



Chorus Education Trust



Key Stage 4 Options 2026-28

A student guide

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Welcome

In the next few weeks you will be asked to make your subject choices for Year 10. You will be given careers information and guidance, and also opportunities to listen and talk to teachers and advisors. It is also important that you discuss your choices with your family.



You can choose from a range of courses, academic and vocational.

Studying a range of subjects will help broaden your knowledge as well as keep your career options open. If you wish to study for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), the 'Choosing your options' section and the options form will let you know what to consider when making your choices. If you are already interested in a particular job, apprenticeship, or going on to study at a sixth form, college or university you should check that your choices help you to progress as you wish. We will be available to advise you as you make your choices.

These are some of the first decisions you will make as a maturing, independent student and they deserve your careful thought. But please remember, courses will only run if they recruit sufficient numbers. In allocating places on courses we aim to maximise individual choice. As well as this booklet and the information teachers will provide over the coming weeks, each student will have an interview with a member of the leadership team. Most students will study 9 GCSE courses and we expect you to work equally hard in all of them.

Read the contents of this booklet carefully, look at the information and videos available on the website (www.silverdale.chorustrust.org/ks4options), and talk to your teachers. If, after looking at these resources, you or your parents have any questions you can ask them using the form on the website.

We look forward to helping you achieve success in Years 10 and 11 as you become a member of the senior section of the school, having graduated successfully from key stage 3.

Make the most of your time at Silverdale and maximise your chances of a great start in adult life. Good luck!

Mrs Samira Hussain
Deputy Headteacher

Advice and guidance

To make the right choices you need to be as informed as possible about what the courses involve and how they are assessed. Assistance from school includes:

- This booklet.
- Information and subject videos on the website.
- Options assembly and subject talks in lessons.
- Careers information in the Careers Library/Library.

Assistance from other sources

- Unifrog, an online careers platform to which all Year 9 students have access.
- UCAS website to investigate possible careers: www.ucas.com/explore/career-list.
- Informed Choices website to see how your subject choices affect degree options: www.informedchoices.ac.uk.

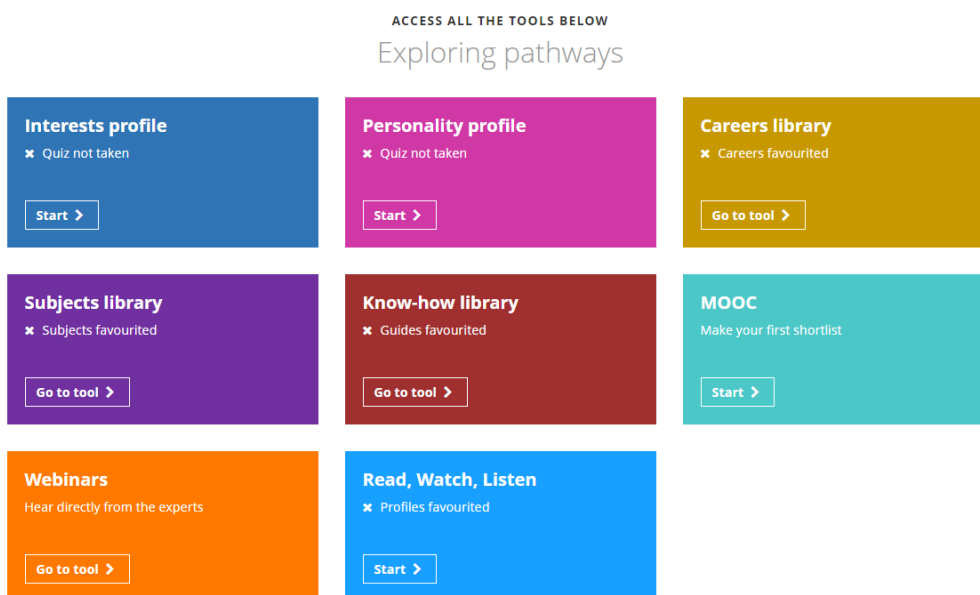
Who will offer me advice?

- Your form tutor.
- Subject teachers.
- School leaders during your guidance interview.
- Your parents and carers.
- The Head of the Integrated Resource, if you are a student in the Integrated Resource for Deaf and Hearing Impaired students.

Planning for the future

Your choices now may affect the choices you make at 16 and beyond, so make sure you seek advice and consider what you want to do in future. Think about what subjects you enjoy and what you may want to study after Year 11. Think about which careers you might like to follow when you leave education. Investigate what subjects you need to study now in order to access these opportunities in future.

Unifrog



All students in Year 9 are given access to Unifrog, an award-winning, online careers platform via an email sent to their school email address.

Use Unifrog to search every undergraduate university course, apprenticeship, and college course in the UK, as well as other opportunities, such as school leaver programmes, MOOCs (online learning) and every college at Oxford and Cambridge. You can compare

and choose the best university courses, apprenticeships or further education courses for you as well as exploring exciting opportunities further afield by looking at English taught undergraduate programmes available in Europe and the USA.

The best places to start your exploration of Unifrog are the 'interest profiles', 'personality profile' and 'careers library'.

Life in key stage 4

Being well-motivated, independent, reliable, well-organised and hard-working are all important in achieving success at key stage 4 in all your subjects.

Remember you will be building on your successes and achievements having graduated from key stage 3.



Support

Your form tutor will support you in planning your work. We will be encouraging you to achieve your own personal best.

Your subject teachers, form tutor and, for some students, an academic mentor, will closely monitor your progress and give you help, advice and encouragement.

Your key stage leader, and the key stage 4 team will be helping all students to reach their potential as well as working in partnership with your parents to assist you in being successful, both in and outside of the classroom.

Homework

In every subject you will be set regular homework, some of which may be spread over long periods of time. On average, you will be expected to spend at least 1½ to 2½ hours each day on school work. Homework is essential in preparing you for your assessments.

You will continue to use Google Classroom to help you manage your time and workload.

As part of some courses you may be required to carry out practical components. Your teachers will give you more information on this subject.



Key dates

Wednesday 10 December	Options assembly
Thursday 8 January	Options booklet and form distributed to students Options information available on website
Tuesday 20 January	Options evening in school
Wednesday 21 January onwards	Student guidance interviews
Wednesday 4 February	Deadline for options forms to be handed in
June/July	Students notified of options decisions
September	Start your key stage 4 courses



Choosing your options

What courses are on offer?

There is a wide range of subjects, both academic and vocational. Whatever is chosen, we will support all students equally to gain the best grades possible.

GCSEs

Most of the qualifications that we offer are GCSEs, which count as Level 2 qualifications. Assessment is through formal examinations, although some also have an element of 'non-examination assessment' (tasks taken in school under controlled conditions). GCSE grades are 1-9 with 9 being the highest.

Vocational courses

Vocational qualifications are GCSE equivalent courses, enabling students to progress into post-16 education, college or training. Level 2 courses (equivalent to GCSE grades 9 to 4) could lead to employment opportunities or progression to Level 3 or A-level equivalent courses.

These courses count as Level 2 qualifications and are graded: Distinction star (D*), Distinction (D), Merit (M)

and Pass (P). Should the standard for a Level 2 pass not be achieved, the courses can be accredited at Level 1.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

The EBacc consists of GCSEs in maths, English, science, (computer science counts as one of the science subjects), a language (French or Spanish for those who study it at key stage 3) and a humanity (either history or geography). Students entered for a language GCSE must take either history or geography or both, in order to achieve the EBacc.

A note about languages

Students are strongly encouraged to study at least one language to GCSE. Students who study French and Spanish at key stage 3 can take both French and Spanish to GCSE (as long as there is sufficient demand). If you use another language at home you should consider taking a GCSE or A-level in this language. This will be studied out of school but examined in school. See the Head of MFL for information.

Decisions to make

All students study these core subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Core PE (non-examined subject)
- PSHE, Religion & Philosophy (non-examined subject studied during enhancement days)

Your choices:

Options 1 & 2

Circle your preferences

Combined Science
(2 GCSEs)

or

Triple Science
(3 GCSEs:
Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

and

Geography

or

History

*Note: You **must** provide a geography or history preference, even if you have selected triple science in case you do not meet the entry requirement for triple science. If you wish to study triple science alongside geography or history, please select your preferred humanity in options 4 & 5*

Option 3

French

or

Spanish

or

Creative
iMedia

or

Food
Preparation &
Nutrition

Options 4 & 5

You will choose FOUR courses from this list in order of preference.

You will be placed on TWO of the four selected courses

Art and Design (Fine Art)

Art and Design (Three Dimensional-Design)

Business

Computer Science

Creative iMedia

Drama

Food Preparation & Nutrition

French

Geography

Health & Social Care

History

Music

Physical Education

Religious Studies

Sociology

PSHE, Religion and Philosophy Enhancement Days

Course Leaders

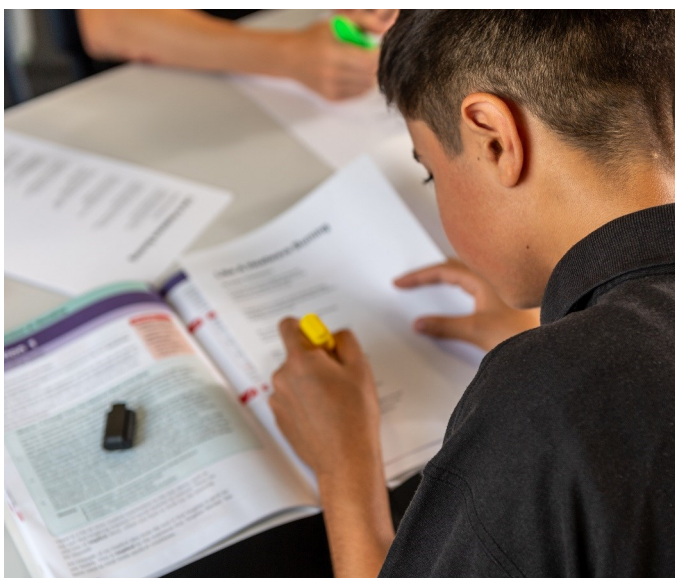
- PSHE: Ms K Millington
- Religion and Philosophy: Mr C Steadman-South

What are enhancement days?

Enhancement days are five off-timetable days where students have time to reflect on important topics and develop skills. These topics and skills are ones that normal GCSE-focused curriculum cannot adequately cover. Therefore the days are immersive opportunities to engage with ideas for the sake of those ideas rather than for a qualification.

The skills the days will try to develop are:

- Team-working.
- Independent thinking.
- Creativity.
- Problem-solving.
- The ability to consider context.
- Awareness of ethical implications of actions.



What will I learn?

The five days cover topics including:

- Employability and the world of work.
- Mental and physical wellbeing.
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Global citizenship and asylum.
- How to make moral decisions.
- Media: information or manipulation?



What attitudes do I need?

- Maturity to work with others to try to complete projects and solve problems.
- Open-minded to other ways of thinking about issues.
- Ambition about your capabilities.

What is next for me after this course?

The course is designed to prepare you for the world of work and being an effective citizen in a multicultural society.

The intellectual skills you develop will be essential for success on a further education course.

Art & Design (Fine Art)

What will I learn?

Art GCSE gives our students the freedom to develop skills, concepts and processes in a way that is personalised to them. Art Exploration, Macro, Personal Project and Externally Set Component are the four projects we will guide our students through, ensuring they are meeting the key assessment objectives and generating outcomes along the way. An essential value of our department is that students take ownership over these projects developing their own personal themes.

It is our mission to introduce students to a wide variety of techniques and materials giving them the confidence to explore their chosen processes in more depth. Over the two years students will have the opportunity to explore the following:

- Drawing -pencil, graphite, colour crayon, fine liner, charcoal
- Painting – oil, acrylic, watercolour, gouache, ink
- Photography – including digital editing
- Printmaking – etching, lino, scrapper board, screen print
- Procreate digital artworks on iPads
- 3D work – to include ceramics, wire work, Modroc
- Textiles – hand embroidery & machine stitch

A three-day residential in the Peak District is an opportunity for Art GCSE students to work directly with established artists, designers and makers. This exciting residential generates a body of work students can put towards their GCSE grade.

What skills do I need?

- An enthusiasm for the subject
- A commitment to develop work independently
- An openness to reflect
- To have ambition for your ideas
- An interest in exploring new techniques, materials and processes
- To give everything a go!

Assessment

☐ Examination

☒ Non-examined assessment

- Component 1: Coursework throughout Years 10 and 11 | 60%
- Component 2: Work from January—May of Year 11, culminating in a 10 hour non examined assessment | 40%

Could lead to:

Art GCSE can provide you with lots of opportunities in creative and practical careers. Many of our students go on to study Architecture, Product Design, Illustration, Fine Art, Interior Design or have gone on to work in the Fashion or Game Design industries. We also have students that use the course to demonstrate excellent problem-solving skills, personal time management techniques, risk taking abilities, and creativity of ideas which have seen them be successful in pursuing careers in medicine, engineering or even PR and marketing.

Art & Design (Three-Dimensional Design)

What will I learn?

Three-dimensional design is the prototyping and modelling or making of products, objects, and environments.

This course is an excellent option for students with a strong interest in **3 Dimensional Design**, as it places equal value on technical skill, craftsmanship, problem-solving and creative innovation. Throughout the course, you will develop a broad and industry-relevant skillset including:

- **Technical drawing and visual communication**
- **Sketching and rapid concept development**
- **Digital manipulation and CAD modelling** (Autodesk Inventor))

3D prototyping and making skills using wood, plastics, card, paper and mixed media

You will learn how to design and construct realistic 3D concepts and outcomes, applying the precision, craftsmanship and design thinking central to 3D Design.

This course can serve as a strong equivalent to a traditional D&T route, while offering the creative freedom and portfolio development valued in the Art & Design pathway.

What skills do I need?

- An enthusiasm for developing skills in architecture, product design and CAD.
- An interest in popular design and designers to help you understand more about the subjects.
- To be able to manage your own work effectively and complete complex designs over a lengthy period of time.
- A strong interest in designing digitally and preferably experience in using 3D software prior to the course.
- A willingness to develop your visual presentation skills through sketching and technical drawing.

Assessment

☐ Examination

☒ Non-examined assessment

- Component 1: Portfolio | No time limit | 60%
- Component 2: Externally set assignment | Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time | 40%

Could lead to:

3D Design provides a strong foundation for creative and technical pathways, leading to A-levels in Product Design, Engineering, Art & Design and Drama/ Set Design.

Students progress to Foundation or BA courses in Product or Industrial Design, Engineering, Architecture, Furniture Design, Digital Media, Web/ Graphic Design, Modelmaking or Set/Prop Design.

The course builds key transferable skills such as creative problem-solving, spatial awareness and iterative design. Art & Design qualifications are widely recognised, making 3D Design a strong route into diverse future careers.

Business

What will I learn?

Unit 1 Content overview: Investigating small businesses

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

Unit 2 Content overview: Building a business

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

What skills do I need?

You will need to be able to :

- Present your ideas clearly in a written format.
- Use numeracy skills to work out calculations.
- Work independently, researching your business coursework.
- Use ICT to present information and gather research.
- Work in groups.
- Present your ideas to others.

Assessment

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: Investigating small business | 1 hour 45 mins | 50%
- Paper 2: Building a business | 1 hour 45 mins | 50%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

Business studies can link to a wide range of opportunities; anywhere you may want to work in the future will be a business, so this is good preparation. A good grade at GCSE will allow you to study A-level business and economics, and vocational business A-levels. The skills learnt including ICT, presentation skills, numeracy and literacy can be applied to a variety of different subjects for further study.

Computer Science

What will I learn?

Computer Science is a very practical subject and will involve a lot of work on the computers but also theory to explain and digest the internal workings of computers, how they operate and store data.

You will be examined on 2 key areas: 1. Computer Systems

- a. Systems Architecture (looking at the structure and function of the CPU and its performance)
 - b. Memory and Storage (looking at Primary and Secondary storage, units of storage and how we store items such as numbers, characters, images and sound)
 - c. Computer Networks
 - d. Network Security
 - e. Systems software
 - f. Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technologies.
2. Computation thinking, algorithms and programming
- a. Different algorithms
 - b. Fundamentals of programming
 - c. How to produce robust programs
 - d. Boolean Logic
 - e. Different programming languages and IDEs

As part of the course you will also be given the opportunity to undertake a programming project which will involve you Designing, Writing, Testing and Refining a computer program. This will support your programming knowledge, understanding and skills for the second exam paper.

What skills do I need?

- Resilience. When working with machines things go wrong. The reward for sticking at a problem can be emphatic but this requires perseverance.
- Thinking logically and problem solving are very useful skills which can be applied in this course.
- Understanding concepts and solving mathematical problems is also very valuable.
- Programming experience would be beneficial but not essential.

Assessment

☒ Examination

- J277/01: Computer systems | 1 hour 30 mins | 50%
- J277/02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming | 1 hour 30 mins | 50%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

Computer Science is a well-regarded qualification and students that undertake the course can find themselves looking at pathways that further develop their computational thinking skills and move into A Levels and then higher education.

Students that take Computer Science can also find it incredibly useful in areas outside of the computing world because of the understanding and skills it provides as a course.

Analytical, critical and computational thinking are all highly desirable skills to possess and can significantly increase your employability skills. With the changing nature of the world in front of us and the ever-increasing use of technology and computational methods to things it's a great opportunity to be at the forefront of these developments.

Creative iMedia

What will I learn?

Creative iMedia is a mainly creative and practical pathway. You will spend time looking at and creating different types of digital graphics and how to utilise these in wider products. In order to complete the set tasks you'll use software such as Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator.

Over the 2 years of study you'll complete 2 pieces of NEA (Non Exam Assessment) worth 60% of your final grade.

For R094 you'll spend time looking at analysing a clients requirements and then taking away those requirements and producing a visual identity for that company or organisation. This could include creating different types of marketing material such as leaflets or flyers and could include the creation of a logo for that company depending on the brief from the exam board. You'll complete this first piece of NEA usually by Easter of Year 10.

For R097 you'll again analyse the clients requirements but this time you'll create a multimedia product which makes use of text, graphics, sound and video to fit with the product you've been asked to make. You'll combine bring back in some of the skills you've looked at lower down the school to ensure you produce a professional looking project. You'll complete this NEA by Easter of Year 11.

For the exam component (R093) you'll spend time looking at what a multimedia product is and look at different sectors of the media. You'll look at camera techniques and how producers of digital products consider lighting and sound effects when creating their products. You'll look at different types of images, sound and video and consider plans that need to be put in place when carrying out a multimedia project of your own. This exam is sat at the end of Year 11.

What skills do I need?

- Creativity!
- The main skills are being able to see what a client wants, written in the style of a brief, then interpreting that into a creative digital product. There is no limit to what you create.
- You will need to be organised and work to deadlines.
- Be prepared to justify your choices and design decisions.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- R093: Creative imedia in the media industry | 1 hour 30 mins | 40%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- R094: Visual identity and digital graphics | 25% of overall grade
- R097: Interactive digital media 35%

Could lead to:

Creative iMedia allows for students to show of their creative IT skills and demonstrate their use of industry standard software used in the media world.

The route of this subject can lead students onto A Level study in a number of related areas including Media Studies. It can also provide pathways onto other vocational options or apprenticeships where students will be able to demonstrate and further develop their creative skills.

The skills taken from this course would also be incredibly useful to future employers because you'll have acquired the ability to interpret a series of requirements and be able to produce and evaluate solutions to fit with them.

Drama

What will I learn?

You will study all aspects of the theatre: acting, directing and designer roles, lighting, set, and costume/makeup however you will select your unique pathway as an actor and/or designer.

The course will:

- Nurture the mind for greater appreciation of the wider world and knowledge of it via the devising process ensuring growth of self organically through the arts.
- Explore practically set play in full and other plays to gain understanding and appreciation of different mediums of theatre and how they gain impact to context and themes.
- Enable you to write skilfully to support understanding of roles and review professional and own work to increase confidence in self and supporting other academic written subjects.
- Mentally challenge and stretch creativity by develop a wide range of practical investigation skills to problem solve consistently, analyse and respond.

What skills do I need?

- Passion for the subject and positive attitude to working with others.
- An open mind to the world and artistic approaches.
- Analytical skills to reflect and respond.
- Problem solving and ability to problem solve creatively .

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Component 3: Theatre makers in practice | 1 hour 45 mins | 40%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- Component 1: Devising | 40%
- Component 2: Text to performance | 20%

Could lead to:

Communication skills, creativity and critical thinking are essential across all post-16 subjects. The skills gained in drama flow naturally into all A-level courses and strengthen students' confidence and versatility. A passion for theatre and a deeper cultural awareness also help shape more rounded, empathetic citizens. Drama is widely respected in higher education; The Russell Group recognises it as a valuable subject. Most importantly, in a fast-changing job market transformed by artificial intelligence, drama equips students with the human-centred skills that are becoming more vital than ever. Problem-solving, leadership, creative innovation, emotional intelligence and the ability to communicate are increasingly sort after by employers as AI reshapes traditional roles. Drama strengthens precisely these future-proof skills, preparing students not just for their next steps, but for the careers of tomorrow.

English Language & English Literature

What will I learn?

- Read a wide range of non-fiction and fiction texts with understanding and insight.
- Develop an appreciation of literature through the close study of prose, poetry and drama texts.
- Write skilfully to suit various audiences, purposes and forms.
- Speak with increasing confidence and fluency for a variety of purposes and audiences.

What skills do I need?

- Literacy - the ability to read and write fluently.
- Listening skills.
- The ability to co-operate in group activities.
- Presentational skills (both spoken and written).

Assessment: English Language

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing | 1 hour 45 mins | 80 marks | 50%
- Paper 2: Writer's Viewpoints and Perspectives | 1 hour 45 mins | 80 marks | 50%

☒ Non-examined assessment

- Spoken language endorsement: a presentation to a group

Assessment: English Literature

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel | 1 hour 45 mins | 64 marks | 40%
- Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry | 2 hours 15 mins | 96 marks | 60%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

Communication skills, creativity and critical thinking are essential for all post-16 subject areas and a good GCSE in English is a requirement for many courses and jobs. Skills and techniques developed in English studies may be continued in a wide range of A-level courses including: English language, English literature, combined language & literature, media studies, and film studies.

Food Preparation & Nutrition

What will I learn?

During Year 10, you will be taught a variety of practical skills which will enable you to complete a series of design briefs, extend your design skills and evaluate your products. You will also learn about topics including nutrition, food science, why we use the ingredients we use, environmental issues and factors affecting food choices.

In Year 11, you will complete a major non-examined assessment which consists of two tasks. Task 1 will be a 10 hour food investigation and written report to answer a specific question relating to food science. Task 2 will be a 20 hour food preparation assessment where you will design and make a three dishes of your choice with a written report. All tasks will incorporate designing, researching, making and ICT presentation skills.

What skills do I need?

- An enjoyment and enthusiasm of working with food.
- Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- Ability to work in a group and individually.
- Research and design skills.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Written paper:
1hr 45 mins | 50%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- NEA 1 Food Investigation: 30 marks | 15%
- NEA 2 Food Preparation: 70 marks | 35%

Could lead to:

The course provides a good knowledge of nutrition, why we need food and what it does for our bodies. This can link with future careers within the healthcare, sport or nutrition.

The course will help you to understand how food preparation and nutrition affects our everyday lives. You will acquire practical skills which will be of benefit to you in the future.

It is a good preparation for A-level food technology and future university courses, for example health and nutrition, food science and hotel management. It is also a good foundation for related vocational courses and college courses such as hotel management and hospitality.

French

What will I learn?

The more languages you learn the bigger and better your world becomes. We want you to gain a sense of the excitement of the world we live in and to give you the skills to get to know it personally. At GCSE, you will develop a wide range of language learning skills, which will help you to communicate with people all over the world, learn other languages in the future and enjoy life wherever you may be.

You will learn to:

- Listen to and understand short passages.
- Speak French by taking part in conversations.
- Read aloud and understand written French.
- Write your opinions and ideas accurately in French.
- Translate from and into French.

What skills do I need?

You need to be able to:

- Listen.
- Learn vocabulary regularly.
- Learn and use structures.
- Speak to others in French.
- Read and write short passages in French.
- Work co-operatively with others in class.
- Write down what you hear (dictation) and read aloud with clear pronunciation.

From 2026, in addition to the current exam students will need to do dictation (listening exam) and reading aloud (speaking exam) tasks. You will be expected to learn a total of 1200 words or phrases at foundation level and 1700 at higher level.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Paper 1 Listening: Foundation 35 mins | Higher 45 mins | 25%
- Paper 3 Reading: Foundation 45 mins | Higher 1 hour | 25%
- Paper 4 Writing: Foundation 1 hour 10 mins | Higher 1 hour 15 mins | 25%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- Paper 2 Speaking: Foundation 7–9 mins | Higher 10–12 mins | 25%

Could lead to:

A language is a great addition to any skill set and can broaden work and life opportunities, as is spoken extensively throughout the world.

A GCSE qualification in a language will help you when applying to university. With a good GCSE you will be able to continue your language to A-level and this may help you to get into the top universities. Travel and working abroad will become much more interesting.

Geography

What will I learn?

Students will travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies like the rainforest in Borneo, industrial growth in newly emerging economies like Vietnam or the value of tourism to places like the United Arab Emirates. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes. Overall, lots of big ideas (like poverty, the global shift in economic power and climate change) to get your teeth into!

Living with the physical environment

- The challenge of natural hazards (tectonic hazards, extreme weather & climate change)
- The living world (rainforests, deserts & temperate woodlands)
- Physical landscapes in the UK (rivers & coasts)

Challenges in the human environment

- Urban issues and challenges (Urban change, Sheffield & Mumbai)
- The changing economic world (Global development, Vietnam & the UK)
- The challenge of resource management (food, water & energy)

What skills do I need?

The skills that have built up in key stage 3 are designed to help with GCSEs. Students doing geography GCSE will develop a wider range of skills, some specifically geographical (like using a range of maps and fieldwork skills), others mathematical (like simple statistics) together with graphical, literacy and data presentation skills. All these are valuable transferable skills.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Paper 1: Living with the physical environment | 1 hour 30 mins | 35%
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment | 1 hour 30 mins | 35%
- Paper 3: Geographical applications | 1 hour 30 mins | 30%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

A GCSE in geography is an excellent stepping stone to a wide range of careers and post-16 opportunities. A good grade will allow you to take any A-level course, including continuing with geography. The practical and problem solving skills you will develop are good if you go on to follow a science-based career such as medicine or engineering. However, the discussion skills and ability to understand people's actions will help you if you want to follow a career in social sciences or the arts, like education, media or law.

Some of the content of GCSE geography can be a good introduction to new subjects (at A-level) like business studies and sociology.

Health & Social Care

What will I learn?

This qualification will prepare you for work in the health and social care sector by equipping you with basic knowledge on the sector. You will apply your knowledge to case studies and real world applications. You will develop a range of skills that are valued by employers including communication, teamwork, responsibility, empathy and interpersonal skills.

You will gain subject knowledge through studying three components:

- Component 1: Human Lifespan Development – how people develop across the life stages and the factors that impact on their growth and development.
- Component 2: Health and Social Care services and values – the range of health and social care services that are available to us and barriers that stop people accessing them. The values you need to demonstrate to work in health and social care.
- Component 3: Health and Wellbeing – the components of a healthy lifestyle and how different factors impact on lifestyle. Planning how to improve lifestyle and barriers that might stop this happening.

You can find out more at this webpage which is specifically about the course at Silverdale:
btecworks.com/teacher/courses/zvdgfj/health-and-social-care

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Component 3: Health and Wellbeing | 2 hours | 40%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- Component 1: Human Lifespan Development | 30%
- Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values | 30%

Could lead to:

Studying health and social care equips you with a range of practical, work-related skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, communication and independent learning. These qualities are highly valued by sixth forms and employers because they demonstrate readiness for further study or work in a range of areas, not just the health sector. If you do want to stay in the health and social care sector, options include:

- Further study in sixth form or college. Silverdale Sixth Form offers the Level 3 BTEC in health and social care.
- Apprenticeships in health and social care.
- Courses in childcare and care of the elderly.

History

What will I learn?

In GCSE history you will study:

- America 1840 – 1895 expansion and consolidation.
- Conflict and tension 1918 – 1939.
- Britain: health and the people.
- Elizabethan England 1568 – 1603.

If you enjoyed history in Years 7 to 9, GCSE history will allow you to study new topics, using a different approach.

What skills do I need?

You will need to be able to:

- Read and identify details, opinions and problems from written information, graphs and pictorial sources.
- Explain your ideas clearly on paper.
- Feel comfortable using historical sources.
- Organise your work and take responsibility for it.
- Work co-operatively with others.

Assessment

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: Understanding the modern world | 2 hours | 50%
- Paper 2: Shaping the nation | 2 hours | 50%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

A GCSE in history is useful for a range of opportunities at post-16. A good grade will allow you to take any A-level courses including history, politics, English and social science courses. It is also useful for students considering a career in medical sciences, journalism, law, the police, and any career path that requires research skills and an ability to compile evidence in a persuasive way.

The skills you have gained will also be valued by vocational courses and by employers. Many students who wish to go in to law use history to show that they are able to interpret evidence and present a substantiated conclusion from it.

Mathematics

What will I learn?

All students at Key Stage 4 study GCSE mathematics. Many of the topic areas from key stage 3 are extended and there is more emphasis on algebra and formal skills, such as trigonometry and quadratic equations. There is also a larger emphasis on contextualised problem solving.

In GCSE mathematics you will use and apply mathematics in practical tasks, in real life problems and within mathematics itself. You will:

- Develop and use a range of methods for working with numbers.
- Focus on the various methods to apply different forms of ratio.
- Use algebra to model real life situations and solve problems.
- Explore shape and space.
- Use data analysis to make judgements.

What skills do I need?

You will need to be able to:

- Solve problems using mental, written and calculator methods.
- Use fractions, decimals, percentages and ratios to solve problems.
- Understand and apply algebraic and other mathematical skills to real life situations.
- Present and analyse statistics.
- Break larger problems down into smaller sections.

Assessment

☒ Examination

- Paper 1 (non-calculator):
90 mins | 33.3%
- Paper 2 (calculator):
90 mins | 33.3%
- Paper 3 (calculator):
90 mins | 33.3%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

A good GCSE grade in maths is an essential requirement for numerous future qualifications at sixth form, college or university, such as maths, engineering, economics, the various scientific courses, and more. The course also provides skills that most employers will find extremely valuable, such as problem solving, thinking creatively, an understanding of units and measures, as well as crucial number skills.

Students in Year 11 set 1 will be offered a level 2 further maths qualification during Year 11. The majority of this content is studied in lesson time but there may be some additional twilight sessions. This is a good stepping stone to studying A-level maths and sits well between GCSE and A-level maths.

Music

What will I learn?

In GCSE music you will learn to:

- Compose your own music in a variety of different styles, using traditional methods and music technology. You will be able to use midi keyboards as well as recording live into Band Lab and will learn to compose using Musescore. We use a variety of software and make this fit the direction you want to go in.
- Perform by playing an instrument, singing, rapping, beatboxing or DJing. You will record two performances: one solo and one in a group and this can be any style of your choice. You will record these in school either as a live performance, or with your teacher in Year 11.
- Perform through technology – this is for students who do not play a musical instrument. You can input a song of your choice into Studio One or Garage Band instead of performing on an instrument.

What skills do I need?

It is important to have:

- An interest and enthusiasm for music.
- An open mind and creative imagination.
- An ability to enjoy making music by either using an instrument, your voice or music technology such as sequencing and recording software. Instrument/vocal lessons are not essential for taking GCSE music, however students wishing to achieve the best performance marks should start lessons prior to taking GCSE music. These are available in school – please speak to your music teacher.
- An ability to work independently and with others.
- A real interest in listening and appraising different styles of music.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Listening and appraising | 40%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- Solo performance | 15%
- Ensemble performance | 15%
- Composing to a brief | 15%
- Free composition | 15%

Could lead to:

GCSE music is a required preparation for further musical study, such as A-level/BTEC music and music technology. It is also studied at the majority of universities.

Music is useful for all vocations and career pathways as it encourages confidence, creative thinking and teamwork. It allows you to use analytical thinking skills and develops your cultural awareness. Previous music students have progressed to a variety of areas of study from becoming medicine through to business. Music is seen as a prestigious subject by universities due to the use of both creative and academic thinking skills.

Physical Education

What will I learn?

Theory unit:

- Physical factors affecting performance.
(Fitness testing, types of training, injury and risks, bones and muscles, the cardiovascular system, respiratory system and planes and axis)

Theory unit:

- Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology.
(Health, fitness and wellbeing, ethics in sport, participation in sport, commercialisation of sport and characteristics of skill)

Practical performance in physical education:

- Assessment of practical ability.
- Performance of three practical activities and one performance analysis task.

What skills do I need?

- To enjoy participating in a variety of sports.
- To be enthusiastic and be prepared to work hard.
- To participate in sport regularly (in and out of school).
- To work towards being a competent performer in three activities.
- To umpire, coach, officiate and be able to analyse and improve performance.
- Be prepared to work hard at school and at home on the theoretical aspects of the course.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Physical factors affecting performance: 1 hour | 30%
- Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology: 1 hour | 30%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- Assessment of practical ability: 3 practical activities and 1 performance analysis task | 40%

Could lead to:

The course can open a gateway into the world of sport - one of the most lucrative and fastest growing industries in the world. Studying GCSE PE could lead onto courses like A-level PE in further education, a subject that itself is valued highly by universities around the country as well as other avenues such as apprenticeships and courses at college.

The variety and depth of the topics can help build towards a variety of careers in sport such as sports science, elite performance, sports psychology, coaching and many more. Additionally, the successful outcomes our students achieve offer great support for further education applications.

Religious Studies

What will I learn?

This course explores the biggest questions in life through ethical reasoning and philosophical enquiry. We will investigate the viewpoints of Christianity and Islam, focusing on philosophy, ethics, and social justice.

- Islam: The nature of God (Allah), Afterlife, Family Life (Marriage), Creation, and ethical issues (Euthanasia, Abortion).
- Christianity: Philosophy of Religion (Problem of Evil, arguments for God's existence), and Social Justice (tackling equality, racism, and prejudice).

What skills do I need?

- To be able to put your own opinion into words and to back it up with reasons, examples and a fully justified conclusion.
- To be able to compare the different religious attitudes to different interesting and current world issues.
- To analyse the strengths and weaknesses of different positions taken on a topic.
- To develop and strengthen our personal views on a range of topics.

Assessment

☒ Examination

- Religion and belief through Islam: Specification B | 1 hour 45 mins | 50%
- Religion, philosophy and social justice through Christianity: Specification B | 1 hr 45 mins | 50%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

Your studies will help you to understand the society in which you live.

Many employees are looking for evidence of people who have thought about other people, especially in careers in medicine, law, teaching, nursing and the armed forces.

Many future careers require you to process large amounts of information logically and in a thoughtful, fully considered way.

Science—Combined (Trilogy)

What will I learn?

- Develop knowledge and understanding of ‘working scientifically’.
- Develop a wide range of practical and investigative skills.
- See the relevance of science in our daily and working lives.
- Consider and interpret scientific data, evidence and ideas so that you can reach your own conclusions.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of a broad selection of science topic areas.
- You will complete a number of ‘required practicals’ throughout the course. Final examinations will include questions about these ‘required practicals’ and so it is important that they are not missed.

What skills do I need?

You will build on the skills that have been important in science at key stage 3.

These include:

- Communication and ICT.
- Designing investigations.
- Observation skills.
- Using and presenting data.
- Working with others.
- Handling apparatus.
- Problem solving and research.
- Analysis and evaluation.

Note: all students study either combined (this course) or triple science (see next page), which you may include as part of your options choices.

Assessment—for each science (6 exams in total)

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: 1 hour 15mins | Foundation or Higher Tier | 70 marks | 16.7%
- Paper 2: 1 hour 15mins | Foundation or Higher Tier | 70 marks | 16.7%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

You will have completed GCSEs in science and these will be valuable to you whatever you decide to do next!

A high grade in combined science could lead to continued study of science at A-level and beyond.

Science—Triple

(three separate sciences)

What will I learn?

- The content of the new 'combined science' will still be covered.
- Extra topics will be studied in all three sciences that will cover additional areas and skills.
- These extra topics will provide the chance to enhance practical and investigative skills.
- 'Triple Science' will build further on the understanding of 'working scientifically'.
- You will complete a number of 'required practicals', but these are not assessed at the time of completion. Final examinations will include questions about these 'required practicals' and so it is important that they are not missed.

What skills do I need?

- You will build on the skills that have been important at key stage 3.
- You should have a high level of interest in science.

Note: as in previous years there is a limited number of triple science places. Pupils will be chosen based on their average performance in the Y9 science assessments.

Note: all students study either combined (previous page) or triple science (this course), which you may include as part of your options choices.

Assessment—for each science (6 exams in total)

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: 1 hour 45 mins | Foundation or Higher Tier | 100 marks | 50% of each GCSE
- Paper 2: 1 hour 45 mins | Foundation or Higher Tier | 100 marks | 50% of each GCSE

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

You will have gained three GCSEs in science and will be in a strong position should you wish to continue with science subjects at A-level or beyond.

Sociology

What will I learn?

You will study the following topics:

- The sociological approach
- Social structures, social processes and social issues
- Sociology of families
- Sociology of education
- Crime and deviance
- Social stratification
- Sociological research methods

What skills do I need?

You will need to be able to:

- Draw on information and evidence from different sources.
- Analyse and evaluate information and evidence presented in different written, visual and numerical forms.
- Apply your understanding to explore and debate current social issues.
- Compare and contrast social issues, construct reasoned arguments and debates, make judgements supported by evidence and draw conclusions.
- Organise your work and take responsibility for it.
- Work co-operatively with others.

Assessment

☒ Examination

- Paper 1: The sociology of families and education | 1 hour 45 min | 50%
- Paper 2: The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification | 1 hour 45 min | 50%

☐ Non-examined assessment

Could lead to:

Your studies will help you to understand the society in which you live and how social issues affect social groups in different ways.

A good grade will allow you to take many Level 3 courses including sociology, psychology, criminology, health & social care, history, religious studies, business & economics, geography and English. The skills you will have gained are also valued by vocational courses and by employers.

Many employers are looking for evidence of people who have analytical skills and an understanding of how society works, especially in careers in medicine, law, teaching, nursing, journalism, marketing, policing and the armed forces.

Spanish

What will I learn?

The more languages you learn the bigger and better your world becomes. We want you to gain a sense of the excitement of the world we live in and to give you the skills to get to know it personally. At GCSE, you will develop a wide range of language learning skills, which will help you to communicate with people all over the world, learn other languages in the future and enjoy life wherever you may be.

You will learn to:

- listen to and understand short passages.
- speak Spanish by taking part in conversations.
- read aloud and understand written Spanish.
- write your opinions and ideas accurately in Spanish.
- translate from and into Spanish.

From 2026, in addition to the current exam students will need to do dictation (listening exam) and reading aloud (speaking exam) tasks. They will be expected to learn a total of 1200 words or phrases at Foundation level and 1700 at Higher level.

What skills do I need?

You need to be able to:

- Listen.
- Learn vocabulary regularly.
- Learn and use structures.
- Speak to others in Spanish.
- Read and write short passages in Spanish.
- Work co-operatively with others in class.
- Write down what you hear (dictation) and read aloud with clear pronunciation.

Assessment

☑ Examination

- Paper 1 Listening: Foundation 35 mins | Higher 45 mins | 25%
- Paper 3 Reading: Foundation 45 mins | Higher 1 hour | 25%
- Paper 4 Writing: Foundation 1 hour 10 mins | Higher 1 hour 15 mins | 25%

☑ Non-examined assessment

- Paper 2 Speaking: Foundation 7–9 mins | Higher 10–12 mins | 25%

Could lead to:

A language is a great addition to any skill set and can broaden work and life opportunities, as is spoken extensively throughout the world.

A GCSE qualification in a language will help you when applying to university. With a good GCSE you will be able to continue your language to A-level and this may help you to get into the top universities. Travel and working abroad will become much more interesting.



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