This ensures that each student receives all materials required to support them with independent work as well as a hardback sketchbook and folder for their coursework. Paints, brushes, pastels, drawing pencils, acrylics and watercolours etc are provided in the pack. A Year 11 exam research trip to London takes place upon receipt of the exam paper in January of Year 11.

Design and Technology (Timbers and Boards)

(swilliams@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Design and Technology

Examining Board: Eduqas

The information given is based on the new exam specification that has been introduced to our DT students this year.

Examination : 50%

Non Examined Assessment (NEA) : 50%

Assessment: Exam 50% - Written Paper testing theoretical knowledge

- Technical principles including designing and making principles

Non-exam assessment 50% (NEA) – A design and make task (*content released June prior to submission*)

- Produce a working prototype of design
- Produce a portfolio of evidence

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

- Develop on KS3 experiences within DT
- Design, develop and create a prototype of a product made from a variety of different materials
- Draw in 3D and 2D to communicate your designs using sketches and CAD packages
- Use a range of different materials and equipment safely and effectively
- Build a prototype using a variety of machines and techniques, laser cutting, plasma cutting, wood working skills, metal forming, plastic shaping, printing, quilting, appliqué, dyeing methods, gathering and layering, patchwork and beading
- Identify different materials, fibres, fabrics and smart materials
- Analyse and evaluate products and processes
- Engage in focussed tasks to develop and demonstrate practical techniques
- Plan the use of time and work independently on set tasks
- Work safely at all times
- Consider existing products and how they affect different groups of people
- Understand moral, cultural and environment issues in design & technology
- Plan the effective use of time and work independently on set tasks

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Be creative and love experimenting and develop your work constantly, tweaking your designs at every stage to improve them
- Learn about the theory behind materials, tools and equipment and apply this to your design work
- Present designs graphically to show how you have reached the chosen solution that you will make
- Be confident in the use of various hand and machine tools
- Create a quality product, which will be a toy for young children, that uses a combination of woods, metals and plastics
- Provide materials and components when producing a large product
- Have the ability and aptitude to design and make quality 2D and 3D outcomes
- Have an interest in design and how our design influences the world we live in

In the future this subject will help you to:

This course could lead to a variety of different A level, apprenticeships and other college courses, as well as open the gateway to university. Further down the line this course could lead to jobs in Product Design, Fashion Design, Robotics, Aerospace, Electronics, Civil engineering, interior design, digital media, games industry and many more.

Potential costs and useful revision materials A selection of revision guides and resources will be available online. Class teachers will communicate with students' other good resources. All students will be asked for a contribution of £10 in years 10 and 11. Extra costs are subject to material choices of products for year 11 projects.

Design and Technology (Textiles)

(swilliams@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Design and Technology

Examining Board: Eduqas

The information given is based on the new exam specification that has been introduced to our DT students this year.

Examination: 50% Controlled assessment: 50%

Assessment: Exam 50% - Written Paper testing theoretical knowledge

- Technical principles including designing and making principles

Non-exam assessment 50% (NEA) – A design and make task (***content released June prior to submission***)

- Produce a working prototype of design
- Produce a portfolio of evidence

If you choose this subject you will learn:

- Basic skills in machining,
- Pattern cutting
- Free motion stitching (drawing with thread)
- Range of embellishment techniques
- Costume and prop designs
- Draw using a range materials and scales
- Study colour theory
- Study Design History
- Analyse Contemporary fashion trends
- Batik
- Tie Dye
- Screen printing
- Plastic fusion
- CAD
- Portfolio presentation
- 3D costume and set design as part of an extended project for higher marks
- Organise Fashion show and exhibition

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Be creative and love experimenting with a range of different approaches to making Fashion products
- Work tirelessly to engage in your chosen theme providing a personal response to a brief
- Explore a wide range of presentation techniques to make your work stand out and be unique
- Create a quality Fashion/ Art Textile product which may take the form of lots of mini outcomes.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

Students will be expected to contribute £12 in years 10 and in year 11. For this contribution students will be given a good quality sketchbook folder and be able to access fabric paints inks etc. Students will have the opportunity to attend educational trips and take part in extracurricular activities throughout their time on this course.

Subject: Drama

Examining Board: Edexcel

Assessment:

Component 1: Devised Performance & Portfolio 40%

Component 2: Performing from a Text 20%

Component 3: Exam 1hr 45 minutes 40%

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

- Think creatively
- Create and understand different genres of theatre
- Learn about the different roles and responsibilities of theatre makers
- Create interesting and creative theatre – acting, lighting and sound

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Write with clarity and purpose
- Work effectively in all group situations
- Perform or design to create meaning for an audience
- Have a good knowledge of both performance and design skills

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Speak confidently to others and build your self confidence
- Work effectively in a team
- To effectively analyse, explain and evaluate different situations
- Preparation for A level theatre studies or equivalent qualification

Costs and useful revision materials

Theatre trips and visits (£20-40)

Year 11 set play text – (£8-10)

Revision booklet (£5.00)

Subject: Food Preparation and Nutrition (8585)

Examining Board: AQA

This course is suitable for students who enjoy cooking and the science related to food and nutrition.

Assessment: One Examination:

- A written paper testing theoretical knowledge
- 50% of total GCSE

Two pieces of Non-examination Assessment:

1. A Food Investigation (15%):

Students are required to write a report on their understanding of the working characteristics of certain ingredients. It must include photographic evidence of practical investigations carried out and their understanding of the results.

2. A Food Preparation Assessment (35%):

Students will plan, cook and present a 3-course menu within 3 hours.

Students are taught how to prepare recipes using a range of practical skills throughout the three years and to **showcase** their best skills during this piece of controlled assessment.

A written portfolio will also be created to support the practical work and all work is presented to the highest of standards and photographed.

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

- Investigate the function and role of nutrients and importance of a balanced diet.
- Look at factors affecting food choice and different dietary requirements
- Investigate the functions of ingredients used in food products
- Understand the different methods of cooking
- Research British and International cuisines
- Learn to analyse the sensory characteristics of foods.
- Learn about a range of food commodities
- Understand the environmental impact and sustainability of food

Students will **complete practical work most weeks**, learning a broad range of practical and presentation skills that increase in difficulty as they go through year 10 and 11.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to:

- Be organised and prepared for ALL your cooking lessons
- Be willing to practise and demonstrate a range of culinary skills
- Understand the importance of presentation when cooking
- Be interested in nutrition and food science and its impact on health
- Be able to explain the different functions and properties of foods and ingredients
- Be able to communicate your written work in a detailed manner

In the future this subject will help you to:

Complete further study in Food and Nutrition at university.

A qualification in food will enable you to enter a career in a broad range of areas including Teaching, Food Product Development, Catering and Hospitality, Marketing, Nutritionist, Dietetics, Food critic and Food Science.

It is important to be aware of the potential costs involved when you take this course. You will cook most weeks and your parents / carers will be responsible for purchasing your ingredients.

Subject: Health & Social Care

Examining Board: Cambridge National Level 2

This is a course for students who have an interest in or would like to pursue a career in any aspect of the Health or Social Care industry, or wish to develop their understanding of people, social needs & how to access solutions.

Assessment: 1 Examination and 2 Controlled Assessment units of work.

Examination: 1 hour 15 mins -Principles of Care in Health & Social Care settings.

Controlled assessment:

Controlled assessment contains written tasks and a practical element. Each controlled assessment is worth 30% of the final grade and is usually completed in year 10.

1. Supporting individuals through life events.
2. Creating & presenting a health promotion campaign

If you choose this subject you will learn:

- What influences an individual's Health and Well Being?
- To understand the different care needs of major client groups within society and the services available to them - children, adolescents, adults, older adults and people with disabilities.
- How to support people who have disabilities or illnesses using different therapies.
- About job roles and voluntary organisations - nursing, social work, physiotherapy, counselling, psychotherapy, paramedics and other related occupations.
- A range of communication skills and techniques that will be valuable in any career.
- To analyse real problems in Health & Social Care and provide practical solutions.
- How to embed the Person-Centred Values, which can be applied into all aspects of life.
- How to interview someone to understand their needs following a life event and then research solutions and guidance.
- About different job roles through a range of visiting speakers & practical activities.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Enjoy discussion-based work.
- Work independently on research projects
- Have an interest in issues related to Health & Social Care.
- Be prepared to produce long and detailed pieces of written work.
- Meet all controlled assessment deadlines
- Have good attendance

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Progress to higher level college courses or training programmes in Health & Social Care.
- Have confidence and develop a range of communication skills valued in any workplace.
- Understand people well and what affects people's health, attitudes and choices.
- Be able to suggest and apply different approaches to a wide range of situations.
- Develop a solution driven mindset, which can be applied into all future careers.

Extensions to this course can be studied at all the local Post 16 Colleges and so this acts as a good foundation for anyone thinking of a career within the Health, Social Care or Early Years sectors.

Subject: Child Development Examining Board: Cambridge National Level 2

This is a course for students to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Child Development to include health and well-being, creating a safe environment, the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years, and the development of children from one to five years

Assessment: 1 Examination and 2 Controlled Assessment units of work.

Examination: 1 hour 15 mins -Unit R057: Health and well-being for child development.

Controlled assessment:

Controlled assessment contains written tasks and a practical element. Each controlled assessment is worth 30% of the final grade and is usually completed in year 10.

- **R058** : Create a safe environment and understand the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years
- **R059** :Understand the development of a child from one to five years

If you choose this subject you will learn:

- Preconception health and reproduction
- Health and well-being for child development
- Antenatal care and preparation for birth
- Postnatal checks, postnatal care and the conditions for development
- Childhood illnesses and a child safe environment
- Creating a safe environment in a childcare setting
- Choosing suitable equipment for a childcare setting
- Nutritional needs of children from birth to five years
- Physical, intellectual and social developmental norms from one to five years
- Stages and types of play and how play benefits development
- Observe the development of a child aged one to five years
- Plan and evaluate play activities for a child aged one to five years for a chosen area of development

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Enjoy discussion-based work.
- Work independently on research projects
- Have an interest in issues related to children aged 1-5
- Be prepared to produce long and detailed pieces of written work.
- Meet all controlled assessment deadlines
- Have good attendance

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Progress to higher level college courses or training programmes in Child development
- Have confidence and develop a range of communication skills valued in child settings
A career in social work, nursery working, teacher, hospitals, child psychology

Subject: Music

Examining Board: AQA

Assessment:

Listening Examination 40%

Two Performances worth in total 30%

Two Compositions worth in total 30% completed as controlled assessment

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

- Listen to and analyse music from a variety of times, places and cultures;
- Compose music successfully using computer software to present your pieces;
- Develop performance skills on an instrument (of your choice) or voice, both as a soloist and within a group.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Perform confidently two pieces on an instrument (of your choice) or voice;
- Practise your instrument or voice regularly and be prepared to perform in class;
- Be prepared to work in groups, with all that entails, to develop performances;
- Appreciate and be open to music of many different styles (some Classical, some Popular, some from other countries);
- Develop and improve your work based upon feedback. This is particularly important with the composing work.
- Work with focus in lessons.

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Develop confidence when in front of other people;
- Develop your ability to cope under pressure;
- Develop your ability to work with other people to achieve an end goal;
- Develop analytical and critical thinking skills.

Studies also show that music has many benefits for mental health by improving mood and prompting a creative flow helping with anxiety and self-esteem.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

The school is able to provide the opportunity for individual instrument or singing lessons, through the Swindon Music Cooperative. The school can meet the cost of a weekly 15 minute lesson for each GCSE Music student. It is possible for individuals to pay to supplement this further to have a longer lesson.

If you choose to take GCSE Music you will be expected to contribute to the Extra-Curricular Musical life of the school through attending extra-curricular clubs (choir, ensemble, keyboard club etc.) or participating in concerts such as Recital Evenings.

Subject: GCSE Photography

Examining Board: AQA

Assessment: Coursework 60% Unit 1 Minor and major project.

Controlled Assessment: 40% Unit 2

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

explore ideas, themes, subjects and feelings using the digital camera and digital packages such as Adobe Photoshop.. This will inspire creative responses which are informed by different styles, genres and aesthetic considerations such as figurative and non-figurative forms, image manipulation, close ups, and imaginative interpretation.

You will learn about camera handling, recording and contact sheets as well as editing and final pieces.

You will learn about the rules of photography as well as exploring visual and tactile elements such as colour, line, form, composition, sequence and contrast.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Work both in class and independently with a digital camera(provided during lesson time), mobile phone camera and your chromebook.
- Complete a portfolio (60% coursework) using your chromebook which comprises a major and minor project.
- Be dedicated to completing your photo shoots and portfolio edits..
- Express ideas, feelings and meanings which can be interpreted in images and final outcomes. Be prepared to annotate and explain your ideas using specific photography language.
- Show an understanding of historical and contemporary photographers and techniques.
- Learn to use the working vocabulary and specialist terminology which is relevant to photography.

In the future this subject will help you to:

Aim for a number of different creative college courses or jobs both in the UK and overseas.

Fashion/ Advertising/ Graphic Designer/ Film / Publishing/ Marketing /Artist / Photographer/ Journalist / Designer / Media / Fashion / Theatre / / Teaching

Potential costs and useful revision materials

Although there are no revision guides there is a one off payment of £25 for the two year course. This is to cover the cost of printing and photography paper when needed.

Students are expected to provide their own card reader for their Chromebook and a SD card for use in the camera.

A Year 11 exam research trip to London takes place upon receipt of the exam paper in January of Year 11.

Subject: Physical Education

Examining Board: OCR Cambridge National

Assessment: Examination - 40% 1 unit, 1 hour 15 mins written exam (70 marks).

The exam comprises short answer questions, extended response questions and some use of multiple choice questions. It also assesses the quality of written communication.

Controlled assessment: 60% 2 units, coursework

Sport Studies: Contemporary Issues in Sport (40%) Practical/Leadership (40%) and Sport and the Media (20%)

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

- develop a range of skills through involvement in sport and physical activity in different contexts and roles
- develop your ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations
- gain a better understanding of the complexity of different areas of sport and the sports industry
- increase their awareness of different ways to stay involved in sport and physical activity and of different careers and roles within sport.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- apply sporting theory by drawing on personal experience of playing sport
- be willing to try new things outside of your comfort zone such as refereeing, coaching and new sports
- maintain a good base level of fitness
- meet deadlines by completing assignments on time
- be organised by bringing you both PE kit and relevant books

In the future this subject will help you to:

- develop your skills for employment or further study in a wide variety of careers in the sports sector
- understand how to lead a healthy active lifestyle
- become a leader in other industries using the leadership skills developed.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

- cost of sportswear (trainers, boots etc)
- there are currently no revision guides available or text books for this course available to buy
- Cambridge National Website has past papers and useful resources
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/>

Subject: Physical Education

Examining Board: OCR

Assessment breakdown:

Examinations - 60%, 2 papers, both 1 hour long and 60 marks (120 marks in total)

The exam comprises short answer questions, extended response questions and some use of multiple choice questions.

Practical Assessment - 30%

You will choose 3 sports. One team, one individual and one more team/individual sport. You will also keep a logbook of all competitive events you compete in for each sport (inside and outside of school).

Non examination assessment (NEA) - 10%

You will analyse and evaluate your own, or someone else's performance from one of your chosen sports.

If you choose this subject you will learn to:

- Develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance.
- Understand how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport.
- Perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas.
- Develop their ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport.
- Understand the contribution which physical activity and sport make to health, fitness and well-being.
- Understand key socio-cultural influences which can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to be able to:

- Be driven and motivated to achieve the best grade possible.
- Attend/represent the school in your chosen sports as much as possible.
- Perform in at least one of your chosen sports outside of school.
- Maintain a good base level of fitness.
- Be organised, with equipment and the correct uniform for lessons.
- Complete all Home learning deadlines.

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Begin the pathway into a career in sport.
- Allow you to take A level or BTEC PE.
- Understand how to lead a healthy active lifestyle.
- Develop and continue a positive attitude to being active for life.

Potential costs and useful revision materials

- Cost of sportswear (trainers, boots etc).
- GCSE Specification, past papers and marks schemes.
<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/physical-education-j587-from-2016/>
- OCR GCSE PE revision guide.

Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry & Physics)

(acassey@kingsdownschool.co.uk)

Subject: Separate Sciences

Examining Board: AQA

Taking this option in one of the blocks will allow you to study all three Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) as separate GCSEs. This option is suitable for those who really enjoy Science and are **seriously thinking about taking at least one Science subject at A Level** as it means that you will cover **additional content which is useful for KS5 preparation that isn't covered in the Combined Science GCSE**.

There is a greater mathematical demand in the separate science papers.

Assessment:

There will be 2 exams for each of the three science subjects:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher tier
- 100 marks
- Each exam covers 50% of the course

The course contains a large element of maths skills which are taught explicitly and the exams contain up to 20% Maths questions.

Students will study and carry out 28 Practical investigations across the three subjects and their knowledge and understanding of these specific practical activities will be assessed in the written exams.

To gain a good grade in this subject you need to:

- Have a genuine passion for Science and have the ambition to study it further beyond KS4.
- Regularly attend classes, actively participate in discussions, and take comprehensive notes.
- Practice solving a variety of problems and questions to enhance your problem-solving skills.
- Collaborate with peers for group study sessions, fostering a supportive learning environment. Seek clarification on concepts you find challenging from teachers or classmates.
- Consistent revision is key, ensuring you cover the entire syllabus. Finally, maintain a healthy balance between studies and relaxation to optimise overall performance.

In the future this subject will help you to:

- Study A Levels in Science subjects at KS5
- A separate science background provides a well-rounded education, enabling individuals to pursue diverse careers in science and related fields such as: Medical Doctor/Physician, Biomedical Scientist, Pharmacist, Research Scientist, Chemical Engineer, Environmental Scientist, Astronomer/Astrophysicist, Bioinformatician, Dentist, Forensic Scientist, Radiographer, Nutritionist/Dietitian, Geologist, Physiotherapist, Materials Scientist, Biotechnologist, Veterinarian, Science Educator.