



Anthony Gell
— School —

YEAR 9 OPTIONS



2024 - 2026

CARE • ASPIRE • ACHIEVE



FOREWORD

As a parent myself, I have first-hand experience of the sort of conversations which will be happening between parents/carers and their children as subject choices for Key Stage 4 are being discussed.

Unsurprisingly, most children in Year 9 don't have a set career plan carefully mapped-out. Many will be able to tell us what subject they like best and which subject they definitely want to 'drop', but they may struggle to add any more detail than that at this stage. It is therefore really important that schools provide as much information as possible, in a format that makes sense, for students and their parents and provide opportunities for effective communication.

Every child is unique - each with different interests, strengths and goals. Students are generally more successful and have greater levels of motivation and self-esteem when they are able to engage in a curriculum that best suits their needs. We have therefore continued to invest in and provide a broad curriculum, and offer students a range of different options. Our philosophy has never been a 'one size fits all' approach.

Whilst our curriculum remains very broad we do have to be aware that, given the continued financial pressure on schools, we cannot facilitate unrealistically small class sizes. In a few cases therefore it will be necessary to make compromises. Where compromises are required we will communicate with and involve individual students and their parents/carers.

One of the benefits of being a slightly smaller school is that the staff who will be advising each student will know them well. Staff will happily discuss options or answer specific questions that may arise. Our aim is to offer the best advice and guide each student to make sensible choices.

I hope you find the information in this booklet to be very helpful. Please remember that we do not have to make final decisions about option choices straight away. Try to gather as much information as you can about the various subjects; be open to new ideas and keep the conversation going.

Malcolm Kelly

Headteacher



GUIDED CHOICES BOOKLET

This booklet is designed to help students and parents, in consultation with teachers, to create a Key Stage 4 curriculum that will best suit the needs of each student. We hope that the subjects available will enable students to choose a set of courses that they will enjoy and in which they will be successful.

We have taken the following into account when designing this curriculum:

- The importance of gaining a range of GCSEs including English, Maths and Science
- Allowing students as much choice as possible whilst maintaining a balanced and appropriate curriculum
- Current Government policy and advice on the English Baccalaureate subjects
- The future needs of students including those who will go on to Further and Higher Education



The Core

As required by the National Curriculum, we have 'core' subjects which all students must follow. The compulsory core studies are as follows:

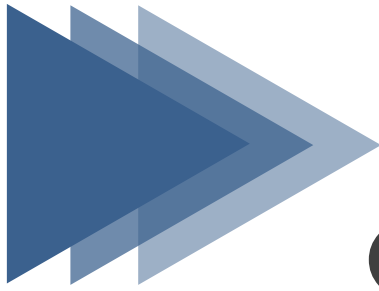
- English - leading to two GCSEs, one in English Language and one in English Literature
- Mathematics - leading to one GCSE
- Science - leading to two or three GCSEs
- Physical Education - not examined
- Citizenship and Religious Studies – not examined



The Sciences

It is important that students are guided along a suitable science pathway at Key Stage 4. The demands of the reformed 9 to 1 GCSEs mean fewer students might be considering studying the three separate sciences. These students are likely to be considering going on to study one or more science at A Level or have a deep interest in two or more of the subjects. If a student is considering studying a science degree at a Russell group university, taking separate science is more advantageous than combined science. Parents and students will be guided in both pathways and an appropriate course selected after Easter in Year 9. The completion of their end of year exam is used to determine which students will be added to the two separate science classes in Year 10. More than half of students will study Combined Science (2 x GCSE's) during Year 10 and 11. Not all students who start separate science in Year 10, will sit the separate science GCSEs in their final exams. Final entry into the separate science GCSEs is based on progress and ensuring students can achieve the best grades possible.






REFORMED QUALIFICATIONS

GCSEs were reformed in 2017 and are now designed to be more demanding than their predecessors. In addition there is a new grading system that replaces the A*-G grades used previously - the new system will be 9 to 1 (with 9 being the highest).

This table shows how the old and new grading system can be compared:



Grading new GCSEs from 2017

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	A*
8	A
7	A
6	B
5	B
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
1	G
U	U

GOOD PASS (DfE)
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING
4 and above = bottom of C and above

Tiered Exams

All GCSE qualifications will be examined at the end of the course, which will be the summer of your child's Year 11. Prior to the 2017 reforms, students could be entered for "Higher" or "Foundation" exam papers. The highest grade achievable on Foundation exams was a Grade C, with all grades up to A* being accessible via the Higher exam papers. Tiered exams for the new 9 to 1 reformed qualifications exams only apply to the subjects of Maths, Modern Foreign Languages (French and Spanish), Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and Combined Science. Foundation level will cover grades 1 to 5 and Higher Level will cover grades 4 to 9.

VOCATIONAL & EBacc

VOCATIONAL

In addition to GCSEs, students also have the opportunity to study a range of subjects often referred to as vocational qualifications e.g. BTEC qualifications. Vocational qualifications were initially reformed in 2017 and again for some subjects in 2021. These qualifications contain examinations in both Year 10 and Year 11 with more of an emphasis on coursework which is assessed throughout the duration of the two-year course. They are robust and challenging qualifications that lead to Level 3 study and carry GCSE equivalence.

There are a variety of vocational subjects offered to students at AGS:

Art and Design (Photography)	Construction	IT	Enterprise
Hospitality & Catering	Health and Social Care	Performing Arts (Dance)	

ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE (EBacc)

The English Baccalaureate is **not a qualification**, it is an award which recognises that a student has obtained a **grade 5 or above** in all of the following GCSE subjects:

English Language

Maths

At least two sciences (can include computer science)

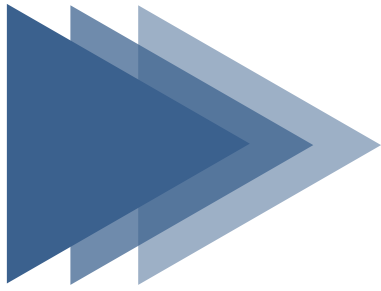
History or Geography

A modern (French or Spanish at AGS) or ancient foreign language (not offered at AGS)

The EBacc is not compulsory at AGS. Currently very few universities have the EBacc as part of their entry requirements.

The Russell Group previously published a list of subjects which can be particularly useful for students who aren't sure what to study at university. These subjects are considered essential for many degrees and so can open lots of doors. Rather than give misleading generic guidance the Russell Group has now produced its own website called **"Informed Choices"** (www.informedchoices.ac.uk), therefore removing the need to publish such a list. Here you can explore the various degrees and subject areas you're interested in – as many as you like – to build up a more personalised picture of the subject combinations which suit your talents and ambitions.





GUIDED CHOICES

THE OPTIONS

All students will select, with guidance, **four** option subjects in total. One of these will be from list 1 (you can choose more than one if you wish) and the others made up from list 2— see below.

List 1

French

Spanish

Geography

History

Computer Science

List 2

Art

Art and Design (Photography)

Computer Science

Construction

IT

Drama

Enterprise

Design and Technology

French

GCSE PE

Geography

History

Hospitality & Catering

Media Studies

Music

Performing arts - Dance

Religious Studies

Sociology

Spanish

Limitations on choice

Students are encouraged to study a broad and balanced choice of subjects. Our over-riding commitment is to provide the best possible curriculum for our students so that they can achieve the best outcomes to prepare themselves for future life.

Whilst we will endeavour to give students their first four choices, this will not be possible in all cases. Some compromise will inevitably be necessary.

There are also physical limits to the sizes of groups we can operate and problems can arise where subjects are over or under subscribed. Clearly, given staffing and budget constraints, we are not able to run uneconomic groups. Should it be necessary to reconsider original choices, individual students and parents will be closely consulted.

Timeline

Completed option forms need to be completed via Microsoft form (more details to follow) by Friday 29th January 2024. If there are any specific issues, including a student not getting their first choices, these will be discussed with the student and subsequently with parents to discuss alternatives. Early in the summer term students will receive a letter confirming their curriculum for Years 10 and 11.

ART

Course Details

Students who choose to take this subject will follow a broad based course in Art.

UNIT 1

Students will develop an Art and Design Portfolio using a variety of different media and in both 2D and 3D forms. This will include drawing, photography, painting and 3D design. Their Portfolio will include an Art history element in which the practical work of the student is linked with the work of other artists. The Portfolio is produced over the two year period and the exam is taken at the end of the course.

UNIT 2

Students select one question to which they produce a personal response through their art work and links with other artists. They are given a period of time to plan and prepare for this and then 10 hours of controlled time to produce a final piece.

The work is internally marked and externally moderated.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // OCR

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Art?

Media Studies, English, Construction and D&T.



Student View

“Art lets you explore different sources to create mind-blowing pieces.”

How is GCSE Art assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Unit 1: Art and Design	60
Unit 2: Set task	40

ART & DESIGN (PHOTOGRAPHY)

Course Details

This GCSE Art & Design (Photography) course will help you gain knowledge and understanding of art, craft, design, media and technologies.

The course has TWO components.

Component 01: students produce a portfolio of practical work showing their personal response to either a centre-set or learner-set starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus. The portfolio can be a project, theme or course of study. It may be presented in an appropriate format, for example as a digital presentation or printed images on mounted sheets.

Component 02: students complete an externally set task. A paper will be issued in January each year and will give students a choice of five themes, each with a choice of written and/or visual starting points or stimuli. From this paper, learners are expected to choose one option for which they will generate an appropriate personal response of one or more artefact(s)/ product(s)/personal outcome(s) within a 10-hour supervised time period. The paper will also give the learner an opportunity to develop an extended response.



Course Type/exam board:

GCSE Award // OCR

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Construction?

Art, Media Studies, D&T & IT.



Our View

This course is the perfect opportunity students wanting to be creative with digital media. As well as taking photographs students will use photo editing software to create a portfolio of their work.

How is Photography assessed?

Assessment	% of Award
Portfolio—non-exam assessment (internally assessed and externally moderated)	60 (Coursework)
Externally set task—non-exam assessment (internally assessed and externally moderated)	40 (Coursework)

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Course Details

Computer Science is a modern, fascinating subject. The world depends on computers. In this GCSE you will learn about how computers work, the networks they use and how programming can create solutions to everyday problems and future challenges.

Component 01: Computer systems (Exam 1 - 50%)

Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (Exam 2 – 50%)

Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

Practical Programming

Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task/

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // OCR

Course Availability

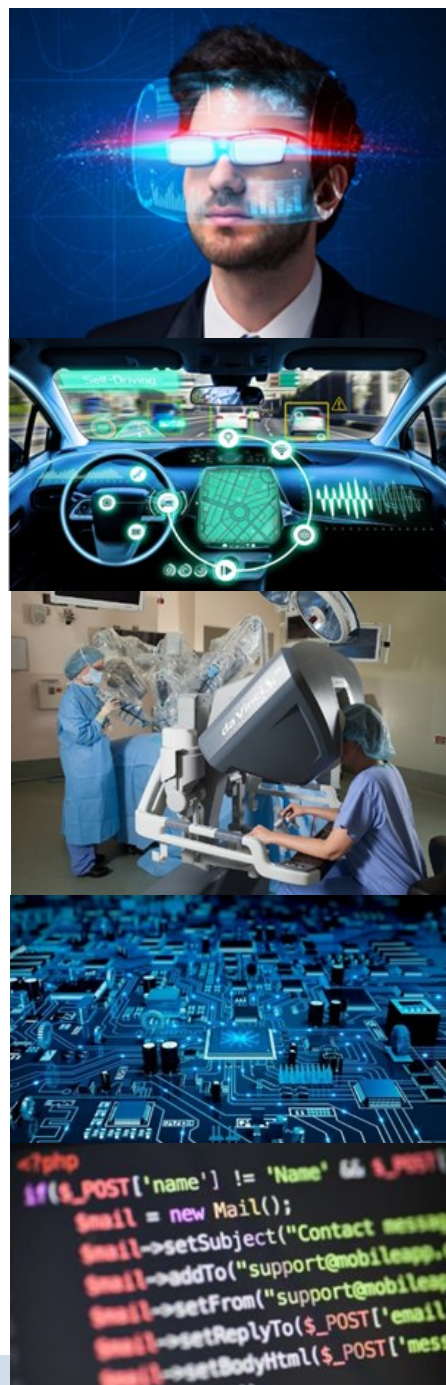
Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Computer Science?

Any other subjects fit well, but especially IT, Sciences and Maths.

tasks during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations.



Student View

Studying Computer Science lets you to solve complex, challenging problems, enabling you to make a positive difference in the world.

How is GCSE Computer Science assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination	100

CONSTRUCTION

Course Details

This Level 1/Level 2 Vocational Award in Constructing the Built Environment is designed to support learners to develop an awareness of construction processes. It provides learners with an introduction to the different trades involved in the sector, the importance of safety and security.

Students will have the opportunity to work in three or four practical disciplines; Carpentry & Joinery, Electrical, Bricklaying and Painting & Decorating.

You will have one exam for **Unit 1** which will be worth 40% of your qualification. The exam will last 2 hours, it will be made up of short and extended response questions based on Health & Safety, security and how a work place operates in a construction environment.

Unit 2 will be assessed via project work (no exam), which is worth 60% of your qualification. Here you will be asked to prepare and complete three trade-based tasks e.g. creating a simple lighting circuit, building a brick structure and making a wooden planter. This coursework unit is then completed in a written report covering each task.



Course Type/exam board:

Vocational Award // WJEC

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Construction?

D&T, IT and Enterprise.

WJEC Level 1/2 Grade	GCSE grading equivalent
Level 1 Pass	3
Level 2 Pass	4
Merit	5/6
Distinction	7
Distinction*	8/9

Student View

This course is the perfect opportunity for any student who is looking for a job in the building, joinery, plumbing, painting or electrical trade. It gives you the basics for all areas.

How is Construction assessed?

Assessment	% of Award
Introduction to the built environment	40 (Exam)
Constructing the built environment	60 (Coursework)

DANCE—PERFORMING ARTS

Course Details



The BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Performing Arts is an exciting and creative course that links well with the Performing Arts industry. You will learn by completing assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations, activities and demands. This course introduces students to a career in Dance and **for students who gain a Merit or Distinction at Level 2**, it provides a good basis for progression to more advanced work-related qualifications.

The units covered are mainly based on Contemporary Dance with opportunity to study other styles like Jazz and Urban. The course is mainly practical and requires commitment, hard work and a determination to learn new techniques and skills alongside a willingness to perform. There is a written unit, which is a study into professional artists and choreographers. It is most suited to students who have a keen interest in Dance and Performing Arts.

A BTEC Tech Award is equivalent to one GCSE. On completion of the course, students will be graded at Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* Level 1 and 2.

Students must be aware that there will be some written and practical homework. Practical homework may require lunchtime or after school rehearsals; particularly when working towards performances.

BTEC First Award Grade 1/2	GCSE grading equivalent	Level
Pass	1/2	Level 1
Merit	2	
Distinction	3	
Pass	4	Level 2
Merit	5/6	
Distinction	7	
Distinction*	8/9	

Course Type/exam board:

BTEC Tech Award // EDEXCEL

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Dance?

Art, Drama, Music and PE.



Student View

“Dance has inspired and motivated me, it gives me a chance to express myself.”

How is Dance assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Set assignments—practical and	60%
Externally set assignment—Practical	40%

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Course Details

Paper 1 Written Exam (50% of GCSE)

- Learners will sit an 2 hour exam that covers the following subject content;
- Core Technical Principles in all media of Technology
- Specialist Technical Principles in at least one Technology material
- Designing and Making Principles.

NEA Non-Exam Assessment (50% of GCSE)

Learners will carry out a substantial design and make task. Students will choose from a context set by the exam board. They will then produce a design portfolio and manufacture a prototype. This will take approx. 30-35 hours.

Assessment criteria:

- Identifying / investigating design possibilities
- Produce design brief and specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Realising design ideas
- Analysing & evaluating



Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Design and Technology

Maths, Physics, Art, Creative iMedia and Enterprise .

How is Design & Technology assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination percentage	50
Coursework/practical assessment	50

Student View

This is a good course because you can get to design and make projects of your choice. It has a good balance of theory, design and practical work.

DRAMA

Course Details

The course consists of 3 components:

- **Unit 1 Devising Drama (30%)** – Students create a piece of drama from a choice of stimulus provided by the exam board, they also create a portfolio or a working notebook alongside the performance, both practical work and portfolio will be marked.
- **Unit 2 Performing Texts (30%)** - The students will study and perform extracts from a script. They will look at what effect they want to create on the audience and how to do that. The performance is marked by an external examiner.
- **Unit 3 Written exam (40%) 1 hour 30 mins** – Students study a set text in a practical way and answer questions about their explorations and findings. They will also write a live theatre performance analysis which means that some theatre visits will be essential to the course.

Drama gives students the opportunity to express themselves and their ideas in a wide variety of ways. It is also about much more than acting and students develop many key transferable skills, which, are highly sought after by employers. Students can also choose to explore the technical side of theatre including sound, lights, costume etc

Course Type/exam board: GCSE // OCR

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Drama

All subjects including Maths, Physics, Art, Creative iMedia and Enterprise.



This QR code links to a Youtube clip where prominent business people discuss the transferable skills of drama. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3DGHtpuV28>



Student View

Drama is a fun, exciting and practical subject which makes a nice change. Improvising, practicing and performing helped develop my ability and skills to focus my mind, improve memory and build confidence.

How is Drama assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination percentage	60
Coursework/practical assessment	40

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Course Details

Throughout the two year course, you will work on skills such as reading comprehension, creative writing and non-fiction writing to build up your skills to prepare for the examination papers. You will be reading both fiction and non-fiction texts independently. There is an important focus on writing accurately so this is something you will practise. These skills will be taught and nurtured by your English teacher and you will do practice questions so you get used to working in timed conditions. You will work on examination technique in order to get the best grade possible in the final exams.

In Year 10, you will prepare for the Speaking and Listening Endorsement. This will involve presenting a topic of your choice and responding to questions using Standard English. You will be able to present to a small group or the whole class. This will be marked by your teacher and moderated by the exam board.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? YES

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with English Language?

English can be combined with any subject. It goes especially well with humanities, languages, creative arts but also sciences and mathematics.

There are two examination papers for English Language that are taken at the end of the two year course. There is no longer any coursework.

Paper 1

Section A - reading comprehension and analysis skills (one fiction extract) - 25%

Section B - writing skills (narrative or descriptive writing) - 25%

Paper 2

Section A - reading comprehension and analysis skills on two non-fiction extracts - 25%

Section B - writing skills. This will be writing to present a view point - 25%

Spoken Language: Non-exam assessment (Now a separate grade awarded)

Student View

English Language has helped me think about the way I write - how to describe things or to use words to persuade people.

How is English Language assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Exam Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading & Writing	50
Exam Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives	50
Spoken Language Endorsement	Separate award

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Course Details

In Year 10 and 11 you will read the set texts with your English teacher. However you will not be able to take these texts in the examination. You will study two examination texts for Paper 1: a Shakespeare play (Macbeth) and a nineteenth century novel 'A Christmas Carol' by Dickens (40%). In the exam, for each section, you will answer questions on a printed extract and then write an essay on the whole text. For Paper 2, (60%) you will study a modern text and poetry on 'Power and Conflict' from an anthology. In this Paper 2 exam, you will write three essays: one on the modern text ('An Inspector Calls') and one on the poetry you have studied. The third essay will be on an unseen poem that you will need to analyse yourself in the exam. After each unit of work there will be an exam-style assessment to prepare for the exams at the end of the course. Throughout the two year course, you will work on examination techniques for each style of question in order to get the best grade possible in the final exams.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? YES

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with English Literature?

English can be combined with any subject. It goes especially well with humanities, languages, creative arts but also sciences and mathematics.

There are two examination papers for English Literature (Paper 1) and English Literature (Paper 2) - both will be taken at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 is divided into two sections:

Section A – Shakespeare (20%)

Section B – The 19th Century novel (20%)

Paper 2 is divided into three sections:

Section A – Modern Texts (20%)

Section B – Poetry from the Anthology (20%)

Section C – Analysing unseen poems (20%)

Student View

It's a good chance to read books I wouldn't usually choose. Actually, they turned out to be really good!

How is English Literature assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Exam Paper 1: Shakespeare & the	40
Exam Paper 2: Modern texts and	60

ENTERPRISE — BUSINESS STUDIES

Course Details

BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Enterprise gives learners the opportunity to develop specific knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment. The main focus is on the knowledge, understanding and skills required to research, plan, pitch and review an enterprise idea that includes:

- Development of key skills that demonstrate an ability in planning an enterprise activity, including market research, planning, carrying out financial transactions, communication and problem solving
- Knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, such as the features and characteristics of enterprises and entrepreneurs, and the internal and external factors that can affect the performance of an enterprise
- Attitudes and ways of working that are considered most important for enterprise, including monitoring and reflecting on performance of an enterprise idea and own use of skills.



Course Type/exam board:

BTEC Tech Award // EDEXCEL

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Enterprise?

Maths, Media Studies

BTEC Level 1/2 Grade	GCSE grading equivalent
Level 1 Pass	3
Level 2 Pass	4
Merit	5/6
Distinction	7
Distinction*	8/9

How is Enterprise assessed?

Student View

This is a new course for Y10 students for 2019/20. There are strong links to A Level Business Studies – AGS has a long tradition of very successful results in this subject at A Level.

Unit	Title	Assessment	% of Award
1	Exploring Enterprises	Internal	30
2	Planning and Presenting a Micro-Enterprise Idea	Internal	30
3	Marketing and Finance for Enterprise	External – set task	40

FRENCH

Course Details

Every student is examined in each of the four skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Students may be entered for either Foundation or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills. There is **no** coursework element within this course - the writing component now takes the form of a final exam. During the course, students develop the four skills they have already encountered in language learning.

The emphasis is on the practical, the useful and the interesting. Students are not judged on whether they get every single word correct but on whether they understand and communicate effectively. Students currently use a variety of resources, including the Nelson Thornes GCSE coursebook and the accompanying online resource, *Kerboodle*. We also supplement this by authentic material - leaflets and brochures from France, TV programmes and recordings, and selectively use material from other coursebooks and the Internet. Students are encouraged to use their ICT skills where relevant. To enrich the work in the classroom, there are visits to France; we have links with Die, in a region towards the south of France and we usually offer a visit to Paris.

Students study three broad themes on which the assessments are based:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle.

Theme 2: Popular culture.

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? No

An option available to some students on advice from staff? Yes

What subjects combine well with French?

GCSE French combines well with any other GCSE subjects.

During the course, students develop four skills:

Listening: Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language. Dictation of short, spoken extracts.

Speaking: Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes. Speaking test with the French teacher at the end of the course. Including a role-play, a photo card description and a reading aloud task in French.

Reading: Understanding and responding to different types of written language. Translation into English and inferring meanings of words.

Writing: Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes. Written exam includes a variety of tasks including translation from English into French.

How is French assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Listening Assessment	25%
Speaking Assessment	25%
Reading Assessment	25%
Writing Assessment	25%

Student View

Qualifications in French and German are highly recognised and valuable.

I think taking a language opens lots of doors for the future.

GEOGRAPHY

Course Details

The course is made up of **three** examination papers.

Component 1: Investigating Geographical Issues – 40%

Topics include: Urbanisation, Development, Global Cities, Rivers, Weather and Climate, Ecosystems, Rural – Urban Change, Coasts, Climate Change, Desertification and Water.

Component 2: Problem Solving Geography – 30%

This paper explores a current geographical issue. The paper introduces the issue and then goes on to outline possible solutions that you will analyse so you can choose and justify a solution that will hopefully solve the problem.

Component 3: Applied Fieldwork – 30%

For this component we will go on two fieldtrips during the course to learn how to conduct a good piece of fieldwork. We will set hypotheses, trial different methods of collecting data and then present our data, analyse the findings and draw conclusions from what we find. The exam is based

on these experiences and how well you can apply what you've learnt into other fieldwork settings.

Course Type/exam board: GCSE // Eduqas B

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? Yes

What subjects combine well with Geography?

History, MFL, Sciences and Maths and Enterprise.



Student View

“Geography has taught me so many skills I can use elsewhere and I know so much more about the world I live in.”

How is Geography assessed?

Assessment		% of GCSE
Component 1	1hr 45mins	40%
Component 2	1hr 30 min	30%
Component 3	1hr 30 min	30%

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Course Details

The Award gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment. Learners who generally achieve at Level 2 across their Key Stage 4 learning might consider progression to:

- A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects
- study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Health and Social Care, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in aspects of health or social care.

Students who prefer to complete on-going assessments through assignment work will be well suited to this course. Two of the units are assignment based and there is one examination, each part will contribute to the overall grading for the qualification. The table below shows the units studied over two years of the course.

Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care				
Component number	Component title	% of GCSE	Level	How assessed
1	Human Lifespan Development	30	1/2	Internal
2	Health and Social Care Services and Values	30	1/2	Internal
3	Health and Wellbeing	40	1/2	External Synoptic

Course Type/exam board:

BTEC Technical Award Level 1/2 // EDEXCEL

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? Yes

What subjects combine well with H&SC?

Health and Social care combines well with any GCSE or BTEC course offered at the school.



Teacher View

There's hundreds of different jobs in adult social care, depending on what you want to do, who you want to work with and where you want to work.

How is H&SC assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Course work	60%
Exam (2 Hours)	40%

HISTORY

Course Details

Paper 1 (thematic and historic environment)

Medicine in Britain 1250 to present day AND a case study:

The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches.

Paper 2 (period study and British depth study)

Earlier Elizabethan England, 1558-88

Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

Paper 3 (modern depth study)

Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918—1939



Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // EDEXCEL

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? Yes

What subjects combine well with History?

English, Geography and PRE.

Student View

History is not only really interesting at GCSE but it has given me a valuable skill set for life. I can debate ideas, use evidence, make comparisons and justify my opinions. It really is a fantastic and worthwhile subject!

How is History assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Exam (1hr 15m) Paper 1	30
Exam (1hr 45m) Paper 2	40
Exam (1hr 20m) Paper 3	30

HOSPITALITY & CATERING

Course Details

This Level 1/2 Award widens our understanding of the Hospitality and Catering industry. You will develop the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they have to take into account to be successful. You will have the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful Hospitality and Catering operations. In this qualification, you will also develop food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem solving, project management, organisation and time management as well as collaborative working and team working.

Prior learning to the course should include proficiency in numeracy and literacy, an aptitude for working with ICT and motivation to work independently. The course offers a progression from the Key Stage 3 programmes of study.



Course Type/exam board:

Vocational Award // WJEC Eduqas

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Hospitality & Catering?

Languages and PE

Student View

This is a great course to take because it enables you to learn a wide range of skills, develops your catering ability and is great fun.

How is Hospitality and Catering assessed?

Assessment	% of course
Controlled assessment	60
Written paper percentage	40

IT

Course Details

The Vocational Award in ICT will develop students' knowledge and understanding of the ICT sector and provide them with opportunities to develop associated practical skills. It covers ICT in Society; allowing learners to explore the wide range of uses of hardware, application and specialist software, and ICT in context; introducing learners to a broad working knowledge of databases, spreadsheets, automated documents and images.

The qualification is made up of 2 units:

Unit 1: ICT in Society (online exam, worth 40%)

Explore the wide range of uses of hardware, application and specialist software in society; investigate how information technology is used in a range of contexts, including business and organisations, education and homes.

Unit 2: ICT in Context (project work, no exam, worth 60%)

Gain a working knowledge of databases, spreadsheets, automated documents and images; learn to apply your knowledge and understanding to solve problems in vocational settings.

The course would suit students who are passionate about technology, like solving problems and are curious about all things digital.



Course Type/exam board:

Technical [Award](#) // Eduqas

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with IT?

The course combines well with Computer Science and other vocational courses.

Technical Award Grade	GCSE grading equivalent
Level 1 Pass	1
Level 1 Merit	2
Level 1 Distinction	2/3
Level 1 Distinction*	3
Level 2 Pass	4
Level 2 Merit	5/6
Level 2 Distinction	7
Level 2 Distinction*	8/9

Student View

Nearly every job uses IT these days, taking it is a must!

How is IT assessed?

Assessment	% of Certificate
Examination (online)	40% (1hr 20 mins)
Controlled Assessment (in lesson time)	60%

MATHEMATICS

Course Details

Overview

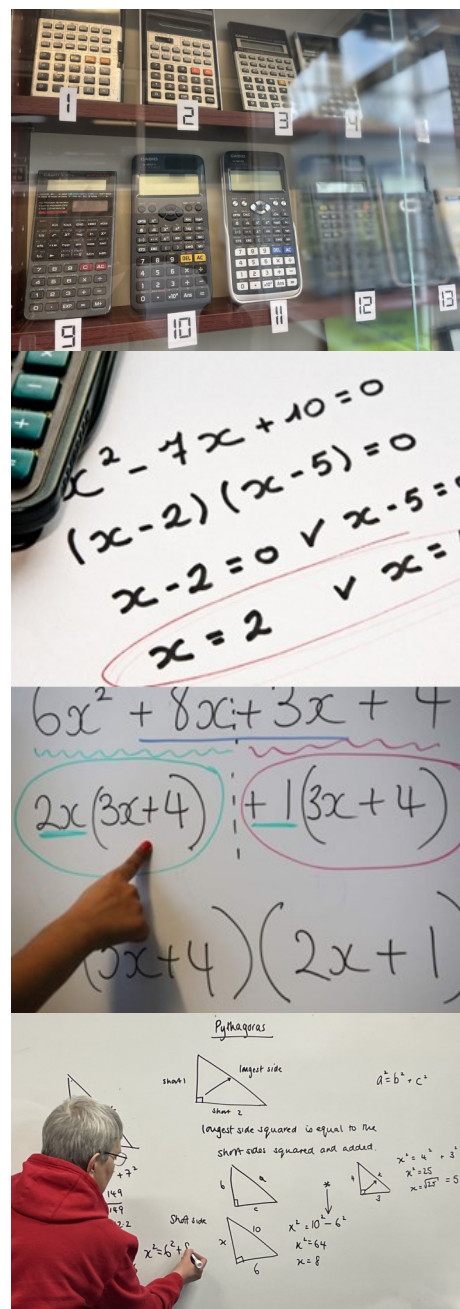
Pupils are prepared for the AQA 9-1 GCSE Mathematics Course. They are taught in sets and teachers use a range of resources with each class.

Syllabus

The National Curriculum covers a wide range of mathematical topics and these are assessed in written examinations. In GCSE Mathematics, students will either sit the Foundation Tier or Higher Tier examinations at the end of Year 11. The Foundation Tier omits certain more challenging topics from the Higher Tier syllabus. The Higher Tier leads to a grade in the range 9-4; the Foundation Tier leads to a grade in the range 5-1. A decision on which tier will be made in consultation with students, teaching staff and parents.

Resources

All students must have a scientific calculator and basic mathematical equipment to ensure they are fully prepared for the course.



Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? YES

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Mathematics?

Sciences, Computer Science and Enterprise

Student View

As students at AGS we are really lucky that our teachers prepare us well and ensure we can be successful in maths.

How is Mathematics assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination	100

MEDIA STUDIES

Course Details:

Key Concepts

This GCSE Media Studies specification is based on the key concepts for exploring and creating media. The framework is based on four inter-related areas:

Media Language: How forms, codes and conventions create meanings.

Representation: How the media portray events, issues, individuals and social groups.

Media Industries: Production and distribution.

Audiences: How audiences respond to and interact with media products and processes.



COMPONENT 1

Section A – Representation and Media

Section B – Audience and Industry

COMPONENT 2

Section A – Television

Section B – Music and Online

COMPONENT 3

Practical Production

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // Eduquas

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Media Studies?

IT, Art, photography, psychology, sociology and English Literature.



How is Media Studies assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination 1	40
Examination 2	30
Coursework	30

Student View

Media Studies gives me an opportunity to explore media texts and to create my own.

MUSIC

Course Details



Every student is required to perform, compose and listen to music. The performance and composition elements of the course take the form of 4 controlled assessments. The performances and compositions are internally assessed and externally moderated.

Students must be prepared to study a wide range of musical styles. Performances can be on a variety of instruments, including voice, keyboard, piano, guitar, drum kit or others. You will be expected to perform as a soloist and as a member of an ensemble. For this reason you **MUST** be able (or willing to learn) to play and instrument/sing to take GCSE music. Please note that subsidies for instrumental lessons are available depending on your circumstances.

Music gives students the opportunity to express themselves and their ideas in a wide variety of ways. They will gain a working knowledge of the skills used by performers and others in the music industry. This course provides a good basis for students who may want to go on to take A level or RSL Music Practitioners Level 3.

You will undertake 5 Areas of Study, which will include music from the past and present and music from Western traditions and World cultures:

Area of Study 1 - My Music, a study of your instrument

Area of Study 2 – The Concerto through time

Area of Study 3 – Rhythms of the world

Area of Study 4 – Film Music

Area of Study 5 – Conventions of Pop

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // OCR

Course Availability

Compulsory? NO

Option for all? YES

What subjects combine well with Music?

Combines well with Art, Media Studies, History, Drama and Dance.

Course outline

Integrated portfolio

A solo performance, a composition to a brief set by the learner — 30%

Practical Component

A group performance, a composition set to an OCR brief — 30%

Listening and appraising

Written paper with CD — 40%

Student View

“I have loved developing my instrumental skills and creating my own compositions.”

How is Music assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination	40
Coursework/practical assessment	60

PE (PHYSICAL EDUCATION)

Course Details

At GCSE level the course is split into practical and theory. 40% of the assessment is practical and 60% theory.

Practical Component — You will be assessed in your performance in three sports. The sports you can choose from are listed below. You must select one individual and one team sport/activity and the third sport can be from either list. Together these are worth 30% of the overall mark.

You will also complete a piece of controlled coursework 'Analysing and Evaluating Performance' task, where you observe a performance of another candidate and develop an action plan to improve an identified weakness. This is worth 10% of the overall practical mark.

Theory Component — In GCSE PE you will explore the way in which the parts of the human body work and function during physical activity and how diet and training can cause changes in performance. You will also develop your knowledge and understanding of sports psychology. In addition, you will study the health and fitness benefits of exercise and the consequences of leading a sedentary lifestyle. Your knowledge is assessed by means of two examinations that each last one hour. These are worth 60% of the overall mark.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // OCR

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? If you participate regularly in sport outside of school

What subjects combine well with GCSE PE?

Biology

Do you enjoy all sports or do you only really like one, such as football...?

This is an important question to ask yourself when considering this option as you must be keen to play more than one sport in order to be successful. You must be participating in at least 1 sports outside of school on a regular basis.

Team Sports: Football, Badminton (team or individual), Basketball, Cricket, Dance, Figure Skating, Handball, Hockey, Inline Roller Hockey, Netball, Rowing, Rugby, Sailing, Squash (team or individual), Table Tennis (team or individual), Tennis (team or individual), Volleyball.

Individual Sports: Athletics, Badminton, Canoeing, Cross Country Running, Cycling (Track, road, BMX racing), Dance, Golf, Equestrian, Rock climbing, Sailing, Skiing/snowboarding, Swimming, Trampoline, Table Tennis and Tennis.

Student View

"I really like learning about the way the body changes during exercise. The practical lessons are really fun."

How is GCSE PE assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination	60
Coursework/practical	40

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION & ETHICS)

Course Details

The course is made up of **two** examination papers.

Paper 1 – Thematic Studies

Value and origin of human life - Issues surrounding: abortion, euthanasia, life after death, animal rights, the use and abuse of the environment.

Peace and Conflict - Issues surrounding: causes of war, terrorism, pacifism, just war, modern warfare nuclear weapons, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Crime and Punishment - Issues surrounding: causes of crime, theories of punishment, effectiveness of prisons, the death penalty.

Human Rights and Social Injustice - Issues surrounding: human rights and responsibilities, racism, sexism and homophobia, causes of poverty, responses to poverty.

The above topics are studied from religious and non-religious perspectives.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? Yes

What subjects combine well with RS, Philosophy and Ethics?

History, Media Studies, Science and English

Paper 2 – A Study of Buddhism

Buddhist Beliefs - Karma, reincarnation, Nibbana, the Buddha.

Buddhist Practices - Meditation, worship and living in the modern world.

Christianity Beliefs - Crucifixion, sin, salvation, Christianity practices, prayer, festivals, worship and living in the modern world.

How is PRE assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Exam 1 1hr 45 min	50
Exam 2 1hr 45 min	50

Student View

I love the discussion and debate in Philosophy and Ethics. It has taught me to question and look at

SPANISH

Course Details



Every student is examined in each of the four skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Students may be entered for either Foundation or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills. There is **no** coursework element within this course - everything is assessed at the end of the two years. During the course, students develop the four skills they have already encountered in language learning.

The emphasis is on the practical, the useful and the interesting. Students are not judged on whether they get every single word correct but on whether they understand and communicate effectively. Students currently use a variety of resources, including the Nelson Thornes GCSE coursebook and the accompanying online resource, *Kerboodle*. We also supplement this by authentic material - leaflets and brochures from Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries, TV programmes and recordings, and selectively use material from other coursebooks and the Internet. Students are encouraged to use their ICT skills where relevant to develop these skills. To enrich the work in the classroom, we will be looking to give students real-life experience with trips abroad to Spain and celebrations of Spanish-speaking cultural events.

Students study three broad themes on which the assessments are based:
Theme 1: People and lifestyle.
Theme 2: Popular culture.
Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // AQA

Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? No

An option available to some students on advice from staff? Yes

What subjects combine well with Spanish?

GCSE Spanish combines well with any other GCSE subjects.

During the course, students develop four skills:

Listening: Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language. Dictation of short, spoken extracts.

Speaking: Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes. Speaking test with the Spanish teacher at the end of the course. Including a role-play, a photo card description and a reading aloud task in Spanish.

Reading: Understanding and responding to different types of written language. Translation into English and inferring meanings of words.

Writing: Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes. Written exam includes a variety of tasks including translation from English into Spanish.

How is Spanish assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Listening Assessment	25%
Speaking Assessment	25%
Reading Assessment	25%
Writing Assessment	25%

Student View

Qualifications in languages are highly recognised and valuable.

I think taking a language opens lots of doors for the future.

SCIENCE (COMBINED SCIENCE — 2 GCSEs)

Course Details

Combined Science will build on the science already studied in KS3 and will explore topics such as:

- Waves, Energy, Electricity and Circuits, Forces and their Effects in Physics;
- Acids and Alkalis, Fuels, Obtaining and Using Metals, Earth and Atmospheric Science in Chemistry;
- Cells and Control, Plant Structures and their Functions and Genetics in Biology.

There are 17 core practicals in Combined Science. Knowledge and understanding of these core practicals, as well as investigative skills will be assessed in their exams and makes up 15% of the marks in the final examinations. There are 6 exams; 2 each for the Biology, Chemistry & Physics.

Science is essential for those who might consider taking Biology, Chemistry or Physics

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // Pearson-Edexcel

Course Availability

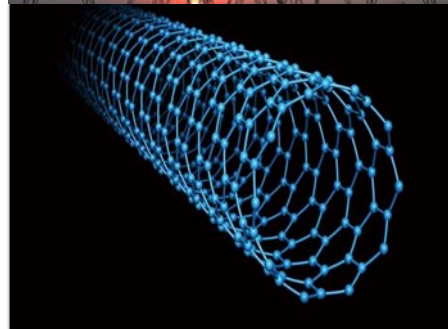
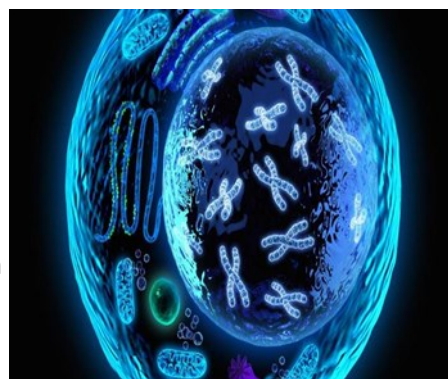
Combined science is compulsory, unless you take the separate science pathway.

What subjects combine well with Combined Science?

Maths, D&T and Geography

at A-level. In addition, this course is important for students considering practical careers

requiring science such as car mechanics, a veterinary nurse or beauty therapy. Maths skills will be tested in the examinations; for Foundation tier, this will be at the level of KS3 Maths. For Higher tier, this will be at the level of Foundation tier Maths. In Combined Science, 20% of the examinations will test students' mathematical skills.



Student View

“Combined science covers the key areas of science; the lessons are really informative and also really fun!”

How is Combined Science assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination	100

SCIENCE BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS

(3 GCSEs)

Course Details

Each of the separate science GCSE courses aim to provide students with the knowledge and scientific understanding to progress to further study in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These courses are useful to students aiming for scientific A Levels, degrees and careers in science related areas or who are particularly interested in science.

Separate Science students will cover the same material as Combined Science students; however they will also study additional content in each of the Sciences. This will include topics such as Static Electricity, Astronomy, Chemical Cells, Alcohols and the kidney. There will be 8 core practicals that each student will need to complete for each of the GCSEs. Knowledge and understanding of these core practicals, as well as investigative skills will be tested in the exams (15% of marks for each GCSE). There will be 6 exams; 2 each for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. All exams will be sat at the end of Year 11.

Mathematical skills will be tested within the examinations; there are different weightings for maths within the exams: Biology 10%, Chemistry 20% and Physics 30%. The level tested will be the equivalent of foundation GCSE maths.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // Pearson-Edexcel

Course Availability

Students can start to express their preference of pathway (combined or separate) at the first Year 9 parents evening. We will give students and parents information to inform their preference. The final decision of their Year 10 pathway will depend on them achieving a minimum standard in their end of year exam.

What subjects combine well with Separate Sciences?

Maths, D&T and Geography.



Teacher View

“Separate Sciences are essential for specific degree courses in some universities.”

How is Separate Sciences assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Examination	100

SOCIOLOGY

Course Details

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Sociology is designed to foster in learners an understanding and critical awareness of the social world around them. The specification focuses on the importance of social structure in explaining social issues. Learners will be encouraged to explore and debate contemporary social issues to enable them to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and to question their everyday understanding of society. By following this course, learners will develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world.

Sociology will develop learners' ability to think sociologically in relation to their experience of the social world around them so that they are able to play a positive, active and informed role in society. The course represents an opportunity for students who are interested in studying the social sciences at level 3 in subjects such as A level Sociology, Applied Criminology, BTEC Health and Social Care, Government and Politics as well as English, Media studies and History.

The course involves 2 units, each comprising a number of topics, these are as follows:

Component 1: Understanding social processes

This involves the following topics: Culture and socialisation, nature vs nurture, the family and social change, Education its purpose and how it has changed over time, research methods.

Component 2: Understanding Social Structures 1 hour 45 minutes (50%)

Theories of inequality, poverty and the causes of deprivation, crime and deviance and applied research.

Course Type/exam board:

GCSE // WJEC

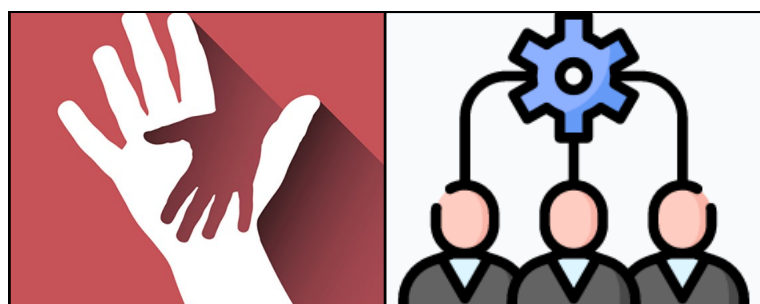
Course Availability

Compulsory? No

Option for all? Yes

What subjects combine well with Sociology?

GCSE Sociology combines well with Media Studies, English, History, Geography and Health and Social Care.



Teacher View

Sociology is the study of society – how it works, why it works, and how it could change. It's a fascinating subject that covers modern life on the planet.

How is Sociology assessed?

Assessment	% of GCSE
Exam (1 Hour 45 Minutes)	50
Exam (1Hour 45 Minutes)	50

CORE PE (PHYSICAL EDUCATION)

Course Details

PE is still a compulsory subject. Students will have 3 or 4 lessons a fortnight regardless of other PE related courses.

The emphasis is on participation and activity, with particular stress on the health and fitness aspects of physical education. Students are offered a variety of sports in Key Stage 4 and they will be encouraged to improve and build upon their levels of skill and performance, already developed in Key Stage 3. Sports are rotated on regular basis to give a broad range of opportunities.

Students are made aware of the necessity for and the opportunities to participate in regular sporting activities once they have left school. They will be encouraged to continue to make the most of all the extra-curricular sporting opportunities which are available in and out of school.

CR (CITIZENSHIP AND RE)

Curriculum Details

In Years 10 and 11 Personal and Social Education (Citizenship) and Religious Education (RE) are taught as a combined course. The course is compulsory and aims to help students make informed and responsible decisions about their personal behaviour, relationships, lifestyle and future financial choices. The main themes throughout the course are:

Careers Education and Guidance

This includes learning about the world of work, looking at strengths and preferences, future careers action planning, work experience & working with Careers Advisors from the Connexions service when appropriate for specific students.

Health Education

This includes areas like relationships, sex, parenting & drugs education as well as issues about mental health.

Relationships Education

This covers key skills in supporting students in forming and maintaining relationships including consent, victim blaming and sexual health.

Financial Capability Education

This includes topics on budgeting, money management and credit.

The course is taught using a wide range of methods and activities including individual and small group work, paired activities, whole class activities, ICT and a visiting specialists or visitors whenever possible.

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