



**Silverdale
School**

Chorus Education Trust



Key Stage 4 Options 2025-27

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

ACCESS ALL THE TOOLS BELOW

Exploring pathways

Interests profile ✕ Quiz not taken Start >	Personality profile ✕ Quiz not taken Start >	Careers library ✕ Careers favoured Go to tool >
Subjects library ✕ Subjects favoured Go to tool >	Know-how library ✕ Guides favoured Go to tool >	MOOC Make your first shortlist Start >
Webinars Hear directly from the experts Go to tool >	Read, Watch, Listen ✕ Profiles favoured Start >	

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 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 15 January	Options assembly
Thursday 16 January	Options booklet distributed to students Options information available on website
Monday 20 January	Options form distributed to students
Wednesday 22 January	Options evening in school
Thursday 23 January onwards	Student guidance interviews
Wednesday 5 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)	Geography
Art and Design (Three Dimensional-Design)	Health & Social Care
Business	History
Computer Science	Hospitality & Catering
Creative iMedia	Music
Drama	Physical Education
Food Preparation & Nutrition	Religious Studies
French	Sociology

PSHE, Religion and Philosophy Enhancement Days

Course Leaders

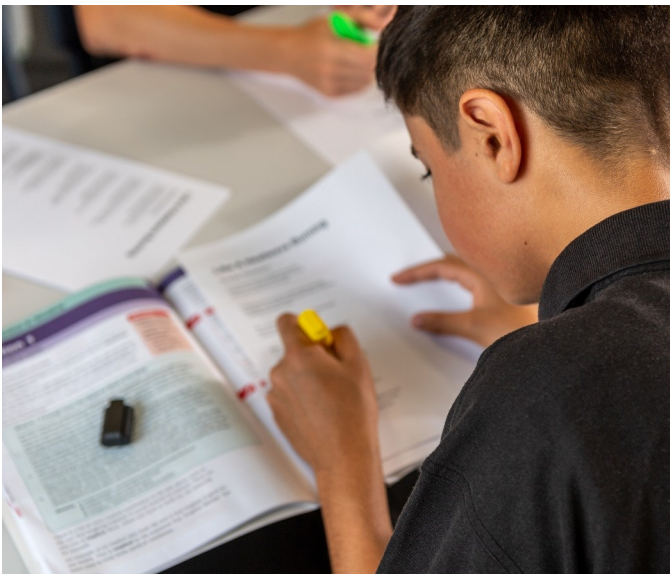
- PSHE: Ms K Millington
- Religion and Philosophy: Mr C Steadman-South

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.



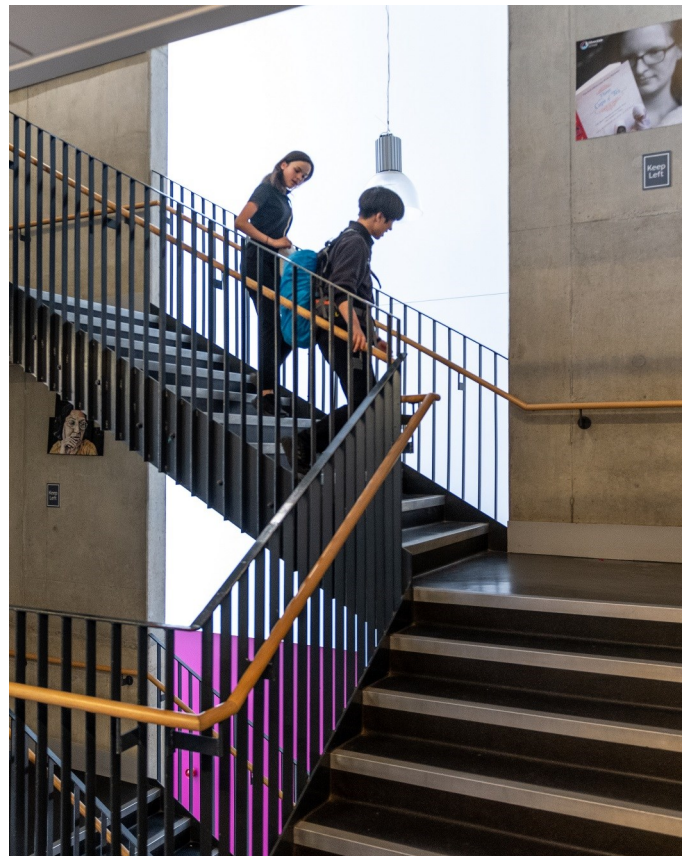
What attitudes do I need?

- 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 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 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?

You will learn to, independently, develop and create projects within themes of your own choosing, producing a wide variety of artwork that meets four assessment objectives and culminates in a final outcome. The GCSE is entirely coursework based, which means you can start working towards it as soon as you begin the course and can continue to develop and refine it over two years.

You will explore the formal elements of art and design through drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, digital manipulation, and photo editing, 3D work and ceramics. Technique workshops vary each year, but may include learning to use acrylic and oil paint, pencil, pen, watercolour, printing techniques, ink, etching, photography and creating textured surfaces. There is an emphasis on students initiating their own research and theme, experimenting with media and processes, and refining their techniques to create personal outcomes.

The course offers a three day residential in the Peak District where you can work directly with established artists, designers and makers from the Sheffield area on exciting projects that can then be submitted towards your GCSE grade. GCSE students are given much more freedom and make their own choices over the materials they want to use, subject matter, project titles and how they would like to develop their work. Students that take this subject are happy and feel they can express themselves through their work.

What skills do I need?

- An enthusiasm for the subject and a drive to create and explore materials and processes.
- A commitment and enthusiasm to develop work creatively across many different disciplines which can include digital drawing, sketching, painting and 3D work.
- To be able to reflect on your work then use this to develop it and explore suggestions.
- To have ambition for your work and want to explore it independently.
- 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:

Doing art at GCSE can provide you with lots of opportunities in creative and practical careers. A large number of our students go on to study architecture, product design, and Illustration or have go on to work in the fashion or game design industries. However we have students that also use the course to demonstrate excellent problem solving skills and creativity 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.

You will learn how to develop your skills in architecture, CAD (Autodesk) and practical making skills to develop and make products that you are interested in.

In component 1 and component 2 students are required to work in one or more area(s) of three-dimensional design, such as those listed below:

- Architectural design.
- Product design.
- Interior design.
- 3D digital design.

They may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas.

You will learn how to produce visual evidence for the four assessment objectives.

You will develop your technical drawing, sketching, digital manipulation, CAD (Autodesk/Sketchup) and 3D skills using a variety of materials including wood, plastic, card and paper to enable you to create realistic 3D designs and concepts.

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:

A-level product design, engineering, art, drama and set design and then onto Foundation or BA courses in related subjects. This could lead to a career in product design, engineering architecture, digital media, web design, or graphic design. It could also be a good skill for academic degrees after A-level, particularly regarding creative problem solving, for instance engineering, or the sciences. Universities appreciate art as a valid qualification standard for most courses. Check on the UCAS website if unsure.

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?

In computer science you will learn:

- Computer systems.
- Computational thinking, algorithms and programming.

The curriculum is designed to develop the skills to solve problems, design systems and understand human and machine intelligence. You will apply the academic principles you learn in the classroom to real-world systems in an exciting and engaging way.

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 now called the fourth science and counts towards the EBacc. It has become a sought-after, highly paid career with huge potential for future expansion, with computer scientists being employed by the top technology companies.

Creative iMedia

What will I learn?

In creative imedia you will learn how to create different digital products using a range of software. This includes: Adobe Dreamweaver and Photoshop.

The emphasis on this course is developing your creativity and creating industry standard publications. This includes: magazines, comic strips and websites.

You will deepen your understanding of pre-production methods, design techniques and strategies to communicate effectively.

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 | 30%
- R095: Characters and comics | 30%

Could lead to:

Creative imedia is an excellent foundation to a wide range of careers and post-16 opportunities. A good grade will allow you to take any A-level course, including media studies and computer science. The skills you have gained will also be valued by vocational courses and by employers.

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 to all post-16 subject areas and the skills and techniques developed in drama will be continued in a wide range of A-level courses including: drama, English, humanity subjects, social sciences, media and film studies. A love for the theatre and developing a greater cultural appreciation will ensure a much more rounded citizen. Drama can build a stronger position in degree applications as it is correctly recognised by The Russell Group as a valued subject when looking for a broad and balanced curriculum. Finally, the course will provide skills that all employers will find valuable such as problem solving, leadership, creativity and the ability to communicate in all forms.

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!

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

What skills do I need?

- Literacy skills.
- Ability to work in a group.
- Independence
- Good organisation.
- Good communication skills.

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:

- 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.
- Preparation towards a nursing career.

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.

Hospitality & Catering

What will I learn?

In unit 1 (the hospitality and catering industry) you will gain a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the hospitality and catering industry including provision, health and safety, and food safety.

In unit 2 (hospitality and catering in action) you will gain knowledge and understanding of the importance of nutrition and how to plan nutritious menus. You will learn the skills needed to prepare, cook and present dishes. You will also learn how to review your work effectively. This unit is synoptic and draws upon the knowledge gained in unit 1.

What skills do I need?

- Creativity and imagination.
- Ability to work in a group and individually.
- Research and design skills.
- An enjoyment of working with food and a genuine interest in the hospitality catering industry.

Assessment

Examination

- Unit 1: The hospitality and catering industry | 1 hour 20 mins | 40%

Non-examined assessment

- Unit 2: Controlled assessment: Hospitality and catering in action | 12 hours approx. | 60%

Could lead to:

You will gain a broad understanding of commercial food production and an awareness of related career paths. You will be expected to make a range of food products and will develop skills related to commercial food preparation including food hygiene, food presentation and considering production in quantity, as well as a broad understanding of the hospitality industry.

You will be expected to apply technical and practical expertise to ensure that food meets customer needs and preferences and is appropriate for a given occasion. You will also have acquired skills that will be valuable no matter what career path they choose including team working, problem solving and communication.

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?

- Topics include: Muslim beliefs and practices e.g. the nature of God, the problem of evil, and the afterlife. Marriage and the family.
- To understand aspects of the interconnections between religion and ethics from the view point of Islam.
- Topics include: Christian beliefs and practices e.g. philosophy of religion, the beginning of the universe, equality, racism and prejudice.
- To understand aspects of interconnections between religion, philosophy and social justice from the view point of Christianity.

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: you must be working at least at grade 4+ at the end of Year 9 as a requirement to follow the triple course.

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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